

restent dans l'ombre. Néanmoins, ce bel ouvrage offre un point de vue novateur sur les rapports de pouvoir entre chrétiens et musulmans dans la péninsule ibérique, et constitue un exemple très réussi de l'apport des études de genre dans la compréhension des relations interconfessionnelles au sens large. L'examen minutieux du contexte politique, social et religieux des sociétés ibériques et l'étude critique d'un vaste corpus de sources permettent à Simon Barton de proposer une analyse fine et convaincante des enjeux que représentaient les liaisons interconfessionnelles, de la manière dont elles étaient investies d'une signification politique, de leur évolution dans le temps, de leur pouvoir symbolique et de leur rôle dans la définition de l'identité des communautés religieuses.

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BONNELL, Jennifer L. – *Reclaiming the Don: An Environmental History of Toronto's Don River Valley*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014. Pp. 316.

The Don is a small river, just 24 miles long with a 139 square mile catchment area, best known as the river that flows through Toronto, Canada's largest metropolis. Its headwaters are in the Oak Ridges Moraine of Ontario and it empties into Lake Ontario. Nearly 90 percent of the Don's basin has been usurped for residential, commercial, and industrial purposes, making it one of the most urbanized (1.2 million people) and environmentally endangered watersheds in North America today. Yet the river's small size, the author argues, has tended to mask its central role in the making of modern Ontario. Whereas nearly everyone understands the importance of the Mississippi to New Orleans, the Ruhr to Duisburg, and the Huangpu to Shanghai, few have grasped the importance of the Don to Toronto's history.

*Reclaiming the Don* covers a time span of two centuries, from the founding of York (modern-day Toronto) in the 1790s to the most recent urban renewal projects of the early twenty first century. As the city expanded decade after decade, city planners and engineers gradually transformed the landscape of the Don valley to fit the ever-changing needs of urban dwellers. Hills were levelled and flood plains reclaimed; the main riverbed was canalized and branches removed; river water was pumped out for use in industry and then returned to its bed as a polluted waste. Each chapter of the book focuses on a different facet of these transformations: the creation of an industrial wasteland on the lower reaches of the Don during the mid- to late nineteenth century; the implementation of river improvement projects during the early twentieth century; the emergence of a "hobo jungle" of outcasts and unemployed on the urban outskirts, before and during the Great Depression; the partially successful efforts to restore and clean up the river during the mid-twentieth century; and current efforts to re-naturalize small portions of the waterway and delta.

That the Don jumpstarted the town of York in the 1790s can scarcely be doubted: its high hills offered good conditions for water mills and its flood plain offered fertile space for agriculture and urban expansion. In the mid-nineteenth century, its broad lower banks facilitated Toronto's industrial development, even as its measured flow made it a relatively easy river to manipulate and control, albeit one more suitable as an industrial sink than as a hydroelectric producer or transport route. Over time the river became heavily polluted, even if Torontonians did manage to avoid having their river become the poster child of environmental neglect—à la Ohio's Cuyahoga River, famous for periodically bursting into flames—through some timely cleanup and restoration projects in the mid- to late twentieth century (though it is worth pointing out that the author begins her book with a hilarious account of Princess Margaret's visit to Toronto's foul-smelling river on July 31, 1958). Charles Sauriol played a big role in these important restoration projects, as the author makes clear in a chapter devoted solely to him and the Don Valley Conservation Association that he co-founded.

Despite the title, this book is less about the ecological restoration of the Don than about the environmental consequences of an ever-expanding Toronto cityscape. What has defined (and confined) Toronto's river the most for the past half century has been the Don Valley Parkway (DVP), constructed between 1958 and 1966, at a time when, paradoxically, conservationist sentiment was running strong. The DVP is Toronto's only major north-south expressway and it is now so thoroughly jammed with cars and trucks ("Don Valley Parking Lot" is its nickname) that it is hard to imagine what driving in Toronto would be like had it never been built. But its construction, as the author notes, also killed the dream of restoring the Don:

For urban ecologists seeking to revitalize a neglected urban green space, for example, the presence of a six-lane concrete thoroughfare running alongside the river places firm limits upon restoration efforts.... Twenty-first-century plans to 'naturalize' the area around the river mouth halt abruptly at the Narrows, where possibilities are circumscribed by the straitjacket of a rail corridor on the river's east bank, and an expressway on the west. No amount of shoreline vegetation can soften the hard edges here; nor can sinuous curves be reinscribed along a river bed canalized with concrete pilings (p. 172).

For those who have studied other industrial rivers, the Don is a familiar story. But it is also a story with many twists and turns that are peculiar to the Toronto environs (how many rivers have had Roma camps on their banks, for instance?). If *Reclaiming the Don* does not break new theoretical ground, it nonetheless offers an amazingly detailed and highly readable micro-history of a much underappreciated river. And the author's unblinkered recognition of the limitations of restoration, and her balanced perception of the pros and cons of city life, make this book a compelling read for anyone interested in the history of urban rivers.

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