

the Heart showed how colonial empires connected space, race, and place as much as people, memory, and emotions served as invisible links between these abstract dimensions.

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Europe and the Wider World

Steven S. Maughan. *Mighty England Do Good. Culture, Faith, Empire, and World in the Foreign Missions of the Church of England, 1850-1915*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014. 511 pp. ISBN: 9780802869463. \$45.00.

Dr. Steven Maughan is professor of History and Bernie McCain Chair in the Humanities at the College of Idaho. His research interests are religion, gender, class, and empire in Victorian Britain, all of which figure prominently in this monumental study.

Mighty England Do Good is the 23rd volume in the excellent Wm. B. Eerdmans series edited by R.E. Frykenberg and Brian Stanley, “Studies in the History of Christian Missions.” Beginning with the first volume in 2004, Wilbert R. Shenk’s *North American Foreign Missions, 1810-1914*, this series has consistently published studies of Christian missions of the highest quality scholarship.

There are two caveats to this book that should be addressed up front. First, although the title suggests a study of Church of England mission societies in the empire and the world, the true focus is much narrower. Maughan has written a rich and meticulously researched inquiry into the construction of English national identity during the age of New Imperialism, and how the Church of England and its mission societies and missionaries at home and abroad, shaped, and were themselves shaped by, that process. As Maughan himself notes, recent missionary studies have emphasized the importance of the “missionary encounter” to both “metropole” and “periphery.” Still, the English missionary movement “had the range and scope it did because millions of Britons supported it with their sustained interest and substantial financial contributions.” In *Mighty England Do Good*, therefore, Maughan “focuses primarily on the sites of institutional, ideological, and social power in England that were necessary to sustain the effort” (9-10).

Second, this intensely detailed analysis of religion, missions, and national identity in England in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, requires of the reader a firm grasp of all three of those elements, and most particularly of the Church of England and its various sects—such as the High Church, the Low Church, Evangelicals, Anglo-Catholics, the Oxford Movement, the Keswick Convention, Revivalists, Ritualists, Pietists, Universalists, Broad Church Modernists, and Christian Socialists. This is a fascinating journey through a deep forest of identity and religion set in late Victorian and Edwardian England, but the journey is more illuminating if one can identify all the trees along the path.

Essentially, Maughan sets out to demonstrate how English “missions formed a crucial set of overseas causes and an armoury of social examples against which discussions of religion, respectability, civilization, race, and gender could be framed. As the missionary project of the Church of England grew in importance, it became a critical platform supporting discussion of contested ideals for church, society, nation, empire, and international order” (21).

These contested ideals were held by a plethora of religious parties (see above). In his text, Maughan focuses on the internal dynamics within the Church between and among these parties, constituencies, and factions, in each of their theological, social, and political dimensions, which formed the context for the development of Anglican missions. He argues that the “development of Anglican ‘missionary religion’ grew from a complex interaction of religious, social, and ideological factors that require detailed examination if the movement is to be understood” (6).

After laying out the theoretical threads underpinning and guiding his enquiry, Maughan uses the remainder of chapter 1 to provide an overview of the historiography of British foreign missions, followed by an “introduction to the relationship of missions to religious sectarianism, nationality, gender, and empire” that provides a framework for his analysis (6). It is in this chapter that the author introduces one of the most important and enlightening facets of his study, the feminization, and professionalization of mission, to which he dedicates chapters 4, 5, and 6.

In chapters 2 and 3 Maughan identifies and locates the varieties of “High Churchism” that were emerging at the end of the nineteenth century. He also places in context the nature of the debates and controversies between the increasingly vocal and growing evangelical movement and these High Church varieties as they competed for souls at home and abroad.

