

## Editor's introduction

The 2010 edition of *Past Imperfect* continues to bear witness to the diversity of topics and methods of research that graduate students in Canada's History departments are grappling with. This edition carries a total of five essays and four book reviews.

Megan Highet is the author of the *Journal's* first essay. She focuses on the incidence of two contagious diseases: scurvy and smallpox, among the population of Klondike gold rushers in Canada's Northern Territories in the last years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Megan shows that the initial reliance by researchers on quantitative sources of data alone resulted in a limited knowledge of the experiences that gold miners went through when infected by scurvy and smallpox. A better understanding of these diseases and their effect on miners can be gained when both quantitative and qualitative sources of information complement one another.

In the second essay of the *Journal*, Angela Ranson focuses on recantations under religious persecution in Reformation England. Convicted heretics who then recanted could die either convinced of their condemnation, or of their salvation. In the essay, Angela examines the *ars moriendi*, or 'the art of dying well,' showing that recantation could actually be a means of ensuring salvation. Also investigated in the essay are the reasons for recantation, and the varying interpretations of doctrine and authority that allowed them.

Leslie Holmes explores the role played by the drinking of tea in the formation and consolidation of a British identity among immigrants to western Canada in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Using a variety of sources, mainly primary, but also

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published material, she shows the ways in which the consumption of tea, itself a cultural habit, was used by the Conservative Government of the Dominion of Canada to promote a national policy favoring the settlement of immigrants from Britain.

Robert Stephan applies quantitative and spatial analytical tools to papyri excavated from the Graco-Roman town of Karanis. In this paper, he categorizes papyri found under categories such as type of text, authorship, dates, and languages, avoiding the past tendency of publishing individual texts, or small archives without reference to their larger context. He also uses GIS to plot the provenience of the Karanis papyri, revealing patterns of socio-economic status and literacy.

Vojin Majstrovic focuses on the rise and fall of the Yugoslav-Soviet alliance between 1945 and 1948. His analysis is on the interaction of Moscow and Belgrade's policies towards Albania. In this interaction, the strength of the Yugoslav-Soviet relationship was revealed until the middle of 1947, at which point the conflict between the two countries manifested itself most dramatically. Vojin argues that the demise of the alliance, however, was caused by considerations greater than the bilateral ties between the two countries. The Titoist regime became the primary victim of the Stalinization drive when Soviet policy-makers became convinced that America's commitment to Western Europe was durable, in the wake of the Marshall Plan.

This short summary is only intended to invite readers to proceed and discover what this year's authors have produced. They all agreed to be contacted by readers who wish to make suggestions. Refer to the authors' bio on the website.

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