

However, how one evaluates this book as a whole depends upon what one understands its purpose to be. It cannot be said to represent a comprehensive summary of the state of current research on the areas covered, encompassing all available sources of evidence, nor a canonical statement of scholarly consensus regarding the interpretation even of the textual and epigraphic data. We are a long way from the latter in regard to most of the period covered here. But, if one takes its purpose to present a reinterpretation of the relevant textual and epigraphic sources by a leading historian and philologist, then it is undoubtedly one of the most significant studies to have been published for at least a decade.

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MYSTICISM, MYTH AND CELTIC IDENTITY. Edited by Marion Gibson, Shelly Trower and Gary Tregidga. Pp 240. London: Routledge. 2013. £24.99 paperback.

This interdisciplinary collection of essays originates in a conference held in 2010, which formed part of an Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project, the principal investigators of which are the editors of this volume. Focusing on literary and performative work from the Romantic period to the present, this book explores how mystical and mythical histories informed national imaginations, how they influenced Celtic nationalism, and how such narratives shaped identities within wider British and Celtic contexts.

The three sections of this volume are interrelated, with each section consisting of five essays. Part one focuses on pre-history and paganism in relation to myths and fictions which have developed from science and pseudo-science. Ronald Hutton considers how representations of druids in history and literature underwent fundamental shifts in post-war Britain. He contends that prior to 1950 literary depictions of Celtic paganism were more vivid and historically informative than those represented during the era of decolonisation. Marion Gibson's chapter considers a variety of British fictions and histories over a broad chronological span, and examines not only the recreation of pagan thought but also representations of both divine and demonic imagery. Chris Manias on the other hand explores nineteenth-century scholarly attempts to theorise the past. For Manias, material histories and prehistoric cultural practices were assimilated into contemporary conceptions of ethnicity, race, progress and improvement. Rebecca Welshman's chapter is concerned with late Victorian novelists and the role of archaeology in conjunction with the development of Celtic revivalism. Finally, Carl Phillips examines alternative archaeology and representations in contemporary mystical writing, demonstrating the convergence between myth and environment.

Part two of this volume focuses on Celticity. Elizabeth Edwards' contribution considers late eighteenth-century, revolutionary France and its influence on Welsh literature in terms of the concept of 'lost liberty'. The second chapter in this section, offered by Dafydd Moore, tackles the impact of James Macpherson's poetry on literature produced in South West England during the late eighteenth century, by exploring ancient mysticism and its influence on Enlightenment thought. Shelley Trower's contribution concentrates on the work of folklorist Robert Hunt, suggesting that geological knowledge concerning rock formations – or 'primitive' landscapes – was used when emphasising regional and racial differences and discussing notions of Celticity in Cornwall. Maura Coughlin's analysis of the Breton Celtic Revival in the long nineteenth century demonstrates how Brittany's Celtic history became central to its mythology. The final essay in this section considers travel diaries written during the 1770s and 1780s. For Peter Merchant, the personal and cultural change recorded in travelogues provides a framework for a discussion of notions

of 'primitive' and 'commercial' existence within the context of Celticity and national mythology.

The final section in this volume considers myth and national identity. Jo Esra's chapter looks at captivity narratives in the context of Celtic revivalism in Cornwall. David Hesse's chapter is concerned with European battle re-enactments and the portrayal of Scottish identity, along with female representations and mythical performance. The third chapter, offered by Garry Tregidga, considers representations of Cornish nationalism through an examination of Cornish and Welsh identities during the twentieth century. Andrew Wilson's chapter offers a contemporary study of nationalist discourse with reference to Nordic paganism and racist 'nationalism', emphasising the difficulties of interpreting mystical and cultural origins. Finally, Jason Whittaker considers the writings of William Blake and explores how twentieth century right-wing political movements in England have reformed and adopted Blake's interpretation of British identity. For Whittaker, these identities are constructed on the adoption and variation of cultural forms based on complex and ever-changing notions of historical identity.

Although this work has many positive features, its geographical coverage is limited, and an overemphasis on the development of English Celtic identity dictates the scope of the collection. The overall failure to address notions of Irish Celtic identity, especially during periods of intense change in the nineteenth and twentieth century, is to be regretted. Nevertheless, this book should be commended for its ambitious chronological span, the overall calibre of its essays, and its interdisciplinary approach, which along with its use of an impressive range of sources is certain to attract a readership drawn from different disciplines.

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THE IRISH LORD LIEUTENANCY C.1541–1922. Edited by Peter Gray and Olwen Purdue. Pp xii, 244. Dublin: U.C.D. Press. 2012. €50.

Debates on whether or not the British–Irish relationship, from the Tudors to Partition, may usefully be described as 'colonial', seldom advance very far nowadays before that strange constitutional beast, the office of Irish lord lieutenant, hoves into view. The changing role and functions of the monarch's representative in Ireland, from the proclamation of the 'kingdom' in 1541 to the final abolition of the office of lord lieutenant with the settlements of 1920–22, provides an enabling framework or prism, as this volume richly demonstrates, through which wider issues of governance in the long British–Irish relationship may be fruitfully considered.

Studies of particular crisis episodes or of individual viceroys, together with a modest crop of works on the apparatus of government and administration in Ireland in the early modern and modern periods, have ensured that the office of Irish lord lieutenant was never wholly neglected in Irish historiography since the 1930s. However, as the editors of this volume rightly emphasise, in recent years a quickening of scholarly interest in relations between the monarchy and Ireland (notably during the 'long' nineteenth century) and a more diffuse, interdisciplinary debate on models, frameworks, theoretical constructs for considering the British–Irish relationship over the long term, have resulted in closer academic attention being paid to the office of Irish lord lieutenant.

The volume under review originated in a conference on the Irish lord lieutenant held in Dublin in September 2009. It is gratifying to be able to record that the resulting book achieves a thematic coherence and a consistently high quality of analysis and writing seldom found in a volume of such origins.

So far as the structure and chronological coverage of the volume is concerned, of the eleven chapters (including the Introduction), five are concerned with the period of the