

# The Irish Civil War and Society: Politics, Class, and Conflict

Gavin M. Foster

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Gavin Foster re-conceptualizes class debates around the Irish Civil War (1922-3), exploring the social dimensions of the bitter conflict from fresh angles that highlight the rival social outlooks, interests, and conflicts that ruptured nationalist solidarity at the end of the Irish Revolution. Putting aside traditional class conflict models and quantitative socio-economic methods, Foster uniquely emphasizes social status as a key area of friction and contestation between supporters and opponents of the Irish Free State that informed partisan discourses, animosities and outlooks. His analysis of these 'politics of respectability' includes an innovative chapter on the partisan meanings of clothing and lifestyle practices, while he also complicates traditional narratives of the civil war by showing the pervasive and intimate blurring of republican insurgency with social conflicts over land, labour, and state authority. Chapters on the understudied aftermath of the civil war illuminate the political and social pressures that forced many IRA veterans to emigrate, an important revolutionary outcome that helped cement the conservative post-revolutionary settlement.



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