only by exoticizing the very locales that once appealed because of their purported “Frenchness.” Antsirabe has been thoroughly indigenized, “the geological goodness of the great island eliding any trace of French colonial science” (153). Korbous remains multivalent, as precolonial and colonial legacies jostle each other. Vichy’s longstanding role as imperial hub ended abruptly in 1962.

Through these spa stories, Jennings has captured some of the precarious and complex dynamics of constructing and performing whiteness throughout the longue durée of the French empire—without ever losing sight of the displacements and exploitation of indigenous peoples and local cultures that the appropriation of highlands and thermal springs occasioned. Each of his case studies is rich in insights that historians will wish to investigate further; together, they reveal a closely knit French imperial world often lost in studies that focus on one colony and the metropole.

ALICE L. CONKLIN
Ohio State University


In July 1885, the French premier Jules Ferry famously argued that “superior races” had a right and duty to “civilize” those “inferior” to them. Ferry was not describing the present state of affairs; instead, he offered a rationale for future action—the speech aimed to secure funding for France’s conquest of Madagascar. Yet Ferry’s normative pronouncements have all too often been taken as indications that the Third Republic pursued a coherent civilizing mission across its empire.

As J. P. Daughton ably demonstrates in his richly documented and beautifully written book, this is to confuse rhetoric and reality. In practice, republicans initially found themselves reliant on Catholic missionaries. Missionaries, meanwhile, did not see themselves as “agents of colonial enterprises” but as “colonizers of souls” (12). It was only as France consolidated its position in the colonies, and as metropolitan anticlericalism was exported, that colonial officials actively pursued a “secular” civilizing mission. Catholics, in turn, adapted their evangelizing to make it more palatable to republicans. Thus, competition with Catholic missionaries for influence, and not any coherent political program, led the French administration to “republicanize” its rule abroad.

The book’s title, An Empire Divided, is apt in several respects. Daughton makes clear that colonial policy was “much less an extension of revolutionary republican values than a set of individual projects defined by degrees of dissent, debate, competition, and collaboration between people both at home and abroad” (17). The French empire was deeply fractured and, especially in the 1880s, highly unstable. This instability explains why, despite their often Protestant and anticlerical leanings, convinced republicans brokered uneasy alliances with Catholic missionaries in the early years of colonial rule. Also, as Daughton shows through a thoughtful comparison of Indochina, Polynesia, and Madagascar—chosen for their long and rich histories of missionary work—these compromises were driven by different pragmatic concerns and occasional distinct outcomes.

Daughton’s treatment of the relations between colonial administrators and missionaries in the wake of conquest makes for fascinating and often gripping reading. In Indochina, for instance, the colonial government and the missionaries clashed from the
beginning. Though missionaries’ pleas for “protection” from the French government were one impetus for the conquest, this did not lead to easy cooperation afterward. Instead, each side blamed the other for violent attacks on Vietnamese Christians occurring in the wake of the French invasion. Nonetheless, administrators could not ignore that within a decade of France’s incorporation of Annam and Tonkin, Indochina’s Catholics had increased by 60 percent, and missionary schools, hospitals, and orphanages had provided an important service in helping to stabilize French rule.

In Tahiti, the administration “had no choice but to see the missions as crucial allies” (126). Although pressured to recognize Protestantism (a legacy of the British presence on the island) as Tahiti’s official religion, the government also subsidized Catholic missions throughout Polynesia in an effort to extend France’s influence. This approach was practical in two respects. First, Catholic missionaries were often the only French around. Second, subsidizing Catholic schools and hospitals was cost-efficient—there were neither lay schools nor lay teachers in Polynesia, and the prospect of changing this fact was prohibitively expensive. Still, there were plenty of conflicts. Missionaries were disappointed that the administration did not force children to attend their schools, and by century’s end, colonial administrators began to question the missions’ loyalty to France.

