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The international aspects of women's experiences also feature in the chapters on emigration, as might be expected, but this book, by foregrounding interdisciplinarity and the modernist lens, offers some new perspectives on what is one of the better researched areas of Irish women's history. It also traces a narrative that shows that migration was a way to expand choices and control over one's life, but, crucially, within a wider family dynamic. Furthermore, direct connection is made with the first case study on elite women's reading and learning by drawing attention to the greater literacy and English language skills of female migrants of the nineteenth century which enabled them to emigrate and prepared them 'for the challenge that lay ahead in the public rather than the private world' (p. 89). This was also a factor in shaping a new kind of woman by the turn of the twentieth century, the 'returned yank', a financially successful, independent and modern archetype who embodied cultural change on their visits back to the homeland. This transformation could occur despite the predominance of emigrants in domestic service, an occupation in Ireland that was often poorly paid and regarded as low status. Women were clearly capitalising on the opportunities offered to them and passed on the cultural capital accrued through hard work to their relatives by paying passages to America, and to their daughters, who successfully infiltrated the professions of nursing, teaching and clerical work. The story of women's autonomy through the financial independence they found through migration is a compelling one, and the book gives detailed, personal examples of how this facilitated women to marry and live lives on their own terms. The two-way cultural transmission process is also emphasised in the book, demonstrating not simply a process of modernity being 'imposed' on Irish emigrants from their American experience but a more complex exchange of mores, manners and ideas.

The final section of the book focuses on cultural history and textual analysis with regard to the *avant-garde*, a movement that came to define Irish literary output internationally, but, as is pointed out in the text, did not fit well with the cultural mores of twentieth-century Ireland. This section offers a fascinating insight into literature that was produced from Ireland, such as that by Katherine Cecil Thurston, which may not be well known by contemporary readers. In this sense *Reading the Irish woman* also makes an important contribution to the canon of women's history in recovering the lives and works of influential women in past periods.

The book concludes by reflecting on the agency aspects of women's identity and experiences in the past – how they were both receivers *and* shapers of the cultural influences of the modern period, all of which had an impact on taking women beyond the barriers of the domestic sphere, a message this book outlines in impressive detail.

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ULSTER PRESBYTERIANS AND THE SCOTS IRISH DIASPORA, 1750–1764. By Benjamin Bankhurst. Pp 202. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 2013. £53.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries large-scale migrations affected parts of Britain and Ireland. No class, religious, regional or national group was entirely excluded from the swirl of human traffic. First the English, and then the Scots, comprised the bulk of leavers till the 1710s, with heavy migrations to Ulster, North America, and Europe. Thereafter, the Scots Irish of Ulster assumed centre stage. Along with migrants from the German territories they utterly dominated British colonial traffic till the American Revolution. Benjamin Bankhurst's fine book, which won the Donald Murphy Prize for Distinguished First Books from the American Conference of Irish Studies, deserves a place alongside classic works on Ulster by R. J. Dickson, Patrick Griffin, and Kerby Miller et al. His sustained foray into a field marked both by

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excellent studies and a legion of populist potboilers is both important and original. Consequently, what he has to say needs to be integrated into our thinking about the transnational people who connected Scotland, Ulster and the colonies, both demographically and culturally. In terms of its framework, this is a contribution to the study of Ulster's Presbyterians and America's Scots Irish within the context of the British Empire; it is also a work at home in the historiographies of the Scottish diaspora and of the colonies.

Bankhurst is primarily interested in exploring the transfer back to Ulster of news from the colonies, and how such news affected people at home. In this sense, it is one of the best books I have read for engaging with how diasporas shape homelands. Bankhurst acknowledges a debt to Vincent Morley's study of the effect of the American Revolution on Irish politics and society though he focuses on an earlier period when the war for mastery in America (the French and Indian Wars, 1754–1763/Seven Years War, 1756–63) was affecting the homeland via regular news and propaganda. The period was one where the factual connections of Scots, Ulster and colonial populations (through family and friendship networks) were maintained and strengthened by the sheer volume of information charting the violence of the colonial frontier. In Ireland, associations were formed to support the cause in the Americas and folk fasted in the hope that an angry God would rescue a situation, which, till 1759, was marked only by bad news and defeats. Reports and pamphlets relayed the brutality faced by colonials in the Americas – colonials who included the Scots Irish. Consequent upon digesting such news, the Presbyterians of the north coalesced in a collective psychological union with their peers and families over there. In 1759, that British imperial *annus mirabilis*, however, New Englanders and New Yorkers, who were at the front line of conflict with the French and their Indian allies, expressed happiness and relief on hearing that Quebec had fallen. The Scots Irish in Ulster shared this joy. Why, though, did we not already know much more about this aspect of the Atlantic frame of reference for northern Protestants? Bankhurst says it is because 'we are trained to think of the Irish as victims of British imperialism not as active agents in the maintenance and expansion of the Empire' (p.7). He therefore tackles manifestations of pro-imperial sentiment in Ulster, whereby emigration was just one facet of a trans-oceanic connection.

