

Brothers, became very prominent. As their pupils progressed to professional status, the social status in Cork was maintained. The data on these personages are duly authenticated, and under the patronage of Stokes, and through the Garryowen Club Munster rugby prospered.

In contrast, the active members and players enjoyed fame under different headings. O'Callaghan resurrected an Obituary Notice of an emigrant who was killed in America. Praise was lavished on him by both a GAA club and a rugby club, and the point was made that 'foreign' or 'native' games did not matter to such a sportsman. In another news item the fact that a Limerick family of pig dealers amassed thirty-nine cup medals made prominent headlines.

Owing to the popularity of rugby, many players were elected counsellors and politicians, while others achieved notoriety by their fierceness or brute strength on the field. Under professionalism European adulation was gained by those Munster players involved with the Irish team or in the various European competitions. In this regard perhaps one could say that O'Callaghan got lost by the number each claiming 'his place in the sun'.

In conclusion, the reviewer must relate an episode relative to Munster rugby of a personal encounter while on holiday in south-west France. On stopping at a restaurant situated among the pine forests of Les Landes region, the proprietor, on discovering that I was from Ireland, became quite excited. 'Ah' he said, developing a forward crouching movement, 'McLaughlin, the Munster man, carrying and dragging four Frenchmen on his back fighting the last three metres to the line – TRY!' Somewhere in the psychic of this native of Gaul a chord was struck as he recognised those who excelled in physical violent effort!

To anybody interested in sport and the evolution of sport, this book gives an illuminating insight into the work required to ferret out the facts, present them in a readable manner and retain the pleasure that sport provides for countless people. It is to be recommended without hesitation.

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**Celtic revival? The rise, fall and renewal of global Ireland**, by Sean Kay, Lanham, MD, Rowman & Littlefield, 264 pp., €39.95, £24.95 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-4422-1109-4

I found that this book fell between a number of stools. The author is a respected academic (Professor of Politics and International Relations at Ohio Wesleyan University and an adviser on aspects of Irish policy to President Obama). He has a strong publication track record and wrote the book as a visiting scholar at the Institute for British and Irish Studies at UCD in 2010. As such, the book has very valuable insights into Irish culture and some very interesting reflections from interviews with key politicians, academics and observers. On the other hand, the style of the book is less than objective; the author has clear family connections to Ireland and clearly loves the country (he is also connected to Micheal Martin (now leader of Fianna Fáil (80))). This makes for a curious mix. While clearly well researched, the book is less academic in nature, with no formal citations or footnotes. Curiously, there is an index but no bibliography. Some of the book's observations are grounded in elite interviews while others seem grounded in little other than pub talk and

family chats, from page 1 onwards there are strong overtones of sentimentality. Some attention to definitions might have been useful; globalisation plays a large part in the narrative but it is never clear what precisely is meant by globalisation. At times it implies neoliberalism or the distinctive Irish variety of capitalism.

There is an impressive scope in the book, ranging as it does from economic crisis and fiscal policy to sexuality, religion and alcohol, and on to Northern Ireland, international relations and Irish military policy. This wide range is risky; however, the author appears to do justice to most subjects and certainly the first two chapters' exploration of the causes of the crisis capture well the political dysfunction and lack of fiscal sustainability in the Irish model. The ordering of chapters is largely thematic, which can interfere with chronology, and at times the mix in the chapter is very random – chapter 4, 'A Million Small Steps', mixes societal responses to the crisis, health and addiction alongside education, enterprise and smart economy policy.

The wide scope contrasts with a tendency towards too much information on quite minute details; for example, far too much time is devoted to the pen picture of Mary Coughlan TD (59). However, this focus on detail is also a strength of the book as at times it does very well to capture 'moments' and the mood in a way that is illustrative of the larger picture of the crisis. The angry exchange between Labour's Pat Rabbitte TD and Fianna Fail minister Pat Carey TD certainly captures a moment (81). In contrast, little was gained by devoting six pages to Sinead O'Connor's perspective on the Irish Catholic Church and its history of child sex abuse (118–24)

