Book Reviews

GUYER, PAUL. *A History of Modern Aesthetics, Volume I: The Eighteenth Century*. Cambridge University Press, 2014, xii + 578, $355.00 cloth [for 3-volume set].

While aesthetics has a long and distinguished history, it was born and came of age much later than its disciplinary kin, and only in the latter part of the twentieth century can it really be said to have settled down with the likes of epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics to find a secure home within professional philosophy and the academy at large. As a late bloomer, it has not, like its older and more precocious siblings, received anything like a comprehensive treatment that attempts to synthesize the myriad parts of its history and present them in a single, unified, comprehensive body; it is only with its late establishment, moreover, that it has been able to produce a figure capable of undertaking such an enormous task. In the shape of Paul Guyer and his much-anticipated three-volume *A History of Modern Aesthetics*, both eventualities have come to pass in a work that reflects fifteen years of hard scholarly labor and stands, in its richness and complexity, as a testament to the subject it treats. As its title indicates, volume 1 covers the eighteenth century, with Anthony Ashley Cooper (Lord Shaftesbury), L'Abbé Dubos, and Cristian Wolff at one end and Dugald Stewart, Johann Friedrich Herbart, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau at the other, totems of the century's open and close, and the points between which Guyer leads his reader through the intellectual worlds of Britain, France, and Germany as they turn on their axes, sometimes in parallel, often touching, but always as part of a tale compellingly told of the discipline's birth, growth, and flowering.

Guyer's canvas is broad, and he ranges with confidence, erudition, and ease across the wide range of topics—*inter alia* beauty, sublimity, novelty, taste, virtue, genius, tragedy, poetry, painting, and architecture—that consistently occupied thinkers in the eighteenth-century aesthetic tradition, though, as he readily admits, there are "no doubt other ways" (p. 8) than the one he chooses for organizing such a narrative, his being therefore "only *a* and not *the* history of modern aesthetics" (p. 2). Guyer holds, in fact, that since the "proper subject matter of the discipline" has "itself been contested" (p. 6), there is "little value in attempting to stipulate a clear definition of the field in advance," and "we will simply have to see how that history goes" (p. 3) in the "course of narrative" (p. 6). Guyer's "we" presumably includes the narrator, but he seems to have scanned his terrain pretty well in advance, and before the relatively brief "Introduction" is over (it speaks not only to volume 1, but to the work as a whole), readers have a good map and a clear idea of what lies ahead. Guyer makes two fundamental decisions that determine the course that follows and, to a large degree, the sights that will be included on the way. The first concerns his conception of "philosophical aesthetics," nominally what is "continuous with the topics of aesthetics as it is taught in philosophy departments" (p. 2), but, more fundamentally, "the study of the nature and value of the human *experience* of art and (sometimes) nature" (p. 1). The study is not intended as a history of art or literary theory, but, as Guyer acknowledges later on, his standards for what counts as "philosophical aesthetics" are "relaxed" (p. 377), and the line that divides "aesthetics" from "criticism" is not "always clear" (p. 3). In fact, one might object that Guyer's definition invites an elision of "aesthetics" with "philosophy of art," domains that overlap, but also have different origins and distinct desiderata of their own—one refers to a species of perception and corresponding affective states, the other to a kind of making and artifice—which might explain why, in the event, a good number of "critics" make the cut even if their main concerns are the nature, production, and reception of art rather than theories of the aesthetic per se. Some of these are familiar and their contributions well documented (Johann Joachim Winckelman, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, and the "critical poetics" of Johann Christoph Gottsched and his Swiss adversaries), while others are figures less well known (James Harris and James Beattie) or writers whose more aesthetically inclined writings are

often overlooked (Adam Smith, the French Encyclopedists, Rousseau, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and Alexander von Humboldt). Whether or not all the figures Guyer includes are equally worthy, the treatment they receive is consistently illuminating and informative.

The second decision is to organize the work as a whole (volume 1 included) around the conceptual triad of "truth, feeling, play," a proposal that anybody who has followed Guyer's work over recent years will immediately recognize. Guyer's insight, and the thesis that gives the work its singular character and distinctive shape, is that a "great deal of modern aesthetics . . . can be captured by following the intertwining trails of the three ideas that aesthetic experience is an experience of key truths, of the most fundamental emotions of human experience, and of the free play of the imagination" (p. 27). Alternatively expressed, and in terms that will be more familiar to some readers, modern aesthetics can be understood as a "struggle between those who oppose the unity of the Neo-Platonic triad" of the true, good, and the beautiful along with their corresponding "capacities" (p. 27) on the one hand, and, on the other, writers who identify the distinct feature of aesthetic experience with a way of presenting what human beings take to be true and good in "imaginative and entrancing ways, for which the term 'beautiful' may be used as shorthand" (pp. 27–28). Guyer devotes the substantial prologue ("The Origin of Modern Aesthetics") to explaining the origin of these three approaches. He locates the first—that aesthetics is primarily cognitivist—in Plato's criticism of the fine arts and Aristotle's response to it, with its modern legacy carried into Britain, via Shaftesbury's Neo-Platonist conviction that pleasure in beauty involves the apprehension of rational order, and Germany, with Christian Wolff's Leibnizian view of pleasure as a response to the sensory perception of perfection. Amid this long, persistent, broadly "Platonic" or "traditional" view, Guyer detects the stirring of new growth—emotional response and play—in the writings of Jean-Pierre de Crousaz, Dubos, and, above all, Joseph Addison, whose essays "On the Pleasures of the Imagination" herald the future to come and, most prominently, as Guyer puts it, the "idea that aesthetic response is grounded in free play of our mental powers, a play that is intrinsically pleasurable just because it is free and freedom itself is a deep source of satisfaction for us" (p. 64). Having erected the conceptual framework and identified its historical origins, Guyer characterizes the "remainder" of the volume as a matter of tracing how these three ideas "played themselves out" over the course of the century (p. 32), a task that proceeds chronologically through ten chapters divided into four parts corresponding to "national school": "Aesthetics in Britain, 1725–1800," "French Aesthetics in Mid-Century," "German Aesthetics between Wolff and Kant," and "Kant and After."

What is groundbreaking about Guyer's thesis and productive in his method is how well it captures and represents the discipline of aesthetics and its history as a growing tradition, a living tapestry that expands simultaneously in multiple directions, its parts stained different hues as writers take up and mix "truth," "emotion," and "play" in a variety of striking, often subtle, sometimes contested ways or, to use Guyer's preferred term, "syntheses." Distinguishing these discrete elements provides an interpretive target at which to aim, where identifying the presence or absence of each idea, variations, and combinations thereof opens a way of both illuminating the texts in question and uncovering connections that might otherwise remain obscure: how Addison, Crousaz, and Dubos, for example, combine forces at the beginning of the century to found the discipline, albeit with the latter emphasizing emotion; that Edmund Burke and Alexander Gerard are bound together by their focus on the "free play of our mental powers" (p. 140), in the company of William Hogarth as well, although he, following another thread, reveals his links to Smith and David Hume in championing beauty; the views of Smith, Beattie, and Sir Joshua Reynolds likewise are collectively variants on the combination of play and truth. The triad also allows Guyer to trace conceptual threads through time, especially the often distant and sometimes surprising influences on and connections with Immanuel Kant, including Dubos, Shaftesbury, Alexander Gerard, Moses Mendelssohn, Georg Sulzer, and Marcus Herz.

Indeed, nowhere does Guyer's method yield richer fruit than in the chapters devoted to the contributions of German writers, where putting the triad to work reveals the tradition post-Wolff to pre-Kant as an "attempt to find room for a fuller account of aesthetic experience within a framework that privileges the idea of cognition" (p. 305). Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (to whom goes credit for giving the discipline its name), Guyer argues persuasively, departs almost imperceptibly but crucially from Wolff by valorizing the perfection of representations for their own sake and, through his idea of "life of aesthetic cognition," glimpses the emotional impact of art (p. 324), which his student Georg Friedrich Meier subsequently makes explicit: a beautiful art work must be "touching" and a source of pleasure in itself (p. 331). In midcentury, as Guyer continues the story, a point is reached in the shape of Mendelssohn, where aesthetic experience can be appreciated as "mixed," drawing on a "range of mental and even physical resources" (p. 342) and it is "not a stretch" (p. 346) even to see Mendelssohn articulating in his isolation of a "faculty of approval" (p. 354), and for the first time in

German context, the concept of play. This idea, once framed, subsequently informs Lessing's famous discussion of the Laocoön, in which he "at least touches upon" and even "employs" the "new theory of play" (p. 373), setting the scene for Sulzer and Herz to effect a near-decisive break with rationalism in favor of emotion and mental activity, thus clearing an approach for the "complexity of Kant's aesthetics" (p. 417), the towering achievement of philosophical aesthetics from its early stirrings almost a century earlier.

