

*John Punch, Scotist Holy War, and the Irish  
Catholic Revolutionary Tradition  
in the Seventeenth Century*

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Seventeenth-century Irish Catholic revolutionaries were generally reluctant to call for a holy war on their Protestant enemies. These revolutionaries constituted a political tradition committed to certain basic propositions in Jesuit political thought. However, the Irish Franciscan theologian John Punch (c. 1600–61) advanced a theory of holy war more extreme than that of any other Stuart subject.<sup>1</sup> Punch's theory has gone unnoticed until now. The main body of Irish revolutionaries, while well known individually, have not previously been identified as a coherent political tradition.<sup>2</sup> This article explains Punch's theory of holy war in the context of disagreements among Franciscans and Jesuits on the relationship between warfare and religion, and argues that most Irish revolutionaries avoided talk of holy war because they had been taught that such war undermined not just government by heretics, but all human government.

Identifying a number of the seventeenth-century Irish Catholic elite as

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<sup>1</sup> Glenn Burgess, "Was the English Civil War a War of Religion? The Evidence of Political Propaganda," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 61 (1998): 173–201.

<sup>2</sup> For a previous survey, see Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin, "‘Though Heretics and Politicians should misinterpret their goode zeal’: Political Ideology and Catholicism in Early Modern

revolutionaries should not be controversial. Aidan Clarke and Jane Ohlmeyer have distinguished the majority of the Irish Catholic elite who rebelled and established their own provisional government within the Stuart system between 1642 and 1649 in order to improve their position under the rule of Charles I from a minority of exiles who rejected the entire frame of Stuart government in Ireland in favor of the Habsburg alternative.<sup>3</sup> Benjamin Hazard has analyzed the activities of those exiles between the conclusion of the Nine Years War—fought between Hugh O’Neill, earl of Tyrone, and Elizabeth I—in 1603 and the end of the 1620s, demonstrating that their aim was to have the kingdom of Ireland incorporated into the Spanish *monarquía*, that nexus of kingdoms and lordships subject to the Spanish Habsburgs.<sup>4</sup> This would have involved the restoration of the Catholic Church’s powers and property on the island. Perez Zagorin and Steven Pincus have emphasized that a true revolution constitutes a break from the previous regime that entails not just changes to the political leadership of a polity and its policy orientation (such as result from rebellions and coups d’état), but also to its political and socioeconomic structures.<sup>5</sup> Seventeenth-century Ireland was a country subject to the English common law in which all land was held of the king. As Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin has observed, the more cautious elements of the Irish elite feared that the introduction of Habsburg sovereignty would mean an accompanying revision of all land title in Ireland in favor both of the Catholic Church and the exiled elite. This would thus amount to revolutionary change not just in politics but also in society.<sup>6</sup> Zagorin and others also insist that modern revolutionaries by definition believed that they were beginning a new era in the history of state and society.<sup>7</sup> No part of the Irish Catholic elite held such a position. Catholics loyal to the Stuarts wished initially to restore the kingdom’s pre-Reformation constitution; Catholic militants looked further back, perhaps

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Ireland,” in *Political Thought in Seventeenth-Century Ireland*, ed. Jane Ohlmeyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 155–75.

<sup>3</sup> Aidan Clarke, “The Genesis of the Ulster Rising of 1641,” in *Plantation to Partition*, ed. Peter Roebuck (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1981), 29–45, at 29–30; Jane Ohlmeyer, “Introduction: A Failed Revolution?,” in *Ireland from Independence to Occupation, 1641–1660*, ed. Ohlmeyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1–23, at 15–16.

<sup>4</sup> Benjamin Hazard, *Faith and Patronage: The Political Career of Flaithrí Ó Maolchoinaire, c. 1560–1629* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2010), 1–2, 166–67.

<sup>5</sup> Steven Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 31–32; Perez Zagorin, *Rebels and Rulers, 1500–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1982), 1:17.

<sup>6</sup> Ó hAnnracháin, *Catholic Reformation in Ireland: The Mission of Rinuccini, 1645–1649* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 26–32.

<sup>7</sup> Zagorin, *Rebels and Rulers*, 1:4–5, 22–23, 38; Pincus, *1688*, 31.

even to that ancient constitution that some believed the island had enjoyed before the twelfth-century English conquest.<sup>8</sup> The aims of those Irish Catholics radically alienated from the Stuarts are thus more effectively captured by categorizing them as early modern (rather than modern) revolutionaries than as rebels or radicals. They sought both a political and social transformation in Ireland, but envisaged this transformation as the restoration of an idealized past relationship between state and church. And although most of these revolutionaries were Gaelic Irish, most Gaelic Irish were not revolutionaries. Breandán Ó Buachalla has established the prominence of Stuart loyalism among Gaelic Irish intellectuals, but his insistence that this loyalism was so orthodox as to be almost an unacknowledged assumption is perhaps precipitous.<sup>9</sup> The arguments of the revolutionaries seem too well known for that to have been the case.

The concepts of religious and holy war require definition. Between 1642 and 1649 even those Irish Catholics fundamentally loyal to the Stuarts resisted Charles I in order to achieve confessional security; they repeatedly stated that their continuing existence as a Catholic elite within the Stuart multiple monarchy was at risk and required defense.<sup>10</sup> If the war in Ireland was a religious war, it was so only in the sense that Ireland's Catholics and Protestants fought for confessional security. The accounts that Micheál Ó Siochrú and Robert Armstrong offer of the aims of the various parties in peace talks in 1642–46 support this analysis.<sup>11</sup> By contrast, the term “holy war” will be reserved in this article for wars fought not in defense of religious identity, but rather fought to advance religion and to evangelize by force.

The first section of the argument below begins in the 1640s with an account of the holy-war theory of John Punch, one of a number of prominent followers of John Duns Scotus who favored the use of force in evangelization. These Scotists were criticized by the Jesuits for collapsing the natural, where humans made rational by God were free to build commonwealths, into the supernatural, that realm where God intervened directly. The second section below emphasizes Punch's marginal position by returning to the 1610s and 1620s to describe the main Irish Catholic revolutionary tradition in the seventeenth century. Archbishop James Ussher of

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<sup>8</sup> Ó hAnnracháin, *Catholic Reformation*, 28–29.

<sup>9</sup> Breandán Ó Buachalla, “James our True King: The Ideology of Irish Royalism in the Seventeenth Century,” in *Political Thought in Ireland since the Seventeenth Century*, ed. D. George Boyce et al. (Routledge: London, 1993), 7–35.

<sup>10</sup> Aidan Clarke, *The Old English in Ireland 1625–1642* (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1966), 218.

