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Review of: Mary C. Kelly (2005), *The Shamrock and the Lily: The New York Irish and the Creation of a Transatlantic Identity, 1845-1921*. New York: Peter Lang.

Mary C. Kelly's study of what she terms the creation of "a transatlantic identity" adds much to the broadening study of the Irish American experience in the post-Famine decades. Her central thesis challenges that of other historians who view the formation of Irish American identity as a consequence of the often embittering Irish immigrant experience in the unfamiliar, alien environment of urban America. Kelly suggests that Ireland was not just a place from which the Irish escaped but that the Irish transported and transplanted social, cultural, and political beliefs and practices to the new world. These products of the ancestral homeland, when fused with the New York identity, gave rise to a "dual-culture genesis" and the basis of a new nineteenth-century Atlantic world.

Focusing on the city of New York, "one of the most prominent of the 'untypical' cities," Kelly's study builds upon the growing body of regional and local stories that make up the Irish immigrant experience, most particularly upon the exemplary *The New York Irish* (1996), edited by Timothy J. Meagher and Ronald H. Bayor. She stresses, however, that the chapters she presents do not constitute "local history" per se. While it is the formation of the New York Irish character that is explored through the lenses of gender, religion, the arts, and politics, this character reflects a confluence of new and old world identities and a complex culture that echoes the settlement process more generally. The book is nonetheless replete with New York characters, street names, and institutions that reflect its vibrant cosmopolitanism and provide a specific backdrop for this particular settlement.

Throughout the book, Kelly highlights the diversity of the New York Irish. Citing accountants, shoe and boot wholesalers, plumbers, lawyers, booksellers, and a long list of prosperous and educated people, she portrays groupings of middle-class and thriving Irish men and women who have remained largely invisible within the familiar Irish American canon, especially on the east coast. Focusing on women in particular she highlights an array of varied classes and convictions: middle-class women who had fallen on hard times; society women organizing balls and charity functions; nuns; and, most significantly, the more hard-edged, female-led, political groups, especially the Fenian sisterhood and the Irish Women's Council, which combined nationalism and feminism. In terms of religious diversity Kelly estimates that there were at least 50,000 Irish Protestants in New York by 1860, whom she terms the "quiet men (and women)" but who nonetheless played a distinct part in the formation of the city's Irish identity. Less quiet perhaps were the parades of the Orange Order, the most important of which took place on July 12 and which occasioned a violent riot in 1871. Yet, clashes between the two Irish traditions were not the mainstay of Protestant Irishness in New York, and Kelly cites connections and cross-cultural affinity between them in organizations such as The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick and the Protestant Friends of Ireland and in the rhetoric of republicanism.

Rhetoric and language provided a fundamental link with Ireland during these decades. Referencing popular literature and the pages of New York's Irish press, Kelly points to a shared memory of the "race" and suggests that the language of writers, poets, and balladeers who extolled a proud Irish heritage and tradition provided a "beacon of hope" for immigrants

and a central unity of purpose in the search for pride in an independent Ireland. This solidarity of the race was again evident in the fact that every window in the new St. Patrick's Cathedral bore the name of an Irish benefactor. Kelly suggests that while Catholicism was in the midst of a devotional revolution in both Ireland and America at this time, it was New York City that gave the Irish the freedom to build an edifice as splendid and as central as St. Patrick's. This freedom of organization also allowed the Irish to grasp opportunities in the political sphere. Once again, Kelly provides insight not just into the ward politics long associated with the Irish but into the "black tie" division epitomized by Michael Norton, Thomas F. Grady, and William Bourke Cockran as well.

Kelly challenges the hegemonic picture of the Irish immigration experience in a specific location. As other historians have observed, the Irish were less Catholic, less rural, and less poor than has commonly been assumed. The links between Ireland and America are portrayed in an insightful and fresh manner, as more symbiotic and evenly balanced than previously thought. At times, however, experiences on either side of the Atlantic appear to be more parallel than transplanted, and the generational differences, especially between Irish-born immigrants, remain underexplored. The crucial risk throughout is that the impact and dynamics of location and place are minimized. Overall however, Kelly's repositioning of Irish influence in the Irish American encounter represents a valuable and important contribution to our understanding of the multidimensional nature of Irish settlement and posits an engaging and appealing argument.