One might expect from the trajectory of Guyer's narrative that all roads lead to Kant, and there does seem to be a hint of teleology in Guyer's observation that "we cannot appreciate the complexity of Kant's aesthetics unless we have seen the separate approaches that he ultimately combines, and which he rejects" (p. 417). When it arrives, however, not only is Guyer's treatment of Kant (as one might expect) masterful, especially in showing how the idea of free play unlocks the complexities of his views on fine art, genius, adherent beauty, sublimity, and the problem of taste, but also critical of him for failing to push through: Kant synthesizes the appreciation of aesthetic experience as a form of free play with truth, but in denying that "experience of art can involve the experience of the full range of human emotions" (p. 431) he "consciously held back" from the threefold synthesis of truth, play, and emotional impact that was within his grasp (p. 422). In the final chapter of the volume, Guyer shows how, with the exception of von Humboldt and his "revival of the traditional aesthetics of truth" (p. 423), Kant's aesthetics was absorbed and, with various revisions (Friedrich Schiller's primary among them), largely accepted by the generation that immediately followed. Even Johann Gottfried Herder, his vehement objections to disinterestedness and free play notwithstanding, Guyer urges, should be viewed as an heir to Kant, the latter's "feeling of life" (p. 520) reflected in his assertion that beauty is a "subjective response to the perception of objective harmony ... triggered by empathy with the well-being of other things in the world" (p. 523).

There is no question that Guyer's thesis provides him opportunity to form figures and concepts into a smooth, often seamless story that would probably not otherwise be possible. At the same time, there are consequences to the choices he makes, and these are worth noting. Appealing to a single principle runs the risk of dulling differences and blurring distinctions that might otherwise emerge, and there are indeed moments in Guyer's narrative when "truth, emotion, play" appears removed from the actual motivations of the writers in question. There is only one occasion when he formally acknowledges this possibility—when he notes that the French never "explicitly analyzed aesthetic experience as a free play of our cognitive and/or moral and emotional powers" (pp. 247–248)—but otherwise Guyer appears unconcerned that, while it might serve the Germans well, at least some British and French writers appear ill at ease in their borrowed clothes, with Hogarth, Archibald Alison, Stewart, Reynolds, Denis Diderot, and Jean le Rond d'Alembert noticeably unhappy when constrained within conceptual limits not of their own making. The triad also functions as a selection mechanism, ruling writers in or out because their work is amenable to analysis through one or more elements of "truth, emotion, play," and it tends to focus attention on certain aspects of the contributions under consideration while others that do not touch upon the elements significantly are passed over more lightly, as in the case of the sublime, which, except in cases where it cannot be ignored (as in Burke and Kant, for example) receives less discussion than might be expected given its prominent place in the eighteenth-century tradition; the picturesque, one might note, is not broached at all, even though it is an aesthetic category that, in the British context at least, wielded much influence in the latter part of the century and remained a presence for decades to come.

There are also times when, the effortless historical excavation notwithstanding, the reader wishes Guyer had spent more time up front delineating the analytic contours of the model he employs; for as the narrative develops, qualifications and subcategories appear that, while they might be referred to seeing how the "history goes," effectively blur what one expected to encounter as discrete divisions. Play, for example, even though distinct from the aesthetics of emotion and truth, comes in "emotional," "intellectual," and "cognitive" varieties, and truth can be "Platonic," "perfectionist," "intellectual," or "moral." The triad, moreover, functions as both a descriptive strategy to organize and narrate the history of aesthetics—"[t]racing out the different forms and combinations" of "truth, feeling, play"—and a normative criterion for showing that "greater value lies in their synthesis than in their separation" (p. 9). The latter role increasingly dominates, dividing up the good (play), the pretty good (emotion), and the decidedly bad (truth), with writers praised for embracing the former elements but regarded critically, derisively even, for accepting the latter. This normative flavor also intensifies that hint of teleology evident in the march, however desultory, in the direction of Kant, the movement of the whole progressing decisively toward the ascendency of free play so that when the aesthetics of truth reappears it does so as an unwelcome guest who just will not stay away: as a "revival" in Thomas Reid and Stewart (p. 176), a malingerer in the "deeply Christian" approach of André (p. 253), a "reversion" to tradition

in Rousseau (p. 291), an older form of "representation" in Johan Joachim Winckelmann (p. 365), and something "add[ed] back" by Karl Philipp Moritz (p. 417). In von Humboldt there is not a "breath of free play" to be felt anywhere (p. 508). After all, as Guyer himself remarks on several occasions when looking ahead to volume 2, the aesthetics of truth was on the verge of undergoing a major "revival," becoming "monolithic" under the leadership of the German Idealists (p. 423), suggesting that neither its demise nor the ascendancy of play were ever as secure in the eighteenth century as Guyer's narrative implies. The normative element complicates, in turn, the status of Guyer's conviction, variously expressed, that, ideally, all three elements should combine in a "pluralistic approach [that] will provide us with more insight into the nature of value of our experience of art and nature ... than any reductionist or monistic approach can do" (p. 7), and that the "most powerful theories of modernity deploy all three of these ideas" (p. 11), with the "most interesting figures ... those who do synthesize all three approaches in their own ways" (p. 27). Beyond these admonitions, the reader never learns what makes such a synthesis valuable nor how the aesthetics of truth, once it has been rejected, can be welcomed back into the fold like a prodigal son from the aesthetic wilderness. One's curiosity in this regard only grows on learning that most of those (Schiller being an exception) who come closest to satisfying this criterion for success—Lord Kames, Stewart, Mendelssohn, Sulzer, Schiller, and Karl Heinrich Heydenreich—are names that many would not rank among the theories that have wielded greatest influence or been considered most worthy of imitation.

In the final analysis, however, these are little more than requests for more information, and that they can be raised at all is a sign of how deeply Guyer engages both his subject matter and the reader, who feels that the only good thing about reaching the end of volume 1 is that there are still two more to go. For Guyer has accomplished something extraordinary in *A History of Modern Aesthetics*, a work that, as is only fitting, one might artfully describe in terms of the very aesthetic language the origin and meaning of which the study itself traces: sublimity in the grand sweep of philosophical history that it captures in its thesis, beauty in the details that it extracts and intricately connects, and pleasure in the response it elicits, engaging in its audience the faculty of imagination, whose hedonism, playful character, and freedom is ultimately the great hero of the book.

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DORAN, ROBERT. *The Theory of the Sublime from Longinus to Kant*. Cambridge University Press, 2015, xiii + 313 pp., $99.99 cloth.

The sublime has begun to gain some traction among scholars on both sides of the water in the past few decades. Every year another book appears reinterpreting and revisiting this concept, such as works by Emily Brady, Timothy Costelloe, Robert Clewis, and Frank Ankersmit. The river of books is breaking its banks. Robert Doran points out on page 5 that it was Paul Crowther that began this trend in 1989 with *The Kantian Sublime*, followed by works or chapters, primarily on Kant, by John Zammito, Paul Guyer, and Henry Allison. Thus, for nearly thirty years, writing on the concept of the sublime, mostly on Kant, has grown and has nearly outweighed the critical literature on beauty, fossilizing the third *Critique* as a work of beauty and sublimity. Is the subject of the sublime now a trend, which we might call a bandwagon, eclipsing categories such as taste, ugly, or the (what might be considered outdated) aesthetic attitude? Has it become an aesthetically valuable self-conscious way of understanding the history and development of (modern?) thinking about nature (nonhuman and human) in terms of what Doran calls "cultural fossilization"?

Doran's book takes five authors as key theorists of the sublime: Longinus, Boileau, Dennis, Burke, and Kant. In terms of secondary sources, Doran is still quite selective. For example, he mentions one work by Baldine Saint Girons as the "most exhaustive study of the sublime" (p. 7) and yet rarely references it in the rest of the book. The problem, as I see it, is how selectively he reads this history—a history whose banks have broken. And yet there is much to be said that is good about this book. Insofar as his three chapters on Longinus and six chapters on Kant unpack a great deal in both of these thinkers, especially regarding the "transcendental structure" of the sublime, the book is certainly worth reading for a better historical case than has previously been argued for in the literature (except in the French, German, Japanese, or Czech secondary literature, which has, in my opinion, surpassed many of the English-speaking authors mentioned above). Thus, what Doran means by history can be challenged. Three main theses of this book are worth mentioning.

First, he argues for the move from a "rhetorical" sublime to a transcendental sublime, starting with Longinus. Doran's thesis is that Longinus is as philosophical as rhetorical and that this "transhistorical structure" (pp. 9, 26) runs through the history of the sublime. Much of the secondary work, especially on Longinus, is concerned with the *technê* rather than the *logos* of *Peri hypsous*, much of which is lost. But

Doran convincingly shows how this text of Longinus's is philosophical as much as any work by Plato or Aristotle. Doran's three chapters on Longinus, "Defining the Longinian Sublime," "Longinus's Five Sources of Sublimity," and "Longinus on Sublimity in Nature and Culture" are excellent, particularly his reference and use of the classicist Stephen Halliwell as well as his comparison of the sublime to wonder (*thaumasion*), astonishment (*ekplêxis*), and time (*kairos*). What I would have appreciated, however, would have been a deeper analysis of the Italian Renaissance reception of Longinus (briefly referred to on pp. 29, 34, 98, and 104). For Doran, Longinus's *logos* of the sublime (which concerns both thought and expression) "is thus a matter of the nature of the self," (p. 41) but we are not at all sure what sort of self he means by this: a classical, a Renaissance, an early modern self, or is it all of them? Sometimes his twentieth- and twenty-first-century lens, which Doran himself names as "anachronistic," gets in the way of his historical–contextual work, as when he writes, "Although Longinus does at times suggest that *hypsos* puts us in touch with the gods or the divine, his vision is largely 'secular' or pararelligious, meaning that it expressly adopts a human—even a humanistic—perspective" (p. 43).

