

Historical Studies in Education / Revue d'histoire de l'éducation
BOOK REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

Chantal Fiola

Rekindling the Sacred Fire: Métis Ancestry and Anishinaabe Spirituality

Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015. 256 pp.

The First Nations and Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Models¹ teach us that everyone has an inherent capacity to learn and that everyone is on a lifelong learning journey. Sources and domains of knowledge and Indigenous knowledge and knowing affect Métis peoples' holistic lifelong learning journeys as they participate in the spiritual and cultural branches of their lives; their actions, in turn, affect societal collective wellbeing in a natural order. Chantal Fiola in *Rekindling the Sacred Fire: Métis Ancestry and Anishinaabe Spirituality* shows us how eighteen participants draw on their sources and domains of knowledge—self, family, ancestors, traditions and ceremonies, and languages—to become knowledgeable of Anishinaabe spiritual and cultural traditions. Fiola looks at their learning journeys as they come to know themselves as Métis, Anishinaabe, and spiritual beings.

Fiola and her participants are lifelong learners because they participate in the spiritual and cultural branches of their communities; they all seek to learn their community's teachings so they can nurture their linguistic, traditional, and ceremonial knowledge roots. She begins with an investigation of her existing sources and domains of knowledge, those of her family and ancestors. The reason? People need to know their background if they are to participate in Anishinaabe spiritual and cultural teachings. In her family's case, Fiola finds that Christian practice cut off their language, traditions, and ceremonies and replaced them with a new story that emphasized Catholicism and her family's French roots as the only ones worth knowing. Fiola argues in chapter two of the book that this replacement of Métis sources and domains of knowledge with explicitly Christian ones enabled colonizers to give a new identity to Métis. The consequence was that “[m]any Métis parents were increasingly silent about their Métis heritage, for example, by not teaching their children how to speak Michif” (31), and focusing instead on English or French language instruction, or both.

Fiola faces a tough question in chapter three: How do Métis define themselves in a postcolonial society and among decolonizing community members? Legislation

¹ “First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model,” diagram cited in Jonathan Anuik, “Applying the First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model to the Study of Crime: A Teaching Note,” *in education* 21, no. 1 (2015): 2–11. <http://ineducation.ca/ineducation/article/view/196>; and *Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Model* (Ottawa: Canadian Council on Learning, 2007).

and legal agreements such as treaties once exclusively determined membership. But now, membership criteria are fluid. She seeks to determine where spiritual knowledge can sit amid changes among Indigenous peoples since the 1960s. She concludes that all we know for certain is that in the Red River Settlement (contemporary Winnipeg, Manitoba), Métis grew up overwhelmingly influenced by Christian and especially Catholic teachings that became traditional knowledge. The only path available to a spiritual and cultural life was often at Catholic and other Christian churches. And collective well-being in Métis communities was often of a Christian, and specifically Catholic, hue. Fifteen out of eighteen of participants had some sort of encounter in their lives with the Catholic Church; “Anishinaabe spiritual practices, ceremonies, and people” (135) only appeared in bits and pieces in their formative years. Although a slight majority, eleven, of the participants can draw on their Anishinaabemowin language as they learn the spiritual and cultural teachings, Fiola suggests they did not lose the Anishinaabemowin route as priests and other clergy pressured parents to replace the language with English and French.

In chapter four, Fiola identifies her methodology, which is a journey Elders say we must take in research. Regardless of our problem, she proposes we research to “know who we are and where we come from...to learn why we are here and where we are going” (76). Her goal is to obtain an understanding of Métis’ comprehension of Anishinaabe spirituality as part of their spiritual and cultural teachings. Fiola’s life’s work is to encourage “Métis...to relearn our place in creation from an Anishinaabe perspective” (77).

In chapter five, Fiola constructs each participant’s lifelong learning journey. She begins with standard markers of identity that social scientists and historians use in their investigations: residence, education, employment, ancestry, and for research with Indigenous peoples, whether one is a Status or a Non-Status First Nations person. For Métis on the Canadian prairies, the scrip system was a guarantee of land from the Dominion of Canada. However, land speculators and Catholic clergy often convinced Métis to hand over their scrip at low prices. For Fiola’s research participants, knowledge of their homelands is the touchstone to comprehension of their Métis Anishinaabe worldview, which includes the spiritual and cultural teachings. Language, family, and ancestors are sources and domains of knowledge that root her participants on their journeys to learning of and participating in the spiritual and cultural branches of their homelands. Fiola says, “The most frequently reported cultural subsistence practice was relationship with land” (121). She also notes “almost every participant mentioned at least one specific community or place as significant along their spiritual journey” (183). Once she establishes a composite of her participants, she drills down into their familial and ancestral roots.

In chapter six, Fiola explains how her participants want to learn their spiritual and cultural teachings in order to “transmit...cultural heritage across generations” so that knowledge “of language, childrearing” (120), and all aspects of tradition become part of the next generation’s Indigenous knowledge and value system. However, they combat the still heavy Christian influence on the Métis collective consciousness that shapes theirs and their families’ lives. We learn in chapter seven, which concerns

self-identification, that the choice to hide from Métis ancestry and pass as white resulted in families internalizing racism and willingly becoming part of making a Christian community and natural order in their communities. The consequence was that families, in becoming part of Euro-Canadian society, lost control of how to identify. The legacy is that almost all participants feel their identity is somewhat fluid as a result of some sort of imposition, whether from churches, the Indian Act, or some combination of these things.

In chapter eight, Fiola asks participants to identify the knowledge they hold that can explain “how they came to follow traditional spirituality,” explaining, “whatever they felt was significant regarding how they came to follow this path” (162). It is in this chapter where participants break free of the hold of labels from colonial legislation and Christianity and tell their stories of spiritual teachings as the core of their humanity. “[P]articipants...focus more on how they relate to everyone and everything in Creation, as opposed to fixating on calling themselves by this or that specific noun or names; the names themselves (e.g., Cree or Métis) have become less important than the relationships” (206). In this chapter, participants tell of finding their spirit names and their spirit animals and their clans, encountering animals and spirit beings, learning of traditional lodges, ceremonies, and medicines, smudging, and having dreams and visions. Fiola finds her participants are on a new lifelong learning journey to find how their Anishinaabe spiritual and cultural teachings can shape their roles in their communities and responsibilities to everyone in creation. Interestingly, we also learn how education in universities and colleges opens a door to Indigenous spiritualities, especially among younger participants. “They learned who they were at school.” Fiola concludes, in chapter nine, that her participants are now replacing the Christian idea of wellbeing and the natural order with work that involves “learning their spirit name and coming to know who they are in Creation....[T]hey now focus more on how they relate to everyone and everything in Creation” (206).

