

story, which so calls out to be told. Certainly no one is better prepared to confront the stereotypes *Wedded to the Cause* so well describes.

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Eighteenth-Century Western Cree and Their Neighbours, by Dale R. Russell. Hull, Quebec: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1991. (Archaeological Survey of Canada, Mercury Series Paper 143.)

Reconstructions and interpretations based on historical sources — which we call histories — have created an evolving historiography. Russell examines historiographically the interpretations of the twentieth-century ethnographer David G. Mandelbaum and early-nineteenth-century explorer Sir Alexander Mackenzie, and cursorily what Russell characterizes as the “post Mandelbaum writers.” All of these writers have previously contributed their own reconstructions about the Cree and their culture history.

In this work Russell focusses particularly on the question of whether the Cree migrated to the northern plains from the eastern woodlands or whether Plains Cree occupations had anything to do with the westward push of the European fur trade. The answer to these questions depends on the degrees of accuracy attributed to written observations by which historical groups of Indians can be identified and traced.

The implications of this migration question are more interesting than the question itself because it focusses upon the nature of sources and the tests for reliable information. The oral traditions of the Plains Cree, as interpreted by Russell, do not substantiate the idea of a known migration; rather, there is a suggestion of a long-term occupation of the Prairies and Plains since time immemorial. While asserting this on behalf of Cree oral tradition, Russell offers no detailed discussion or even minimal examination of specific sources for this perspective. Russell indicates that his examination of the historical sources for the Cree and their neighbours reveals a picture quite different from that of the migrationists and quite similar to that of the Cree oral traditions. He suggests that, as Europeans travelled west they perceived the Cree to be moving with them. Russell's interpretative approach supports a nonmigrationist view, especially when European biases are filtered out from the extant sources for particular time periods and regions. What is missing is his documentation of Cree sources that corroborate his historical discussions.

Russell's reconstruction is just as monolithic and stiff, however, as the ones he wishes to dismantle. In the late 1930s, for example, when ethnologist David Mandelbaum did his fieldwork in Saskatchewan and consulted a range of historical sources for his important baseline Boasian (via Clark Wissler) ethnography (synthesized from his extensive field notes of oral interviews), a number of historical sources were unknown or unavailable

to him. There is little evidence that Mandelbaum did any archival research other than consulting published sources. Russell shows how this affected Mandelbaum's basic interpretations, and thus, his view of developing Cree culture and society. Revisionists must be careful not to judge by standards of comprehensiveness unless they also are willing to be judged by them. Russell does not cite Mandelbaum's field notes housed in the Saskatchewan Archives Board - Regina or Mandelbaum's retrospective discussion of his own methods (1979). Russell attributes motives and interpretations, but far from proves them.

Russell suggests that the diffusion of guns and resulting warfare were not as powerful a factor upon migration as was the western movement of fur traders and explorers. He critiques in detail Alexander Mackenzie's secondhand accounts of the prairies that he never visited, and suggests unqualified reliance by twentieth-century scholars upon what Mackenzie only meant to be generalizations. Russell calls this method of attribution the "fallacy of displaced observation" (p. 47). What is particularly disturbing about Russell's perspective is that he accepts one oral tradition over another, for example, the informants to Mackenzie, many of whom were known to have been Indians or Inuit. Oral traditions must be weighed in relationship to other sources; their power as sources is found in both collaboration or new perspectives.

Russell's descriptions taken from historical sources for the specific geography of the woodlands, prairies and plains continuum are truly impressive. From this base of local knowledge, which includes locations of historical sites, Russell critiques the limitations of other scholars, especially those of the migrationists. He marches through the early journals and accounts, correlating locations with his localized understandings. His descriptions of the lands of the "periphery," which he knows intimately from experience, are particularly powerful. While this geographic accuracy makes aspects of his discussions appear clear-cut, the comprehensiveness of his historiographic critique remains flawed in several ways. Nowhere does Russell acknowledge the relativity of historically emerging geographical knowledge as it was being invented cartographically through acceptance, rejection and modification during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Ruggles 1958, 1991). Rather, he discusses geographical space in absolute terms, assuming the locations of action throughout the periods under examination had the same conscious reality for all actors. Russell unfortunately also limits his discussion by not using or referring to recent scholarship done on similar issues or on interactions with the Cree for the same time periods and important adjacent regions for the Eastern Dakota (Sioux), southwestern and western Ojibwa, the Gros Ventre/Hidatsa, the Cheyenne and the central and western Great Lakes region.

Particularly odd is the publishing of this volume of broad-based ethno-historical cum geographical analysis in the Mercury Series publications of the Archaeological Survey of Canada. Nowhere in the volume does Russell attempt to discuss his interpretations relative to the archaeological record

in the regions he discusses. The utility of this volume is enhanced by two folded reference maps ("The Canadian Northwest" and "Western Interior of Canada"), which facilitate the tracing of Russell's descriptions of specific locations.

The successful proof of the nonmigration perspective finally is left to the reader. The discussion of localized geography and descriptions of early fur trade interactions make this volume a useful reference. It reasserts one perspective in a long-standing debate, but does not resolve it.

Mandelbaum, David G. 1979. "The Plains Cree Remembered: Proceedings of the Plains Cree Conference, Fort Qu'Appelle, (Saskatchewan), 24-26 October 1975, 1-26." Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina.

Ruggles, Richard Irwin 1958. "The Historical Geography and Cartography of the Canadian West, 1670-1795: The Discovery, Exploration, Geographic Description and Cartographic Delineation of Western Canada to 1795." Ph.D. dissertation, University of London.

—. 1991. *A Country So Interesting: The Hudson's Bay Company and Two Centuries of Mapping, 1670-1870*. Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

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The Alberta Temple: Centre and Symbol of Faith, by V.A. Wood. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1989. Pp. 221.

Homes in Alberta: Buildings, Trends, and Design, 1870-1967, by Donald G. Wetherell and Irene R.A. Kmet. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1991, Pp. 382.

The built environment of the Canadian Plains has been attracting increasing attention as our regional society matures. More communities are beginning to recognize that their buildings are part of a legacy left to them. The study of those structures can reveal important elements about who we are as a people, the aspirations of those who preceded us, as well as the influences which have shaped the world we now live in.

These two books represent the opposite approaches which can be taken to studying our built past. One takes a narrow view, focussing upon a single structure. The other takes a broader approach, seeking to examine the evolution of housing in one of the prairie provinces.

Perhaps it is not currently fashionable to speak of faith in a scholarly review of a book, but it would be difficult to discuss V.A. Wood's work without reference to it. Wood has wisely centred his history of the Alberta Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on its role as the centre and symbol of that group's religious convictions. The building's very existence, together with its location and construction, are not understandable apart from the Mormon faith.

The importance of faith as this book's organizing principle is also