<sup>11</sup> Micheál Ó Siochrú, *Confederate Ireland 1642–1649* (Dublin: Four Courts Press,

Armagh thought this tradition a grave threat to Protestant monarchy throughout the three Stuart kingdoms; but these moderate revolutionaries never claimed that difference of religion alone validated their war against the English and always respected the natural basis of politics. Their ideology was propagated by effective institutions established in the Spanish dominions by the generation of Irish Catholics who had left Ireland after the Nine Years War. Philip O'Sullivan Beare's *Compendium* of 1621 provided the first major printed statement of the ideology, and it was further developed in printed books, manuscript letters, treatises, and histories published between the 1610s and the 1660s by Archbishop Florence Conry of Tuam, Conor O'Mahony, Richard O'Ferrall, and Robert O'Connell. Between the 1610s and 1630s the main line of this ideology was embodied in the Franciscan college of St. Anthony at the University of Leuven (the foundation of which Conry had procured), as well as in the exiled households of O'Neill's and O'Donnell's heirs, and the regiments that they commanded in the Low Countries. When war broke out in Ireland in the 1640s, personnel from those institutions became prominent in General Owen Roe O'Neill's Ulster army, in the household of the papal nuncio to Ireland, Gianbattista Rinuccini, and throughout the radical wing of the Irish Catholic Church. In the 1650s, men who had belonged to Rinuccini's household, including O'Ferrall, steered Irish policy in the Roman Congregation de Propaganda Fide, which governed the Irish Church.

John Punch, characterized by Jacob Schmutz as one of the most brilliant Scotists of his time, remains known to modern historians of philosophy as an innovative metaphysician.<sup>12</sup> He was born in Cork about 1600, and attended the College of St. Anthony, Leuven, taking the Franciscan habit there; he also studied philosophy at Cologne. In 1625 he joined St. Isidore's College, Rome, which was also an Irish Franciscan institution. After gaining his higher degree in theology, he taught philosophy and theology at St. Isidore's, and by 1630 was rector of that college. In the same year, he became governor of the Ludovisian College at Rome, which educated Irish secular priests. The patronage of the senior Irish Franciscan at Rome, Luke Wadding, was essential to Punch's success.<sup>13</sup> During the 1630s, Wadding directed the compilation of the first complete edition of the works of the

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1999), 55–86; Robert Armstrong, *Protestant War: The 'British' of Ireland and the Wars of the Three Kingdoms* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 119–42.

<sup>12</sup> Jacob Schmutz, "L'Héritage des Subtils: Cartographie du Scotisme de l'Âge Classique," *Les Études Philosophiques* 1 (2002): 51–81; C. A. Andersen, "'Metaphysica secundum ethymon nominis dicitur scientia transcendens': On the Etymology of 'Metaphysica' in the Scotist Tradition," *Medioevo* 34 (2009): 61–104.

<sup>13</sup> Luke Wadding, *Scriptores ordinis minorum* (Rome, 1650), 221–22.

premier Franciscan theologian John Duns Scotus, and Punch contributed long commentaries on Scotus's ethical and political theories.<sup>14</sup> Punch published a textbook of Scotist philosophy in 1642–43 (reprinted in 1649, 1659, and 1672), a theology textbook printed in 1652 and again in 1671, a long pamphlet on Irish politics in 1653, an argument on Scotus's nationality in 1660, and a full set of theological commentaries on Scotus in 1661.<sup>15</sup> Following an interlude at Lyons, Punch moved to teach in Paris in 1648. He died in Paris in 1661 and was buried in the crypt of the choir of the Grand Couvent des Cordeliers.<sup>16</sup>

In 1648, Rinuccini excommunicated the Irish Catholic government to which he had been accredited because he disapproved of the truce that government had struck with the then Protestant and royalist Murrrough O'Brien, Lord Inchiquin. Punch took Rinuccini's side, intriguing in the theology faculty of the University of Paris to prevent that faculty declaring the excommunication invalid.<sup>17</sup> Punch's political pamphlet reinforced that position, and also defended the right of the Catholic Irish to seek aid from Charles IV, duke of Lorraine, as their own Stuart princes could not defend them from their Parliamentary adversaries.<sup>18</sup> But both Punch's theology textbook of 1652 and his commentaries of 1661 contained a much more precise theory of confessional warfare.

Punch stated his case most succinctly in his textbook of 1652, when treating the causes of just wars:

It is lawful by war, when other means do not avail, to reduce unbelievers, and much more heretics, to such a state, that they should

<sup>14</sup> John Duns Scotus, *Opera omnia*, ed. Luke Wadding et al., 13 vols. (Lyons, 1639).

<sup>15</sup> John Punch (Poncius), *Integer philosophiae cursus ad mentem Scoti*, 3 parts (Rome, 1642–43); Punch, *Philosophiae ad mentem Scoti cursus integer* (Paris, 1649), *ibid.* (Lyons, 1659), *ibid.* (Lyons, 1672); Punch, *Integer theologiae cursus ad mentem Scoti* (Paris, 1652); Punch, *Theologiae cursus integer ad mentem Scoti* (Lyons, 1671); Punch, *D. Richardi Bellingi vindiciae eversae* (Paris, 1653); Punch, *Scotus Hiberniae restitutus* (Paris, 1660); Punch, *Commentarii theologici quibus Iohannis Duns Scoti quaestiones in libros sententiarum elucidantur, et illustrantur*, 4 vols. in 6 parts (Paris, 1661).

<sup>16</sup> Jérôme Poulenc, "Deux registres de religieux décédés au grand couvent de Paris au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 59 (1966): 323–84, at 344. Jacob Schmutz's biography is essential: see [http://scholasticon.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/Database/Scholastiques\\_fr.php?ID=1052](http://scholasticon.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/Database/Scholastiques_fr.php?ID=1052) (last updated September 9, 2014).

<sup>17</sup> Richard O'Ferrall and Robert O'Connell, *Commentarius Rinuccinianus, de sedis apostolicae legatione ad Foederatos Hiberniae Catholicos per annos 1645–9*, ed. Stanislaus Kavanagh, 6 vols. (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1932–49), 3:584.

<sup>18</sup> Micheál Ó Siochrú, "The Duke of Lorraine and the International Struggle for Ireland, 1649–1653," *Historical Journal* 48 (2005): 905–32; P. J. Corish, "John Callaghan and the Controversies among the Irish in Paris 1648–54," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 21 (1954): 32–52.

not impede the preaching and instruction by means of which they might be converted to the faith, and also in order that they should assemble to hear that instruction.<sup>19</sup>

For the academic authorities who supported or opposed this statement, Punch referred his readers to his theological commentaries (then still in manuscript, to be printed in 1661). In his proof, he argued that the commandment that we should love our neighbors demanded that we do everything lawful to provide our neighbors with the faith necessary for eternal life; and if war was lawful to provide much lesser goods, it was certainly lawful to secure such a great good. So much for offensive holy war. Punch next argued that it was lawful to make war defensively on those who impeded us in exercising our own religion. Punch deemed it strange that we might kill someone who was about to murder our friend, but not one who intended to murder our friend spiritually, perverting him from the true faith. Such a problem and such a war, he continued, currently faced Catholics in Ireland.<sup>20</sup> Punch then argued that it was just to make war against one's own king when he made laws that harmed the commonwealth (so long as the harm that would be caused by the war was less than the harm caused by the laws); such a position required no support from authorities, he wrote, because it was common to all of them. On this ground, Punch continued, Catholics might make war on their heretical monarchs throughout the Stuart kingdoms.<sup>21</sup> Punch then addressed the question of who might lawfully declare war, arguing that this category included not just kings, princes, and free commonwealths, but also cities and parts of kingdoms or commonwealths, if those parts of commonwealths might avert greater harm to themselves by undertaking such a war. Although its relevance to the Irish war went unspecified, this was probably intended to justify the war being fought by the Irish Catholic Confederation, which could not be conflated with the whole kingdom of Ireland.<sup>22</sup> The following sections dealt briefly with the quality of knowledge of just cause necessary to declare war, and with massacres, captivity, and the spoils of war.<sup>23</sup>

Three functional efficiencies to Punch's theory are especially relevant.

