

## The French Canadian and Acadian Diaspora

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Volume 15, numéro 1, autumn 1985

URI : [https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/acad15\\_1rv04](https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/acad15_1rv04)

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### Éditeur(s)

The Department of History of the University of New Brunswick

### ISSN

0044-5851 (imprimé)

1712-7432 (numérique)

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### Citer ce document

Harvey, L.-G. (1985). The French Canadian and Acadian Diaspora. *Acadiensis*, 15(1), 174–186.

More work also needs to be done on the influence in Atlantic Canada of national or international currents. E.R. Forbes has shown how accounts of such movements in Canada are likely to omit or misinterpret developments in the Atlantic Region when told from a Central Canadian perspective.<sup>51</sup> Forbes himself had gone some way toward redressing the balance with a good essay on the social gospel in Nova Scotia,<sup>52</sup> but unfortunately nothing further has been published on this topic. We need major studies not only of the Social Gospel, but also of the evangelical movement of the 19th century and of Ultramontanistism among Catholics.<sup>53</sup> We can also benefit from seeing well-known local developments in a broader context, as Gregory Baum's *Catholics and Canadian Socialism* (1980) illustrates with respect to the Antigonish Movement.<sup>54</sup>

Finally, we must continue to extend the compass of research beyond mere ecclesiastical history. A knowledge of the internal development of the churches is essential, but one of the most fruitful tendencies in current research is the desire to understand the influence of religion on the behaviour of the general population. The methodological problems here are formidable but, as a few exemplary works have demonstrated, not insurmountable. It is only by devising means of evaluating popular religious customs and attitudes that we will be able effectively to relate the history of the churches to the social development of the region.

TERRENCE MURPHY

51 E.R. Forbes, review of Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-1928* (Toronto, 1971), in *Acadiensis*, II, 1 (Autumn 1972), pp. 94-9.

52 E.R. Forbes, "Prohibition and the Social Gospel in Nova Scotia", *Acadiensis*, I, 1 (Autumn 1971), pp. 11-36. See also Clifford Rose, *Four Years with the Demon Rum*, with an introduction by E.R. Forbes and A.A. MacKenzie (Fredericton, 1980).

53 The question of ultramontane influences has been raised in a limited manner in Frederick Jones, "Bishops in Politics: Roman Catholic v. Protestant in Newfoundland, 1860-2", *Canadian Historical Review*, LV, 4 (December 1974), pp. 408-21.

54 Gregory Baum, *Catholics and Canadian Socialism: Political Thought in the Thirties and Forties* (Toronto, 1980).

## The French Canadian and Acadian Diaspora

IN RECENT YEARS historians and social scientists using a variety of methods and sources have rediscovered tiny islands of French settlement throughout North America. A review of some of the latest works dealing with these communities reveals two major approaches to the study of French minorities outside Québec and New Brunswick. It seems that Canadian students of the French Canadian and Acadian diaspora stress the importance of language in their studies of the French communities in English Canada. This emphasis is hardly surprising

given the official status of the French language in our country, but Canadians dwell on the linguistic variable even when examining French communities in the United States. American researchers, on the other hand, tend to focus on the formation and social composition of the Franco-American population as an ethnic group and to examine its interaction with an emerging urban and industrial society. In this approach, the Franco-Americans appear as but one community of many which have come under closer scrutiny with the growing popularity of ethnic studies. A comparison of the different theoretical and methodological assumptions underlying these two views reveals a fundamental division within the field itself.

After a century of considering emigration as a national disease<sup>1</sup>, Québécois scholars have in the past decade come to a new appreciation of francophone minorities elsewhere in North America. This is at least partially a result of developments within Québec itself, particularly the election of the Parti Québécois in 1976 and the inevitable questions concerning the situation of francophone minorities should Québec withdraw from Confederation. In addition, the international role that Québec has aspired to play seemed to necessitate a more forceful recognition of francophone communities in the United States. These factors alone might not have created renewed interest in the French Canadian diaspora were it not for the cultural and political reawakening of francophone communities throughout North America. Not willing to be merely pawns in a constitutional struggle between Québec and Ottawa, the Fédération des francophones hors Québec began to lobby for linguistic rights throughout English Canada and published two important studies in the wake of the Parti Québécois' election.<sup>2</sup> At the same time musicians, writers and artists from francophone communities from Ontario to Louisiana exploded on the Québec scene. By the early 1980s it had become increasingly difficult to ignore the French fact outside Québec.

