

on the political uses of scurrilous, satirical verse by lawyers against Catholics in the Court of Claims.

Scholars will finally and perhaps above all be indebted to Colum Kenny for his lengthy annotated transcription of the Black Book of King's Inns, extending from the execution of Charles I through the Commonwealth and the Restoration of his son; while the records are incomplete, entries here extend to nearly one hundred pages and include proceedings, lists of attendances, admissions to membership and annual accounts, all of which will prove invaluable to future researchers. For one cannot understand the seventeenth century – arguably the most important century in modern Ireland's history – without understanding the law as it played out in that country's courts; and one cannot understand the law without knowing the institutional structures and personalities that shaped it in turn. *Law and revolution in seventeenth-century Ireland* is therefore an indispensable contribution that not only illuminates previously-neglected subjects, but offers an exciting and interdisciplinary lens through which to view that time in entirely new ways.

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THE IRISH PARLIAMENT, 1613–1689: THE EVOLUTION OF A COLONIAL INSTITUTION. By Coleman A. Dennehy. Pp 256. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2019. £80.

The calling of the Irish parliament in 1613 saw the (eventual) return of a slight but significant Protestant majority in the lower house for the first time. During the first half of the seventeenth century, the houses of parliament came to represent a new phase in the English colonisation of Ireland. Gradually, the commons and lords included more Protestant members, which diluted the influence of their Catholic counterparts. Consequently, Catholic elites complained that parliament did not serve one of its key functions: the communication of political grievances to the king. As Kevin Sharpe has argued for England, the breakdown of communications between the core and periphery caused by the failure to call parliament in the 1630s led to civil war. In Ireland, the failure to incorporate Old English Catholic voices into conversations about Irish politics contributed to their increasing sense of isolation and legitimated their participation in the confederate wars. Thus, it could be argued that the operation (or not, as the case may be) of parliament was closely linked to the machinations of contemporary politics. Curiously, this book aims to sidestep politics and to focus solely on 'how the institution undertook its work and dispatched the business put before it' (back cover) which will give 'a different perspective' (p. 4).

First, Dennehy covers the little-explored topic of 1,664 petitions presented by ordinary subjects and members of parliament, which took up a significant amount of its time. Here, the author skilfully deals with the lack of surviving evidence – only 'roughly' (p. 19) twenty-five complete petitions survive alongside the sparse summaries contained in the manuscript and printed parliamentary journals. A series of detailed tables allow us to see, among other things, the success rate of petitions, the general grievances they complained of, and the number of female petitioners. Secondly, Dennehy investigates the development of the Irish legislature, which evolved along significantly different lines to its English counterpart. In Ireland, due to Poyning's Law, bills for discussion arrived with royal assent before parliamentary deliberations.

The third chapter unpacks the central role of key figures, especially the speaker, without whom parliament could not operate. The strengths of Dennehy's approach is evident here in his descriptions of surviving evidence. Two brief mentions in June and October 1640 hint that parliament's daily agendas were set by the speaker prompting Dennehy to conclude that 'These are just two examples of something so regular that it was not worth recording' (p. 122), showing the fruits of painstaking research across the journals. Finally, Dennehy delves into the tricky subject of parliamentary privilege and shows that members' attempts

at self-regulation sometimes hint at their sympathy for the needs of ordinary people. Thus, the Irish parliament, as described by Dennehy, is an institution that on the surface appears to mirror its English counterpart closely but upon deeper investigation has interesting unique features.

Not all of Dennehy's strengths were consistently applied and parts of the argument needed more careful consideration. Based on the sheer volume of petitions heard by parliament, Dennehy concludes that 'the community at large also felt, at least to some degree, that parliament was accessible and could be a fruitful avenue of access to both grace and justice' (p. 42). It would have been interesting to see the author's stance on confederate criticisms of the Irish parliament and other colonial institutions for failing to fulfil these very functions, particularly when the conclusion states that 'the Irish Parliament at this time was not democratic in any sense and the ethnic and religious chasms within Irish society make it questionable whether parliament in Ireland in this period could be described as representative' (p. 210). A dedicated chapter on this topic would have enriched the book and given us a greater understanding of the book's subtitle, 'evolution of a colonial institution'.

Furthermore, the index requires revision in any future edition. There appears to be no consistent principle guiding the indexing of people or places. A quick glance suggests that not all of the people mentioned in the text are included (Charles Lambart, earl of Cavan, being one example) and, in some cases, entries are incomplete for significant people and offices (James Butler, duke of Ormond; gentleman usher of the black rod; law officers; lord deputy) or inaccurate (Edmund Borlase does not appear on p. 178 but his father John is referred to two pages later but not indexed). This does not detract, however, from the fact that this book is a significant contribution to our knowledge about the Irish houses of parliament and important reading for scholars and students of seventeenth-century Ireland.

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TERRORISTS, ANARCHISTS, AND REPUBLICANS: THE GENEVANS AND THE IRISH IN TIME OF REVOLUTION. By Richard Whatmore. Pp 478. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2019. £34.

This book, a literary exploration of the interplay between republican Geneva and late eighteenth-century revolutionary Ireland, is arranged in three parts. The first, in two chapters, evokes the site of the Genevan enterprise in Waterford. It outlines how a European city state, or at least part of it, ambitioned the creation of a new, republican Jerusalem, in Georgian Ireland. The second part, in four chapters, looks at the genesis of the Genevan enterprise in cantonal and French politics. By the mid-1760s, Genevan politics had reverted to 'the kinds of polarity that marked the era of the Reformation' (p. 47), the author argues, providing the context for the 1782 civil war, revolution and retribution that culminated in the calculated exodus of some of the vanquished, the *représentants* (one hundred families in all) to Ireland.

The third part, again in four chapters, examines the unrealistic, even delusional expectations of the Genevans concerning their Irish enterprise, and how they fell foul of political and social realities there. In the interval during which the Waterford site was transformed from a Gandon-designed field of Genevan dreams into a sordid prison for Irish republican dreamers, Whatmore sees a metaphor for a larger, Europe-wide *dérive* that heralded, he argues, the end of Enlightenment. In an argument some will find extravagant, this was nothing less than the collapse of the 'old Europe' (p. xvi), until then characterised by the cohabitation of diverse political forms and cultures. In this sense, it marked the return of a still older Europe, whose violence and intolerance recalled the Reformation.

Whatever one makes of this conclusion, there is no doubting the principal value of the book: its leisurely description and studied assessment of the political turmoil in Geneva during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. The author concentrates less than might be