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Ciaran Brady, Jane Ohlmeyer, eds. *British Interventions in Early Modern Ireland.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 371 pp. $85.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-521-83530-5.

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This volume is intended as a tribute to Aidan Clarke, the distinguished historian of early modern Ireland, and it originated at a conference arranged in his honor in March 2000. While Clarke was not a prolific scholar, and most of his important work was done in the sixties, he is a fitting subject for such a collection. His work on the Old English in Ireland, who were among the targets of British intervention, was important and has been repeatedly cited.

British interventions in Ireland is thus an appropriate topic for a collection honoring Aidan Clarke, and it has also been a subject of much interest in recent historical writing. Cromwell's invasion of Ireland in the mid-seventeenth century was one of the final steps in completing the English conquest of the island. At the same time, the English conquest also completed the destruction of Ireland's two dominant social groups, the Gaelic Irish lords and the Old English, while signaling the triumph, after more than a century of struggle, of two new groups of aggressive arrivistes, the New English and the Lowland Scots.

For much of the sixteenth century, the New English, consisting of soldiers, adventurers, government officials, clergy, and planters, swarmed into Ireland and established themselves as the main political authority in the realm. At the same time, the Lowland Scots migrated heavily into Ulster and consolidated their control on the extensive territory in the north of Ireland.

The triumph of these two groups represented nothing less than a revolution in the governance of Ireland. Previously dominant ruling elites were replaced by two new and different forces determined to eradicate everything recognizably Irish and create another England in Ireland. Virtually everything about the governance of the island was reformed, including the laws, institutions, patterns of landholding, and perhaps, most importantly, religious observance.

This volume contains essays on a wide range of topics related to these events. Ciaran Brady and Jane Ohlmeyer contribute a very good introductory essay, as well as original essays of their own. While the editors make no attempt to group them, the remaining essays might be profitably divided into four distinct groups, although, inevitably, there is some overlap. One group of essays, by Brian Jackson, R. J. Hunter, Alan Ford, and Robert Armstrong, deals primarily with religion. A second group, by Brady, Ohlmeyer, BrÃd McGrath, and MichÃ¡el Ã¢ SiochrÃº, is mainly political. A third group, by Toby Barnard, Raymond Gillespie, and Patrick Kelly, could be described as studies of *mentalitÃ©*. Finally, several essays, including those by Harold O'Sullivan, Geoffrey Parker, and Sarah Barber, offer comparative perspec-

tives.

Collections like this one are invariably quirky, as the editors are dependent upon the interests of their collaborators. The main emphasis of the volume has to do with the aftermath of British interventions in Ireland; persons looking for enlightenment on the motivation and origins of those interventions will not find much here. Given this fact, it is not surprising that most of the essays concern seventeenth-century developments.

Several of the essays merit special attention. The first of these is Brady's study of the attainder of Shane O'Neill, who led a rebellion against the English in the early 1560s. On the surface, the attainder has always seemed a good example of English hypocrisy in Ireland. After denying, for years, all of Shane's territorial claims while he was alive, once he was dead the English government suddenly chose to accept them so that through the process of attainder it could claim as much Irish land as possible. After careful investigation, however, Brady concludes that the attainder of O'Neill represented an important constitutional restructuring by which the interests of the native Irish were elevated and those of the English reduced, while at the same time subordinating both to the authority of the English monarch and an Irish viceroy.

Raymond Gillespie contributes an interesting essay on the different readings of Sir John Temple's account of 1641: *The Irish Rebellion* (1646). On the surface, *The Irish Rebellion* was a classic English Protestant account of events in Ireland, full of details of massacres and outrage at Catholic brutality. Gillespie is able to show, however, that Temple's text is not completely transparent or susceptible to only one interpretation. It could be read in several ways. Those seeking titillation, scholarly enlightenment, or reassurance of God's providence could find things of interest in *The Irish Rebellion*. As time passed, the urgency of the events of 1641 receded. Even Irish Protestants took little interest, although in the 1690s the book experienced something of a revival. Gillespie sees the text not so much as a window into the Protestant mind, but as a tool that shaped historical memory as it suited different groups to have it shaped.

Several of the essays are disappointing. Harold O'Sullivan's essay on regional variations in the settlement of southeast Ulster, begins with the promising suggestion that historians have tended to assume that most English settlement in Ireland followed the same general pattern, and that more sensitivity to regional difference and variation is necessary. Unfortunately, little of this valuable admonition finds its way into his essay, which basically narrates the history of the settlement of southeast Ulster.

Also problematic is Geoffrey Parker's essay on "The Crisis of the Spanish and Stuart Monarchies in the Mid-Seventeenth Century: Local Problems or Global Problems," which attempts to connect the political rebellions in seventeenth-century England and Spain with each other and with climatic change. As the author of a recent book on the subject, Parker is no doubt aware of the perils of establishing such connections. It is hard enough to find historical consensus on the "general crisis of the seventeenth century" without trying to make it worldwide. While we do have some hard data on weather patterns, most of what Parker presents is of the "cold as hell today," impressionistic variety, which is of little evidentiary value. Moreover, over the last twenty years, a barrage of scholarship has appeared on the English Revolution, on which the dust has been shaken out of almost literally every relevant document. Hardly any of the scholars, including Conrad Russell, cited by Parker as the author of the best account, see weather as a serious causal factor.

In conclusion it is good to have a volume honoring Aidan Clarke and his work, but the historian or the general reader looking for great insight into British interventions in early modern Ireland will find some, though not a lot of it.