The recent publication of a collection of essays dealing with the topic by Laval University's geography department reflects this renewed awareness. D. R. Louder and Eric Waddell, eds., *Du continent perdu à l'archipel retrouvé* (Québec, les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1983) is presented as an introduction to the study of francophone communities in North America. Impressive in scope, this collection details the spatial distribution of French-speaking groups throughout the continent. It goes beyond the traditional studies of New England and Ontario to consider communities in such places as Newfoundland and British Columbia as well as Missouri and Texas. In most cases, these geographers have made considerable effort to document the historical development of the groups they studied, using both traditional and oral history sources. The maps and statistical information in the book serve as a useful reference for

1 This view was particularly evident among historians of the clerico-nationalist school. For an example see Lionel Groulx, *Histoire du Canada français, II* (Montréal, 1976), p. 211.

2 *Les héritiers de Lord Durham* (Ottawa, 1977), *Deux poids, deux mesures: les francophones hors Québec et les anglophones au Québec: un dossier comparatif* (Ottawa, 1978).

students in the field. Problems arise, however, in the analysis of the contemporary cultural life of the groups examined. As Lise Bissonette writes in her foreword to the book, many of the articles read like "des diagnostics au mieux inquiets et souvent défaitistes" (p. x). In most cases this is because the authors found high rates of linguistic assimilation among the groups they studied. Linking language and culture, they concluded that the cultural survival of their subjects is doubtful. Such an affirmation is curious coming as it does from geographers, whose discipline constantly reminds us of the importance of the interaction of men and women with their environment. Indeed, in the face of analyses so dependent on the linguistic variable, one wonders how much the uniqueness of Cajun culture, for example, may owe to 200 years of life on the Louisiana bayous with or without the continued use of French.

The use of a Québécois standard in defining culture and prescribing strategies for cultural survival is evident throughout this collection. Pierre Anctil, for example, in his study of the Franco-Americans of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, concludes that "Dès qu'elle a cessé d'être d'inspiration québécoise, la vie française de la Nouvelle Angleterre a commencé à s'effacer" (p. 38). Similarly, Jean-Claude Vernex sees Acadians who reject the notion of politically dividing New Brunswick on linguistic lines as victims of assimilation and acculturation (p. 175). Alain Larouche's analysis of the Cajuns of the Yankee Canal area in Louisiana finds that while they have adapted well to resource development and even maintained the use of French in their working lives, the community's continued cultural existence may be threatened because it has not produced a university-trained cultural élite. Thus the Cajuns of Yankee Canal, he states, are in danger of becoming "américanisé". The insightful article by Eric Waddell shows, however, the futility of applying such standards for cultural survival without regard for the specific situation of various groups within Louisiana. Waddell contends that in emphasizing Acadian origins and promoting the use of international French, the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana has alienated a substantial portion of the Cajun and Creole population. He goes on to say that Québec's perception of French culture in Louisiana is coloured by its own ideological and political preoccupations (p. 208), an observation which is also applicable to the other essays in his book.

The preoccupation with language as a determinant of the cultural vitality and survival of French communities outside Québec raises some important methodological questions. Do Franco-Americans or Franco-Ontarians lose their cultural identity completely if they stop speaking French? In their introduction to *The French Canadian and Acadian Diaspora in North America* (Toronto, Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1982), editors Raymond Breton and Pierre Savard consider this a question which must be examined in future research. They do so, in large part, because the papers which appear in their collection continue to stress the importance of the linguistic factor. For example, while geographer Donald Cartwright's essay offers an interesting analysis of the spatial distribution of francophone communities in Ontario, the

