Book Reviews

Contesting Spirit: Nietzsche, Affirmation, Religion. By Tyler T. Roberts. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1998. xiii, 230 pages. $16.95 US paper.

Tyler T. Roberts, an American professor of Religious Studies, has interesting and valuable things to say about a controversial figure. He distinguishes in Nietzsche two elements, one critical, the other affirmative. Most interpreters—modernists and postmodernists, admirers and detractors—are certain that Nietzsche's comments on religion belong to the critical side of his philosophy. Some—Walter Kaufmann and Richard Rorty, for instance—go so far as to assimilate Nietzsche's thought to liberal criticisms of religion and the modern notion of secular freedom. Roberts allows that for Nietzsche religion is an illusion, a construct of reason, a perverse form of the will to power. At the same time he holds that Nietzsche is an initiate of religion who gives us a new revelation, a new kind of faith, inspired by Dionysus. Nietzsche's faith, like his art, is beyond all reason, a positive and creative force, a joyful affirmation of the world of myth and imagination. Thus, in Roberts' view, interpreters overlook or distort the truth in Nietzsche—the "deep tensions"—when they present him in the context of modern atheism, or consider his thoughts on religion in the perspective of secular enlightenment and freedom (7).

Roberts works through Nietzsche's various accounts of Western history and culture in order to clarify the limits of reason and establish religion as the other of reason. He points out that for Nietzsche the modern secular world can no longer present itself as something new, independent, powerful and promising. The modern world is only a final stage in a long—and eternally recurring—history of rationalization that begins with the disappearance of heroic culture and the collapse of poetic religion. This is what Roberts calls Nietzsche's "abysmal thought"(130–32). In the ancient world, Socrates and Christ, the founders of philosophical thought and ecclesiastical authority, mark the break. In the modern age, the unsatisfied yearning for knowledge, the tremendous need for control, the consuming desire for cultures other than one's own—all this points to the loss of our mythical home, the loss of our religious imagination. Art is always for Nietzsche the appropriate response to the neediness and suffering of human beings. But art is capable of transforming and transfiguring religious ideals and practices. Roberts comes back to this point over and over again. The Nietzschean artist can affirm anything—even Christian "love"—provided it is freed from the comfortable assurances of the modern world and opened to the archaic experience of suffering and dying (180–83).

Roberts' main theme is the tension between "affirmation" and "alterity," viz. Nietzsche's conviction that in all experience a contradiction exists, so that of everything that is presented the opposite also holds good (204–12). The method here is to assert as true the principle that each definite assertion concerning experience has to be set over its other, in forms or tropes, not in propositions. There is no selection of dogma or doctrine—say, materialism over idealism, or atheism over theism—but only that which leads or directs us to live rightly and think correctly. This method, Roberts maintains, does not work against religion as such, i.e., against the religious imagination. The religious imagination is rather its weapon of defence, and Nietzsche was conscious of this. He uses that weapon against both ancient and modern versions of materialism and idealism. Though he always expresses himself as if everything were in 'process' only, Nietzsche goes further towards genuine religiosity than those whose criterion of truth and standard of excellence must be either sensuous perception or reflective thought (212–14).

This is the relation of Nietzsche to religion, if put quite abstractly. A word of caution: neither Roberts nor Nietzsche himself really understands the sceptical nature of this standpoint. Roberts makes much of Nietzsche's art of demonstrating opposites through tropes, whereby the withholding of assent comes about, as also the possibility of religious affirmation. But Nietzsche can affirm nothing in religion except the will to illusion, to masks, to superficiality; he can affirm nothing but this because for him life itself is based on illusion, deception, appearances, the necessity of perspective and of error. From this point of view everything he asserts is opposed to the positive, even though this is founded on a carefully thought out annihilation of all that is held to be true, so that all is made transient. That is, Nietzsche only arrives at a negative standpoint and can proceed no further. He thinks that this negativity is likewise a wondrous affirmation, for it is the self-transcending experience or infinite process of life. A true knowledge of religion would also comprehend the negativity of this process. The difference is that Nietzsche remains at the negative result, arguing that everything determinate—whether natural or spiritual—has an internal contradiction, that it destroys itself and consequently does not exist.

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Dilemmas of Trust. By Trudy Govier. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 1998. x, 246 pages. $29.95.

