

But no historian had considered these cases together. The collective and comparative study of the three cases, according to Callan: ‘brings significant issues to the forefront, such as the relations between the “three nations” – the English, the Irish, and the Anglo-Irish – and the role of the church in these relations; tensions within the ecclesiastical hierarchy and between secular and spiritual authority; Ireland’s position within its European context; and the political and cultural aspects of the heresies’ (p. 2).

In the case of the Templars, Callan tends to highlight the peculiar hostility shown towards the order by other members of the Anglo-Irish community, thus stressing the importance of the trial not so much for its ‘heretical’ motives, but as a window opened onto a tense and quarrelling society. The second case, which has the lion’s share of the analysis (pp 78–187), is dominated by the sinister figure of Bishop Richard Ledrede and his obsessive persecution of his political (and religious) enemies. The background is a most complicated one: mid-fourteenth century Ireland was a society in great turmoil, shaken by widespread rebellion, Gaelic resurgence, bitter internecine warfare among the most prominent lords, all against a backdrop of an even more complex political upheaval in neighbouring Britain (especially in the 1320s). It is no easy task to try and make clear sense of the tangled alliances and allegiances between Ireland and Britain and the impact – if any – they had on the events described. It is notable that scholars of the calibre of J. Lydon and R. Frame disagreed on how much weight to assign to these loyalties, as Callan herself points out (pp 150–1). Ledrede’s all-out war against his enemies is nevertheless told in a compelling account which leaves no stone unturned. All characters in the ‘play’ are dissected and analysed in depth, along with their backgrounds, motives and attitudes, all the while keeping an attentive eye on the cultural differences between the Irish environment and ‘alien’ European influences. It is these differences, the author argues, that were perhaps at the root of the vehement local reactions to the trials and executions, and hindered attempts to make them into the norm.

Callan’s conclusions are quite convincing, especially with regards to the conceptual distinction between ‘real’ and ‘artificial’ heresies, the second case mostly applying to Ireland. *The Templars, the witch and the wild Irish* is a very good work, which has the merit of touching on curious and fascinating events of medieval Irish history without relinquishing on serious academic research and analysis, and grouping them into a line of inquiry that had hitherto largely escaped the attention of scholars.

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‘AND SO BEGAN THE IRISH NATION’: NATIONALITY, NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND NATIONALISM IN PRE-MODERN IRELAND. By Brendan Bradshaw. Pp xvii, 318. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate. 2015. £75.

Brendan Bradshaw has been one of Ireland’s greatest historians, though he has not been universally acknowledged as such in his native land. If, as Bernd Moeller stated, historians are ‘a herd of individuals’, then Bradshaw stood outside the herd, psychologically as well as physically distanced from the historical academy in the Republic of Ireland, at a time when its loudest members insisted that their ‘revisionist’ interpretation of the Irish past was the sole legitimate paradigm for Irish historical studies. When Roy Foster declared that ‘we are all revisionists now’, Bradshaw spoke out and declared that that was not true. This volume represents his final engagement in his long-running battle with the ‘revisionists’. It is mostly comprised of essays and reviews that were published elsewhere. The justification offered for their republication is the worthy one of making accessible important work originally published in ‘journals

or edited collections that are unlikely to be generally familiar to academic historians' (p. ix). However, several of the pieces were written in the heat of battle and the severity of the tone of criticism of some historians, Steven Ellis and Aidan Clarke come particularly to mind, might have been tempered rather than being reprinted verbatim in this volume. On the other hand, the combative spirit reflected in the original texts reveals Bradshaw's passionate engagement with Irish history while he was based in the University of Cambridge.

Tommy Graham's insightful interview of Brendan Bradshaw for *History Ireland* (1993) makes for a marvellous introduction to the man, and his anti-'revisionist' critique. However, it is Bradshaw's paper on 'Nationalism and historical scholarship in modern Ireland', which was first published in this journal in 1989, that sets the scene for this volume. Bradshaw proposed, and re-iterated the argument in a number of other papers reprinted in this volume, that modern Irish historical scholarship, as it 'developed since the 1930s, has been vitiated by a faulty methodological procedure'. He argued that it has been characterised by a 'revisionism' which aspires to produce 'value-free' history but has actually produced value-less history! In his 1989 paper, Bradshaw seemed to condemn the entire Irish historical establishment, with a few named exceptions, as guilty of 'revisionism', but in 'Irish nationalism: an historical perspective', first published in 2000, he narrowed his sights on 'the secular liberal commentators – the "Dublin 4" lobby as they are derisively called' (p. 253).

By any reckoning Bradshaw is an eminent historian whose observations need to be addressed by the Irish historical establishment: his challenges to Irish historians to give due consideration to the emergence of an Irish sense of nationality in the early-modern period, and also to consider the value and purpose of history for the society that wages its practitioners and finances its production, ought to engage wider attention. Unfortunately, his scattergun assault on the historical establishment blunted the impact of his critique, and the reproduction of essays from the last century may not be the best means of encouraging engagement with Bradshaw's agenda today.