author's ultimate goal is "to develop some measure of the strength and pervasiveness of the French language among the francophones in their daily routine of local contacts and interaction" (p. 139). Using a statistical measure termed "the index of language intensity", and data concerning language use from the 1971 Canadian census, Cartwright attempts to gauge the extent of language maintenance in various areas of French Ontario. This leads him to divide Franco-Ontarian communities into two groups: those which form "language islands" in south and central Ontario and those in the bilingual belt of eastern and northeastern Ontario. Cartwright is most concerned with the assimilative potential in the south, where French Canadians suffer from a lack of contacts with Québec society, increased interaction with the English community, and low francophone immigration. He is fairly optimistic as to the continued cultural survival of the second group because of its ties to Québec and its isolation from English urban centres. Yet he also suggests that shifts in the population of certain areas of the bilingual belt may require a reassessment of their ability to maintain the use of the French language.

This theme is pursued by Gaétan Vallières in "The Franco-Ontarian Experience", who shows that the composition of these areas has already undergone significant change. Much of this paper outlines the original sources and destinations of the migration from Québec to Ontario in the 19th and 20th centuries, but Vallières goes further, examining the patterns of francophone migration within Ontario since 1940. His research reveals that significant modifications in the spatial distribution of the Franco-Ontarians in the past 40 years have transformed this community from predominantly rural to predominantly urban. According to Vallières, this change is both an indicator and a cause of altered cultural patterns. While the initial emigrants from Québec often came in groups and were able to reproduce traditional life by creating self-contained rural communities, the migrants of the last four decades, drawn both from traditional Franco-Ontarian communities and from Québec, have relocated individually and found it difficult, if not impossible, to reproduce their cultural milieu in an urban setting. Concomitant with these changes have been the decline in the role and authority of the church in Franco-Ontarian life, the slow but inevitable laicization of Franco-Ontarian cultural organizations, and the growing influence of the provincial government in everyday life.

These changes are of fundamental importance to the Franco-Ontarian community not only because they have altered its culture and threatened its language through out-migration from the "bilingual belts", but also because they threaten to dilute its political power and thus its ability to promote and conserve linguistic rights. Vallières stops short of this conclusion and, indeed, seems unwilling to admit that the trend he describes is bound to continue, given the limited occupational opportunities available in northern and eastern Ontario. In "The Franco-Ontarian Collectivity", however, sociologist Danielle Juteau-Lee, a Franco-Ontarian, confronts the issue of political power. She argues that the changes described by Vallières have led to the emergence of a new collective

identity characterized by the term "Franco-Ontarian". Juteau-Lee contends that the francophone minority in Ontario is engaged in a struggle to define itself vis-à-vis the anglophone majority which controls the provincial government. The battle for linguistic rights, bilingual services and control over French schools are all manifestations of this trend. But while the Franco-Ontarians might be able to influence and even control municipal affairs, their collective ambitions cannot be channelled, like those of the Québécois, into the creation of an autonomous national state. Moreover, she points out that the Franco-Ontarians also have little control over their economic destinies, which are in the hands of English-Canadian and American capitalists. Juteau-Lee believes that if the Franco-Ontarians are to survive as a distinct cultural entity they will have to challenge the legitimacy of the state and gain more control over their lives. Her solution is the concept of "autogestion", a form of self-management, by Franco-Ontarians and for Franco-Ontarians.<sup>3</sup>

The concern with linguistic rights and the continued use of French is also evident in Sheila Macleod Arnopoulos, *Voices from French Ontario* (Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1982). Arnopoulos will be familiar to students of the anglophone minority in Québec; she was the co-author, with Dominique Clift, of *The English Fact in Québec*, which in its French edition won the Governor General's Award for non-fiction.<sup>4</sup> For her most recent work Arnopoulos journeyed to Northern Ontario to interview and live among the Franco-Ontarians of that region. Her book documents the reawakening of Franco-Ontarian culture and the everyday lives of the members of the French community. Unfortunately, Arnopoulos chose not to deal with the significant Franco-Ontarian population in the eastern part of the province, a choice not clearly explained or justified in the book.