Rekindling the Sacred Fire takes a reader on a learning journey. It shows how Métis deal with the standard received world view that seeks to label and sort, and in doing so, confines and most significantly, excludes them. Fiola gives agency to her participants and lets them expose the impacts of colonialism, specifically Christianity, on their learning spirits and knowledge of Anishinaabe spirituality. It is in chapter eight, that Fiola significantly moves her participants into a truly Indigenous space where spirituality is centre and *not* labels and terms. I really appreciate the book’s structure—it takes a reader through an interview with a participant. It shows a fidelity to an Indigenous methodology and is an exemplar for how we as historians of education need to revise the narrative to place learners at the centre. We need to hear from Métis learners as they set new points of reference in the history of Indigenous education.

Jonathan Anuik
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Phillip McCann

Island in an Empire: Education, Religion, and Social Life in Newfoundland, 1800–1855

St. John's: Boulder Publications, 2016. 320 pp.

Island in an Empire offers a comprehensive account of religion and education in nineteenth-century Newfoundland. As James Hiller notes in his introduction, Phillip McCann is the pre-eminent historian of education in Newfoundland and Labrador. Dr. McCann's book draws on more than thirty years of scholarship, blending new and previously-published material into a compelling interpretation of how colonial politics and social pressures shaped the development of educational and religious institutions. In doing so, he offers a wonderfully nuanced study that effectively debunks the popular stereotype of nineteenth-century Newfoundland as hopelessly dominated by violent sectarian strife.

Dr. McCann's scholarship makes a number of important contributions to Newfoundland history. First, McCann brings a refreshingly independent perspective and balanced tone to the study of sectarianism. He successfully resists not only the common urge to identify heroes and victims, but also the temptation to dismiss religion as merely politics by other means. McCann's portraits of complex figures, such as Bishops Michael Anthony Flemming and Edward Feild, are models of careful research and reasoned judgements. McCann is one of the very few scholars who are equally knowledgeable about the histories of both Protestantism and Catholicism. Equally important, McCann is extremely careful to place each of his studies in their appropriate social and imperial contexts. McCann takes great pains to explain the economic factors that influenced developments in education, and he never misses an opportunity to explore how shifts in imperial policy affected the lives of Newfoundlanders.

Island in an Empire is incredibly rich in detail yet clear in argument. McCann's chapter on the Benevolent Irish Society, for example, spans thirty years but still manages to offer a lively prosopographical portrait of all of the Society's major figures. In reading his accounts of figures such as Patrick Morris (someone whom I have studied for over twenty years), I learned a great deal. McCann demonstrates how divisions and rivalries within a particular community were just as important as those between different communities. He shows how changes in the cod fishery and in imperial politics opened doors for some while closing doors for others. In doing so, he strikes just the right balance between contextual breadth and interpretive depth. McCann is careful to root his arguments in the historiography without getting bogged down in theory or jargon. He makes wonderful use of the colonial newspapers, drawing on the lively press accounts without drowning the reader in detail. While many of McCann's arguments are ambitious in scope, e.g., his notion of Sir John Harvey's "cultural revolution," he is refreshingly careful on points of chronology. In other words, McCann's analytical reach never exceeds his evidentiary grasp.

Island in an Empire is a fitting tribute to a career that has spanned fifty years. It is

interdisciplinary in the best sense of the term, ranging widely over topics as diverse as theatre, mummering, horse racing, and the Regatta. It shows how traditional sources, particularly newspapers, can be mined profitably if one knows where to look and how to reconsider events in a new light. The result is a book that reminds us that the history of education is at its best when placed, firmly and creatively, in its social and political contexts.

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George E. Boulter II and Barbara Grigor-Taylor comp.

The Teacher and the Superintendent: Native Schooling in the Alaskan Interior, 1904–1918

Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2015. 394 pp.

The Teacher and the Superintendent, compiled and annotated by George E. Boulter II and Barbara Grigor-Taylor, offers a fascinating glimpse of colonialism and frontier schooling in Alaska. A collection of official reports, personal letters, and journal entries written by George E. Boulter and Alice Green, teachers who worked among the Indigenous (Dene) peoples of the Alaskan interior and eventually married each other, *The Teacher and Superintendent* is a rich repository of documents that shed light on the nature of teaching in an often neglected outpost of the colonial project. Though Boulter II and Grigor-Taylor's opening essay does not adequately frame the documents from a critical scholarly perspective, the book nevertheless highlights the major educational issues, debates, and conflicts in Alaska at the turn of the twentieth century and thus contributes to an historical understanding of colonial schooling in North America.

The Teacher and the Superintendent is divided into two sections. The first is a detailed collection of George E. Boulter's personal papers and official reports on Indigenous schooling in Alaska. The documents show that George was drawn to Alaska by gold. He left London in 1898 to try to strike it rich in the Klondike gold fields. Like many of his fellow prospectors, however, George was unsuccessful and he turned to teaching to make a living. George first taught in local schools for whites but soon focused his efforts on the mission and government schools set up specifically for Indigenous children. After a few years of teaching in the government school, George was promoted to assistant superintendent of schools for the Alaska School Service's Northern District, and he eventually became superintendent of schools of the larger Upper Yukon District. As part of his duties, he toured across the Alaskan Interior to inspect different Native schools, which is how in 1907 he met Alice, a mission schoolteacher. George's annual reports included in the collection reveal the challenges that teachers like Alice faced in early-twentieth century frontier schools, from poor attendance to inadequate classrooms, teaching materials, and salaries. While George

often wrote of the necessity of “civilizing” the Dene through schooling, his reports nevertheless also contain a number of criticisms of the lack of governmental support for educational initiatives, which served to worsen conditions in the schools for teachers and students alike.

The collection's second section presents selections from Alice's personal journal. As Myra Rutherdale has argued, too little is known about the roles played by women in North America's missionary fields, and Alice's reminiscences reveal much about her labours as a missionary teacher.¹ While George came to teaching by chance, Alice's devout Christian upbringing in Louisiana prepared her to participate in missionary endeavours. At a young age, she showed promise in teaching children and later studied at the New Orleans Free Kindergarten Training School. After taking up a number of teaching positions in the southern United States, in 1907 she accepted a post at an Episcopal mission school in the interior of Alaska, which is where she met George. Similar to George's reports, Alice's journal entries reflect a strong belief in the colonizing mission in Alaska. But they also contain critical commentary as well as important information on the trials and tribulations of frontier teaching. For example, Alice frequently wrote that she was deeply saddened by the levels of disease and death in many of the Native schools and was frustrated by the government's seeming lack of interest in ameliorating the situation. She retired from teaching at the end of the 1910–11 school year to marry; however, when George died suddenly in October 1917, Alice resumed her work and became acting superintendent of schools for the Upper Yukon District. Although Alice wrote that she wanted to stay in Alaska and raise her children while continuing to do educational work, US government officials deemed it unwise for her to do so as a single parent and did not renew her contracts. Alice left Alaska for good in June 1918.

