

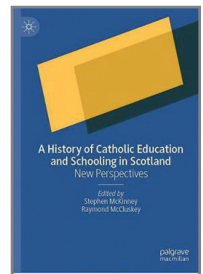
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A History of Catholic Education and Schooling in Scotland. New Perspectives

Historia wychowania katolickiego i oświaty
w Szkocji. Nowe perspektywy

S.J. McKinney, R. McCluskey (eds.), *A History of Catholic Education and Schooling in Scotland. New Perspectives*, London 2019: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 207.

The centenary of the passing of the Education Act in Scotland in 1918 provided a unique opportunity for scholars to revisit the historical context of this important moment in Scottish history. This book is clearly a response to the stimulus of the anniversary. *A History of Catholic Education and Schooling in Scotland* is the title of this book and reflects the historical importance of the Catholic community in this northern country. The subtitle, *New Perspectives*, was added by the editors to indicate the enhancement and extension of knowledge in this particular field. This series of essays forms a great publication which helps to understand the importance of the 1918 Education Act. Not only does it concern Catholic schools across the country, but it also definitely helps the reader to comprehend the background of the evolution of state-funded schooling in Scotland.



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The aim of the work is presented in the wide-ranging introduction, which is also referred to as chapter one. It comprehensively presents the historical context of Catholic education and the long process of providing school education in Scotland. The most important acts from 1872 and 1918 highlight the role of the Church in the provision of school education and its development in the nineteenth and twentieth century. What is more, the book provides the reader with incredibly detailed insights into the impact of Catholic schooling and Scottish education. The nine elaborate chapters are focused on five key themes that recur throughout the book: the impact of poverty on children in Catholic schooling, the role of religious and lay female teachers, the training of Catholic teachers, the identity of the Scottish Catholic community and sectarianism. The introduction has a logical narrative construction with very personal language and offers smooth connections to the remainder of the publication.

Chapter two, which was written by the editors, is called “The Education (Scotland) Act, 1918, in Historical Context.” This part specifically describes the context of the book and discusses the key themes through history. It provides the reader with a detailed examination of the two mentioned Education Acts. What was particularly interesting to the authors were the early post-Reformation Catholic schools and those established by the Catholic Schools Society after its inception in 1817. The final lines of this chapter explore the response of the Catholic Church to the Acts and present the slow process of the integration of schools into the state-funded school sector. Overall it is a very informative and complex chapter with clear language supported by the vast knowledge of the authors.

The next chapter is entitled “The Distinctiveness of Catholic Schooling in the West of Scotland Before the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918.” It was written by Geraldine Vaughan, who examines the distinctiveness of Catholic schooling before the 1918 Education Act. She describes some early practices, including the relation between Catholic schools and the religious instructions delivered in parishes on Saturdays and Sundays. The problems with attendance at school are mentioned here as well. The end of this chapter is devoted to the key question of Irish identity in Catholic schools. The author proposes that the influence of ultramontanistism was strong within Scottish

Catholicism. This chapter represents an innovative approach in the publication.

Chapter four, written by Sister Karly Kehoe, is devoted to “Women Religious and the Development of Scottish Education.” The author is the Canada Research Chair in Atlantic Canada Communities at Saint Mary’s University in Nova Scotia. Her chapter shows that there is a need to ensure that race, class and gender are used to question the historical legacy of education. The author presents the important role (especially after 1850) of the women religious in Scotland. She claims that historical narratives underestimate females’ contribution to Catholic schooling. The whole chapter shows some of the major barriers that were faced by the Catholic community, elementary schooling and teacher training for women. What impressed me most is the part dedicated to women’s impact on creating a culture of education within the mentioned Catholic community in Scotland.

Chapter five, “The Role of Male Religious Orders in Education in Scotland in the Decades Leading up to the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918,” analyses the role of male religious orders in the period leading up to the Education Act. The author, Tom O’Donoghue, provides the reader with a concise but very useful context of the origins and development of religious life from the ascetics in the desert until now. Also noteworthy is the variety of male religious orders that created schools across Scotland while at the same time avoiding the danger of concentrating on the Central Belt of Scotland.

The sixth chapter is dedicated to “The Role of Lay Women Teachers in Catholic Education Before the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918” and is written in a very interesting fashion by Jane McDermid from Southampton University. Her chapter explores the role of lay female teachers in Catholic schools as well as the challenges faced by these women. The main idea of this chapter is to show the major issues of the day: the salary difference between women and men and the rising costs of maintaining schools. The conclusion drawn by the author is that female teachers were to be a cheap labour source. At the end of this chapter, McDermid presents the impact of the establishment of Notre Dame College, which changed teacher training by raising the quality of female teachers and widened the curriculum.

The following chapter looks into the question of “Catholic Education Beyond the School: Sodalities and Public Lectures.” The reader, thanks to Raymond McCluskey, is offered a chance to discover non-formal learning and the scope of public lectures in the late nineteenth century. This chapter offers two paths: a discussion of the Roman Question and a surprising engagement with some of the major scientific issues of the day.

The next chapter, which is called “The Presbyterian Campaign (1923–1930) Against the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918,” was written by Stephen J. McKinney from the School of Education at the University of Glasgow. He touches on an under-researched area, namely the response of the Church of Scotland to the Education Act. Apart from that, he manages to present the advantages gained by the Roman Catholic Church in denominational schooling. According to the author, it is important to explain that the campaign against the 1918 Act was used as a tool to reclaim and recover the power of the Church of Scotland in national schooling. The author’s line of thought is very well-structured and well-presented in this chapter.

The last, ninth, chapter of this book is entitled “The Education (Scotland) Act, 1918, Revisited: The Act and Its Legal Implications.” The author, Mary McHugh, is an archivist of the RC Archdiocese of Glasgow and lectured in church history at Chester College. This part might be especially interesting for those who are curious about key events that occurred after the Education Act. The author gives a wide description of the outcomes, such as new Catholic school buildings, the transfer of Catholic schools and their progress and development at that time. McHugh draws our attention to persistent challenges in recruiting a sufficient number of Catholic teachers for the new schools. The value of this chapter is indisputable and unique in terms of the detailed analysis of male and female religious orders and congregations in Scotland.

The reviewed book has led me to the conclusion that the complexity and experience of the authors made this publication special and readable. It presents a very helpful and detailed summary of what has been achieved in the history of Catholic education and schooling in Scotland through the years. The authors of this book managed to present and extensively describe the difficulties and challenges for both female and male teachers over time. On the whole, the volume

gives the reader an opportunity to explore research and ideas on the rough history of Catholic education. Written by skilful writers, it is now more interesting than ever before.

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