

cléricalisation de la société, de l'épanouissement de l'agriculturisme, du messianisme et de l'anti-étatisme. Nous n'avons pas l'intention de suivre l'auteur sur les sentiers qui mènent de la transformation de la société canadienne-française « en société traditionnelle » (p. 169) vers 1840, de sa traversée de l'industrialisation jusqu'à la révolution tranquille et à nos jours. Nous en avons assez dit pour montrer que la rhétorique n'appartient pas nécessairement au discours. Même si, à l'occasion et plus souvent lorsqu'il traite des périodes plus contemporaines, l'auteur a des accents plus justes, il ne dépasse presque jamais le niveau de l'idéologie ambiguë qui a inspiré son livre. C'est à propos d'entreprises de ce genre que G. Haupt écrit: « Ce discours historique ne représente aucun intérêt théorique et ne remplit pas non plus une fonction militante. Car ce type d'histoire transmet des images jaunies et occulte les vrais problèmes »<sup>10</sup>. Ceux qui s'intéressent à la difficulté des engagements présents devraient lire à propos du *parti québécois* la conclusion et l'appendice.

Fernand OUELLET,  
*Université d'Ottawa.*

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ELAINE ALLAN MITCHELL. — *Fort Timiskaming and the Fur Trade*. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977. Pp. xxiv, 308.

Elaine Allan Mitchell has already done considerable service to fur trade history. In this book she does even more; she fills a gap in existing fur trade literature. By concentrating upon the Timiskaming District, an extensive area encompassing parts of Ontario and Quebec and stretching from Hudson Bay to the St. Lawrence, and reconstructing its long trade history, between the early 17th century and 1902, she has illuminated a corner of fur trade history virtually unknown — neglected by previous trade historians whose attention followed the great trader-explorers into the more immediately exciting and romantic northwest.

Her work begins with an outline of French exploitation of the area, underway before de Troyes, expedition in 1686, and proceeds thereafter with a careful restoration of the competition between the Bay-side traders and Montreal fur interests which characterized the trade in Canada until the union of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company in 1821. This section of the book only establishes the marked similarity with the course of the trade in the northwest — the same post and counter post chess match was conducted on Lakes Timiskaming and Abitibi as took place along the Saskatchewan. Perhaps the only variation on that common theme was that in the east cordiality rather than hostility was the tone of competition — a phenomenon marvellously illustrated by Mrs. Mitchell's description of rival traders sharing a winter picnic of partridges and bacon.

It is within this context of competition however, that Mrs. Mitchell most impressively displays her firm grasp of the intricacies of fur trading gained from many years, devotion to the subject. She demonstrates, for example, more clearly than others have, how the wilderness skills of Canadian employees in the field enabled the Montreal merchants to hold their own for a time against the

<sup>10</sup> Georges HAUPT, « Pourquoi l'histoire du mouvement ouvrier? » *Europa*, 1978, p. 104s.

English Company which, though better organized and more securely financed, had its competitive edge dulled by its reliance on inexperienced Orkney employees.

It is in the second half of the book dealing with the period after 1821 that Mrs. Mitchell is able to break new ground in more than just a geographic sense. She reveals an eastern trade history which was unique at least throughout most of the 19th century. It was a period of continued competition but between a different set of characters and with very different stakes indeed. In the Timiskaming district by the 1830s and increasingly thereafter the Company was faced with Canadian lumbermen, missionaries and finally with the encroachment of the colony itself in the form of agricultural settlement. At stake was not only the control of the trade but the very existence of the trade itself.

The case of missionary intrusion is perhaps the most interesting, for the missionary, with his dedication to the conversion and civilization of native people, posed a threat to the indispensable partnership between the trader and the Indian. Moreover it was a threat which could not be dealt with by the aggressive techniques employed by the Company against lumbermen, free traders and settlers. As Mrs. Mitchell accurately points out, Governor Simpson was well aware of the considerable influence in England of the humanitarian movement, an influence which in the person of Benjamin Harrison had reached into one of the most secluded preserves — the London Committee of the Company. Yet Simpson was determined to delay the process, to resist the tide of Catholic missionaries advancing from the south. Initially he tried to fight Catholics with the more palatable Wesleyans. But the determination of the Catholic hierarchy in Quebec proved too strong. By 1850 the Catholic Church controlled the religious life of the district. Ironically the Church proved not to be the threat it was originally considered. Even Simpson found he could make his peace with priests who, for the sake of conversion, were prepared to cut their creed to suit the fur trade occupation of their congregations. Catholicism and the trade seemed able to co-exist.

