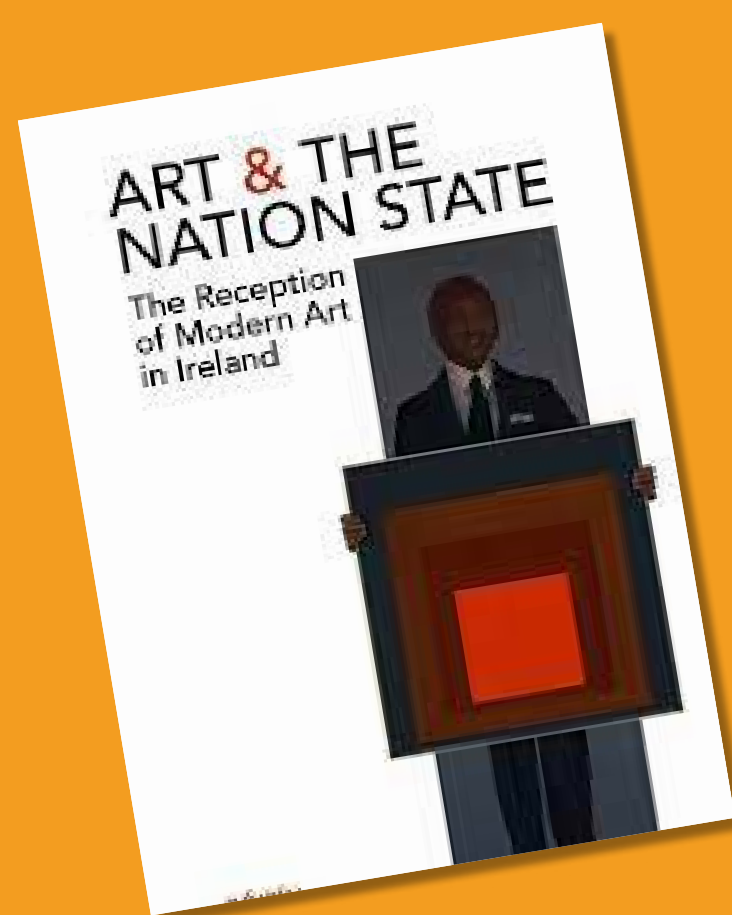


Books

Art and the Nation State

Dr Róisín Kennedy,
UCD School of Art History
and Cultural Policy,
Liverpool University Press
ISBN: 978-1-789-62235-5



Dr Róisín Kennedy's *Art and the Nation State* exposes the machinations of the processes that influenced the evolution and reception of modernist art in Ireland. A period that extends from the foundation of the Irish Free State in 1922 to the end of the modernist era in the 1970s. Kennedy deftly guides us through the decades, giving us a holistic view encompassing the artists, arts organisations, museums, galleries and patrons through to the establishment stakeholders such as politicians and the Catholic Church. In the relatively inward-looking, isolated decades after the foundation of the Free State, the visual arts are co-opted as a means to help create a suitable and unifying image of Ireland for the Irish themselves, to smooth away the

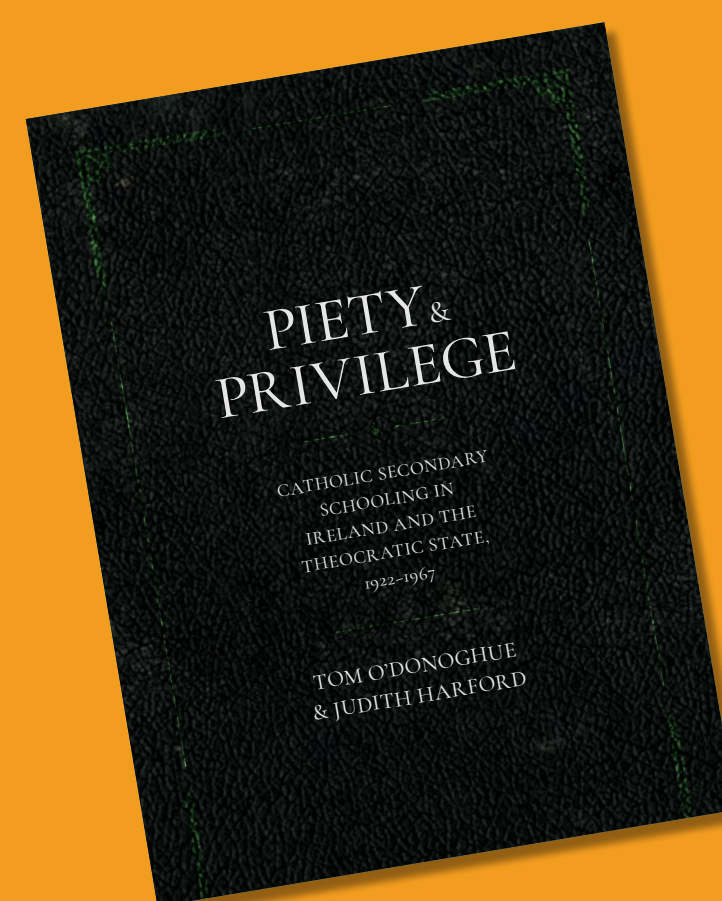
cracks of division and the damage of colonialism. As we move through the post-war period, the visual arts are seen as a useful tool in Ireland's charm offensive on the rest of the world, as the country begins to look outwards, seeking to be included in international affairs and marketing itself as a tourist destination. Kennedy quotes Charles Haughey as noting that for a "tourist country it was important to be identified with the best in contemporary culture". By tracing how stakeholders worked to influence the visual arts for their own interests both at a micro individualistic level and a macro societal level, Kennedy illustrates how Irish modernist art contributed to 'post-independence cultural debate and diverging notions of Irish identity' but also how the cultural debate and differing ideas about Irish identity, in their turn, shaped the development of Irish modernist art.

