

années 1950 (comme probablement presque toutes les autres provinces canadiennes) accuse un retard sur l'Ontario. Dans quelle mesure le retard du Québec (ou l'avance de l'Ontario) s'expliquent-ils par les politiques mises en avant par les gouvernements des deux provinces (plutôt que par un contexte géographique ou historique ou autre qui favorisait l'Ontario par rapport au Québec)?

Certes, il n'est pas facile de répondre à la question. Dans son ouvrage *The Prosperous Years: The Economic History of Ontario, 1939-75*, K.J. Rea conclut, après avoir analysé le développement économique rapide de l'Ontario après 1945 : « While the government could take some credit for not stifling this growth and possibly for stimulating it on occasion, it cannot be credited with causing it. Most of the underlying economic forces ... were clearly beyond provincial government control. » (226). Dans son livre *The Politics of Development*, H.V. Nelles montre, pour sa part, qu'en ce qui concerne le développement minier, le parti pris du gouvernement ontarien était clair : « As far as help with getting on with the job was concerned, no developer could ask for a better, more attentive partner than the government of Ontario. » (490) Le gouvernement ontarien faisait-il vraiment les choses différemment? Chose certaine, la question du « retard », ou du retard, du Québec est loin d'être close!

Par contre, le traitement des années depuis 1960 est empreint d'une plus grande modération. Oui, le Québec se modernise et vit les « glorieuses années 1960. » Mais la gestion de l'Etat-providence « devient de plus en plus lourde et coûteuse. » (579) Le Québec devient plus francophone, mais les Québécois occupent une part décroissante dans l'ensemble canadien. Le Québec s'enrichit, mais le chômage structurel augmente et les écarts régionaux persistent. Les syndicats deviennent « des partenaires sociaux de première grandeur » (531) mais les « grèves répétées dans les services publics provoquent l'irritation des usagers et ternissent l'image publique des syndicats ». (529) De fait, ces années apparaissent pleines de contradictions et de tensions.

Dans ce volume (comme dans le premier tome), les auteurs ont cherché à comprendre et à interpréter le Québec contemporain. Mais il faut les féliciter surtout d'avoir livré une synthèse solide qui décrit ce Québec sous ses multiples facettes. Les étudiants et étudiantes sauront en tirer grandement profit.

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Roland Mousnier and Jean Mesnard — *L'âge d'or du mécénat (1598-1661) : Actes du colloque international CNRS (mars 1983), Le Mécénat en Europe, et particulièrement en France avant Colbert*, réunis et publiés pour le compte de la Société d'étude du XVIIe siècle. Paris, Editions du CNRS, 1985. Pp. 440.

At first sight this collection of papers dealing with the golden age of patronage, primarily in France from 1598 to the fall of Fouquet, scarcely seems apposite for review in *Histoire sociale-Social History*. Many of the contributions deal with the minutiae of literary history, discuss editions of plays or poetry, and relate first nights long forgotten to all save scholars of theatre. However, as Roland Mousnier noted in his attempt to sum up the papers presented at the March 1983 conference from which the volume sprang, a reading of what is inevitably an uneven collection is highly suggestive for those interested in privatized relations between intellectuals and power in the first half of the seventeenth century. This can be contrasted with the Louis Quatorzien policy of state patronage for the arts. Only five papers deal with non-French topics.

The introduction by Marc Fumaroli pointed out major themes under investigation. The papers are grouped under three rather improbable sub-headings as the editors strove to give an appearance of coherence to the diverse contributions. These are: 1) the patrons, 2) those protected and their social

status, and 3) themes found in paintings and writings. (One greatly regrets the absence of any illustration in the book.) In conclusion Mousnier and Mesnard attempted a summation. There is no index, as is so often the case in collections of papers, and which is extremely unfortunate for those who would like to follow references to individuals like Paul Pellisson, premier commis of the financier Fouquet, who is discussed, like his employer, by various contributors.

Rather than making an attempt to point out the most interesting studies for social historians of the period among the forty-two items published one might better point to the need for a historical sociology of taste along the lines so brilliantly proposed for contemporary France by Pierre Bourdieu in his book on *la distinction*. Many writers here seem to conceptualize a "homme de goût" — female patrons are few in these pages — without enquiring how taste itself formulated a language of power and social authority among the wealthy. The maecenas paid for, or was hoped to pay for, literary production almost always explicitly linked to himself by dedication, or even actually dealing with him. This system of cash awards provided authors a living still not available from a literary market place insufficiently developed to support a career. Attention in this book is kept on the highest levels of the aristocracy and the court in relation to great names of French literature like Molière, La Fontaine, Théophile de Viau and so on. Sylvie Chevalley is refreshingly informative about the amounts of support paid to Molière and the difficulties of getting the cash in one's hands. Nobody in this collection considers the support offered in provincial capitals to those writers who provided sonnets or occasional verse for parlementaires or the local noblesse.

Definitions of good taste also affected those industries which produced what was desirable for the fashionable. An excellent example is that of the interior decorations especially for châteaux. Jean-Pierre Babelon's discussion of the Hotel de Guise shows how flattery of a patron's house and the lavishness of the food offered to guests is a way of proclaiming his social prominence.

In any book there are usually some typographical mistakes, but this set of essays goes far beyond a tolerable level of errors. There are numerous mistakes in French and other languages. Whoever was in charge of book production was extremely slovenly.

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Martin S. Pernick — *A Calculus of Suffering: Pain, Professionalism, and Anesthesia in Nineteenth-Century America* New York: Columbia University Press, 1985. Pp. ix-xv, 421.

At first glance, a book-length study on the introduction of surgical anesthesia does not offer an inviting prospect. Still less when, as in the volume under review, more print appears devoted to endnotes and bibliography than to the text proper. Surely this is a well-worn story typically recounted as an American success dating from the memorable day in October 1846 when a Boston dentist persuaded the chief surgeon at Massachusetts General Hospital to try his mysterious gas to render patients impervious to pain. The substance was soon afterward revealed to be ether, the procedure given an appropriate Greek designation, and the practice rapidly diffused throughout the medical world. Aside from passing mention of resistance by certain sectors of the obstetrical profession given to citing Biblical passages on pain in labour and grudging mistrust by the Philadelphia medical establishment, standard accounts present the acceptance of anesthesia as virtually instantaneous, inevitable, and unproblematic. Indeed, anesthesia, the unmitigated technical blessing, becomes, in this view, a rare straight-forward case when a profession notoriously opposed to innovation universally applauded.

A Calculus of Suffering is an important book not only because it revises the above simplistic picture but because it greatly enlarges our interpretive framework. It deserves attention from those