The case of Madagascar is particularly fascinating because of the long-standing presence of British Protestant missionaries on the island. It was this, Daughton writes, that explained why “the colonial government in Madagascar accepted and, in many instances, even cheered Catholic missionary involvement in the pacification of the country” (170). Despite the association between Protestantism and republicanism in the metropole, in Madagascar, even French Protestants were deemed suspicious, because it was difficult to distinguish their goals from those of the London Missionary Society. Initially steadfastly “neutral” vis-à-vis religion in the colony, the governor general Joseph Gallieni nonetheless lobbied the capital to subsidize Madagascar’s Catholic missionaries. Daughton finds this “nothing short of remarkable” (181), but I was less surprised. Republicans attacked Catholic education in the metropole because they feared the church’s political influence. Having only just achieved a republican majority in parliament some seven years into the Third Republic, republicans wanted to ensure that French children would not grow up monarchist. Since democracy was never on the table in the colonies, the church did not pose the same kind of threat there. What Daughton sees as counterintuitive is less so when the antidemocratic impulse of imperialism is recalled. Indeed, Daughton shows brilliantly that the republic, in its imperial guise, was first and foremost pragmatic. It did whatever it took to consolidate rule.

Pragmatism being so central to the story of imperial consolidation, it is all the more interesting that an ideological anticlericalism was exported to the colonies in the Dreyfus affair years, often undermining the compromises brokered in earlier decades. For each colony, Daughton chronicles a shift from an uneasy truce between republicans and missionaries to a decided attack on clericalism. Though that ardent anticlerical Léon Gambetta had, in 1876, proclaimed that “anticlericalism was not an item for export” (14), republicans in the late 1890s and early 1900s came to think differently. The consequences of this new anticlerical orthodoxy varied across the colonies. In Indochina, Freemasons (who were often businessmen) attacked Catholic missionaries for thwarting the mise en valeur of the colony. In Polynesia, anticlericals blamed missionaries for exacerbating the “barbarity” of the native population and contributing to shocking levels of demographic decline. As it turned out, the attack on missions, the closing of schools, and subsequent efforts to “civilize” Polynesians in “republican”
fashion only worsened the depopulation crisis. Thus, Daughton proves that what was politically pragmatic in the metropole was sometimes disastrous in the empire. In Madagascar, the replacement of Gallieni by the virulently anticlerical Victor Augagneur in 1905 triggered a response from British Protestant missionaries that, ironically, allowed the French missionary movement to claim more autonomy. The Dreyfus affair and the anticlericalism it triggered are the catalysts for all of this, and while this seems plausible, one wonders, given the distinctiveness of each colony, whether internal dynamics might not also have played some role. Daughton mentions how local people responded to missionary work, but this is not his focus, nor does he incorporate into his analysis the work of those who have concentrated on this (such as Pier Larson or Jean and John Comaroff). His emphasis on the timing of the antimissionary attacks makes the argument feel more unidirectional than his evidence and discussion otherwise suggest.

Although the theme of fragmentation is carried throughout the book, the final chapter sounds a rather different note. Abandoning the case studies, Daughton focuses on the press of Catholic missionary associations such as the Oeuvre de la propagation de la foi, which, at the end of the nineteenth century, contended that the “homeless soldier of God was now a faithful and proud servant of France” (247). Here, Daughton describes a sort of empire-wide ralliement to the republic, and this helps explain how the story of divided empire has been remembered as a singular civilizing mission. After all, Oeuvre’s journal had a huge readership, and this was the age of expanding literacy, not to mention growing press influence on politics. It’s a fascinating suggestion, but it has the inadvertent effect of leaving the colonies—and their own internal complexities so splendidly demonstrated through most of the book—somewhat behind. That this criticism is so small testifies to the richness and importance of this book. An Empire Divided should become required reading for any student of Third Republic France and its empire.

MARY DEWHURST LEWIS


Gregory Mann breaks new ground in Native Sons. From the middle of the nineteenth century until well into the twentieth, France recruited African men to fight its wars and keep the peace—most famously, in Europe during World War I (but also in World War II), and outside Europe in West Africa, the Maghreb, and Southeast Asia. Political scientists and historians of Africa have long studied the history of colonial soldiers, especially for their role in decolonization. Whether as aggressive militants or as quietists, African soldiers figure in the literature because of their role in the postwar national liberation movements. Mann avoids this often teleological approach. He looks at the mutual ties of obligation that bound France and its West African soldiers. Without writing an apology or simple denunciation, Mann takes empire seriously. He shows how empire was created and sustained and how it continues to influence France and West Africa more than a generation after its collapse.

In the nineteenth century, French invaders took advantage of long-standing local traditions of slave raiding and trading in their bid to control the West African territory