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HISTOIRE ET SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNES-FRANCAISES

WADE, Mason. **The French-Canadian Outlook**. Carleton Library No. 14. Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1964, 95 pages, bibliographic footnotes.

RIOUX, Marcel, and MARTIN, Yves, editors. **French-Canadian Society**, vol. 1. Carleton Library No. 18. Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1964, 405 pages, bibliographic footnotes.

Although more expensive than they should be, these two paperback reprints will be a welcome addition to the libraries of many students of French Canada. *The French-Canadian Outlook*, first published in 1945, is an early distillation of the themes which were later elaborated in Mason Wade's monumental study, *The French Canadians 1760-1945*. *French-Canadian Society* is a collection of essays on the changing and contemporary character of French-Canadian society.

Although *The French-Canadian Outlook* and the larger volume which followed it have often been criticized, their value amply justifies this re-publication. Wade's undertaking was enormous, particularly so as he had few reliable studies on which to build. The chapter of New France probably leans too heavily on Francis Parkman's inaccurate tableau, and the analysis of the impact of the conquest suffers accordingly. Fernand Ouellet's forthcoming book on the economic history of the early XIXth century casts doubt on portions of Wade's analysis. Some of the statements in the concluding chapter are belied, as Wade himself points out in the preface to this edition, by events of the last twenty years. Québec is no longer « opposed to the expansion of the state in society, » for the state in Québec has become a bastion of national survival ; and, if the newspaper coverage of the recent New Democratic Party convention is indicative, Québec no longer has « a holy terror of socialism ». But in 1945 this was a remarkable and timely book, and with its larger companion it remains a mine of information about early French Canada and a wise appraisal of the problems and potentials of French-English co-operation. The researcher may be annoyed from time to time, but annoyance is a healthy impetus for research.

The collection of essays edited by Rioux and Martin makes a totally different book. It deals with aspects of the social upheaval in Québec which are absent in Wade's study, it embodies a different approach to research, and it presents a variety of conclusions. For the English-speaking Canadian there is no better introduction to modern Québec, and for the student of Québec the book is an admirable entrée to the work and the debates of the sociologists.

The geographer who reads these books for analyses of the past or present geography of Québec will be disappointed. Mason Wade barely touches on the physical environment of the early colony and the settlement patterns which emerged there. His concern is with political and social attitudes, and he has not attempted to shed light on them by analysing the environments in which they developed or the geographical patterns which were partly their corollaries. However, implicit in the organisation of the second book and in many of the articles therein are the assumptions that environmental change and social change proceed hand in hand and that the examination of one casts light on the other. The volume begins with Pierre Defontaine's « The Rang-Pattern of Rural Settlement in French Canada » ; and many of the articles — particularly Léon Gérin's examination of the French-Canadian family, Everett C. Hughes' study of « Industry and the Rural System in Québec, » and Jean-Charles Falardeau's « The Changing Social Structures of Contemporary French-Canadian Society » — contain solid geographical information, although little that is not available in the geographical literature.

These books, then, are not sources of geographical data — they are not intended to be. Their principal geographical value lies in the research which, inadvertently, they can suggest to us. With my biases as an historical geographer, I see this potential for geographical research in the following way.

Almost all of *The French-Canadian Outlook* and half of *French-Canadian Society* are concerned with social development and change in French Canada ; and both of these analyses

founder on the same reef: a dearth of information about the society which has been changed. To be sure, Wade has described the evolution of French-Canadian attitudes; but his analysis proceeds in bounds — a contemporary effect is attributed to a distant cause while the connection is not substantiated. The sociologists have postulated, on the one hand, the existence in xviiith and xixth century Québec of a nearly self-sufficient folk society and, on the other hand, a highly individualistic, commercially inclined habitant, a rural antecedent of the contemporary urban French Canadian. The debate on these interpretations, especially when pushed back beyond the last third of the xixth century, has flowed as freely as only a near vacuum of information permits. Some of the facts cited have been wrong. Philippe Garigue supports his point that a French rural tradition was not transplanted in Canada with the observation that common land was not part of early Canadian agriculture. In fact, there were commons during the French regime on at least two thirds of the settled rural seigneuries. Hubert Guindon suggests that the conquest brought about the collapse of a feudally-operated trading society and that the post-conquest society rested in its early phases on an economy of subsistence farming. To the contrary, wheat exports rose sharply after the conquest, and the amount of grain grown and livestock raised on farms in the older seigneuries did not change suddenly. However, the principal weakness is scanty rather than faulty information; and, until more information is supplied, interpretations of the impact of the conquest or of the rural-urban transformation of the last hundred years will remain unconvincing.

The reasons for this lack of information are obvious. In 1760 at least three fourths of the French Canadians were farmers, and the proportion was approximately the same a hundred years later. An understanding of social change in French Canada cannot by-pass this large block of population. However, the habitants were almost entirely illiterate until the 1820's, and left remarkably few written records until the end of the xixth century. Historians have guessed at the motives behind the habitants' action or inaction (behind, for example, their neutrality during the invasion of 1774) or have relied on officials' or visitors' accounts of the habitants. The sociologists, who customarily depend on the questionnaire or the interview, have relied on the historians.

