Roger Schlesinger and Arthur P. Stabler, eds. — *André Thevet's North America. A Sixteenth Century View*. Kingston/Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986. Pp. xli, 292. Illustrations, Maps, Bibliography, Index.

Royal cosmographer to four monarchs André Thevet, described by jealous contemporaries as an impudent liar, a charlatan and a subtle deceiver, who had never visited the places he sought to describe in publications which were *vieux haillons et fripperies* (second-hand rags and tatters), emerged in the assessments of Suzanne Lussagnet and Frank Lestringant for South America, and now in this edition-translation by Stabler and Schlesinger, as an important and largely credible source of information for early European-Amerindian contacts. It is clear from the critical notes and historical annotations prepared by Roger Schlesinger that Thevet found much of his information in other publications, as his detractors have always maintained, nevertheless his claim to have spoken at length with Jacques Cartier and the captured chieftain Donnacona from the Laurentian settlement of Stadacona, and to have exchanged information with Sebastian Cabot who was searching for a northwesterly passage to the fabulous wealth of the Orient are not to be set aside as inconsequential. Indeed, it emerges that Richard Hakluyt obtained valuable information from Thevet as well as several important manuscripts, not least among them the account of Cartier's third voyage which has come down to us only in Hakluyt's translation. Thevet, it is now certain, had information about North America not found in any published sources and which likely came from informants he interviewed in the seaports, inns and taverns which were then as now invaluable sources of information, not all of which though can be accepted at face value. In addition, there is at least one independent publication which attributes two American voyages to Thevet, as he himself claimed.

André Thevet's North America is therefore an important publication in the gradual rehabilitation of a once discredited cosmographer. One may ask who Thevet was, what was his claim to fame, who were his detractors and what were their arguments. It is evident that scholars would not have laboured to transcribe the virtually undecipherable manuscripts, to translate them along with the early published works, and to provide critical historical and literary comments unless they believed his writings were both relevant and largely credible accounts. Upon reading the results of Stabler's and Schlesinger's labours we can only agree that a significant addition to our source material on the colonial period has been made accessible and comprehensible.

Thevet was sent to a Franciscan monastery in Angoulême much against his will at a very early age. He came under the protection of the influential La Rochefoucault family who saw to his university education and appointment to high office upon graduation. By the 1540s he was travelling extensively in southern Europe, the Near East and northern Africa, a boast few men of his age and time could make. Already named royal cosmographer, he was assigned as chaplain to the Chevalier de Villegagnon's colonizing expedition to Rio de Janeiro in 1555. In the months he spent in Brazil, Thevet amassed much geographical and ethnographical information. But he also aroused the bitter enmity of his Protestant counterpart, Jean de Léry who had been appointed by no less a personage than the Reformer Jean Calvin. Thus began both Thevet's writing career on North America and the defamation campaign waged against him by contemporary writers, both Catholic and Protestant. The attacks centred on three points: his borrowing extensively from the writings of his predecessors and contemporaries; his exaggerated claims and misplaced descriptions; his alleged voyage(s) to "near Canada". The devastating criticisms of cosmographers such as François de Belleforest and Sebastian Munster and of historians such as Jacques-Auguste de Thou and Sieur de la Popelinière, echoed throughout the succeeding centuries until in 1888 Paul Gaffarel began to rescue him from ignominious contempt. William Ganong and Bernard Hoffman emphasized the accuracy of the cartographic and ethnographic information in his published works. Finally, in the 1950s Suzanne Lussagnet, and more recently and more aggressively Frank Lestringant, called for a complete rehabilitation of Thevet's reputation. As far as Canadianists are concerned, this volume will probably be the culmination of that process.

The book is divided into relevant passages dealing with each of Canada, Florida and Mexico in turn, while a fourth section provides a French transcription of the Canadian material from the hitherto unpublished *Grand Insulaire*. There is repetition in the passages from the several books and

manuscripts but the authors are to be commended for not having broken the continuity of the originals. Just as Benjamin Keen found the account of Mexico rich in descriptive information, so I have found many passages on Canada invaluable in providing either the earliest description of certain characteristics of native life and customs or confirming information which was deduced from some other uncorroborated sources.

In addition to providing an English translation of relevant passages of *Les Singularitez de la France Antarctique* (1557), *La Cosmographie universelle* (1575), and *Les Vrais Pourtraicts et Vies des Hommes Illustres* (1584) the authors have laboured over the unpublished manuscripts of *Le Grand Insulaire* (1588), and of *Description de plusieurs isles* (1588), *Histoire de deux voyages* (1588), *Fragments sur les Indes occidentales et le Mexique* (n.d.), and *Second Voyage dans les Terres Australes et Occidentales* (1587-88) which had gathered four centuries of dust in the Bibliothèque Nationale. The editors have succeeded not only in making Thevet better known but also in illuminating some of the obscure circumstances of early contact. Social historians will be gratified for a well-edited collection of documents, set in historical perspective, which contributes to both our enlightenment and enjoyment.

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Pieter Spierenburg — *The Spectacle of Suffering. Executions and the Evolution of Repression: From Preindustrial Metropolis to the European Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pp. xii, 274.

Pieter Spierenburg has written a provocative essay relating attitudes towards public punishment to the development of the modern state that will generate much discussion, in part because the work is more suggestive than conclusive. The genesis of the work may explain in large part its unorthodox structure and inchoate character. One suspects that the author began with a more traditional case study of crime, criminality, and punishment in Amsterdam between 1650 and 1750 and then extrapolated therefrom. But the case study — which constitutes approximately one-third of the entire text — does not contribute substantially to the author's argument. If anything, its results attenuate the forcefulness of the thesis advanced in the remainder of the work.

The Spectacle of Suffering is, above all else, a history of changing mentalities rather than a history of a system of control. It focuses on evolving notions of what society considered undesirable behavior and how it dealt with such actions. Spierenburg consciously follows the course charted by Norbert Elias, who asserted in *The Civilizing Process* (originally published in 1939, first translated from the German in 1978) that changes in individual behavior were intimately related to changes in human organization, specifically the political organization of preindustrial society. Repression, like many other events in life, formerly had a more open, public character. Its "privatization" occurred concurrently with other developments, notably changing attitudes toward death and the rise of the domesticated nuclear family. Whereas Elias relied heavily on the French experience in his explanatory model, Spierenburg emphasizes not so much the centralization of an individual state as the wider phenomenon of the rise of a European network of stable, integrated state, be they republics or monarchies. In the early modern period, punishment incorporated the element of publicity and the conscious infliction of physical suffering. Monarchs and oligarchs alike valued public executions because they underlined the power of the state and emphasized its monopoly of violence: "They were meant to be an exemplary manifestation of this power, precisely because it was not yet entirely taken for granted" (p. 201). The dynastic and patrician states of pre-industrial Europe made a display of repression because they simply "could not afford to hide it partly behind the scenes and to individualize it" (p. 80). The authorities had usurped from private individuals the right to vengeance and