

a tendency in East German historiography of the Reformation — the era of the early bourgeois revolution — that is most welcome. The study is prefaced by a lengthy introduction, written by Hans Eberhardt, on the value to social historians of sixteenth century land and turk-taxes. These sources are above all invaluable for assessing the dynamics of village economic and social structure, and enough of them seem to survive to encourage a middle-regional approach steering between macro and micro studies of reformation and development in the rural classes of pre-industrial Germany. This is a very wise, new approach from the German Democratic Republic, and it owes its greatest debt to one of its more neglected historians, Karl-Heinz Blaschke.

Gerhard BENECKE,  
*University of Kent.*

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T.W. MOODY, F.X. MARTIN, F.J. BYRNE, eds. — *A New History of Ireland*, III: *Early Modern Ireland, 1534-1691*. Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1976.

The idea of a 'new', comprehensive history of Ireland goes back fifteen years; and since 1968 the series has been in active preparation, under the auspices of the Royal Irish Academy. The nine parts of this cooperative effort will cover the whole course of Irish history to the mid-1970s. "The work is not a series of isolated volumes but a harvesting of the best contemporary scholarship available for each period" (p.v). The first volume of this ambitious project to appear is the third, which covers early modern Ireland. All students of Anglo-Irish history will welcome this first installment because as the output of scholarly work on Irish history has increased during the past quarter-century, many have felt the lack of a broad yet detailed history that draws together the best of this scholarship in a convenient format. The *New History of Ireland* satisfies this need admirably. This initial volume accords a full, balanced treatment to a pivotal century and a half of Irish history (1534-1691). The impressive organisation, editing and production of this volume owe much to the diligence of Professor T.W. Moody, who for nearly forty years has been a driving force behind the advancement of the scholarly study of Irish history. This splendid book, appearing in the year of Professor Moody's retirement as Professor of Modern History at Trinity College, Dublin, is an appropriate testimonial to all the fine work that he has done over the years on behalf of Ireland and Irish history.

The years falling between the reign of Henry VIII and the defeat of James II was a time when the English dimension exerted many pressures on Irish society. During the 1530s Henry began to pay greater attention to Ireland. Until that time the English presence and influence was limited largely to the eastern part of Leinster, with its centre at Dublin. Beyond 'the Pale' there remained the Irish society that had existed for centuries. The language and social customs were gaelic, the economy was pastoral, and political power was dispersed among a myriad of family groups and local alliances. Among the gaelic Irish (within the Pale and outside it) were the descendants of Norman invaders and other early English settlers, the *sean-Ghail* or Old English. Conscious of their English ancestry and often influential landholders and wielders of regional power, the Old English had mingled closely with the Irish, and by the mid-sixteenth century they shared family ties, traditions and the Catholic religion with the Irish. But they remained important for the maintenance and extension of English rule in Ireland. While Irish loyalties were local, the Old English for the most part supported the English

crown. Despite many strains, the Old English would remain royalist till the end of the seventeenth century. But they would find themselves increasingly leagued (if uneasily) with the Irish because while they were royalist, they also remained Catholic, when England was officially Protestant.

The confrontation of this dual Catholic tradition in Ireland with the steadily increasing demands of the English (Protestant) connection, with its far-reaching social and political consequences, of course, forms the principal part of the narrative of *Early Modern Ireland*. From the time that Henry VIII set out to expand and consolidate English rule in Ireland during the 1530s and 1540s it was apparent that the old Irish social order was resistant to change and surprisingly resilient even when overcome by superior force. Even though the Irish were more accustomed to warring among themselves to achieve regional advantages, during the course of the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries they were able to coordinate their military efforts well enough to make the suppression of their risings a time-consuming and expensive business for the English. Though the Old English continued to identify with the English crown, they found their social and political position undermined by the English administration and the powerful Protestant planters because they continued to embrace the Catholic faith in the face of the English reformation and its anti-Catholic policies. During the war of the 1640s and the Jacobite war of 1689-91 they had aligned with the defeated Irish and in the aftermath were stripped of what remained of their position. The final subjection of Irish and Old English strength had taken 150 years, but by the 1690s there was no question that the English conquest of Ireland was complete. In defeat the Irish Catholic and Old English traditions became one. The subordination of Catholic Ireland through military power, expropriation and the plantation of Protestants on the land was symbolised in the anti-Catholic penal laws of the eighteenth century. The society of ascendant Anglo-Irish Protestants and subject Irish Catholics was the result. English policies toward Ireland during the Tудо-Stuart period had placed heavy pressure on gaelic Ireland, but the decline of the old culture was accelerated and the rate of anglicisation enhanced by the dominance of a thoroughly English-oriented administration and social elite.

This period of Irish history, when political and social change was turbulent and continuous, is addressed by sixteen of the most distinguished authors in the field. A high standard of scholarship and presentation is maintained throughout the volume. The lengthy contributions of the late Professor G.A. Hayes-McCoy and Dr. Aidan Clarke deserve special mention for the penetration and clarity of their treatment of complex themes. Further, Dr. Clarke's valuable section on the Irish economy during the first half of the seventeenth century (Chapter VI) sheds much light on a subject that has received little attention previously. Dr J.G. Simms's lucid sections on the restoration and the military campaigns of 1689-91 (Chapters XVII and XIX) form an excellent closing to the main historical narrative of the volume and introduce the reader to the social and political realities of eighteenth-century Ireland. Political history is well-balanced in *Early Modern Ireland* by discussion of social and economic themes; and separate chapters are devoted to Irish coinage, the Irish and English languages in Ireland during the period, Irish scholarly literature, and the Irish abroad. Helpful maps and illustrations have been included. *Early Modern Ireland* contains something for all scholarly tastes, and for the general reader too. This volume, and the entire distinguished series, deserves to occupy a prominent place on the shelves of any serious student of Irish history and should be a mandatory addition to the Irish collection of any library. We shall look forward to future volumes of the *New History of Ireland*.

W.J. LOWE,  
Lake Eire College.