

le rigorisme, mais confondre jansénisme et rigorisme est prendre le tout pour la partie; car le jansénisme est une *doctrine* (de la grâce et de la prédestination) alors que le rigorisme est une attitude *morale* (éthique). Ce type d'explication n'était pas propre du reste aux membres du clergé; ce type d'argumentation habitera le discours médical durant toute la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle. Comme l'auteur a choisi de décrire l'épidémie dans son évolution chronologique, il est comme malgré lui conduit à multiplier les redites. C'est là l'une des rares réserves que nous ayons concernant l'ouvrage.

Toutefois le livre de Michael Bliss repose sur une base documentaire assez impressionnante. D'abord, tous les principaux journaux (anglophones et francophones) ont été consultés; les procès-verbaux du Conseil municipal de Montréal ainsi que ceux du Comité de santé sont aussi exploités. Tous les travaux des contemporains, ceux de Hingston à Osler en passant par ceux de Bryce et de Dion sont également connus et utilisés par l'auteur. Bliss a aussi tiré profit des nombreuses sources documentaires américaines concernant l'épidémie de 1885. On comprend l'intérêt des Américains à se protéger d'une épidémie meurtrière lorsqu'on sait que les principales villes de la Nouvelle-Angleterre étaient reliées à Montréal par le train. L'auteur a fouillé les Rapports annuels des Bureaux de santé des États du Maine, du Massachusetts, et du Michigan. Regrettons cependant qu'il n'ait pas utilisé les rapports annuels de l'État du New Hampshire. C'est cet état, limitrophe au Québec, qui organisera, conjointement avec le gouvernement fédéral américain, la protection des états de la Nouvelle-Angleterre.

L'ouvrage de Michael Bliss est tout à fait remarquable par la quantité et la qualité de l'information prodiguée. L'ouvrage est fort avantageusement délesté de son caractère ultra académique bien qu'il en possède toutes les qualités. Les dons littéraires de l'auteur sont reconnus depuis longtemps et la lecture de *Plague* est aussi captivante qu'agréable.

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**The Idea of History in Early Stuart England: Erudition, Ideology, and 'The Light of Truth' from the Accession of James I to the Civil War.** D.R. WOOLF. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990. xxii, 377 p. ISBN 0-8020-5862-0 \$50.00.

The purpose of any historiographical study is to examine the concept of history and how that concept was applied at a specific time. In the case of this work, the period examined is the English Renaissance of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. During this time of intellectual ferment writers, researchers, gentlemen of leisure and country parsons defined and redefined their perception of what was *history*. In doing so, they helped to create the modern concept of history, something of weighty concern for all involved in archives.

Prior to the period addressed in this text (roughly from the late sixteenth century through the 1620s), the study of history in England had only a stunted tradition of medieval chroniclers to follow. Starting with the early Tudors though, a Renaissance theory of history, one emulating the writing of classical historians, came to influence historiographical thought in England. Brought to England by historians such as Polydore Vergil, it remained an almost dormant growth until the latter portion of the Tudor reign, when it flowered

into the study of history which Woolf has recounted here. Woolf is, however, the first to concede that the study of history during this period was by no means as extensive or thorough as the more flamboyant blossoming experienced during the Restoration. Throughout Woolf's narrative he admits that the early Stuart historiography was hardly an example of revolutionary change in historical thought. The exceptions, such as Raleigh, do not mark a move towards such change, although Woolf is also quick to add that this lack of general movement "should not be equated with stagnation" (p. xi).

Instead, what Woolf is attempting to do is examine more closely the place of the historian in the historiography of the time: the position of those individuals who stated that what they were writing was "history." By examining their role in the development of the period's historical thought, Woolf wants to show that there existed a basic qualitative, recognizable difference between these "historians" and the antiquarian movement of the same time, a difference largely rooted in how the two groups perceived "history."

It was the role of the historian to show the cause of an event, while the antiquarian merely reported that the event had occurred. For the Jacobean historian, history was a learning tool with which to further his understanding of what had shaped his own time. An antiquarian, on the other hand, studied an institution for the purely intellectual joy of inquiry, and his studies were *not* intended as a "history" of said institution (p. 201). It should be emphasized though, that whatever their stance and no matter what cause they might ascribe to an event or action, the real cause they recognized was predestination (p. 262-263).

Woolf's study of the general theory of history prevalent in Jacobean England is partially accomplished through a description of the Tudor historians and antiquarians who helped to shape and mold this concept. Woolf describes some of the main works of Jacobean historical research, and in some cases has provided a short plot summary. In describing the various types of research ascribed to historians and antiquarians, though, he has perhaps overstated his position—that the antiquarians and the historians were of necessity distinct from each other.

In his chapter on John Selden, Woolf attempts to separate Selden's position as antiquarian and historian, an attempt which is not altogether successful. When Selden studied the institution of tithes, he used many of the techniques he had used in his antiquarian inquiries; the fact that Selden then called his work a "history" did not magically transmute it from antiquarian dross. An examination of Selden's writing shows that any division between antiquarianism and historical research may be more illusionary than real.

Unfortunately, Woolf brings his work all too suddenly to a close. Even though his title claims to cover the period from the accession of James I until the beginning of the English Civil War, the book really only deals with the historians of James' reign. The writers of Charles I's time are given comparatively short shrift, something they may or may not have deserved. His final chapter, in which he swiftly takes the coverage through the Restoration, is interesting, primarily for his conclusion that any general absence of controversy in historical writing during the pre-Civil War period was the result of government control that Orwell's Big Brother might have envied. Since several of the examples Woolf cites were at least lightly censorious of the government, it is not clear just how all-encompassing this control might have actually been. This is not to say that there was not censorship, as indeed there was, but rather to indicate that it may not have had the result noted here. Regardless of any putative controls, writings using historical

examples and critical of the crown were written and did circulate (for example Walter Raleigh's *The Prerogative of Parliament* was posthumously published in 1628 and may have circulated in manuscript form before that).

Woolf's work, which first saw the light of day as a 1983 Oxford dissertation, is, although limited in scope, of value to the researcher of historiography. When taken into context with similar works, such as Pocock's *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* or MacGillivray's *Restoration Historians and the English Civil War*, Woolf's research helps lead to a better understanding of what the historian of seventeenth-century England meant when he wrote of "history." However, in any discussion of the differences which may have existed between the antiquarian and the historian of that time (or for that matter between the historian and archivist of this), it is well to remember what one of Selden's French contemporaries believed: "the archive-seeking antiquary was a historian, and history was anything which described the past" (p. 210).

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