

introduction, an excellent map, appropriate and interesting illustrations — all creating an effective framework for seven life stories, each with its own introduction and explanatory conclusion. The whole is more than the sum of its parts; Traugott has created an invaluable resource for the social historian.

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Donald E. Jordan — *Land and Popular Politics in Ireland: County Mayo from the Plantation to the Land War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. Pp. xiv, 369.

Mayo was Ireland's poorest county: before the famine of the 1840s it had the lowest land values, the greatest rural density of population, the lowest per capita income, and the most pronounced subdivision of holdings. It suffered most during the famine of the 1840s. It may come as no surprise, therefore, that the modern struggle for peasant proprietorship began there, one outcome of which was to immortalize the term "boycott" in the English language.

The great value of this book is that, by focusing on one crucial area, it takes us beyond the general contributions to the field made by Paul Bew, *Land and the National Question in Ireland, 1858–82* (Dublin, 1978), and Samuel Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War* (Princeton, 1979). Concentration on one locality allows Jordan to delineate effectively a complex set of social, political, and tenurial relationships. At the same time he deftly weaves the local dimension with what was happening nationally.

The author employs a core-periphery model as a method of analysis to dissect the different economic and social groups in Mayo society. Overall this approach proves to be an effective tool, though he does not extend its use to explicitly seeing the breakdown of consensus in 1881 as essentially one involving the Mayo (periphery) and the Land League national executive (core).

The post-famine economic boom served to sharpen the contrast between the small farmers of the periphery, mainly tied to tillage farming, and the larger farmers of the core, benefiting from the expansion in grazing. The fall in cattle prices and the general economic crisis which ensued in 1877 to 1880 forced a reduction in farmers' incomes, made rents (hitherto tolerable) appear burdensome, and galvanized the farming sector into radical action to challenge landlord control. The ensuing Land War saw the coming together of different elements, local and national, small farmer and large, rural and urban, agrarian and nationalist (constitutional and republican elements), clergy and laity, in a common effort to overcome the landlord monopoly.

This consensus was short-lived, however, principally because of tensions between small and large farmers over tactics and goals. The smallholders concentrated in the periphery desired protection from eviction and free access to land, while the larger farmers and their social and economic equals in the core sought the greater goal of

freeing themselves from landlord control so as to benefit more universally from market forces. Their unified aim was to challenge the system of landlordism.

Much of this analysis will be familiar to social and economic historians. However, it is the level of detail with which the themes are explored so concisely and clearly by Donald E. Jordan that marks a real advance. In addition, he makes an important revision to accepted views on some key issues. While Clark's view is to see the Land War as marking a diminution of antagonism within Irish peasant society in a common cause against landlordism, Jordan sees it as only temporary, since smallholders remained hostile to any permanent alliance with the large farmer-shopkeeper coalition because they were indebted to the latter, especially the shopkeepers (p. 167). The evidence would seem to bear him out. It was the large farmers who benefited most from the struggle with landlords, and the small farmers were to continue their own struggle for decades.

My concerns about the book are threefold. The first relates to chronology. Despite the broad chronological range enunciated in the title, two-thirds of the book is devoted to the 1850–1880 period. Although the changes in landownership in the early centuries is summarily traced, the bulk of the book focuses on the traumatic and dramatic events of the Land War in Mayo between 1879 and 1881.

The second issue concerns documentation. Jordan has marshalled an impressive range of information, much of it captured in the valuable number of figures, maps, and tables generously littered throughout the text. The book is based on published parliamentary papers, other printed contemporary accounts, and the records of government. It is striking how few landed estate records are used, due primarily to difficulties of access (pp. 148, 149 n. 127), a deficiency rectified in part by copious secondary works. However, despite their availability, the author has not used a number of important collections relevant to the topic in Trinity College Library, Dublin, for instance, notably those of the Gore family, earls of Arran (including nineteenth-century rentals), Sligo (small cache of correspondence), the papers of J. O. Hannay (see p. 273 n. 38), and especially the extensive Dillon papers which document in detail tenant defence associations and proceedings concerning evicted tenants. Utilisation of these estate records would have allowed the author to expound more fully the pattern and evolution of tenure and tenurial relationships on the ground. Also, the author does not cite the contributions by Gerard Moran to the subject, including his work on James Daly and Fr. Patrick Lavelle, two key figures in the local agitation. The volume edited by G. Moran and R. Gillespie, '*A Various Country*': *Essays in Mayo History, 1500–1900* (Westport, 1987) contains a number of essays relevant to the theme of the book, but it does not appear in the bibliography.

A final concern relates to the landlords. While Jordan's examination of the tenants and their social, economic, and political equals in the towns is competent, his exploration of the landlord class and its response is less satisfactory and complete than one would have wished. In dealing with the tenants and their concerns, he has demonstrated how local agitation became the nucleus of a national movement. Was the same true of landlords? How prominent, for instance, were Mayo landlords in promoting and participating in the Property Defence Association,

an organization founded in December 1880 by leading Irish landlords to defend their property rights against the Land League? (In this regard the extensive correspondence of the Property Defence Association to be found in the Courtown papers, Trinity College Library, Dublin, might have been consulted.) A more balanced result might have been achieved had more attention been devoted to the position and response of the landlords.

Deficiencies concerning chronology, documentation, and the landlords aside, Jordan has with this book considerably advanced our understanding of the dynamics and processes of the Irish land struggle in the crucible county where it began.

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Wendy Z. Goldman — *Women, the State and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917–1936*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Pp. xii, 351.

The Bolsheviks who staged a putsch in Petrograd in November 1917 hoped to transform not only people's material circumstances but all manner of human relationships. Dreaming of nothing less than the creation of a new type of human being, Marxists predicted that in the Communist future not only the traditional state would wither away, but also marriage and the family. In October 1918, the Russian Central Executive Committee ratified a Code on Marriage, the Family, and Guardianship. It declared women's equality under the law, abolished illegitimacy, established easy divorce at the request of either spouse, and gave legal status only to civil marriage. It was watered down later, supplanted in November 1926 by a Family Code which effectively conceded that, at least for a while, Soviet society still needed some sort of family for the sake of stability. By 1936 the libertarian experiment was over, and traditional values were reasserted such that abortion was prohibited, pro-natalist measures were adopted, and divorce was more difficult. These developments, long overdue for a serious study, are the subject of this work.

Wendy Z. Goldman begins with a glance at the history of the debate about women's status among social democrats. Before 1917 Marxists commonly assumed that, once socialism prevailed, household labour would be done by paid workers in communal dining rooms, laundries, and so on. Free union would replace conventional marriage and children would be brought up in state-run nurseries. The attempt to implement such idealism, or ideology, had dire consequences. During the Civil War, which lasted until the spring of 1921, the economic policy labelled War Communism drove multitudes of people, including children, into destitution and crime. Some waifs were accommodated in appalling state homes, their numbers swelling to 540,000 by 1921. Despite the efforts of a Children's Commission created in January 1921, 90 to 95 per cent of children under the age of three died in areas affected by a massive famine.

At the war's end, amidst unprecedented poverty and chaos, the Bolsheviks