Trudy Govier is known to many Canadian philosophers as the author of lively introductory texts on philosophy and reasoning. She has recently produced two volumes on trust. It was Annette Baier's 1986 paper, "Trust and Anti-trust"—its title alluding to American commercial legislation, but its substance

touching the core of ethics—that made trust a notable concept in contemporary philosophy. Govier's first volume, *Social Trust and Human Communities* (1997), deals with socio-political issues of trust, while *Dilemmas of Trust* discusses the role of trust in personal relationships, particularly those among friends and family members.

Whether Govier should have tried to separate the socio-political from the personal dimensions of trust is a question some readers might ask themselves. We could neither thrive nor survive without trust, according to Govier, so when it diminishes or dies out in personal relationships, usually the parties should work hard at forgiveness and reconciliation. However, as feminists have long argued, personal relations are often the sites of oppression and abuse. That is why Baier urged that sometimes it is appropriate to be "anti-trusting" rather than trusting: sometimes we need to resist any inclination towards forgiveness and will ourselves not to trust someone who has betrayed us in the past. Betrayal often has a political dimension, which explains how pervasive it can be in certain kinds of relationships. We cannot bracket the political from the personal in discussions about trust.

Govier takes issue with people who claim that most families are dysfunctional in ways that are damaging to our ability to trust in ourselves and in others. She argues that most families are "good enough" for us to experience and learn about trust. However, the term "good enough" is dangerous, for often it is used to cut off meaningful discussion: 'Ah, their relationship is good enough, so stop worrying about it.' We are not yet ready to end discussion about what sorts of family dynamics are important for teaching people how to trust well, and about whether those dynamics *are* present in most families.

Still, *Dilemmas of Trust* is interesting in its focus on those very dilemmas. A typical one is that without trust we will not find love, but only when we trust can our heart be broken. Another is that evidence of trustworthiness is often ambiguous, and so sometimes we are unsure of whether to trust at all. Some philosophers will seek rational solutions to such dilemmas, but Govier does not pretend to be able to do so. Instead, she explores everyday examples and considers what are good and bad reasons for trusting and distrusting. There is a lot of good sense in that discussion, but little in the way of formal solutions.

The dilemmas Govier discusses could be handled in more fruitful ways if she were clearer on the nature of trust and trustworthiness. She is often ambiguous about what distinguishes trust from attitudes such as confidence, reliance, and respect. At the end of the book, she describes trustworthiness as a moral stance, of being concerned about the welfare of others (210), but near the beginning she uses an example of some Nazi prisoners who supposedly were "trustworthy" to their captors (13). "Consistent trustworthiness" is the solution Govier offers to the dilemma of how to restore trust without putting oneself at grave risk of harm. However, that advice is vague in the absence of a clearly spelled-out conception of trustworthiness.

Govier has attempted to write both for the professional philosopher and for the 'lay reader,' which might explain why she avoids some of the analytical work of clarifying the nature of trust and trustworthiness. Her book is accessible and weaves together in interesting ways reports on theoretical literature, CBC phone-in testimony, philosophical argument, anecdote, sociological surveys, and silly self-help literature (of which she offers some well-aimed criticism). It also gives the first sustained treatment in ethics of "self-trust," a fascinating variant on interpersonal trust. Whatever their background, most readers will find that discussion illuminating.

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From Subject to Citizen: The Second Empire and the Emergence of Modern French Democracy. By Sudhir Hazareesingh. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1998. xii, 393 pages. $19.95 US paper.

The principal aim of Sudhir Hazareesingh's recent book is to challenge the prevalent scholarly opinion that modern French citizenship, as an ideology and a practice, was the creation of the Third Republic. Hazareesingh wishes to draw the attention of scholars to the largely ignored public debates during the Second Empire about citizenship, in particular as these involve considerations of decentralization. It is his contention that a conception of modern citizenship arose directly out of these ideological disputes, thus preparing the foundations for the Third Republic. He concludes his book as follows: "it was very probably because this broad sense of citizenship was not only accepted but also practiced by a very wide section of society by the late 1860s that the republic was able to establish itself, in the measured words of Littré, as 'the regime that best allows time to keep its just preponderance'" (321).

