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est tributaire des arrivages d'Europe qui sont interrompus durant la saison hivernale. L'imprimé – journaux, périodiques, magazines, affiches, images – reste tout de même un facteur de premier plan dans la vie sociale. Ce sont surtout les publications d'ordre public et administratif qui assurent la rentabilité des entreprises d'imprimerie.

Les pouvoirs politique et religieux entretiennent avec l'imprimé des rapports problématiques. Si l'imprimé apparaît pour l'un et pour l'autre un outil de promotion et de légitimation, il devient à d'autres égards une menace, puisqu'il favorise les mouvements de contestation en permettant la circulation de textes diffusant des « idées nouvelles, parfois inquiétantes » (p. 8). D'où la nécessité d'exercer une censure – l'interdiction des « mauvais livres », par exemple –, qui sera toutefois difficile à faire respecter malgré les conséquences possibles pour les contrevenants.

C'est dans ce contexte qu'est véritablement née la littérature canadienne. En effet, des textes d'auteurs locaux, inspirés par des modèles littéraires européens, ont d'abord été publiés dans les journaux et dans les magazines – qui, on le sait, comblaient l'absence de textes européens en saison hivernale par la diffusion de textes locaux. Le public lecteur étant peu nombreux, on improvisait des séances de lecture dans les lieux publics. La culture littéraire, qui en est à ses premiers balbutiements, baigne alors dans l'univers du conte, de la légende et de la chanson.

Il est à toutes fins pratiques impossible de rendre justice au travail monumental accompli par l'équipe réunie par Fleming, Gallichan et Lamonde en quelques lignes. Malgré la densité du propos et son caractère savant, le parcours historique détaillé qu'ils proposent plaira tout autant, me semble-t-il, aux chercheurs et au grand public intéressés par l'histoire du Québec et du Canada. C'est là une qualité qu'on peut rarement attribuer aux travaux universitaires de cette envergure.

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GRIFFITHS, N. E. S — *From Migrant to Acadian: A North American Border People, 1604–1755*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005. Pp. 633.

Naomi Griffiths has produced a detailed political chronology in support of her overall thesis, that "it is the Acadians' own unique historical experience that is the foundation of their identity" (p. xviii). Her work is comprehensive, considering both French and British imperial conditions, and brings into one compelling narrative the diverse individuals and events that together composed Acadia before the Deportation in 1755. The result of a lifetime of scholarship on the Acadians, this book seeks to define Acadian identity as based on the experience of a migrant people within the imperial contexts and contingencies of a colonial borderland. Griffiths presents us with an even-handed account. For instance, her important emphasis that in the eighteenth century both British and French "assessed the Acadians not as a community to be understood but as an obstinate peasantry to be brought to a proper sense of their obligations" (p. 419) draws attention to the often omitted parallel *dérangement*

caused by French pressures that culminated in the burning of Beaubassin and the displacement of at least 1,200 people in 1750–1751 alone across the Missiguash River (p. 395).

Griffiths argues that the development of a distinct Acadian political identity is exemplified by the use of elected deputies to further a long-term strategy of neutrality and negotiation that by 1730 appeared to reach a lasting accommodation with British governor Richard Phillipps. After the resumption of imperial conflict in the 1740s, the critical moment Griffiths describes is 1749, when deputies from all Acadian communities, including those on the French side of the fortified boundary, presented a unified petition to Governor Cornwallis refusing to swear unconditional loyalty to Britain but agreeing to continue under the terms accepted in 1730 (p. 384). While Cornwallis and his successor, Hopson, sought to reach an accommodation with the Acadian community to support their own efforts of settlement around Halifax, Charles Lawrence became convinced of the need to remove the French inhabitants after a few hundred Acadian men were found under arms at Fort Beausejour in 1755. First organizing the deportation of those captured in the Chignecto area, Lawrence easily convinced his Council at Halifax to proceed with the forced removal of all those who refused to fulfil their obligations as British subjects. Griffiths' balanced (though certainly not complimentary) description of Lawrence, in stark contrast to previous accounts that seek either to condemn or to exonerate him, helps the reader understand how an insecure, headstrong group of marginal British officials in Halifax resolved, without first seeking the approval of their superiors or of the colonies to which the Acadians would be sent, to begin this infamous and tragic series of events — when the necessary resources of ships and troops appeared.

