

'REFORM' TREATISES ON TUDOR IRELAND, 1537–1599. Edited by David Heffernan. Pp xxix + 381. Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission. 2016. €40.

This is an impressive compendium of texts advocating reform in Ireland dating from 1537 to 1599, most of them written from 1580 onwards. Dr David Heffernan is to be congratulated for investing so much time, energy and care in such an ambitious enterprise. This book is a veritable treasure trove for historians of Ireland in the sixteenth century, and will be indispensable for anyone engaged in research on that formative period in Irish history.

This is a complicated compendium. Heffernan states that there are 'over 600' reform treatises extant for Ireland in the Tudor period (p. xxii), but his definition of what constitutes a 'reform treatise' is very elastic, encompassing as it does what he terms 'formal treatises', some 'informal' treatises, letter tracts, government memoranda and working documents, as well as diaries, campaign journals and accounts of service which 'offer advice and proposals on how to govern Ireland' (pp xxv–vi). Many of the texts included in this volume do not meet the generally accepted definition of a treatise, but they are interesting nonetheless.

Of the 'hundreds' of 'reform' treatises extant Heffernan chose seventy for publication in this compendium. In the Introduction he explains that his 'primary motive for selection' was to publish the most important Tudor 'reform' treatises in Ireland that had either been unpublished heretofore, or else been the subject of inadequate calendar entries, while the 'second overarching consideration' was to present texts that to date have been largely, or entirely, ignored (p. xxvii). This is entirely justified in a publication of this nature but the fact that no other criteria for selection are identified begs the question as to how representative this choice of treatises is of the totality of the genre. That is an important question that has to be considered by scholars using this compendium. Could it be that the most important and influential treatises were published before? Does the material published here comprise disproportionately, as seems to be the case, of less significant writings? Does the chronological spread of the treatises published in this volume mirror the chronology of the composition of treatises at the time? How far do the seventy treatises chosen reflect the editor's interests? Let me observe, for example, that while Heffernan states that 'numerous bishops of the Church of Ireland were regular writers of treatises' (p. xviii) only one is published in this volume. Were there others that he chose not to include, or were they all published already?

In terms of the analyses of Ireland's problems and the nature of the solutions proposed Heffernan confirms what one would expect – that they were often determined by the author's background. Hence, it is generally the case that military officers were most concerned with military strategy, legal officials with fostering common law institutions and aspiring colonists with establishing colonies. Military men were more sanguine than civic officials, and ethnic backgrounds could pre-dispose men towards certain views. In most of the treatises published the editor found a palpable degree of self-interest.

As for the significance of the treatises, Heffernan concludes that, '[T]he impact of the treatises throughout the sixteenth century was unquestionably immense' [p. xx]. He regards them as the medium through which English royal policy in Ireland was developed, and states that historians can use them to trace the evolution, or at least the progression, of ideas to 'reform' Ireland. However, the impact of 'reform' treatises on English policy is actually a controversial subject. Christopher Maginn discovered in his study of William Cecil, Elizabeth's chief minister for the bulk of her reign, that for all of the voluminous information about Ireland sent to him he did not devise policy for Ireland, but left that to the viceroys. In their more recent study of the Hatfield compendium of 'reform' treatises Maginn and Steven Ellis showed how very difficult it is to demonstrate a clear relationship between English policy formation for Ireland and such treatises. Heffernan admits that the impact of individual treatises is difficult to discern. Intuitively one feels that treatises and other forms of written correspondence

must have made some contribution to English policy formation, but we are not clear on how precisely they did so. Elizabeth and her ministers received great volumes of correspondence about Ireland, with often contradictory diagnoses of the problems and mostly with contrary solutions proposed. Indeed, the volume of advice increased substantially in the last decades of her reign. Yet there was no attempt made to synthesise the information and advice received into a coherent overall policy for Ireland. Very telling in that respect was the occasion on which Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth's secretary of state, sought views for the 'setting down of a plan' for the governance of Ireland in 1581. Heffernan cites it as proof of the importance of 'reform' treatises (p. xv). However, Walsingham indicated that the queen had just held a conference about Ireland at which it was decided to solicit the views of the viceroy and another senior office holder in Dublin for proposals to 'reform' Ireland: one might have expected the solicitation to have preceded the conference! The viceroy, Lord Grey de Wilton, responded by writing that he saw no point in treatises until Ireland was subdued by force. Edward Waterhouse, the other official solicited, asked for copies from London of a couple of treatises that he knew had been sent there so that he might consult them before he set his own thoughts down on paper. In other words, for all of the treatises, and other sources of information and advice, sent to London over the first twenty three years of her reign Elizabeth and her ministers did not feel that they were in a position to devise an effective policy for Ireland, while her viceroy in Ireland saw no point in treatises, and there were no copies in Dublin of most of the treatises written about Ireland. The obvious implication is that one ought not to exaggerate the impact of 'reform' treatises for English policy formation in Ireland. Having said that, Dr Heffernan has published a tremendous amount of material that has been overlooked or ignored by historians of Tudor Ireland, and put us all in his debt. This material is sure to challenge preconceptions and inspire new avenues for research. This book shows that there is more than enough thought-provoking documentation to engage the interests of historians and students of Tudor Ireland far into the future.

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HENRY A. JEFFERIES  
*Arts & Humanities Research Institute, Ulster University*  
 henryjefferies@icloud.com

**IRELAND AND QUEBEC: MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES ON HISTORY, CULTURE AND SOCIETY.** Edited by Margaret Kelleher and Michael Kenneally. Pp 256. Dublin: Four Courts Press. 2016. €50.

This collection brings together leading scholars from seven institutions in Ireland and seven in Quebec in an interdisciplinary exploration of diverse approaches to the construction of the past, present, and contemporary society in both. In doing so, its principal achievement is that it breaks new theoretical ground and provokes 'valuable parallel resonances that can deepen scholarly understanding of Ireland and Quebec in their historical and contemporary manifestations'.

But why Ireland and Quebec? Before reading this treatise I would have certainly thought of each of their vibrant cultural identities and the comparable tensions arising out their Roman Catholicism in a Protestant British Empire. And then there have been the ensuing conflicts prompted by religious, language, and cultural differences that resulted in independence for Ireland in 1922 and polarization and conflict in Quebec over the last century. But what *also* emerges is how both Ireland and Quebec are struggling to define and sustain their core identities as they respond to similar global economic and cultural imperatives. By considering both the genesis and construction of cultural identity *and* the responses to the contemporary contexts, this exploration of Ireland and Quebec offers insights into these specific places and *also* to identity theory in general.