While Hazareesingh does provide a valuable summary and analysis of the views of the four most significant political groupings in the public discussions surrounding citizenship and decentralization during the Second Empire, he is unable to sustain the claim that he makes in the last sentence of his book. The problem lies less in the validity of his analysis than in the limitations of his methodology. Hazareesingh takes up the approach initiated by scholars such as Quentin Skinner and J.G.A. Pocock in their work in the history of political thought: namely, to analyze ideologies as 'speech acts' within a set of linguistic practices. While this approach can be helpful in articulating the political thought of an individual or period, it is less helpful as an explanation of the actions of those involved in political processes. Hazareesingh justifies his claim that decentralization and citizenship were interconnected and central concerns in the public debates of the Second Empire. But his further claim that these ideological articulations provided the

basis for the modern republicanism of the Third Republic requires additional considerations about how these ideologies actually affected political life. For example: did political actors (both the elites and the general populace) actually think in these terms? what is the relation of these ideological structures to social and economic structures at work in mid-nineteenth century France, such as urbanization or industrialization? While Hazareesingh raises these issues, he does not in fact address them, and so leaves the ideologies he articulates floating in mid air, unconnected to the actual processes of political, economic and social life.

Apart from its introduction and conclusion, the book consists of four chapters, each dedicated to one of four major political groupings: Bonapartist, Legitimist, liberal, and republican. In each of these chapters, Hazareesingh provides an analysis of the ideological position, particularly in relation to concerns about citizenship and decentralization. He sees these positions not as purely pragmatic efforts to raise opposition to imperial administrative despotism, but as articulations of a vision of "the good life" (18). While he seeks to bring out the logic of each standpoint, Hazareesingh is not uncritical; indeed, he sees each of the positions—with one crucial exception—as riddled with contradictions. Rather than explain these contradictions, however, he offers the somewhat empty adage that "contradiction is a fundamental law of politics" (18). But in spite of his unsatisfactory treatment of contradiction, contradiction is, for Hazareesingh's argument in this book, a crucial explanatory principle. Municipal republicanism emerges as the most significant result of the ideological debates of the 1850s and 1860s in large measure precisely because it is not fraught with contradictions, and thus appears as the exception which proves the adage.

Equally important in Hazareesingh's account of the special significance of municipal republicanism is its peculiarly comprehensive nature as an ideology. According to Hazareesingh, municipal republicanism is a position that encompasses the best in the other ideological standpoints. It combines the need for local self-government articulated by the Legitimists, the need for rights and protection from authoritarianism articulated by the liberals, and the need for a united France and a role for administration articulated by the Bonapartists, with the need for a secular republican structure of government as expounded in republican thought. Yet Hazareesingh presents this result of the public debates of the Second Empire in an ambivalent light. On the one hand municipal republicanism is able to draw together much of what inspires the other ideological standpoints, but, on the other hand, it is merely one position among others and so apparently just as one-sided or partisan as the rest. Perhaps Hazareesingh's ambivalence, at least unconsciously, articulates the very ambivalence that beset the Third Republic, and indeed French politics, for the century following the collapse of the Second Empire.

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Crimes of War. By Peter Hogg. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1999. 232 pages. $32.99.

Peter Hogg, who between 1993 and 1995 worked as a prosecutor for the War Crimes Unit of the Justice Department in Ottawa, has published an account based on that experience concerning persons accused of perpetrating such actions during World War II who subsequently emigrated to Canada. The book is explicitly called a work of fiction, doubtless to protect the author from possible lawsuits. It would be more accurate, however, to describe it as a hybrid combining historical fact with literary imagination, as Hogg indeed does in a "Note" appended to the text and a disclaimer on the reverse of the title page: "... the characters ... are solely the creation of the author. Any resemblance to actual persons—with the exception of historical figures—is entirely coincidental." Moreover, when the latter "consort with fictional characters, the results are, necessarily, fiction. Similarly, some events have been created to serve fictional purposes."

