

doi:10.1017/S0009640716000986

Christianities in the Early Modern Celtic World. Edited by **Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin and Robert Armstrong.** Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014. xiii + 254 pp. \$100.00 cloth.

This second volume of the Insular Christianity Project, sponsored by the Department of History of the University of Dublin, furthers the project's efforts to examine the role of religion in shaping culture and society in the British-Irish archipelago. The volume consists of ten essays dealing with aspects of Celtic Christianity in Ireland, northwest Scotland, Wales, and the Cornish peninsula. In his introduction, Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin observes that before 1500 the archipelago was divided politically but unified religiously; by 1800, however, the isles were, for the most part, united under a single monarchy, but divided by religious diversity. While claiming that in fact no single "Celtic Christianity" existed in the Celtic-speaking areas of these two islands, nevertheless, historians can uncover certain similarities. The series of essays that follows explore the changing religious climate in response to the Protestant Reformation in individual areas of the Celtic world.

Part one examines the religious life in each of the four Celtic areas. Iain MacDonald points out the deficiencies of church practices in northwest Scotland. Lowlanders often held important church positions, while most of the clergy could not preach in Gaelic. Overall, he admits the impossibility of gauging the piety below the highest levels of society. Martin MacGregor illustrates how kinship far exceeded ecclesiastical authorities in controlling the Church in Argyll and the Isles. Looking at Irish Christianity at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Raymond Gillespie concludes that the Irish church centered far more on Rome and Europe than its British neighbors. Madeleine Gray argues that, unlike traditional historical assessments, the medieval church in Wales had vibrant attributes. On the other hand, Katharine Olsen explains why the Reformation in Wales had a much easier time than in other parts of the Celtic world, especially with the physical changes wrought through the destruction of religious shrines. Perhaps trying to have it both ways, she nevertheless claims that the Welsh laity failed to embrace the Reformation, which progressed very slowly.

Alexandra Walsham's impressive interdisciplinary essay surveys the impact of Protestantism on Cornwall, the decline of the Cornish language, and the importance of topography in understanding this process. She argues that while traditional medieval religion collapsed quickly, support for the new religion remained "tepid," while the failure to produce the new liturgy in Cornish aided the disappearance of the Cornish language. Finally, she rejects the notion that evidence exists "to support the contention that there was anything culturally let alone ethnically distinctive about either pre- or

post-Reformation religion in Cornwall" (91). In many respects, this essay most strongly addresses the questions advanced by the editors.

Part two of the collection utilizes cultural measures to understand changes in Christian attitudes in Celtic Britain and Ireland. Sim Innes proposes the use the Gaelic poetry from Scotland found in the *Book of the Dean of Lismore* to determine if one could discover a unique form of Celtic Christianity in the poems, yet the bulk of the essay tries to differentiate between uniquely Scottish poems and those derived from Irish sources. Only at the very end of the essay does he attempt to answer his original question, indicating that the solution necessitates further research. Salvador Ryan presented a more convincing case in demonstrating how the religious poetry in the *Book of the O'Conor Don* reveals much about seventeenth-century religious attitudes in Ireland. Lloyd Bowen discusses the use the reformers made of Welsh history to support the Reformation, although his use of the term "patriotism" in the context of sixteenth-century Wales seems anachronistic. Bernadette Cunningham's essay on Irish intellectual culture, oddly subdivided into an "Introduction" and a "Conclusion," but apparently no other subsections, centers on the shift from secular support of intellectual activity in the late Middle Ages to an exclusively religious patronage. Finally David Jones's essay concerns the influence of Calvinistic theology on Welsh Methodism. Yet a large portion concerns disputes between John Wesley and George Whitefield, neither of whom were Welsh, and only secondarily with Welsh religious leaders. Additionally the essay deals with controversies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries seemingly at odds with the time parameter set for the volume.

The introduction and conclusion of the book attempt to gather the threads of these disparate essays into a coherent picture. Unfortunately the resulting tapestry seems more like abstract impressionism, a common problem with collections of essays. Robert Armstrong's conclusion does provide some interesting insights, but the book's central question goes lost in the details.

R. B. Levis
Rollins College

doi:10.1017/S0009640716000998

Theology and the Kinesthetic Imagination: Jonathan Edwards and the Making of Modernity. By **Kathryn Reklis**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. xii + 166 pp. \$78.00 cloth.

At just three chapters and some 150 pages, one senses that this book will serve as a prelude to a more thorough investigation of the subject matter, rather than a