makes a significant contribution to scholarship not least because it opens up the unexplored topic of birthing consciousness in early modern poetry and brings attention to the relatively under-appreciated Traherne. Perhaps more importantly, it is a refreshing update on methods formerly known as the history of ideas. Harrison’s explicit discussions of the approach are insightful in ways that clearly demarcate it from practices of cultural and intellectual history.

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Irish Literature in Transition, 1700–1780. Ed. Moyra Haslett.
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Nearly every chapter in this collection makes an intelligent contribution to Irish studies; taking diverse critical approaches, several synthesize recent research. I single out six for special merit.

Marie-Louise Coolahan’s programmatic “Transition and the Early Modern” recognizes that pre-Union Ireland was not, pace Whig history, inevitably transitioning to modernity. Its Irish, Latin, English literatures were marked by an “edgy sense of flux” across linguistic boundaries. English’s “hegemony was not inevitable from the vantage point of transition, when everything was still to play for.” Indeed, “1,000 books in Latin were published by Irish authors [pre-1800], an embrace of print culture far more sustained and impactful than was achieved by” writers in English or Irish; Ireland was integral to the universal Baroque, the Latinate, Catholic culture radiating from Rome through Europe to Mexico City, Manila, and Macau. It was exiles, such as the Irish Franciscans at Louvain, whose print culture first posited a “national identity that hinged upon Catholicism and the Irish language.” Meanwhile “hibernification of English literary modes . . . worked both ways”; macaronic verse shows “English-language traditions . . . expanding to accommodate Hiberno-English and Irish.” Thus Coolahan’s key insight: literary history must “switch from starting point to end points” to avoid anachronism. “[E]arly-modern’. . . is reductive, flattening social, technological, and cultural features that do not fit the meta-narrative” of teleology. “We produce the past by imagining it in our present,” blowing out of proportion “the seeds of . . . cultural practices” prestigious today: Anglophony, secularism, liberalism.
Brean Hammond reviews Swift’s transition to nonmodern Irish genius—caustic Tory polemicist, authoritarian Anglican—from the usable Swift constructed by domesticating critics: bipartisan, normative, “relatable” (that favorite undergraduate word), a mind who anticipated their liberal, democratic own. This safe-for-the-office satirist prevailed postwar: “The castrated Swift who emerges from [Kathleen] Williams’s literary surgery is the acceptably moderate writer . . . our canon-makers then wanted.” Ehrenpreis’s biography too, for all its Freudianizing, reinforced “the timid understanding of his subject.” And as recently as 2016, Eugene Hammond’s “expends much effort in getting Swift off hooks, demonstrating that his intentions were usually moral, at the very least, excusable.” In fact, his “originality is the result of, rather than . . . in despite of, the extremism of his personality and beliefs.” This produced a “philosophical and temperamental chasm that separated Swift from” the other Scriblerians—as did, after 1714, the Irish Sea, two visits excepted. He nevertheless “adopt[ed] positions that both espoused and . . . opposed the colonial basis upon which relations between Ireland and England stood.” In lifelong transition, perhaps, between English and Irish identities, Swift spent his final three decades among “obscure Irish gentry-folks,” loyal printers, servants; these contexts are finally “more significant than that of . . . great writers and thinkers” off-island.

David Dwan anatomizes “The Prejudices of Enlightenment,” including the prejudice against prejudice itself. Against assumptions that Ireland was “deeply inimical to enlightenment,” itself assumed to be “aggressively secular,” Dwan reminds us that for Swift, Berkeley, and Burke “religion was a condition of genuine enlightenment, not its benighted antithesis.” Without it, enlightenment’s “concept of reason was unreasonable, its toleration . . . intolerant, and its sense of improvement . . . morally regressive.” Unlike naïve empiricists such as Toland, Swift and Berkeley perceived rational inquiry’s limits; their “self-cancelling type of scepticism” recognized that “at some point we will all defer . . . to the authority of another.” Burke concluded “that it was unreasonable to ask reasons for everything” given “practical and theoretical limits to justification” of our beliefs; as Hume too discovered, reason finally requires skepticism of reason itself. Postures of toleration, meanwhile, were hypocritical in an Establishment that framed penal laws disabling landholding and worship by Ireland’s Catholic majority. “Enlightenment . . . was expressive of religious animosity as much as . . . an attempt to mitigate its effects.” Texts like *A Modest Proposal*, in turn, “exposed the prejudices of projectors or their dangerous lack of them. Such absolute open-mindedness . . . is a type of moral
insanity,” as is the “notion that the progress of science or commerce necessarily fostered virtue.” Transition is, frequently, regress.

