

century, fostered a unique culture of confession in Russia. Confession was imbedded in a liturgical and social process of preparation and purification called *govienie*, which involved fasting, limitations of secular activity, attending several days of church services, then confession and communion. Because the vast majority of Orthodox fulfilled this ritual before Easter, *govienie* took on a communal and seasonal character. Memoirs, letters, and literature of the nineteenth century are replete with descriptions of *govienie*. Written confessions demonstrate the extent to which Russians incorporated the words of the liturgy into their personal self-examinations. Kizenko's focus on practice, and her gender analysis, support a rethinking of characterizations of elite culture in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that suggest confession was a compromised, theatrical procedure. Kizenko shows the degree to which elite men took it seriously and how it had become intertwined with civic virtue in their minds. Certainly, after heavy-handed efforts by Nicholas I to use confession against those arrested after the 1825 Decembrist uprising, such men increasingly distinguished between the sacraments of the Orthodox Church and the contents of the Gospel in their writings about *govienie*. However, Kizenko shows that for noble women in the nineteenth century, for whom it was less of a test of loyalty and who had few opportunities to publish their writings, sacramental confession played a key role in their reading and life narration. These women sought father-confessors who were their intellectual equals and corresponded extensively; moreover, these clerics clearly were not just directing their spiritual daughters but using the correspondence to explore ideas in private. The many devotional texts noble women authored to prepare their children for confession reveal the sacrament's centrality to elite domestic culture.

This book is a scholarly tour de force. In Kizenko's able hands, confession proves to be an illuminating window into church–state relations, but also for viewing Russian Orthodoxy in relation to both western Christianity and other Orthodox societies, for exploring social and legal relationships in imperial Russia, and for glimpsing the devotional lives of its Orthodox inhabitants.

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***Heathen: Religion and Race in American History.* By Kathryn Gin Lum. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2022. 368 pp. \$35.00 hardcover.**

In this remarkably wide-ranging and densely argued book, Kathryn Gin Lum offers a cultural and intellectual history of the concept of heathenism. The book's title and its argumentative framework ties this concept to White American missions and empire. Yet Gin Lum's evidence covers a much broader geographic and chronological scope, extending to varied Euro-American empires and back to the ancient world, when the concept of "heathen" first originated. The impressive breadth of Gin Lum's analysis, ironically, also creates an interpretive problem. While White American Protestants regularly spoke about and acted upon the idea of "heathens," it is less clear how much was uniquely American about the concept.

Gin Lum's primary historiographic aim is to question a historical literature that suggests that the nineteenth-century science of biological races replaced older Christian or monotheistic notions of the fundamental unity of humanity. That belief in the basic sameness of humanity derived from the widely held assumption of common creation, or monogenesis. A view of the "heathen," in the older model, allowed Europeans to justify exceedingly negative views of allegedly inferior cultures and religions. But monogenesis implicitly drew the line at concluding that those inferior peoples were *biologically* separate from and inferior to Whites (Gin Lum capitalizes White to mark it as a constructed racial category). Gin Lum sees religion and race as having a complex, overlapping relationship. She does not accept a neat, linear replacement of civilizational inferiority by the harder-edged code of racial inferiority. She argues that Whiteness, in the Euro-American missionary mind, was inextricably connected to religion.

Conversion to Christianity obviously changed a heathen person's religious status, but it theoretically transformed their racial status, too. Conversion switched one's cultural and civilizational alignment from a fundamentally inferior group to a superior power. This did not just entail a change of belief, Gin Lum notes, but the (potential) transformation of virtually all spheres of life. Many of these spheres were as conceptually tied to race and civilization as they were to religion. "Whiteness signified 'superior' status based on 'right' religion," Gin Lum writes, "which was supposed to have reverberating effects on governance, gender roles, education, medicinal practices, clothing choices, and labor on the land. . . Religion was the master key that unlocked the other benefits that made White Americans the self-appointed teachers of the heathen" (123). Whiteness, in other words, meant far more than skin color. But skin color and national origin still mattered a great deal in the practices of missionary churches and schools. Converts from heathenism regularly found themselves subjected to greater scrutiny about their sincerity as believers, and capability for leadership, including ordination as pastors or missionaries. Many who rejected their heathen past and put their faith in the Christian God felt that they still could not escape restrictions that came with the "oxymoronic" status of "converted heathens."