In many ways, chapter 4, “Women’s Work,” touches on nearly every issue that is at the heart of this study, particularly the debates over, and controversies about, gender that were redefining the role and place of women in this era. The fact that women were invading the missionary field at the end of the nineteenth century has been recognized in many recent missionary studies. Maughan notes that women made up 55 percent of the British missionary force in 1899 and that by 1907 women missionaries outnumbered ordained ministers in the field 2,332 to 1,980 (32). In chapter 4 he explores this phenomenon, showing how women in the mission field was an expansion of the domestic sphere that allowed women to enter the public sphere by encouraging “useful, serious, spiritual work for women outside the home” (187). The feminine presence in the foreign missionary field was viewed as being particularly effective when working with women and children, especially in those societies whose women were secluded and allowed little or no contact with men outside of the immediate family, such as in India. Women missionaries were valued for their perceived domestic skills as, for example, educators, caregivers, and managers of the household that could then be deployed abroad for, as Maughan phrases it, “domesticating the rebellious Indian home” (219)

Chapter 5 continues the discussion of the changing roles of women and the increasing power and influence they were exercising in the public sphere, as they gained access to universities and larger organizational networks, such as the YWCA and the Missionary Settlement for University Women, at the turn of the twentieth century. All this is placed within the context of the professionalization of missionary activity, university culture, and the “missionary pledge” that began in America in the 1880s and spread quickly to Britain where large numbers of highly educated young men and women took the pledge and committed themselves to overseas missionary work. In chapter 6 Maughan describes how some groups of High Church Anglicans, influenced by “Christian Socialist ideals and animated by public-school enthusiasms for duty and sacrifice in imperial service, sought to construct a new missionary culture that emulated the style, enthusiasm, and methods of evangelical holiness-driven missions” (324). This chapter illustrates this sense of competition between the High Church and the growing evangelical movement, and the idealism and revivalism that evolved to counter the evangelical expansion.

These efforts were led by young men and women student leaders who envisioned a “missionary movement that would draw a wave of idealists into active service, transcending sectarian, denominational, national, gender, and racial divisions” in the new century (329). The stumbling block to this “heady vision” were the “growing problems revolving around women and their place in the missionary movement ...” (329).

Chapter 7 then returns to “Women’s Work: Leadership, Dependence, and the Limits of Change” and the growing conservative religious backlash against expanding women’s roles and the “modern” missionary methods, especially the progressive program promoted at the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh. Some of the greatest concern related to matters of clerical authority and church government, as women began to fill executive roles within various church and religious organizations.

Chapter 8 focuses on the “imperial church” and the breakdown of a unified effort for “Mighty England” to do good in the overseas mission field. At the height of the age of New Imperialism, divisions arose “as missionaries and missions were forced to define their relationship to empire” (432). Efforts to “construct a meaningful, unifying Anglican imperial program” failed, doomed by “university heterodoxy, re-emerging party factionalism, and discomfiture with contending imperial models” (432). The High Church plan to “implement a student-driven ‘imperial Christianity’ had not united the Church but had further divided it” (438).

It should be clear that this is a densely-packed study of the issues surrounding mission that swirled around the Anglican Church in Britain from the mid-1800s to the beginning of the Great War, including both domestic and foreign policy, gender, imperialism, evangelicalism, race, identity, civilization, and respectability. It should appeal to scholars working in any of these fields in British and missionary studies.

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Leonard Smith. *Insanity, Race and Colonialism: Managing Mental Disorder in the Post-Emancipation British Caribbean, 1838-1914*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. 285 pp. ISBN: 978113702862. £63.00.

Leonard Smith’s work provides a clear, concise and meticulously researched history of the asylum regime in the British Caribbean. Smith focuses primarily on the intentions and motivations of personalities in the dynamic, though often ad hoc and piecemeal, approaches to insanity on the part of colonial agencies in the post-emancipation Caribbean. The author wants to eschew both a historical objectivity that “can be mistaken for apologism” and a presentist moralism associated with “outright condemnation of key groups of participants and their actions” (2). Smith urges us to consider how “[c]onscious motivations for their [the asylums] gradual establishment throughout the empire comprised both benevolent and controlling intentions” (3). Colonial authorities, in short, did not view the asylum as an extension of the oppression of slavery, and the directors and doctors of the reformed asylums were committed to the therapeutic relief of human suffering, most often through the paradigm of “moral treatment”. Smith’s commitment to objectivity is admirable, if conceptually a bit simplistic. The approach leaves certain critical questions unanswered, and Smith’s judgment of the effects of institutional, disciplinary power and the rise of a “therapeutic” scrutiny on the patients’ psyches can at times seem tone-deaf to the trauma of brutal slave regimes in transition.