While George and Alice's archival record will be of interest to historians of education, Boulter II and Grigor-Taylor's introduction is problematic because it does not properly frame the documents from a critical scholarly perspective. The collection's opening chapter (there is no conclusion or analytical essay) briefly surveys the lives of George and Alice and the politics of schooling in the Alaskan Interior. When it comes to situating George and Alice as active agents in the colonial project, however, the editors shy away from critical scholarly analysis. This is all the more egregious because Boulter II is George and Alice's son. Without a critical scholarly frame, the editor's comments border on genealogical justification, having the effect of excusing the ideas and actions of Boulter II's mother and father. For example, the editors suggest that while some of George and Alice's beliefs may seem out of step with contemporary sensibilities, “they were, after all, products of their time” (xxxvi). Moreover, the editors maintain that George and Alice's actions must really be understood as emanating from a “framework of ‘enlightened’ paternalism” (xxxvi). A deeper analysis, drawing on relevant scholarly literature to situate the documents within critical debates about colonialism and education, is needed to complicate the letters and records that, on

1 Myra Rutherdale, *Women and the White Man's God: Gender and Race in the Canadian Mission Field* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2002).

their own, mostly serve to reinforce problematic notions of Indigenous peoples as “backward” and requiring “uplifting” through education (xxxvi). Mary-Ellen Kelm’s *The Letters of Margaret Butcher: Missionary-Imperialism on the North Pacific Coast* is an example where such deep scholarly contextualization is done successfully.¹

Overall, *The Teacher and the Superintendent* is a valuable collection of documents related to colonialism and schooling in the Alaskan Interior at the beginning of the twentieth century; however, it is limited by its lack of critical analysis. Boulter II and Grigor-Taylor have done a good job of editing and annotating important records, which reveal much about the lives of teachers in Native schools of the period, and hopefully their publication will spur new scholarly analysis.

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Cecilia Morgan

Creating Colonial Pasts: History, Memory, and Commemoration in Southern Ontario, 1860–1980

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015. 217 pp.

Small museums and historical societies are a common feature of community life across Canada. Individuals with a deep knowledge of and passion for their community’s history are often the driving force behind these institutions. They serve on boards, lead the tour groups, and do all the other work necessary to keep the lights on. In *Creating Colonial Pasts: History, Memory, and Commemoration in Southern Ontario, 1860–1980*, historian Cecilia Morgan examines the work of, and connections between, several individuals and groups involved in historical commemoration in small-town rural Ontario, from the mid-nineteenth to the late twentieth century. Morgan is an established authority on the subject of historical commemoration and memory, having published and taught on the subject for nearly twenty years.

In the introduction, Morgan makes clear that *Creating Colonial Pasts* is, in part, an outgrowth of her research for a 2002 book (co-authored with Colin Coates) *Heroines and History: Representations of Madeleine de Verchères and Laura Secord*. Accordingly, Chapter 1 is a detailed examination of the work of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Janet Carnochan (1839–1926), a schoolteacher and local historian Morgan first encountered while researching commemorations of Laura Secord. The Carnochan chapter is indicative of the book’s general focus on the Niagara and Brantford areas, especially the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Six Nations reserve. Niagara-on-the-Lake—where Morgan resides—accounts for not only the Carnochan chapter, but also Chapter 4, which explores efforts to promote the town as a tourist destination

1 Mary-Ellen Kelm, ed. *Letters of Margaret Butcher: Missionary—Imperialism on the North Pacific Coast* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2006).

during the twentieth century. The remaining two chapters offer fascinating analyses of the interventions of Six Nations people in discussions around history and commemoration in Southern Ontario. Chapter 2 looks at the involvement of the Six Nations in provincial and regional heritage organizations and the historical writings of two prominent men from Six Nations, Delaware farmer Elliot Moses and Mohawk soldier, school principal, and magistrate, Milton Martin. The third chapter, "Among the Six Nations" deals with white teacher and historian Celia B. File's work on Haudenosaunee history and her relationships with the people of the Six Nations and Tyendinaga reserves.

Morgan claims that *Creating Colonial Pasts* is not a tightly organized monograph, but instead a collection of chapters addressing the overall theme of historical commemoration and memory in the aforementioned small-town Ontario contexts. This assertion does not seem entirely accurate, since there is a definite unity to the subject matter, and many tangible linkages between the subjects. The book's overarching purpose is to highlight the importance of people and place to historical commemoration: "...memories and histories...were conditioned by the contingencies and contexts of place" (7). Whether discussing Carnochan, Moses, Martin, or File, Morgan demonstrates a consistent concern for exploring "...the ways in which individuals and groups struggled to define themselves and their contexts through the medium of historical commemoration" (10). In addition to sustaining this line of analysis throughout the book, Morgan also draws tangible connections between her subjects, a process she describes as "pulling on threads" in order to "...unravel the web of connections that linked these individuals" (4). For example, Carnochan was connected to Six Nations historians through shared involvement with in the Ontario Historical Society.

Three features make this book a particularly valuable addition to the literature on historical memory and commemoration in Canada. First, and perhaps most pertinent for readers of this journal, it documents the work of teachers as historians and historical commemorators, a subject that has thus far received limited attention. Carnochan, Martin, and File were all teachers; their different relationships with the teaching profession are explored in the book. The second valuable feature of the book is that it is one of very few works to examine historical commemoration and memory in small-town and rural contexts. As Morgan notes, much of what has been written on the subject focuses on large urban centres and major national institutions and events, with exceptions largely to be found in the Atlantic Provinces. However, in discussing this aspect of the historiography, Morgan does not acknowledge some of the work on commemoration that has been done in the western context, particularly Frances Swyripa's *Storied Landscapes: Ethno-Religious Identity and the Canadian Prairies* (2010).

Perhaps the most significant contribution *Creating Colonial Pasts* makes to the literature is in delivering a fascinating and highly nuanced discussion of the work of Indigenous people as historians and historical commemorators in spaces, such as the Ontario and Brant historical societies, that were otherwise dominated by white settlers. Indeed, Morgan states that she was "surprised and delighted" to find, echoing

Phillip J. Deloria, “Indians in unexpected places” (5). She had previously “...naively and uncritically accepted that divides between settler descendants and indigenous people would be both vast and unyielding by the late nineteenth century” (4–5). Her portraits of Moses and Martin in Chapter 2 reveal their complex and sometimes conflicting relationships with Canadian society, especially its assimilationist discourses. Milton Martin, the magistrate who gave up his Indian status through the enfranchisement process, on the one hand “epitomized the model of assimilated Indigenous manhood” (79), while on the other hand was an outspoken critic of racist history textbooks and Canadians’ general ignorance of Indigenous history. By highlighting the engagement of individuals such as Martin with history and history education, Morgan has made a contribution to the growing literature on Indigenous people in the twentieth century.

Finally, Morgan asks her readers whether her subject position as a resident of Niagara-on-the-Lake, concerned with the position of women in history and the place of Indigenous people makes her interpretation “more perceptive or overly myopic” (10). Unquestionably, it is the former; Morgan’s local knowledge and passion for the subject has helped produce a fine study of memory and historical commemoration.

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Elsie Paul, Paige Raibmon, and Harmony Johnson

Written as I Remember It: Teachings (??ms ta?aw) from the Life of a Sliammon Elder

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014. 488 pp.