<sup>19</sup> "Licet bello, quando alias fieri non possit, infideles, & multo magis haereticos cogere ad hoc, vt non impediatur praedicationem, ac instructionem, qua mediante possent conuerti ad fidem & etiam vt convenient ad audiendam illam instructionem." Punch, *Theologiae cursus* (1652), disp. 33, q. 2, con. 4, p. 404.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., con. 5, pp. 404–5.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., q. 3, p. 405.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., qq. 4–5, pp. 405–7.

First, his theory allowed the circumvention of papal authority. In his textbook, Punch mentioned briefly the pope's power to nominate an erring prince for punishment by another Christian commonwealth, but he did not build this papal deposing power into the holy-war theory that he applied to Ireland.<sup>24</sup> Since the papacy had no intention whatsoever of deposing either the Stuart monarchy or any other English regime, the sort of holy war that depended on a high doctrine of papal monarchy did not serve Punch's case. Second, Punch's commentaries of 1661 explained the theory's geopolitics. Punch affirmed the justice of Irish resistance to the Stuarts, the injustice of Dutch Protestant resistance to the king of Spain, and deplored the Franco-Dutch alliance of the 1630s.<sup>25</sup> Third, Punch's section on massacres defended, against Jesuit theologians, the massacre of innocent people, including women and children, when seizing fortresses and cities. Punch envisaged massacre as a form of corporate punishment for societies which had undertaken unjust wars, as an object lesson for other evildoers, and as a precaution against acts of revenge.<sup>26</sup> Unusually, Punch did not mention Ireland in his section on massacres, but it seems likely that these arguments were prompted by Catholic massacres of Protestants in Ulster in 1641.<sup>27</sup>

All these propositions were to be found, in expanded form with more technical citations, in Punch's *Commentarii theologici* (Theological commentaries), printed in Paris in 1661. The *Commentarii* also included a special section headed *Corolarium: De bello moderno Hibernorum* (Corollary: Concerning the recent war of the Irish). This section hammered home the relevance of the preceding abstract doctrines to the Irish case, emphasizing the threat that English heresy posed to Irish religion, and the tyrannous behavior of the English kings.<sup>28</sup>

The *Corolarium* also contained crucial information for dating Punch's arguments. Punch's textbook frequently referred readers back to the *Commentarii* for citations and other detail, implying that the *Commentarii* (themselves printed in 1661) already existed in some form before the textbook was printed in 1652. At the beginning of the *Corolarium*, Punch also referred to the war in Ireland, "which happily undertaken now about a year ago everyday makes better progress."<sup>29</sup> Since fighting in Ireland had begun

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, disp. 33, q. 2, con. 3, p. 404.

<sup>25</sup> Punch, *Commentarii theologici*, 4:328–29.

<sup>26</sup> Punch, *Theologiae cursus* (1652), disp. 33, q. 5, p. 406.

<sup>27</sup> Eamon Darcy, *The Irish Rebellion of 1641 and the Wars of the Three Kingdoms* (London: Royal Historical Society, 2013), 132–67; Micheál Ó Siochrú and Jane Ohlmeyer, *Ireland: 1641* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

<sup>28</sup> Punch, *Commentarii theologici*, 4:336–38.

<sup>29</sup> "quod iam ab uno circiter anno feliciter susceptum feliciores quotidie progressus facit." Punch, *Commentarii theologici*, 4:336.

in October 1641, Punch thus seems to have written this observation in late 1642. In that year, Punch was still teaching at St. Isidore's and at the Ludovician College in Rome. Since it was common for this kind of academic material to be delivered first in lectures before manuscript and print publication, it is thus likely that Punch was teaching his graduate students in theology—both friars and secular priests—his theory of holy war and revolution from late 1642. There is no suggestion of such a doctrine in the commentaries that Punch contributed to Wadding's edition of Scotus printed in 1639.<sup>30</sup>

Contextualizing Punch's theory of holy war is crucial. His 1652 textbook did not name authorities who agreed or disagreed with his theory of forcible evangelization, but referred readers to his *Commentarii*, where he had cited those supporting the opinion that "anyone can absolutely and simply, when unable to accomplish it by other means, force unbelievers to accept the faith by war" as including Alfonso de Castro, John Mair, Pope Innocent IV, Anthony Diana, and Silvestro da Prierio Mazzolini (known as Sylvester).<sup>31</sup> Those who opposed such an opinion were named as Luis de Molina, Pedro Hurtado de Mendoza, and Giles de Coninck. The inclusion of Innocent, Diana, and Sylvester as supporters of his theory was questionable. Innocent had famously argued that infidels truly owned private property and truly exercised political power. But he argued also that the pope had the right to punish any human who broke natural law, which included a right to declare war on those infidels who obstructed the preaching of the Gospel.<sup>32</sup> The casuist Diana had preferred to argue that it was wrong to wage war on infidels solely on account of their unbelief, but did allow that the pope had the right to command a Christian prince to use force on pagans who refused to admit preachers.<sup>33</sup> Likewise, Sylvester had associated the right to make war on infidels with the papal deposing power, and had not envisaged individual Christian princes acting on their own initiative.<sup>34</sup>

Punch's version of holy-war theory found unambiguous support from only two of his cited authorities. The Scottish nominalist theologian John

<sup>30</sup> Scotus, *Opera omnia*, note especially vol. 7, part 2, dd. 32, 37, pp. 687–94, 854–914.

<sup>31</sup> "absolute et simpliciter potest quis bello, quando aliter fieri nequit, infideles ad fidem cogere." Punch, *Commentarii theologici*, 4:327.

<sup>32</sup> Pope Innocent IV, *Super libros quinque decretalium* (Frankfurt am Main, 1570), book 3, title 34 "De voto et voti redemptione," chap. 8, fols. 429v–30v.

<sup>33</sup> Antonio Diana, *Coordinatus; seu omnes resolutiones morales eius*, 9 vols. (Lyon, 1667), vol. 7, tractatus 7 "De bello," resolutio 15, pp. 389–90.