Second, he argues for the "dual-transcendence structure" of the sublime that runs through all of the primary sources mentioned above. On the one hand, it is overwhelming or overawing. On the other hand, it is an elevation of the mind. As Doran writes, "if experiences of overpowering awe, emotional transport, sacred terror and so forth had not been subsumed under a unifying term such as 'the sublime,' there would have been no *discourse* for the theories of Burke and Kant to build upon" (p. 8). While it is accepted that Kant builds upon this tradition, it is rather more complicated that Burke was working from an "established convention" (p. 9). A provocative claim concerns the key texts of the sublime all appearing at "turning points" in the history of philosophy. But is it that Longinus, Boileau, Burke, Dennis, and Kant are all describing the "*same basic experience*" in terms of this dual-transcendence structure? Doran's claim in this book is that Longinus presents a structure—"transcendence conceived aesthetically"—to the discourse on the sublime. This is certainly a worthwhile thesis and one that he supports in each chapter.

Third, he argues that these theorists all support the socioeconomic defense of a "bourgeois ... cast of mind" (p. 20). In each author, however, it is in a slightly different context. For Longinus, it is not class struggle but rather the heroic that is at stake. Great or high-mindedness (*megalophrosynê*) and grandeur (*megethos*) refer to education as much as inculcation, Doran claims: "Longinus observes that even though Euripides was 'not formed by nature for grandeur, he often forces himself to be tragic.' When Longinus says that genius may be 'dangerous,' if not properly trained, he is most probably referring to the misuse of rhetorical gifts in the public sphere ... . Genius thus requires 'education'—what the Germans call *Bildung*" (p. 52). A worthwhile comedy on this point of cultural influence would be Aristophanes' *Frogs* in which Euripides competes with Aeschylus for best tragedian in a bathetic underworld: Who is the more sublime tragedian? For Boileau, cultural critique means debating Huet and the meaning of *honnête homme* ("man of honor") in which the French historical context is defined over against the English post-civil-war context. "By suggesting that Longinus not only has a 'sublime mind,' that is, a mind capable of great thoughts and expression, but also a nobility of character that 'elevates' him morally above other men, Boileau associates the seventeenth-century concept of *honnête homme* with Longinus's idea of *megalophrosynê*, an idea that ... undergirds Longinus's subjective theory of literary practice" (p. 109). Similarly, John Dennis (1657–1734) defends Milton as the most sublime poet and that "grandeur of mind is achieved most effectively by terror, for terror forces us to consider the greatness and power of the cause, thereby expanding our mind accordingly" (p. 136). These authors, as well as Burke and Kant, all contribute to a cultural decadence perhaps only overcome by the French Revolution.

Perhaps my biggest qualm with this book is his chapter on Burke, which takes the Irishman, inspired by the Liffey breaking its banks, as supporting "sublime individualism." On page 160, he references "his biographer," Isaac Kramnick's 1977 work, *The Rage of Edmund Burke*, and Tom Furniss's *Edmund Burke's Aesthetic Ideology* (1993), ignoring three more recent major biographies by F. P. Lock, David Bromwich, and Richard Bourke (published by Oxford University Press, Harvard University Press, and Princeton University Press, respectively); a *Life in Caricature* by Nicholas Robinson (published by Yale University Press); and Seán Patrick Donlan's edited book *Edmund Burke's Irish Identities* (2006). All five of these books would challenge Doran's core thesis of sublime individualism, and these books make for much better historical–contextual work than either Kramnick or Furniss (see also the author of this review's co-edited book, *The Science of Sensibility*). Of course, Doran's book is not a book on Burke, but rather one on Longinus and Kant with a chapter each on Boileau, Dennis, and Burke (and yet, he comments that the idea for the chapter on Burke came about through a discussion he had with Derrida "during a ride from the San Jose airport" [p. x]). From the sublime to the ridiculous is but a step.

In Cressida Ryan's 2012 article on Burke's use of Longinus in the *Philosophical Enquiry* (in *The Science of Sensibility* mentioned by Doran), she sees a humorous, almost parodic side to Burke's sublime. This use of the sublime in the eighteenth century, easily parodied, could be compared in our time to Monty Python's use of the Grim Reaper in *Life of Brian*. The theory of the sublime has gained traction, but it is still a little weighty for its own good, and not yet logically or historically explicated in the way that the primary sources, including Burke's or Burnet's 1681 *Sacred Theory of the Earth*, have truly manifested in their own time and context. To return to Baldine Saint Girons on Burke and Marjorie Hope Nicolson on Burnet would do us some good (representing each side of the water). Doran's brief discussions of Vico and Mendelssohn also require other histories of the sublime, further breaking the banks. The manner in which the sublime is represented and expressed still verges on the bathetic—as Frances Fergusson pointed out some years ago—that is, you better take it seriously, and it better be secular; otherwise the aesthetic or philosophical work might just be seen as ridiculous in this (post?)modern age. Despite these criticisms there is much of value in this book, especially on Longinus and Kant and the fact that "the relation between the sublime and modern subjectivity ... is at the heart of this work" (p. 4). The acts of cultural fossilization and decadence cry out for novel but rigorous readings of the sublime yet again. Just think of what Jonathan Swift would have made of Donald Trump—it would have been sublime.

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KONSTAN, DAVID. *Beauty: The Fortunes of an Ancient Greek Idea*. Oxford University Press, 2015, x + 262 pp., $29.95 cloth.

In six elegant chapters comprising just under 200 pages, David Konstan sets out to do a lot: (1) set up philosophical dilemmas besetting our modern concept of "beauty"; (2) argue that the ancient Greeks had a term for the concept (chapter 2); (3) explore the nature and development of the ancient Greek concept of "beauty" (chapters 3 and 4); (4) chart a partial genealogy of the concept through biblical, Roman, Renaissance, and eighteenth-century usage to today (chapters 5 and 6); and (5) conclude with a fortune telling of sorts: appreciation of ancient Greek "beauty" could help philosophers dodge dilemmas afflicting modern "beauty," reclaiming a greater role for beauty in contemporary aesthetics.

The book is a wonderful and complicated little book. Through vivid case studies, concise summaries, and a cataloguing of beauty vocabularies, Konstan identifies important complexities in notions of "beauty," identifying important areas for philologists and philosophers to do more work. I appreciate the forward-looking nature of this book, especially Konstan's inspiring suggestion that the full fortune of ancient Greek "beauty" remains to be discovered.

The book is not about beauty standards—that is, the particular, culturally specific forms that beauty takes. Rather, the book is about the concept of "beauty" itself, especially its relation to certain aesthetic puzzles. Konstan is more interested in formal features of the concept—for example, the family of responses it elicits, how it is sensed, the kinds of objects it attaches to (and what this implies about art, class, gender, and so on), the locating of beauty in objective or subjective features of the world, and how philosophers and statesmen extend the concept in promising or problematic ways. The various threads of Konstan's refreshing "meta focus" crisscross throughout, making this book a rich read.

In chapter 1, Konstan suggests that it was only in the eighteenth century that beauty became a category in the burgeoning field of aesthetics, under the influence of Kant. A feature of "artworks," beauty was meant to evoke admiration, contemplation, and reverence. However, we also associate beauty with erotic attraction, a notion Konstan traces to the ancient Greeks, especially Plato. This then raises the following question: What distinguishes the kinds of beauty that evoke these divergent responses (that is, admiring contemplation and erotic attraction)? Konstan neatly illustrates the problem with a fifteenth-century Spanish altarpiece. Consisting of twelve paintings, "The Martyrdom of Saint Marina" depicts the life of Saint Marina, who was martyred in Pisidian Antioch (in modern Turkey) in the third century. Attracted to her beauty, the local governor Olymbrius proposed to marry Marina on the condition that she renounce her newfound Christian faith. When Marina refused, Olymbrius subjected her to multiple tortures, ultimately beheading her. However, none of the violence marred Marina's beauty—a kind of beauty that was at once carnal and spiritual, arousing both erotic desire and admiring, reverent contemplation. With this striking example (which serves as a reference point for the rest of the book), Konstan sharpens the dilemma: Viewing the altarpiece, must we respond to Marina with either admiring reverence or sexual desire, just as we must see either a duck or a rabbit in Joseph Jastrow's famous Duck–Rabbit image? Or is it possible to reconcile these ostensibly opposing responses?

