

Essays on European Settlement and North American Development

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Reviews/Revue

Essays on European Settlement and North American Development

“To exist as a North American”, according to the philosopher and theologian George Grant, “is an amazing and enthralling fate”, with novelty as its hallmark.¹ North American civilization, Grant argues, differs from its predecessors most obviously in consequence of its momentous technological development. But North Americans are also distinct from technologically powerful Europeans; they are conscious of having forsaken the old and encountered a magnificent, if oftentimes forbidding, new continent. Even our oldest white communities on the eastern seaboard are not truly autochthonous; the process of taming the land lies within the bounds of memory. Moreover, “the very intractability, immensity and extremes of the new land required that its meeting with mastering Europeans be a battle of subjugation”. Environment became object, and North Americans developed a “conquering relationship to place”.² This is to argue, as have many before, that the meeting of man and land lies at the heart of the North American experience. From Crevecouer to Lockridge through de Tocqueville and Turner, historians, sociologists, political thinkers, and more general commentators have recognized — from their various vantage points — the shaping influence of the settlement process upon American life.³ Yet, surprisingly, historical geographers — whose concerns might be defined as the study of peoples’ experience with the land, and the distribution of populations, practices and artifacts across it — have rarely confronted those large questions about the nature of North American life that lie back of their own studies of this continent’s settlements.

Personal predilections cannot be ignored in accounting for this neglect, but time and circumstance provide a more telling explanation of its existence. Academic historical geography in North America is very largely a product of the last forty years. It developed at a time when geography as a whole defined itself as a chorological science, concerned with the study of spatial relations and of area.⁴ And it formed part of a subject that, in the North American context of rapid commercial settlement in a productive land, was far more economic than

1 George Grant, “In defence of North America”, in *Technology and Empire: Perspectives on North America* (Toronto, 1969), p. 15. This paragraph is a precis of the first part of Grant’s “defence”.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 17.

3 Hector St J de Crevecouer, *Letters from an American Farmer* (London, 1782); K. Lockridge, “Land Population and the Evolution of New England Society 1630-1790”, *Past and Present*, 39 (1968), pp. 62-80; Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (Paris, 1835-40); F.J. Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History”, *American Historical Association, Annual Report for 1893* (Washington, 1894), pp. 199-227.

4 R. Hartshorne, *The Nature of Geography: A Critical Survey of Current Thought in the Light of the Past* (Lancaster, Pa., 1939) offers the classic statement of this position. See, especially, ch. IV.

cultural or historical in orientation.⁵ Well into the 1950s, methodological orthodoxy defined historical geography as the study of spatial relations and areas at a specific time in the past; historical geographies were spatially extensive but chronologically restricted.⁶ Even in the 1950s and 1960s, when it became acceptable to study "geographical change", historical geographers were expected to focus their chronological interests on the evolution of spatial patterns.⁷ Under these circumstances there was little scope for reflection upon the relationship between the occupation of a continent and the shaping of an American character.

Indeed, the very survival of an historical approach in a discipline set so firmly on the study of area is largely attributable to two men, Carl Sauer and Andrew Clark. Sauer fostered an interest in the past among a succession of cultural geographers trained at Berkeley between 1927 and 1967.⁸ Clark developed the continent's major centre for graduate study in historical geography at Wisconsin, where he was professor of Geography from 1951 to 1975. Sauer was the greater of the two men, perhaps the wisest of all American geographers, but Clark played a larger role in the development of historical geography in Canada and the United States. Whereas most of Sauer's students pursued their research interests beyond Anglo-America, all but three of the nineteen who worked with Clark completed dissertations on North America; most of these remain productive scholars. In addition, Clark advocated and defended historical geography among geographers and historians, arguing that geography must have a vigorous temporal component; he initiated a monograph series and a journal for the publication of historical geographical work; and he published numerous articles and books on the historical geography of Canada, the Maritime Provinces, New Zealand, and the New World temperate-latitude grasslands. In short, Clark was the focal point of historical geography in North America; at his death "he had practically become the fulcrum of historical geography in the English-speaking world".⁹

5 C.O. Sauer, "Foreword to Historical Geography", in J.B. Leighly, ed., *Land and Life. A Selection from the writings of Carl Ortwin Sauer* (Berkeley, 1965), pp. 353-4. Originally published in the *Annals*, Association of American Geographers, 31 (1941), pp. 1-24.