<sup>34</sup> Silvestro da Prierio Mazzolini, *Summae Sylvestrinae, quae summa summarum merito nuncupatur*, ed. Lazarus de Lancellotis (Venice, 1612), part 2, q. 7, fol. 211v.



Mair had claimed that the Old Testament's command to make war on blasphemers and idolaters (Deuteronomy 12:2) and also on those who had fallen away from God (Deuteronomy 13:12–17) indicated that blasphemy, idolatry, and apostasy were just causes of war.<sup>35</sup> But the first authority Punch alleged, and his best support, was another Franciscan: Alfonso de Castro. Castro's *De iusta haereticorum punitione* (On the just punishment of heretics) of 1547 had explained that, during Charles V's wars on heretical German princes, some Spaniards had remarked that it was un-Christian to oppose heretics in that way, and that one should instead reason with them. In response, Castro had insisted that the very first and most important cause of war was idolatry, citing Deuteronomy 12:2; the second most just cause was falling away from God, citing Deuteronomy 13:12–17; and the cause of self-defense fell into fifth place, all of which provided direct support, Castro wrote, for Charles V's war on the heretics.<sup>36</sup>

Punch's holy-war theory (and that of Mair and Castro) thus appeared to fly in the face of a basic component of seventeenth-century Christian theology: the independence of *dominium* from grace. Punch outlined this in the appendix on justice and law that he added to his textbook in 1652. He asked whether “infidels, sinners, children before the use of reason, and the insane might be capable of *dominium*,” which, as he explained elsewhere, denoted lordship both in the sense of exercise of political power and possession of private property.<sup>37</sup> Punch answered briskly: “*dominium* both of property, and of civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, can be held without faith.” As he explained, the Council of Constance had condemned the dependence of *dominium* on grace as heretical: Christ had enjoined Christians to render unto Caesar the things which were Caesar's (Matthew 23:21), when Caesar was a sinner lacking faith. Moreover, if the legitimacy of magistrates depended on whether they were in a state of grace or sin—which would not be obvious to their fellow humans—there would be chaos throughout Europe.<sup>38</sup>

While Punch did not regard the *dominium* and grace problem as relevant to his theory of holy war, it underlay a series of Jesuit attacks on

<sup>35</sup> John Mair, *In quartum sententiarum quaestiones* (Paris, 1519), dist. 15, q. 20., fols. 117v, 118.

<sup>36</sup> Wadding, *Scriptores*, 11; Alfonsus A. Castro, *De iusta haereticorum punitione, libri III* (Lyons, 1556), book 2, chap. 15, 369–89.

<sup>37</sup> “An infideles, peccatores, pueri ante usum rationis, et amentes sint capaces dominii.” Punch, *Theologiae cursus* (1652), tractatus appendix, “De iustitia et iure,” disp. 1, q. 1, p. 741; Punch, *Theologiae cursus* (1652), disp. 23, q. 7, p. 277.

<sup>38</sup> Punch, *Theologiae cursus* (1652), tractatus appendix, “De iustitia et iure,” disp. 1, q. 1, p. 741.

Castro and Mair. The Jesuit Luis de Molina tackled them jointly in 1593. Both, Molina wrote, held that war might justly be waged against infidels solely on the grounds of idolatry, and that indeed the idolatry of the peoples in the New World supplied sufficient cause for Spanish subjection. Molina added that Pope Innocent IV, Diana, and Sylvester, all held that infidels might be punished on the pope's authority. For Molina however, this was wholly wrong: neither the pope nor any other Christian prince had authority or jurisdiction over infidels, and so had no right to punish them for such an offense. Moreover, those divine commands issued in Deuteronomy to the Israelites to make war on other nations because of idolatry were temporary commands specific to that time and place, rather than divine commands perennially relevant to all Christians. Finally, Molina did concede that in circumstances wherein infidel rulers were harming the innocent in ways violently contrary to natural law—for example, by practicing human sacrifice or cannibalism—then a foreign prince might intervene to uphold justice, even without papal permission.<sup>39</sup> Hence Molina believed that infidel *dominium* was generally impervious even to papal power. Molina's fellow Jesuit Hurtado, writing in 1631, tended more towards papal monarchy, in claiming that the pope had the right to command that force be employed against all barbarians, pagans, and Jews who obstructed the preaching of the faith. Such a right lay in the pope, not in any secular prince, and so infidel *dominium* remained lawful until the pope decreed otherwise.<sup>40</sup>

At this point, Hurtado addressed what he saw as a pernicious tradition within Scotism. For Hurtado, it was against the law of nature to force unbaptized infidels to the faith: by this, he meant especially Jews within Christian kingdoms. This position was endorsed by all theologians, he went on, except John Duns Scotus and his Scotist followers.<sup>41</sup> Hurtado pointed out that, in his *Sentences* commentary, Scotus had argued that the children of Jews and infidels might be baptized even against their parents' wills, on the basis that the right of God outweighed the parents' natural right.<sup>42</sup> Hurtado opposed this position, displaying a Thomist preoccupation with natural teleology. Temporal *dominium*, he wrote, was itself from God, as the author of nature, towards whose praise temporal principality was directed,

<sup>39</sup> Carlos Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 10 vols. (Brussels: Oscar Schepens, 1890–1900), sub “Molina, Louis”; Luis de Molina, *De justitia et jure opera omnia, tractatibus quinque . . . tomus primus* (Cologne, 1733), disp. 106, pp. 235–36.

<sup>40</sup> Petrus Hurtado de Mendoza, *Scholasticae et morales disputationes. De tribus virtutibus theologicis. De fide volumen secundum* (Salamanca, 1631), disp. 75, pp. 578–81.

<sup>41</sup> Hurtado, *Scholasticae et morales disputationes*, disp. 75, pp. 583–38.

<sup>42</sup> Scotus, *Opera omnia*, vol. 8, dist. 4, q. 9, pp. 275–80.

and kings were obliged to forbid things which turned man away from this end, and command the means useful to this natural end. But such natural law did not look to anything supernatural, such as faith in Christ.<sup>43</sup>

Hurtado was not the only Jesuit to note the importance of this argument in Scotus to later Scotists, and to distinguish between the natural and the supernatural in countering it. The Flemish Jesuit Giles de Coninck, who held a theology chair at Leuven in the 1610s and 1620s, echoed Molina in 1623 in insisting that Christian princes could neither by their own authority nor that of the church punish foreign infidels for idolatry or other breaches of natural law, unless such infidels were harming the innocent to the extent of, say, sacrificing them to their gods.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, Coninck also claimed that infidels might have *dominium* over their own property and infidel subjects, and also over Christian subjects.<sup>45</sup> Then Coninck addressed the Scotist tradition of forced baptism, carefully citing Scotus's *Sentences* commentary. He accorded princes the responsibility to punish baptized infidels under their own jurisdiction, and he did not deny—but did not endorse—the pope's deposing power over heretical princes in Europe. Like Hurtado, however, Coninck clearly distinguished between nature and supernature, defining the power of secular princes as totally political and natural (*politica et naturalis*); it could not be greater than that power by which the commonwealth itself was founded, which looked only to a natural end. By contrast, the Christian faith and religion were completely supernatural (*supernaturalia*), and a natural power simply could not force anyone to embrace them.<sup>46</sup> Accordingly, the Scotists had drawn the line between the natural and the supernatural in the wrong place, bringing the supernatural too far into human life, and their doctrines of forcible evangelization and holy war threatened to undermine not just the government of infidels, but all human government.

