

ne puisse rendre compte de réalités complexes avec un vocabulaire anémique. Mais la rage que l'on met parfois à créer des néologismes ne conduit qu'à rendre artificiellement hermétiques certains textes... peut-être pour les entourer d'une « aura » scientifique susceptible d'ébahir le lecteur. Quand je vois des auteurs jargonner ainsi, je ne peux m'empêcher de penser au notaire de village qui, au magasin général et devant les cultivateurs, échangeait quelques citations latines avec l'avocat, le médecin et le curé afin de bien souligner sa « distinction ».

Pour conclure, l'ouvrage de Bourque et de Duchastel fera époque. Leurs thèses me semblent incontestables, sauf si l'on tient à chicaner sur des questions de détail. Après le succès d'expressions comme « la Grande Noirceur », il est bon que l'on reconnaisse les aspects résolument modernes du discours duplessiste. Aussi, ce ne sont pas tant les conclusions qui laissent perplexes que les méthodes : l'analyse des discours du budget assistée par ordinateur ne semble, dans ce cas précis, que confirmer à grand renfort de statistiques l'impression laissée par des « beaux morceaux », bien moins coûteuse. Mais surtout, l'étude du discours « en soi » laisse perplexe l'historien que je suis. Ce n'est qu'au dernier chapitre que les auteurs retombent sur le sol et replacent la production discursive dans son contexte.

Cependant, il y a fort à parier que cette impression ne tienne qu'au caractère partiel de cet ouvrage, et que je ne rende pas justice aux auteurs. Les tomes suivants, notamment grâce à de nouveaux corpus, vont sans doute donner à l'œuvre toute sa profondeur.

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Gary Burrill and Ian McKay, eds. — *People, Resources, and Power. Critical Perspectives on Underdevelopment and Primary Industries in the Atlantic Region*. Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1987. Pp. vii, 201.

One of the most vigorously debated questions of Atlantic Canadian studies in recent years concerns the failure of the promising industrial growth in the region in the late nineteenth century to sustain itself beyond World War One. Relative to the rest of Canada, the Atlantic provinces have been marked this century by large out-migration, high unemployment, low levels of investment; in short, the region is seen as underdeveloped. The dominant interpretation of regional economic decline from S.A. Saunders' early work in Maritime economic history in the 1930s focusses on the alleged geographic isolation and poor resource endowment of the region. This argument has provided the rationale for heavy government subsidization of private enterprise in the region in an effort to "level the national playing field" for investors.

Since the resurgence of Atlantic Canadian studies in the 1970s, this orthodoxy has been closely scrutinized. Many of the most insightful critiques have been rooted in marxist interpretations of the regional economy. Indeed, one might argue that nowhere have studies in Canadian political economy been as productive in recent years as in the Atlantic provinces. In contrast to earlier accounts of Maritime economic decline, with their overtones of geological and/or geographical determinism, political economy roots "underdevelopment" in capitalist accumulation, a historical process marked by uneven development. Both a condition and a process, "underdevelopment" reflects not the absence of capitalist growth, but rather constitutes an integral aspect of it. This process can be both understood and, as all political economists argue, resisted. Early work on Atlantic Canadian underdevelopment was strongly influenced by dependency theory, which identified the major impediment to development in underdeveloped regions as the "metropolitan" appropriation of the surpluses of economic "satellites". Recent work has sought to incorporate analysis of class structure within the region (relations of domination in production) with the emphasis on external factors (relations of domination in exchange) characteristic of dependency theorists such as André Gunder Frank. Needless to say, controversy has been confined to the academy. By editing a collection of articles they label

"popular political economy", Burill and McKay hope to widen participation in the underdevelopment debate.

This book is the first in the series "Gorsebrook Studies in the Political Economy of the Atlantic Region." Founded at St. Mary's University (Halifax) in 1982, the Gorsebrook Research Institute seeks "to encourage and support interdisciplinary research concerned with a variety of socio-economic, political, environmental and policy issues specific to Canada's Atlantic region." *People, Resources, and Power* reflects these varied research concerns. It contains sixteen articles grouped into sections on agriculture, fishing, forestry, mining and energy, with an introduction by editors and an afterword by Rick Williams. Although unified by the themes of underdevelopment and primary industries, the book's contents range widely. On the question of the forestry sector alone, themes such as shortsighted state policies of resource management, the dispossession of regional woodlot operators, corporate disregard for public health, foreign ownership and control, and lax state safety standards emerge in Julia McMahon's "The New Forest in Nova Scotia"; Christopher Majka's "A Reader's Guide to the Spray"; Bruce L. Livesey's "The Political Economy of Pesticide and Herbicide Testing in New Brunswick"; and Aaron Schneider's "Underdeveloping Nova Scotia's Forests" and the "Role of Corporate Counter-Intelligence". Underdevelopment has many other faces: from the sinking of the Ocean Ranger to the controversy over Nova Scotia's offshore, to a strike by female collectors of Irish moss in Prince Edward Island, to Ian McKay's moving account of the misfortunes of the single industry community, "Springill, 1958", this collection never fails to stimulate interest. It will certainly be "a useful guide for students and others who have an interest in understanding the region from a critical, progressive perspective", an aim that is also served by suggestions for further reading appended throughout the book (1).

The explanation of Atlantic Canadian underdevelopment offered in *People, Resources, and Power* is shaped by the source from which the editors drew these articles. All but one were originally published in *New Maritimes* and reflect the variety of opinion characteristic of this "independent left newsmagazine". If carrying the common theme of the "underdevelopment" of the Atlantic provinces, these articles do not share a definition of this concept. Thus, no single explanation of regional underdevelopment emerges; rather, the hardships it entails are depicted and interpreted in a variety of ways. The origin of these articles in *New Maritimes* has a further consequence. Written in response to issues of the day, they discuss very incisively the impact of Atlantic Canadian underdevelopment on regional primary producers and workers. They do not, however, address the reasons why the region was subject to underdevelopment in the first place. Implicit in this collection is a call for more research on the nineteenth-century roots of underdevelopment. This would also shed more light on the primary concern of the dependency "school", that is, the historical movement of economic surpluses out of the region.

Among the many questions this book prompts, one might be raised here. What is specific to the experience of primary producers in underdeveloped capitalist regions as contrasted with the experience of those in "developed" capitalist region? I find problematic claims that the dispossession of independent commodity producers, regional fishers, farmers and woodlot operators is to be considered evidence of an underdeveloped economy. Is it not the persistence of this class (and the consequent occupational plurality and seasonal unemployment) which has characterized regional underdevelopment?

It is nonetheless the strength of *People, Resources, and Power* that it is engaging at a number of levels. As critical journalism, this book will be appealing to all with an interest in Atlantic Canada. As a primer to political economy, it will find use as a textbook. For those more familiar with political economy, it serves as a reminder of the complexity of the Atlantic Canadian class structure and the difficulties faced in organizing a class-based response to regional underdevelopment.

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