

geographical and thematic analyses. They also assess childhood experiences among different social classes in both rural and urban contexts.

*Children, childhood and Irish society* is split into five sections. The first, entitled ‘the child in history’, contains essays on early modern childhood, child street-trading in Edwardian Ireland, and the role of parents in the twentieth-century Irish education system. A subsequent section examines welfare in Irish history, with an emphasis on the N.S.P.C.C., workhouse provision for the young and the complex relationship between the twentieth-century state and the child. A third section explores the shaping of Irish childhood cultures, investigating themes such as the Irish Fireside Club, schoolboy novels and autobiographical literature that have provided insight into growing up in Ireland. A fourth section focuses on literary representations (with reference to literary luminaries such as Jonathan Swift and Oscar Wilde) while a concluding section examines cultural representations of childhood in mediums such as journalism and cinema. Combined, the essays contained in this collection, while focusing on childhood, sheds light on far broader historical issues such as welfare provision, poverty, education, class relations, abuse and power relations in pre- and post-independence Ireland. The collection will appeal to a broad range of academic scholars working in diverse disciplines, as well as a general public nationally and internationally.

As with all edited collections, *Children, childhood and Irish Society* is not without its structural problems. The vast majority of the contributions focus on the narrow time period 1850 to 1950. Despite the title claiming to offer an overview of Irish childhood from 1500 to the present, a bare minimum of essays assess pre-1800 childhoods. Moreover, one might expect a volume that purportedly covers ‘the present’ to contain non-historical essays penned by academics researching twenty-first century Irish childhoods. The introduction points towards issues in present-day Irish childhood yet most of the contributors refrain from considering how their historical assessments could potentially speak to modern policy debates. For instance, essays on institutionalisation do not consider some of the ways in which the debates under discussion precede current concerns about the trajectory of modern Irish childhood or attempt to speak directly to ongoing, and highly controversial, inquiries, despite the reference to ‘the present’ made in the title. In addition, the structure of the volume is somewhat confusing at times. Notably, the opening section is sparse and covers disparate themes and time periods. Nonetheless, *Children, childhood and Irish society* provides a remarkably in-depth account of the diversity and complexity of Irish childhood that will undoubtedly prove essential to scholars of history, literature, sociology and Irish society. The editors provide a well-written, well-edited and highly original collection of essays that will prove immensely valuable to academics working in diverse disciplines.

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IAN MILLER

Centre for the History of Medicine in Ireland, Ulster University  
e15028007@uucde.ulst.ac.uk

IRELAND IN THE VIRGINIAN SEA: COLONIALISM IN THE BRITISH ATLANTIC. By Audrey Horning. Pp xx, 385. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2013. \$49.95.

Ever since the pioneering work of D. B. Quinn on Ireland’s role as a testing ground for English colonisation of the New World during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries comparative studies of the two regions have abounded. Audrey Horning’s new book, *Ireland in the Virginian Sea* offers one of the more substantial recent contributions to the field. In scope it comprises a comparative analysis of English – and subsequently British – colonial activity in Ireland and Virginia roughly between 1550 and 1650. The first two chapters of this four-chapter book examine the development of colonisation in

Tudor Ireland (pp 17–100) and England's initial encounters with the Powhatan natives of Virginia in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (pp 101–75). The great majority of Horning's readers will either be more familiar with early modern Ireland or colonial Virginia and consequently this contextualisation is understandable, though it is perhaps excessively drawn out in places. However, the core of *Ireland in the Virginian Sea* is offered in chapters three and four. These respectively offer a comparative study of the history and archaeology of the Ulster Plantation (pp 177–270) and the Jamestown Colony (pp 271–352) in the early seventeenth century. Particularly welcome is Horning's in-depth analysis of the plantation of Londonderry from Thomas Phillips's settlement of Coleraine in the immediate aftermath of the Nine Years' War through to the settlements erected by the London Companies as part of the formal Ulster Plantation. By examining both the historical contexts in which these evolved and the material remains of them from an archaeological perspective Horning provides one of the more substantial studies of the Londonderry Plantation conducted to date (pp 194–239). Equally, the particularly ample coverage of the Jamestown colony in the less studied years after the Powhatan uprising of 1622 is welcome (pp 313–52).

Horning's adoption of the comparative model is somewhat paradoxical as her argument throughout is that it is inaccurate to suggest that Ireland provided a testing ground for English colonisation of the New World. For instance, she argues that cultural understandings between natives and settlers in the two regions were vastly different, the English and Irish having co-habited in Ireland since the twelfth century, while the natives of Virginia and the English would have found each other much more profoundly alien. Horning is largely correct to identify in this manner how the similarities between the two regions as arenas of early modern colonisation have perhaps been overstated. English settlers were indeed more familiar with Ireland than Virginia in the early seventeenth century, while the Irish were certainly much more familiar with the English than the natives of Virginia were. But there is a danger in thinking that this familiarity or lack thereof was monolithic, and doing so elides some of the complexities of these interactions. For instance, English army captains with years of experience of Ireland could recommend destruction of crops as a weapon of war in Ireland. But those less familiar with the country could express genuine surprise that arable farming was practised in parts of Ulster. Thus while some English visitors to Ireland were far more knowledgeable of the country than they would have been of Virginia, for others both regions were strikingly alien. Nevertheless by highlighting the many broad divergences between the two regions Horning provides a useful corrective to studies which place too great an emphasis on the parallels between English and British activity in regions such as Ulster and Virginia in the early seventeenth century.

