

This study of Gaelic culture has its own peculiarly Highland characteristics. Readers must be prepared for lengthy, occasionally repetitive, and to some tedious genealogies, and especially the bewildering web of names, nicknames, anecdotes, feuds, and visions that accompany Scottish folk studies (sometimes the reader might wish for a concordance, rather than the bare index). Those without some familiarity with Scottish and Cape Breton geography will need a better map than the ones provided. Often the precise links between settlers and old-country pipers cannot be confirmed in surviving records, leaving Gibson with probabilities instead of certainty. Sometimes the interviews contradict the documents, and even the headstones in the cemetery. Some of the most interesting parts of his argument have the least documentary support, which is one of the hazards of researching an almost pre-literate culture. Gibson's pride in the Gaelic culture and contempt for the lairds who dispensed with their old values and retainers is the descant of almost every chapter, but a chorus of both musicians and historians on both sides of the Atlantic would concur. Transatlantic Celtic music also has been moving in this direction. When Scotland's *Runrig* lost veteran singer Donnie Munro to Nationalist politics in 1997, the band eventually turned to Nova Scotia's Bruce Guthro. While Gibson laments what has died and can be no more, the recent movement back to the Cape Breton way suggests that his own research and advocacy have been more than an exercise in nostalgia. His painstaking weaving together of a diffuse tale opens up an innovative line of inquiry that helps connect scholars with old Highland ways beyond the musical aspects that, while damaged and dispersed in the Highlands, lived long and died hard in other parts of the Gaelic diaspora. Both historians and musicians should thank him for that.

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Oscar Handlin — *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People* (2nd ed.). Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002. Pp. xii, 333.

This is the third printing of Oscar Handlin's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, which was originally published in 1951 and expanded in its second edition (1973). Apart from an "Author's Note", the 2002 printing contains nothing new.

To historians of immigration the story presented by *The Uprooted* is now very familiar: According to Handlin, European peasants, who were all alike and who knew nothing of the world outside their villages, were in the nineteenth century driven by overpopulation and lack of work to emigrate to the United States of America. The trip across the Atlantic was horrible and American cities were a new nightmare of isolation, hostility, and slum-living. As a result, the immigrants and their children were terribly alienated by the New World and struggled mightily, over several generations, to shed their communal mentality and to adjust slowly to the individualism of America, thus transforming themselves into exceptional human beings called Americans.

From its first appearance, Handlin's book has been severely criticized by historians. Karen Larsen accused Handlin of having pretended to tell the story of all peasants and all immigrants when, in fact, he was mainly talking about those who may have originated in eastern or southern Europe and who ended up living in New York City (*American Historical Review*, vol. 57, 1952, p. 703). Rudolph Vecoli, moreover, tested Handlin's generalizations regarding the European peasant by applying them to migrants who had left southern Italy for Chicago at the turn of the nineteenth century and found that Handlin's generalizations did not apply (*Journal of American History*, vol. 51, no.3, 1964, pp. 404–417). A whole generation of younger historians in the 1970s and 1980s, who had studied the migration of individual ethnic groups from southern and eastern Europe to the United States and elsewhere, also found Handlin's book misleading. John Bodnar summarized their findings in *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (1985). As the title of Bodnar's book suggests, far from being hapless victims of impersonal forces that drove them to America, the immigrants made conscious choices about their future and voluntarily acted upon them. Many traversed the Atlantic several times, and some stayed in the United States while others returned home for good. In view of these and other criticisms by respected historians in the field, one is puzzled by a third printing of this book.

In the second edition of *The Uprooted*, in a new chapter entitled "After Two Decades", Handlin tried to deal with some of his critics. He complained that in 1951 there did not exist enough decent secondary works on the European peasant, on the ocean crossing, on American cities, and on individual immigrant groups on which he could base his story and that, under the circumstances, he did his best. If that was the case, one could legitimately question his motives in writing the book. Why did Handlin not do the necessary spadework, as Marcus Lee Hansen had set out to do when writing the first of a projected three-volume series on *The Atlantic Migration* (1940)? Hansen, who died prematurely in 1938, had already mastered four European languages and was preparing to learn another four to enable him to study the European antecedents of immigration to America. He had calculated that the entire project would take him 20 years. Since Handlin published four books between 1941 and 1951, one wonders how much time he devoted to *The Uprooted*.