Konstan raises a second problem, which, like the first, allegedly arises out of a "new complex" that "recuperated" classical notions but "reconceived or altered" them, generating new problems that were "moot in antiquity" (p. 27). In distinguishing the "beauty of an artwork" from the "beauty of the object represented in it" (a distinction foreign to the Greeks), contemporary aestheticians create a new puzzle: Is a fine painting like Henri Matisse's *Blue Nude* beautiful, given that it represents an ugly figure? Nobody can agree.

In the ensuing chapters, Konstan explores ancient Greek "beauty," with a view to (1) showing how these two dilemmas do not arise for the Greeks, and (2) framing this result as a *good thing*. Since I am a philosopher, I am, of course, going to raise potential problems for (1) and (2). However, first I will say a few words about Konstan's very valuable analysis of the beauty vocabulary and the ancient Greek concept of "beauty" more generally.

It is no small thing to find (as Konstan does) solid evidence for a Greek beauty vocabulary—a vocabulary distinct from, albeit related to, terminology signifying other concepts. Konstan boldly challenges the view that the Greeks lacked a recognizable notion of "beauty." In chapter 2 Konstan argues that while the adjective *kalós* has a wide range of meanings (visually attractive, brilliant, well-wrought, good, of fine quality, noble, honorable, virtuous), the noun *kállos* has a narrower range of meanings (visual attractiveness, fine and shapely look, youthful glow, rejuvenation, splendor, and so forth). Konstan notes that *kállos* is associated with effeminate men, mortal women, and Aphrodite, becoming increasingly contrasted with masculinity and virtue, especially in the literature of the fifth century BC and beyond. Nevertheless, both *kalós* and *kállos* retain close connections with human attractiveness and the visible, especially with brightness, visual attractiveness, and the pleasure of sight. Beyond these core uses, the terms come to be "analogically" applied to artifacts, auditory stimuli, and the human soul. However, whatever its object, the fundamental response *kállos* elicits is erotic desire (*éros).*

Chapters 3 and 4 develop ideas proposed in chapter 2. I will note a couple of Konstan's key moves. First, Konstan formulates a tension in the Greek conception of "beauty": it is "both a positive attribute and a suspect trait, characteristic of courtesans and pretty boys rather than adult males and respectable characters generally" (p. 95). Interestingly, *éros for kállos* is nonreciprocal. For example, while the "noble" *(kalós)* general feels *éros* in response to the "beauty" *(kállos*) of his highborn courtesan, she does not feel *éros* for him. Indeed, more and more classical authors contrast *kállos* and *kalós* to draw out the difference between human physical attractiveness and human virtue. I worry that Konstan passes over this tension too quickly, given that it bears directly on the question of whether the Greeks had the resources to reconcile carnal and spiritual responses to beauty. I will return to this point.

In chapters 3 and 4 Konstan also more forcefully defends his claim that the core meanings of Greek "beauty" relate to human visual attractiveness. Extensions of the Greek beauty vocabulary to noble actions, the human soul, artifacts, and auditory stimuli (especially speeches and music) are merely "analogical." Citing the sculptor Polyclitus's hugely influential *Canon* (later fifth century BC) and Hermogenes's *On Style* (second century AD), Konstan makes the case that proportion, harmony, and symmetry were central to the Greek conception of "beauty." Since such features "naturally apply" to visual objects, beauty is, at its core, visual. Hermogenes, Plato, and others analogically apply beauty to rhetoric because speeches can possess a kind of symmetry and harmony. The same goes for philosophers' applications of beauty to the soul.

However, I wonder about one of Konstan's key premises, namely, that proportion, harmony, and symmetry apply most naturally to visual objects. While Konstan is certainly right that Plato's Symposium emphasizes the visual and erotic aspects of beauty, Plato's Philebus plausibly introduces the pure pleasures of sight and hearing as genuine responses to beauty, as Konstan himself notes (p. 104). In short, why suppose that beauty only "analogically" applies to the auditory?

Also, Konstan hints at the idea that Greek beauty may be something beyond proportion, symmetry, and harmony—rather, something this trio gives rise to. For example, according to Hermogenes, beauty is the good complexion or color blooming on a speech—that single quality of character throughout. This reminds me of *Republic X* when Socrates complains that the color and complexion of a poem often deceives people into believing it is fine *(kalós)* (601a–b).

That said, Konstan does offer a really compelling analysis of Plato's *Hippias Major*, arguing that, in the course of the dialogue, the focal concept (*tòkalón*) noticeably narrows, moving from the fitting, useful, advantageous, and good to visual and auditory attractiveness. In short, Socrates starts defining "fineness" and ends defining "beauty." If this is right (and I think it is), then it would suggest that Plato was aware of some of these conceptual and/or linguistic nuances. We may need to take a serious second look at the *Hippias Major* with Konstan's reading in mind.

A final key move Konstan makes in chapters 3 and 4 is an argument from silence. Konstan emphasizes that the ancient Greeks never ascribe beauty to *artworks*, as opposed to *what is represented* in the sculpture, painting, amd so on. First, it is not even

clear that the Greeks had a concept of "artwork." Second, the Greeks called "artworks" *kalá* only with regard to their "mimetic quality"—that is, how accurately they represented an object. (This claim seems to me less supportable with regard to speeches and music. Unfortunately, Konstan only considers visual art.)

Chapters 5 and 6 offer a partial genealogy of the concept of "beauty," arguing that Hebrew, Greek, and Latin terms for beauty all retain a "primary connection with the visual" and with the human form, such that all three languages associate "beauty" with attractiveness and desire. (Konstan interestingly suggests that Cicero's speeches against Verres represent a key moment—one in which Cicero appropriates the term "pulcher" and cognates to identify an aesthetic erotic response to *artworks as such*—that is, the mysterious, possessive passion of the art collector.) Konstan skips medieval usage, discussing Renaissance and Enlightenment usage in chapter 6.

Konstan tells a quick story in chapter 6. Neoplatonism dominated Renaissance thinking about beauty (physical, visual beauty expresses abstract, transcendent beauty) until Kant turned the tides of our thinking about beauty. According to Konstan, "thanks to Kant, beauty was deprived of the ability to inspire passion as well as of the possibility that there should ever be general agreement about aesthetic judgments" (p. 185). Clearly, Konstan sees this Kantian wave as a bad thing. He surmises that conceiving of our response to beauty as disinterested contemplation has motivated some of the social, political, and feminist critiques of beauty and the subsequent deemphasizing of beauty in contemporary aesthetics.

On the tail of this tale Konstan wraps up his book claiming that beauty can and should "cohabit with other, equally important aesthetic values" (p. 191). Attending to the Greek idea of "beauty" can help us establish a secure connection between beauty and passion so as to reclaim a larger role for beauty in contemporary aesthetic theorizing.

As promised, I will end by returning to the aesthetic dilemmas set up in chapter 1, raising some potential problems for ancient Greek "beauty." (One of the strong points of Konstan's book is that he invites this conversation with philosophers.) While it is certainly the case that the Greeks do not have to reconcile Kantian "disinterested contemplation" and "sexual attraction" as distinct responses to beauty, they do have to reconcile "spiritual attraction" and "sexual attraction." Indeed, such a reconciliation is arguably at the very heart of what Plato is trying to do in the *Symposium*. In other words, a parallel form of the first dilemma may arise for the Greeks, echoed in the very tension Konstan himself highlights: *éros for kállos* is often nonreciprocal because *kállos* is a suspect trait—one that is frequently contrasted with virtue. In short, did not the Greeks also grapple with how to reconcile carnal and spiritual responses to beauty? Why suppose they fared any better than we in this reconciliation?

My worry regarding the second dilemma is different. Suppose I grant that the Greeks did not ascribe beauty to artworks and so did not worry about the beauty of a painting of an ugly figure. But then I am inclined to say that the Greeks made a *mistake* in not ascribing beauty to artworks as such. If you think *Blue Nude* is in fact beautiful (as I in fact do), then you have strong philosophical reasons to resist or reject the allegedly Greek idea that beauty does not apply to artworks as such.

None of this is to deny that Greek thinking about beauty might help us resolve these dilemmas. I share Konstan's sentiment that thinking through Greek beauty can and will help us understand beauty and the puzzles beauty generates. This book is an excellent starting point for that endeavor, and I wholeheartedly recommend it to any philosopher grappling with beauty and associated puzzles.

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WIESING, LAMBERT. *The Philosophy of Perception: Phenomenology and Image Theory*. Trans. Nancy Ann Roth. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014, ix +166 pp., $120.00 cloth, $39.95 paper.

Much of the work on perception, both in philosophy and psychology, focuses either on what the perceiver (or some part of the perceiver) must do in order to perceive (for example, compute, theorize, categorize, interpret, construct, and so on) or on what is perceived (the external world, sense data, and so on). Lambert Wiesing believes this is a mistake. Perception cannot be explained, he thinks. It should, instead, be our starting point and explored phenomenologically. We should, instead of trying to explain perception, focus on what we can learn about ourselves through reflecting on perception itself.