“Improvement” is also central to Andrew Carpenter’s chapter on landscape in Irish Anglophone poetry. Many writers adapted Greco-Roman hard pastoral, ironizing arcadia; James Ward and Mary Barber juxtaposed Dublin’s “filthy Shambles” and “dirty Streets, / Stifled with Smoke, and stunned with Noise” to the “fruitful valleys” and “fine Improvements” of Ascendancy landowners. Morrow O’Connor however praised “the sweeping vistas of the west of Ireland” with “obvious affection for an unimproved landscape,” and Swift’s “Carberiae Rupes,” Englished by William Dunkin, depicted “a ferocious storm lashing the coastline of West Cork”; it is unique for “its imaginative power and the sense that nature’s force is far greater than” man’s. Demesne poems made a major genre, sometimes jokey (Sheridan twitting Delany’s mini-estate Delville) but usually earnest (Walter Chamberlayne’s depiction of Powerscourt’s waterfall). Laborers figured in these but often as “barely civilized creatures given to heavy drinking and faction fighting.” More three-dimensional were Laurence Whyte’s “Parting Cup” and Goldsmith’s “Deserted Village,” balancing sympathy for dispossessed tenants with realism about enclosure and rent hikes by landlords “Who without Cer’mony or Rout / For their Improvements turnd them out.” The rise of Romanticism however ensured that “Increasingly, looking at the land of Ireland . . . replaced a sense of the significance of owning it or working it.”

Aileen Douglas analyzes how Mary Barber “negotiate[d] readers’ expectations of gender, and of poetry” in transitioning from scribal to print publication. Part of Swift’s “Senatus Consultum,” Barber framed Poems on Several Occasions (1735) as moral didaxis and prompts to practical charity. Printed as “an expensive book and desirable object,” these nevertheless take quotidian objects as poetic occasions (fans, rings, books, seaside rocks), which “encourages awareness of a pre-existing . . . ordinary world of things.” Six were posthumous publications by Constantia Grierson, who edited Vergil, Terence, Tacitus, and Sallust before dying young. The “trope of the modest female poet indifferent to fame” wasn’t new but Barber’s “role of compiler” to her was. Both however “justify the publication” by its “encouragement of beneficence,” especially aristocratic “women’s charity to other women.” Barber thus mocks socialites at Tunbridge Wells (where she courted subscribers) for stingy giving, but the effect is blunted because “Print publication removes poems from the events that originally occasioned them.” More permanent are those “written on, or to accompany books”; the material object “as it moves between hands . . . assert[s] female virtue and . . . sociability.”
Anne Markey, finally, details a transition sketched by Coolahan: Gaelic influences on the Anglophone novel. Given the paucity of eighteenth-century print in Irish, literacy was “a skill ‘usually acquired in English’” (or Latin); most fiction-writers were Protestants. Texts like *Vertue Rewarded; or, the Irish Princess* and Sarah Butler’s *Irish Tales* nevertheless use “*dinnseanchas*, which links the Irish landscape with . . . historical and legendary events and people,” to valorize Gaelic history. Indebted to Seathrún Céitinn’s accounts of native resistance to Viking invasion, Butler’s Jacobite political allegory “may be the earliest . . . Catholic novel.” Lilliput and Brobdingnag are influenced by myths from the Fenian cycle and *Aidedh Ferghusa*; Thomas Amory’s *Life of John Buncle* draws on *Parliament na mBan*, itself a translation of Erasmus’ (Latin) *Assembly of Women*. “[T]he concept of plagiarism . . . is alien to the oral tradition of *seanchas,*” in which “original authorship is oxymoronic”—as it is to *translatio studii*, whereby Ireland transitioned to the universal Baroque before transitioning, under Anglophone secularism, to modernity.

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**Hemispheres and Stratospheres: The Idea and Experience of Distance in the International Enlightenment**. Ed. Kevin L. Cope.

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To see things that are distant, to see things at a distance: these ambitions rose to the level of obsessions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Writers and thinkers of the Enlightenment returned again and again to questions about faraway peoples, places, objects, and phenomena and the knowledge attendant on wide-angle views of them. From voyages to the South Seas to observations through telescopes, from philosophies of human nature to the painting and poetry of landscape, the issue of distance lurks in the background, crucially important yet seldom set apart for focused and sustained inquiry. That is the purpose of this volume, *Hemispheres and Stratospheres: The Idea and Experience of Distance in the International Enlightenment*, written by scholars who teach in universities as far flung as North America and South Asia, and who thus embody the networks of far exchange so important in the period under analysis.