

de sage-femme n'a plus guère de chances de pouvoir un jour exercer. Mais, se demande Hélène Laforce, n'est-ce pas là seulement une étape dans un processus de mutation culturelle qui, depuis le XVIII^e siècle, a permis aux hommes de contrôler les mécanismes naturels à travers le contrôle des sciences de la vie? Aujourd'hui, avec la fertilisation *in-vitro*, l'insémination artificielle, demain avec le clonage, la prédétermination du sexe, le placenta artificiel, n'est-ce pas vers une toute autre culture de la naissance que nous allons?

Ce n'est pas l'un des moindres mérites d'Hélène Laforce que d'attirer l'attention sur l'entrecroisement de croyances et de pratiques relevant à la fois de la magie et de la saine doctrine religieuse dans la culture de la naissance. Mais peut-être aurait-il été utile ici de pénétrer davantage dans cet univers du symbole de la correspondance entre les choses et les êtres dans ce monde de l'analogie, de la « sympathie »; de même qu'il aurait été intéressant de montrer de manière plus précise l'accoucheuse « en action », comment elle se comportait avec le corps de la femme en couches : atouchements, port d'amulettes, récitation de formules. Il est vrai que parler en quelques 200 pages de l'histoire de l'accoucheuse du Québec suppose un choix dont s'explique l'auteure : cette histoire étant « par nécessité idéologique », elle a voulu « rendre hommage pour leur participation sociale ancienne (...) aux dernières *chasses-femmes* » (p. 24). Il faut souligner aussi la constante mise en perspective qui est faite par Hélène Laforce avec la situation de la sage-femme de métropole. Évoquant la sociabilité des couches, elle insiste sur la présence, plus fréquente qu'en France, du curé, du mari, ou du grand-père; sur l'habitude qui semble assez répandue d'aller accoucher chez la mère ou la sœur. Elle fait l'hypothèse intéressante d'une plus grande interpénétration des rôles homme/femme au Québec : ce qui expliquerait la proportion relativement importante d'accouchements effectués par des hommes avant même la période de médicalisation.

Mais pourquoi avoir rejeté à la fin de l'ouvrage le thème du contrôle de la sage-femme par l'Église et l'avoir séparé de la question de l'ondoisement traité dans la première partie, alors que les deux questions sont étroitement liées? Il aurait été souhaitable également d'indiquer plus clairement et plus vite ce qui distinguait la matrone de la sage-femme : derrière les mots se cachaient effectivement des réalités (formation, exercice, univers mental) différentes. Cet ouvrage n'en restera pas moins la référence incontournable de tous ceux qui s'intéresseront, à l'avenir, à l'histoire de la sage-femme et de la femme québécoise.

Jacques GÉLIS
Université de Paris VIII

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HOWARD PALMER — *Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982. 217 pp.

It may be that we are ready for some new departures in the writing of ethnic history in Canada. Certainly, in *Patterns of Prejudice*, Howard Palmer has developed fully the conventional method of dealing with his topic. The strengths and the weaknesses of the genre are here. Palmer is not happy with the model of the mosaic — the official or unofficial encouragement of ethnic distinctiveness — which has made our experience different (and presumably nicer) than that of the United States. Nor is he content with the contrary notion that Canada has harboured a consistent and frequently virulent strain of prejudice to the present day.

Professor Palmer prefers, as an analytic device, the concept of nativism, by which he, like John Higham in the United States, means an amalgam of nationalism and ethnic prejudice. Xenophobia, or old-fashioned bigotry, may thus be elevated to the status of public policy and justify discrimination both official and personal. So *Patterns of Prejudice* is a study of attitudes and behaviour

in Alberta set in the context of Albertans' perceptions of successive immigrant groups rated as potential or perceived threats to socio-political stability.

Fully two-thirds of the book deals with the peasant migration of the turn of the century, the Great War and the readjustments of the 1920s. It is, of course, for this period that the documentary and historical literature are richest. Palmer leaves no article unread, no thesis unexploited (in the best sense), to produce the fullest and most polished synthesis on this first wave of non-Anglo-Celtic migration that we yet have in print. Using his own variation on Higham's elements of nativism — Anglo-Saxonism, anti-Catholic and anti-radical — he takes us through the patterns of attitudes of the host society to the influx. Curiosity and optimism become anxiety and determination until insecurity is institutionalized on the national level with the creation of the official category of the non-preferred. The impacts of the Depression of the 1930s and the World War II are illustrations of the fluctuating fortunes of minority groups when Albertan society is buffeted by economic and international disasters. Of the three thematic lines followed, Anglo-Saxonism and anti-Catholicism have been in retreat in recent years, except for the odd maverick outburst against those pushy Hutterites and the bizarre pedagogy of Mr. Keegstra. Anti-radicalism, however, seems a persistent component of the Alberta psyche.

Dr. Palmer has concentrated on the attitudes and reactions of the majority group. There is no attempt to explore the converse complex — the attitudes of the various immigrant groups toward their hosts, or the almost unknown web of relationships among the minorities themselves. Perhaps this is the direction in which we should be directing new research. But it will be a formidable task given the linguistic skills necessary and the frequent reluctance of some groups to bare their collective souls. But the ethnic history of Canada — despite the generally successful series sponsored by the Secretary of State — will remain incomplete without such studies. If they even approach the quality of Palmer's work we shall be well served.

J.E. REA
University of Manitoba

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EMMANUEL LE ROY LADURIE — *La sorcière de Jasmin*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, n.d. 283 pp.

Few subjects have been flogged in recent years as much as that of early modern witchcraft. The present orthodoxy holds that there existed a timeless humble local witch or magician, seen through the myopic vision of the Renaissance, Reformation and the Counter-Reformation as the devil's disciple, and horribly persecuted as such from 1480 to 1670. Clothing the traditional witch in the garb of theological categories only disguised its original features, of interest to the more anthropologically-minded scholars of our own day. The more recent historians, such as Carlo Ginzburg and Robert Muchembled, have followed the lead of ethnologists such as Ernesto de Martino (*Sud e Magia*, Milano, 1959) and tried to strip the village sorceress (for most of them were in fact women) of her diabolical attributes and to seize her role in the cultural framework of a pre-scientific society. The originality (yet again) of Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie consists in recourse to traditional narrative forms, in this case the folk-tale, in an attempt to extract the kernel of ethnographical reality from the heart of the myth surrounding beliefs in witchcraft in seventeenth-century Aquitaine.

The source is a long poem in Gascon published by the barber-poet of Agen, Jasmin (Jean-Jacques Boé), who in 1839 or 1840 heard from a peasant in nearby Roquefort the story of Françoneto, a legend which the poet recounted in the style of an operetta complete with choruses of peasants (*Les Papillotos de Jasmin*, Agen, 1842; reproduced in the original bilingual text, in the *Sorcière de Jasmin*). As Jasmin tells it, Françoneto was the village belle in Roquefort at the time