

Act and the New Poor Law over the next decade. Despite these shortcomings, which prevent it from being the last word on the Captain Swing riots, *The Rural War* is a valuable addition to a growing body of literature on rural protest.

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CATHERINE HALL. *Macaulay and Son: Architects of Imperial Britain*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012. Pp. 420. \$75.00 (cloth).
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Over the past twenty-five years, Catherine Hall has built a reputation as one of the preeminent historians of her generation. In a series of path-breaking works, she has shown us the riches that lie at the interface where middle-class formation, the domestic life of the family, and the history of nineteenth-century British imperialism intersect. In this study of the two-generational saga of the Macaulays, Hall now adds to her string of seminal publications with what may well be her most polished and masterful book.

Her story begins with the rise of Zachary Macaulay, a young impecunious Scotsman, who was compelled by necessity to emigrate to Jamaica. After eight years as a plantation manager, he returned to Britain psychologically transformed. The former slave driver became a leading abolitionist, an indefatigable crusader for evangelical Anglicanism, and a key political operative with the Clapham Sect. Hall shows us the many ways in which domesticity was at the center of both Zachary's personal experience and his public vision of liberal imperial reform. As governor of Sierra Leone (1793–99), he tried to forge an antidote to slavery by inculcating his own domestic virtues and values into a group of British loyalist black freedmen, who had been resettled from Canada on the African coast. After his final return to Britain, Zachary continued his abolitionist efforts. Around this moral core, he built a large and devoted family that extended to encompass his Claphamite neighbors, with whom he pursued a wide range of further personal and behavioral reforms.

As Hall demonstrates, domesticity and Christianity were not only espoused in their own milieu by Zachary and his fellow Evangelicals but also deployed as markers to distinguish themselves from the African subjects whose characters they were seeking to improve. To Zachary, home was in England, not in Africa, while the inferiority of Africans was grounded in their failure to assimilate the same virtues of homely domesticity by which he measured his own civilizational superiority. These attitudes toward home, domesticity, civilization, and alien others were absorbed by Zachary's son, the future historian Thomas Babington Macaulay. While the younger Macaulay was not much moved by his father's abolitionism or Christianity, he reestablished many of the same values and discriminations in secular terms.

Hall's account of the younger Macaulay's attachments to home and domesticity constitutes one of the most brilliant and innovative features of her book. It not only sheds fresh light on the making of the historian but also provides the most nuanced and insightful account of his relationship with his sisters that we are ever likely to get. Only one who is familiar with the meager and fragmentary sources can fully appreciate just how deeply and imaginatively Hall has delved into their meaning. The T. B. Macaulay who emerges on her pages is at once both emotionally needy and profoundly narcissistic—seeking others who would mirror his own self-image and whose love he could always elicit and control. When these others, most notably his younger sisters Hannah and Margaret, exhibited any spark of independence and autonomy, their older brother felt wounded, abandoned, and betrayed. Not surprisingly, given this personality, Macaulay found his deepest satisfaction in reading. Here he could

find an imagined communion with the illustrious dead, who could not leave him or talk back. “With the dead there is no rivalry,” Hall quotes him as saying, “in the dead there is no change” (136).

It was these sentiments, Hall strongly implies, that eventually drew the younger Macaulay into his vocation as a historian. Nevertheless, before he could fully commit to this calling, he had first to establish his masculine independence and autonomy in the public realm, beyond his family home. This public career as an essayist, a politician, and an imperial proconsul has been much studied by others, but Hall’s interpretive angle gives it a novel twist. She reminds us just how much this “independent man” was dependent on others; not only directly on his personal dependents—mother, sisters, niece, and servants—but also on a series of class and gendered colonial others, who were deemed to be civilizationally deficient and therefore in need of the program of reform and improvement that Macaulay was empowered to impose upon them from above.

This theme is continued in Hall’s account of Macaulay’s time in India, in a chapter titled “Imperial Man and the Space of Difference.” Here, she emphasizes Macaulay’s sense of alienation from a colonial environment that differed greatly from the normative space of “home.” Yet this difference, she also shows, provided Macaulay with his reforming agenda through which he hoped to anglicize the backward Indians, so as to prepare them for a future of British liberty. To Hall, the most telling feature of this liberal imperial future is the practical reality that it was repeatedly postponed. While Macaulay’s Legislative Code was grounded in the abstract principle of racial equality, in practice, British and Indian subjects were to be treated by the law in divergent ways.

Hall is not the first to suggest that Macaulay’s decision to devote himself to “English” history writing was underpinned by his rejection of Indian difference and precipitated by the traumatic loss of his sisters. Nevertheless, she makes this case with greater force and detail than anyone else has done hitherto. Having established his manliness in imperial and domestic politics, Macaulay could finally afford to turn to history and live among the dead who were within his control. In her final chapter, Hall conducts an extended interrogation of the historian’s opus, *The History of England* (1848), making the case that it was always a distinctively English, domestic story. It alone was a story of liberty and progress, not just as ideals, but as realities concretely achieved. While Scots like himself had successfully assimilated into this narrative, other peoples—the Irish, Indians, and West Indians, for example—remained retrograde, entirely devoid of their own authentic history. Although the door was left open to their future descendants, Macaulay’s book was a celebration of the liberal constitutional tradition that was the exclusive possession of white, middle-class, male citizens during the nineteenth century.

As with any figure as complex and multifarious as Macaulay, the portrait that one paints will depend on the angle from which one sees. While I am persuaded by most of Hall’s arguments, my Macaulay might differ from hers in a few particular respects. One wonders indeed what Macaulay himself would have made of this book. Though he doubtless would have preferred a less critical presentation, I suspect that he would have been impressed (and perhaps chagrined) at the extent to which Hall has figured him out. As is well known, Macaulay was greatly concerned about his future reputation, and he wrote with “the year 2000, and even the year 3000, often in my mind” (260). Whether or not Catherine Hall’s interpretation would have pleased him, it is likely to remain the most authoritative account for a very long time.

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