Further afield, there was indeed a Franciscan tendency towards forcible evangelization, a tendency that extended far beyond lecture halls in Paris and Rome. The rapid, forced mass conversions of indigenous populations undertaken by the Franciscans in sixteenth-century Mexico are now well known, although recent studies tend to emphasize the ideological importance of Franciscan mystical writings belonging to the Joachimite tradition

<sup>43</sup> Hurtado, *Scholasticae et morales disputationes*, disp. 75, p. 588.

<sup>44</sup> Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque*, sub "Coninck, Gilles de"; Giles (Aegidius) De Coninck, *De moralitate, natura, et effectibus actuum supernaturalium in genere . . . libri quattuor* (Antwerp, 1623), disp. 18, dubium 12, con. 5, p. 355.

<sup>45</sup> Coninck, *De moralitate*, disp. 18, dub. 10, pp. 347–50.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, dub. 14, con. 4, pp. 360–63.

(which urged the friars to hurry their evangelization in preparation for the world's end) or the exegetical works of Nicholas of Lyra.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, Franciscan activists who favored the extension of Christendom by force could themselves become objects of reflection for Franciscans within the colleges and universities: the fifteenth-century anti-Ottoman preacher John Capistran was received at St. Anthony's, Louvain, in this way.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, contemporaries judged Scotus's position on the Jews particularly relevant to the tradition in which Castro and Punch stood.

Although he appeared ignorant of Punch's teachings, Archbishop James Ussher of Armagh was nevertheless well informed about the main Irish revolutionary tradition. On April 30, 1627, Ussher, then a member of the Irish Privy Council, spoke in Dublin Castle before representatives of Ireland's Catholic and Protestant elites and Lord Deputy Henry Carey, Viscount Falkland.<sup>49</sup> Ussher opposed the Catholic gentry and nobility's attempt to exchange financial supply for toleration, and instead he demanded a standing army for the kingdom's defense, funded by both Protestants and Catholics. Ussher observed that discontented persons had found recourse to Catholic princes overseas to whom they had unlawfully offered the Irish kingdom; James FitzGerald, tenth earl of Desmond, had made a similar offer to the French king in 1523, and Pope Paul III later transferred the title of Ireland and England from Henry VIII to the Emperor Charles V, which was confirmed onto his son King Philip II during Elizabeth I's reign. By this, Ussher meant the papal excommunications of 1538 and 1570 that invited the English monarchs' deposition; these were not precisely transfers of sovereignty to named monarchs.<sup>50</sup> Ussher continued:

<sup>47</sup> D. E. Randolph, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission in the High Middle Ages* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1975); J. Leddy Phelan, *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970); Viviana Díaz Balsera, *The Pyramid under the Cross: Franciscan Discourses of Evangelization and the Nahua Christian Subject in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2005).

<sup>48</sup> Benjamin Hazard, "A new company of crusaders like that of St John Capistran"—Interaction between Irish Military Units and Franciscan Chaplains: 1579–1654," in *Extranjeros en el ejército: Militares Irlandeses en la sociedad Española 1580–1818*, ed. Enrique García Hernán and Óscar Recio Morales (Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa, 2007), 181–97.

<sup>49</sup> Richard Parr, *The Life of the Most Reverend Father in God, James Ussher, Late Lord Archbishop of Armagh* (London, 1686), 28–35.

<sup>50</sup> Mary Ann Lyons, *Franco-Irish Relations, 1500–1610* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), 29–30; Paul van Dyke, "The Mission of Cardinal Pole to Enforce the Bull of Deposition against Henry VIII," *English Historical Review* 37 (1922): 422–23; Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 157–60.

Hereunto may we add, that of late, in Spain, at the very same time, when the treaty of the Match was in hand, there was a Book published with great approbation there, by one of this Country birth, Philip O Sullevan, wherein the Spaniard is taught, That the ready way to establish his Monarchy (for that is the only thing he mainly aimeth at, and is plainly there confessed) is, first, to set upon Ireland, which being quickly obtained, the Conquest of Scotland, next of England, then of the Low Countries, is foretold with great facility, will follow after.<sup>51</sup>

The “Match” to which Ussher referred was the projected Spanish marriage for James VI and I’s heir, Prince Charles, which had preoccupied the three Stuart kingdoms in the early 1620s; Philip O’Sullivan Beare’s *Historiae Catholicae Iberniae compendium* (Summary of the Catholic history of Ireland) had been composed in the company of fellow noble Munster exiles in Madrid during the 1610s and printed in Lisbon in 1621. In this context, Ussher urged his audience to remember the Nine Years War that had taken place between 1594 and 1603, which had included the Spanish king’s alliance with the rebels, and to remember that Pope Clement VIII had solicited the Irish nobility and gentry to revolt against Elizabeth I in 1600, imparting to the rebels the same indulgences granted to those fighting Turks, and finally to remember that such promises and threats had been seconded in 1603 by divines from Salamanca and Valladolid.<sup>52</sup> Above all, Ussher told those assembled (many of whom were Catholic) not to forget that this revolutionary tradition was a distinctly Gaelic Irish one, and hostile to Irish Catholics of English descent. The standing army that Ussher wanted would thus defend both Ireland’s Catholic and Protestant populations from invasion.

Ussher maintained his interest in O’Sullivan Beare over some years. In one of Ussher’s notebooks, containing material from the 1610s and 1620s, chapters from the *Compendium* were carefully transcribed that treated the spurious nature of the pope’s grant of Ireland to King Henry II in the twelfth century and the injustice of the English claim.<sup>53</sup> In another notebook, including material from as late as 1648, Ussher took a more comprehensive set of notes, particularly attending to O’Sullivan Beare’s vision of

<sup>51</sup> Parr, *Ussher*, 30.

<sup>52</sup> Sir Thomas Stafford, *Pacata Hibernia* (London, 1633), 368–69; Hiram Morgan, “Hugh O’Neill and the Nine Years War in Tudor Ireland,” *Historical Journal* 36 (1993): 21–37.

<sup>53</sup> Trinity College Dublin, MS 568, 91–94.