The oral testimony and a lucid writing style make *Voices from French Ontario* an extremely readable introduction to the topic. This is particularly evident in the best chapter of the book, which deals with the miners of Sudbury. Here Arnopoulos describes how the lives of the Franco-Ontarians around Sudbury changed with the arrival of extractive industries in the early 20th century. The already marginal agriculture which sustained them was gravely affected by sulphur emissions from the smelters and eventually the French Canadian men in the region drifted into the mines, armed with letters of introduction from their local priests. Once in the pits the workers faced deplorable conditions and low pay through the 1920s and 1930s. But in the late 1930s and early 1940s they turned to the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, popularly known as Mine-Mill. Although Mine-Mill was good for the workers, by the late 1950s its radicalism led it to fall into disfavour with the Canadian Labour Congress and Mine-Mill became the target of a raiding operation by the

3 Juteau-Lee's "Ontarois et Québécois: relations hors frontières?" in Louder and Waddell, pp. 41-53, considers the implications of these changes for relations between Franco-Ontarians and Québécois.

4 Dominique Clift and Sheila Arnopoulos, *The English Fact in Québec* (Montréal, 1980).

more conservative United Steel Workers of America. Faced with the concerted opposition of community and clerical leaders, the CLC, and their employers, the Franco-Ontarian workers of the Falconbridge plant in Sudbury fought back and managed to maintain the autonomy of their Mine-Mill local.

Arnopoulos interviewed some of the key players in the Mine-Mill affair. One retired miner describes how the priests and the company cooperated in order to control who got jobs in the mines before the union arrived. The best oral testimony, however, deals with the struggle against the Steel Workers in the 1950s and 1960s. The social pressures exerted on the miners are vividly illustrated. Albert Ouellet, a Mine-Mill officer opposed to the merger with Steel, tells how he was personally denounced from the pulpit of his church:

But the crowning point came during the sermon. The priest got up, and without using my name — but making it clear he was talking about me — told the church my life story. He told them how I had lived in an orphanage in Cabano, Québec, how I rode the rods during the depression, and how I finally came to Sudbury. Then he started telling everyone that I'd been to Moscow and that, if elected, I'd be taking my orders from the Russians. He said that anyone who voted for me, or any member of the Mine-Mill slate, would be considered a communist and ex-communicated (p. 114).

Ouellet's testimony makes it clear that in rejecting annexation to a large international union the Falconbridge workers were also rejecting the dominance of their traditional clerical élite.

It is also significant that in this one chapter which offers an insight into the everyday lives of Franco-Ontarian workers linguistic issues are conspicuously absent. However, a concern with language dominates the rest of the book, and in chapters dealing with culture and business the exclusive use of evidence gained from interviews gives the work a rather subjective quality marked by a certain amount of journalistic overdramatization. The Franco-Ontarians appear solely as a linguistic minority and the uniqueness of their experience on Ontario's northern resource frontier is lost. Moreover, the conclusion comes as somewhat of a surprise. There Arnopoulos contends that to survive the Franco-Ontarians will have to develop a dynamic business élite which can plug into a network of francophone — read bilingual — capitalists centred in Montréal and operating throughout Canada.

This call for the creation of a new élite underlines the power vacuum left in Franco-Ontarian society by the decline in the influence of the Catholic clergy. Robert Choquette's *L'Eglise catholique dans l'Ontario français du dix-neuvième siècle* (Ottawa, les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1984) shows how the clergy came to occupy such an important place in Franco-Ontarian life. Choquette's work is a solid piece of historical writing based upon detailed research in church archives both in Ontario and Québec. The author's basic argument is that the

breach between Irish and French Canadian Catholics in Ontario over Regulation 17, which severely proscribed the use of French in the province's schools, was actually the climax of longstanding linguistic feuds within the Ontario church. Thus while language does play a key role in Choquette's account, this book has the merit of examining the evolution of an important institution which helped shape the Franco-Ontarian identity.

