

XVIII^e siècle, notamment auprès des Micmacs et des Abénaquis: l'entreprise éducative y était beaucoup mieux structurée. L'A. s'est appuyé sur les recherches de Bruce Trigger, mais n'a pas suffisamment mis en relief les effets culturels dévastateurs de l'évangélisation auprès des premières nations.

Magnuson expose le débat historiographique sur la comparaison hommes/femmes au niveau de l'alphabétisation: les historiens du XIX^e siècle ont avancé une supériorité des filles sur les garçons à cause de l'importance du réseau qui leur était destiné. Les historiennes et historiens du XX^e siècle ont soutenu l'opinion contraire, sur la foi de l'analyse des signatures. Magnuson, pour sa part, soutient que «educational facilities were greater for girls than for boys on three pieces of evidence or proofs: the numerical superiority of female teachers; the higher enrolments in girls' schools; and the longer life of girls' schools» (p. 100). Il semble toutefois que cette supériorité institutionnelle n'ait donné que de bien piètres résultats (ce qu'il se garde d'affirmer cependant). Car si l'instruction des filles était si bien organisée, comment expliquer que toutes les analyses de signatures affichent une nette supériorité des hommes en termes d'alphabétisation? Est-ce que les écoles de filles n'enseignaient pas l'écriture? [ce qui reste plausible]. Où les garçons apprenaient-ils à écrire? Manifestement, ce débat n'est pas clos et il faudra d'autres recherches, notamment sur l'instruction élémentaire des garçons, sur l'enseignement de la lecture et de l'écriture (y avait-il des écrivains pub-

lics en Nouvelle-France?), sur les habiletés calligraphiques et orthographiques des personnes scolarisées, pour faire avancer le débat.

Enfin on peut s'étonner que Magnuson insiste tant sur les dites «arts and crafts schools» de la Nouvelle-France. Peter N. Moogk avait naguère bien établi l'inexistence de la fameuse École des arts et métiers de Saint-Joachim et on sait que les deux autres écoles, à Québec et à Montréal, n'ont existé que sous forme d'intention (pour celle de Montréal) ou dans le cadre de la formation artisanale traditionnelle (pour celle de Québec). Encore un exemple d'emprunt à une formulation récente pour désigner une réalité ancienne. Si, «craft training was one of Canada's ... successful educational ventures» (p. 185), ce ne fut certes pas dans un cadre institutionnel qu'il s'est produit.

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Alain Choppin. *Les manuels scolaires: histoire et actualité.* Paris: Hachette, 1992. Pp. 224, 16 colour illustrations.

Before reading this volume, I thought of M. Choppin as the wearer of two hats. He was and is, first, a distinguished social and intellectual historian of French education. Second, he directs the world's largest computer data base for the history of school textbooks—“EMMANUELLE,” at

the Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique [INRP]. Now, with the publication of *Les manuels scolaires*, Choppin acquires a third hat, that of a clear writer with a mission: to make his subject broadly accessible and even popular. In *Les manuels*, Choppin accomplishes his mission.

In *Les Manuels*, Choppin offers a neat summary of the vast secondary literature on French school books, maintaining a consistent level of generality, presenting statistics and regulations that few readers (French readers included) have ever seen, and asking most of the historiographical questions a study of textbooks should do. There are few footnotes, many side-bars, a liberal use of bold type-faces to highlight the topic sentences of paragraphs, and dozens of graphs and illustrations.

This is an approachable work, a model of the late twentieth-century textbook. Its closest analogue in France might be Antoine Prost's popular text in the history of French education, published in 1968 by Colin—a competitor to Hachette. (At page 74, by the by, Choppin gives a one-page diagram showing the ownership structure of all the large textbook publishing firms in France; its analogue is hard to find for Canada or the U.S.) In overall form, the closest parallel in North America to *Les manuels* would be the typical high-volume textbook for junior-level psychology or geography courses.

The book is easy to use, full of colour engravings, and built around straightforward themes. Choppin's breezy treatment of costs and benefits in the industry exemplifies all of these

features. Like most academics, I wonder about the economics of textbook production, whether in Europe or in North America. How well off are our publishers? Is a national text-book industry a non-starter in an internationalized market? The French, it turns out, have for well over a hundred and fifty years been interested in these questions. After a rapid historical overview of these matters, Choppin gives us four tables (pp. 90-95) showing how a typically priced textbook (82 francs) is produced in the late twentieth century, where the profits and mark-ups are, and how long it takes for a text to go from the stage of authorial conception to pupil consumption. In two later sections of six and eight pages, he tells the story of French textbooks in the international commerce of ideas and values from 1789. We thus learn, in fewer than twenty pages, about the whole evolution of an industry whose economics were and are necessarily tied up in the complexities of the broader social, political, and intellectual history of France.

The entire volume has a similarly thematic structure. Chronology plays a subsidiary role in six of the book's seven parts. The exception is Choppin's treatment of textbooks as "instruments of power," a diachronic survey of changes in official arrangements for textbook selection, evaluation, and (as in the Second Empire and during World War II) censorship. Elsewhere we are treated to highly schematic and synchronic treatments of textbooks, considered as evidence of pedagogical evolution, as vehicles of ideology and cultural practice, and as clues to the material history of schooling. This is

not to say that *Les manuels* is ahistorical, but rather that it presents the perennial questions of cultural policy both in historical perspective and in terms of general policy. In this sense, *Les manuels* is a work of "historical policy study."

Although the book is French in outlook and in emphasis, it does make a bow in the general direction of Europe and the rest of the world. M. Choppin notes that INRP computer programmes are available without charge to any person or country wishing to build a complete data bank for its textbook production. But Canadian or American readers will be surprised by Choppin's assertion that his is the "first study exclusively about the history of textbooks, seen in their own right" and not as adjuncts in a history of curriculum or of state decision-making. It would be easy to make a list of a hundred books and doctoral theses on textbooks in Canada and the United States. Thus despite his computer literacy and internationalist yearnings, Choppin is francocentric in his views of publishing and of historical inquiry.

Les manuels is a *manual*, probably intended for senior-level students in French teacher-training schools, for educated general readers in France, and for people in the textbook trade itself. Of its kind, it is very good. A North American historian will find that Choppin painlessly and conveniently summarizes complicated educational and administrative history in a book ostensibly about something else! This accidental achievement is not the least of its charms. Its bibliography (pp. 218-23) shows, too, that it is a reliable, if scant, guide to recent historical and

sociological studies of the textbook. Anyone who has tried to study the history, politics, and/or economics of textbook production will know how scarce the documentation is, how carefully producers and evaluating authorities (usually branches of government) try to "cover their tracks." We are thus beholden to M. Choppin for giving us this straightforward account, and for recovering at least a little of the lost history of textbooks in France.

Choppin left me wishing for Canadian and American equivalents of his book, and hopeful that someone, somewhere is thinking of imitating the INRP's example in this country. For it is true, as Choppin writes in justifying the expense of his computerized historical record of textbooks in France, that "le manuel constitue pour l'historien, qu'il s'intéresse à l'éducation, aux sciences, à la culture ou aux mentalités, une source privilégiée et d'autant plus précieuse que l'on sait qu'il a longtemps constitué la base principale, la référence des pratiques quotidiennes des enseignants" (p. 198).

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Diana Moore and Andrea Schwenke. *New Brunswick Schools: A Guide to Archival Sources.* Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1992.

In 1947 Katherine MacNaughton's excellent monograph *The*