

New Zealand, and the Scots in Australia. Gender is occasionally mentioned in these analyses, particularly in McGrath's essay where the importance of intermarriage and children are highlighted. Gender thus remains an important and as yet under-explored dimension of this topic. There is more research happening in the field of indigenous and Irish interactions in Australia and elsewhere and this will no doubt point to more complexity and local differences. This will only deepen our understanding of the past as well as the present.

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MARY LOUISE O'DONNELL, *Ireland's Harp: The Shaping of Irish Modernity c.1770-1880*, Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2014, 175pp. €35. ISBN 9781906359867.

The image of the Irish harp has permeated almost all aspects of discourse about Ireland throughout history, most especially during the turbulent eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Harpists and their repertoire were often considered relics of a past age of Gaelic culture, glorious in achievement but doomed to oblivion. Their persistence as a living tradition into the late nineteenth century has confounded many commentators and left a trail of unanswered questions about the nature of the harp's adaptability to rapidly changing political and cultural circumstances and the potency of the instrument as a marker of Irish identity. In her study of the Irish harp in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ireland, Mary Louise O'Donnell offers a rich panoply of musical and political contexts for 'the importance of the Irish harp icon and metaphor in the formation and expression of national identity and the effect of their employment on contemporary Irish harp performance and patronage in this period' (p. 4). Chapters 1 ('The Irish Harp as 'A Driving Image of Revolution' in the Late Eighteenth Century') and 2 ('Towards the Grave of Oblivion': The Politics of Irish Harping in the Eighteenth Century') provide assessments of the history of the Irish harp, with particular attention to the specific socio-political contexts of the late eighteenth century. The following five chapters examine the extraordinary adaptability of the instrument in the nineteenth century to changing patterns of patronage, performance and manufacture, as well as its significant role in literature, political movements and iconography. The year 1880 is chosen as a terminus because at this time 'the unique and intimate connection between wire-strung harp performance, patronage, and Irish society, which had its origins in early Gaelic society was broken forever' (p. 7). The result of this study is an engaging and lively account of the Irish harp during a little-studied period of its history, with a wealth of details that are all scrupulously documented and supported by a generous amount of illustrations, figures and colour plates.

A recurrent theme in O'Donnell's book is the constant regeneration of the harp tradition and its adaptability to myriad circumstances arising within Ireland's volatile cultural climate. The dichotomies and tensions between the instrument as part of

an ongoing albeit decaying performance tradition, and its broader iconographical significance in contested visions of Irish identity, are particularly well handled. This allows O'Donnell skilfully to bridge the divide between events of the late 1700s—culminating in the disastrous 1798 rebellion—and the challenges faced by Irish society in the early 1800s, a connection often bypassed, she claims, in prior scholarship on the Irish harp. Thus, the detailed accounts of harp imagery in publications by the Volunteer Movement and the impact of the 1792 Harp Festival (discussed in Chapters 1 and 2) lay the groundwork for following discussions of training, patronage, performance and preservation of the harp tradition in the early and mid nineteenth century.

In Chapter 3 ('One Faithful Harp' and Harper in the works of Owenson, Maturin and Moore'), O'Donnell offers a sympathetic assessment of the harp as a motif in the literary works of Sydney Owenson and Charles Maturin, which helps to contextualise the achievements of Thomas Moore whose work has otherwise overshadowed his contemporaries. Although O'Donnell recognises that Moore's aims in utilising the symbolic potential of the harp are complex, her probing of the political dimensions of his writings helps to unravel Moore's journey from 'the utopian discourse that permeated his earlier songs' (p. 62) to the despondency in his later years with what he perceived as the increasingly polarised nature of Irish society. Chapter 4 ('Custodians of Culture: Patronage and the Sacred Fire of Patriotism') surveys the achievements and also the failures of the Irish Harp Society in its two incarnations, the first based in Dublin in 1809–12, and the second in Belfast in 1819–39. O'Donnell's trawling of newspapers from the period has yielded many fascinating details; for instance, the contributions of Irish officers of the British Army resident in India to the activities of the Belfast society. This chapter also acknowledges the valiant efforts of the Drogheda Harp Society, founded c.1840 by Rev. John Burke, who was Prior of the Dominican Priory in Drogheda for several years. This society, also short-lived, was dissolved in 1845, just one year after Burke's death.

O'Donnell reappraises the position of harp maker John Egan in Chapter 5 ('John Egan: An Innovator and Inventor'). Egan's technical advancements to the wire-strung Irish harp and his very influential development of the pedal harp are outlined clearly, and the often negative assessments of his achievements by earlier generations of scholars are critiqued and mostly rejected. Chapter 6 ('The Harp of Kings and Liberators') traces the appropriation of harp imagery in the carefully choreographed visit to Ireland by King George IV in 1821. Through clever manipulation by the organisers of the visit, the harp's association with nobility in pre-colonial Ireland was usurped in imagery that portrayed the instrument as part of a package of obsequious homage to a legitimate and benevolent ruler of the Irish nation. Lessons drawn from this nadir of the harp's history were apparently not lost on Daniel O'Connell whose 'monster' rallies in demand for Catholic Emancipation and repeal of the Act of Union were replete with flags and banners portraying harps and with performances by harpers.

Chapter 7 ('Cultural Curiosities: The Last of the Blind Irish Harpers') draws upon evidence culled from diverse sources, including databases of nineteenth-century newspapers, to trace the professional and personal lives of harpers who eked out modest livings both in Ireland and abroad. Many of these stories are layered with struggles, although occasional successes are recorded; for instance, the case of Patrick Byrne (d. 1863) who performed for nobility (including Queen Victoria) throughout Ireland, Scotland and England. In the 'Epilogue: Relics and Revivals', O'Donnell gives a brief overview of attempts to maintain interest in harp repertoire in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, while at the same time noting that interest in the harp's iconography and cultural symbolism never abated.

The book concludes with reflections on the longevity of the harping tradition despite its teetering on the brink of oblivion for most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. O'Donnell credits this survival in large part to the harp's role as 'a mediating symbol between Irish and colonial cultures' (p. 141) and how the harp could represent shifting cultural identities on many levels. The last pages of the book also include mention of the limited amount of scholarship on the Irish harp, something that the present study very ably addresses. Furthermore, perusal of the bibliography reveals a plethora of dissertations, publications of various kinds and web pages on the Irish harp tradition that have materialised within the last decade. These surely point to a vibrant and robust engagement with all matters pertaining to the Irish harp and augur a growing scholarly engagement with the topic in years to come.

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ANGELA MCCARTHY (ed.), *Ireland in the World: Comparative, Transnational, and Personal Perspectives* (Studies in Modern History), New York & London: Routledge, 2015, 248pp. £90. ISBN 9781138812062.

This edited collection is, at its heart, a toolkit of different methodologies and sources available to scholars wishing to learn about Ireland's place in the world. Angela McCarthy expands the focus of the Irish in the world to Irish Protestants, multi-site comparisons, and outside the long nineteenth century. Providing glimpses into the current work being done around the world, this book brings together the research of established scholars and doctoral students. Using transnational, comparative, and biographical frameworks, this collection makes use of both traditional and novel sources: social media-led questionnaires, personal testimonies, and family papers are all used to understand the experience of migration. This mix of the conventional and innovative results in a fascinating collection of work which can be read individually or collectively, presented as it is in chronological order.

Beginning with Trevor Burnard's chapter on how Irish Protestants reconfigured their imperial worlds in the 1780s, this collection moves through the centuries exploring how