



ital of the world. Prominent New York museum directors such as Alfred Barr and James Soby and critics such as Clement Greenberg and Meyer Schapiro redefined abstract expressionism as the fulfillment of "modernism"—in other words, as a strictly apolitical, formal statement. Dealers, meanwhile, saw to it that there was no market for other modern American art. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.'s *The Vital Center* (1949) argued that the individual freedoms afforded by democracy inevitably led to anxiety and alienation, and that abstract art expressed the confusion of a truly free people. He thus placed the liberal seal of approval on this bewildering visual movement. "Consciously or unconsciously," writes Guilbaut, cooperation between the avant-garde and the liberal political establishment made abstract expressionism "the American 'style' par excellence."

Contemporary Affairs

**ROOTS OF RADICALISM:
Jews, Christians, and
the New Left**
by Stanley Rothman &
S. Robert Lichter
Oxford, 1982
466 pp. \$27.95

The tools of social science are exhaustively applied in this attack on the notion, once proclaimed by liberal and neo-Marxist social thinkers such as Kenneth Keniston, Erich Fromm, and Herbert Marcuse, that the student radicals of the 1960s were the cream of America's youth. Political scientists Rothman and Lichter, drawing on extensive interviews with former radicals, a battery of psychological tests, and a comparative look at West German leftists of the same period, find that the American New Leftists were anything but the most balanced, idealistic, or democratic members of their generation. Crypto-authoritarians, simultaneously desirous and resentful of power, they were also psychologically ill-adjusted (Jewish radicals typically suffering from overpowering mothers, Christians from "intrusive and demanding" fathers). Jewish domination of the Students for a Democratic Society, the Free Speech Movement, and other New Left groups was, according to the authors, the logical extension of a traditional Jewish alignment with radi-

cal politics, an alignment dating from the mid-19th century. But the Jewish radical of the 1960s was prompted, even more than his predecessors, by the desire "to estrange the Christian from society, as he feels estranged from it." New Left leaders, Jewish or Gentile, aided by the pressures of the Vietnam draft, succeeded for a time in generating a broad student movement "critical of nativist American institutions." But why did these troubled types get such high marks from the academics who first studied them? Because, as Rothman and Lichter note, those who "initiated the student movement were very often the children (ideologically, if not biologically) of those studying it."

THE ALLIANCE: America-Europe-Japan, Makers of the Postwar World
by Richard J. Barnet
Simon & Schuster, 1983
511 pp. \$19.95

Readers expecting a radical polemic against the Alliance will be surprised. Barnet, codirector of the leftish Institute for Policy Studies, offers a comprehensive and balanced reminder of how a variety of formal and informal agreements, both military and economic, linking America, Western Europe, and Japan, has helped these nations adjust to an "anarchic international system" since 1945. At the very least, major U.S. allies have enjoyed economic growth: Just after World War II, Germans survived on only 500-600 calories a day, while nine million Japanese were homeless. During the 1960s, Japan's productivity grew four times the U.S. rate, and automobile exports from West Germany to the United States increased 250 percent. But the Alliance has never been easy for any of its partners. The postwar relationship between America and Europe, which "grew out of a compromise between the liberal vision of a world economic order" and the "gospel of national security," brought an end to peacetime U.S. isolationism. Western European leaders, for their part, did not altogether relish dependence on America for military security. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO, founded in 1949) was, in Charles De Gaulle's view, the price Europeans paid for America's economic assistance. Recounting