
with its spectacular expanse of exterior glass wrapped elegantly around the workshop wing. And the Bauhaus's influence in the United States has been on balance positive, bringing a clean, streamlined look not only to architecture (see, for example, the indisputably gracious Mies Lake Shore apartments in Chicago), but also to graphics, furniture, and consumer products. Most of the ugly "modern" buildings that Wolfe (rightly) denounces were designed not by Gropius, Mies, or their students but by architects who clumsily appropriated the deceptively simple look of modern architecture and have now given it a bad name.

THE INTELLECTUALS AND THE MASSES: Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880–1939. By John Carey. St. Martin's Press. 256 pp. \$19.95

That turn-of-the-century literati were by and large hostile toward the masses hardly comes as news. Every British literature survey adverts to the aristocratic elitism and snobbery of W. B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, and other masters of modernism. It comes as no greater revelation that the intellectuals' notion of the "masses" was largely a convenient fiction, spun from such demographic facts as the population explosion (which in Europe was marked by a jump from 180 million to 460 million people between 1800 and 1914), rapid suburbanization, and the growth of the clerkly trades.

What distinguishes Carey's examination of all this is what he makes of it: very much, one might say in his favor; too much, one might object. Consider, for example, the modernist cult of difficulty, the urge to make the art object as complex and demanding as possible. Carey attributes this occultism entirely to the literary artist's contempt for the vulgar, uneducated tastes of the common man, and Carey is not altogether wrong. Many of the archmodernists held that only the priestly few should have access to Art; after all, Art was intended to separate the human wheat from the (barely) human chaff. T. S. Eliot's decree that poets "must be difficult" was widely understood and approved by those whom Coleridge had dubbed the clerisy. Such willful obscurantism led the modernists to

undervalue some of the simpler (but no less important) pleasures of art, including sentiment and story, a bias that in turn has contributed to the marginalization of serious literature to this day.

Yet it is hard not to feel, even on this strictly literary point, that Carey presses too far in one direction, never acknowledging the possibility of a more generously motivated concern. Weren't modern intellectuals right to be opposed to the oversimplifying and sensationalizing tendencies of a modern popular culture that began to emerge at the turn of the century? Carey, a professor of literature at Oxford University, plays too easily the friend of populism when he discounts the virtues of difficulty. He would seemingly reduce art to entertainment. And doing so, he ends up indulging in a form of counter-snobbery, as when he asserts that a person like Leopold Bloom would never read the novel in which he figures so centrally, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, because more than any other 20th-century novel, "it is for intellectuals only."

But art—important as it is—is not all that is at stake here. Carey sees literary values shaping political and social attitudes. And, again, there is great virtue in his driving home just how ugly and inexcusable many of the opinions of literary intellectuals were. Too often these have been lightly passed over, but Carey shouts where others have whispered. We learn of the extent of H. G. Wells's obsession with eugenics and his horror of undesirable types and races. We hear of George Gissing's vitriolic contempt for democracy and his yearning for a Nietzschean superman. We are treated to the full blast of Wyndham Lewis's fulminations against suburban man and his ghastly paeans to Nazi storm troopers. ("The Anglo-Saxon would feel reassured at once in the presence of these straightforward young pillars of the law.") And Carey rightly derides Ezra Pound's excuse for his anti-Semitism—"a suburban prejudice"—as obscuring the true high-culture origins of his attitude.

But Carey insists upon a simple determinism where a more nuanced analysis is called for. Modernist, elitist notions could as easily be used to attack Nazism as to underwrite it, and they were. It is more than an oversight not to mention that Gissing's beloved Nietzsche specifically loathed everything about anti-Semitism, includ-

ing the race-thinking behind it. Much similar denial of the complex play of ideas makes it possible for Carey to reach his banner-headline conclusion: "The tragedy of *Mein Kampf* is that it was not, in many respects, a deviant work but one firmly rooted in European intellectual orthodoxy." To which one can respond only with the Scotch verdict: Not proved.

Philosophy & Religion

SELLING GOD: American Religion in the Marketplace of Culture. By R. Laurence Moore. Oxford. 336 pp. \$25

Americans worship both the Almighty Dollar and, if opinion surveys are to be believed, the Almighty far more fervently than do the citizens of any other Western country. Such dual loyalty seems less incongruous if one considers that one of the sources of America's religious vitality is the absence of an established church. Churches have been forced (or allowed) to compete for souls, much as McDonald's and Burger King vie for hungry mouths. Moore, a Cornell University historian, might say that the link between fast food and religion is more than a useful analogy. Much that we mistake for the secularization of American society, he believes, "has to do not with the disappearance of religion but its commodification."

Since the late 18th century, when the new diversions offered by the nation's growing commercial culture—*theater, cheap novels, and the like*—began to threaten religious authority, church leaders have borrowed commercial methods to spread the Word. One of the first to discover the magic of the marketplace was the Calvinistic Methodist preacher George White-

field (1714–70), whose wildly successful revival meetings in America and in England "turned a portion of the Protestant Christian ministry away from intellectual preparation and instruction toward emotional exhorting," according to Moore. Before long it was an accepted principle in many holy quarters that ministers should borrow methods from the theater to stir up audience enthusiasm. By the 1830s, Walt Whitman could call churches "the most important of our amusements."

The pattern was repeated over and over. No sooner did clergymen denounce the dime novel or television than some enterprising colleague was picking up a pen or daubing on makeup for the cameras.

Moore strives mightily to appreciate some of the benefits of this "commercialized" religion, observing, for example, that the notion of faith as something to be sold rather than imposed promotes religious toleration. But of course it is more interesting to ask what it has all cost. He discerns a general thinning of religion: Spread everywhere in American culture, from self-help manuals to Christian rap music, it seems to be nowhere.

Surprisingly, Moore has relatively little to say about today's televangelists, seeming to regard them as regrettable but inevitable products of a world where denominations must compete. It would have been interesting to get some idea of how "consumer satisfaction" with religion has changed over the past two centuries of "commodification," not to mention how the competition for new souls has affected non-Protestant sects.

Moore reserves most of his criticism for the mainline Protestant churches that embraced the Social Gospel in the late 19th century—the very denominations that most disdained commercial methods. He argues that the Social Gospel was nevertheless the last word in "commod-