The first part of Choquette's study is devoted to a thorough discussion of the early growth of the Catholic church in Ontario. He shows how francophone clerics recruited predominantly from Québec eventually came to dominate the church by 1850, despite the growing numbers of Irish Catholic immigrants streaming into the province. The most important development for Franco-Ontarians was the growth in importance and stature of the Ottawa diocese, which Choquette describes in great detail. The historian is at his best during this richly documented account of the evolution of the Bytown parish from a missionary outpost to an important religious and cultural centre for the Franco-Ontarians. Moreover, the correspondence and reports of the Ottawa bishops reveal the trials and tribulations faced by a church operating with limited resources in what were essentially frontier conditions. Although Choquette is at times rather uncritical of the Ottawa hierarchy, he does show the inconsistency between the bishops' moral rigorism and their involvement in a society which was in the process of modernizing. The Ottawa hierarchy persisted in adhering to a dogmatic ultramontanist view of the world, and attempted to impose this ideology on parishioners whose daily lives could never conform to their expectations. In their theological assumptions, the Ottawa bishops reflected the influence of the dominant streams of religious thought in Québec.<sup>5</sup> This is one example of a recurring theme in the chapters devoted to the Ottawa church: the importance of the link between the Franco-Ontarian church leadership and that of Québec. Indeed, the successive bishops of Ottawa faithfully attended the provincial councils of the Québec church and recruited a large number of clerics from Montréal.

The intimate contacts between the French Canadian hierarchy in Québec and Ontario, coupled with the shifting balance of power between Irish and French Canadian Catholics, set the stage for decades of conflict within the Ontario church. In the second section of Choquette's study the religious archives again provide numerous examples of the growing rift between French and English Catholics in the province: disputes over the colonization activities of the Ottawa church, attempts by the Bishop of Toronto to gain control over parts of the Ottawa diocese, and finally a profound disagreement over the role of Catholic schools in the province. In his account of these events Choquette shows that the Ottawa bishops' struggle to maintain their autonomy made a positive contribution to the preservation and development of Franco-Ontarian culture. On the

5 On ultramontanism in Québec see Nadia Fahmy-Eid, *Le clergé et le pouvoir politique au Québec. Une analyse de l'idéologie ultramontaine au milieu du dix-neuvième siècle* (Montréal, 1978).

other hand the author also points out that the inability of Franco-Ontarian church leaders to reach a compromise with the Toronto hierarchy divided Ontario Catholics and paved the way for the crisis over Regulation 17. In the end, then, the Franco-Ontarian church appears as one which was involved in linguistic disputes throughout its history. Once more the analysis tends to define the Franco-Ontarian experience primarily in terms of language.

The importance of the linguistic issue for Canadian students of the French Canadian diaspora, so evident in the studies of the Franco-Ontarian community, stands in sharp contrast to the recent work dealing with the Franco-Americans. Although American scholars have not been insensitive to language, their primary concern has been with the social composition of the ethnic group. Thus, those papers in the Savard and Breton collection which do consider the linguistic variable among Franco-Americans link it to the shifting occupational profiles of the communities they examine. Such is the case with Gerald Gold's paper which explores patterns of language maintenance among the Cajuns of Mamou Prairie, Louisiana. Drawing on survey and interview data collected by the *Projet Louisiane*, Gold shows that language use was affected by many of the same factors described in studies of Ontario. But here the similarity ends, for the *Projet Louisiane* team went on to question their subjects further about the relationship between language, the workplace and the home. Their conclusions are both revealing and somewhat surprising. While we are inclined to think of the work site as a place of assimilation and the home as the bastion of language maintenance, Gold's results show the opposite to be true for many residents of Mamou Prairie. As their traditional economic activity, cotton farming, became less viable, the Cajuns moved into small villages and towns. In this new environment they were exposed to the socializing influences of English public schools, which had their greatest effect on women and children in the home. While the language of the home was switching to English, men continued to work in French within the area and in occupational groups where they formed the majority. Thus many Cajun offshore oil workers, for example, speak French on the job and English in the home. It is notable that Gold's essay clearly demonstrates the utility of oral history techniques in helping the researcher interpret survey data.<sup>6</sup>

The bulk of the recent work devoted to the Franco-Americans, however, deals not with language as such but with the formation and social composition of French speaking communities within the United States. The study of migration patterns has been especially important to American scholars in the last few years. In part the concern with why and how people migrate grew out of the social mobility studies characteristic of American social history in the 1960s and 1970s. These studies tended to support an image of 19th century America as a society in flux, marked by very high rates of geographic mobility. Historians