The book is well written—and this from philosophers working in the analytic tradition about an author working in the phenomenological tradition. We assume that at least some of the credit is due to Nancy Ann Roth, who translated the book from its original German. The book is short, with only four chapters. And the book is interesting and worth reading, especially for aestheticians working on images and

image perception. The book is also maddening; in places every bit as careless and quick as it is, in other places, thoughtful and penetrating. Fortunately, the reader, and perhaps especially the reader from the analytic tradition, can get much of what is interesting without having to travel far down the rabbit hole (unless, of course, you are asked to review the book).

The first chapter argues that traditional approaches have not only failed, but necessarily must. This chapter is easily the most maddening, the chapter after which it is hard to believe that anything worth reading could follow. In outline, the argument is that any explanation of perception will have to rely on myth. Why myth? Because it will have to offer an explanation by appeal to what cannot be seen and to what we cannot be certain, whereby "certain" Wiesing obviously has in mind Cartesian certainty. In one fell swoop, all arguments to the best explanation have been dismissed. Why we should require certainty of an explanation is never shared. It is also not clear that Wiesing's own account can support the burden, but that we will leave aside. Nor is it clear what an account of perception, as Wiesing is thinking about it, is supposed to explain. Early in the book, for instance, Wiesing writes "I actually doubt that it would be possible to explain, by way of a theory, why there is perception rather than no perception" (p. vii). But surely that is not what most philosophers and cognitive scientists take themselves to be explaining. Like Wiesing, they take perception to be given. In trying to explain how it is possible, they are assuming that it is. Indeed, and this is part of the frustration of the first chapter, it is not clear that Wiesing's approach is not simply orthogonal to much current work on perception. It is not clear, in other words, why much of Wiesing's account in the later chapters is not perfectly compatible with the approaches that he criticizes in the first.

In the second chapter, Wiesing lays out his phenomenological approach to perception. In this he hopes to orient the locus of inquiry on perception itself, avoiding the isolating focus on either subject or object alone, which he argues is at the core of the failing of traditional approaches to perception. The focus on perception itself, and the self-imposed requirement that we appeal only to what is certain, would seem to entail that Wiesing can appeal only to his own experiences, about which we cannot be certain, or make claims about ours, about which he cannot be certain. The way out, Wiesing argues, is to offer a proof that does not involve an argument, at least not an argument in the traditional sense. We can do this by employing what Wiesing refers to as a Kantian "eidetic variation" as "phenomenological proof." The idea is that by creatively describing features of our own experience, we might allow others to find those features in their own experiences. My certainty about my experience becomes your certainty about yours. This method of exploring the variation of perception allows the perceiver to grasp what is essential to a certain phenomenon—what aspects remain and which can be dismissed because of the impossibility of their own imaginations. Going further, Wiesing believes this method of "eidetic variation"—an imaginative inquiry—can establish the relational nature of phenomena to each other and to the perceiver, thus allowing a phenomenological description of perception.

We suspect that all of this will likely be of interest to philosophers in phenomenology, although much of it is not new. But there is something here for the rest of us, we think. For the eidetic method shares much with particularist accounts in aesthetics and ethics. We might think, for instance, that by describing certain features of an artwork we can thereby get others to see "higher" features of the work. What many particularists propose is something like the eidetic method, but with the object of perception being public and with no hope for the kind of certainty that Wiesing requires.

The third chapter is the central chapter of the book, although we do not find it the most interesting. Perhaps the chapter will be of greater interest to phenomenologists, and especially those sharing Wiesing's view that philosophy requires certainty and so can appeal only to experience, narrowly construed. In this chapter, Wiesing returns briefly to his critical overview of theories of perception: that they are ultimately concerned with the preconditions necessary for perception rather than concerned with, as he is, perception *in se*. Wiesing argues that however articulate and thoughtful these "prehistories" of perception may be, they are ultimately speculative only. The very act of perceiving, Wiesing notes, is not the sort of thing which admits of accessibility to its genesis or to necessary and sufficient conditions: perception is simply a given and an essential part of what it is to be human, a perceiving thing. Perception—and this is why Wiesing argues that "prehistories" fail and, as mentioned above, necessarily must—is not something one can remove oneself from and observe from the outside. Wiesing wishes then to reverse the direction of the common question. We ought not, he argues, trouble ourselves with what the "conditions of possibility" for perception are, but rather question what results are present for a subject that is necessarily a perceiving entity. From this approach, Wiesing seeks to derive the "consequences of perception," that is, that perception demands of a subject some internal logic of perception itself. He seeks to answer the question: What universal and necessary features of perception qua perception can be discerned?

This piece of Wiesing's argument is central to the success of his overall project. Wiesing thinks of this intellectual enterprise as one of polarity, yet in this chapter he presents it in a schema of "constellations." The first presents the object of perception as that of primary inquiry, the second constellation places the perceiving subject as the "fixed star" in phenomenology. By setting up this schema, Wiesing is able to more easily show us his *via tertia*, or missing piece: perception itself. Wiesing does not set up this schema in order to dismiss entirely the former two "constellations" but rather to present a more comprehensive one: a phenomenological approach that does not neglect perception itself as a necessary *relatum* among these three. As Wiesing later says, "as in every perception, the perception of an image is an intentional state with a subject and an object. In order to describe this state, three *relata* must therefore be identified . . . " (p. 133). (Whether there are three *relata*, and especially whether perception itself could be among them, is never critically examined by Wiesing. And whether we can make sense of this without reifying perception and falling afoul of Wiesing's requirement that we appeal only to what is certain, lest we fall prey to myth making, is a question we leave for others.)

This third chapter also offers more trying and interesting arguments. He returns to his critique of the Cartesian cogito, arguing that when the former schema is understood the *fundamentum inconcussum* may be modified. Instead of its primary establishment of *I* as subject, the orientation to the "me" that perception imposes upon us may be more clearly seen. And with this, the necessary conditions of perception itself may be explored. Among these conditions imposed upon the perceiver is that of "continuing presence." Objects are not merely "present" to the perceiver, they impose a condition of "presence" upon her. Wiesing thinks this distinction is critical in that it can explain the manner in which temporal and spatial relations are a fundamental feature of perception, whether or not a perceiver is "attending to" a particular object at some specific time and place. Furthermore, Wiesing argues that "content" is a necessary feature of perception; one cannot simply "perceive." Perception is necessarily a transitive and intentional act—it both acts toward an object, and the object, by the very nature of perception, imposes itself upon the perceiver.

We have tried thus far to offer an overview of the previous chapters and share some of our misgivings. Since the fourth chapter, the chapter on image perception, rests significantly on the first three chapters, you might expect that our misgivings would resurface. But it is common in philosophy for interesting insights to survive misplaced beginnings, and we think this is true of chapter 4, which is a gem. Indeed, here the phenomenological method plausibly has greater purchase. As Wiesing thinks about image perception, "this is neither about the question what do I see when I see an image? Nor is it about the problem what do I do when I see an image? The starting point for this approach is, accordingly: the unique property of image perceptions may be thought back from the distinctive consequences this mental state has for the subject" (p. 140). And what is this distinctive consequence?

According to Wiesing, what distinguishes the perception of images from the perception of ordinary objects or states of affairs is that the perception of images does not involve the subject in the same way. Images are nonimmersive. We do not participate. Wiesing attempts to capture this thought in various ways, but perhaps the easiest to grasp is the different causal relations that hold. When I see my daughter, for instance, I am in causal contact with her and she with me. What I see, in the ordinary case of perception, involves me. Even if I do not perceive myself, I necessarily take myself to be part of the scene. What I see can affect me. When I look at an image of my daughter, even if we think of the image as transparent—that is even if we understand my seeing an image of my daughter as a way of seeing my daughter—my perceiving her image does not place me with her. The perceiver and the image do not share the same space-time points. There are, of course, other ways to capture this insight, or at least much of it. Part of what I am aware of in ordinary perception is the object's relative location to me. And although the same is true when I see the medium of the image, when I see the piece of paper that it is on, for instance, the same is not true when I look at the image itself. I am not, as Wiesing puts it, immersed in the perception.

As we have already noted, we suspect this book will prove very interesting to philosophers in the phenomenological tradition, and much of it will prove very frustrating to those who are not. But, and this is especially true for those working on image perception, the book will prove interesting to a wider range of philosophers, even those ready to abandon all hope after the first chapter.

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CAHAN, SUSAN E. *Mounting Frustration: The Art Museum in the Age of Black Power*. Duke University Press, 2016, 360 pp., 20 color + 93 b&w illus., $34.95 cloth.

HEIN, HILDE. *Museums and Public Art: A Feminist Vision*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Book Store, 2014, 250 pp., $17.95 paper.

