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Charles-Philippe Courtois, *La Conquête: Une anthologie*. Montreal, Quebec: Éditions TYP0, 2009. 485 pp. Map, table of contents, appendix. \$22.16 U.S. ISBN978-2-89295-242-1.

Review by Linda Frey, University of Montana, and Marsha Frey, Kansas State University.

The epic struggle for Quebec in 1759, the final battle in the French and Indian Wars, but particularly its long range implications, serve as the focus of Charles-Philippe Courtois', *La Conquête: Une anthologie*. Courtois recently received his degree from the University of Quebec at Montreal (2008) and the Institute d'Études Politiques de Paris (2007), where he wrote his dissertation, *Trois mouvements intellectuels québécois et leurs relations françaises*. In addition to this anthology, he has written several articles for the *Bulletin d'histoire politique* and chapters in various collections, all of which reflect his background as a twentieth-century intellectual historian. *La Conquête* is an interesting *mélange* of documents divided logically into three sections: the events of the conquest, the representations of such, and the consequences. The first section proceeds chronologically, but not the other two. The distinction between representation and consequence is not clear. For example, Courtois includes Lévesque's argument for sovereignty for Quebec in the section on representation, not consequence. Almost seventy per cent of the book covers such theoretical arguments as whether it is possible for two nations to exist within one state.

A thirty-nine page introduction, a chronology and one difficult to decipher black and white map grace this book. The chronology from 1753 to 1763 would be useful except that some of the pages are missing several lines of text, most notably pp. 470, 480, and 485. The book also includes an appendix that prints the articles of capitulation and selected articles from the Treaty of Paris. This work fits into the recent wave of works on the Seven Years' War, most notably *The French Navy and the Seven Years' War* by Jonathan R. Dull (2007); *The Seven Years' War in Europe* by Franz A. J. Szabo (2007); *The French and Indian War: Deciding the Fate of North America* by Walter R. Borneman (2007); *The Seven Years' War: A Transatlantic History* by M. Schumann and K. W. Schweizer (2008); *Shipping and Military Power in the Seven Years' War* by D. Syrett (2008); *With Frederick the Great: A Story of the Seven Years' War* by G. A. Henty (2009); *England and the Seven Years' War* by J. S. Corbett (2010).

The audience for this work is not clear; it is not targeted at scholars as the basic scholarly apparatus, such as a bibliography and index, are not provided. Nor are the sources cited for the documents in the appendix and one of the selections, the letter of George Washington to his brother. In addition, many of the sources are not given in their original language but translated into French. Nor is this work intended for a general audience because there is no narrative account of the war, of its course and consequences. In addition, the introduction does not place the Seven Years' War in a general context, analyze the overall French and British strategy in the war, explain the logistical significance of Quebec on the confluence of the St. Lawrence and St. Charles' rivers, or discuss the significant difficulties that the British overcame to take the city. The author does not even mention the earlier British success in seizing the city (1629-1632) or their failures (1690 and 1711). The general reader will also look in vain for the reasoning behind France's policy to cede their colonies or a discussion of the decline of French power and influence not only in but outside Europe. Nor will the general reader find some of the most stirring episodes in the war, such as the emotive and oft quoted words of the dying James Wolfe when

told that the enemy was retreating: “Now God be praised, I die happy” [1] or the hubristic and ultimately incorrect overconfidence of the French governor after a British foray had failed: “I have no more anxiety about Quebec.”[2] The compiler very briefly introduces each topic, but does not explain its context. For example, in the selection from *Evangeline* he mentions the expulsion of the Acadians but he does not elaborate. He identifies the individual writers of the various selections with the exception of Henri-Ramond Cosgrain, the illustrious nineteenth-century Canadian historian.

Courtois has not selected any archival documents but only widely available printed materials. The documents are wide ranging and include predominantly secondary and some primary sources. Of the fifty-five documents cited, only ten date from the eighteenth century. The selection is particularly disappointing in the section on events for even there only six are from contemporary sources. Overall, sixteen date from the nineteenth century and twenty eight from the twentieth century. But the variety is impressive: he includes poets (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (the widely known and often cited *Evangeline*) and Louis Fréchette), novelists, politicians (the predictable ones such as Trudeau, Lévesque, and De Gaulle), intellectuals, clergy, (Samuel Woodward, a sermon) military men, but predominantly Canadian historians. The compilation of such documents in one book is valuable. Some of the selections are particularly interesting, such as the letter of Voltaire to Choiseul in which he urges the minister to abandon Canada: “I love peace better than Canada” and goes on to say that perhaps France “would be happy without Quebec.” (p. 217). After reading this compilation the reader is tempted to ask: can Quebec be happy without France?

## NOTES

[1] Lorenzo Sabine, *An Address Before the New England Historic-Genealogical Society* (Boston: A. Williams, 1859), p.56.

[2] *New World Encyclopedia*, “The Battle of Quebec,” p.35.

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