Anger is a theme throughout the book and, like many other foreign commentators, the author is constantly questioning why there has not been more protest in response to the crisis. He also captures well some of the protest he sees and hears about during his research. The analysis of the extent of anger in the Garda Representative Association (77) and the significant decision of some Garda to march in the February 2009 public protest of over 100,000 people is indicative of the anger felt at the time. It is ironic, therefore, to see the same Garda training in riot control in May 2010. Kay correctly anticipated that Ireland would not see radical action or witness massive unrest. How long this will be the case is an open question. Some interesting hypotheses are developed to explain the absence of massive unrest. Ruarai Quinn TD (now Minister for Education and Skills) advances the idea that the civil war legacy has made Irish people wary of deep social division and has oriented them towards a more consensus politics. Liam Doran, General Secretary of the Irish Nurses Organisation, points to significant civility and patience, end products of two decades of social partnership that nullified the trade unions. The role of the Catholic Church and Irish identity also plays a role. The book captures one aspect of Irish-style protest centred on media reports of individualised outbursts of anger. Culture and use of music and song are also expressions of anger (Bono in relation to the 1987 Enniskillen bomb and Sinead O'Connor in relation to child sex abuse).

A different approach to mixing what the author calls 'facts, interviews and personal asides' (3) might have worked better. For this reader, the less academic conversational style and range of anecdotes and jokes are at times frustrating but more importantly it can get in the way of the more substantive content. This is regrettable as the author has an experienced eye and ear with a valuable perspective that is worth hearing. The style militates against the academic detachment required of the author and reader but others who find academic citations tiresome may find this approach works well and will reach the largely US-based wider audience targeted by the publishers.

Ultimately, Sean Kay's book is a message of hope but it is a sentimental hope. The book's title *Celtic Revival?* and the message therein appears to be 'back to the future'

(204). How much of the past can we really bring into a sustainable future? The challenge surely is to move through a period of transformation, to grow up and develop more mature and substantially different values and institutions? Written largely in 2010, the book went to print after the 2011 general election and so captures the demise of Fianna Fáil and its replacement with the Fine Gael/Labour coalition. Above all, the book reminds us how fast things are changing. One cannot help but wonder what kind of postscript Kay might add eighteen months later – would he be more or less hopeful, would his analysis have changed? One thing is sure; he would still be asking why we are not seeing more anger.

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## LITERATURE

**Blasted literature: Victorian political fiction and the shock of modernism**, by Deaglán Ó'Donghaile, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2011, 272 pp., £65.00 (hardback), ISBN 9780748640676

Terror is a form of communication and terrorism is both powerfully figurative and brutally literal in its terms of expression as text and its effect on the body. The connections between bombs and books are at the heart of Deaglán Ó'Donghaile's lively and fascinating interdisciplinary study, *Blasted Literature: Victorian Political Fiction and the Shock of Modernism*. This work signals in its subtitle its original contribution to the expanding field of critical, historical approaches to the literature of terrorism: Ó'Donghaile foregrounds continuously interconnectedness of politics, popular fiction and literary modernism and technological modernity. The approach builds on arguments by Nicholas Daly and others that identify categorically modernity's origins in that transitional decade, the 1860s. Such scholarship has underlined the cross-fertilisation of so-called high- and low-brow texts as informed equally and irrevocably by the new modalities of being in the technological, commercial and industrial realities that constituted the second half of the Victorian age while, in a two-way exchange, such cultural products contribute to and educate us in new ways of seeing, sensing, mediating and experiencing these realities. Ó'Donghaile's expansive range of material, from popular fiction to manifestos of modernist aesthetes, from radical political journalism to fiction by Henry James, is brought together in productive and interesting ways to continue to revise the rigidly hierarchical and separatist categorising of literature according to the scales of a symbolic capital that is still culturally overdetermined. Ó'Donghaile shows us other routes of connection and differentiation, new terms of exchange, however, that are revealed by his emphasis on the political in national, imperial and global (capital) contexts.

Those familiar with Alex Houen's *Terrorism and Modern Literature: From Joseph Conrad to Ciarán Carson* (2002) will note that Ó'Donghaile covers some similar ground (dynamite novels of the late nineteenth century; Joseph Conrad's anarchists; Wyndham Lewis on Vorticism and *Blast*, and Lewis's responses to both French Syndicalism and to militant suffragettes). Amongst the particular values of Ó'Donghaile's approach, however, is the richly detailed historical context that he develops as a result of his more specific focus on a narrower timeframe in the main body of his text, which he dates roughly from 1880 to 1915. Ó'Donghaile identifies this period specifically for the variety of writing that