What is an historian to make of this procedure? From my research on the same genocidal activities of the so-called *Einsatzkommando* 10a in southern Russia during 1941–42, where it shared in the shooting or gassing of 90,000 Jews, I can attest that some individuals are identified correctly while others are only lightly disguised. For example, whereas the first commander of EK 10a was Heinz Seetzen (not "Zeetzen" as Hogg spells it), his successor is properly named; and the central figure from the killing squad appearing in the story is "Friedrich" Reile, but Adolf Reile was an ethnic German translator, too, who actually served in the unit. Though the real-life Reile, who was tried and executed by the Russians in the early 1960s, never became a Canadian, four or five of his fellow murderers from EK 10a did. This is a remarkable proportion among a group of 100–130 men; and one of them, his crimes, and the tardy response of this country's judicial system are the subject of Hogg's novel.

In alternate chapters the author presents two interrelated biographies. "Fred" Reile resides in Winnipeg, the hometown of Peter Hogg (but not of the true protagonist). The teenager, whose father and brother had been arrested by the communist regime or drafted into the Red Army and disappeared, was caught up in the 1941 invasion of the USSR and willingly signed on for duty with the advancing German forces. He found himself in a special SS formation whose task, it soon transpired, was to eliminate Jewish and other alleged enemies of the Third Reich. Hogg describes the unit's organization and *modus operandi* graphically and in precise detail, right down to the playing card—the ten of hearts—painted on every vehicle. He leaves no doubt that Reile was an active participant in mass murder, at first horrified yet gradually as a routine more or less willingly accepted: there was a rumour that anyone refusing to join the firing line in a liquidation *Aktion* would also be executed, "but it never occured to me to disobey" (69).

Some forty years after Reile arrived in Canada his long-repressed memories of this past are abruptly recalled to mind by a series of photographs and documents sent him anonymously by the novel's other main character, the historian Dennis Connor employed in the "Special Prosecutions Unit." In contrast to the morose tone of the sections Reile narrates, those told by Connor are often witty in their remarks about the varied personnel of the SPU ranging from its dedicated police investigators to a battery of lawyers, either idealists, cynics, bureaucratic time-servers or bumblers, who prepare its prosecutions. Connor's job has now become helping wind down the office, the result of both budgetary reductions and its middling success in securing convictions. That drastic dénouement has not, in fact, taken place; since the government lost the Finta case, it has abandoned criminal litigation and instead has been able to strip four persons (or about a quarter of those accused) of their citizenship who have then either left Canada voluntarily or are in the process of being deported. The author uses this disappointing record to raise several key issues connected with national policy vis-à-vis war criminals in the 1990s, such as the appropriateness of proceeding against harmless old men a half-century after their misdeeds and the increasing inability of equally elderly witnesses to identify their persecutors. The last file Connor deals with is that of Friedrich Reile, and he is very reluctant to close one on a killer who has escaped both postwar Soviet and German justice and is safe in Canada. Therefore he decides to let Reile know someone is aware of his wartime acts by mailing him copies of part of the data collected by the SPU about him. This rather improbable behaviour by a member of the agency is evidently meant to reflect its sense of frustration and culminates in a futile (and even less likely) incident. Connor, a bit drunk, pelts Reile's house with eggs and deposits a last message in his letterbox: "... you're off the hook ... you should never have lived this long."

More plausibly, Hogg speculates how an otherwise average, "normal" person could commit such atrocities, and here the book has a sad relevance for understanding contemporary events in Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, East Timor, and elsewhere. Reile says he began to regard his victims not as individual men, women, and children but instead as "a curious patchwork of strange creatures," already dead—that is, no longer human beings—before he shot them. "I saw but did not see, as if a veil had fallen across my eyes, and I was absorbed by numbness." For whatever stirrings of compassion might remain there was plenty of alcohol available: the youth drank "heavily and often; but even sober I kept the cancer that festered deep within me silenced and at bay" (70ff).

Viewed as a historical text, Peter Hogg's maiden novel has much to recommend it. Thus it relates how war criminals managed to enter Canada (Reile provided information about the NKVD to British intelligence and was in turn shielded by it when he wanted to quit Germany), and how decades afterwards we finally proceeded to gather testimony on these people. The

author shares the exasperation of a Russian procurator who laments that the Canadians have come too late: witnesses are dying and he is too preoccupied with present crimes to deal with past ones. In fictionally terminating the SPU, Hogg seems to approve that course. Not all his readers will agree, however, with a conclusion—"burying all of the bodies, disposing of the evidence" (212)—which seems rather like the practice of the perpetrators themselves.

