

Ó CHÉITINN GO RAIFTEARÁÍ: MAR A CUMADH STAIR NA HÉIREANN. By Vincent Morley. Pp ix, 295. Dublin: Coiscéim. 2011. €10.

While the importance of Cétinn's prose history, *Foras feasa ar Éirinn* (1634), has long been recognised 'because of its profound and prolonged influence of perceptions of Irishness' to quote Bernadette Cunningham (*The world of Geoffrey Keating: history, myth and religion in seventeenth-century Ireland* (2000), p. 226), Vincent Morley proposes that *Tuireamh na hÉireann* (The dirge of Ireland), a poem composed (c.1657) by one Seán Ó Conaill, was even more influential and arguably one of the most important works ever written in Ireland. Composed in simple metre, easily understandable and capable of being learned by heart, this poem supplied an understanding of Irish history for the Catholic majority (monoglot speakers of Irish who could neither read nor write for the next two hundred years). In arguing his case, Morley analyses the manuscript tradition of both texts between 1650 and 1900 in blocks of twenty-five years. He discovered 127 copies of Cétinn's work in that period, peaking to thirty-seven copies in the years 1701 to 1725. On the other hand, he found 257 copies of the *Tuireamh*, thirty-two of which belong to the period 1751 to 1775, forty-three between 1776 and 1780, eighty-seven between 1781 and 1800, and thirty-eight between 1801 and 1825. This statistical analysis clearly indicates that the influence of Ó Conaill's work continued for more than a hundred years after Cétinn's started to wane. Furthermore, whereas Cétinn's account finished with the reform of the Irish Church in the twelfth century, Ó Conaill's poem continued to the seventeenth, thus resonating more profoundly with its audience.

Aodh Buí Mac Cruitín (c.1680–1755) came under the influence of both works, closely adhering to Cétinn in *A brief discourse in vindication of the antiquity of Ireland* (1717), but clearly following Ó Conaill in his poem, *A Bhanba is feasach dom do scéala* (c.1714). Indeed he transcribed a copy of the latter's poem that same year, but continued the narrative on to the Williamite wars in his own composition. Mac Cruitín was actually writing for two different constituencies, his prose work for the new Catholic middle classes of the towns, literate in English, loyal to the regime; his poem for the Irish-speaking dispossessed. While there was no problem dealing with the coming of St Patrick, the golden age of Irish Christianity, the Viking wars and the victory of Clontarf, there was no way a Catholic author could openly discuss in print such controversial issues as the Reformation, the Confederate wars and the Williamite wars. In his Irish poetry, however, he could treat them with impunity. Though Cétinn and Ó Conaill were at one in describing the Norman invasion as a benign intervention, by the eighteenth century the poets could only see it as an unmitigated disaster.

Morley detects a set pattern in the depiction of Irish history throughout the poetry of the eighteenth century, and continued by the blind poet Raftery in his *Seanchas na sceiche* (1825). First published by Hyde in 1903, the editor's copy was transcribed twenty years earlier from recitation by an old beggar, striking testimony to the robustness of the tradition. The paradigm contained some interesting omissions, however, notably that of the Nine Years War and the so-called Flight of the Earls. Given the strong Jacobite sentiments of much of eighteenth-century Gaelic Ireland, Morley suggests that Ó Néill's campaign against the crown would not have rested easily with contemporary royalist discourse.

Despite the growing momentum of the language shift, this nativist interpretation of Irish history was maintained but transferred to the English language through the works of Theophilus O'Flanagan, Dennis Taafe, Patrick Lynch, John Lanigan and Watty Cox, the latter adding Protestant English-speaking heroes of republican views to the traditional pantheon. What actually happened was an internal cultural transfer from the Gaelic manuscript tradition to the printed book in English, a transfer of media but not of content, the very same content that was developed by the Young Ireland movement.

Tuireamh na hÉireann was published with an accompanying translation in 1827 and yet again in 1855. Pearse recalled how he first learned the traditional narrative of Irish history

from his Irish-speaking great-aunt, Margaret Brady (born c.1830 in the neighbourhood of Nobber, County Meath). Nobber was the homeplace of Michael Clarke who published the *Tuireamh* in 1827. Some of the subscribers to this volume bore the name Brady and Morley wryly notes that Pearse's poem *Mionn*, published in 1912, is in the same tradition as the *Tuireamh*.

Morley's work demonstrates the flaws in Jürgen Habermas's theory of public space, ignoring as it does the multiple interaction between orality, manuscripts and print in early modern England. What was true for England, was *a fortiori* true for Ireland and for much longer. In arguing for the priority of Irish language sources and manuscript materials in tracing the growth of the nationalistic version of Irish history, Morley offers a timely riposte to those who claim it to be a nineteenth-century construct.

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THE EXPERIENCE OF REVOLUTION IN STUART BRITAIN AND IRELAND: ESSAYS FOR JOHN MORRILL. Edited by Michael Braddick and David Smith. Pp xxxv, 312. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2011. £60.

The experience of revolution in Stuart Britain and Ireland: essays for John Morrill marks Professor Morrill's sixty-fifth birthday. Each contributor addresses some of the major themes of Morrill's work, particularly religion and biography. Most of the essays challenge long-held beliefs about the nature of the English Revolution and provide thought-provoking and stimulating conclusions.

Understandably, religion is at the heart of this volume. Throughout his career, Morrill was at pains to point out how religious ideologies led to the outbreak of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms. Morrill later modified his claim that the English Revolution was Europe's last 'war of religion' to state that contemporaries were not simply fighting for a religious cause, but debating the extent of influence the church and state could have over British subjects and over one another. Glenn Burgess's tentative yet thought-provoking arguments take this a step further. Key figures such as Stephen Marshall, Henry Ireton, and John Locke were beginning to separate 'secular' and 'religious' issues in their considerations of private conscience and public authority. Such concerns captured the wider British imagination, however, when Charles I as head of both church and state addressed rising religious tensions across the three kingdoms by implementing the Scottish Prayer Book in 1638. Historians have blamed Charles I's poorly-planned reform of the Scottish Church as a key cause of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms. Joong-Lak Kim, however, points out that numerous Scottish bishops, as well as Laud and Charles I, helped draft the Prayer Book, giving it a distinctive Scottish character. Despite this, Charles is still seen as responsible for the Scottish liturgy's popish flavour. Their attempts amounted to, according to Joong-Lak Kim, an attempt by the king to use Scotland as a test case to mitigate religious tensions in England.

Those interested in some of the key figures of the period will be glad to see essays on James Harrington, John Lilburne, Henrietta Maria and Benjamin Rudyerd. Many of the essays use biography to tease out individual responses to the English Revolution. David Smith's excellent article on Benjamin Rudyerd shows how patronage networks, personal piety and political views shaped allegiances and actions in Parliament. Such work enriches our understanding of the English Revolution's impact upon people's daily lives and the choices they made – a strength of this entire collection. Alan Orr's essay on John Lilburne's incarceration shows how Lilburne's experience in prison shaped his views on liberty, a conclusion drawn from meticulous examination of Lilburne's writings. Other essays pay close attention to the language and arguments used by Parliament as M.P.s