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0521826993 - Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860

Anna Johnston

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EMPIRE, 1800–1860

Anna Johnston analyses missionary writing under the aegis of the British Empire. Johnston argues that missionaries occupied ambiguous positions in colonial cultures, caught between imperial and religious interests. She maps out this position through an examination of texts published by missionaries of the largest, most influential nineteenth-century evangelical institution, the London Missionary Society. These texts provide a fascinating commentary on nineteenth-century evangelism and colonialism, and illuminate complex relationships among white imperial subjects, white colonial subjects, and non-white colonial subjects. With their reformist and often prurient interest in sexual and familial relationships, missionary texts focussed imperial attention on gender and domesticity in colonial cultures. Johnston contends that in doing so, they re-wrote imperial expansion as a moral allegory and confronted British ideologies of gender, race, and class. Texts from Indian, Polynesian, and Australian missions are examined to highlight their representation of nineteenth-century evangelical activity in relation to gender, colonialism, and race.

ANNA JOHNSTON is Lecturer in Australian and Postcolonial Literature in the School of English, Journalism, and European Languages at the University of Tasmania. She is the co-editor of *In Transit: Travel, Text, Empire* (2002) with Helen Gilbert, and has published articles on missionary writing, postcolonial literature, and autobiography.

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*For Garth Tickle*

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