

A rewarding chapter deals with “trade patterns and resource constraints”. Not only does this deal with the economic bases for the wars, but it also discusses the economic rivalry between Britain and France and elucidates the war between Britain and the United States. The chapter on the Peninsular war clearly demonstrates Gates’s especial expertise on this topic.

Although this clear and reliable book seems destined to have a fine career as an undergraduate text, it is more than that. It is critical of the interpretations of previous writers. The final section, which points to the evolution of the modern state and notes compelling comparisons with the First World War, is especially memorable. Advanced readers already familiar with most of the topics discussed will appreciate the wide range of new and older materials used in the book’s compilation, listed in the chapter endnotes and in the very valuable, 20-page bibliographical essay, which includes a list of primary and manuscript sources. Especially remarkable are the references to German manuscripts in particular, but the author’s fluency has led him to display in the main text a panoply of untranslated German technical terms.

So great is the rate and volume of Napoleonic publication now that the Bicentenary is in full flood that it is difficult to keep up. Doubtless this explains why only one of Michael Broers’s books is listed and why there is only a sampling of the many recent books about the American war of 1812. It is strange not to find any reference to the publications of Alain Pigéard, a noted authority on the Napoleonic army. Zlotnikov’s book in Russian on the blockade is cited, but there are no Russian language books on military topics. Why is there no reference to J. H. L. Keep’s fine *Soldiers of the Tsar?* Admiral Saumarez has been omitted from the index. Flayhart’s book on the British expedition to Naples in 1805 might to advantage have been listed in the chapter notes, rather than in the general bibliography. Was Schulmeister, Napoleon’s “chief spy”, not worth mentioning, or is there a hint in the account of Ulm’s capture? The major battles are easy to follow because plans are supplied, but not all campaigns are made clearer by maps. It is to be hoped that the book’s success will permit many more editions, thus negating these little quibbles.

It is a pleasure to report that in February 1999 this book was awarded the Literary Prize of the International Napoleonic Society, a choice that speaks volumes.

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Michael A. Gomez — *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. Pp. xi, 370.

In recent years, historians of early America have begun to recognize that African-American society did not emerge *tabula rasa* on the slave plantation, but instead grew from African roots that shaped its culture and influenced not only Africa’s children, but also the culture and history of the larger Union. *Exchanging Our*

Country Marks is a major contribution to this effort. The title refers to the scarification that often marked people born in Africa. Michael Gomez argues the importance not only of African roots, but of particular African cultures. In the first half of the book, he looks at the structure of the trade and then at who the slaves were, focusing on five areas that provided most of the slaves, the stereotypes planters had of their different cultures, the cultural baggage Africans took with them, and why each group was sought in particular areas. He also has a chapter on Islam. He then looks at the transformation of African-American identity from ethnic identities to a racial one and the ways in which these separate cultures shaped the new.

This is done in three original chapters. The first looks at the slave's experience within Africa, on the Middle Passage, and in the brutal and humiliating seasoning process. It describes the responses of slaves, who resisted in different ways, trying to seize ships, flee, or commit suicide. They also began forging trans-ethnic bonds, beginning the transition from ethnicity to race in the barracoons and on the boat. In the Americas, they clung to their languages and cultures and to the idea of Africa. They used English only when necessary and then rapidly Africanized it. They also fled and in different areas sought to set up maroon communities that tried to recreate Africa. Gomez argues that "although Africans may have left Africa, Africa never left them" (p. 185). In making his argument, Gomez skilfully uses both ex-slave reminiscences and advertisements for runaway slaves.

