

I tend to agree with Schrauwers that we must examine these colonial documents less as a source of knowledge but more as historical artefacts that need to be examined for the categories and conceptual frameworks they produced.

Overall, Forth provides a meticulous reading of Louis Fontijne's study. We finish the book knowing much more about Louis Fontijne's life, the purposes and limitations of his research, and extensive details about the practices and the beliefs in the Nage district of central Flores in the colonial period and more recently.

References

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Northwestern Lake Superior Jesuit Diary Project,¹ *Diary of the Mission of the Immaculate Conception, Volume I, 1848-49*, CD-ROM, Thunder Bay: Northwestern Lake Superior Jesuit Diary Project, 2003.

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The standard sources of research material for ethnohistorians, anthropologists and others interested in Canada's First Nations peoples have been restricted up until now mostly to the Jesuit Relations and the account books of the Hudson's Bay Company. A new resource is now being compiled consisting of Jesuit diaries of the mission of the Immaculate Conception situated in northwestern Lake Superior, principally in the Thunder Bay (Fort William) region, for the period of 1848-49. This compact disc is a preview version of the project, consisting of sample diaries, manuscripts, letters, maps, a glossary and bibliography. The CD begins with a slide show introduction which outlines the historical background of the Jesuits and their activities among the Micmac, Huron and other associated tribes, and then finally their arrival at Sault St. Marie and Fort William. The goal of the project is to publish in an electronic format the entire 80-year history of the Jesuits in the northern Lake Superior region.

The Diaries begin on July 19, 1848 when three Jesuit missionaries were put ashore with a boatload of miners at a

remote destination on the western shore of Lake Superior. The Jesuit Relations (1632-1672), which had previously recorded the exploits of the "Black Robe" missionaries, were serially published in Europe and were a popular source of information concerning the New World. Eventually, in 1773, the Society of Jesus was dissolved, yet reappeared after it was reinstated by Pope Pius VII in 1842. In Ontario missions were subsequently established on Walpole Island on Lake St. Clair (1844) and a few months later on Wiwemikong on Manitoulin Island. Two years later the Jesuits proceeded further west to Sault Ste. Marie and, in 1848, arrived at the trading posts of Fort William and Grand Portage. The plan of the missionaries originally was to minister to the existing Ojibwa communities in the area, but by 1849 they evidently had dreams of building a self-sufficient Native village based on subsistence agriculture in the vicinity of their new headquarters on the Kaministiquia River.

The diaries give us a day to day account of the many obstacles faced by the missionaries, such as the harsh weather conditions (a frost in the middle of July in 1849 that almost destroyed their potato crop), barriers created by language, and serious injury (one of the missionaries cut his leg open with an axe while attempting to square a log). Historically this time period of the late 1840s is of particular interest because of the struggles between the First Nations people and the Canadian and American mining companies. The missionaries were also witness to the preliminary negotiations for the 1850 Robinson Superior Treaty, and found themselves embroiled in a dispute between two chiefs competing for leadership of the Fort William Ojibwa community.

Ultimately it is envisioned that the Northwestern Lake Superior Diary Project will be expanded to include the Diary up to 1926, and would include various other letters and journals. It is anticipated that up to 4 000 pages of these documents could be processed and published. On the basis of the present sample of some 60 pages of material, it is difficult to assess how useful this material would be for those interested in historical ethnography, or northwestern Ontario history. For the most part the journal entries are quite sketchy, consisting usually of three or four lines of brief information, although there are occasionally much longer paragraphs. There are only two entries, for example, for the entire month of October, 1848. On another occasion (November 27, 1848) it is commented that "almost all the men go away hunting for 15 days or 3 weeks." Consequently, I suspect that those readers who are seeking the sort of detailed information such as that found in Charles Bishop's *The Northern Ojibwa and the Fur Trade* will be disappointed. None the less, the diaries provide information that cannot be gleaned from other existing sources, such as the triad of relationships between the Jesuits, the personnel at the Hudson's Bay Company post, and the followers of local Ojibwa leader Joseph Peau-de-Chat. The Diary Project certainly has the potential to provide a new beginning for researchers interested in the complex developing relationships in Northern Ontario's frontier between

fur traders, missionaries, mining interests, officials of the Government's Indian Department and the various Aboriginal populations in the Lake Superior region. I look forward to the eventual completion of the entire project and then we will be in a better position to assess the historical value of the Jesuit diaries.

Note

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