6 The most famous and probably the most successful of historical geographies in this vein is R.H. Brown, *Mirror for Americans. Likeness of the Eastern Seaboard, 1810* (New York, 1943), a finely crafted account in the style of the times, purportedly the work of an imaginary author resident in Philadelphia. Eric Ross has provided an excellent Canadian example of this genre with *Beyond the River and the Bay* (Toronto, 1970).

7 A.H. Clark, "Geographical Change: A Theme for Economic History", *Journal of Economic History*, 20 (1960), pp. 607-16.

8 J.B. Leighly, "Carl Ortwin Sauer, 1889-1975", *Annals*, Association of American Geographers, 66 (1976), pp. 337-48 and a number of items in the *Historical Geography Newsletter*, 6 (1976) summarize Sauer's career and influence.

9 The quotation is from R. Cole Harris, "Andrew Hill Clark, 1911-1975: An Obituary", *Journal*

It is therefore wholly appropriate that Andrew Clark is the first North American historical geographer to be honoured by the publication of a *festschrift*. *European Settlement and Development in North America: Essays on Geographical Change in Honour and Memory of Andrew Hill Clark* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1978), edited by James R. Gibson, is a handsome tribute. Its focus echoes Clark's longstanding academic concern with European expansion overseas; its eight essays allow a cross-section of Clark's students to pay tribute to their mentor by reflecting the intellectual curiosity, the scholarly discipline, and the methodological catholicity that he encouraged; its prologue appraises Clark's career; and its epilogue reflects upon the value of geographical study. The paperback edition of the book, in the University of Toronto Geography Department's research publication series, is reasonably priced. And those other common failings of *festschriften*, pious veneration and disconcerting variety, have been avoided. Social historians, historical geographers, and others interested in the North American past are likely to find stimulation and suggestion in this volume.

Taken as a whole, the Clark *festschrift* provides something of a touchstone by which to measure North American historical geography in the 1970s. Settlement and encounter continue to occupy the chief points of the historical geographer's escutcheon; most interest still focusses upon the penetration of new territory by Europeans. Research into urban systems and the internal geography of cities aside, historical geographers have barely broached investigation of the complex changes produced in old settled areas by industrialization and the transportation revolution of the late nineteenth century. Work is almost invariably regional, if not explicitly with the intent of demarcating regional character and regional boundaries, then in the sense that particular areas are the loci for more thematic investigations.¹⁰ Despite the tide of enthusiasm for an abstract, model-building, law-finding, and generalizing geography in the 1960s,¹¹ historical geography remains archival and empirical. Yet it is also clear

of Historical Geography, 2 (1976), p. 2. See also David Ward, "Andrew Hill Clark, 1911-1975", *Annals, Association of American Geographers*, 67 (1977), pp. 145-8.

10 General reviews of North American historical geography in the 1960s and 1970s include Andrew H. Clark, "Historical Geography in North America", in A.R.H. Baker, ed., *Progress in Historical Geography* (Newton Abbot, 1972), pp. 129-43, and the more recent and more thoughtful piece by R. Cole Harris, "The Historical Geography of North American Regions", *American Behavioral Scientist*, 22 (1978), pp. 115-30.

11 See for example Richard J. Chorley and Peter Haggett, eds., *Models in Geography* (London, 1967), esp. pp. 19-41; R. Abler, J.S. Adams and P. Gould, *Spatial Organization, the geographer's view of the world* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1971); W.W. Bunge, *Theoretical Geography* (Lund, Sweden, 1962). These ideas did have an impact upon historical geography. H.C. Prince, "Real, Imagined and Abstract Worlds of the Past", *Progress in Geography*, 3 (1971), pp. 44-58 is an overview. W. Norton, "Process and Form Relationships: An example from Historical Geography", *Professional Geographer*, 30 (1978), pp. 128-34 provides a recent example.

that much has changed. Buoyed by the call of the 1970s for a so-called "humanistic geography",¹² and finding themselves in a field increasingly tolerant of methodological diversity, historical geographers have broken new ground in recent years. Sharing the rising interest of historians in family history, local studies, class, and community, some of the essayists in this volume offer a tantalising foretaste of the prospects for intellectually exciting and essentially humanistic work in historical geography during the 1980s. Perhaps, then, historical geography's insights into the distinctiveness of North American settlement will contribute more clearly than they have in the past to the American's understanding of his "amazing and enthralling fate".