Ireland's role in re-Catholicizing northern Europe and the most anti-English aspects of his doctrine of sovereignty.<sup>54</sup> Ussher also possessed a report from around 1619 that had apparently been authored by O'Sullivan Beare on ethnic hostilities among the Irish in Spain.<sup>55</sup>

Ussher did not doubt the risk of Catholic revolution and renewed foreign invasion, and he accorded pride of place to the ideological element in this revolutionary tradition as both evidence of past treason and warning of future disaster. Ussher's understanding of this mainstream tradition was not wholly accurate: for example, he placed far more emphasis on the papal deposing power than had O'Sullivan Beare. Nevertheless, it might be argued that Ussher's fear of renewed war in Ireland, driven by Catholic determination to secure confessional security, turned out to be well grounded. Irish Catholics did turn on their Protestant neighbors in 1641; Catholic officers did return to Ireland from the Spanish service in 1642, as the Catholic gentry and nobility established their own provisional government; a papal nuncio did land in Ireland in 1645; and ethnic conflict among Irish Catholics did disrupt Irish politics in 1648. Alternatively, one might argue that Ussher's fears were self-fulfilling and that his advocacy of persecution in the 1620s contributed to the necessary preconditions for that war.<sup>56</sup> Either way, the importance of the Catholic revolutionary tradition to official discourse in Dublin cannot be in doubt.

O'Sullivan Beare was one of those Gaelic Irish revolutionaries who hated Protestant power in Ireland and risked their lives to destroy that power. But they never argued that the Stuarts had lost their right to the kingdom of Ireland because they were Protestant. Several of these radicals had been educated by Jesuits and all argued in a Thomist manner. Ignoring the Franciscan theory of holy war, they instead argued that the Stuarts had lost their right to the kingdom of Ireland because they had broken natural law. There was a complication: some of O'Sullivan Beare's manuscript works as well as the histories and reports composed by Richard O'Ferrall in the 1650s and 1660s alleged that Irish Catholics of English descent had, due to their proximity in language and custom to the English heretics, undergone a process of ill-habitation that had rendered them less Catholic, and that consequently they should be excluded from civil and ecclesiastical government in Ireland.<sup>57</sup> Such exclusion did not contradict the legitimacy

<sup>54</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Rawlinson D 1290, fols. 106r–11r.

<sup>55</sup> Trinity College Dublin, MS 580, fols. 95r–98r.

<sup>56</sup> Clarke, *Old English*, 39–41.

<sup>57</sup> Philip O'Sullivan Beare, *Selections from the Zoilomastix of Philip O'Sullivan Beare*, ed. Thomas J. O'Donnell (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1960).

of Protestant power: all Jesuit theologians were clear that Catholic governments were obliged to persecute heretics living within their jurisdiction, which was a different matter to invading or rebelling against other lawfully constituted jurisdictions.<sup>58</sup> However, it was around this complication that O’Ferrall in the 1660s would build a novel account of Irish society that began to leave the Thomist tradition behind.

Rather than being a scholastic text, emerging from lecture-hall practices, O’Sullivan Beare’s *Compendium* proceeded in a historical mode more suited to the gentleman’s or nobleman’s study. Its primary argument was that Henry II’s twelfth-century conquest of Ireland had been merely an unjust war of aggression and that the papal bull *Laudabiliter* that had authorized that conquest was void, having been dishonestly obtained. Since the conquest, the English monarchy had governed Ireland only for the good of a colonial elite, as opposed to the good of the whole people; the Crown’s parliaments were unrepresentative and the Gaelic Irish were even obliged to seek naturalization to receive the benefit of the law. According to O’Sullivan Beare, English pseudo-law also provided that killing innocent Irishmen was not murder. For O’Sullivan Beare this was irrational, and contrary to natural law. The English monarchs’ embrace of heresy in the sixteenth century was a further tyrannical extravagance; but English government in Ireland had been rendered illegitimate long before. To the manifest injustice of English rule in Ireland, O’Sullivan Beare added a pointed appreciation of the island’s strategic situation, which was such that it might act as a fortress for returning all of northern Europe to the Catholic faith. This, and his insistence that the war of Hugh O’Neill, earl of Tyrone, against Queen Elizabeth I had been a just one, was as close as O’Sullivan Beare came to recommending another Spanish invasion.<sup>59</sup> The same argument appeared in the letters and short treatises of Archbishop Florence Conry in the 1610s and 1620s; in Conor O’Mahony’s *Disputatio apologetica* of 1645, in O’Ferrall’s report of 1658, and in the *Commentarius Rinuccinianus* composed by O’Ferrall and Robert O’Connell in the 1660s. O’Mahony, O’Ferrall, and O’Connell all cited the *Compendium* frequently, and all insisted on the massive injustice of English rule, while Conry and O’Mahony openly demanded war and revolution.

Although O’Sullivan Beare adopted a historical mode in the *Compendium*, he had nevertheless been educated at a Jesuit college founded to educate Irish noblemen at the University of Santiago de Compostella. There he

<sup>58</sup> Harro Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State c. 1540–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 64–83.

<sup>59</sup> Philip O’Sullivan Beare, *Historiae Catholicae Iberniae compendium* (Lisbon, 1621), fols. 10r–11r, 57r–57v, 61r–63v, 202r, 237r–37v, 257v–58r.

achieved an MA and a bachelor's degree in canon law, and his argument was clearly organized around certain fundamental Jesuit and Thomist political assumptions.<sup>60</sup> O'Sullivan Beare's politics also took place in the natural sphere, rather than the supernatural one. He assumed that natural law underlay all European political jurisdictions, whether Catholic or Protestant, and that local positive law contrary to natural law was void.<sup>61</sup> He assumed that the Irish kingdom, whose prestigious ancient founding he described in great detail, was a *respublica perfecta* or perfect political community, an artificial person that due to its size and consequent capacity for self-sufficiency possessed a right of self-defense analogous to that of an individual human.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, he assumed that the purpose of all human government was the common good, and that the political community might resist an attempt to govern in favor of a faction of colonists as though it were an attack on its person.<sup>63</sup> Had O'Sullivan Beare thought it sufficient to state baldly, as Punch later did, that English kings were heretics and therefore might not govern Catholics, there would have been no need for his extended historical arguments.

The Franciscan archbishop of Tuam, Florence Conry, pursued anti-Stuart revolution at the Spanish royal court in Valladolid and Madrid from the later 1590s to 1618, where he assisted O'Sullivan Beare's family, and the political ideologies he employed remained within the Thomist mainstream.<sup>64</sup> In his *Compendium*, O'Sullivan Beare printed an important letter of Conry's that had circulated in Ireland after the Irish Parliament had passed the attainder of the Catholic earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell in 1614, thereby enabling the confiscation and colonization of their Ulster estates. In this letter, Conry did not argue that the authority of the Protestant James I was *ipso facto* illegitimate; rather, Conry insisted that the earls had committed no offense against the king, that they had not been convicted by their own confessions or by reliable witnesses, and concluded that the right to private property under natural law was not one that James was competent to negate.<sup>65</sup> In 1616, Conry had his Irish-language translation of an

<sup>60</sup> Clare Carroll, "Custom and Law in the Philosophy of Suárez and the Histories of O'Sullivan Beare, Céitinn, and Ó Cléirigh," in Carroll, *Circe's Cup: Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Writing about Ireland* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2001), 124–34.

