

dommage car les notes, souvent détaillées, sont nécessaires à la compréhension et surtout à la recherche. Il s'ensuit donc un alourdissement de lecture — au sens propre comme au sens figuré.

Voici donc un livre qui constitue un apport significatif à la connaissance de l'histoire de Montréal et qui devrait stimuler la recherche. Cependant, son caractère encyclopédique fait ressortir le besoin d'une synthèse « portable » de l'histoire de la ville.

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GALLAND, Caroline — *Pour la gloire de Dieu et du Roi. Les récollets en Nouvelle-France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2012. Pp. 528.

In 1904, a dispute broke out between historian Thomas Chapais, author of a newly-published biography of Intendant Jean Talon, and a Récollet friar, Brother Colomban-Marie Dreyer. The burden of the friar's complaint was that in the writing of this and other historical works, the Récollets were being treated unfairly. There was no doubt: as missionaries in New France they had frequent run-ins both with the Jesuits and with the episcopate. This, in the eyes of Chapais and others, made them unfaithful servants to the Church of Québec. Since history always favours the victors, and since the Récollets were the losers, they were relegated to something close to oblivion. "Les Récollets n'ont rien à perdre; tout est perdu pour eux," wrote Dreyer (p. 144).

Caroline Galland recognizes this unfairness, which she attributes to the ideology of late nineteenth-century Québec. A nascent nationalism infused with ultramontanism had created a foundational myth in which the Church, unified and unshakeable, stood like a rock between the *habitants* and the British conquerors. In this scheme of things, the Récollets were, so to speak, the burr under the saddle. They were Gallican in their loyalties and laxist in their administration of confession – both of these things anathema to the rigorists of the seventeenth (and the nineteenth) century: so historiography set them set aside.

And, says the author, the misperception has been allowed to continue to this day. Even now, historians downplay the role of the friars in New France. She purposes to correct this; but first, she takes their problems head-on. As missionaries to the Amerindians they were no match for the Jesuits. They were poor communicators: nothing that they wrote could match the Jesuits' *Relations* – or inspire comparable moral and financial support. Their poverty was a constant hindrance to them. Above all, their Gallicanism was an affront to Bishop Laval who suspected (quite reasonably) that they were in league with the Crown to degrade, or at least dilute, his power. Had he not been ordered otherwise, he would have kept them penned up in their convents, away from the parishes and the Indian missions. For years, the Récollets lived with frustration. But is not all this worthy of record? "Quand bien même l'histoire des récollets en Nouvelle-France est celle d'un échec, cette histoire mérite d'être écrite" (p. 146).

The progress (or, sometimes, lack of it) of the Récollet friars in the Canadian missions provides an excellent illustration of the political entanglements of seventeenth-century Catholicism. Initially favoured by Champlain, they soon found themselves sidelined in favour of the Jesuits. Then, in 1632, when France took back the colony after a brief occupation by the Kirke brothers, the Jesuits returned, but the Récollets did not. To find out

why, Galland looks to the interplay of politics in Paris. The favour of powerful patrons was a deciding factor, and in the 1620s and 1630s the Jesuits enjoyed more of it than did the friars.

In 1669, however, the situation changed. The Récollets were ordered to return to New France, for reasons both political and religious. Louis XIV and his minister Colbert were determined that the Crown, not the bishop or the Jesuits, should control the colony. This meant, among other things, tamping down its religious extremism. The Jesuits used their monopoly to enforce a rigorist observance, especially painful where the sacrament of penance was concerned. Complaints came back to Paris of “la genne des consciences”, a problem that, it was feared, might impel some colonists to return to France. The Récollets, already known for confessing seculars in a milder and more compassionate manner, were chosen to offer an alternative. Whatever their own missionary aspirations, they came as instruments of royal power. The reaction of Bishop Laval was understandably predictable.

Arguably, the Récollets’ travails during the seventeenth century, with all their tensions and rivalries, make the most interesting reading in the work, but there is much more to come. Galland continues the narrative through the eighteenth century, to the final dispersion of the last community in 1796. Then she opens a second, larger section, in which she studies the friars in depth: the composition and organization of their communities, their spirituality, their apostolate, their material situation, their daily lives.

Of special interest is the chapter that deals with their specialization as military chaplains. Religious orders were never entirely autonomous in the early modern period; they were always subject to some degree at the beck and call of their patrons and political masters. Galland illustrates how the demands and imperatives of the Crown led the Récollets into a career that Saint Francis could never have envisaged.

Their involvement in chaplaincy work, which began in France with the siege of La Rochelle, expanded mightily in New France. From the 1660s on, the colony lived on the edge of war. A string of forts was constructed, stretching from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi valley to Louisbourg. As soldiers arrived to man those forts, the demand for chaplains increased. “Il existe un lien évident entre la militarisation de la colonie et la spécialisation des récollets dans l’aumônerie militaire” (p. 338). According to Galland, 47% of the total complement of friars in New France spent time in the service. This took them out of their convents and into the barracks, and it made them salaried servants of the Crown. “Indéniablement, l’aumônerie militaire participe à la sécularisation des récollets de la Nouvelle-France” (p. 385). Their entry into parish work intensified that secularization. Thus, this small but significant “band of brothers”, took a centuries-old form of religious life, and adapted it to the realities of a different world.

The introduction to the book is entitled “De l’amnésie à la reminiscence”. It used to be said that a history of the Récollets in New France was “impossible”, due to lack of sources. In recent years, a number of Récollet researchers have challenged this dictum and have found the sources. Galland has threaded all their findings into a work that is both exhaustive and readable.

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