Written as I remember It is a gift to the Sliammon people, and to all Canadians. Elsie Paul, recent recipient of the Canadian Historical Association’s Lifetime Achievement Award, and one of the last surviving mother-tongue speakers of the Sliammon language, collaborated with her granddaughter, Harmony Johnson, and historian Paige Raibmon, to produce this award-winning collection of stories, language, and knowledge.

The book is a new addition to the Women and Indigenous Studies Series from UBC Press, a further example of the important work on Indigenous history coming out of this press. Elsie Paul tells her life story, interwoven with traditional knowledge and teachings. Her childhood was spent with her grandparents, and she was immersed in traditional culture. She faced numerous challenges throughout her adult life, in which she married, raised children, and worked to build a career, and Sliammon teachings gave her strength throughout adulthood.

Paige Raibmon’s introduction tells of how the book came to be, of Elsie Paul’s (or Chi-chia’s, as she is known) vision for the book, and the process of talking, discussing, editing, and revising the manuscript. Raibmon explains that Paul wanted the

book to be an accessible account of Sliammon stories and knowledge “that future generations could draw upon, learn from, and heal from” (13). And as “history, language, and culture are so deeply intertwined as to be inseparable” (14), the book includes a note on the Sliammon language by Honore Watanabe; several Sliammon narratives, or stories, that are produced in both Sliammon and English; and the language itself is woven throughout the book, as Paul uses Sliammon words in the stories she tells.

Written as I Remember It is a life history, and is organized chronologically. Paul’s stories begin with a section called “Where I Come From,” which includes a chapter on “The Territory and the People,” and two legends: “A Man Taken by the Sal Family” and “Twins are Gifted.” It is this format—the combination of oral history and story-telling—that makes the book so valuable. The second section of the book is on Paul’s life as a child, and includes several chapters on her early life with her grandparents, teachings on learning, Sliammon legends, and a chapter on her experience of residential school. Paul also went to a local Indian day school on and off during her childhood before attending Sechelt Residential School from the age of about ten to twelve. She suggests that she was lucky not to have experienced the physical and sexual abuse that so many children did, and she discusses the impact of the residential school experience on family members, including her husband and mother, as well as other Elders in her community. At the end of this chapter, Paul eloquently describes the losses that children who attended these schools experienced. And in doing so, she makes clear the value of her own book:

So our people are survivors. They came from a rich culture. It’s not that we’re gonna go back there and want to live the way my ancestors lived. But to look at that and say, “I’m from a rich culture. Our people were here first in this country, on this coast. Our people survived.” And just so that young people in the future know we have a history, that we were once a proud Nation. That our people survived, they were resourceful, they were ambitious, they were hard workers, they were good providers to their families. They’ve got nothing to be ashamed of... New generations will survive and look back and be proud of who there were, two, three hundred years ago: It’s my history. That’s our ancestors. Not to be ashamed of themselves. To be strong (203).

The book’s last sections focus on Paul’s life as an adult. The section “Mother” includes the chapters “Teachings for Moms,” “Married Life,” and “Community Work,” and the final section, which focuses on Paul’s life as a grandmother, titled “Chi-Chia,” includes the chapters “Naming my Family,” “Healing Work,” and “Teachings on Spirituality.” The book also includes a significant and detailed additional reading section, a family tree, and family photos.

At a time when Canadians are increasingly becoming interested in Indigenous peoples’ experiences of lived-colonialism of in this country, and when it is becoming increasingly necessary to listen to these stories in order to build any sort of

reconciliation going forward, Paul's book is a very valuable contribution to the growing number of memoirs and oral histories from Indigenous people.

Alison Norman

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David Fraser

"Honorary Protestants": The Jewish School Question in Montreal, 1867–1997

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015. 514 pp.

David Fraser's monograph, *"Honorary Protestants": The Jewish School Question in Montreal, 1867–1997* is an important but uneven study. Consulting historical sources from only one archive, Fraser unpacks in detail an elite male perspective of the Jewish School Question on the island of Montreal and in two rural communities. The book is chronological, covers 130 years of history, and is vigorously argued. Fraser contends that Section 93 of the British North America (BNA) Act guaranteed Roman Catholic and Protestant educational rights in Quebec; those practicing other religions had no immutable right to send their children to public school. He reminds us that in highlighting the role Protestant schools played in transmitting identity and asserting the place of Protestants in Quebec, students who were neither Protestant nor Catholic were "Othered" (7). Jewish children attended public schools, a consequence of 'Christian charity' and of spirited and ongoing negotiations and compromises between members of the city's Jewish community and Protestant school commissioners.

Fraser maintains that the policies that permitted Jewish children to attend Protestant schools did not always conform to the law. Rather, they were negotiated in its shadow and were therefore illegal. What makes Fraser's study important is his exploration of the gap or shadow between law and daily life. The author is at his best deconstructing this space to show the contradictions, conflicts, and debates around the Jewish School Question. Yet, Fraser's probe of the shadow of the law disappoints. By deeming compromises illegal with respect to Section 93, he undermines the Jewish community's efforts and successes. Where Fraser ought to have showcased how and why Jewish Montrealers asserted their agency, learned to navigate the public school system to meet their children's needs for education, and resisted untoward authority and anti-Semitism, the reader faces an exhaustive inventory of the legal debates of the Jewish School Question born of his narrow reading of historical sources, a methodology that lacks originality, and a failure to engage history from the bottom up. Take the example of Jacob Pinsler. His father Paul sued the Protestant school board when it revoked a scholarship that Jacob had won to attend high school. Given that Paul Pinsler was a hat maker from the immigrant Jewish quarter, the lawsuit was a testament to his refusal to accept the school board's decision without a fight. Fraser buries Pinsler's remarkable act in a load of legal arguments with little

regard for his human agency.

Although Fraser argues that Jewish Montrealers sought unfettered access to Protestant schools as Canadian citizens he does not explore the different and sometimes conflicting meanings, based on social class, language, origin, and politics, that they attached to citizenship rights and equality. Jewish elites worried that immigrants would sully their hard-earned reputation and jeopardize their tentative hold on social citizenship. Fraser also gives little consideration to the importance of citizenship, identity, belonging, and equality in Quebec. While he draws links between the Jewish School Question and political, social, and economic transformations in Quebec over the period under study, in particular the Quiet Revolution, the Parent Commission, nationalism, and the election of the Parti Québécois, he ignores Bill 101 and the consequences it may have had for Jewish children of new arrivals to Quebec after 1977. Did Jewish children have to attend Catholic public schools or did they go to Protestant schools in the French sectors?

Fraser does not apply the same rigour to his discussions about Montreal and the people who inhabited it as he does to legal debates, court cases, and state interventions. Some things he gets wrong. For example, he refers to the area where immigrants and their families resided as “the ghetto” and located in the east end of Montreal. They actually lived in the St-Laurent Boulevard corridor or the Main, which served as the dividing line between east and west; it was also a mixed neighbourhood with respect to ethnicity and commerce. What then is the origin of Fraser’s use of the term ghetto?

