

physical evidence survives from thirty of them, all of them Augustinian, and this points to general multiformity in design. Ten or eleven of the nunneries were co-located with the houses of male Augustinians. Her map on (p. 29) shows some interesting clusters of nunneries, as in the vicinity of Clonfert, and begs the question as to whether the clusters identified were simply random phenomena or whether there were many more nunneries in existence than those mentioned in the patchy records that have chanced to survive.

Tadhg O'Keefe's study of the eight known transeptal churches of the regular canons in Ireland shows that all but one of them date from the early years of the English invasion, between 1177 and 1210, with the exception at Ballintubber — the only example built in an area that was not conquered. The discussion of the architecture of the priories at Athassel, County Tipperary, Ballybogan, County Dublin and Newtown Trim, County Meath, exemplify what can be achieved by a maestro in his field. O'Keefe suggests that the transeptal church was a manifestation of the 'big bang' of Augustinian monastic culture after 1177 and as such must have implications for our understanding of the nature of the Augustinian regular community before the invasion. The association of some Augustinian communities with English colonisation in eastern Ireland is analysed in depth by Arlene Hogan through her study of the cartularies of the canons of Llanthony Prima and Secunda. Adrian Empey emphasises the Augustinian contribution to the development of the parochial system across much of Ireland from the twelfth century. However, this reviewer suspects that their role was more parasitic than positive.

Finally, Brendan Scott addresses the dissolution of the Augustinian houses in the Pale by Henry VIII, while Clemens Galban surveys the story of the Augustinians in Ireland following the Henrician dissolutions until their eventual extinction with the death of the last abbot in 1829. Altogether this impressive collection of essays transforms our understanding and appreciation of one of the largest institutions in operation in medieval Ireland. It shows how much Ireland's rich built heritage can contribute to the study of Irish history, and it reminds any historian who may yet need to be reminded of the pitfalls of insularity when studying the transnational medieval Church.

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HENRY A. JEFFERIES

*Arts and Humanities Research Institute, Ulster University*

WALTER RALEGH: ARCHITECT OF EMPIRE. By Alan Gally. Pp xiv, 560. New York: Basic Books. 2019. £35.

Walter Raleigh was one of the pivotal players in Elizabethan England's initial forays into empire building in Ireland and North America. In this book Alan Gally has succeeded in generating a study of Raleigh that is very readable, lively and accessible. One of the great strengths of his book is that he shows how English colonisation in Ireland fitted into the wider patterns of English imperialist ambitions in Elizabeth's reign. Raleigh himself personifies the connectedness of English colonialism in Ireland and in North America in that he played key roles in the Munster plantation and also in the Virginia plantation, and in doing so he was not alone. Gally situates Raleigh firmly among a closely-related milieu of ambitious west country adventurers who sought to make their fortunes beyond England's shores.

One of the most important of those men for Raleigh was his elder half-brother, Humphrey Gilbert. In 1566 Gilbert submitted a proposal to Elizabeth I asking her to allow him to find a north-west passage to Asia, which won the support of William Cecil, the queen's chief minister, but was ultimately rejected because of the competing claims of the Muscovy Company. Therefore, Gilbert looked to Ireland for opportunities to gain riches but his dubious claims to land in south-eastern Ireland helped to precipitate a rebellion, which he then proceeded to crush on behalf of the queen by employing levels of savagery that were unprecedented in Ireland.

When Gilbert's adventures in Ireland brought him no fortune, he looked again to the Americas to enrich himself. He again offered to find a north-west passage to Asia, and also to pirate Spanish treasure from the Americas and to colonise the north-east coast of North America on behalf of the queen. However, his ill-organised attempt at establishing a colony in North America in 1578, along with his half-brothers, Carew and Walter Raleigh, ended in dismal failure. Walter subsequently became one of Elizabeth's captains during the Desmond rebellion and played his part in pacifying southern Ireland through a murderous famine. When the rebellion came to an end Walter joined Gilbert in yet another failed attempt to establish a colony in North America.

After Gilbert died, Raleigh secured the queen's approval to establish a colony of his own in North America, and in July 1584 a small English settlement was duly established on Roanoke Island. The planned colony on the mainland never matched Raleigh's great expectations and six years later Roanoke was completely abandoned by its English colonists in mysterious circumstances. Meanwhile, Raleigh enjoyed greater success in another colonial venture — the plantation of Munster. He used his position as one of Elizabeth Tudor's favourites to secure grants from her of three-and-a-half choice seignories: an area of about 150,000 acres when account is taken of non-arable land (p. 270).

Gallay offers a sympathetic account of Raleigh's efforts as a coloniser. He highlights the economic benefits generated for Youghal and its hinterland, and his success in attracting English immigrant farmers and manufacturers to Munster. However, having gotten one of the queen's ladies-in-waiting pregnant, Raleigh married her in November 1591 without the queen's permission, and ended up imprisoned in the Tower of London in consequence. Though he was released in time his fortunes never fully recovered. The plantation of Virginia had failed, his involvement in Munster was curtailed and he was barred from Elizabeth's court. He began to fantasise about finding incredible riches in South America. In 1595 Raleigh launched his quest for El Dorado in the 'empire of Guiana', an imaginary place which he supposed was located somewhere near the Orinoco River. The quest ended, inevitably, in failure.

Raleigh's shifting focus on Ireland and the Americas as potential sources of fortune and fame, and also service to his queen, alerts the reader to the fact that he and his kind sought their personal aggrandisement in what they saw as inter-changeable theatres. Gallay transforms our understanding of the true nature of the English colonial enterprise in Ireland by setting it in its transatlantic context. English colonists justified their schemes on many bases, but one recurring claim is that they were motivated by a desire to bring benefits to the 'savages' whose lands they intended to colonise. In America, as in Ireland, they claimed that they wished to propagate true religion to the 'natives', which was an empty formula in both cases. They also trumpeted the economic gains that would accrue to both the indigenous peoples, as well as to the colonists. However, the bottom line was that should the 'natives' resist the English they could then be exterminated, just as the god of the Old Testament sanctioned the dispossession, enslavement or genocide of the enemies of the Israelites. English provocations cynically provoked resistance — which was then used to justify genocidal campaigns against great numbers of people ahead of English settlement on both sides of the Atlantic. All too often historians have mimicked the English and blamed the victims for their misfortunes.

The great weakness in Gallay's book is that he tries to represent Raleigh as an exception to the rule; as a coloniser who sincerely conceived of 'colonization as an act of co-creation, of English and Natives working together', one who 'understood indigenous peoples as humans blessed by God' (p. 364). However, his evidence of Raleigh working in co-operation with native people concords with a wider pattern wherein other English colonisers 'promoted friendship as a means of coexistence ... (while) they waited until they had a modicum of security before turning to enslaving, swindling, attacking and taking Natives' land' (p. 364). This book is not the definitive study of Raleigh, but it makes a nonsense of any attempt to understand him or his kind from a strictly insular perspective.