Patrice Brasseur & Jean-Paul Chauveau, *Dictionnaire des régionalismes de Saint-Pierre et Miquelon*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1990. Ser. Canadiana Romanica Vol. 5. 748 pp., biblio., index, maps, illus.

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THE PUBLICATION OF THIS very substantial dictionary of the French of the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon (SPM) is a welcome addition to the large number of dictionaries dealing with spoken French in North America. But unlike other projects on French lexicons in the New World, this one was launched under the aegis of France's CNRS (Centre National de Recherche Scientifique) in the framework of its program covering "Atlas linguistiques, parlers et cultures des régions de France." In other words, as a *département* of metropolitan France, St. Pierre and Miquelon is considered linguistically an extension of regional French speech.

The dictionary's researcher in the field and senior partner in the project, Patrice Brasseur, is best known to French dialectology as the author of the 2 vol. *Atlas linguistique et ethnographique de Normandie* (Paris, CNRS, vol. 1, 1980, vol. 2, 1984), and for his subsequent research on the French of the Channel Islands. His concentration on maritime French led him to begin research on a proposed linguistic atlas of the Atlantic coasts, specifically on the forms of French spoken on both sides of the Atlantic. He has, in addition to his work in France, recorded and studied types of French spoken in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Quebec. Brasseur is thus well equipped in his attempt to characterize the French spoken on the islands of SPM. In so doing, he raises questions of the relationship between the islands and Newfoundland, but not, as we shall see, with the results scholars of Newfoundland English (or of Newfoundland French, for that matter) might have expected.

The twenty-nine page introduction to the dictionary provides brief summaries of the history and geography of the islands before presenting, through the use of direct quotations, the islanders' perceptions of their variety of French compared not only to those of other francophone communities in North America, but also to those of their metropolitan French contacts,

be they fishermen or administrators. In general, while recognizing the existence of certain characteristic local turns of phrase, most islanders think of their brand of French as being 'neutral.'

Brasseur attributes this somewhat inadequate perception both to a desire to stress the islanders' attachment to France, and to observable and audible differences between their speech and that of French-speaking Canadians with whom they have or have had sufficient contact. The inadequacy of the perception is taken up by Brasseur after a description of his fieldwork from 1983 to 1986, both in St. Pierre and in Miquelon (between the speech of which he finds but little difference). He finds ten phonetic features which can be contrasted with their equivalent in 'standard' French, some of which are very similar to Acadian realizations. Brasseur also notes some half a dozen morphosyntactic variations from the norm.

Native Saint-Pierrais and Miquelonnais may not notice phonetic or morphosyntactic differences in their speech compared to the standard, but they are aware of lexical differences. Many such differences reflect local realities — of flora and fauna, of climate, of the fishery; some are considered locally as 'proper' French usage, and it is much to the surprise of some to learn that such words do not exist in standard dictionaries.

Brasseur next gives his criteria for the inclusion of terms in the dictionary. Generally, a word or phrase is included if it does not figure in any of the major dictionaries of standard French usage — the *Grand Robert*, the *Trésor de la langue française*, the *Grand Larousse*, with some qualifications allowing for archaic or regional notices, or for variant uses of standard terms. He discusses the thorny problem of technical terms, but in general sins of commission are greater than those of omission. A final section outlines the structure of entries, including a lengthy comment on the use of oral sources, as in the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* (DNE), and an important comparative and historical note. Brasseur indicates the origins of SPM regionalisms in technical vocabularies (noted in marine and fisheries glossaries), in glossaries and linguistic atlases of western France and francophone regions of North America, and in historic and etymological dictionaries. Any word, usage or expression not given a bibliographical reference he considers a local creation. As for anglicisms, Brasseur considers his inclusions to be of Newfoundland origin, of Nova Scotian origin, or through Canadian French channels.

It would normally be the lexical connections between Newfoundland and St. Pierre and Miquelon which might interest the Newfoundland scholar, and if it is, he will be singularly disappointed. A cursory count of anglicisms recorded by Brasseur gives slightly more than one hundred, but of these the vast majority appear to be part of the Canadian or common North American English word stock; at any event, while Newfoundland may be the direct origin of many such anglicisms, there is no actual supporting evidence.

Words which do seem to have come directly from Newfoundland include 'galloper' (DNE 209, 'A type of small vessel used in the cod-fishery, the seal hunt, and coastal trade'), 'greysole' (DNE 226, 'flounder'), 'Ponchon' (DNE 395-6, *puncheon*), 'Pouffin' (DNE 394-5, *puffin* 1, 2), 'scoff' (DNE 438-9), 'skiff' (DNE 484), 'skiner,' 'skineuse' (DNE 486, *skin* 1, *skinner* 2), 'smart' (DNE 498, *smart* 1), 'spell' (DNE 509, 2) 'spruce' (DNE 517, 3, *spruce beer*). A singularly minuscule number of borrowings, it would appear, and not words which suggest specific relations with Newfoundland.

One exception in the short list above is the term 'galloper.' It is defined as 'A small Newfoundland fishery vessel which used to bring goods to St. Pierre.' One of the oral citations used to illustrate St. Pierre usage tells us the 'gallopers' came from Newfoundland to sell cabbages, billets (DNE 43, 2) 'vignettes' (periwinkles), and other kinds of shellfish. Under 'Scallop' further mention is made of Newfoundlanders selling the shellfish in St. Pierre. It is only when scanning a word such as 'sapin' (fir) that we learn this was the nickname given to Newfoundlanders who came selling wood in St. Pierre; Newfoundlanders were called 'sapins' because they smelled of resin from the fir trees they brought over in billets (cut into short logs and bound together with metal barrel rings). In St. Pierre these poor Newfoundlanders, selling their firewood from door to door, were also known as 'martyrs.' This was in pre-Confederation days, of course. One other exception is the word 'skiff'; it is used by St. Pierrais as one of the terms for a Newfoundland fisherman's small boat which brought packets of spruce, cabbages and rabbits to sell in St. Pierre, as well as for the vessels of Newfoundland rum-runners, some of whom put cabins on their skiffs. There is no further direct reference to vocabulary relating to rum-running.

Students of Newfoundland French will also be somewhat disappointed, given the alleged historical and contemporary ties between St. Pierre and Newfoundland's west coast. A scanning of supposed St. Pierre regionalisms (distinct from terms common to the French around the Gulf of St. Lawrence) revealed no more than a dozen or so which are common to the French of the Port-au-Port Peninsula.

Indeed, one can readily conclude that a high percentage of supposedly St. Pierre regionalisms are common to North American French in general with, as can be expected, a strong maritime flavour and emphasis. This does not mean the SPM French is not distinct from other types of North American French; the differences are simply not evident in the SPM lexicon.

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