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Derrière le Trône: Mémoires d'un parlementaire québécois. By Hector Laferté. Sillery: Septentrion, 1998. 461 pages. $29.95.

Un Bleu du Québec à Ottawa. By Jacques Flynn. Sillery: Septentrion, 1998. 395 pages. $24.95.

There was a time when in Québec the two most hotly discussed topics were hockey and politics. In the latter case, camps were strictly aligned, the 'Bleus' (i.e. Tories) on one side, and the 'Rouges' (i.e. the Grits) on the other. Is it to keep this proverbial balance that Septentrion, a reliable publishing house based in Sillery, Québec, decided to publish, in a matter of a few weeks in 1998, two memoirs of two Québec politicians? As one might imagine, one is a Grit (Laferté) and the other is a deep-dyed blue Tory (Flynn). Moreover, Laferté had a long provincial career while Flynn spent over thirty years in Ottawa, both careers together covering most of the twentieth century. These two works therefore could constitute interesting reading for anyone who wishes to get an insider's view of many political battles of this period. This genre is not totally new to this publisher since their catalogue also offers the memoirs of Léon Balcer (a Québec Tory lieutenant under Drew and Diefenbaker) and biographies of liberal premiers Louis Alexandre Taschereau and Adélard Godbout.

The title of the first book, Laferté's memoirs, *Derrière le Trône* ("Behind the Speaker's Chair"), reveals the general approach taken by the author. First, it no doubt refers to a good part of Laferté's career since he has been Speaker of both the then Legislative Assembly and, later on, the Legislative Council (Québec's Upper Chamber) where he sat from 1934 until its abolition in 1968. Moreover, in many Assemblies in the British parliamentary system, "behind the Chair" is the place where parliamentarians of all stripes traditionally meet to make deals, protected from the scrutiny of their colleagues, the public in the galleries, and the media. It is also the place that gave rise to the popular expression: 'it's in the bag,' meaning a deal is settled. In Westminster, a bag in which petitions to the Parliament are dropped is hung literally behind the Speaker's Chair; when MPs bring their constituents' concerns to the Parliament through this route, it is considered that they have done their job

and that a solution is not far down the road, hence, 'it's in the bag': it's settled. The expression was extended to deals settled by politicians in this specific location: by analogy, MPs and later, most people referred to agreements by the same words. Indeed, this book has much to say about wheeling and dealing. However, as the publisher warns in the foreword: "Political science books and academic treaties will not be very useful here: the reader would be better served in getting a proper nouns dictionary or a who's who" (13). And this is indeed the case.

Laferté is not a very well known politician, although, on top of his Speakerships, he held portfolios in the Taschereau administration and was 'Leader of the Left'—in reference to where the opposition sits and not to ideologies—in the Legislative Council during the years the Liberals were in Opposition. Some of his contemporaries have compared his style, political curriculum, and oratorical abilities to Wilfrid Laurier's. Laferté was a political actor of interest, one who could bring a stimulating point of view to the political scene.

Unfortunately, the book falls short of these expectations. Throughout, Laferté appears as a man steeped in himself, one who has THE answer to all questions. Few people find favour in his eyes, including federal Liberal politicians such as Ernest Lapointe, Mackenzie King's Québec right-hand man, many of his colleagues at the Council, or even Premier Godbout, who does not receive many laurels from Laferté. In such a context, it is not surprising that almost all the acts of his political foe, Maurice Duplessis, of his people, and of his government are condemned. Here, one does not need to refer to complex policy statements to understand Laferté's criticisms; protocol questions, the availability of a coatroom in the Parliament buildings for the ladies who attend the opening of a session, or the possibility of drinking wine in the Speaker's office, are all grist for Laferté's mill. To the author, mundane life seemed as important as politics, and Laferté proudly writes that he did not hesitate to contact a newspaper editor in order to protest if his name did not appear or was listed in the wrong order of precedence in the account given of a state banquet or of a prominent person's funeral.

Since the period covered by the memoirs (1936–1958) includes World War II and the conscription plebiscite, one could expect some interesting insights about these key moments in Canadian political life; however, aside from a few references to the war, not much is said. Of the political life of his party, of the governments he served, of the great political debates of the time, and of the riding politics of the day, we do not learn a lot more by reading this book than what is already in the public domain. Surprisingly, the only person who seems to get Laferté's approval is Ésioff-Léon Patenaude, Lieutenant Governor of Québec, a former provincial and federal … Tory politician! To a lesser extent, Premier Taschereau also receives a few good words, but Laferté's list of 'nice people' is not much longer.

