

That aside, Lipinsky has succeeded in imposing his own will on this complex material and produced a compelling history. *Imposing Their Will* is nourishing soup made all the more delicious by careful preparation. At last, those letters make sense.

Roderick Macleod

McDonought, Graham P., Memon Nadeem A. and Mintz, Avi I. (eds.) *Discipline, Devotion, and Dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic Schooling in Canada*, Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2013. 282 pp.

The place occupied by religious schools within Canada's diverse education systems (i.e. the independent systems of the provinces and territories) is a recurrent topic of debate, often re-surfacing during provincial elections. Most prominently, such schools are critiqued for being recipients of public funding, for promoting religious and cultural values, and even for encouraging segregation within a society that emphasizes a multicultural way of life. This assessment opens the book *Discipline, Devotion, and Dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic Schooling in Canada*, which considers key elements of these debates from the perspective of schools.

The book is organized into three parts, each considering a core critique. In the first part describing the aims and practices of religious schools, the authors mainly address the pedagogical particularities of such schools, including the teaching of religious faith and values, the use of language (e.g. Hebrew), the community served, and challenges faced by the respective communities. The second part seeks to reveal the ways in which schools "negotiate the tension between the demand of the faith and the expectation that they educate Canadian citizens" (6). Finally, the authors discuss how pluralism is handled within schools by addressing strategies for "respond[ing] to internal dissent" (6).

The editors' choice to concentrate on only Catholic, Jewish, and Islamic schools – each offering a different historical perspective to the discussion – is understandable given the wide

variety of religious schools in Canada. We learn that Catholic schools enjoy a “historical and widespread prominence [...] in Canada” and therefore “lend themselves to scholarly scrutiny as an entity” (8). Meanwhile, Jewish schools are the oldest non-Christian academies, having “evolved and become established in Canada through implicit negotiation with the larger Canadian society” (8). Finally, we see Islamic schooling as a relatively recent phenomenon, which “currently serve[s] as the most identifiable object of public concern about faith-based schooling in Canada in the post 9/11 era” (8).

Indeed, this selection, which is well-justified by the editors, achieves the stated goal of allowing the reader to reflect on different perspectives surrounding debates over religious schools. The focus on three religions also serves the discussion regarding three important aspects of the debate. In the first part, it affords the reader the opportunity to become more familiar with the approach to education particular to each of the studied religions. In the second, we consider the integration of Canadian multicultural values into religious teachings, while in the third we are exposed to the openness of religious schools to internal pluralism. In this fashion, the reader comes to appreciate different facets of the daily functioning of such schools, grasping a more holistic portrait of their reality.

Nevertheless, this choice made by the editors is not without problems. First, historical, social, and political differences between the three religious communities addressed in a Canadian context bring the authors to treat a single question in very different ways, in spite of common goals. This is why, for example, while Chapter 1 explores the variety among Jewish schools (Esptein), and Chapter 3 reflects on a generalized Islamic pedagogy within a growing community (Memon), Chapter 2 proposes a more philosophical consideration of education according to Catholicism (D’Souza). Notably, on-the-ground particularities of Catholic education in Canada go unmentioned, perhaps because such a community does not really exist apart from dominant society.

This seems to me even more problematic in the second part, which addresses “Faith and Citizenship.” While Beiles and Ahmed explore questions they have themselves confronted during their own experiences in Jewish and Islamic schools (respectively), Donlevy addresses different court decisions concerning key issues like sexual orientation within different Catholic institutions (and not necessarily schools). He concludes by noting the important role of the Catholic school in preparing younger generations to face such debates in terms of Catholic values, including “respect for the Other, fairness, the common good and democracy” (135), four values that are not necessarily or even evidently Catholic.

This is again the case in the third part “Dissent and Critical Thinking,” in which one chapter presents a case study of a Toronto Jewish school (Pomson and Schnoor), another is based on the author’s personal experience as a teacher in a Toronto Islamic school (Ahmad), while the last discusses how Catholic schools manage to integrate controversial Catholic subjects into their teaching (McDonough).

In other words, while the book clearly treats the theme of Jewish and Islamic schooling in Canada, it seems to treat Catholic education in the country in a larger scope. This emphasizes the unequal positions of these three religious communities vis-à-vis Canadian society. The perspective on Islamic and Jewish schools developed through case studies shows their uniqueness, while Catholic education is certainly a religious one, but treated in a generalized fashion. The questions explored by the authors also show their concern; Jewish and Islamic schools are often publicly critiqued for having a general disregard of Canadian values, while the authors demonstrate that this is hardly the case in the schools they observed. No similar question is posed of Catholic schools, to discover how on a daily basis these also handle similar Canadian values. At the end of this book, we remain without an answer to this question.

Another limitation in the selection of schools is, in the editors’ own words, that it includes only those schools adhering

to Canada's multicultural policies. We might easily imagine that access to schools that encourage their students' segregation from broader society is not easily granted. An open discussion in the introduction surrounding this methodological problem would have been welcome, given that it surely influences the reality the book presents. I would even presume that the openness of participating schools to researchers attests to a willingness to integrate differences, and therefore a general approach to education in the multicultural context.

The presentation of schools only located in Ontario is another limitation of this volume. Indeed, the province is host to many ethnic communities, often very numerous. Nevertheless, one can imagine that religious schools across Canada face diverse challenges, and are influenced by distinct provincial histories, immigration policies, and educational systems. However, except for mentioning the existence of religious schools across Canada, none of the chapters presents such schools in particular.

In sum, since religious schooling in Canada is a subject that has been scarcely treated in academic literature, even though it regularly occupies the public's attention, a sort of demystification of religious schools emerges in this book. This reveals that even while respecting a religious faith and structure, such institutions can encourage students to be a part of a tolerant and open society. These contradictions in experiences within religious schools are well-discussed in the book's conclusion, "Diversity and Deliberation in Faith-Based Schools" (Mintz), a chapter that, without trying to eliminate the controversy, shows how such schools have a place in the quest for Canadian identity.

Sivane Hirsch

Université de Montréal