Bradshaw's call for 'present-centred history' generated fierce controversy: Kevin Myers worried that it could make historians into 'the sort of hacks and political toadies who supplied the historical gibberish which sustained the Third Reich and the Soviet Union. ... in the hands of totalitarians, it could be a warrant for genocide, the intellectual authorisation for the liquidation of the kulaks or the exterminations of the Jews' (*Irish Times*, 3 Sept. 1998). That is not what Bradshaw intended, obviously. His call should be understood in its United Kingdom context where successive governments have seen education not as an end in itself but rather as a vehicle for attaining wider societal goals, primarily economic but also as a means of fostering social and political cohesion. Britain's past is also exploited as a means of exercising 'soft power' in the world today: Britain's 'special relationship' with the U.S.A., for example, has deep cultural as well as military and economic bases. Bradshaw's call for 'present-centred history' is problematic, but not so outlandish from a British perspective as it might seem to Irish eyes.

The great irony of Bradshaw's critique of Irish 'revisionism' is that he criticised its practitioners for not being 'present-centred' when, in fact, they very much were – albeit with a different agenda to his own. He failed to recognise the 'revisionism' of the late-twentieth century for what it was, a complex and complicated process of re-interpreting Ireland's past against the backdrop of a prolonged period of economic crisis, political disillusionment, rapid secularisation, and general societal transformation. The Irish Catholic nationalist worldview imploded, not because of the cynicism of the 'revisionists' as Bradshaw believed, but because it was no longer relevant to the experiences of many Irish people. The angry writings of the 'revisionist' historians simply reflected the *Zeitgeist* of their day. With the advent of the 'Celtic Tiger' in the Republic and the unfolding peace process in Northern Ireland 'revisionism', in turn, lost its once-fierce relevance.

Nonetheless, this book has much more than historiographical interest. In its fourth chapter, Brendan Bradshaw tackles a subject of vital importance for Irish history and makes a compelling case that Irish 'national identity, national consciousness and nationalism itself all emerged as dynamic forces in Irish political history' from the mid-sixteenth century, under Renaissance and Counter-Reformation influences among others, with a pre-history dating 'much further back in the medieval period' (p. 114). By its very nature this subject is bound to provoke further debate. Nonetheless, Bradshaw has made a major contribution to this whole subject, and his work ensures that Irish historians will have to reconsider the importance of a sense of Irish nationality in making sense of Ireland's past.

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IRISH VOICES FROM THE SPANISH INQUISITION: MIGRANTS, CONVERTS AND BROKERS IN EARLY-MODERN IBERIA. By Thomas O' Connor. Pp xv, 280. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. £63.

Over the last decade many historians have been attempting to rectify the hegemonic Anglocentric interpretations of the Irish diaspora. Logically, most of this effort has concentrated on Irish emigration to early-modern Europe, especially on the Irish communities in France and Spain. In line with recent trends in the historiography of this diaspora, Thomas O'Connor's *Irish voices from the Spanish Inquisition: migrants, converts and brokers in early modern Iberia* represents a movement away from the political and economic causes of Irish migration to the socio-cultural and religious aspects of the Irish expatriate communities. In the process he has thrown light on almost totally unknown sources relating to the lives of Irish immigrants in the early-modern Spanish empire, belonging to an institution not traditionally associated with Irish emigration. The author portrays the Spanish Inquisition not as a repressive and bloody Catholic Counter-Reformation institution, but instead as a pragmatic religious policing institution, fully integrated to the will of the Spanish monarch, that acted as a social integrator of foreigners.

Effectively, *Irish voices from the Spanish Inquisition* represents a series of collective insights into the socio-cultural and religious lives of Irish immigrants from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The author shows that although the Inquisition had a strictly religious remit, its trial records also contain considerable socio-economic data. For similar reasons, certain Irish groups such as Old English merchants, and soldiers as converts, on the one hand, and Irish ecclesiastics as intermediaries, on the other, appear more often in the records.

The book is divided into three parts covering the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Part one is partly an introduction to the subject, and partly an account of the growing levels of contact between Irish immigrants and the Inquisition in the Iberian Peninsula during the sixteenth century. For the most part these were Old English merchants, such as Thomas Burke, who were under suspicion for having taken the oath of supremacy in England or Ireland while professing themselves as true Catholics in Spain. Many of these merchants argued that their apostacy was external and made under duress (p. 43). However, this would have made the inquisitors suspect 'false conversions' in much the same way as they would have viewed the conversions of the Moriscos. According to the teachings of Mohammed, they were permitted to conform to Catholicism in public while remaining Islamic in private.

Part two, which covers the seventeenth century, deals primarily with the Irish presence in Spanish America, and the role of the Irish as intermediaries in the Iberian