<sup>61</sup> Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought*, 263–82.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 203–4, 222–23.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 283–313.

<sup>64</sup> For Conry's career as a proto-Jansenist theologian, see Thomas O'Connor, *Irish Jansenists 1600–1700* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2008).

<sup>65</sup> O'Sullivan Beare, *Compendium*, fols. 255r–57v. Hazard's interpretation differs; see Hazard, *Faith and Patronage*, 101.



Iberian devotional text printed for use in the Spanish dominions and Ireland, and he also added long sections to his composition on the proper relationship between Catholic subjects and Protestant government.<sup>66</sup> Mícheál Mac Craith has ably placed these arguments in the context of Jesuit political theory, showing how Conry firmly defended the papal power to depose princes, while at the same time reluctantly implying the distinct, natural power even of Protestant kings.<sup>67</sup> This is unsurprising: despite the archbishop's Franciscan habit, he had been educated by Jesuits at the Irish College of the University of Salamanca.<sup>68</sup>

Both the foundation of St. Anthony's College at Leuven in 1607 and the securing of an Irish *tercio* (a Spanish unit somewhat larger than a regiment) for Henry O'Neill in 1609 were the result of Conry's adroit lobbying at court. The primary purpose of St. Anthony's was to train friars for the Irish mission, but this was inseparable from strategic considerations. Hazard has explained that the treatises and letters that Conry addressed to King Philip III of Spain in 1605–6 stressed that the Irish College at Salamanca was dominated by Irishmen of English descent who were antipathetic to Ulster, Connacht, and the Spanish monarchy, unlike the Gaelic Irish, who were descended from the ancient Spaniard Milesius and who fought on the Spanish side against Queen Elizabeth I. An Irish Franciscan college in the Low Countries, Conry argued, would better preserve Catholicism in Ireland and also prepare the way for the re-conversion of the English.<sup>69</sup> However, not all the voices emerging from St. Anthony's in the 1610s and 1620s demanded revolution. Although Hugh McCaughwell appears to have hoped for a Spanish invasion of Ireland right up to his death in 1626, nonetheless his *Scáthán shacramuinte na haithbridhe* (Mirror of the sacrament of repentance) of 1618, a printed work on penance directed to the laity, acknowledged James I as king of Ireland.<sup>70</sup> And the tenor of political discourse in St. Anthony's becomes more difficult to judge in the 1630s, as works connected to the college such as the *Annála ríoghachta Éireann* (Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland) did nothing to suggest that Charles I's

<sup>66</sup> Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire (Florence Conry), *Desiderius* (Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies, 1941), 127–29.

<sup>67</sup> Mícheál Mac Craith, "The Political and Religious Thought of Florence Conry and Hugh McCaughwell," in *The Origins of Sectarianism in Early Modern Ireland*, ed. Alan Ford and John McCafferty (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 183–202.

<sup>68</sup> Hazard, *Faith and Patronage*, 27–31.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 50–54.

<sup>70</sup> Brendan Jennings, *Michael O Cleirigh: Chief of the Four Masters and his Associates* (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1936), 191–92; Mac Craith, "Political and Religious Thought," 197–99, 202.

rule was unlawful.<sup>71</sup> Nevertheless, the version of Archbishop Peter Lombard's *De regno Hiberniae . . . commentarius*, celebrating the great earl of Tyrone and his war against Elizabeth I, which was printed at Leuven in 1632, provides evidence of ongoing hostility to Stuart sovereignty in the O'Neill *tercio*.<sup>72</sup> Along with the O'Donnell *tercio* founded in 1632, all these institutions proved crucial in forming the generation that returned to Ireland in 1642.<sup>73</sup>

Conor O'Mahony's *Disputatio apologetica* of 1645 drew heavily on O'Sullivan Beare's *Compendium*, but O'Mahony's arguments were the most extreme of any member of this Irish revolutionary tradition.<sup>74</sup> An Irish Jesuit based in Portugal, O'Mahony, who had held a chair in moral philosophy at the University of Évora and taught at the Irish College in Lisbon, bitterly hated English heresy.<sup>75</sup> Printed in Lisbon, his book was divided between a scholastic argument against the English right to Ireland (the *disputatio*) and an oration meant to persuade the Irish to throw off English rule and elect a native king (the *exhortatio*). In the *disputatio*, O'Mahony argued that the provisions of the bull *In coena Domini*, which was read annually in Rome and excommunicated all those who aided heretics, meant not only that all English and Scottish heretics should be expelled from Ireland immediately, but also that those Catholics who supported those heretics in any way should also "be done away with" (*e medio tollere*); and he also took care also to approve the practice in Catholic commonwealths of burning heretics at the stake.<sup>76</sup> In the *exhortatio*, O'Mahony celebrated the killing of 150,000 heretics in Ireland between 1641 and 1645, lamenting

<sup>71</sup> Bernadette Cunningham, *The Annals of the Four Masters: Irish History, Kinship and Society in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010), 35–37, 293–98.

<sup>72</sup> Thomas O'Connor, "A Justification for Foreign Intervention in Early Modern Ireland: Peter Lombard's *Commentarius*," in *Irish Migrants in Europe after Kinsale, 1602–1820*, ed. Thomas O'Connor and Mary Ann Lyons (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 14–31.

<sup>73</sup> Hazard, *Faith and Patronage*, 83–89; Brendan Jennings, "The Career of Hugh, Son of Rory O'Donnell, Earl of Tirconnel, in the Low Countries, 1607–1642," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 30 (1941): 219–34.

<sup>74</sup> C. M. [Constantius Marullus, Conor O'Mahony], *Disputatio apologetica de iure regni Hiberniae pro Catholicis Hibernis adversus haereticos Anglos* (Frankfurt [Lisbon], 1645); C. M. [Conor O'Mahony], *Disputatio apologetica* (Dublin, 1826); C. M., *An Argument Defending the Right of the Kingdom of Ireland*, trans. John Minahane (Aubane: Aubane Historical Society, 2010).

<sup>75</sup> Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin, "Conor O'Mahony," in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, ed. James McGuire and James Quinn, 9 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 7:659–60.

