

**Bayor, Ronald H. and Timothy J. Meagher, eds. *The New York Irish*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996. Pp. xxii, 743. Tables, maps, photos, index. U.S.\$ 45.00**

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tion du servage. Mon seul regret est l'absence d'une bibliographie complète à la toute fin du livre.

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**Hamm, Michael F.** *Kiev: A Portrait, 1800–1917*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993. Pp. xviii, 304. Illustrations, tables, index.

Spécialiste en histoire urbaine et éditeur de deux collections d'articles parues récemment — *The City in Russian History* (1976) et *The City in Late Imperial Russia* (1986) — Michael F. Hamm nous donne ici le fruit de plusieurs années de recherche consacrées à l'étude d'une des plus célèbres cités d'Europe: Kiev. Quelles sont donc les principales couleurs de ce portrait?

Dans un style clair, l'auteur relate l'histoire de la transformation d'une ville-frontière en une grande métropole: ainsi, l'arrivée, en 1869–1870, du chemin de fer reliant Kiev à Odessa et à Moscou accélère sensiblement la croissance démographique de la ville qui passe de 70 000 habitants en 1870 à 626 000 en 1914. Kiev partage, en outre, certaines caractéristiques d'autres villes européennes du dix-neuvième siècle: le feu en tant que menace de destruction et possibilité d'un redessinement de la configuration physique de la ville; les scandales financiers; la question de la municipalisation de services publics (eaux, égouts, transports) souvent inadéquats et les ravages causés par différentes épidémies (le choléra venant en tête de liste). La partie la plus originale de ce livre est certainement celle qui traite 1) de la culture politique de Kiev, à la fois élitiste et étriquée dans la mesure où l'absence du droit de vote pour la très grande majorité de la population retarde la croissance d'un sens communautaire; 2) de l'émergence d'un mouvement socialiste, à la suite du développement d'une infrastructure industrielle un peu particulière — l'agriculture, plus que l'industrie, dominant l'économie de Kiev — et 3) des composantes ethniques (polonaise, juive, ukrainienne et russe) et religieuses (catholique, hébraïque, et grecque orthodoxe) de cette cité, de même que la façon dont chaque groupe contribue à modeler le caractère d'un tissu social polyglotte et bigarré à un point tel que son cosmopolitisme et sa diversité culturelle en font un microcosme de l'empire russe. Cette situation explique (sans les justifier, cependant) les mesures de russification introduites par certains tsars. A ce titre, le sort des Polonais et des Juifs est bien mis en évidence. Bien que numériquement faible (moins de 10% de la population totale), la présence polonaise préoccupe grandement les autorités politiques russes. Plus tragique encore est le sort réservé aux Juifs: autorisés par Catherine II (1762–1796) et par Alexandre II (1855–1881) à s'installer à Kiev, les Juifs s'immiscent assez rapidement et avec succès dans le monde des affaires (sucre, meunerie, banques) et des professions libérales, mais, en raison d'un anti-sémitisme pro-

fondément enraciné en sol ukrainien, ils deviennent à l'occasion les victimes de mesures discriminatoires — rafles, expulsions et pogroms (en 1881 et en 1905, par exemple). L'auteur consacre ses deux derniers chapitres à une description colorée de la vie quotidienne des habitants de Kiev — leurs divertissements et leurs loisirs (jeux de cartes, tavernes, sport organisé, concerts, festivals, prostitution); la turbulence des étudiants de l'université Saint-Vladimir; le rassemblement dans les bazars de journaliers et de serveurs en quête de travail — et aux bouleversements politiques et sociaux de l'année 1905, durant lesquels Kiev réagit davantage aux événements de la capitale nationale qu'elle ne provoque de nouveaux incidents.

La faiblesse de ce livre réside dans l'absence d'analyse — trop souvent, l'auteur se contente simplement d'accumuler une masse de détails sans toujours en dégager leur signification — et d'une discussion des différentes théories de développement urbain qui, tout en remplaçant l'histoire de cette ville d'Ukraine dans un cadre théorique, ajouterait une autre dimension à cette étude.

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**Bayor, Ronald H. and Timothy J. Meagher, eds.** *The New York Irish*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996. Pp. xxii, 743. Tables, maps, photos, index. U.S.\$ 45.00.

This book is good value, but only if one understands what it is. It is not a history of the New York Irish, although it includes masses of historical details, from earliest settlement to 1992. And it is not history done at a high professional standard, although many professional historians have participated. Instead, it belongs to the genre of local celebration. Usually these celebrations deal with a parish or a town, or even a city; the only thing which distinguishes this volume from most others is its massive size. This is New York and the story has to be big. The volume was funded by the Irish Institute of New York, which was founded in 1948 by the Mayo-born, New York politician and activist in Irish-related matters, Paul O'Dwyer. In the late 1980s, the octogenarian O'Dwyer (and his institute) was the moving force in commissioning this heterogeneous collection of essays by two dozen authors.

