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BOOK REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

Rosa Bruno-Jofré

The Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions: From Ultramontane Origins to a New Cosmology

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019. 384 pp.

The Religieuses de Notre Dame des Missions (RNDM)—Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions—arrived in rural Manitoba on 11 August 1898 as part of the recruiting drive of Adélarde Langevin, archbishop of St. Boniface. Faced with the influx of settlers from Europe and other parts of North America, the Quebec-born bishop successfully invited up to 20 religious congregations to establish the Roman Catholic presence in Western Canada. As a member of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI), he knew that the multilingual personnel and financial resources of men and women religious congregations would assist in his aim of expanding Catholicism through language and schools.

The RNDMs were a perfect match in bringing and safeguarding the faith in schools and parishes. A teaching congregation, the RNDMs were founded in 1861 by 32-year-old Euphrasie Barbier, a laundress who was motivated as a teenager to be a foreign missionary. For the foundress, education was the community's priority in France and in the foreign missions. "What children receive at school, reaches the families, makes God and the Catholic faith better known and lived" (39). She embraced the ultramontane papocentric loyalty to Rome, which dominated the First Vatican Council (1870), and remained as a congregational *raison d'être* beyond the Second Vatican Council.

Within two weeks of arriving in the Franco-Manitoban community of Grande Clairière, the RNDMs opened their first Canadian school, consisting of 20 pupils in the village rectory. During the next eight decades, the sisters taught in 50 schools in rural communities and towns of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and later in Ontario and Quebec. A private girls' school was opened in Brandon, Manitoba and three in Regina, including Sacred Heart College, which was affiliated with the University of Ottawa. When describing the years as a teaching congregation before the Second Vatican Council, Rosa Bruno-Jofré skillfully intertwines the congregational visions, charism and constitutional customs, nineteenth century Roman Catholic theological movements, pedagogy, and the pioneer circumstances.

This is not an all-encompassing detailed account. Instead, the author has selected to impart the history through the congregation's founding vision, its application in Canadian schools, mainly in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and the effects of the

Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). The vast archival material from the various RNDM archives and secondary sources is supported by the author's credentials as an historian and a retired dean of education at Queen's University. In conveying the RNDM's "divine mission" in nature, purpose, and location, Bruno-Jofré outlines the congregation's accommodation in dealing with the Franco-Manitoban language and school issues, parish-private schools, English-speaking immigrants, and the Saskatchewan Catholic separate school system.

The post-Second Vatican Council section, particularly the RNDM's transformative mission in Peru (1969–1984), benefits from Bruno-Jofré's South American heritage. Like many congregations, which responded to Pope John XXIII's call for missions in Latin America, the RNDMs lived through the political turmoil of coups, dictatorships, and the 1977 general strike. In response, the sisters expanded their parish work and catechesis, concentrating on the urban slums and the rural poor as community workers and in social enterprise.

The Canadian Peru mission awakened the international RNDM congregation to a commitment to social justice, which was approved in the 1984 General Chapter as central to their community life. The long-held papocentric policy was abandoned, and instead the congregation responded to the contemporary needs of the world rather than those directed from Rome.

For a 30-year overview of the internal effects of the Second Vatican Council on the Canadian RNDMs, Bruno-Jofré has chosen the administration's voices. In a 51-page transcript, seven sisters, former provincial superiors of the Canadian Province, discuss their terms in office from 1968 until 1998, a crucial period of leaving the trappings of their semi-cloistered life and widening their community and individual perspectives.

A comprehensive view is provided of a conservative, slow-moving adaptation of reforms from the Vatican and the RNDM central administration in Europe, contrasting with the evolving Canadian experience of introspection, spiritual renewal, and a more collaborative leadership. In particular, the Canadian persistence for reform and the surrounding tension is explored through the flashpoint issue of a change to more contemporary clothes from the nineteenth century habit and veil. Bruno-Jofré credits the Western Canadian prairie culture of openness, the community's specific situations in Canada and liberal clerics in advancing the RNDM push for change.

However, the reform movements among the Canadian women religious congregations and the influence of the Canadian Religious Conference's many studies since 1960 have been treated minimally. Fuller details beyond the timeline in the appendix would have created a better view of the rebuilding of their identity beyond the Peru mission as participants in Canadian collaborative humanitarian and social justice projects. However, the tracing of the rethinking about their place in the institutional church and its liturgy produces an understanding of their ground-breaking decision in 2003 to embrace Eco-spiritualism, seeing all life forms as part of the same sacred body and earth.

The narrative is enlivened with memories and observations from individual sisters, especially about the Canadian school missions, the Peru mission and the panel

discussion by the provincial superiors. From these anecdotes and comments, the reader might wish for the biographical background, demographics, vocation attraction, and specific membership numbers of the women who entered the Canadian Province to appreciate their charism. Nevertheless, this well-written and researched institutional history presents a solid academic view of a woman religious teaching community from its nineteenth century conservative roots to its renewal since the Second Vatican Council.

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rosalind hampton

Black Racialization and Resistance at an Elite University

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020. 224 pp.

Black Racialization and Resistance at an Elite University by rosalind hampton was released against the backdrop of social unrest in 2020. Within the Canadian context, there was a particularly hastened effort by many Canadian universities to offer a rash of teaching and research positions for self-identifying Black professors, including the establishment of several new research chair positions in Black Studies across the country. More institutions conceded under public pressure to offer more or establish inaugural Black and African studies courses. In addition, the 2020/21 academic year opened with Scholars Strike for Black Lives in Canada, joining thousands of academics in higher education in an organized labour action “to protest anti-Black, racist and colonial police brutality in the U.S., Canada and elsewhere” (Scholars Strike Canada). Over the course of two days, scholars in Canadian universities paused teaching and administrative duties and led and participated in public digital teach-ins as part of a global action. This political context makes the release of hampton’s book particularly timely.

Black Racialization is an ethnographic case study of the ways in which higher educational institutions, as colonial vestiges, reproduce white settler colonialism, oppression, and racial capitalism. Through a careful examination of the experiences of Black students and Black faculty at McGill University, an anglophone university in Montréal, hampton employs anti-colonial and critical race feminist paradigms to unpack the study and work experiences of twenty-two Black scholars, including herself, over the course of sixty years. Using personal interviews, archival materials such as the school newspaper, photographs, and historical accounts, and various institutional texts including an institutional history and a statue, the author contextualizes the experiences of the participants through a close analysis of how processes of racialization shaped their time at McGill.

hampton begins by detailing the origins of McGill as the first colonial higher education institution in 1821 as outlined in institutional texts. The school was established