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ticularly with regard to the appearance of violence or revolutionary action. They create the timing, opportunity, and spur for action whose potential is principally generated by these factors.

Halebsky proceeds to survey a series of radical protest movements from early peasant and labor agitation to the Nazi movement in Weimar Germany; and he indicates, in each instance, how specific group alliances and completely logical interest orientations have conditioned each extremist response. Granting the preconditions for the social experiences, there was literally no other direction in which the movements in question might have been expected to go. Communist party support, likewise, does not appear to arise from political estrangement or from the absence of ties and the consequent search for community. It also does not arise out of irrational and emotional pique or merely reflect a vague *ressentiment*. While Communist voters may be more disaffected than other groups, this disaffection is based on social realities rather than on character structures. The nature of radical or protest political behavior will be misunderstood, asserts Halebsky, in the absence of attention to its possible class or other interest group character and the broader determining circumstances within which it arises.

Some aspects of Halebsky's work may be repetitive of earlier endeavors but in the eyes of this reviewer even repetition is desirable in terms of the climate of much present opinion which fosters the contention that a primary source of human behavior lies in the realm of the irrational. A major theme running through Halebsky's book is the affirmation, in the face of all such doubt, of the dignity and reasonableness of man as he seeks to come to terms with an often stressful and confusing world. There is also here an emphasis on the broad scope of social factors that both shape the activities of individuals and provide the broader context in which individuals — to evoke the Marxian insight — may create their own destinies.

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Carl Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing: 1900 - 1970*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976, pp. 300. \$12.50 cloth.

In *The Sense of Power* (Toronto, 1970) Carl Berger examined the ideas of Canadian imperialists in the fifty years before the First World

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War. Although they were committed to imperial unity he saw their ideas as essentially a species of Canadian nationalism. *The Writing of Canadian History* continues some of the themes of the earlier work and makes a substantial contribution to the intellectual history of English Canada.

The body of ideas that Berger now has taken as his frame of reference is that provided by English-Canadian historians who were born, roughly speaking, in the half century before 1914. In the universe of twentieth century English-Canadian historiography, as Berger observes it, there are two levels: the superluminaries — Wrong, Shortt, Underhill, Innis, Lower, Clark, Creighton and W.L. Morton, and the mere luminaries — Brebner, Burt, Careless, Doughty, Forsey, Kennedy, Mackintosh, Martin, Masters, A.S. Morton, Skelton, Stacey, Stanley and Wallace. The former receive close biographical and analytic attention, and the book is really about them.

It is sobering to realise how recent is the writing of history in Canada, and how in the early days of this century there still had to be built up the rudiments of the tools and facilities needed by historians. Archives still had to be assembled, academic journals established and basic documentary sources edited and published. That all this was quickly achieved is a measure of the diligence and enthusiasm of these early historians. The work in particular of Doughty in this regard shows that he was certainly not misnamed!

Seventy years ago universities in English Canada were very elitist in composition. This, combined with the influence of British ideas, (many of the historians in Berger's study received at least part of their university education in Britain) produced a tendency by historians such as Shortt, Wrong and Underhill to see the university as an institution that would produce a widely educated and highly civilised clerisy whose task was to provide the general society with guidance and leadership. And indeed it is interesting to notice the extent to which Canadian historians, like a large number of intellectuals in this country, have played important political roles. Shortt was on the board of conciliation set up under the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act and was a member of the Civil Service Commission; Skelton became Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs after 1925; Underhill was the principal author of the Regina Manifesto and in fact declared that the writing of history must inevitably be partisan and political; and, of course, in recent years Creighton and W.L. Morton have assumed a major role as opinion leaders of educated public debate.

It is this 'politicising' of their discipline that is at the back of Berger's

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main criticism of English-Canadian historians. They have tended, he says, to write history as if they were contributing to pressing matters of contemporary public concern, especially the matter of national survival:

All these historians described the past at least partially in relation to what they knew of their present and in terms of an image of what the future should be. They were at times directly engaged in contemporary issues. (p. 260) Canada's historians have all been nationalists of various hues, and sometimes their judgments about what was central to the past and what was peripheral arose as much from divergent conceptions of nationality as from disagreements about interpretations of the same evidence. (p. 259)

Before 1900 conventional nationalist wisdom in English Canada was concerned with the evolution of responsible government within an increasingly co-operative Empire-Commonwealth. Kennedy, Wallace, Wrong and Martin accordingly wrote history in keeping with such a theme. Between the wars, and especially during the depression, there was concern over the economic foundations of society. Not accidentally, Berger argues, this was coeval with Underhill's and Lower's preoccupation with the economic origins of the Canadian community. After 1945 public opinion changed again. The cold war and the Atlantic alliance fostered a concern for free institutions, the dignity of the individual and the collective inheritance of western civilization. As a consequence Canadian historiography became interested in biography, the transplanting of metropolitan ideas and the nation's traditions of democracy and civil liberties.

Berger sustains this general thesis convincingly, though I believe that his description of all Canadian historians as nationalists places much too much weight on that over-used term. There is, as in fact Berger recognises, a large difference between Wrong's and Skelton's views of the role of Canada in the Empire, and between Clark's frontierism and Careless's metropolitanism, not to mention the ideas of even two nominally Tory historians, Creighton and Morton. They may all be concerned with the survival of the nation but they have very different conceptions of the nation that is to survive. Certainly, however, Berger's claim that Canadian historians have been generally unconcerned to ex-

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plore the group loyalties of class, region, culture and family is unimpeachable.

Other criticisms of what is basically an excellently written and meticulously researched book are small ones. The last chapter which summarises the general character of Canadian historiography is unfortunately all too brief. In the main body of the work a case seems to be made for the relativity of all historical ideas. The brevity of the last chapter left this reader wondering whether this was indeed the author's intention.

Other social sciences in Canada have often disparaged the 'historical-descriptive' approach of Canadian political history. They seem to mean by this that Canadian historiography has been atheoretical, methodologically unaware and hyper-factual. A reading of Berger's book will convince them of the invalidity of this view. Canadian historiography is rich in theory and speculation, and at times replete with superb literary style. In short it has, with all its faults, produced a highly commendable body of literature.

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