Within the history of the American Society for Aesthetics, there continues to be significant resistance to including the sociohistorical context of a work of art as part of the essential discussion of its aesthetic. Since the eighteenth century, aestheticians have often relied upon the judgments and consensus of (white) "men of taste" who set the norms for the elusive characteristic of "quality" in art, supposedly derived from a disinterested perspective that is objective, neutral, and imbued with an overriding concern for "pure" aesthetic value. Art historians, critics, and philosophers have set the standards for art that are considered high, fine and valuable, not to mention beautiful, canonical, and worthwhile as a monetary investment. These two books challenge museums—the predominant and continually evolving institutions of art delivery—in order to uncover and expose the rampant political biases and hidden strategies that their founders, administrators, and boards of trustees have utilized in order to maintain the preferred status quo of predominantly white male power. We learn that in spite of artists' activism and political actions to the contrary, executive decisions for the past fifty years—about exhibitions, the acquisition of new artworks, the creation of permanent collections—have often fueled self-serving interests of the powerful and elite whose money, influence, and capacity to determine the fate of an artist's career has typically run unchecked. (In full disclosure, I earned both undergraduate and graduate degrees in studio art and felt continually frustrated for decades in my attempts to "break into" the male-dominated artworld. I repeatedly tried to understand gallery trends and persistent museum discrimination against women, most recently codified in the data presented by Maura Reilly, "Taking the Measure of Sexism: Facts, Figures, and Fixes" [*ARTnews* 05/26/2015] that compares the notorious "report cards" issued by the Guerrilla Girls in 1986 and Pussy Galore in 2015.)

These two texts are noteworthy because they focus on reasons for a deliberate and systematic exclusion of under-represented artists from the establishment artworld. The stories are intricate and often intriguing, but mostly they are perplexing in their hypocrisy; museums publicly claim to serve "the public" but privately manipulate who counts—both as persons whose artistic production is considered worthy of value and exposure to "the public" as well as persons whose invitation to and consumption of art is carefully orchestrated by the kinds of shows curators choose to produce. The basic question aestheticians might ask is: What role is played by philosophical aesthetics within the scenarios of real-life decision making—particularly in the debates over "quality"? An additional question, though not yet asked by all in our profession, might be: How can a more enlightened vision of the future facilitate more parity for women and artists of color within persistently narrow and constrained artworld institutions?

The more recent and historical text, *Mounting Frustration*, is written by a highly experienced and knowledgeable member of the museum and academic world, Susan E. Cahan. She is an art historian and associate dean for the arts at Yale University with prior work as a curator and director of educational programs at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Peter Norton Family Foundation. In chronicling the recalcitrance of art museums in "the age of black power," she aims to persuade us that in spite of a number of noteworthy African American artists emerging after World War II in New York City, public efforts in the 1960s toward justice for growing numbers of Black artists to integrate museums amid the American civil rights movement and the good (though flawed) intentions of some isolated museum professionals to provide more parity for Black artists, full equality for artists of color within elite museums has failed. After decades of museums seeking to insulate themselves against operational change by mounting shows that included no artists of color while simultaneously denying there was any problem and rejecting proposed solutions by protesting activist artists, racial discrimination still persists through the preferred exhibition model for showcasing minority artists: the one-person "token" exhibition which Cahan considers an "'additive' approach to multicultural reform, which safely avoids radical revision" (p. 12). Historical evidence consists of case studies that are meticulously analyzed through internal museum documents and numerous interviews with artists, activists, and journalists. The historical context prior to 1967 included less than a dozen exhibits of African American artists (with perhaps the most prominent being Romare Bearden's 1966 show, *Art of the American Negro*) and numerous shows at major museums that routinely excluded Blacks. Although the Studio Museum in Harlem started up in 1968, serving as a positive model, major New York museums bungled attempts at integration, inspiring more protests. Prime examples of incompetency included the infamous 1969 *Harlem On My Mind* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the 1971 *Contemporary Black Artists* show at the Whitney Museum of Art, and the 1984 *"Primitivism" in 20th Century Art: Affinity of*

the Tribal and the Modern at the Museum of Modern Art. In these cases, Black artists were either systematically treated as invisible (*Harlem On My Mind* consisted of photographs of people with no actual works of art), as incapable of co-curating a survey of contemporary Black artists (resulting in twenty-four of the originally invited seventy-eight artists boycotting the show), or as sufficiently represented by only two Black artists in a show on primitivism that privileged modernism and abstract "art" over "tribal" artifacts of indigenous peoples. (Lest we think New York City is the only locus serving to influence audiences, the 1984 MoMA show circulated to twelve additional museums.)

Cahan cites this last case, where art was narrowly defined as "the creation of white European and European American artists" (p. 171), as the clearest example of a museum demonstrating "how aesthetic ideas were used to advance political agendas that could not be expressed outright . . . . [In effect] the Whitney Museum used aesthetic concepts to do the work of discrimination" (p. 8). Many other aesthetic issues were operative below the surface as well, for example, Black American artists who sought recognition were forced to confront the positing of "a black aesthetic": whether it was exemplified in their art and how it differed from that of "classical style" African art. Interestingly, theorist Alain Locke had written about such issues in the 1920s, arguing for the positive influence of African art upon Europeans and debating its importance with art historian James Porter who, conversely, encouraged Black artists not to imitate (as did Picasso and Brancusi) the "special geometric forms" of "primitive" originals (p. 189). (We can welcome the continuation of the discourse in Paul C. Taylor's *Black Is Beautiful: A Philosophy of Black Aesthetics* [Wiley Blackwell, 2016].) Another issue, as already noted in this review, was whether curating shows of exclusively black artists was a good strategy since they recused a museum from actually integrating temporary exhibits and permanent collections. Moreover, the ever-present "quality debate" raised questions about whether art created by Blacks rose to the standards of "high art" or even exhibited beauty. It is worth noting that many of the same aesthetic issues arose during the revolution of feminist art in the 1960s and 1970s. Female artists and theorists debated whether a unique feminist aesthetic was at work, whether alternative mediums like quilting constituted mere "craft" and not "(high) art," and whether all-women shows were/are conducive to long-term success. (The new Los Angeles gallery—Hauser Wirth & Schimmel—opened with an all-female show of thirty-four artists, *Revolution in the Making; Abstract Sculpture by Women, 1947–2016*, in March 2016). Women who experimented with their own bodies—for instance, in agentic performance art intended to subvert male-defined ideals of white female beauty—risked the dismissive snubs of artworld aficionados. (One art critic, Hilton Kramer, has been repeatedly cited by both feminist and race critics as a dominant voice that denounced artworks by both women and Blacks as lacking artistic quality.)

Hein's collection of essays includes several that were previously published (as far back as 1990) as well as revised versions of publicly delivered lectures. They cover topics such as "The Museum as Canon-maker," "Refashioning the Museum with Feminist Theory," and "Public Art: A New Museum Paradigm." As an esteemed, long-standing member of the American Society for Aesthetics and founding member of the ASA Feminist Caucus in 1990, Hein has been a mainstay within our profession: a role model with a groundbreaking feminist voice consistently strong and unyielding. Her skepticism that we live in a twenty-first century age of "post-feminism" in which women have triumphed over marginality and exclusion within a masculinist tradition recalls a mantra from the beginning of the women's movement: "As feminist scholars in the 1970s observed, 'add women and stir' is not a formula that suffices to resolve deeply rooted systemic problems" (p. 6). Calling herself a "museum theoretician," she observes museums and their personnel at the "meta" level, interested in how museums think and why: how the intentions that become policy are the product of both individual taste within the particular circumstances of an institution and local conventions. Her preferred mode of analysis is feminist; indeed she aims to bring feminist theory "down to earth" (p. 7) by applying probing questions to the real artworld dynamics of how museums operate. She does not claim that feminism provides all the answers or is the only conceptual framework to promote strategies for correcting unfairness; rather, her bias is toward feminism as "a preeminent change agent" (p. 7). Together with her previous writing—*The Exploratorium: The Museum as Laboratory* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990) and *The Museum in Transition: A Philosophical Perspective* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000)—she has observed a shift away from "object centered" to "experience centered" practice. A model for the type of activity toward which museums are now moving is previewed in her 2006 text *Public Art: Thinking the Museum Differently* (AltaMira Press). In the volume under review, she sees the two institutions of museums and public art sharing "a common dynamic of inclusiveness, experimentalism, open-endedness, and self-criticism" (p. 15). Her conclusion, however, is that in spite of new fields like Museum Studies, radically transformed disciplines of art history, cultural studies, queer studies, and others, plus many more women occupying positions within museums and

rising through the ranks, women "did not profoundly change the ethos of the institution" (p. 15). Many, in fact, saw no need to do so nor were they inclined to appeal to feminist theory as a guideline. Hein saw her work cut out for her—to more specifically suggest, as a feminist, what changes needed to be introduced and to provide a workable framework for their implementation. (Unfortunately, Hein has omitted any extensive discussion of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum of Art established in 2007 upon the occasion of the permanent installation of Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* as well as the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C., incorporated in 1981.)