The restructuring of slave identity involved conflicts among the slaves and between slave and slave-owner, the topic of the next chapter. Gomez describes the slave's rejection of the slave-holder's values. The slave-owner could force the slave to work, but could not determine who the slave thought he or she was or what he or she believed. Gomez also discusses the beginnings of differentiation with the creation of house servants and skilled workers. After the early years, these roles were filled by American-born slaves and increasingly by the mulatto offspring of slave-owners. Along with race-consciousness came the internalization by many of the racist ideas of white society. It was not in the Big House, but in the fields, that race-consciousness emerged. Gomez uses both reminiscences and ads for runaways to describe relations between Africans and African-Americans. He also uses folklore, for example, the tradition among African-Americans that their ancestors were tricked onto the slave ships. Gomez argues that these traditions should be seen not as a description of what actually happened, but as an indication of the transformation from ethnic communities to a racial one. He also describes the poignant folk tales that picture slave traders condemned "to eternal wandering, to be forever homeless and rootless" (p. 213).

The final chapter looks at the emergence of African Christianity. For more than two centuries, African religions persisted in the slave quarters. Only after 1830 did the African-American population become overwhelmingly Christian, and then largely because they had Africanized Christianity. They were able to do so largely because there was much that they recognized in Christianity. The slave masters were long unconcerned about the conversion of their slaves, and, when revolts in Haiti and in the United States began to worry them, they served up a pallid religion that counselled submission and had no attraction for slaves. A very emotional

African-American Christianity became a core institution for a community now defined in racial terms and an important divide between mass and elite.

This is a provocative and important book. Gomez provides us a rich description of how African roots served as an anchor for a people bludgeoned by the horror of the slave trade and the brutality of slavery and helped to create a new community in face of a slave institution that sought to keep them as isolated units of labour. In doing so, Gomez explains many contemporary dilemmas, but he also describes how African-Americans became the source of much that is vital in American culture.

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Patrice Groulx. *Pièges de la mémoire. Dollard des Ormeaux, les Amérindiens et nous*, Hull, Les Éditions Vents d'ouest, 1998, 436 p.

L'ouvrage de Patrice Groulx est le résultat d'une thèse doctorale menée à l'Université Laval en association avec le Centre d'études interdisciplinaires sur les lettres, les arts et les traditions (CELAT). Il fallait une certaine témérité pour s'aventurer sur un sujet aussi pointu que Dollard des Ormeaux, « héros » déchu d'une historiographie traditionnelle canadienne-française qui a eu ses plus beaux jours au cours des années 1920–1960. Mais le décryptage du mythe Dollard permet à l'auteur de déconstruire, car c'est bien de cela qu'il s'agit, les pièges d'une mémoire qui a élevé ce personnage au rang de héros national. Ce faisant, se dévoile une historiographie, avec ses historiens et leurs conceptions de l'histoire toute imprégnée de conceptions des époques en cause. À travers cette histoire des héros, des bons et des méchants, se profile un regard sur les autres qui nous enseigne sur nos propres limites. Et tout semble ici devenir une histoire où les historiens eux-mêmes deviennent des acteurs importants de la création du mythe sur fonds de projet national.

Les deux premiers chapitres de l'ouvrage tracent le bilan des textes fondateurs qui traitent de la question. La lettre de Marie Guyart et le texte de la *Relation* de 1659–1660, textes écrits par des religieux, placent le discours dans un cadre de production qui lui infère déjà une portée particulière. Comme le précise Groulx : « C'est pourquoi la combinaison Foi-Patrie ou Religion-Nation imprègne littéralement les tout premiers récits, notamment celui des jésuites » (p. 54). Cependant, c'est l'analyse de François Dollier de Casson (1672) qui structure véritablement le mythe identitaire.

Paradoxe évident chez Dollier qui écrit, selon l'auteur, une histoire au « sens moderne » avec sa sélection critique des informations, une synthèse, un bilan et une ouverture sur l'avenir. Toutefois, Dollier contribue à aussi créer la matrice d'un mythe qui perdurera. Le texte de Dollier montre selon Groulx une proche parenté avec le conte populaire. En recueillant des témoignages oraux sur le sujet, il a pu obtenir des informateurs un récit enjolivé de la réalité. « En ce sens, le conte est un avatar du mythe, dont il a gardé le rôle initiatique, aidant ses auditeurs à comprendre leur place dans la société et la place de cette société par rapport aux groupes humains, contribuant ainsi à la formation de leur identité » (p. 82).