Although the book-jacket proclaims this "an unusually consistent *Festschrift*" there is considerable diversity in the focus, and unevenness in the quality, of its ten contributions. The prologue and epilogue inevitably differ in intent, and are distinct from the rest of the book. Of their authors, Donald Meinig had the simpler task in writing an appreciation of Andrew Clark. His essay is gracious and effective. More might have been said of the context in which Clark worked; I differ with Meinig in believing that Clark's pronouncements about the importance of field work are belied by his writing. But this is a realistic appraisal. It concludes with a sentiment that will be widely shared: Clark's "work endures, but for those who knew him well the stronger legacy will be the memory of the man himself" (p. 26). John Warkentin is less successful in his attempt to distil the essays and link them to "the wider purposes and values of geography" (p. v). His basic argument is that geography is a civilizing subject. As a geographer, I am hardly inclined to deny that position. But the epilogue is a disappointing effort to review the intellectual connections and prospects of historical geographical scholarship in North America (p. 210), falling between somewhat jejune recommendations and brief summaries of the preceding essays. The book's eight substantive contributions reflect the wide variety of research interests nurtured in Clark's graduate seminars in Wisconsin. Although all deal with European settlement in North America, they range in time from the seventeenth to the twentieth century and consider areas as distant and as disparate as Alaska and Georgia, New France and Kansas. To a degree, the collection reflects Clark's interest in the relationship between cultural inheritance and patterns of new world settlement. But this book is still a collection of distinct studies. Some bear the mark of the recent dissertations from which they are derived; others offer more reflective perspectives on the settlement and development of North America. The years have moulded individual interests; those who would argue the existence of a Wisconsin school of historical geography are more likely to seek their evidence in the dissertations of Clark's students than in the pages of this book.

12 For example, see David Ley and Marwyn Samuels, eds., *Humanistic Geography: Prospects and Problems* (Chicago, 1978).

Two contributions to the *festschrift* consider aspects of a complex, yet common, facet of North American development: the encounter between native peoples and newcomers in search of trade. James Gibson's treatment of Russian fur-trade settlement in the far northwest of the continent is perhaps most akin, in its approach, to Andrew Clark's work. It offers a succinct summary of the cultural and physical factors impinging upon Russian commercial activity in the new world, and points, briefly, to the geopolitical consequences of Russia's over-extension in Alaska. This is a well-rounded case study, emphasizing the importance of local circumstances and external connections, and illustrating the tyranny (or was it the liberation?) of distance in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century North America. Certainly isolation undermined central authority; but for Russians in Alaska there was probably more than cold comfort in the Siberian wisdom that "God is high above and the tsar is far away" (p. 63). Arthur Ray is also concerned with the fur trade in his examination of the mesh between European and Indian economic systems on the shore of Hudson's Bay. His brief discussion utilizes data from a previously published study, and although it elaborates the argument of that work, there is a strong sense of *déjà vu* about this essay.¹³ Moreover, I am not entirely convinced by its claim that price instability was a disincentive to Indian trade (p. 121) on learning that fur receipts increased during the 1750s, when even the use of 5 year moving averages "to smooth out the data" (p. 126) reveals that the percentage mark-up on goods traded climbed from 30% to approximately 75%.

Andrew Clark's deep interest in the settlement of ethnic groups in North America is echoed in Aidan McQuillan's study of territorial survival among Mennonites, Swedes, and French-Canadians in Kansas between 1875 and 1925.¹⁴ The essay begins with a brief, diffuse, and correspondingly insubstantial, review of the links between "places" and ethnic identity, and continues with an investigation of the three groups' efforts to establish a territorial base on the plains. Here the recent dissertation from which this work is derived comes to the fore. The investigation is detailed and quantitative. Farm turnover, family size, farm-rental patterns, and mortgage foreclosures are compared in six sample townships, each more or less dominated by one of the ethnic groups under investigation. Then patterns of land-ownership change in these townships are mapped at ten-year intervals to reveal the connection between "territorial development and Americanization" (p. 158). Although, in conclusion, McQuillan is able to challenge the findings of some previous work, there is an obvious spareness about his study. The emphasis is upon census data and tax returns; as McQuillan acknowledges, virtually nothing is said of the nature and function of the ethnic communities, of the value systems and aspirations of their

