

The first thing that strikes one about these essays is the difficulty of drawing neat boundaries. The *petite bourgeoisie* is not coterminous with all retail trades, "petit commerce", in the useful French expression, nor with all master artisans; nor is the exact level of success and exploitation that leads into the bourgeoisie proper easy to identify. All the national surveys presented here struggle with this problem, a problem made more difficult, and more urgent, by the tendency of social historians in recent years to define the working class widely to include many self-employed artisans, outworkers, even peddlers, depending on the case. Many more case studies will be required before this question can be dealt with satisfactorily; several of those presented here at least make the contours of the problem eminently clear: Clive Behagg's piece on Birmingham, Alain Faure's pathbreaking exploration of Parisian grocers, and Josef Ehmer's quantitative study of inheritance and residence patterns among Viennese artisans all amply illustrate the great fluidity of the boundaries between debt-ridden retailers, well-established shop operators, substantial manufacturers, and chain-store pioneers. Not only were individuals constantly moving between these groups, but the range of possible statuses tended to expand (both up and down) in most trades. Clearly, we cannot know who the working class is or who the bourgeoisie is until we better understand the broad *terra incognita* in between.

The second important impression gleaned from these essays is the fact that the nineteenth century was the heyday of the *petite bourgeoisie*, not the era of its decisive demise. Not only did it grow substantially in size (no matter how it is defined), but by the end of the century it had found a new political voice, indeed was in some ways the principal beneficiary of the maturation of mass political parties and parliamentary forms of government. National differences in the way the *petite bourgeoisie* used its new-found voice are particularly striking; this class seemed especially prone to the influence of distinctive national political traditions. The remarks of Crossick's concluding essay are revealing in this regard.

Crossick and Haupt are to be congratulated for this latest effort in a series of collaborative enterprises aimed at waking the profession up to the importance of the *petite bourgeoisie*. The one cautionary note worth sounding is that it would be dangerous to make the *petite bourgeoisie* into yet another semi-isolated subfield of research. The whole challenge of studying this group is to see how their presence altered or modulated the sharp polarities of political conflict, and influenced the consciousness of other classes.

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Denys Delâge — *Le Pays Renversé. Amérindiens et Européens en Amérique du nord-est, 1600-1664*. Montréal, Boréal Express, 1985. 416 p. Notes et références, bibliographie.

In *Le Pays Renversé*, sociologist Denys Delâge proposes a comparative study of the interaction between the largely horticultural Amerindians, French, Dutch, and English in northeastern North America against the background of economic and political transition in Western Europe and in the conceptual framework of Immanuel Wallerstein's world system. It appears at a time when Bruce Trigger has studied French relations with the Natives in the same "heroic age" (although he also gives necessary attention to the pre-1600 contacts) and James Axtell has published a comparative history of French/English/Amerindian contacts in the same period. In general terms, Delâge's interpretation accords more with Trigger's anthropological approach than with Axtell's historical approach. All three authors would willingly accept the classification of ethnohistorians, yet each approaches the period and its salient events from a different perspective.

Delâge, as one might expect, adopts a model for his overview and comparative evaluation. To fit the peoples and events into this explanatory model, the author conceives of North America

as an "economic unit" and contact as "the process of annexation of this space to the Atlantic economy" (p. 9). The historian concerned with socio-political aspects and the anthropologist with socio-cultural aspects could conceive the continent and imperial expansion in different modes. The validity of the Wallerstein model in this case can only be gauged by its comprehensiveness in incorporating all the significant developments in the time and space selected. Also, it will be a measure of the author's success both of understanding and communication if these historical verities lend themselves completely to the model.

The originality of this study stems also from its emphasis on economic factors and the application of Fernand Braudel's thesis of material civilization, as expounded in *Le temps du monde* (1979), to North America in the period 1600-64. The European background focuses on the transition from feudalism to capitalism and on the concept of world community composed of a dynamic economic centre, a semi-periphery and a periphery. The Dutch occupied the centre at the beginning of the 17th century, England and the French Atlantic coast were on the semi-periphery, while America found its place alongside West Africa and India in the periphery.

The structure of the book flows naturally from these postulates. A first chapter explains three European types of transition to a capitalist economy, with the consequences for Dutch, English and French overseas activities, and concludes with three types of colonization in which the French came out the losers. The second chapter deals with indigenous life before the arrival of these Europeans and reveals the author's deep appreciation of Native cultures as well as his extensive knowledge of this prehistory. Then comes a chapter dealing with trade relations expressed in Marxist terms of "unequal exchange" in which the Amerindians spend more time and energy producing their goods than did the French traders. A sophisticated analysis of this economic relationship ensues explaining, for example, the development of new values and of specialization among Native producers. The end result is the drawing of North America and its native population into the world economy as peripheral participants who are dominated and exploited by the metropole. What does not emerge clearly from this application of the centre/periphery thesis is the fact that the Amerindians were not just primary producers of a raw material but also their womenfolk were processors of hides and skins which underwent no further manufacturing until they came into the hands of Parisian hatters. Canadian voyageurs and merchants, like French sea captains and investors, were part of a chain of middlemen. The profits surely accrued to the metropole in good measure, but the Marxist model underplays the risks and losses involved in this so-called unequal exchange which characterized all economic activity in New France. Who insured and took the risks on the investment in the trans-Atlantic shipping burdened with onerous overhead costs and constantly threatened by losses arising out of spoilage, shipwreck, piracy, warfare and fraud? Furthermore, Amerindian adaptability is underscored by the author so that in the unequal exchange we soon see the Natives exploiting the situation as best they could for their own benefit. The Canadians were trapped into this trade every bit as much as the Amerindians.

