

CHANGING LAND: DIASPORA ACTIVISM AND THE IRISH LAND WAR. By Niall Whelehan. Pp 216. New York: NYU Press. 2021. US\$30.

Throughout the mid- to late- nineteenth century, innovations in print culture and travel allowed for a heightened interconnectedness between migrants and their homelands, and indeed, migrants and their country men and women who had emigrated and settled in other locations around the globe. Within an Irish context, such individuals often served as the precipitants for many of the major social and political movements which emerged and took root in the home culture. From the rise of Fenianism to the Gaelic cultural revival, the unique multicultural vantage points of individual migrants and the diasporic communities they inhabited allowed for radical new engagements with Irish identity, unfettered by the restraints of British colonial rule. Despite the deep political agency evinced by these communities, there is a scholarly tendency to peripherally reduce their activism to fundraising efforts and their reception of political leaders on highly publicised tours. Niall Whelehan's groundbreaking study reverses this trend, conveying the extent to which the Land War in nineteenth-century Ireland was connected to wider ideological currents, and driven by returned emigrants and other visitors. What emerges is a fast-paced narrative which retraces the steps of these 'lesser-known activists', shedding light on their motivations, beliefs and the radical networks they established as they travelled throughout not only Ireland, but the far reaches of the diaspora, connecting the land question to progressive causes ranging from socialism and feminism to humanitarianism and abolition.

Whelehan's study is organised into five chapters which are largely formulated around the stories of individual actors or communities representing various schools of thought and aspects of the Irish emigrant experience. As the author notes, this approach 'helps to negotiate the complexity of transnational relations and recapture points of contact, alliances, and contradictions between people, places, and ideologies often considered separately' (p. 7).

Chapter 1 introduces the transnational story of Peter O'Leary, an Irish-speaking emigrant to England who emerged as a key advocate for land nationalisation during his vast travels across Ireland, England, the United States and Canada. As Whelehan shows, O'Leary possessed a heightened appreciation of the different forms of Irishness that were shaped and developed based on emigrants' specific destinations, and thus 'aimed to cultivate a diaspora sensibility throughout his travels ... reflecting his sense of himself as an agent for strengthening links between different emigrant centers and with Ireland' (p. 44).

Chapters 2 and 3 provide a counterbalance to the often male-centric histories of the period, focusing on the activism of transnational agitator Marguerite Moore and the Ladies' Land League of Dundee, Scotland, respectively. Whelehan skilfully charts the rise of Moore's political activism, which would ultimately outlast the Ladies' Land League after its abrupt dissolution in the summer of 1882. A self-professed nationalist of the Young Ireland stamp, Moore eventually settled in the United States, where she utilised the skills and contacts she had gained as an Irish land activist to embrace new causes, ranging from equal rights for women and the peace movement to the push for Irish independence. Indeed, the author pinpoints how Moore came to embody an integral intergenerational link between the earlier female activists of the Land League and the local *Cumann na mBan*.

Amongst the cities where a youthful Moore inspired other emigrant women to engage with the land question was Dundee, where she spoke on several occasions. Despite the brevity of the Ladies' Land League's activities in the community, *Changing land* highlights their overwhelming significance to understandings of the period, in that they 'challenge perceptions of the organization as primarily a middle-class affair and suggests that the agency of working-class women as a factor in nineteenth-century Irish diaspora activism has been neglected' (p. 93).

Chapter 4 moves across the Atlantic to consider how the Land War was interpreted and engaged with by the sizeable Irish community in Argentina. As Whelehan relays, the opinions of these Irish-Argentines were wide ranging. Some, like Dublin-emigrant doctor John Craghe, sought to tap into conversations about land nationalisation in the hopes of challenging the power and wealth inequalities of both their native and adoptive countries. However, news of anti-landlord sentiment simultaneously brought discomfort to those

Irish who had emerged as wealthy landowners in their new homes. Ultimately, Whelehan notes, the enthusiasm and spatial distance from Ireland left the likes of Creaghe out of political step with the home culture, despite their dedication to the cause.

In reflecting on both the triumphs and shortcomings of diasporic activists, chapter 5 focuses on the eccentric figure of Thomas Ainge Devyr, a Donegal emigrant who had once been a veteran Chartist in England before settling in Brooklyn, New York. Unlike the majority of those featured in the book who became enamoured with the writings of Henry George, and in particular, his stance on the necessity of land nationalisation, Devyr remained diametrically opposed to the idea. Instead, he criticised George's 'false assumption that the land is the property of the nation' and clung to the belief that 'land as a "Divine Gift" ... could not be owned by individual or state' (p. 131). This is but one example of a thorniness which coloured the Donegal man's activism, leaving him prone to fallouts with potential allies and former comrades.

One of the more thought-provoking aspects of Whelehan's study is the way in which, even when engaged in radical politics of their own, Irish land agitators proved susceptible to adopting and regurgitating the prejudices of the various societies to which they travelled or settled. For example, Whelehan outlines how Peter O'Leary conveyed a deep sense of European superiority during a trip to the United States in 1879 and 1880, writing disparagingly of Chinese labourers and separately reflecting that the local Ojibwe and Métis people whom he encountered in Minnesota were 'as a race ... struck down deep in savage abomination' (p. 19).

Of course, such views were not uncommon amongst Irish emigrants of the time. However, Whelehan's incorporation of the beliefs held by certain members of the Irish community in Argentina reveals that such proclivities stretched well beyond Irish experiences in the Anglosphere. In what marks an important parallel to the practice of violent indigenous displacement and settler colonialism in North America during the nineteenth century, the author utilises a cache of previously neglected sources to convey how the ideals of the Land League clashed with the actions of these far-flung Irish emigrants in the southern half of South America. As Whelehan relays, 'Irish Argentine leaders cheered the expansion of the frontier and the accompanying land boom at the same time as the agitation against landlordism in Ireland intensified' (p. 95).

Ultimately, the various interrelated stories presented by Whelehan convey the degree to which the Land League and Ladies' Land League 'contribute[d] to mapping ... the imagined geography of an "Irish world"', as international branches became integrally 'connected through traveling agitators, speaking tours, newspapers, and published fundraising lists' (p. 149). The enduring value of the study lies in the author's ability to convey the different meanings that these agitators took from the land question, and how their activism was inherently shaped by the experiences and views they encountered across the various societies in which they found themselves. Whelehan's contribution will surely provide an essential cornerstone for future studies of emigrant activism.

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PATRICK MAHONEY
Drew University
pmahoney@drew.edu

THE FIRST WORLD WAR DIARY OF NOËL DRURY, 6TH ROYAL DUBLIN FUSILIERS: GALLIPOLI, SALONIKA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE WESTERN FRONT. Edited by Richard S. Grayson. Pp 348. Martlesham: Army Record Society/Boydell Press. 2022. £75.

Historians who specialise in the First World War traditionally focus (sometimes, almost entirely) on the Western Front. In British (and European) collective memories, greater emphasis is given to the Battles of the Somme, which is where the 16th (Irish) and 36th (Ulster) Divisions fought during the entire conflict. Retracing the wartime experiences of a unit deployed in the Balkans, Mesopotamia and the Middle East, Richard Grayson provides