The history of Montreal’s Jewry gets short shrift. He uses the terms “community” and “communities” interchangeably: “Within the Jewish community of Montreal, or more accurately within the Jewish communities of Montreal” (42). Fraser never tells us why Jewish Montrealers comprised a community sometimes and communities at other times. Like all ethnic and racialized communities, the history of the city’s Jewish community is complex. It was differentiated according to social class, cultural origins, language, religious beliefs and practices, political orientation, identity, and in the importance given to integration into the host society. And, while Fraser acknowledges some of these divisions—uptowners and downtowners—he pays little attention to dynamism, vibrancy, and diversity. That is not the only problem. He treats both the Protestant and Catholic communities as monolithic (without distinction of class, gender, and ethnicity), even though he argues that “some” or “many” Protestants disagreed with the changing positions of commissioners and trustees over schooling Jewish children, segregation, and representation on school boards (185, 309, 320, 321).

Written for those knowledgeable about the law and using sources generated by lawyers and others who studied the cases for the Jewish community, the book is not an easy read. “*Honorary Protestants*” is also lengthy consisting of 403 pages of text and 110 pages of endnotes and an index. It is repetitive: the same definition of ‘dissentient’ appears in multiple chapters; the Pinsler narrative is discussed in detail in the Introduction and Chapter 5; and, there is an injudicious use of the phrase, “right of Protestants and Roman Catholics to establish their own school system as laid out in

Section 93 of the BNA Act.” With more attention to editing, the book would have been concise and shorter. Nevertheless, David Fraser has written a noteworthy monograph, which underscores the complexities of the Jewish School Question—albeit from an elite male perspective—and how in the shadow of Section 93 of the BNA Act members of the Jewish community challenged authorities and won concessions. “*Honorary Protestants*” provides both a guide and a resource for anyone interested in Montreal’s Jewish School Question.

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Andrew Woolford

This Benevolent Experiment: Indigenous Boarding Schools, Genocide, and Redress in Canada and the United States

Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015. xiv, 431 pp.

With the availability of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report, and various books written that include testimonials from residential school survivors, I was not sure if there was anything more that could be added on the subject of Indian residential schools. Andrew Woolford takes a different approach from other authors, broaching the important subject by comparing Indian residential schools in Canada and Indian boarding schools in the United States, and by giving meaning to the significance of the terms *genocide* and *cultural genocide* and their usage in the praxis of assimilation in the schools. Woolford takes us through the literature on how these terms came into use in order to bring a better understanding of what he refers to as the “settler colonial mesh,” and in order for the reader to decide whether the schools fit into these categories or not. He makes no personal judgements on the issue of genocide while at the same time lays out in detail the systematic approaches that each nation took to eradicate the cultures and societies of the Indigenous peoples of Canada and the United States through the residential and boarding school systems.

Without giving anything away about the book, I approached an expert on the subject who is working on the Carlisle Indian boarding school experiment, and asked her whether the Canadian system was more egregious than the American one. She rightfully put me in my place saying you cannot evaluate and compare the suffering of one against the other and that much of the American story is yet to be revealed. Woolford takes a similar approach in his book. Due to the TRC, the experiences of survivors in Canada are better known. There were periods when it appeared that survivors in the United States were better off than those in Canada. However, there were periods in both countries when the survivor experience may have been better than during other periods. Nonetheless, both systems were put in place for the same reason: to annihilate societies and cultures to the detriment of the wellbeing of the students by trying to transform them into pseudo Euro-persons of the lowest class as part of the settler colonial mesh.

Woolford's book reveals an order in how this annihilation was attempted. He takes two Indian residential schools in Manitoba and compares the experiences of their students and administration, with two Indian boarding schools in New Mexico. Woolford could have chosen another school for his comparison, like Carlisle Indian Boarding School in Pennsylvania; however, by choosing schools in Manitoba and New Mexico that were geographically so far apart from one another, and cultures equally as different, he finds a certain conformity of objectives that took place in all of the schools. I think this is what Woolford's book adds to the literature on the schools: That in spite of distance, country and even administration, the cultures and wellbeing of the students were maligned to such an extent that the students often ended up broken by their experiences in the schools and left without any bearings on how to navigate either the Indigenous or non-Indigenous worlds. This is not a book that is easily read. It is more than 300 pages long, not including the index, and is filled with a plethora of information. At the same time we need more books like this in order to put residential school survivors' testimonies into a historical context to better understand their experiences. I highly recommend Andrew Woolford's book to those wanting to understand more about the schools, policies, and ideas that led up to their creation, and the settler colonial mesh that tried to immerse the students in a context that would take them out of their identities, and which provided the vehicle and fuel to allow this to occur for such a long period of time.

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Linda M. Ambrose

A Great Rural Sisterhood: Madge Robertson Watt and the ACWW

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015. 360 pp.

Linda Ambrose's biography, *A Great Rural Sisterhood: Madge Robertson Watt and the ACWW*, provides us with a meticulously researched life story of the tirelessly energetic, sometimes personally difficult Margaret Robertson Watt (1868–1948), who devoted her life to the cause of improving the lives of other women. Her achievements were remarkable. Raised in Collingwood, Ontario, in a privileged household, Madge was one of the first women to be granted a graduate degree at the University of Toronto in 1890. She went on to work as a journalist first in Toronto, moving on to the position of editor in New York in the early 1890s, writing fiction and commentaries for fashionable women's magazines. In 1893, Madge moved to Victoria, B.C. on her marriage to Dr. A. Watt, taking up the familiar life here again as a member of the wealthy bourgeoisie. As a busy, socially-engaged, wife and mother, she also kept up her journalistic writing and worked to establish the first Women's Institutes in British Columbia. When Dr. Watt took up the senior and prestigious position as the supervisor of B.C. Quarantines in 1897, the family moved with their two children to the (relatively) remote region of Metchosin, south of Victoria. Here she gained a new

awareness of the difficulties, particularly isolation and drudgery, that rural women, (especially those who, unlike Madge, could not make extended visits into town when they wanted), faced in Canada. After her husband's untimely and scandalous death by suicide in 1913, Madge relocated with her two sons to England. She successfully, and through an act of what Ambrose terms "reverse colonialism," successfully introduced Women's Institutes into Britain during the war, receiving a MBE for her contributions. Ambrose's biography follows Watt from England back to Canada in 1919, through her remarkable success in drawing together various strands of organizational activity in women's work: first participating actively in the newly formed Federated Women's Institutes of Canada, then working internationally to found the Association of Country Women of the World in 1933. Watt chaired the organization until 1947. Up until her death the following year at eighty years of age, and after she had been asked to resign from her leadership roles to give way to a younger generation, she was still seeking active involvement in organizing women, and particularly rural women, nationally and internationally.