The weakness of this text is in large part due to its origins. The publisher found in archives some notes Laferté had produced in order to write his memoirs, a task he never really achieved. It is part of these notes, almost a diary—although incomplete in many regards—that is here printed. The editor chose the years for which the notes seemed more interesting: Laferté's papers also consist of less complete notes for the former and the latter periods of his career and these were omitted. Nevertheless, the notes that are now available offer a reading of long lost days, almost Victorian in style, and give the reader the opportunity to 'meet' many people evolving in and around the political circles of the time. Thanks to a chronology and to an index that includes the titles or functions of most actors referred to in the text, it is easier to get a clearer image of this epic political era.

No doubt Jacques Flynn stands on the opposite side of Laferté's political credo. On his father's side, his grandfather, James Edmund Flynn, was a Conservative Québec premier; and on his mother's side, his great-grandfather was a minister under Joseph-Aldolphe Chapleau's Conservative administration. The title of his book could easily have been 'A *True* Blue from Québec in Ottawa'!

Flynn's memoirs are a lot more traditional in their presentation than Laferté's diary. Starting with his boyhood and concluding with his retreat from federal politics, the text is written in a much more optimistic and even, from time to time, humorous tone. Special attention is given to his political career, but his career as a lawyer and his private and family life also receive consideration. Most of the text is factual, but there are a few instances where the author expands on his sentiments towards specific questions, the failure of the Meech Lake Accord being a prime example.

The point of view taken by Flynn is truly a Québec point of view. In this sense, his memoirs provide the reader with an enriching analysis of the federal Progressive Conservative party's political life in Québec over the last forty years. Few things have been written about this topic, and Flynn's memoirs constitute a definite plus for scholars working on the period. Of special interest is his analysis of the numerous leadership crises his party experienced over the years.

The other side of the coin is that a definite smell of partisan approach to some events is also present—for instance the numerous instances where the Liberals 'stole' power from the Conservatives (whether in the vote of confidence 'that never was' in 1968, the electoral platform against wage and price controls in 1974, or the attack on the eighteen-cent tax on gas in 1980). However, confronted with texts from the other side of the political fence, Flynn's writings bring an enlightening insider's point of view.

Unfortunately, some errors can be traced in the text, as in the stance John Crosbie took in the last ballot of the 1983 Conservative leadership race, or the names of political actors such as Elsie Wayne (not Wade) and Gilbert (not Michel) Chartrand. These do not undermine the value of the text, but

should have received more careful attention in the editing process. As well, the book lacks a good index, an instrument that such a document cannot really go without.

Political memoirs are not necessarily equal in quality, in relevance, or in usefulness. Had Laferté's 'memoirs' been presented as a diary, which they are, the reader would probably have had fewer expectations. Even if Flynn's text is of a much better quality for the understanding of some political questions and of the political behaviour of actors in key political situations, his contribution would have benefited from a better and more complete revision. Nevertheless, all such publications are bricks, some small and fragile, others bigger and more solid, that help the edification of our collective memory. The more we get, the healthier our political culture will be.

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New Art New World: British Art in Postwar Society. By Margaret Garlake. New Haven: Yale UP, 1998. 280 pages. $50.00 US.

Margaret Garlake's history of postwar art in Britain constitutes an impressive foray into the study of twentieth-century culture and politics. Unlike her now antiquated predecessors—Kenneth Clark, Adrian Heath or Herbert Read—whose works probe specific events (the Festival of Britain or the origins of London's ICA) or particular artists and formal practices, Garlake examines the interrelation—and often interdependence—of society *and* aesthetics in the late 1940s and 50s. Embracing an aspect of the 'new' art history, *New Art New World* explores not merely the singular themes and episodes which have largely characterized the study of postwar modernism (and modernist-related aesthetics), but likewise interrogates the wider social landscape of which both were an integral part.