Elsewhere Horning's book has come in for criticism for minimising the degree to which English interactions with Ireland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were marked by conflict and the overthrow of a native class by aggressive newcomers. This, it has been argued, is in order to have *Ireland in the Virginian Sea* conform to a reconciliation-friendly version of Irish history in Northern Ireland. This is certainly an aspect of Horning's study, featuring in both the lengthy introduction and conclusion (pp 1–16, 353–67). The aggression which characterised Irish and English interactions in early modern Ireland is, therefore, rather muted. For instance Horning points out that, unlike in Virginia where native land rights were given little consideration, 'the Ulster Plantation was ... approved and implemented by the Irish Parliament, not by the English Parliament as an invading colonial power' (p. 12). Yet to suggest that this legitimised the plantation ignores the packing of the Irish parliament from the late sixteenth century onwards with New English *arrivistes* whose agenda was inherently colonial. Thus, the ratification of the Ulster Plantation by the Irish parliament really stood for little when assessing the legitimacy of the initiative or the impact it had on the displaced. However, to suggest that these oversights pervade Horning's book or detract from the central comparative study is perhaps to do it a disservice.

Many will find these aspects of Horning's interpretation somewhat disagreeable. But ultimately the substance of *Ireland in the Virginian Sea* lies in the comparative study of

plantation-era Ulster and colonial Virginia. Horning's work adds significantly to our understanding of the history of the two regions, the material culture of both and how the two overlapped and diverged at the time. It will be required reading for scholars of plantation-era Ulster and colonial Virginia.

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DAVID HEFFERNAN  
*School of History, University College Cork*  
 104483405@umail.ucc.ie

CALVINISM, REFORM AND THE ABSOLUTIST STATE IN ELIZABETHAN IRELAND.  
 By Mark A. Hutchinson. Pp. xiii, 219. London: Pickering & Chatto. 2015. £60  
 (Religious Cultures in the Early Modern World, 20).

This book argues that from the 1560s those Calvinist Englishmen charged with governing Ireland became frustrated by the failure of the local population to accept the Gospel and reap the fruits of God's grace in the form of a truly civil, obedient, and reformed society. It was in order to overcome that failure that these New English began to employ the term 'state' in manuscript correspondence with each other and with their masters in England. These New Englishmen, Hutchinson contends, used the term to mean not just a coordinated network of territorially bounded offices exercising political power (the early modern state defined by Michael Braddick), but a fictive person distinct from both the people and the prince (the modern state defined by Quentin Skinner). Skinner's modern state was also a secular entity, though Hutchinson is more ambivalent on his point (pp 4–5, 11). Hutchinson dates this innovative language of the state to the late 1570s, about a decade before the usage is accepted by John Guy to have appeared in England.

Hutchinson has read deeply in the state papers, and exposes many important facts. In particular, the defences of limited monarchy advanced by members of the Old English elite like Nicholas White and Nicholas Walsh in the 1580s run like a red thread through Hutchinson's central chapters. His convincing analysis of these defences is supported by the valuable transcription of Walsh's speech to the Irish House of Commons in May 1586 which he has published in *Analecta Hibernica*. This advocacy of limited monarchy in theory and practice appears to have amounted to a self-conscious political tradition: one of considerable significance. Hutchinson's excavation of a wide variety of uses of the term 'state' in later sixteenth-century Ireland also provides much food for thought.

Nevertheless, there are weaknesses in Hutchinson's argument. He insists that Protestant discourse on politics was very different to that carried on among other Christians, because all Protestants denied that humans were capable of good government unless God intervened, extending his grace to reform their consciences. He grounds this argument in an analysis of the short English-language treatises by John Ponet, Christopher Goodman, and John Aylmer, printed in the 1550s, which urged resistance against Queen Mary. First, Hutchinson's account of the content of these texts is a little one-sided. For example, while Ponet did write that God was the author of political life among humans, he nonetheless argued that pagans (who lacked God's grace) were capable of doing good things guided by natural reason and natural law alone. Second, it is hard to situate these arguments in our wider knowledge of English culture. Luca Baschera has indeed taught us that, apart from Hutchinson's pamphleteers, there were several Calvinist scholastics, received in the English universities, who insisted that only the regenerate recipients of God's saving grace were capable of good political action. But it seems unlikely that the majority of the English Protestant elite subscribed unambiguously to that view. Had they done so, their deep attachment to classical culture – Cicero in grammar school, Aristotle in