6 Gold has also stressed that the breakdown of traditional economic activities can sometimes lead to linguistic assimilation. See his "Les gens qui ont pioché le tuf: les Français de la Vielle Mine, Missouri", in Louder and Waddell, pp. 117-27.

theorized that early industrialization created a class of workers who migrated from town to town in search of work, and that this mass movement of the last century followed no particular pattern.<sup>7</sup> This concept of large numbers of men and women moving around the countryside in a haphazard fashion has been challenged in recent years. Historians of the family and of ethnic groups have argued that there were discernible patterns in the movement of 19th century families. Contacts between members of families and of the same ethnic group often determined the destinations of migrants and, once they had arrived in new locations, helped them find employment and shelter. Interestingly enough, some of the first challenges to the notion of haphazard migration patterns were based on studies of the Franco-Americans.<sup>8</sup> Much of the literature in the field still reflects these concerns.

The continued importance of migration patterns is particularly evident in Claire Quintal, ed., *L'émigrant acadien vers les Etats-Unis: 1842-1950* (Québec, Conseil de la vie française en Amérique, 1984), a collection of papers presented at the fifth annual meeting of the Institut français in March 1984 in Worcester, Massachusetts. As most of the contributors point out, the study of Acadian emigration to the United States, as opposed to that of French Canadians from Québec, is a relatively new field. Their papers also make clear the difficulties inherent in such an analysis, not the least of which are the dearth of reliable sources and, for the early period at least, the small numbers of Acadians who actually left British North America. Béatrice Chevalier Craig's analysis of Acadian migration from the Lower to Upper St. John River Valley and from there to the Penobscot River Valley in Maine suffers on both counts. While Craig does show that Acadian families living in southern New Brunswick with kin in Lower Canada were more likely to migrate to the Upper St. John than those without such ties, her sample is too small, consisting of only 19 families. She is correct in affirming that these initial settlers of the area formed a closed core group and were reluctant to welcome newcomers without ties to the core families into their society, but this pattern in what was essentially a frontier area is not surprising. Moreover her analysis of subsequent migration from the Upper St. John to the Penobscot Valley before 1850 is again based on very small numbers, allowing only tentative conclusions.

The problems created by small numbers and poor sources can be solved by examining the later period, when emigration was more plentiful and records, particularly on the American side, are more complete. A companion piece by Marcella Harnish Sorg presents such an analysis based on an examination of marriage records of the French population of Old Town, Maine from 1850 to 1930.

7 This view is most clearly set forth in Stephan Thernstrom and Peter Knights, "Men in Motion: Some Data and Speculations about Urban Mobility in Nineteenth Century America", *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, I (Autumn, 1970), pp. 7-35.

8 The importance of the Franco-American studies is underlined in Gordon A. Darroch, "Migrants in the Nineteenth-Century: Fugitives or Families in Motion", *Journal of Family History*, VI, 3 (Fall 1981), pp. 257-77.

Sorg's paper demonstrates the importance of the Madawaska area as a source of francophone migration in the period. In addition, she studied the origins of the mates chosen by the former Madawaska residents and concludes that the pattern of endogamy established in New Brunswick quite naturally broke down in Maine. Instead, the main criterion for choosing a partner in Old Town became language, suggesting to Sorg the mutual assimilation of the former Acadians and French Canadians and the emergence of a new Franco-American cultural identity. In time though, even this pattern broke down; the increased number of marriages to non-francophones in the early 20th century revealed a growing assimilation into the anglophone American population.

Because the emigration of Acadians to New England continued well into the 20th century, some of the original migrants have survived to tell their story. Paul LeBlanc's paper is primarily based on interviews with Franco-Americans from Fitchburg, Massachusetts. Combined with economic and demographic information, this makes LeBlanc's study very effective. The Franco-Americans with whom he spoke detail the conditions in New Brunswick which led them to emigrate and they describe life in the new environment. Their accounts also provide valuable evidence concerning the formation of French-speaking neighbourhoods in Fitchburg, the strained relationships with the Irish community in the town, and the interaction between Acadian and Québécois within the French population. Interestingly, the testimony of his subjects supports Sorg's hypothesis that the Acadians first assimilated with the French Canadians and then with the more general society.