13 Arthur J. Ray, *Indians in the Fur Trade* (Toronto, 1974), pp. 61-8.

14 See Andrew H. Clark, "Old World Origins and Religious Adherence in Nova Scotia", *Geographical Review*, 50 (1960), pp. 317-44.

members, and of the strength and attitudes of the host population. On a more general level — and this is less a response to McQuillan's work than my reaction to a gamut of earlier studies — I wonder about the wisdom of historical geographers continuing to place the study of ethnic groups, and the differences in their economic practices, at the centre of their inquiries. Obviously ethnicity will be an important element in the understanding of particular places — a study ignoring the Scottishness of Cape Breton is inconceivable — but it is clear that assimilative pressures were strong in the prevailing market economy of North America; cultural practices that interfered with economic success were generally discarded remarkably quickly. Survivals were vestigial and often ceremonial. Indeed, Clark concluded in the 1970s that differences in land-use attributable to the settlers' different Old World origins (which were sought so assiduously in his *Three Centuries and the Island*) were of far less significance than he had expected.¹⁵

Of the *festschrift's* five remaining essays, one prompts connection with Maritime Canada by comparison, another by extension. In a neatly conceived and effectively executed study, Sam Hilliard examines tidewater rice cultivation in antebellum South Carolina and Georgia. In detail the agricultural system he describes is vastly different from that of the Acadians and others who cultivated the Fundy marshlands; the need to flood and drain fields precisely and regularly made rice cultivation a far more delicate enterprise than farming the Fundy marshes. Yet the broad similarity between Acadian and Georgian-tidewater reclamation techniques is evident. Southern embankments resembled Acadian dykes; drainage trunks were but sophisticated variants of the *aboiteau*. And from this comparison, questions emerge. The substantial time and labour requirements of reclamation were clearly greater in the southeast than in Nova Scotia, and were met there by the use of slave labour; one wonders how the still considerable labour demands of Fundy reclamation were overcome, and how they might have influenced the structure of Acadian settlement. Hilliard's step-by-step documentation of the reclamation process is also of interest, given the paucity of similarly detailed information about the Acadian dyke building process. Certainly the southern-tidewater practice of erecting a rough temporary embankment might have served the Acadians by providing protection from the sea during construction of their permanent dykes.

Robert Mitchell's discursive commentary upon the formation of early American cultural regions reminds us that we know little about the landscapes of Maritime Canada. Despite the economic, physiographic and ethnic diversity of the region, and the contrasting patterns of connection within and beyond it —

15 Andrew H. Clark, *Three Centuries and the Island: A Historical Geography of Settlement and Agriculture in Prince Edward Island, Canada* (Toronto, 1969) and Andrew Hill Clark, "Suggestions for the Geographical Study of Agricultural Change in the United States, 1790-1840", *Agricultural History*, 46 (1972), pp. 158-61.

all of which might be expected to enhance vernacular variety — we have neither a moderately comprehensive description of the patterns of cultural regionalization within the Maritimes, nor a sensitive interpretation of the evolution of these patterns. Thus Mitchell's essay — which never quite realises the great potential of its ambitious intent — suggests many lines of inquiry, and offers a few caveats to those who might pursue them. Briefly, Mitchell suggests a tri-partite classification of the processes creating new cultural regions: duplication of traits characteristic of a hearth region; deviation from established patterns due to local circumstances; and the fusion of traits from two or more hearths. Further, he warns against exclusive reliance upon relict artifacts to delimit cultural regions, arguing that ideology and location interact with material culture in the formation of distinctive cultural complexes. Within this framework we might consider the Maritimes. Using architecture as our measure in this first approximation, I would suggest that duplication was characteristic of early Pictou, Lunenburg, and St. Andrews. A certain amount of deviation may have occurred in the small, relatively isolated, fishing and shipbuilding settlements of the region. And fusion, surely the dominant process in Maritime Canada, found expression in the pervasive influence of New England, evident, in time, even in those areas which initially mirrored other hearths (e.g. Pictou). To some extent the convergence of cultural patterns in this physically fragmented environment might be explained by the wide sharing of basic values (liberal individualism?) among settlers of diverse backgrounds. At least as important in shaping the cultural configurations of the twentieth century, however, has been the impact of industrialism. This was reflected most visibly in the replacement of local, essentially craft- or folk-building forms by prefabricated or pattern-book architectural styles, but it was also felt in the demise of an enormous variety of folk traditions in the face of improved communication and increased geographical mobility. Clearly, these changes proceeded at different rates in different parts of the region. Consequently a careful investigation of evolving cultural patterns would reveal much about the fascinating and far-reaching changes produced by the encroachment of late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century materials, attitudes, and ideas upon older, more local ways of life in Maritime Canada.

