

Reviews

Map-making, Landscapes and Memory: A Geography of Colonial and Early Modern Ireland, c.1530–1750.

By WILLIAM J SMYTH

Cork: Cork University Press, 2006, 608 pp. £49.00
ISBN 10 1859183972

This is the first engagement by an historical geographer in one book of this most formative and revolutionary period in Ireland's history. Using the twin concepts of 'colonialism' and 'early modernity', the book comprises a geographical analysis of the conquest and settlement of Ireland by the New English (and Scottish) and the consequences of this often violent and deep-seated intrusion upon the cultures and landscapes of pre-existing Irish societies.

Professor Smyth organizes his work in four sections – all with aptly named sub-sections – beginning with 'Making the Documents of Conquest Speak', which seeks to reveal the hidden Irelands of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the territorial and social structures of Gaelic Ireland; the wooded lands that were being denuded, the lands of Munster and north that were being 'planted'; and the instability of an island where the dispossessed remained alongside the new settlers. All of the chapters commence with very powerful quotations, such as that taken from Elizabeth Bowen, who wrote 'Only the dispossessed people know their lands in the dark' (Bowen 1984).

Later sections elaborate these themes, with three particularly scholarly case studies exploring what Smyth calls the early Anglicised county of Dublin, the hybrid, if feudalised, county of Kilkenny, and the county of Tipperary, where the Gaelic north-west contrasted with the Old English-dominated south-east. A section aptly named 'A World Turned Upside Down' follows, examining the territorial and social implications of the transformations and including an exploration of Ireland in the early eighteenth century, by which time the Roman Catholic Church was, particularly in southern parts of the island, showing a remarkable resilience. The final section seeks to place Ireland in the wider context of an expanding Atlantic world, highlighting parallels between the early English colonisation in North America and the settlement of Ireland.

Smyth is a mastermind of a wide range of documentary evidence, from the Elizabethan faints, sixteenth and seventeenth century manuscript maps, the '1641 Depositions', the Cromwellian Civil and Down Surveys, Petty's '1659 Census' to the 'State

of Property' materials of the 1730s, all of which are beautifully mapped and comprehensively analysed. In all, some 130 illustrations are contained within the covers of this magnum opus, including over 100 original maps, which serve to emphasise the nuanced and regionally varied character of the engagement between local peoples and settlers. Smyth's astonishing feat of using the tools of the geographer to tell the story of the English occupation of Ireland in a new way, firmly grounded in a scholarly, wide-ranging knowledge of the sources, great and small, has been recognised in its award of a place in the 2006 *Irish Times* top five non-fiction books published internationally.

This study – which forms part of the 'Critical Conditions: Field Day Monographs' series of Cork University Press – is a gargantuan achievement, a great credit to all concerned. Its incredible detail challenges the reader at every turn; such is its scope. In writing this work, Smyth encourages us to treat history with a respect for geography. For anyone who is concerned with the study of the subtleties of Ireland's changing landscapes, identities, mentalities and spaces, this is a volume worth having.

DAVID J BUTLER, *University College, Cork*

Reference

Bowen E 1984 *Bowen's court and seven winters: memories of a Dublin childhood* 3rd edn Longman, London, with a new Introduction by Hermione Lee

Cartographies of Travel and Navigation. Edited by

JAMES R AKERMAN

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006, 372 pp.
£35.00 ISBN 978 0 226 01074 8

To the modern traveller, maps and travelling are inextricably linked. However, as Akerman argues in the introductory chapter, scholars of cartography, travel and transport too often neglect maps for 'wayfinding'.

This book forms a compendium of papers, based on the 1996 Nebenzahl Lectures, on mapping for travel by road, sea, rail, air, and highway, along with a chapter on the development of in-car navigation systems. Delano-Smith's account of European medieval mobility challenges the notion that people of the Middle Ages were not mobile and charts the development of itineraries and maps. Cook explains the

Map-making, Landscapes and Memory: A Geography of Colonial and Early Modern Ireland, c.1530-1750 (FIELD DAY ESSAYS) Hardcover
February 1, 2007. by William J. Smyth (Author). William Smyth's great achievement is to show that so much of the early geography of early modern Ireland can be recovered and that so many topics can be mapped in considerable detail. An outstanding feature is the inclusion of more than one hundred maps . . . Sixteen pages of colour plates allow the reproduction, in astounding clarity, of some of the most relevant manuscript maps compiled for English intelligence. Smyth, W.J. 2006 Map-making landscapes and memory: a geography of colonial and early modern Ireland c.1530-1750. Cork University Press. 16th-century Books Brady, C. (Ed.) Essays on the Making of Irish Colonial Society 1534-1641. Irish Academic Press, Richard Clay-The Chaucer Press, Suffolk. Canny, N. 2001 Making Ireland British 1580-1650. Map-making, Landscapes and Memory book. Read reviews from world's largest community for readers. Using the twin concepts of "colonialism" and "early mode..." Start by marking "Map-making, Landscapes and Memory: A Geography of Colonial and Early Modern Ireland, c.1530-1750" as Want to Read: Want to Read saving | Want to Read.