Against the grain of established (and indeed *establishment*) histories of the period, Garlake suggests that the socio-political circumstances of the postwar era encouraged a new framework for the understanding of 'art' (and ultimately 'culture') in Britain. The "shock of the new," Garlake implies, was absorbed through a flexible and often pragmatic understanding of representational practices and cultural politics. As she argues, the influence of a burgeoning population of art critics, edicts of the nascent Arts Council, the success of the Labour Party, and the advent of American popular culture and American Abstract Expressionism, amongst other factors, coalesced to create a particular milieu in which, for example, Francis Bacon's disquieting *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion* (1944) could not only be produced as a work of art but also understood as a facet of the nation's postwar identity.

Thereby eschewing the often puritanical biases of traditional art history, which readily denies the relevance of 'outside' influence in art production and interpretation, Garlake openly contends that artists "function within society and their work is in some measure both produced and consumed by society." Illustrating T.J. Clark's now famous 1974 call for the dismantling of insular art historical practices, *New Art New World* argues that between the poles of art production and art reception there is an expansive area of "slippage, negotiation and disjunction." The making of art, Garlake suggests, is as capricious as its explication, and in seeking to examine its concepts, the art historian is faced with an "unwieldy structure like an irregular three-dimensional grid."

Yet despite this revisionist approach, including Garlake's appeal to the work of postcolonial theorist Homi K. Bhabha and his notion of a "third space"—a space of understanding which is marginal, ambiguous and disruptive, and necessary to comprehend the complexities of "cultural difference"—*New Art New World* is nonetheless inclined towards inherited orthodoxy. This predilection is made particularly evident by the book's minimal consideration of gender and race (a short discussion of representations of the body and the social conditions of women in the postwar period; and a brief and largely uncritical analysis of the 'primitive' in fifties art). However repetitive it might appear, particularly in this age of cultural studies, to recite the litany of abuses against women and racial minorities living within white patriarchal culture or to detail the dominant role of white masculinity in cultural production, these considerations—in whatever form—are nonetheless crucial to the study of art and its history. Art histories are never neutral; they are inevitably ideologically inflected. This is not to say that each history must adhere to a particular template—not every cultural examination evinces an obvious or predictable gender or race (or class) connection. Yet the period under consideration, as Lynne Segal (1990), Chris Waters (1997) and Janet Wolff (1995) have previously argued, is patently conducive to such analysis.

As Wolff, as well as Andreas Huyssen (1986), Griselda Pollock (1988), and Lisa Tickner (1994) suggest, the study of gender readily coexists (or is virtually concomitant) with the study of modernism. Indeed modernism, as Huyssen argues, largely relies upon the binary relationships which gender difference provokes for its very proliferation. To distinguish it from 'feminized' mass culture or 'womanly' decorative and applied arts, modern art and literature rest upon a canon of active or aggressive virility. It is not therefore surprising, as Segal suggests, that avant-garde culture of the fifties was—in effect—masculine.

Moreover, as Waters has indicated, the sudden influx of black immigrants from former colonies in the 1950s amplified the intensity of xenophobic and racist discourse in Britain. Particularly topical in the early postwar period, ideas of the 'dark stranger' were positioned as steadfastly antithetical to notions of the 'British citizen' and the 'British nation.'

Garlake, however, appears disinclined to introduce these questions to her study. By implication, *New Art New World* ostensibly indicates that neither race nor gender carries the necessary theoretical weight required in the analysis of modernism. Yet modernism is founded upon and within these (and other) hierarchical structures: sets of power relations in which social and cultural identities are formed and subsequently play incisive roles. These identities are not trivial, rather they are central to the production and understanding of visual art. There is, in short, a quite manifest reason why the great majority of Garlake's subjects are white men. *New Art New World*, however, is largely uninterested in such an inquiry.

Although its overall agenda is both impressive and much required in the history of twentieth-century British art, *New Art New World* largely declines to probe the lacunae and traces of difference (or disparity) in modernism's historically controlled narratives. Yet a critical art history, as indeed Garlake's introduction implies, becomes more practicable when it brings into question the canonical character of previously established aesthetic and cultural categories, and in so doing reveals their otherwise hidden agendas. Optimistically, such an art history would create a context in which works of art could be immersed and previously imperceptible meanings would appear, shift, displace, and concede to each other and to the viewer. In this way, the narratives which have heretofore defined 'art' hold the potential to be substantially dislodged or opened up to expose the ideational mechanics which have historically underlain them.

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