To their credit, the volume's editors do not claim to have produced a narrative, or even a chronological, history of New York City, but they have done a conscientious job of minimizing overlap. Johns Hopkins University Press has copy-edited the book to a high standard, and the technical apparatus, especially the index, are excellent.

Substantively, however, only four of the essays in the volume are of a standard that one would expect to find in a book published by a first-line university press. (Other pieces, are not nec-

essarily trivial, but would have been more appropriate in niche journals.). These are, first, the proto-biography of the 1790s United Irish exile William Sampson, written by Walter J. Walsh. The life of Sampson is employed as an entry point for a subtle, and nicely revisionist discussion of the place of religion, ethnicity, and Irish-derived political behaviour in the early life of the American republic. Second, John Kuo Wei Tchen presents an unexpected, and highly original, case study of the relations of the Chinese and the Irish populations in certain locales. He introduces the tormented figure of Quimbo Appo, a Chinese criminal-cum-psychotic, as an iconic figure in an essay that highlights how, by the end of the Civil War, the Irish had "become white" and were acting against non-white minorities with a fervour that would have made any Nativist proud. Third, Graham Hodge studies the relationship of the Irish and the African-Americans in New York's third ward during the middle one-third of the nineteenth century. The achievement of this essay is that Hodge is able to free the question of Black-Irish relationships from the heavy shadow of the Draft Riots. And, fourth, Lawrence J. McCaffrey provides a general overview of the Irish in New York at the turn of the nineteenth century. McCaffrey is at home in both the history of Ireland and of Irish-America, and he presents an allusive, masterful essay of the sort G.M. Young did years ago for Victorian England.

Fine as they are, these four essays would not warrant purchase of the book by anyone but an enthusiast for the local history of New York City, or by any library, except a large research facility. However, the thick volume has a secondary characteristic that increases its usefulness. It is itself a fascinating historical document. Collectively the books contributors (not all, but most) indicate a parochialism and an innocence of front-edge scholarship on matters central to the topic. McCaffrey is the only contributor to evidence any significant knowledge of the historiography of Ireland that has been produced in the last three decades. Collectively (again, with rare exception) the authors write as if the history of the Irish in New York began when they got off the boat. Knowledge of the quickly-expanding field of Irish emigration studies is almost totally absent, and, instead, potted histories are employed as background data. The intense parochialism of this volume is indicated by the almost entire absence of any sense of awareness that the Irish diaspora—a worldwide phenomenon—is one of the contexts within which the Irish in New York must be assayed. What has caused this cultural parochialism on the part of the authors is indeterminate, but it is a historical question that in itself is worth investigation.

Most interesting is the unconscious and pervasive sectarianism that runs through this volume (again, with minor and honorable, exceptions). There is a confusion of the statistical fact that most Irish persons in New York City were Catholic with the political-theological position that Irish identity can only be Irish Catholic identity. One encounters a constant binary position of Irish Catholics and Protestant New York. This not only drops from the picture the hundreds of thousands of persons of Irish Protestant

ethnicity who lived in New York City during the years covered by this volume, but implicitly endorses a present-day political viewpoint that every one of the major political parties in the Republic of Ireland has explicitly disowned: that to be Irish one has to be a nationalist and a Catholic. Why the historical study of the Irish in New York City should itself compromise a cultural museum area warrants attention.

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**Green, David R. *From Artisans to Paupers: Economic Change and Poverty in London, 1790-1870*. Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995. Pp. xvii, 298. Figures, tables, index. US\$76.95**

A quarter century ago, Gareth Stedman Jones made reference to outcast London and in a book of that title, examined the growth of poverty and destitution during the latter half of the nineteenth century. He portrayed an urban middle class increasingly fearful of the growing number of casual poor who increasingly threatened their property and their security. The subject has now been revisited by David R. Green who has chosen to view the subject from a somewhat different perspective, focusing upon the relationships which existed between economic change and the growth of poverty rather than upon political or social issues. Not only has the perspective changed but so too has the style. If the argument of the earlier study was, as Stedman Jones himself admitted, clouded by his penchant for drama and metaphor, this cannot be said of Green's study. Indeed, Green seems frequently to forget that there was an intensely human dimension to the transition of London labourers from skilled artisans to poverty-stricken piece-workers. Though *From Artisans to Paupers: Economic Change and Poverty in London, 1790-1870* is an intellectually challenging and stimulating study, it is one which comes perilously close to treating economics as Carlyle's "dismal science".

The metropolitan economy had its own internal dynamic, quite distinct from that of the rest of the country. At the beginning of the century, one in nine inhabitants of England and Wales lived in London; by 1871, the ratio was one in seven. The city lacked cohesion. It was politically fragmented, each parish a local commonwealth of privilege and power. It was socially fragmented; as the middle-class flight to the fringes gained momentum, contact between them and the lower classes diminished. It was economically fragmented; while finance and commerce flourished, and London retained its traditional role as the centre of the nation's political and social life, the manufacturing sector was subjected to enormous pressures which forced employers to find ways to reduce the cost of production.

The manufacturing sector was built less upon large factories (whose growth was hindered by high fuel and land costs) than