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Laurence Pope, Ed., *Letters of François de Callières to the Marquise d'Huxelles*. Introduction by Laurence Pope. In collaboration with William S. Brooks. Studies in French Civilization, Vol. 35. Lewiston, N.Y. and Lampeter, Wales: Edwin Mellen, 2004. xxii + 314 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. \$119.95 U.S. (hb). ISBN 0-7734-6297-X.

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This collection of the letters of the renowned diplomat François de Callières with Mme d'Huxelles dates from just before and just after the official negotiations which ended the Nine Years' War at the Congress of Ryswick and is best read in conjunction with Callières' more famous work, *The Art of Diplomacy*, written much later in 1716.[1] That classic is widely available; his other works are rarely read today. A gifted writer, Callières' flattering *Panegyrique historique du roi* helped to secure him election to the Academy. He also composed *Épître au roi*, *Histoire poétique*, *La Logique des Amans*, *Des bons mots et des bons contes*, *Des mots à la mode*, *Du bel esprit*, *De la science du monde*, and *Du bon et mauvais usage*. Callières is best known as a diplomat; he served as an envoy, both official and unofficial, for Louis XIV, most notably at the Congress of Ryswick. After the congress, Callières' desire, clearly unrealistic because of his relatively low noble rank, to be appointed ambassador to the United Provinces was not realized. Louis did, however, send him on politically sensitive missions to the duke of Lorraine whose lands Louis intended to seize, and subsequently rewarded him with an appointment as secretary of the cabinet.

These letters will not reveal anything new to the well read diplomatic historian, but they do serve to confirm the traditional view of Callières as an intelligent man of letters and a man of the world. Classical allusions to the ancient historians and eminent men of Greece and Rome (Alexander, Caesar, Vespasian) are studded throughout his letters as are many apt *aperçus*. For example, in comparing the United Provinces to France, he astutely notes the differences and observes that the Dutch often prefer money to glory and the French glory to money (p. 53). The attentive reader will note that some of the witticisms that Callières regaled Huxelles with also appear in *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes*. One revolves around the question of suitability for diplomatic posts (p. 226). When the Grand Duke of Tuscany complained to the Venetian ambassador about the poor qualifications and abilities of the Venetian representative at his court, the ambassador replied that he was not surprised: "we have many fools in Venice." The Grand Duke retorted, "We also have fools in Florence, but we take care not to export them." [2]

In his wide ranging letters he discusses the architectural wonders in the United Provinces, the flora and fauna of the area, Dutch cheese, paintings, herbal remedies, the beauty of new coins, and so on. His contempt of pride and vanity, his admiration for charity, and his hatred of warfare and its horrific consequences are often revealed (p. 255). When he discusses the ongoing war and the protracted negotiations he observes somewhat caustically that the people always cry and the people always pay (p. 246). Ruminations are also included on the general art of negotiation. He notes that the very basis of negotiating is the art of conversing and of being observant (p. 247). We also catch glimpses of ongoing concerns such as precedence and what he termed the "civil war of the ladies" over the seating at a ball (p. 277). Wry observations, such as the dangers inherent in speaking a language that one does not know well, the pretentiousness of the ceremonial, and the wisdom of Richelieu who noted the necessity of ceaseless negotiation in both war and peace, make the letters as enjoyable for us as for the marquise (pp. 228 & 238). These letters confirm the astute observation by the duc de Broglie that the diplomats of the

ancien regime belonged to the equivalent of a chivalric order, bound together by similar sentiments and personal alliances, or in Callières' words a "freemasonry of diplomacy." [3]

The preface, introduction, and annotations are generally reliable except that the peace of the Pyrenées was concluded in 1659, not 1658 (p. 8). The principal editor and independent scholar Laurence Pope, in collaboration with Professor William Brooks, has done an excellent job in transcribing these letters. Colloquialisms and idioms such as "bottom line", "bones of contention", "too clever by half", and "overplayed his hand" mar an otherwise readable introduction (pp. 20-23). The seven illustrations chosen are apt and interesting, including the sketch of envoys arriving at Ryswick. The index of names is detailed with birth and death dates and titles. The edition is annotated, but those unfamiliar with the period would have benefited from more extensive notes. For example, the editors do not explain the significance of the bill of attainder against Lord Strafford (in effect a death sentence), the importance of Dunkirk and why the Maritime Powers wanted it destroyed (it was a haven for pirates), or the role of John Churchill, duke of Marlborough, who betrayed James II and allied with William of Orange. Non-diplomatic historians would also have benefited from a more extensive discussion of Louis XIV's foreign policy, his many wars, and the convoluted issue of the Spanish Succession and the Partition Treaties. Without this information it would be difficult to make sense of the allies' attitude at Ryswick. The editors have relied exclusively on archival materials in France and have not consulted the voluminous material in The Hague and London. In the bibliography, the section on the modern editions of *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes* does not include the 1963 edition published by Notre Dame. The section of contemporary memoirs, letters, and documents is less than two pages and that of secondary literature consulted is less than three. Although they have included John Rule's classic work, *Louis XIV and the Craft of Kingship*, major works are omitted. [4] These misgivings aside, these letters reveal a witty, humane, well informed, and well read diplomat.

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## NOTES

[1] H.M.A. Keens-Soper and Karl W. Schweizer, eds., *The Art of Diplomacy* (Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 1994); or A.F. Whyte, *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes* (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Indiana Press, 1963). An earlier, but excerpted edition of these letters was published in 1879 in an article by Édouard Barthélemy. See Édouard Barthélemy, "La Chronique du traité du Ryswick," *Revue Britannique* 5 (1879):177-208.

[2] Whyte, *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes*, p. 59.

[3] Quoted in Jacques Henri-Robert, *Dictionnaire des diplomates de Napoleon* (Paris: Henri Veyrier, 1990), p. 13; Whyte, *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes*, p. 113.

[4] Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1969.

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