In most cases the use of oral testimony allows the historian to look back only to the early 20th century, although second-hand knowledge of 19th century events is sometimes volunteered by the interviewees. However, C. Stewart Doty's contribution to *L'émigrant Acadien vers les États-Unis* reveals the existence of an extremely valuable oral history source which was actually compiled in the 1930s. At that time interviewers working for the Federal Writers' Project, under the aegis of the Works Progress Administration established during the New Deal, recorded the life histories of members of the Franco-American community. The manuscripts produced under this programme have recently been released by the Department of Manuscripts of the Library of Congress. Doty's skilful use of this source together with demographic data from the period allows us to begin to understand the experience of 19th century migrants in more human terms. Thus one Acadian in Old Town describes how his family's inability to eke out a living in Kent County, New Brunswick led him to strike out for the lumber town in Maine. Other interviews provide a rich picture of Acadian life in Old Town, including where the migrants settled, how they first obtained employment, and their battles with other ethnic groups, most notably the Irish.

Since the appearance of that paper Doty has edited a collection entitled *The First Franco-Americans: New England Life Histories from the Federal Writers' Project, 1938-1939* (Orono, University of Maine at Orono Press, 1985). In all,

17 interviews with Franco-Americans from throughout New England are reproduced, and both Acadian and Québécois migrants are represented in the accounts. The book groups the life histories according to places of residence, which include Manchester, Old Town, Woonsocket and Barre. Doty prefaces each chapter with a description of the town and the evolution of its Franco-American population. Because no two of these communities had identical economic bases, the life histories reproduced in *The First Franco-Americans* offer an insight into the working life of migrants attracted to employment in various industries. One Franco-American details his experience on the massive log drives of the mid to late 19th century; another describes his work in the declining New England textile industry of the 1920s and 1930s; and a third provides evidence of the health hazards faced by the granite cutters of Barre, Vermont. In addition many of the interviewees offer first-hand accounts of the large scale emigration from Québec which took place in the decades following the American Civil War. Their story is one of long train trips south, continued links and frequent trips to the villages they left behind, and bittersweet memories of Canada. All of these narratives consistently underline the importance of family and friendship networks in the process of migration.

Doty has created a useful sourcebook for students in the field. Still, the organization of the book does present some problems. A thematic approach might have better highlighted such topics as migration, work experience and community life in the New England towns. This might also have been achieved by the addition of a thematic index at the end of the book, though in fairness, Doty's "Afterword" ably sums up the many of the important themes brought out in the accounts and makes useful suggestions for future research. Unfortunately, the editor does not tell us whether the 17 life histories reproduced in the book are the sum total of what is available or only a small sampling, nor does he provide a reference for the documents reproduced. These flaws notwithstanding, *The First Franco-Americans* is a valuable and welcome contribution to our understanding of the Franco-American experience.

Oral history sources such as those used by Leblanc and Doty are vital tools in the reconstruction of the lives of the members of the French Canadian and Acadian diaspora. Although not exploited by Canadian scholars, the testimony of the migrants themselves has been used by American researchers for some time. Indeed one of the most important works in the field, Tamara Hareven's *Amoskeag*, published in 1978, was a compilation of interviews with Franco-American textile workers from Manchester, New Hampshire.<sup>9</sup> Since then, Hareven has published a more complete study of Manchester's textile workers entitled *Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship between Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982). Here Hareven integrates the oral testimony from Amoskeag into a detailed reconstruction of the home and work environment of the textile

9 Tamara Hareven and Randolph Langebach, *Amoskeag: Life and Work in an American Factory* (New York, 1978).

workers, relying extensively on quantitative data drawn from such records as the United States census and company employee files. This is not specifically a book about the Franco-Americans, but rather a study of Manchester's working class, of whom the Franco-Americans form a significant portion.<sup>10</sup> Hareven is sensitive to the importance of ethnic differences in determining the workers' response to industrialism, but the main focus of her analysis is the adaptation of the family to the regime of work in the mills. The role of the family in recruiting emigrants, finding employment in the mills, and community life are all considered here. Yet, in this work, the Franco-Americans appear as members of an industrial workforce, sharing common experiences with workers of different backgrounds.