Chapter 1 frames the migration patterns of the Ulster Presbyterians who headed to America, exploring patterns, reasons and timing. The second chapter explores the way the *Belfast News-letter* portrayed America, Empire and war. Being the only newspaper in Ulster at the time, points to one of the limitations Bankhurst faced, though he does use the Dublin press, pamphlets, and personal archives to thicken the narrative. Chapter 3 looks more generally at reportage of the Seven Years War as a religious struggle between Protestant and Catholic empires. Rituals such as fasting, we learn here, marked a transnational communalism – experiences shared by Protestants all over the Empire. Chapter 4 departs from the global war and religious identity to explore extensive reports on settler-Indian conflict contained within the *Belfast News-letter*. Bankhurst says these reports, which were framed in terms of Irish struggle and victimhood, were the most detailed and numerous consumed anywhere in Britain or Ireland. If this created a further line of closeness between the Scots Irish who had left for America and their kinsmen at home, these connections were cemented by two further elements. First, awareness of a transnational world that was enhanced by the fundraising efforts of those seeking to acquire funds to help dispossessed frontier folk, particularly in Pennsylvania, in the 1750s and 1760s. Secondly, by subsequent migrations to America, which remained heavy between the Seven Years War and the American Revolution, which also further enhanced this question – this time literally and personally.

The book begins and ends with John Moore, Carrickfergus man, who left for America in 1760. On arrival in the interior of New York he found a world of wild wonder, but also gloom, since it was 'without the Lord of creation; Man'. Wonderment faded and experience took hold. Three years on, Moore was denouncing the murderous 'Spanish spirit' that the British evinced towards the Indians – a policy of killing and clearing that caused the current wars in the first place. For Moore, Christian duty was also being eschewed, for there was a failure to spread the gospel among the original

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people who were regarded with a 'cultural chauvinism' that nevertheless 'did not exclude their humanity' (p. 136).

Bankhurst's careful, innovative study significantly extends our understanding of the nature of information and how its spreading and disseminating shaped the identities of the northern Presbyterians. We certainly have here an excellent example of the manifold localities occupied by the Scots Irish population. The Scots Irish maintained hardy connections to Scotland and developed new ones with the American colonies, and these form focal points here. As well, the same population had a curious relationship with Ulster and therefore the Plantation project, marked by both permanence and transience. This is so much the case that we find ourselves searching for different ways of assessing identity over and above a single locality or regional affiliation. Indeed, Bankhurst's study causes us to think that, for a large portion of those who came to Ulster in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, what McBride called their 'transatlantic subculture' (something Bankhurst closely acknowledges) fundamentally shaped how they saw their world. But the way they saw that world changed. It was moulded by knowledge, sustained by news, and shaped by personal experience.

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CULTURES OF RADICALISM IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND. Edited by John Kirk, Michael Brown and Andrew Noble. Pp 249. London & Vermont: Pickering & Chatto. 2013. £60.

This volume of nine essays had its genesis in A.H.R.C.-funded symposia held in Queen's University, Belfast in 2008 and 2009, on the theme of multi-lingual radical poetry and song in Britain and Ireland, 1770–1820. A companion volume, with the same editors and publisher, appeared in 2012 under the title *United islands? The languages of resistance*. The publishers promise further volumes in its series, Poetry and Song in the Age of Revolution.

The essays under review focus, perhaps rather more tightly than those in the 2012 collection, on the key issues raised in the respective volumes' titles – in the former case, 'the languages of resistance', in this case on 'cultures of radicalism'. Most of the present essays engage, in one way or another, with the widening of the public sphere, arising from growing literacy and (in some cases) reading aloud, which have been well established for the period in question. Overall, however, it is noteworthy that several of the authors find that this widening public sphere, while it might well contribute to the spread of political radicalism, did not necessarily or invariably have that effect. As argued in the essays by Ffion Jones on Welsh ballad singers' response to the war of American independence, Martyn Powell on Scottophobia in Ireland, Niall Ó Ciosáin on printed anthologies in Irish and Scottish Gaelic, Maura Cronin on broadside literature and popular opinion in Munster, and Dan Wall on literary magazines, such widening could sometimes foster or express conservative, loyalist, and/or Unionist views. Much depended on the particular geographies and political constituencies of the expanding public sphere. And in her essay on serial literature and radical poetry in Wales, Marion Löffler reminds us of how tiny some of these constituencies were. The only Welsh town, apparently, that possessed anything approaching an urban culture was Swansea – with a population in 1801 of just 6,099.

The sheer complexity of political stances in the material under review is striking. E. Wyn James discusses William Williams of Pantycelyn (d. 1791), a leading Methodist, and 'the father of the Welsh hymn'. Most of his writing was in Welsh.

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