This book is a thorough and original take on the factors that influenced the evolution of modern art in Ireland, the depth and breadth of research is impressive and Kennedy has left no stone unturned. It will be indispensable for scholars of this period and, in this respect, exposes many threads just begging to be unravelled further. It is also readable, entertaining and bracingly challenging in places. A wonderful and illuminating companion to any person who is interested in artworks or artists from the modernist era in Ireland.

Maria Corbett, Art Historian and Curator

■ Piety and Privilege: Catholic Secondary Schooling in Ireland and the Theocratic State, 1922–67

Professor Judith Harford,
UCD School of Education and
Professor Tom O' Donoghue, University
of Western Australia
Oxford University Press
ISBN 978-0-19-284316-6



Judith Harford and Tom O'Donoghue's newly-published *Piety and Privilege: Catholic Secondary Schooling in Ireland and the Theocratic State, 1922-67* examines the provision of secondary school education from the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922 until the introduction of 'free second-level education in Ireland in 1967.

More than anything, this excellent book is a reminder that nothing reveals the networks of privilege in a society quite like access to education. In independent Ireland, the great inhibiting factor in the development of the state was the nature of its education system.

In short, that system ensured that the great majority of primary and secondary schools in Ireland

were Catholic schools run by priests, religious teaching brothers, and female teaching religious. The state funded the building and maintenance of the schools, and the payment of teachers' salaries. And in return, the national curriculum was State-prescribed and the State also inspected the operation of the schools.

The limitations of the system were most obviously manifest in the limited numbers of Irish children who were able to avail of secondary schooling. This had a devastating impact on the individual lives of the first generations of children born in the Irish Free State and, in turn, had a profound bearing on the nature of Irish society.

But this is not, of course, merely a matter of numbers; it is also about the nature of the education provided. As Harford and O'Donoghue have written, the system allowed the promotion of "unhindered sets of pedagogical, administrative, and leadership practices aimed at the salvation of souls and the reproduction of fellow clerics and a loyal middle class. That situation, in turn, led to the promotion of piety and the upholding of class privilege as core characteristics of secondary schooling".

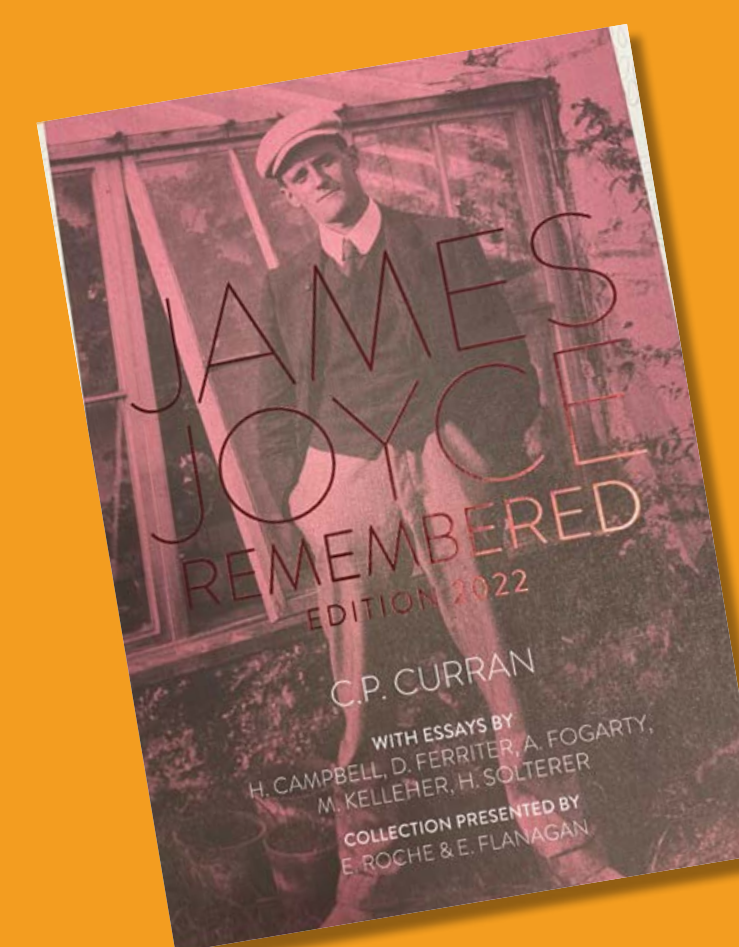
Year after year, decade after decade, the system reinforced itself, apparently considering itself to be beyond questioning. What emerged is documented in compelling detail by the authors and amounted to "feudal privilege in education". This book is essential reading for anyone who wishes to understand the impact of religious education on Ireland, the

nature of class divides across Irish society, and the enduring legacy of the church-state relationship that has defined so much of how people have taught and been taught in Ireland.

Professor Paul Rouse

■ James Joyce Remembered

UCD Press
ISBN: 9781910820803



CP Curran's book is not only an empathetic and nuanced account of Joyce but also, in effect, of a whole galaxy of UCD graduates who contributed to the Irish Revival and to the formation of the state. It is also a necessary and valuable corrective to some of Joyce's over-negative accounts of the UCD from which he graduated. His deserved fame as the leading modernist writer has led some credulous readers to take his valuations of teachers like Fr Darlington at face value and to accept the portrait of his fellow-students in *Portrait of the Artist* as "a frieze of stooges". Curran shows convincingly