Gin Lum demonstrates her arguments through an incredibly diverse base of missionary and other religious writings, as well as an evocative and judicious selection of images from such publications. Anyone needing to understand the long history of race, religion, and cultural conflict will profit from engaging with Gin Lum's account. But the answer to how exceptional America was remains uncertain. There is no question that her themes of cultures, races, and religions suffused American writings from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Moreover, American missionary advocates exercised massive influence on the global evangelistic enterprise over those centuries. Gin Lum further argues that images of the "deluded and degraded Other" still carry great power in contemporary secularized yet still-messianic narratives of humanitarian aid (221). (She also leaves unanswered the question of what to do about such aid, given its allegedly problematic ideological roots.) The term "heathen" has been used in many different ways across time and space, yet Gin Lum's evidence suggests much continuity in the concept's use, too. Haven't *all* monotheistic religions and imperial powers spoken at times of superior and inferior groups, or of enlightened and deluded people? At times one wonders how much explanatory value that "heathenism" holds, if the concept and its related terms are so common?

I was reminded of such questions of ancient roots and modern applications when Gin Lum's prologue cited a statement by the contemporary Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. On its website, the Missouri Synod explains that the "heathen" who have never heard the

gospel of Christ are “without excuse,” and desperately need a missionary witness, in hope of saving them from damnation. This is a representative example of the missionary mentality behind heathenism. As Gin Lum notes separately in chapter 1, however, the phrase “without excuse” is simply a quote from the Apostle Paul’s letter to the Romans. While the idea of pagans being “without excuse” might initially appear to reflect only the hubris of a powerful, conservative American denomination, it seems that ancient Christians affirmed a version of the notion when they were still a tiny, persecuted sect, one which barely registered on the European cultural landscape. To me, this suggests that such zero-sum thinking can be found among exclusive religions and imperial powers throughout time and around the globe. Certainly it was found among all the European imperial powers, as well as in Japan and other global imperial aspirants in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Yet Gin Lum also shows that the people labeled as religious or racial heathens often turned the tables on the powerful. The marginalized routinely accused White Christians of out-heathening the heathens. (This move unintentionally could reinforce the rhetorical power of heathenism itself.) As David Walker’s sensational antislavery tract *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* (1829) put it, slave-owning Christians were “pretenders to Christianity” who “treat us more cruel and barbarous than any Heathen nation did any people whom it had subjected” (129). The ubiquity of heathen rhetoric made it both malleable and difficult to evade. It has seemingly been with us, in ever-changing forms, from the ancient world to present day. But Americans have undoubtedly used the concept to support the exercise of power and influence around the world, in causes ranging from missions to humanitarian aid, and from colonization to empire.

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Lived Missiology: The Legacy of Ernest and Phebe Ward

By **Shivraj K. Mahendra**. Dehradun, UT, India / Wilmore, KY: Fishers for Christ, 2021. 385 pp. \$45.00 paper.

Lived Missiology examines the life of Ernest and Phebe Ward, the pioneer missionaries of the Free Methodist Church outside the United States. Featuring the work of the Wards in Central India during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the book offers the subaltern (Dalit) perspective. Aiming to understand biography as missiology, Mahendra provides not merely a historical account of the Wards’ work but also investigates what it meant theologically for the Wards to be called to do missionary work among the native population of India.

Undertaking the important task of telling the story of the lesser well-known figures in mission history, the author introduces his readers to previously unstudied sources, with the unpublished letters of the Wards, manuscripts of literary pieces (articles, plays), and diaries that illuminate the daily life and language work of the missionaries, among others. Mahendra engages with US-based self-published books by the Wards