

and Arab provincial capitals of the late Ottoman empire remain unexplored in this monograph.

What remains of lasting value in Fuhrmann's monograph is the plethora of vignettes that it provides to researchers of fin-de-siècle history and late Ottoman cities.

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Sophie Cooper, *Forging Identities in the Irish World: Melbourne and Chicago, c. 1830–1922*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022. vi + 258pp. Bibliography. \$110.00 hbk.

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Sophie Cooper's *Forging Identities in the Irish World* begins with a brief anecdote about the arrival of John and William Redmond in Chicago after their triumphant tour of Australia in 1884. With them was John's new Australian wife, Johanna. The *Western Catholic* newspaper's pronouncement that there was 'Unity in Trinity' emphasized the strong diasporic links between Ireland, the United States and Australia. This is also the key theme of Cooper's extremely well-written and ambitious analysis of two significant, but occasionally overlooked Irish communities: Melbourne and Chicago. Using each city's urban environment as a case-study, Cooper's monograph follows 90 years of development, competition and collaboration between different groups in each city in order to trace how Irish identities evolved along religious, class-based and gendered trajectories from the pre-Famine era to the founding of the Irish Free State.

A generation of diasporic historians and cultural geographers have called for a combination of transnational and in-depth local studies in order to better understand Irish diasporic communities in different parts of the globe. Cooper's paradigm of 'foundational identity' adds her own twist to these previous analyses, untangling multigenerational 'unconscious and conscious, or passive and active engagement with ethnic identity' in order to construct societies in each urban centre (p. 10). Unlike Sydney or New York City, which both had older, more established populations and class divisions, Melbourne and Chicago offered more fluid social, religious and political opportunities, with each community enjoying the image of a brash, less-refined younger sibling. Cooper engagingly uses this concept of foundational identity throughout the monograph, underscoring her conclusions about multiple influences affecting the Irish in both cities, while simultaneously providing other scholars with a highly useful framework for future transnational and comparative research.

Cooper offers a thematic approach rather than profiling the cities separately. As she herself states, the choice of case-studies for comparative histories are often intentionally chosen to prove the existence of either great similarities or differences (p. 16). She defends her choice of cities in a dedicated chapter that tends to

nod towards the former rather than the latter. Each subsequent chapter examines how Irish men, women and children in each locale were affected by religious associational culture, access to education, public performance, and the changing fortunes of Irish nationalism, recreating the ‘unity in trinity’ notion that had worked so well for the Redmonds at the end of the nineteenth century. Some of the structuring of the book does seem to echo its origins as a doctoral thesis, with chapters on secular clubs, religious parish life, public and religious education, political nationalism and how each city celebrated St Patrick’s Day as an opportunity for public performances of Irish identity. However, Cooper’s ability to make each city come to life through both her descriptions and her extensive archival research – including numerous newspapers, diocesan and school records, society minutes and parish histories – goes a long way to answer Kevin Kenny’s call for histories that consider how diasporic sensibilities in turn defined nationally specific ethnic identities.

One of this work’s greatest contributions is its determined focus on moving Irish women’s experiences ‘in from the peripheries of St Patrick’s Day balls, the attics of domestic servitude and the silent donors to nationalist subscriber lists’; instead, Cooper sees domestic and educational spaces as rich areas for nurturing a ‘cultural affinity’ for Ireland and Irishness. Male leaders in associational culture and at church still held sway, but Irish immigrant women were demonstrably active and involved in the world around them, giving the reader a much fuller immersion into each city’s Irish population.

I particularly enjoyed the chapter on St Patrick’s Day, charting its growth as a specific moment of pointedly charged ethnic display from the 1840s to the 1920s. One key difference between the cities: Melbourne’s St Patrick’s Society initially promoted a sense of Irishness in line with O’Connellism – loyal British subjects equally proud of their Irish Catholic heritage – that Chicago never needed to entertain. While Cooper does briefly touch upon Fenianism’s effect on St Patrick’s Day festivities in the 1860s, I selfishly would have liked more exploration of the transnational influences of events such as Gavan Duffy’s arrival in Victoria, Henry O’Farrell’s attempted assassination of Prince Alfred in Melbourne, the Fenian invasions of Canada and the increased militarization of the parade in Chicago. However, that is a personal desire, not a professional critique: the chapter is far too interesting to be distracted from Cooper’s deft handling of numerous associations, political agendas, municipal dealings and grand social occasions.

Forging Identities in the Irish World is a must-read for numerous disciplines, above all perhaps because of its ability to make the cities of Chicago and Melbourne fully realized historical characters in their own right, sometimes mirroring one another and sometimes not, convincingly underscoring the importance of internal and external identities for the individual immigrant and the community at large.

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