The thesis moves on to the imperialistic consequences of European expansion in chapter 4 as the Hurons become the victims of the double onslaught of missionaries and Iroquois. Internal disintegration proceeded hand in hand with Huronia's integration into the world economy, Delâge affirms. The Iroquois, on the other hand, came out victors in the inter-tribal wars for control of the fur trade but their social structure also changed as the Confederacy developed along class lines with the war chiefs, women and captives gaining new importance and as Jesuit missionaries were rebuffed successfully. This is also depicted as a victory of the Dutch capitalist economy to which the Iroquois confederacy was allied over the Huron confederacy which was a partner of the French feudal economy. Pursuit of the fur trade required larger hunting territories, more intensive labour, and eventually resulted in intensified warfare. Added to warfare, the scourge of epidemics, and increasing religious factionalism, the old Native cultures buckled under European imperialistic designs. Depopulation was accompanied by social disintegration.

The scenario then shifts to the struggle between the Dutch, English and French for control of the Atlantic economy. From a demographic standpoint England pushed out the dissatisfied and dispossessed, the Dutch attracted them, and France merely stagnated. The assertion of English

superiority in American colonization relies heavily on the work of Bernard Bailyn and Charles Carroll, while the story of the eclipse of the Dutch follows closely the work of Thomas Condon and Van Cleef Bachman. As for French colonization it is somewhat disconcerting to see the use of citations from the late 17th and even 18th centuries to illustrate colonial life before 1664.

Finally, the author considers the rebirth of European societies in America but now ignores the dictum given at the beginning of his work to the effect that the Amerindians were a dynamic element in the transplantation process. A number of basic observations undermine any possibility of sustaining a Utopian or Turnerian interpretation of the colonization process. Land was assigned according to social status; skilled labour was scarce but slaves and engagés were introduced, New France remained tied to the fur trade and subsistence agriculture while the Dutch and English diversified their activities. This seemed to indicate that the North American colonies might some day pass to the level of the semi-periphery. Of course, there is always the question of scale, for New France had only 3,000 inhabitants by 1660 whereas the Dutch had twice as many European settlers and the English eleven times as many. An element which receives surprisingly little attention, although it was four or five times more remunerative than the fur trade for France, is the fishery.

Le Pays Renversé is a well written, tightly argued comparative colonial history which never departs from its central theme. So reflective and provocative an interpretation deserves wide circulation and demands an immediate English version to which we recommend the addition of an index and detailed maps of the English, French and Dutch colonies in North America.

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Charlotte Fuhrer — *The Mysteries of Montreal: Memoirs of a Midwife*. Ed. by W. Peter Ward. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984. Pp. 170.

Canadian booksellers in recent years have been employing a new marketing technique: they target the summer readership with certain titles in the belief that thrillers, romances and mysteries have a special affinity with beach tar, frisbees and ghetto-blasters. There finally is a book for historians too guilt-ridden or status-conscious to take Harlequins to the seashore — *The Mysteries of Montreal*.

It must be pointed out emphatically that the above does not apply to Peter Ward's excellent introduction. He details childbirth practices in early Canada and offers rare personal accounts of familial reactions to the birthing process, and it is hoped that this anticipates a larger study of Canadian midwifery. It is simply that the introduction far out-classes the rest of the book.

Out of respect for the publisher and the editor, the reader looks to pinpoint relevant artifacts in midwife Charlotte Fuhrer's stories — which, unfortunately do not include any reference to her actual midwifery, in obvious deference to Victorian middle-class respectability. There is the tidbit in "The Frail Shop Girl" about the physical hardships suffered by Montreal salesclerks (which one would suspect was mentioned to give a topical flavour to the story). There is Fuhrer's adventure "Among the Fenians" in which she attends a mysterious stranger amid a deadly arsenal. There is the gothic "The Two Orphans" in which a desperate widower, blackmailed by his vindictive sister-in-law, engineers her committal to an insane asylum — a favourite theme in contemporary yellow journalism following the publication of Charles Reade's *Hard Cash*.

Fuhrer was not a social commentator; she should be seen within the context of popular women's fiction of the last century. While comparison with "Austen and Eliot, Flaubert and Fontaine" (p. 25) is stretching the point, Fuhrer could hold her own among Lydia Sigourney, Sara Payson Willis (Fanny Fern) and Susan Warner: Nathaniel Hawthorne's detested "scribbling women" whose