In comparing the two texts more fundamentally, I would conclude that Hein's text is more optimistic, in spite of Cahan having worked within the museum structure and Hein, as an academic, observing museums from the outside with the resolve to provide philosophically inspired answers to questions from museum administrators as to how to improve delivery of their product. Cahan is clearly the historian who offers us innumerable details in how museums have come to be as they are now; however, she ends on a pessimistic note in her epilogue: "This is not to say that nothing at all has changed, but that the theoretical frameworks of institutions has [sic] not changed. The reins of power have not been shared" (p. 266). She admits that the situation would be much worse were it not for three factors: (1) the continued presence of "culturally specific museums" like the Studio Museum in Harlem "that declare their points of view and the criteria they use to select and prioritize art" (p. 266); (2) a wave of new museums in the past twenty years—often with federal funding through the Smithsonian Institution—"with explicitly expansive missions" (p. 266) like the National Museum of the American Indian, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, and a planned National Museum of the American Latino; and (3) ongoing educational outreach—a proven means used by museums to attract minorities when they simultaneously refused to present actual exhibitions or integrate underrepresented artists. Cahan argues that continued resistance of individual institutions to internal change has resulted in "a restructuring of the museum system as a whole" whereby "whiteness as normative persists in the major museums, and even though it may be expressed in ways that are more subtle now than in the 1960s, the result is a similar kind of bigotry" (p. 266). Reading the text offers clues as to how administrators could have done things differently in individual situations; in addition, Cahan strongly promotes more dialogue, an open exchange of ideas, and cooperation among the parties involved. After all, she reminds us, the United States is undeniably moving toward a population where minority races outnumber whites.

Hein, on the other hand, is more optimistic, offering us a "feminist vision" that carefully chronicles minor changes at institutions but also presents a broader perspective on museums by standing apart from them and comparing them, as a system, to changes within the ongoing art practice of public art. Art outside the museum system, that is, truly "public" art, often involves ordinary people (not "experts") who participate nonhierarchically in a dynamic way: experimenting, locating art within communities, seeking out diverse audiences. Museums can follow this model toward a "radical reconception" that involves changes in language, presentation, education, and focus (p. 84). Less a static and passive repository of objects, museums can become more immaterial and ephemeral, geared toward perceiving "the value of objects to be instrumental, a means to the production of certain types of experience" (p. 230). Prime examples that Hein has already written about extensively include the Exploratorium in San Francisco (1969) and the Holocaust Memorial Museum (1984) in Washington, D.C.

It is interesting to note that art critics today continue to raise questions about museums, their holdings, and their funding sponsors. In "Making Museums Moral Again," Holland Cotter cited artists who protested the Louvre in 2015 while crucial policy negotiations were under way in Paris during the United Nations climate talks (*The New York Times*, March 17, 2016). Politically minded art collectives like Occupy Museums and Not an Alternative protested the museum's sponsorship ties to two of the world's largest oil companies. Similar protests against corporate connections have been directed at the Metropolitan, the Guggenheim, and major university museums (Harvard). Cotter notes that the new Louvre and Guggenheim franchises in Abu Dhabi have been criticized for "condoning, if not actively supporting, inhumane labor practices, like those imposed on migrant workers."

Meanwhile, there are some promising efforts toward diversity within the United States. The Speed Art Museum in Louisville, Kentucky, has worked to draw new audiences, broaden their scope of artists, and also diversify "at the top" by using "a board matrix" created by its director: a "long and detailed spreadsheet to recruit people for the museum's board of governors and board of trustees" that "assigns columns to race, age, gender and profession, and to less concrete categories like 'creative thinker'" (*The New York Times*, March 15, 2016). It has proven successful in undermining the "enduring homogeneity of museum boards," as evidenced in a 2007 study by the Urban Institute that found that 86% of board

members of American nonprofit institutions were non-Hispanic whites.

Less promising are the most recent statistics gathered by the Association of Art Museum Directors: in spite of gains made by women at small and midsize museums (often university or contemporary-art museums with budgets under $15 million), women run just 24% of the biggest art museums in the United States and Canada, and they earn 29% less than their male counterparts (see "Study Finds a Gender Gap at the Top Museums," *The New York Times*, March 7, 2014). Only five of the thirty-three most prominent art museums have women at the helm. It is hoped that organizations such as the Center for Curatorial Leadership and the Getty Leadership Institute will continue to help professionally train and move women and minorities into directorships; it almost goes without saying that very few persons of color successfully occupy these positions.

Clearly aestheticians can engage more directly in the ways our philosophical discourse plays a role in insuring more justice in everyday artworld practices. As Hein suggested, we can bring theory down to earth. I highly recommend these two texts as fonts of knowledge about the backroom workings of an artworld that we treasure. Individually, we can facilitate change by being more aware of implicit bias: every time we cite art examples in a published paper that excludes women and artists of color, whenever we teach a syllabus with no diversity in our choice of artists or any mention of institutional power structures, and when we inadvertently reinforce the norm that white, male, Eurocentric thinkers necessarily possess privileged credentials, experience, and intelligence to judge art. With self-awareness and continuing discussion, our own serious philosophical debates can give rise to a future in which the experience of art becomes more inclusive and meaningful.

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WARTENBERG, THOMAS E. *Mel Bochner: Illustrating Philosophy*. South Hadley, MA: Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, 2015, 48 pp., 30 color illus., $19.95 cloth.

The text under consideration is a catalogue for an exhibition held at Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, also entitled "Illustrating Philosophy." It includes a two-page foreword from the director, and twenty pages of essay and discussion by Thomas Wartenberg as well as seventeen page-sized illustrations. (The essay also contains a number of images, almost all of works by Bochner.)

Readers of this journal may know of Bochner's illustrations of Wittgenstein through the "Introduction" Arthur Danto contributed to a 1991 edition of *On Certainty*, reprinted in Danto's *Philosophizing Art* (University of California Press, 1999), an edition illustrated with twelve images from Bochner, the title page and two other front pages of which appear here as plates on pages 30–32. In explanation of the catalogue, Wartenberg recounts his decision to devote a session in a 2012 seminar on the philosophy of illustration to Bochner's pieces, based around this illustrated version of *On Certainty*; and Wartenberg's prefatory note (p. 9) expresses the hope "that this catalogue will bring more attention to the artworks featured in this exhibition," since, according to him, "they are a unique effort to bridge the gap between visual art and philosophical ideas."

Philosophical commentary might intersect with some artworks in a fairly straightforward way, once one moves beyond art criticism and the like. A philosophical work that appears composed of slogans might have some of those slogans illustrated; for me, some works by Nietzsche might seem good candidates. And, of course, *On Certainty* is often read in this way—not as an argument, but as a set of claims, or assertions, or slogans. But such illustration of slogans is appropriate only to works of that sort precisely because the *argument* of any philosophical work, being discursive, cannot lend itself to a graphic depiction not strictly translatable into words. (Wartenberg expresses himself surprised [p. 8] that there were very few illustrated versions of philosophical texts, citing only the title page to Hobbes's *Leviathan* [a vast, complex allegory].) I suggest this is the reason (and my case is realized in the "argument by signs" in Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel* [Book Two, Chapter XVIII]): either the "argument" is translatable into a linguistic argument (as it would be if the gestures were in American Sign Language), or it is very unclear how it can constitute an *argument*.

What would be required, of course, are illustrations "true to the ideas" of the philosophical text, and, while I do not assume such ideas necessarily form a unity, the need to offer a single illustration, or set of them, must raise the question, "has the illustrator 'got it right' as to the philosophy in the text illustrated?" For clearly something illuminating *of the philosophy* must be offered.

Obviously a full appreciation of a text like this requires acquaintance with the artworks. As that cannot readily be provided here, I shall concentrate on some key issues for the illustration of philosophy by art, or the integration of philosophy into art—themes raised in Wartenberg's illuminating essay. For, having admitted that he "initially found

Bochner's works hermetic, difficult to unpack" (p. 8), Wartenberg came to see that the works "did indeed illuminate some of the key ideas put forward in Wittgenstein's text," since Bochner had "found a way to provide visual analogues for Wittgenstein's antiskeptical views" (p. 8).

Here, then, I shall first say something about Wartenberg's project from his essay and then address the question of whether, given the character of the material published as *On Certainty*, any insight generated here can claim to be into *Wittgenstein's* thought.

Suppose, then, that a graphic artist found such "antiskeptical views" in Wittgenstein's work. Moreover, suppose he set himself to illustrate what he took to be these ideas of Wittgenstein's (and, recall, Wartenberg's interest in this material was related to a projected session on the philosophy of illustration). Then the claim is that "[w]hat viewers of Bochner's works must come to terms with is not only how they illustrate Wittgenstein's argument in *On Certainty*, but also, more fundamentally, what Bochner demonstrates about the possibility of illustrating philosophical ideas in general" (p. 15). (Notice how forcefully this is expressed: that these works *do* illustrate Wittgenstein's thought, and that they *succeed* in showing how such illustration is *possible*; moreover, they *demonstrate* this last point. It will be hard to sustain such powerful claims.)

How are the ideas to be illustrated? Not through the depiction of, say, powerful similes or images in the work. (Wartenberg compares them negatively in this respect with an illustration of Plato's cave.) For Bochner has "attempted to go beyond the confines of minimalism ... like Sol Lewitt and Robert Smithson, ... [Bochner's work] ... has moved away from the more traditional creation of physical art objects" (p. 11: my order). Rather than *depiction* even of ideas, then, for Wartenberg, "Bochner attempts to lead the viewer to an appreciation of the truth of certain of Wittgenstein's claims, ... [which] requires a viewer to go through a process that is analogous to the process of unpacking Wittgenstein's text" (p. 16). But how?

