

tableaux, cartes et images n'est pas exprimée clairement dans le texte, ce qui fait perdre de la valeur à celles-ci. Il reste aussi des points d'interrogations concernant certaines informations. Pourquoi l'auteur mentionne Bonnefons (p. 108) et perpétue l'erreur populaire créée par Casgrain, alors que René Chartrand (1993) et d'autres, ont déjà prouvé que les initiales J. C. B. ne sont pas celles de Bonnefons mais probablement de Joseph Charles Bonin dit Jolicoeur. De même, en page 82, pourquoi qualifie-t-il Lebeau de suspect sans donner plus de détails? Malgré ces quelques petites lacunes, cet ouvrage reste un incontournable pour qui s'intéresse aux troupes de la marine et à leur relation avec les Autochtones car il vient combler un grand vide dans le domaine.

Philippe Charland  
*Université du Québec à Montréal*

BENTLEY, Michael — *Modernizing England's Past: English Historiography in the Age of Modernism, 1870–1970*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Pp. 245.

Amidst the current flood of books on postmodernist history, it is useful to have Michael Bentley's book asking, just what is it such history is "post"? What is (or was) that modernist history it succeeds and claims to supersede? His answer is that, in England at least, modernism is the historiographical practice of two or three generations of academic historians working between 1920 and 1970 — history writing's modernist moment. Before that was a somewhat longer whiggish moment extending back to the mid-nineteenth century. Put into such a nutshell, it might seem that Bentley is positing a straightforward, three-stage model of historiographical evolution, but it is not quite that simple: for one thing, its stages do not tidily replace each other, but significantly overlap.

An additional complication for anyone attempting to define modernist historiography is its resolute refusal to acknowledge or even recognize its existence as a genre. Bentley calls it "the history that dare not speak its name." That refusal was an ideological manoeuvre, all the more potent for being unselfconscious. Prior versions of history may have warranted labels, but modernist history needed no label, no modifier, because it was at last the real, final thing. This unselfconsciousness is strikingly exemplified by its resistance to reflective historiography. To this day "historiography" is a term that confuses history students and many professional historians. They take it as meaning the content of a body of historical writing on a particular historical topic; thus the historiography on the causes of the First World War means what all the books written on that celebrated topic have to say. They do not take it as meaning the self-conscious analysis of the epistemologies, discourses, and disciplinary regimes of the various possible historical practices, for theirs is the only right one, a practice based on the model of the natural sciences. Adopting the scientific model for the discipline meant adopting

the scientist's attitude to the history of the discipline. It no more matters to the modernist historian what historians wrote in the eighteenth century than it matters to today's chemist how eighteenth-century scientists explained combustion. We simply do history better than they did; that is how science works. As for epistemology and language, such matters are the business of other departments, notably philosophy and literature.

As a product of late modernist professional training who spent nine years in university as a history student without being exposed to a class in historiography in any sense, I am not surprised by Bentley's claim that not until 1957 was "serious instruction in historiography within a university syllabus" offered in England. Modernist historians were not supposed to think about history, but to do it. Not for nothing were they enamoured of the word "craft." The craft of history was learned by following one's masters. The peculiar anti-intellectualism of this attitude was once unforgettably captured in a remark I once heard from Eric Hobsbawm: "The carpenter who thinks about each hammer stroke will bend a lot of nails." So much for theory. (Marxism, of course, was not theory.)

Bentley's book is comparable to Peter Novick's *That Noble Dream*, which discusses the American historical profession's modernist moment, though it suffers from congestion compared to Novick's more spacious and readable work. An expansion of the author's 2003 Wiles Lectures on "English Historiography in the age of Butterfield and Namier," Bentley's book surveys the period from 1870 to 1970 — from Stubbs, England's Ranke, to Elton, the epitome of high modernism — though noticeably from the perspective of Peterhouse, the Cambridge college most distinctively identified with historians, and with the particular kind of high political history Bentley himself practises when he is not doing historiography. The book is divided equally into two parts, "The Whig Legacy" and "Modernist Investments," that overlap in the 1930s, a crucial decade for Bentley in setting the stage for his confrontation of the two most influential modernists, Herbert Butterfield (whose biography Bentley is writing) and L. B. Namier, neither of whom was as liberated from Whiggism as is widely assumed. Namier, for instance, admired the historical writing of Winston Churchill, while Butterfield (who famously coined "whig" — the sole term of art our profession possesses) was an acute critic of modernist method.

