



God and Mrs Thatcher: The Battle For Britain's Soul

Eliza Filby

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A woman demonised by the left and sanctified by the right, there has always been a religious undercurrent to discussions of Margaret Thatcher. However, while her Methodist roots are well known, the impact of her faith on her politics is often overlooked. In an attempt to source the origins of Margaret Thatcher's 'conviction politics', Eliza Filby explores how Thatcher's worldview was shaped and guided by the lessons of piety, thrift and the Protestant work ethic learnt in Finkin Street Methodist Church, Grantham, from her lay-preacher father. In doing so, she tells the story of how a Prime Minister steeped in the Nonconformist teachings of her childhood entered Downing Street determined to reinvigorate the nation with these religious values. Filby concludes that this was ultimately a failed crusade. In the end, Thatcher created a country that was not more Christian, but more secular; and not more devout, but entirely consumed by a new religion: capitalism. In upholding the sanctity of the individual, Thatcherism inadvertently signalled the death of Christian Britain. Drawing on previously unpublished archives, interviews and memoirs, Filby examines how the rise of Thatcher was echoed by the rebirth of the Christian right in Britain, both of which were forcefully opposed by the Church of England. Wide-ranging and exhaustively researched, *God and Mrs Thatcher* offers a truly original perspective on the source and substance of Margaret Thatcher's political values and the role that religion played in the politics of this tumultuous decade.

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