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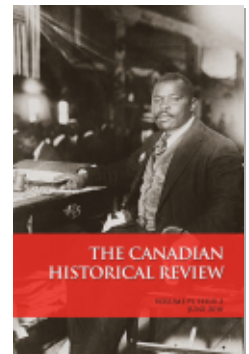
*Towards a Francophone Community: Canada's Relations with
France and French Africa, 1945-1968* (review)

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equality. Civil libertarians have, generally, a much narrower mandate defending 'negative rights' or unnecessary restrictions on individuals. Both have coherent rationales. The campaigns by the Ligue des droits de l'homme for improved welfare rates and for language rights demonstrate the former; the Canadian Civil Liberties Association's fights against abuses of police power were motivated by the latter. As well, organizations differed in tactics, with some heavily engaged in litigation while others sought more public stages. Finally, some accepted government funding, while others perceived this as a clear conflict of interest. It is not surprising that such a diverse range of organizations resisted any attempt at pan-Canadian unity.

Clément's overall assessment is particularly insightful. Not only did the social composition and conservative tactics mark the limits of the movement, the potential of co-optation through government funding ranked high. Such money flowed relatively freely in the late 1960s and the 1970s. Its lures were widely debated, but most organizations took it. What is notable was the extent to which it did not seem to constrain their activities. However, the connections among well-funded federal programs, Trudeau's desire to confront Quebec nationalism through constitutional reform, and the potential game-changing adoption of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms could not fail to shape the agendas of many rights organizations. In the end, of course, the new Charter established an entirely new universe for rights organizations, as they became reoriented to the much more powerful courts. Clément's story ends in the early 1980s, but the roots of the strengths and weaknesses of the new constitutional regime as well as the nature and depth of our rights culture – much of which has been laid bare since 9/11 – are well explained in this interesting study.

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Towards a Francophone Community: Canada's Relations with France and French Africa, 1945–1968. ROBIN S. GENDRON. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006. Pp. 200, \$95.00

In *Towards a Francophone Community*, Robin Gendron examines Canada's relations with francophone Africa from the twilight years of French imperialism to the emergence of the *Francophonie*. Gendron challenges the Quebec nationalist charge – one he alleges Canadian foreign relations historians have tacitly accepted – that Canada lacked interest in French Africa before the 1960s. Organized chronologically, the book recounts how Canadian policy regarding French Africa after

1945 was refracted through a Cold War prism, leading Ottawa to subordinate its sympathy for decolonization to larger geopolitical concerns. The dynamic continued into the post-independence period, notwithstanding increasing recognition in some federal quarters of the domestic rationale for links with the region. It was only in the mid-1960s, after the Pearson government's election and amid the Quiet Revolution, that Ottawa acted to strengthen relations with francophone Africa. This was no easy task, however, owing to prior Canadian policy, Quebec's international assertiveness, and deteriorating Franco-Canadian relations. Indeed, France retained considerable influence in Africa and was increasingly supportive of Quebec nationalism; the result was a crisis when Paris, responding to Quebec requests, saw to it that Gabon invited Quebec to participate in a conference of francophone education ministers in Libreville. Ottawa scrambled to respond to the challenge to Canada's international unity and the federal interpretation of the constitution regarding foreign affairs.

Gendron is to be commended for crossing a number of barriers, not least that of language in producing this account of Canada's relations with francophone Africa. He moves beyond the 'North Atlantic Triangle' that preoccupied earlier generations of Canadian foreign relations scholars and reveals the challenge Ottawa faced in responding to the Quiet Revolution as it intersected with an international environment marked by the Cold War and decolonization. The book is written in a clear, engaging style – no small achievement, given the complex set of relations discussed. In presenting his argument, Gendron draws upon multiple archives, notably those in Ottawa, Paris, and Quebec City (alas, the African voices present come from secondary sources or through the filter of Canadian officialdom). Aimed primarily at historians of Canada's foreign relations, *Towards a Francophone Community* will be useful to those examining Canada's links with Africa and the Global South, including the foreign aid dimension, and provides insight into the history of Quebec's international action and Franco-Canadian relations.

Towards a Francophone Community falls short, however, of being an examination of 'the entirety of Canada's involvement with French-speaking Africa' (5). The book's orthodox diplomatic history approach means that intergovernmental relations and Ottawa's foreign policy establishment are the primary focus. Gendron is effective in recounting the story contained in the governmental sources, but he adheres so closely to the documents that at times the analysis suffers. Given the subject matter, the work would have benefited from increased

attention to the cultural dimension of institutions and events, and to developments outside Ottawa and in the non-governmental domain.

A more global approach, including a greater engagement with the historiography of imperialism and decolonization – notably the African experience of them – would have facilitated a more comprehensive treatment of the legacy of empire and race in Canadian foreign policy. Gendron provides some tantalizing glimpses of this in his recounting of how Canadian ‘mutual aid’ sent to France under NATO auspices was employed in Algeria, how Canadian officials were all too ready to redraw the map of North Africa to ensure it remained tied to the West, and the influence that the limited Canadian business presence in Africa had on Canadian policy. Indeed, Gendron depicts a Canadian complicity in the perpetuation of French imperialism. Moreover, it could reasonably be argued that Ottawa and Quebec City not only facilitated French *neo*-imperialism through the exportation of their constitutional rivalry to Africa, but were themselves guilty of neo-imperialism as they used aid dollars to tie the newly independent African states to their respective agendas. Despite such evidence, Gendron tends to accept Canadian anti-colonialism at face value.

The focus on intergovernmental relations, Cold War high politics, and an account of the Quiet Revolution dismissive of prior events means French Canada and Quebec are absent from a large swath of *Towards a Francophone Community*. There is scant discussion of the growth and evolution of French Canada’s pre-1960 links with the francophone world that were crucial precursors to the Francophonie. Quebec does not enter the narrative in sustained fashion until chapter 6, so that while Gendron’s point is well made about the Cold War’s impact on Canadian policy, he does not engage sufficiently with the elephant in the room: the anglophone orientation of Canada’s foreign policy establishment. In providing this account of Canada’s relations with francophone Africa and Ottawa’s efforts to respond to the Quiet Revolution’s international dimension, Gendron has done an effective job in peeling a number of layers of the onion, but one is left with the sense that there are many more to go through.

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Histoire Populaire du Québec 1960 à 1970. JACQUES LACOURSIÈRE. Sillery: Septentrion, 2008. 488 p. (illustré, index), 29.00\$ papier

Dans le même paragraphe de la préface au dernier chapitre de ce monument qu’est l’*Histoire populaire du Québec*, Paul-André Linteau affirme que Jacques Lacoursière est « peut-être le plus épicurien » et