While Ambrose's biography of Watt certainly documents the features that articulate her identity as a "great woman," Ambrose argues that this biography is situated rather more firmly in another biographical tradition: employing an individual as a "prism" through which to gain perspectives on the social, political and cultural contexts of the times. Ambrose uses Watt's life as a way of explicating or refracting a variety of themes in Canadian society in general, and women's history in particular:

These include the history of co-education; the establishment of Canadian writers and publishers; the roles and definitions of the 'New Woman' at the turn of the twentieth century; the social dynamics between urban and rural communities; the establishment and spread of Canadian rural women's organizations; the enduring place of imperialism in Canadian society in the first half of the twentieth century; and the transnational exchanges that occurred among international women's organization created in the interwar years (9).

Ambrose carefully contextualizes Watt's life within a rich literature that explores these broader themes and issues, illuminating both Watt's life and the broader historiography in the process.

Ambrose draws on one more approach to biography, that drawn from cultural theorists, to explore the nuanced relationships and flexible boundaries between the performative subject and the fixed self, between multiple identities and patterns of representations, and between history and commemoration. These approaches are particularly successful in probing the nuanced world view and the social contexts of a woman Ambrose ultimately portrays as "transitional figure" between traditional and modern: a feminist who, while championing the rights of women to vote, to work for equal pay as men and to be treated as their equals in every way, nevertheless embraced a deeply conservative belief that women's true and socially sacrosanct role was to care for the home and family. Some readers might have welcomed a similarly probing analysis of the role of privilege and Empire in Watt's life and rural women's

organizations more broadly; class and race are not terms widely used throughout the volume, particularly in the context of Canadian women. Acknowledging that the author has largely succeeded in creating a careful balance between the individual and the contexts that framed her life, this reviewer would have appreciated an even sharper lens placed on the differing ideas of rural that the author introduces, and an even closer examination of the relationship between these organizations' privileged leaders and the rural women on whose behalf they were organizing.

While Ambrose's biography does a very good job of highlighting both Watt's remarkable achievements as an individual and the various and complex historical contexts within which they were expressed, *Historical Studies in Education/Revue d'histoire de l'éducation* readers might well conclude that the volume's greatest contribution is historiographical rather than historical. For Ambrose not only tells the story of Madge Robertson Watt, but in the process leads the reader through the difficult, contradictory and often vexing process of research that the author, as historical detective, forged over almost a decade in three different countries and countless archives. For there is no single archival fonds documenting Watt's life, no diaries, and few personal letters. After finding scattered remains of Watt's life and career across a range of sources, Ambrose goes on to include the reader in the process of making sense of the various kinds of evidence that she finds, inviting us, indeed, to make our own sense of the different voices contained in the archive Ambrose has meticulously compiled, including the very different voices emanating from Watt herself. Finally, in the last chapter Ambrose invites us to reflect on the relationship between history and commemoration as it applies to Watt's life, providing us with three insightful examples of what I am tempted to call "commemoration gone bad," raising in the process highly significant self-reflective questions about the nature of evidence, fact, and the role of biography and even history. For this alone, *A Great Rural Sisterhood* would make a thoughtful, instructive and highly readable contribution to any history course, and particularly those on Canadian women and gender studies and the history of education.

R.W. Sandwell

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Françoise F. Laot et Rebecca Rogers (dir.)

Les Sciences de l'éducation. Émergence d'un champ de recherche dans l'après-guerre

Rennes : Presses Universitaires de Rennes, Collection Histoire, 2015. 317 p.

Je ne pense pas déformer les faits en affirmant que le champ des sciences de l'éducation reste à bien des égards imprécis et polémique, et que tant son appartenance à l'université que la valeur des travaux qui y sont menés font, en plusieurs lieux, l'objet de débats, souvent vifs et passionnés.

L'ouvrage que dirigent Laot et Rogers apporte une contribution originale et

importante à ces débats en cours en nous conviant à un retour historique et critique sur l'émergence de ce champ de réflexion et de recherche sur l'éducation.

L'éclairage apporté est d'autant précieux et méritoire que, d'une part, même si le cas de la France est l'objet principal de l'analyse, on ne se limite pas à ce seul pays et que, d'autre part, on tente de cerner cet objet à partir de multiples perspectives et problématisations.

Le contexte historique

Cette idée de sciences de l'éducation et sa réalisation ont de nombreux précurseurs, par exemple aux États-Unis avec John Dewey et son école expérimentale (mieux connue sous le nom de *Dewey School*), avec les idéaux libertaires dont Francisco Ferrer est le représentant le plus connu, avec le vaste mouvement de l'Éducation nouvelle associé à Genève et, en France même, avec Émile Durkheim. Ce n'est toutefois que par un arrêté de février 1967 que les sciences de l'éducation obtiennent, en France, le statut de discipline universitaire autonome.

L'ouvrage consacre de substantiels développements à ce qui en rend possible l'émergence dans le contexte tant national qu'international de l'après Deuxième Guerre mondiale, et les analyses se poursuivent jusqu'en 1973, année où s'amorce la fin des Trente Glorieuses et où se tient, à Paris, le Congrès de l'*Association Internationale des Sciences de l'éducation*.

Notons déjà que les éditrices admettent et déplorent — et nous le déplorons à notre tour — n'avoir pu inclure dans leur propos les perspectives apportées par « l'Amérique du Nord et en particulier les échanges franco-canadiens, importants — notamment en ce qui concerne l'éducation permanente. » (8).

Ce contexte historique est d'abord celui d'une forte demande de savoirs, entre autres de ceux produits dans les relativement jeunes sciences humaines, et dont on attend qu'ils contribueront à cet urgent travail de reconstruction économique, sociale et bien entendu éducationnelle, dont la création de l'UNESCO reste un symbole fort. « L'éducation [...], écrivent Laot et Rogers, se trouve [alors] enrôlée dans la bataille pour l'édification d'un monde meilleur », tandis que « [...] les traumatismes liés à la guerre ont conduit à répandre l'idée (occidentale) de la nécessité d'une éducation humaniste et éclairée des enfants, mais aussi des adultes, afin d'éviter que le monde soit à nouveau confronté à la barbarie. » (9).

Plan Marshall, multiplication des échanges culturels et économiques, Guerre Froide sont quelques-unes des autres composantes majeures du contexte qui voit émerger les sciences de l'éducation comme champ disciplinaire autonome, en France et ailleurs.

La première partie de l'ouvrage retrace tout cela dans les cas particuliers de l'Allemagne de l'Ouest, de la Grande-Bretagne, de la Suisse et de la Belgique — en ce dernier cas en s'intéressant aux sciences de l'éducation à l'Université libre de Bruxelles, de 1920 à 1970.

Ces chapitres sont riches et ils contiennent de précieuses informations qui montrent à la fois des convergences et des particularités. En raison de l'intérêt que je

leur porte depuis longtemps et de la trop grande et déplorable méconnaissance de ces importants travaux dans le monde francophone, j'ai particulièrement apprécié que dans le chapitre sur la Grande-Bretagne, Gary McCulloch fasse écho à l'exemplaire travail accompli dans le cadre de la philosophie analytique de l'éducation par R.S. Peters et son école.