Bentley shows his research chops by having consulted the manuscript archives of 38 historians whose unbuttoned comments to each other in the book's generous footnotes provide an interesting obligato to its text. He certainly manages to fit in a large number of names, mainly of political, constitutional, imperial, military, and religious historians. The 1970 cut-off date might be taken as an excuse for the short shrift social history receives in this book, since the "new" social history blossomed largely in the 1970s. Economic history receives its due, particularly the distinguished cohort of women who graced its early ranks, but those historians who viewed the economy from the standpoint of labour are largely ignored. Asa Briggs seems a conspicuous absentee, as is Harold Perkin. E. P. Thompson is treated somewhat dismissively, though arguably not unfairly, but the death agonies of Marxisant social history in the 1980s and 1990s argue against 1970 as

the modernist watershed. Eltonian ideology may have represented one form of high modernist historical practice, but Marxism also belonged indisputably to high modernism, a complication Bentley evidently prefers to ignore.

So here we are now in the postmodern age; Britain has a new prime minister, Gordon Brown, with a PhD in history. For the practice of history, postmodernism seems to sanction a double overlap. The prestige of technical research expertise vaunted by modernism co-persists with a renewed appreciation of whiggism's sensitivity to readerships. Presiding over this is the spirit of G. M. Trevelyan, a figure who weaves in and out of Bentley's story. If you want to be a best-selling historian and make serious money at it, as he and his great uncle Lord Macaulay did (and Bentley seems not unsympathetic with this reasonable ambition), whiggism remains the horse to back.

Christopher Kent  
*University of Saskatchewan*

DUVIOLS, Jean-Paul — *Le miroir du Nouveau Monde. Images primitives de l'Amérique*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de Paris-Sorbonne, 2006, 364 p.

Avec cet ouvrage, Jean-Paul Duviols élargit encore ses travaux sur les récits de voyage en Amérique du Sud et sur les représentations des Amérindiens en proposant une synthèse sur l'iconographie européenne de l'Amérique. Le titre, inspiré d'une œuvre classique de la littérature géographique, peut-être trompeur car le propos est de montrer que ces visions européennes de l'Amérique ne sont pas seulement une image inversée de l'Europe, elles sont liées aux réalités observées, et certaines constituent de précieux documents ethnohistoriques. L'originalité de cet ouvrage est de se consacrer exclusivement aux représentations graphiques et d'en reproduire un nombre impressionnant (plus de 250). Saluons ici le mérite des Presses universitaires de Paris-Sorbonne de rendre possible ce type de publication. La littérature de voyage constitue le cœur de ce corpus iconographique. C'est là une autre originalité puisque ces images ont souvent été délaissées par les chercheurs en raison de leur supposé manque de réalisme. L'ouvrage ne se limite pas à ces premières perceptions de l'Amérique. Il en étudie l'évolution jusqu'à aujourd'hui et multiplie les supports graphiques : culture matérielle (chapitre 5), œuvres cinématographiques (chapitre 11), philatélie, bande dessinée... Ce parcours visuel nous invite donc autant à découvrir ou redécouvrir certaines images qu'à retracer l'histoire des stéréotypes rattachés à l'Amérique qui peuplent l'imaginaire occidental.

Les deux premiers chapitres nous emmènent aux sources des représentations du Nouveau Monde : les récits de voyage du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, notamment ceux de Christophe Colomb, Amerigo Vespucci et Antonio Pigafetta. Ces premières images sont profondément marquées par les grands débats de la Renaissance : la réflexion humaniste, le rêve exotique et la controverse religieuse et politique.