Hareven's book challenges the notion that the traditional family, as immigrants to New England knew it, broke down under the stress of contact with industrial society. In fact Hareven, in her study of Manchester, finds that "an industrial town offered greater opportunities for cohesion and contact among relatives" (p. 118). In the case of French Canadians it seems that immigrants attracted by employment opportunities in the textile industry were able to adapt family networks to the industrial system by developing "new modes of interaction and new functions" (p. 119). Of course, the family was transformed by its contact with the urban-industrial setting, but Hareven argues that the importance of the extended family was actually enhanced in the period she studied. Families operated as a single economic unit, and children were bound to their parental home well into adulthood, eventually being faced with an obligation toward aging parents. The family also had a role to play in the industrial system and it was used by both the employers and the workers in an attempt to control the workplace. However, when the textile industry in Manchester went into a decline in the 1920s, the family's influence in the industrial world declined and its "social security" role became predominant. Throughout Hareven's work shows that the family remained a central reference point for French Canadian workers in Manchester in the early decades of the 20th century. *Family Time and Industrial Time* is an important contribution to American social and ethnic history and to our understanding of the Franco-Americans.

Clearly, Canadian students of the diaspora can learn something from the American literature in the field. For in studying French minorities with reference only to the cultural baggage they carried with them to New England, Louisiana or Ontario, we close our eyes to the essence of the cultural synthesis which made Franco-Americans or Franco-Ontarians out of Québécois and Acadians: the life experiences of the migrants themselves. The evidence in *Family Time and Industrial Time* confirms that the home and the workplace were the fundamental poles of the life experience of French Canadians in New England,

<sup>10</sup> By 1910 French Canadians comprised about 35 per cent of Amoskeag's labour force and 38 per cent of Manchester's population. Hareven does not distinguish between migrants from Québec and the Maritimes, and thus it is impossible to determine the number of Acadians either working in the mills or living in the town. See Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time*. pp. 16, 20.

and the life histories in *The First Franco-Americans* also make this clear. As Doty writes of the immigrants from Québec and Acadia:

Once in the United States their principal concerns were not erecting parish churches, founding newspapers, and arguing ideological disputes. Instead, their chief interests were in growing up, getting and keeping a job, making the conditions of that job bearable, finding life companions, and seeing that their children would have better opportunities than they did (p. 161).

We can no more understand what it is or was to be a Franco-Ontarian without reference to the experience of the miners in Sudbury than we could understand the life of the habitant in the St. Lawrence Valley without a thorough knowledge of the seigneurial system. The Ontario example is a compelling one, for Arnopoulos' too-brief sketch of the Franco-Ontarian worker demonstrates the existence of a rich oral tradition. No doubt there is much untapped but relevant documentation to be studied here.

The works under review suggest a number of possible avenues for future research. The role of the Franco-Ontarians in the labour movement and their changing relationship with their traditional clerical élite merit consideration. The contribution of kinship ties to French Canadian and Acadian migration within Canada must also be explored. This is not to say that linguistic, political and institutional factors can be ignored in the study of the diaspora. In this vein an examination of Franco-American participation in New England political life would be useful. Nor can American scholars forget that the Franco-Americans did found parishes, build churches, establish newspapers and create voluntary associations, and that often these institutions fostered the continued use of the French language. But these attempts to recreate a society left behind were also affected by the changing patterns of the home and the workplace.

The publication of conference proceedings and cooperative works in recent years is a hopeful sign that such studies will one day be undertaken. While the Canadian emphasis on language and the American fascination with the social composition of the ethnic group are still evident in these collections, such exchanges offer the opportunity for a creative interchange of ideas. This process should contribute to the future development of the field and, in time, enhance our understanding of the French Canadian and Acadian diaspora.

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