In short, Griffiths makes accessible this decision-making process by showing it as more than just the cruel vindictiveness of a single governor and rather a function of a defining and continuing Acadian border reality. In this theatre of imperial conflict, conditional loyalty was simply not enough — both sides demanded more. While the 1750s certainly represent the crucible of this experience, Griffiths presents a detailed narrative of back-and-forth conquests, noble ambitions, and economic motivations. From the court of Henry IV and the machinations of Colbert, to the ambitions of Samuel Vetch and the arrogance of William Shirley, she has presented a remarkably complete narrative, and as such her book is a valuable reference both for those just starting to learn about Acadia and for those well versed in North American colonial history.

While Griffiths' choice to end with the decision to deport rather than with a blow-by-blow account of the deportation itself leaves a certain openness to her narrative, it also leaves a number of unanswered questions. She describes the Acadian decision to seek neutrality after the Treaty of Utrecht in response to British demands for loyalty oaths, but does not explore the variety of Acadian responses to the deportation in the 1750s. How self-aware were the Acadians in developing their political position, how active and uniform was this process of self-identification? How did the deportation itself emphasize and shape a collective memory of the past — a tragic story of the founding marshland community? Griffiths ends her narrative too openly, with no conclusion to guide her reader.

A number of careless mistakes detract from the book. For example, Poutrincourt's family surely fought against Henri IV only until 1593 rather than 1693 (p. 7). If "Louis XIV had much of the pragmatic common sense of his grandfather", what does the reader do with the same sentence's assertion, "but the grandson was much less pragmatic" (p. 102)? Also, Griffiths may not be willing to tackle the murky origins of the Acadians in France's centre-west, but Loudunais should be spelled correctly (p. 183).

Historians have indeed emphasized "the actions of greater powers upon Acadian society, rather than the experiences of the Acadians themselves" (p. 283). Griffiths could have described more of their experience as migrants, specifically how this broad collection of individuals so quickly formed a deep sense of community (pp. 63–68). The terms "border" and "border people" also need to be defined and more carefully applied to give them a specific Acadian meaning. Would any French peasant have acted differently given the circumstances Griffiths describes? After all, other early modern peasant communities existing in borderlands exhibited similar pragmatism when caught between rivals, with similar conceptions of their obligations and those of their titular rulers, and a similar aversion to becoming involved in back-and-forth elite conflicts. This represents an important avenue for development and comparison, because pragmatism is a rather general basis upon which to claim distinction in the early modern French world.

Lastly, local and regional contexts and contrasts within Acadia remain largely unexplored in this account. Griffiths blithely states that the population was too small for a statistical analysis to "yield meaningful results" (p. 173) and engages in little analysis of social hierarchy and family relations. She does note the economic specialization each Acadian community developed — which must have had an impact on relations with imperial officials and the Mi'kmaq (p. 285). How did the dynamics of local power affect the overall decisions the Acadians seemed to make in their negotiations with imperial agents? The uniformity of the Acadian position, identity, and experience that Griffiths presents is striking in comparison with other French communities in both the New and Old Worlds — and, as such, borders on the unbelievable.

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HALLOWELL, Gerald (ed.) — *The Oxford Companion to Canadian History*. Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2004. Pp. 748.

It seems that Canadian history has joined the sprawling family of *Oxford Companions*. The progenitor, English literature (1932), was followed by dozens of volumes including American literature (1941) and much later American history (1966), to be superseded by United States history (2001). Canada made its appearance as Siamese twins, Canadian history and literature (1967), separated in several operations: Canadian literature became independent first (1983), followed by Canadian theatre (1988), and finally Canadian history (2004). The latter was preceded by Irish (1998), Scottish (2001), and Australian history (2001). Was it worth waiting for?