Le cas de la France

La deuxième partie de l'ouvrage examine, en France, les politiques scientifiques et les ancrages institutionnels de la mise en place des sciences de l'éducation et plus généralement d'une nouvelle philosophie de l'éducation alimentant les politiques publiques.

La fameux Plan Langevin-Wallon est bien entendu rappelé ici, mais aussi d'autres réflexions et initiatives, sans doute moins connues mais non moins influentes, et qui conduisent rapidement, avec les mutations démographiques, sociales et économiques qui s'amorcent avec la fin de la Guerre, à une explosion, tant du point de vue quantitatif que de son contenu, de la demande éducative.

La recherche en sciences de l'éducation est alors convoquée pour apporter des réponses que l'on espère informées et crédibles aux nombreuses questions qu'inévitablement tout cela soulève. Les chapitres qui composent cette partie éclairent ces enjeux, en plus de suggérer, me semble-t-il, comment un certain enthousiasme pour l'éducation populaire et son idéal pédagogique humaniste sont peu à peu tempérés par une perspective gestionnaire.

La troisième partie de l'ouvrage porte sur les champs et les perspectives de recherche qui s'ouvrent, en particulier durant cet « âge d'or » des années 1962–1967, et qui sont explorés durant la période considérée, c'est-à-dire jusqu'en 1973. Trois champs disciplinaires sont abordés : la sociologie de l'éducation, dont on connaît bien les travaux français devenus classiques, mais aussi la formation des adultes et la psychopédagogie, qui sont moins connus.

Se dessine alors l'institutionnalisation des sciences de l'éducation en France, qui passe dans ce pays non par la formation des maîtres, comme ce sera souvent le cas ailleurs, mais par ces travaux et « par le mouvement général de réforme de l'université française, porté par les réseaux, les associations, les publications, et les acteurs que ce livre décrit. » (p. 17–18).

Cet ouvrage propose, à mon sens, une contribution historique importante et originale qui, par le rappel et du contexte de leur apparition et des idéaux qui leur ont donné naissance, est susceptible d'alimenter nos actuels débats et discussions sur la place et la valeur des sciences de l'éducation, de la recherche qu'elles produisent et de la pertinence de leur contribution aux politiques publiques.

Normand Baillargeon
Professeur retraité, UQAM

Martine Ruchat

Édouard Claparède. À quoi sert l'éducation ?

Lausanne : Éditions Antipodes, 2015. 392 p.

Si le nom d'Édouard Claparède (1873–1940) est encore bien connu aujourd'hui, peu de gens sont véritablement au fait de la richesse et de la diversité du parcours de ce savant suisse qui fut un véritable touche-à-tout. On connaît bien sûr le pédagogue, fondateur du fameux Institut Jean-Jacques Rousseau de Genève et penseur l'« école sur mesure », mais aussi le psychologue spécialiste de la mémoire et directeur d'une revue internationale intitulée *Les Archives de psychologie*. On sait plus rarement qu'il fut d'abord médecin, pratiquant plusieurs années dans un dispensaire de la capitale cantonale, ainsi que philosophe, amateur selon ses propres dires, mais auteur de nombreux articles dans le célèbre *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie* de Lalande et secrétaire actif des congrès internationaux de la discipline. On le découvre en outre citoyen engagé, lecteur avide et curieux, auteur prolifique, amoureux de la montagne et de la marche, père et mari aimant ainsi qu'ami fidèle dans cette très belle biographie que publie l'historienne Martine Ruchat aux éditions Antipodes.

Cette spécialiste de l'histoire de l'éducation, professeure associée à l'Université de Genève, est l'une des meilleures expertes de Claparède et de son œuvre. Outre de nombreux articles, elle a publié en 2010 sa correspondance avec la psychologue d'origine russe Hélène Antipoff (1892–1974). Après plusieurs années passées au sein des archives de l'Institut Jean-Jacques Rousseau et un travail d'enquête des plus minutieux, elle a acquis une connaissance fine et quasi exhaustive du pédagogue, dont elle nous livre ici l'essence, dans une biographie, qu'elle a voulue personnelle et intime, cherchant à « révéler Édouard Claparède, et non à l'expliquer et analyser » (14).

Partant de son enterrement, qui eut lieu à Genève le mercredi 2 octobre 1940, Martine Ruchat retrace, de manière chronologique, en 25 chapitres consacrés chacun à quelques années ou quelques mois, la vie de celui que ses amis appelaient Clap ou Clapa. Grâce à l'analyse d'une correspondance importante, mais aussi de ses écrits privés et publics, elle suit pas à pas le parcours à la fois personnel et intellectuel du savant, reconstruisant l'agenda de ses voyages, ses travaux, ses enseignements, ses collaborations ou ses communications scientifiques, mais surtout son vécu, ses doutes, ses questionnements, ses angoisses, ses rêves, ses joies, ses déceptions ou ses attentes. Ses archives personnelles offrent en effet un accès inédit à l'existence quotidienne de Claparède et permettent donc d'en dresser un portrait fidèle, parce qu'extrêmement précis, mais surtout un portrait entier, puisque ne séparant jamais la vie du scientifique de celle de l'homme. On retrouve dès lors son ambition de fonder la psychologie sur les sciences biologiques et médicales, mais aussi ses efforts pour établir la pédagogie sur les bases de cette psychologie scientifique, ainsi que son rêve de faire profiter à tous, enfants comme instituteurs, de ces avancées des sciences de l'éducation. On découvre également un Claparède philanthrope, au sens étymologique

du terme, c'est-à-dire passionné par la chose politique et habité par une morale qui n'était pas étrangère à ses origines protestantes. On comprend finalement, au fil de ce portrait aussi précis que touchant, que son projet pédagogique, celui d'offrir une éducation adaptée à chaque enfant, du plus « anormal » au plus « surdoué », était avant tout l'expression concrète, pratique, d'une vision du monde où la vérité, mais aussi la liberté, tenait une place centrale. Tous ses travaux et ses engagements, pédagogiques comme politiques, s'inscrivaient dans cette perspective de lutte contre toute forme de dogmatisme et d'autoritarisme. « À quoi sert l'éducation ? » interroge le sous-titre du livre. Eh bien, avant tout à bien penser et à vivre ainsi en homme libre, honnête et droit, nous répond Claparède.

