

by leading scholars in the field, *In God's**Empire* examines the complex ways in

which the spread of Christianity by French men and women shaped local communities, French national prowess, and global politics in the two centuries following the French Revolution. More than a story of religious proselytism, missionary activity was an essential feature of French contact and interaction with local populations. In many parts of the world, missionaries were the first French men and women to work and live among indigenous societies. For all the celebration of France's secular "civilizing mission," it was more often than not religious workers who actually fulfilled the daily tasks of running schools, hospitals, and orphanages. While their work was often tied to small villages, missionaries' interactions had geopolitical implications. Focusing on many regions—from the Ottoman Empire and North America to Indochina and the Pacific Ocean—this book explores how France used missionaries' long connections with local communities as a means of political influence and justification for colonial expansion.

In God's Empire offers readers both an overview of the major historical dimensions of the French evangelical enterprise, as well as an introduction to the theoretical and methodological challenges of placing French missionary work within the context of European, imperial, religious, and world history.

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J. P. DAUGHTON is Associate Professor of History at Stanford University and the author of *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880–1914* (OUP, 2006), which won the George Louis Beer Prize of the American Historical Association and the Alf Andrew Heggoy Prize of the French Colonial Historical Society.

"A path-breaking collection that brings together outstanding scholars of France's missionary presence overseas, *In God's Empire* is imperial history at its best. Ranging across the French colonial empire and beyond it, the book is both transnational in focus and global in coverage. The missionary activity depicted here defies classification, let alone caricature, with missions revealed as adjuncts to imperial authority in some places, as critics of government in others, at certain points transgressing racial boundaries, at others enforcing them. An immensely rewarding study, the collection adds new layers of complexity to our understanding of missionary activity and the march of French imperialism after 1800."

—MARTIN THOMAS, University of Exeter

"This subtle and illuminating collection of essays brilliantly uses French missions and missionaries as prisms for understanding some of the most important questions facing contemporary historical scholarship: the ambiguities of modernity, the tensions of empire, the limits of secularism, and the persistence of European influence in a globalized, postcolonial world. *In God's Empire* is rich with intellectual rewards."

—EDWARD BERENSON, New York University

"These beautifully contextualized case studies illustrate the complexity of relationships between colonial authorities, missionary workers, and indigenous populations around the world. By shedding light on the activities of religious workers at the local level, the authors offer a model of scholarship that engages with arguments about 'modernity,' while rooting their arguments in careful analysis of practices on the ground."

—REBECCA ROGERS, Université Paris Descartes

"*In God's Empire* is at once highly original, impeccable in its scholarship, and remarkably wide ranging, in both its themes and geographic scope. The result is a book about religion, to be sure, but also about much more, for missionary activity needs to be considered in light of migration, global trends, colonialism, class, and gender."

—ERIC JENNINGS, University of Toronto

"Catholic and Protestant missionaries played a critical role in extending French political and cultural influence abroad, within but also beyond the formal empire. This superbly edited collection maps out new directions and approaches to the study of religious encounters in the modern era and deploys an array of sophisticated conceptual and methodological frameworks that will inspire future research. White and Daughton are to be congratulated for restoring to view this neglected and fascinating facet of French global history."

—ALICE L. CONKLIN, Ohio State University