

***A World Mission: Canadian Protestantism and the Quest for a New International Order, 1918-1939.* By Robert Wright. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991. ISBN 0-7735-0873-2. Pp. x+337.**

Robert Wright examines the leadership of the mainline Canadian Protestants (Anglican, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregationalist Churches—the latter two along with two-thirds of the Presbyterians merged in 1925 to form the United Church of Canada) during the interwar period in its attempts to promote a new world order under Christ. The leadership moved from a position of moral strength and evangelical fervour with a “New Christian Internationalism” immediately after the First World War (Chapter 1), to argue for evangelization in one generation and a Christian alternative to International Communism (Chapter 2). The move to action instead of theology consolidated the ecumenism of the social gospel in the United Church of Canada during the European relief efforts, but it also paradoxically gave the Baptists a stronger independent and international identity (Chapter 3). Further challenges, for example from the developing science of anthropology, brought the Canadians to promote new educational institutes and a more scientific study of mission (Chapter 4), and to rethink missions in the light of more tolerant liberal theologies and attitudes to non-Christian peoples (Chapter 5). This well-constructed and marvellously researched work then moves into an exciting discussion of the impact of Mahatma Gandhi and Toyhiko Kagawa of Japan on Canadian thought (Chapter 6), and traces the reaction of the Canadian Protestant churches to the Far Eastern Crisis and European Totalitarianism. The logical compelling conclusion restates the argument that while Canadian Protestants tried mightily to adapt their evangelical imperative to establish Christ's Kingdom by accepting indigenous churches, the League of Nations and disarmament, they were burdened by notions of the inherent superiority of WASP (white, Anglo-saxon, Protestant) political and religious traditions. As Thomas Socknat demonstrated in *Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada, 1900-1945* (1987), Protestant leaders abandoned their pacifism and developed neo-orthodox theology. Their successful attempts at accommodation showed most forcefully in their acceptance of Gandhi and Kagawa. Their failure to meet the world and make Christianity effective showed in an ambivalent stance toward Hitler, and in their unwillingness to help Jewish refugees or to stop the dispossession and incarceration of Canadians of Japanese heritage.

The book provides a context for a wider history of Canadian foreign affairs (“there were a hundred times more Canadian Protestant missionaries in the field than there were Canadian diplomats”), and underlines the continuing import-

ance of the study of religion to Canadian history. Without setting out to do so, Wright also puts Canadian missions into its North American context, if not as a handmaiden to American missions, at least as a junior partner. It shows how Canadian religion, in its more liberal guise, was irrelevant to Canadian immigration or foreign policy. This work brings Canadian religious scholarship one step further in understanding the inherent intricacies and contradictions within Canadian life and Christianity. Perhaps when someone finally decides to write the history of the Canadian International Development Agency, this book will be a valuable resource in the history of Canada's approach to foreign aid and foreign affairs. The only thing one could have wanted was less thesis-like density and convoluted unreadability. An overall view of the post-war Protestant, and all of the French Catholic, foreign missions still needs an historian. Perhaps Robert Wright will accept the challenge?

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***Prophets, Priests and Prodigals: Readings in Canadian Religious History, 1608 to Present.* Eds. Mark G. McGowan and David B. Marshall. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1992. ISBN 0-07-551341-2. Pp. xxii+365.**

This handsomely-designed paperback is a laudable attempt by two young scholars to provide a useful reader for undergraduates. The result is a smorgasbord of sixteen selections from the writings of scholars whose primary concern has been with the religious history of Canada. The editors have provided a brief "Introduction" which, though well-intentioned, may irritate some readers more than it may help provide clues for understanding the religious kaleidoscope of contemporary Canada. Certainly many undergraduates, for whom the book is primarily intended, will come to these texts with some appreciation for humanist learning, but with little knowledge of what in the Introduction is called "providential" historiography, or for that matter, of any form of history of Canadian religious tradition and/or activity.

For ease of reference, selections are ordered under five sub-headings which begin with "Christian Missions and Native Peoples" (two selections only), followed by a section entitled "Religion in the Colonies" (three selections). The third section includes four articles that look at the internal dimensions of religion ("Religion and Identity"). In the fourth Section, three papers focus on "Mission at Home and Abroad," while Section Five contains four essays under the general