C'est toute la force de cet ouvrage que de replacer avec précision l'œuvre plurielle du savant suisse dans la perspective unitaire de son existence et de ses valeurs. En décrivant dans toute sa complexité et avec une rare habileté la personnalité de Claparède, Martine Ruchat parvient à mettre en évidence la profonde ambition humaniste qui animait ce chercheur passionné et ainsi à reconstituer la cohérence et la visée de son parcours. Elle révèle ainsi clairement les enjeux profonds qui animèrent son travail pédagogique. Son écriture tendre, presque amoureuse, tend en outre à favoriser cette immersion dans l'esprit de Claparède, en effaçant toute trace d'un travail de recherche aussi immense qu'il dut être fastidieux pour celle qui a traqué à travers le monde « le moindre signe de cet homme » (13). L'absence quasi totale de notes de bas de pages, remplacées par la mention finale des sources et par une bibliographie indicative, témoigne de cette volonté de raconter une histoire vivante plutôt que de produire un ouvrage strictement universitaire. À nouveau : révéler plutôt qu'analyser. Le résultat est un ouvrage à l'image de l'existence qu'il décrit : riche, voire parfois dense certes, parce que précis et à tendance exhaustive, mais surtout délicat parce que passionné et intime. En suivant au plus près Claparède, depuis son enfance jusqu'à ses hommages posthumes¹, Martine Ruchat dresse un portrait vivant — d'autant que l'ouvrage regorge de photographies inédites — et particulièrement sensible du psychologue et pédagogue suisse. Au final, c'est une biographie comme on aimerait en lire davantage que nous propose ici Martine Ruchat. Certes, certains points achoppent parfois au détour d'une page, comme la qualification d'anti-dreyfusard accolée au nom d'Alfred Binet (83), mais ce ne sont souvent que des détails, rarement évitables au sein d'une entreprise d'une telle ampleur. Surtout, ils n'entachent en rien la très grande qualité de cette étude aussi ambitieuse et rigoureuse qu'elle est particulièrement réussie. Avec cet ouvrage, Martine Ruchat comble finalement avec brio et élégance un manque historiographique qui s'avérait béant, et signe ce qui est appelé à s'imposer comme LE livre de référence sur Édouard Claparède.

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1 Les dizaines de lettres de condoléances envoyées à sa veuve ont été mises en ligne par l'auteure sur le site de l'éditeur.

Mathieu Ferrand et Nathaël Istasse (éd.)

Nouveaux regards sur les « Apollons de collège ». Figures du professeur humaniste en France dans la première moitié du XVI^e siècle

Genève, Droz, 2014. 414 p.

L'expression « Apollons de collège » a été fabriquée par Lucien Febvre en 1942 dans son ouvrage *Problème de l'incroyance au XVI^e siècle. La religion de Rabelais*, alors qu'il décrivait avec une verve corrosive et un humour caustique les régents qui enseignaient dans les collèges parisiens et provinciaux dans la première moitié du XVI^e siècle et composaient des vers latins. Si l'expression se voulait sous sa plume méprisante et sardonique, elle est reprise ici afin de répondre aux attaques formulées jadis par L. Febvre et redonner à ces poètes néo-latins une nouvelle dignité. La période de la Renaissance a connu la multiplication des collèges, institutions issues du Moyen Âge, et leur transformation. Dès la fin du XV^e et le début du XVI^e siècle, les collèges parisiens puis de province voient leur enseignement et leur pédagogie transformés par l'humanisme et deviennent des foyers importants de sa diffusion. Ces « apollons de collège » sont des poètes, des auteurs, des éditeurs qui enseignent dans les collèges à Paris, à Lyon, à Bordeaux, à Toulouse, les Belles-Lettres et forment une communauté littéraire savante, active et productive. Il n'est plus question de juger de la valeur littéraire de leurs œuvres, de ne retenir que des auteurs « majeurs », mais d'esquisser les contours intellectuels du milieu formé par ces professeurs.

L'ouvrage rassemble dix-huit articles d'une grande érudition écrits par des spécialistes de l'histoire littéraire et de la philosophie de la Renaissance en France. La plupart des articles s'attachent à retracer les destins individuels, parfois croisés, de ces professeurs humanistes et de leurs œuvres, multipliant ainsi les études de cas. Il ne se dégagent pas de problématique forte, mais l'approche, bien que répétitive, permet une lecture fine de la culture humaniste de ces professeurs. Les articles comportent des bibliographies fort pertinentes, mais laissent le plus souvent de côté le travail des historiens des collèges et des universités. Dans la première partie intitulée « Humanisme et enseignement » qui met l'accent sur les contributions des professeurs dans le renouveau des Belles-Lettres, on analyse les œuvres du régent de Montaigu François Dubois (Jean Lecointe) ; du régent du collège de Navarre Joannes Ravisius Textor, (Nathaël Istasse) ; du juriste orléanais Nicolas Béraud (Marie-Françoise André) ; du principal du collège de Presle, le philosophe Pierre de La Ramée (Marie-Dominique Couzinet). L'article de Marie Madeleine Fontaine adopte pour sa part une approche plus sociale en traitant de la troisième génération de régents, « génération malheureuse » qui au milieu du XVI^e siècle voit ses conditions et son prestige se dégrader. Perrine Galand substitue à la figure d'Apollon celle d'Orphée pour penser ces poètes et montre bien l'influence de l'humanisme italien sur la culture des régents de collège, plus spécifiquement l'œuvre d'Ange Policien. La deuxième partie intitulée « Les 'Apollons de collège' professeurs et poètes » cible en effet plus spécifiquement les œuvres poétiques latines, dont certaines s'adressent à leurs élèves, traitent de l'enseignement ou de l'amitié, de ces professeurs humanistes,

tels Guillaume Castel (Jan Pendergrass), Nicolas Petit et Jean Des Fossés (Arnaud Laimé), Nicolas Barthélemy de Loches (Élise Gauthier), Gilbert Ducher (Catherine Langlois-Pézeret), George Buchanan (Philip Ford); Marc-Antoine Muret (Virginie Le Roux) et Nicolas Chesneau (John Nassichuk). Autant de contributions qui réhabilitent ces auteurs et mettent de l'avant la diversité des genres littéraires auxquels ils s'adonnent. Enfin, la dernière partie qui a pour titre « L'Humanisme au miroir, l'humaniste au combat » aborde pour l'essentiel la représentation du professeur chez des auteurs comme Nicolas Bourbon (Sylvie Laigneau-Fontaine), Philippe Boisot (Mathieu Ferrand), François Rabelais (Mireille Huchon). De l'excellent professeur bienveillant et cultivé au professeur exécration et violent, du pédant ridicule à l'humaniste dévoué et au pédagogue compétent, les images de l'enseignant abondent dans les œuvres de ces professeurs qui se définissent eux-mêmes en saillie ou en creux, ou encore décrivent les précepteurs qui les ont inspirés et leur ont servi de modèle. En outre dans cette partie, Michel Magnien révèle la richesse de l'œuvre de Robert Breton, « évangéliste cicéronien » et fournit une remarquable bibliographie de son œuvre. Pour sa part, Jean-Eudes Girot explique l'absence des poètes néo-latins les plus en vue dans la querelle littéraire opposant Marot et Sagon par le fait qu'une prise de position les aurait fait glisser sur le terrain controversé de la religion de Marot.

Si Lucien Febvre a révélé l'existence, quoique dans le sarcasme, de ce « microcosme mal connu », cet ouvrage remarquable, très cohérent, impeccable sur le plan de l'édition, permet d'en découvrir l'érudition et la culture. On apprend peu sur les collèges comme institutions d'enseignement ou sur la réalité des pratiques pédagogiques, mais beaucoup sur ce milieu humaniste qui a assuré la diffusion des Belles-Lettres.

Lyse Roy

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