David Ward, Cole Harris, and James Lemon, Wisconsin cohorts of the early 1960s, round out the collection with three challenging essays, relevant far beyond their specific foci. Ward, whose long-standing interest in the urban past bridges the Atlantic, explores the paradoxical congruence of urban images in industrial England and mercantile America during the nineteenth century. Despite the widely recognized economic and social differences between the two countries, the urban populations of both areas were frequently seen in dichotomous terms, with rich set apart from poor in location as in wealth, thus giving spatial expression to Disraeli's "two nations", and estranging class from class. Yet such descriptions exaggerated the extent of differentiation, they

reflected ideology rather than reality. According to Ward, contemporary accounts of the social geography of early Victorian cities were “geopolitical images designed to justify reform and derived from new concepts of poverty” (p. 189). They cannot be understood apart from the context of Victorian attitudes and beliefs in which they were articulated — a simple point but one too often shunted aside by geographers fearful of emasculating their disciplinary identity by entering the “historian’s realm”. Ward’s work is also richly suggestive of the opportunities for study of urban historical geography in Maritime Canada, where much could be done in both local and comparative frameworks, exploring ecological patterns and urban images as well as economic functions and developmental processes. I am struck, too, by his conclusion that evangelical moralists were largely responsible for the misleading image of the Victorian city, because I suspect that the timber trade provided a lightning-rod for their concerns in New Brunswick, and that a similar discrepancy between image and reality marks the common characterization of lumbermen as representatives of an isolated and depraved culture of poverty.

The fundamental differences between European societies and their mid-latitude colonies attract Harris’ attention. In investigating the extension of seventeenth-century France into rural Canada, he echoes Andrew Clark’s abiding interest in “What happens in the New World to an Old World people?”¹⁶ Clark never really resolved this question. Despite his oft-remarked comparative intentions, contextual explanations, meticulous descriptions of individual cases, provided his answers to it. By his reckoning, more general explanations could only be built on the “scores or hundreds” of similar studies yet to be completed.¹⁷ But Harris disagrees. Recognizing that effective generalization about the development of new societies overseas requires an analytical framework, some basic conceptualization of the elements and processes involved in European colonization, he moves decisively beyond Clark’s achievements on this score. Arguing that the French peasant’s basic desire for private control of land (built upon a strong sense of the nuclear family) was more readily fulfilled in rural Canada than anywhere in France, Harris contends that the terms of access to land powerfully shaped the character of Canadian society. With land abundant and cheap in a largely subsistent economy, rich and poor were pored from the countryside, the former because land, the traditional basis of rural wealth, was neither scarce nor easily worked; the latter because there were few obstacles to acquisition of a modest landed competence. Thus Canadian society was simplified; it became homogeneous and egalitarian. Only with time, the growth of population, the emergence of markets, and a growing scarcity of land did restratification occur. Here then is a model of European

16 The phrase is from J. Warkentin, “Epilogue” in Gibson, *European Settlement*, p. 213.

17 Andrew H. Clark, *Acadia: The Geography of Early Nova Scotia to 1760* (Madison, 1968), p. 371.

overseas settlement, seen at its extreme in isolated New France, but operative to some degree, and in more or less condensed form in almost all regions of recent settlement.¹⁸ Clearly, it bears upon other frameworks for the interpretation of European civilization, especially those of Louis Hartz and F.J. Turner. As Harris recognizes, his model places far more importance upon the transforming power of conditions in the new land than does Hartz' view of transplanted European fragments finding full expression in colonial soil. Yet it is far from Turnerian, stressing the essential Europeaness of Canadian development, and recognizing the role of the market in constricting the safety valve of new land. No doubt, refinement of Harris' general argument will be possible as its insights are applied to settlements less isolated and distinct than seventeenth-century Canada; the institutional bases of colonial development, the influence of indigenous populations, the nature of the local resource base and its associated economic system, all might bear on the model's application. Nonetheless, Harris' suggestions enhance our understanding of colonization, and they do so precisely because they seek to analyse the economic and social as well as landscape changes associated with the transfer of European people to new lands overseas.