<sup>76</sup> O'Mahony, *Disputatio Apologetica* (1826), 45, 96.

only that not all had been killed. He drew this figure from anti-Catholic English pamphlets.<sup>77</sup>

Although O'Mahony thus arrived at a position closely comparable to that of Punch, he had traveled to that position along a Jesuit trajectory, and remained within the conventions of Jesuit political thought. All this killing was taking place because the Irish were fighting a just war.<sup>78</sup> The bulk of O'Mahony's *disputatio* was a thorough refutation of four arguments on which O'Mahony believed English rule over the Irish kingdom rested: that Henry II had conquered Ireland in a just war; that the island had been granted to Henry by the bull *Laudabiliter*; that Henry had been acclaimed lord by the Irish political nation; and that English kings had established a prescriptive right to Ireland. For O'Mahony, Henry's war had been unjust, *Laudabiliter* was void because acquired on false pretenses, Henry's acclamation had been extorted by fear, and no prescriptive right could exist that was based on such unjust foundations.<sup>79</sup> O'Mahony described English government in Ireland as tyrannous from the outset, carefully arguing that if one might fight a just war in defense of one's property, as was universally agreed, then one might also fight a war in defense of one's religion.<sup>80</sup> And despite cheerfully quoting extracts from the excommunications of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, as well as the indulgences granted by Pope Gregory XIII to Irish Catholics fighting the Crown in 1580, the indulgence granted by Clement VIII in 1600, and Pope Urban VIII's bull of indulgence to Owen Roe O'Neill in 1642, the fact that there had been no papal excommunication of either James I or Charles I meant that O'Mahony was driven to insist that kings were a human institution, and that their power came from God only indirectly via the people who might depose such kings without papal intervention when those kings behaved tyrannously.<sup>81</sup> For O'Mahony, monarchical rule "has its foundation in an agreement of human society and therefore it is not by the immediate institution of God," and its "institution is human, and made immediately by men."<sup>82</sup> Political life thus remained a natural space for O'Mahony, preserved, however reluctantly, from the supernatural.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 125; Darcy, *Irish Rebellion*, 157.

<sup>78</sup> O'Mahony, *Disputatio apologetica* (1826), 99.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 7–64.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 32–42, 65–73.

<sup>82</sup> "fundamentum habere in pacto societatis humanae ac proinde non esse immediate ex institutione Dei," "restat ergo, ut haec institutio sit humana, et ab hominibus immediate facta." *Ibid.*, 69–70.

In the persons of Bishop Heber McMahon of Clogher and Bishop Boethius MacEgan of Ross, the former of whom had been educated in Leuven in the 1620s, this anti-Stuart political tradition entered the household of Gianbattista Rinuccini, papal nuncio to the confederate Catholics of Ireland between 1645 and 1649.<sup>83</sup> The Jesuit political theory on which this Irish ideology of revolution rested was entirely familiar to the Florentine nuncio; his early education had been at the Jesuits' hands, and he held a doctorate in civil and canon law from the University of Pisa.<sup>84</sup> Rinuccini did not need Irish extremists to teach him either a hostility to Protestants or a reverence for high doctrines of papal power; but McMahon and MacEgan did convince the nuncio that Irish Catholics of English descent should be regarded as ill-habituated by their contact with the English and consequently less Catholic than the Gaelic Irish, and this conviction subsequently permeated the nuncio's reports to Rome.<sup>85</sup> It was this mixture of resistance theory and ethnic stereotyping that O'Ferrall, Rinuccini's ablest Irish servant, carried forward into the Congregation de Propaganda Fide in the 1650s, until his ideological program was exposed to the bitter criticisms of the exiled Stuart court and Irish Catholic loyalists in 1659.<sup>86</sup>

The *Commentarius Rinuccinianus* was a massive history of the battle between Catholicism and heresy in Ireland from the Reformation to the 1660s, as well as a defense of the former nuncio's honor. Composed with the support of the Rinuccini family in Florence between 1658 and 1666 by O'Ferrall and his fellow Capuchin Robert O'Connell, it was the last grand statement of the ideology first articulated by O'Sullivan Beare in 1621. The tradition died with the accession of the Catholic King James II in 1685. The same arguments pioneered in the *Compendium* reappeared in the *Commentarius*, and were treated at much greater length and with greater historical sophistication. This attention to societal change over time in fact began gently to undermine that line between the natural and the supernatural, as the two friars described how heresy might slowly invade and distort all aspects of a people's life. Laudabiliter was unlawful, the *Commentarius* argued, and English political traditions and institutions such as parliament

<sup>83</sup> Eudoxius Alithinologus [John Lynch], *Supplementum alithinologiae* ([St Malo], 1667), 75–76.

<sup>84</sup> Ó hAnnracháin, *Catholic Reformation*, 83–85.

<sup>85</sup> “Relazione del Regno d'Irlanda 1 Marzo 1646,” in *Nunziatura in Irlanda di Monsignor Gio. Batista Rinuccini Archivescovo di Fermo negli anni 1643 a 1649*, ed. Giuseppe Aiazzi (Florence, 1844), 104–15, at 105; “Relazione delle Cose D'Irlanda fatta al Pont. Innocenzio X da Monsignor Rinuccini dopo il suo ritorno,” in *ibid.*, 391–433, at 392.

<sup>86</sup> Ian Campbell, “Truth and Calumny in Baroque Rome: Richard O'Ferrall and the *Commentarius Rinuccinianus*, 1648–1667,” *Irish Historical Studies* 38 (2012): 211–29.

and the common law that were cherished by Irish Catholics of English descent had been made channels for distribution of former ecclesiastical property. Ecclesiastical property was thus the device by which the English heretics seduced Irish Catholics of English descent into a corrupt slavery. By contrast, the Gaelic Irish preferred Catholic freedom. The *Commentarius* was clear that all wars fought by the Gaelic Irish against English government in Ireland were just wars fought in defense of religion and *patria*, but never stated directly that the Stuarts had lost their right to rule the kingdom. The printing of the *Commentarius* was prevented by the English resident in Florence, John Finch, who deemed it an attack on Charles II's right to Ireland.<sup>87</sup> Catholic loyalists believed that O'Ferrall's earlier 1658 report amounted to a revolutionary argument of the same kind as O'Mahony's 1645 *Disputatio*; the two texts were publicly burned in Dublin by an assembly of loyalist clergy in 1666.<sup>88</sup>

While John Punch's theory of holy war and revolution emerged from a distinct Franciscan, Scotist tradition, this was nevertheless a highly unusual theory when viewed in the wider context of Catholic scholasticism and Irish revolutionary thought. Jesuit theologians criticized Scotist theories of forcible evangelization similar to those advanced by Punch as drawing the supernatural too far into human life and endangering the natural space in which God enabled humans to construct laws and commonwealths. Punch's theory appears to have had no political effects; but this is not true of the main, Jesuit-inflected Irish revolutionary tradition. Irish Protestants and agents of the Stuart government were well informed about these Irish revolutionaries and they were a party of political importance in Ireland between 1641 and 1652. Such revolutionaries were far more careful to distinguish between the natural and supernatural than Punch, even if in the case of O'Mahony and O'Ferrall that distinction became blurred. This distinction between the natural and the supernatural was deeply embedded among Roman Catholics and discouraged the adoption of simple theories of holy war, in the sense of evangelization by force. Early modern Europeans who placed God at the center of their lives could also prove vigorous defenders of humankind's God-granted natural powers. Committed Christians were not necessarily slaves to the supernatural.

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<sup>87</sup> Bodleian Library, MS Carte 35, fols. 518r–19v; John Finch at Florence to Ormond, 2/12 July 1667.

<sup>88</sup> Peter Walsh, *The History & Vindication of the Loyal Formulary* (no place, 1674), part 2 of 1st treatise, 736–42.