



Irish Studies in Britain: New Perspectives on History and Literature

Brian Griffin and Ellen McWilliams

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The history essays in this volume explore how expressions of identity - particularly religious and political identity - shaped the experiences of Irish people from the early seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries, both in Ireland and abroad. They consist of an examination of the role played by Bonamargy Friary in the Antrim MacDonnells' presentation of their family's status in the early seventeenth century; an exploration of the important role played by Irish courtiers during the years of Charles II's Continental exile; a discussion of tensions between Irish Presbyterians and Anglicans in the 1720s and 1730s, with a particular focus on James Arbuckle's *Hibernicus' Letters*; and an overview of the fraught relations between Irish Presbyterians and their Anglican neighbours on the frontier of Britain's North American colonies in the middle decades of the eighteenth century. It also includes an illustration of the masculinist rhetoric employed by Ulster Unionists during the Home Rule crisis from 1912 to 1914; a discussion of the anti-treaty IRA's use of arson attacks in three Munster counties during the Irish Civil War; and, finally, an examination of the impact of W.P. Nicholson's evangelical crusade on Ulster Protestant society in the early 1920s. The essays in the literature section of this collection represent an eclectic range of interests in Irish literature and Irish literary history. Several of the essays focus on the way in which seminal events in Irish history, in particular the Easter Rising, have been imagined and re-imagined over time; they offer new insight into literary responses to, and representations of, those events and explore fresh contexts for thinking about the same. Others take up the question of literary genre and Irish national identity, while a number of contributors explore intertextuality and influence in twentieth-century Irish writing, with a special focus on the Yeatsian and Joycean afterlives. The usefulness of thinking about literary texts alongside other forms of cultural expression is also examined, in particular the interactions of Irish literature and music. Although wide ranging in its interests, the collection addresses key themes central to the interpretation of Irish literature and culture, including changing concepts of national identity, the place of women in Irish history, and the politics of the Irish literary canon.

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