Handlin also needs to be called to account for having cavalierly dismissed the tools and conventions of professional historians. In the "Author's Note" to the third printing of his book, he confessed that "the book dispensed with the conventional scholarly apparatus" (p. x). In the final chapter of the second edition, "Encounters with Evidence", he tried to justify this incredible lapse in judgement with the argument that, "In the end I cut loose. The footnotes went: they could demonstrate my ability to copy accurately from the sources, but I could not pretend that they proved the reality of what I had to say" (p. 300). This suggests that he could not prove his preconceived notions, and, therefore, he dispensed with the footnotes. Such an attitude and action by one of my history students would lead to his or her failing the course. Footnotes distinguish historians from novelists and journalists. The latter do not have to prove their points. We do. By his reckless disregard of the rules of historical method, Oscar Handlin disqualified *The Uprooted* from being considered a

work of history. One wonders whether the judges who sat on the Pulitzer Prize committee understood what it takes to write a true historical monograph.

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Mélanie Lanouette — *Faire vivre ou faire connaître. Les défis de l'enseignement religieux en contexte de renouveau pédagogique, 1936–1946*, Sainte-Foy, Presses de l'Université Laval, coll. « Religions, cultures et sociétés », 2002, 174 p.

« Où est Dieu? – Dieu est partout ». « Que signifie l'onction faite en forme de croix sur le front avec le Saint-Chrême? – L'onction faite en forme de croix sur le front avec le Saint-Chrême signifie que le chrétien confirmé doit professer et pratiquer ouvertement sa foi, ne jamais en rougir et plutôt mourir que de la renier ». On croit entendre le maître poser gravement chacune des 500 questions et plus qui forment les 39 chapitres du *Catéchisme des provinces ecclésiastiques de Québec, Montréal et Ottawa*, publié à Québec en 1944; et les élèves à honorer leurs réponses en s'emmêlant dans un texte aux mots souvent difficiles et abstraits. Le livre de Mélanie Lanouette, tiré de son mémoire de maîtrise, s'inscrit dans le cadre du vaste projet mené depuis quelques années par le Groupe de recherche sur l'histoire de l'enseignement religieux, établi à l'Université Laval. Comme l'indique le titre de cet ouvrage, c'est en effet tout un défi de rendre intéressant l'apprentissage du catéchisme, surtout lorsque la finalité de l'affaire reste envers et contre tout que les enfants connaissent par coeur le mot à mot du livre. En s'intéressant au projet éducatif des frères des Écoles chrétiennes, Lanouette nous révèle comment les enseignants de cet institut, des « apôtres » du catéchisme, ont tenté de rénover leur manière de s'y prendre, à une époque (1936–1946) caractérisée dans le monde catholique par une grande effervescence pédagogique.

Au fil des pages, l'auteure mentionne les données du problème tel qu'il s'est posé aux frères dans les années 1930 et 1940. D'un côté, un ensemble de facteurs favorisant l'immobilisme : un institut désormais engoncé dans ses traditions tricentennaires, un fondateur non seulement reconnu comme éminent pédagogue en son temps mais même canonisé depuis, si bien qu'on n'ose pas abandonner les méthodes dont il usait, un certain nombre de frères pas toujours attentifs aux limites cognitives des jeunes, ainsi que des évêques qui tiennent à la mémorisation de la doctrine et refusent, comme M<sup>gr</sup> Comtois de Trois-Rivières, de changer un seul mot du petit livre. D'un autre côté, la constatation par trop patente de l'échec de la transmission auprès des élèves : la classe de religion prend parfois, au dire même des frères, l'aspect d'un « dortoir », le catéchisme est le moins attrayant des manuels scolaires, et les résultats aux examens prouvent clairement que les écoliers comprennent mal la doctrine. Ce dernier point n'est pas sans conséquence quand les papes, tels Pie X cité en première page du *Catéchisme* de 1944, assurent que parmi les condamnés aux supplices éternels, plusieurs le doivent à leur ignorance des mystères de la foi.

C'est dans ce contexte que, sous le leadership de quelques frères, les fils de