Greatly increased family autonomy associated with individual settlement and the weakening of institutional control is an important offshoot of the process Harris describes. It is also the starting point for Lemon's investigation of place and community in early Pennsylvania. Some might quibble at its method and approach, but this is an intriguing piece. Lemon, the political activist, consciously seeks to turn our attention from the investigation of economy and material culture at the regional level to the consideration of "life together at the . . . local scale" (p. 190). Ranging back and forth in time, borrowing Polanyi's concepts of reciprocity, redistribution, and market exchange, and reading past patterns of landscape and society from a perspective few have spelled out before, Lemon again finds in early Pennsylvania the roots of a current dilemma: the weakness of place and the isolation of self.¹⁹ There was little redistribution in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania, with its low taxes and weak central government; reciprocity was equally weak, even voluntary association and mutual cooperation were "only minimally sustaining" (p. 206); instead possessive individualism prevailed, reflected in isolated homesteads and widespread land speculation. In the context of settlement, of course, these circumstances spelled

18 In recent months Harris has applied his "model" to other areas of early European settlement overseas, and offered a more general statement of its argument. See R. Cole Harris and Leonard Guelke, "Land and Society in Early Canada and South Africa", *Journal of Historical Geography*, 3 (1977), pp. 135-53 and R. Cole Harris, "The Simplification of Europe Overseas", *Annals, Association of American Geographers*, 67 (1977), pp. 469-83.

19 See J.T. Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore, 1972) in which it is argued that early Pennsylvania formed the prototype of American development in its defense of liberal individualism.

opportunity. But it is Lemon's conviction that the eighteenth-century blessings of the free market's "hidden hand" have turned into a twentieth-century curse. We must, therefore, foster new communities and develop a new sense of place if we are to shake free of the historical realities which still control us.

All the world is not Pennsylvania, but Lemon's is still an essay to ponder. To reflect upon it is to reflect upon American society. In this age of instantaneous, world-wide communication, the ubiquity of (American) television culture, and the diffusion of everything from expressways to electric toothbrushes across the western world, that, in turn, is to consider our own circumstances. Thus to weigh the argument of Lemon's article is, in some degree, to come to know ourselves. That, of course, is Lemon's intention. His essay is, therefore, a fitting final chapter in honour and memory of Andrew Hill Clark. It reveals more clearly than almost anything that Clark wrote — though not more clearly than he recognized — the essentially humanistic nature of the subfield that he worked so hard to create and did so much to defend. Here, more explicitly than in most historical geographical writing, we recognize something of the fate of being North Americans. Not all will wish to follow Lemon down the road of relevance, but the potential for a vital, challenging historical geography that addresses questions central to understanding the experience of Europeans in North America is clear. Of course, other disciplines claim a similar final goal. As part of the humanities, so they should; knowledge is not to be confined by disciplinary labels. Yet historical geography does provide a distinctive perspective on these important issues. With its interest in man and land, properly conceived it would seem to offer a rich potential of suggestive insight into the distinctive quality of life as it has been lived in the novel circumstances of North America.

GRAEME WYNN

Redressing the Balance — the Prairie West, Atlantic Canada and the Historiography of Canadian Regionalism

One of the most encouraging features of recent Canadian historiography has been the emergence of a talented group of scholars whose field is the history of the Atlantic region. Writing in the *Journal of Canadian Studies* in the fall of 1978, George Rawlyk pointed out that Carl Berger in *The Writing of Canadian History* pays "remarkably little attention" to Maritime historians and does not even include any index reference to the Maritimes. Rawlyk suggests that because the Canadian historical tradition has been preoccupied by the themes of French-English conflict and the western thrust of central Canada,

. . . the Maritimes are often automatically pushed to the periphery and