The same of course was not the case with other rivals in the District. Though the Company's defense of the territory is shown to have been energetic, it could defeat neither the lumbermen nor the settlers; it could not hold the colony back; nor could it find an accommodation with activities which were the antithesis of the fur trade. Thus the District began a progressive decline in the 1860s and was finally abandoned in 1902.

Though Mrs. Mitchell has chosen to concentrate on a single trade area she does not treat the Timiskaming District in total isolation. Rather the history of the District is well integrated with the major events of the fur trade in Canada: the H.B.C.-N.W.C. competition, the union agreement and the whole series of Departmental policies subsequently formulated by Sir G. Simpson and his successors as Inland Governor. In this manner she presents not only a detailed examination of the District but also a well-rounded view of the trade in general. This synthesis is yet another part of her considerable contribution.

There must be added, however, a word not so much of criticism but of caution. This is a book for devotees of the fur trade and of fur trade history of the most traditional kind. Considerable space is given over to the intricate details and significance of geography — the heights of land and the relative usefulness in terms of supply of one waterway over another, the supposed benefit of establishing a post on this spit of land rather than on that island — and to the minutiae of the art of trading. One might wish for a more catholic interpretation or failing that, some

greater concentration on the social dynamics of the trade. The whole subject of Indian-trade contact might deserve at least a chapter.

Yet having appended that cautionary note the work should still be welcomed as a valuable addition to the literature of the fur trade.

J. S. MILLOY,  
University of Winnipeg.

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NOËL BAILLARGEON. — *Le Séminaire de Québec, de 1685 à 1760*. Québec, les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1977. viii, 459 p. Cahier N° 21 des *Cahiers d'histoire de l'Université Laval*.

On a longtemps attendu une histoire du Séminaire de Québec: l'importance de cette maison dans notre passé religieux comme dans notre passé économique, social et culturel et la richesse extraordinaire de ses archives permettaient d'en attendre une étude monumentale; et on peut à bon droit se scandaliser du retard qu'a mis le Séminaire à se donner un historien. Certes, le futur cardinal Taschereau en avait rédigé une histoire, mais heureusement elle est restée manuscrite; l'abbé Arthur Maheux s'était mis à la tâche, à son tour: il a dû laisser tomber dès les débuts, n'étant pas fait pour ce genre de besogne. Enfin, l'abbé Noël Baillargeon, autre prêtre du Séminaire et formé à l'histoire selon les règles de l'art, consacre sa carrière à rédiger cette œuvre. En 1972, il publiait un premier volume, *Le Séminaire de Québec sous l'épiscopat de Mgr de Laval, soit de 1663 à 1688*. Cinq ans après, il fait paraître un deuxième volume, *Le Séminaire de Québec, de 1685 à 1760*, c'est-à-dire depuis l'arrivée de Mgr de Saint-Vallier jusqu'à la coupure de 1760, la conquête allant amener le Séminaire à d'importantes transformations.

Sur ce Séminaire qui, en 1685, a déjà une vingtaine d'années d'existence et qui poursuit jusqu'en 1760 une carrière de trois quarts de siècle, on était en droit de s'attendre, compte tenu de la formation de l'auteur, à une histoire qui nous renseigne largement sur la vie spirituelle et intellectuelle de l'institution, qui nous apporte des données nouvelles sur sa vie économique, sur son rôle de seigneur, sur les origines sociales de ses prêtres et de ses élèves; bref, des réponses aux questions que se pose aujourd'hui l'histoire sociale. Or là-dessus ce deuxième volume est loin de nous satisfaire.

D'abord, parce que la moitié du livre est consacrée aux querelles juridico-ecclésiastiques entre l'évêque Saint-Vallier et le Séminaire (les pages 3-195), querelles que l'historien Gosselin avait déjà racontées avec suffisamment de détails. Et aussi parce que, à notre surprise (car ce n'est pas ce qu'on attend d'un historien), l'abbé Baillargeon y prend constamment et systématiquement parti pour le Séminaire contre Saint-Vallier.

Il eût été utile d'indiquer en page-titre que l'auteur est prêtre du Séminaire de Québec, ce que tous les lecteurs ne savent pas. En tout cas, l'auteur annonce ses positions dès l'avant-propos. Parlant du régime établi par Laval pour le Séminaire, il écrit: «Ce régime communautaire, qui avait été une source de bénédictions [...], M<sup>sr</sup> de Saint-Vallier le jugera incompatible avec l'exercice de l'autorité épiscopale [...] Il n'aura de cesse qu'il ne l'ait entièrement détruit» (p. vii). D'où le titre de la première partie du livre (et en même temps de la première moitié): *La destruction de l'œuvre de M<sup>sr</sup> de Laval* (p. 1). D'où aussi cette affirmation en conclusion: pendant quarante ans, Saint-Vallier «s'acharna à détruire l'œuvre de