There is an escape from this impasse if the assumption that there is a relationship between environment and social attitudes is tenable. Officials during the French regime were constant collectors of data; censuses, *aveux et dénombremments*, and *papiers terriers* were taken and preserved. Notarial records of the concession and sale of land, detailed wills, and the accounts of travellers are also available. With these data much of the basic settlement and economic geography of early Canada can be reconstructed. The farm operation can be described in detail and the farm surplus established. The changing size of farms and the scale of agricultural operations can be worked out, as can the spatial mobility of the farming population. This distribution of services along the *rangs* and in the few compact villages can be described. After 1760 the character of the documentation changed somewhat — censuses and *aveux et dénombremments*, for example, appeared more intermittently — but fundamental aspects of the human geography of French Canada in the late xviiith and early xixth centuries can still be reconstructed. When they have been reconstructed, there will be for the first time a substantial pool of data about the habitants.

Although the sociologists have usually recognized the relationship between social development and environment (Garigue, if I understand him correctly, does not), they have not exploited the potential of environmental studies as a means of understanding past habitant populations. Nor should they. Sociologists, or historians for that matter, have not been trained in this type of analysis; and they cannot be expected to do it well. Undoubtedly it is our job, and until we have done it the habitant in early Canada will remain a cloudy figure. Geographical analysis will not dispel all the clouds, but it will eliminate some alternatives and strengthen others. I suspect it would support most of Garigue's hypotheses about the habitants during the French regime, although I think he has confused the issue by describing them as an urban-like people. It would probably also support Marcel Rioux's contention that the most complete folk culture developed in the xixth century. Certainly it would supply evidence to calculated guesses.

I do not wish to suggest that some of us become the choreboys of the sociologists and the historians. If it is our aim to describe and interpret the character of the surface of the earth

as the home of man, we can surely speak out about the men as we collect information about their home.

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UN ATLAS GÉOGRAPHIQUE MONDIAL

Atlas classique Larousse. Avec la collaboration de Donald CURRAN et de Michel COQUERY, préface de René CLOZIER. Librairie Larousse, Paris, 1964. 128 planches.

Dans la préface de cet atlas, rédigée par R. Clozier, il est dit que « chaque carte a été élaborée et présentée comme un document susceptible de servir à l'observation et à la recherche, de capter l'attention de l'élève, de lui suggérer l'effort de réflexion, de reconstruction des faits d'ordre géographique ». Il s'agit là d'objectifs ambitieux, certes, mais qui sont à la base d'un enseignement bien compris de la géographie. Et l'étude du contenu de l'atlas nous révèle que ses auteurs n'ont pas failli à leur tâche.

L'examen de la répartition des planches par sujet montre l'importance donnée à la représentation de la France (32 planches sur un total de 128), des faits de géographie générale et des grands traits de l'économie mondiale (27 planches). Le restant illustre les aspects généraux de la géographie de chaque continent. Ainsi, l'Europe et les pays européens (moins la France) se voient attribuer 20 planches, l'Asie 14, l'Afrique 10, l'Amérique du nord 10, l'Amérique du sud 8, l'Australie et l'Océanie 6. La dernière planche figure les régions polaires, et les pages de garde concernent les principaux types de projections, les fuseaux horaires et les communications intercontinentales.

La partie consacrée à la géographie générale comprend un rappel des techniques annexes de la géographie : projections, astronomie, géologie, météorologie, climatologie. Dans cet ensemble, certains regroupements de faits sur une même planche ne manquent pas d'étonner. Ainsi, à la page 88 (éléments de climatologie), un même planisphère associe la salinité des eaux marines et les précipitations terrestres. On veut bien croire que cette association a été réalisée pour économiser de l'espace. Mais l'élève qui découvre cette carte, s'il a l'esprit tant soit peu inquisiteur, peut fort bien perdre son temps à chercher des relations entre les deux faits représentés, alors qu'il n'en existe aucune. D'autres associations de faits sont cependant plus heureuses. Par exemple sur la planche 9, où on a figuré simultanément les courants marins et la végétation terrestre, ce qui met notamment en évidence les liens entre les courants froids et les déserts côtiers (Rio de Oro, désert de Namib, désert de Atacama). Mais la relation entre les deux phénomènes n'est qu'indirecte et il aurait été plus logique d'associer précipitations et courants marins.

La série de cartes traitant la géographie humaine du monde et l'économie mondiale utilise la projection équivalente de Goode, très répandue dans les atlas américains. Mais dans l'*Atlas Larousse* l'échelle de cette projection semble trop petite, car on note des agglomérations de points inesthétiques. Ceci interdit tout comptage sur les cartes de répartition. Cet inconvénient est heureusement compensé par l'adjonction de diagrammes en barres qui représentent les chiffres de production des principaux pays. Parmi les cartes relatives à l'économie mondiale, signalons aussi l'originalité de celles illustrant le niveau de développement économique des différents pays (planche 13). Le sujet lui-même est original, et la représentation, utilisant des superpositions de figurés, ne l'est pas moins. On note également d'intéressantes corrélations entre les faits géographiques : indice d'urbanisation et zones climatiques à la page 15 ; population et consommation d'énergie à la page 27.

Chaque continent est traité d'abord globalement, puis régionalement à l'échelle d'un pays ou groupe de pays. Les cartes d'ensemble illustrent les grands traits de la géographie physique, le découpage politique, l'utilisation du sol et les degrés de développement économique. Ce dernier aspect est représenté par une teinte de fond dont les nuances symbolisent les niveaux de développement. La densité de la population est en même temps indiquée par des hachures interrompant la teinte de fond. Enfin, on a aussi porté sur la même carte le chiffre global de la population des pays au moyen de figurines, les centres industriels et les grands cours d'eau navigables. Cela fait beaucoup d'éléments sur une même carte, mais le tout reste pourtant très lisible et très expressif. Les cartes régionales, qui accompagnent les cartes d'ensemble de chaque continent,