
since antiquity for organizing and retaining vast stores of information. (Ricci hoped his memory palace would so impress the Chinese that they would be tempted by its religious furnishings.) Using each image as a frame for anecdotes about Ricci and his times, Spence, a Yale historian and prize-winning China scholar, guides readers through the rigors of Jesuit education, the dangers and discomforts of 16th-century sea travel, the intricacies of the Far East silk trade, and, above all, Ricci's spiritual and intellectual labors. The heart of the story is the conflict between Western ideas (specifically, Ricci's Christian humanism) and the Buddhist, Confucian, and Taoist doctrines of the Chinese scholar-gentry. Many of the Chinese scholars were impressed by Ricci's mental power—on one occasion, he recalled a list of some 400 Chinese ideograms after looking at it only once—but few were convinced that Christianity was preferable to their own beliefs. The Buddhist Zhuhong dismissed the Jesuit's arguments: "[His] kind of sophistry is a clever play on words. How can it harm the clear teaching of the Great Truth?"

**THE LOST SOUL OF
AMERICAN POLITICS:
Virtue, Self-Interest, and
the Foundations
of Liberalism**
by John P. Diggins
Basic, 1984
409 pp. \$23.95

"How can America understand itself?" To answer his own question, Diggins, a University of California historian, turns to early 19th-century American thought—and, specifically, to what he perceives as a fundamental dilemma within the "liberalist" tradition. There he sees "two incompatible value systems struggling for the soul of America: the liberal idea of labor, competition and self-help and the Christian idea of sin, atonement and redemption." Incompatible though they were, liberalism, the child of John Locke and others who preached the primacy of self-interest, existed in tension with Calvinist notions of moral responsibility. That tension, Diggins holds, was most palpable during the mid-19th century. Its most dramatic embodiment in politics was Abraham Lincoln; in literature, Herman Melville. During the post-Civil War era, however, when commerce

was no longer seen as inimical to (or at least incompatible with) virtue and character, "ambition and self-interest became as American as apple pie." Turn-of-the-century social Darwinism was but the first of many ready-made ideologies used to justify unbridled greed; George Gilder's effort (*Wealth and Poverty*, 1981) to relax the tension between virtue and the pursuit of wealth is, according to the author, a more recent example of the same impulse. Diggins challenges the classical "republican" emphasis many historians give to early American civic ideals, reminding readers of a more complex spiritual heritage.

Contemporary Affairs

THE SECOND INDUSTRIAL DIVIDE: Possibilities for Prosperity
by Michael J. Piore and Charles F. Sabel
Basic, 1984
368 pp. \$21.95

The first industrial divide, according to the authors, came during the 19th century. Mass production eliminated the "flexible-production" methods of the craft system, which had, since the Middle Ages, employed skilled workers and general-purpose machinery to produce a variety of goods for an ever-changing market. The widespread economic slowdown that the industrialized world has been experiencing since the early 1970s is, the authors believe, a prelude to the second divide; it is also an opportune moment for restoring the best features of the flexible-production system. Much of their persuasive book is an attack on various aspects of our current mass-production arrangement—"the technologies and operating procedures of most modern corporations; the forms of labor-market control defended by many labor movements; the instruments of macroeconomic control developed by bureaucrats and economists in the welfare states." Piore and Sabel, both of MIT, point to the Italian garment industry and some Japanese toolmaking firms as successful contemporary instances of flexible specialization. In addition to more democratic shop-floor relations, the authors' "strategy of permanent innovation" calls for