As Wartenberg describes "[t]he basic structure of the Wittgenstein illustrations," each consists of "the presence of a matrix upon which the series of numerals is drawn" (p. 19), and "[a]t the bottom of each print there is a handwritten quotation from *On Certainty*, conveying the impression that each image illustrates the quotation" (p. 18). Wartenberg takes it to be more revealing to regard these quotations "as giving a viewer not versed in the intricacies of Wittgenstein's thought a sense of the positions the philosopher articulates in *On Certainty*" (p. 19). Yet how might this be achieved, especially once we recognize that Wittgenstein's remarks are not mere aphorisms?

Wartenberg's answer lies in Bochner offering "a visual rendering of one of Wittgenstein's philosophical claims" (p. 19), namely, his emphasis on the conceptual role of *doubt*. As Wartenberg quotes from Bochner: "Decision (hence doubt) must be made at each intersection" (p. 20). This thought is crucial in drawing the connection to *doubting*. Thus, Wartenberg urges: "Because the artist has the freedom to decide whether to end the sequence at each intersection or to extend it in one of the directions allowed by the matrix, the intersection provides a visual analogue of doubt" (p. 20).

But, of course, the appropriateness of such a visual analogue depends, in turn, on the degree to which Bochner has identified (and understood) ideas from Wittgenstein. Here the freedom of the artist does not readily compare with that of the rest of us. For, while Wittgenstein *did* endorse the kind of freedom where one could say what one liked (say, PI §79), he also recognized sets of conceptual constraints here: say, that one had to be able to recognize "the facts."

In a revealing example (although not one understood in terms of the *artist's* freedoms), Wartenberg finds illustrative connections here for Wittgenstein's remark: "There is a difference between a mistake for which, as it were, a place is prepared in the game, and a complete irregularity that happens as an exception" (OC §647, quoted p. 26). For Wartenberg identifies just such a mistake; that is, an occasion where "[t]he rules are very clear about the need to complete a basic sequence prior to beginning a new one" (p. 27), but Bochner fails to do this. Here, the illustrations *do* perhaps show that "the appropriate context is required to recognize the presence of a mistake" (p. 27). And so perhaps amount to an "illustration of the problem with the skeptic's claim that *all* of our empirical beliefs could be mistaken" (p. 27: my emphasis). For only when the context provides the *possibility* of mistake can one be mistaken, and such a possibility cannot be provided for *all* empirical claims, but only for some—rather for *any*, but only by taking others for granted. So *everything* cannot simultaneously be up for grabs.

These thoughts—in reflecting claims for which Wittgenstein argued—return us to a question raised earlier: namely, "has the illustrator 'got it right' as to the philosophical content of the text illustrated?"

Here, my own response initially resembles that of Aristotle scholars faced with the promise of an illustrated *Nicomachean Ethics*: that, since Aristotle did not compose the work himself, there is no possibility of genuinely reflecting *his* ideas. But perhaps that is not quite right for *On Certainty*, where—at least—Wittgenstein wrote all of the words. Still, those bringing only the internal evidence from Wartenberg's essay to the project of relating this work to Wittgenstein are likely to be misled. We are told that "*On Certainty*

was assembled from reflections Wittgenstein made in his notebooks in the year and a half before his death in 1951" (p. 12). Although not false, this gives the wrong impression. Of course, it is better than those accounts (including the one by the editors of *On Certainty*) that seem to suggest that the text was complete in his notebooks and therefore minimize its construction by the editors. But the account here is misleading in implying that these "reflections" were sprinkled through the notebooks, that is, in failing to recognize that the "units" are typically many pages long and regularly composed of *arguments*. Consider the fate of the notebook Wittgenstein used between the 21st of March and the 24th of April, 1951 more or less as it is explained in J. Klagge and A. Nordmann (eds.), *Philosophical Occasions 1912–1951* (Hackett, 1993) p. 509 (slightly updated): pp. 1–22 were published as Part One of *Remarks on Colour*; pp. 22–47 were published as §§425–523 of *On Certainty*; pp. 47–51 were published as the final section of *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology, Volume Two*; and pp. 51–81 were published as §§ 524–637 of *On Certainty*.

So Wittgenstein's last notebooks, as represented by just one of those notebooks, regularly incorporate all three of the texts the editors constructed (and published) from those notebooks. And the passages that contribute to *On Certainty* are both substantial.

I would conclude that there is no one thing *Wittgenstein* meant in *On Certainty*, since any unity here must be produced by the editing. Moreover, suppose one looks to an analysis by content, as Wartenberg seems to, in seeing the subject of the notes as "G. E. Moore's contention that radical skepticism about the truth of our beliefs could be refuted by citing a number of propositions the truth of which Moore knew for certain" (p. 12). Unfortunately, these claims would also be the content of other of the notes from the same period (for discussion of Moore, see *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology, Volume Two* [p. 44]).

We are told that "Wittgenstein did not live to prepare *On Certainty* for publication" (p. 14), as though it was obvious he would have, given a slightly longer life. But the most optimistic version of his life has Wittgenstein prepare just one text for publication after the early 1920s (namely, *Philosophical Investigations* Part One). Given the volume of notes and drafts Wittgenstein did not prepare for publication, the assumption that he *definitely would* have prepared these notes in particular seems unwarranted.

Wittgenstein thought that his notes might interest a philosopher "who can think for himself" (OC §387). Here Wartenberg comments: "Perhaps this accounts for the improvisatory quality of the book" (p. 14). But that quality in the book as published is, as I have argued, a reflection of its character, as material edited from a larger body (and edited with regard to content in ways Wittgenstein never did).

Of course, in spite of the variety of texts, there seems little reason to doubt that, for Wittgenstein, "the skeptic generalizes the possibility of doubt beyond any context in which it might legitimately arise, [whereas] Moore treats certainty as residing in a set of specific propositions rather than the structure of knowledge itself" (pp. 13–14). The difficulty is, first, how to bring out the subtle nuances of Wittgenstein's view here, and then, second, how to illuminate them graphically. Page 15 features a work of Bochner's entitled "Language Is Not Transparent" (1970). Should we take that work as somehow endorsing such a thesis? Or even illuminating it? After the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein came to see how one *could* find transparency in language, once its contextual character was grasped, despite confronting "the unsurveyable seething totality of our language" (Wittgenstein & Waismann, *Voices of Wittgenstein* [Routledge, 2003], p. 67); for what made sense in context could not then be reduced to a finite totality. Much here turns on the accuracy of one's reading of Wittgenstein and hence on the *arguments* that one claims he uses to reach his conclusions. Perhaps my account is false. Deciding will involve making sense of Wittgenstein's project, as reflected in these notes.

For Wartenberg, though, "Bochner attempts to lead the viewer to an appreciation of the truth of certain of Wittgenstein's claims" (p. 16). For me, these could not be *Wittgenstein's* claims unless the arguments for them were substantially Wittgenstein's arguments. Yet if these arguments are already somehow "in the mix," there is no need to provide the reader with a *further* basis for appreciating them. Or, if there is, that must be a criticism of Wittgenstein.

Yet perhaps what I have said in criticism might be taken positively; that the editing of *On Certainty* robbed its claims of the argumentative structure they might have had if, say, Wittgenstein's last writings were published as a single volume. Perhaps losing that argumentative structure turns them into slogans after all.

To decide if there is illumination to be got here, the reader must turn to Bochner's works themselves. Here I suspect the larger scale of some of the works themselves is not well captured in this text (although that would not apply to the ones actually including words from *On Certainty*). The reader who wishes to undertake such an inquiry will find a willing guide in Wartenberg's essay.

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ROELOFS, MONIQUE. *The Cultural Promise of the Aesthetic*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015, 288 pp., $34.95 paper.

Monique Roelofs's *The Cultural Promise of the Aesthetic* is a fresh, ambitious, and comprehensive critical project that, on the one hand, envisions the reach and application of aesthetics—or, *the aesthetic*—beyond "aesthetics," which is to say, beyond the professionalization of its discipline (which, as with other kindred pursuits, we take to be both necessary and problematic). On the other hand, it envisions its application beyond the temptations of aligning it with a catch-all relativism (which, of course, risks devaluing aesthetics in turn). From another, sharper vantage point, Roelofs analyzes the aesthetic by way of its application to what are, arguably, the most pressing cultural issues and themes of our contemporary age. However, beyond their general crystallization vis-à-vis concepts (and constructs) like "public," "race," "gender," and "beauty," Roelofs dares to insist upon a range of provocative intersectionalities, primarily driven, but also problematized, by aesthetics, including the aesthetics of whiteness and blackness, the aesthetics of gender, the economic labor of beauty, the aesthetics of ignorance, and race and nationalism. Meanwhile, although they are few in number, the reader will appreciate Roelofs's use of "Time Slices," which provide an opportunity "to delve into backstories or dwell longer with subjects" (p. 3). Examples include: "Hume's Contemporaneity," "The Botero Controversy," and "A Little More Detail About Detail" (where "detail" refers primarily to what Roelofs calls "Gendered Aesthetic Detail").

Roelofs sets the tone with her earlier discussion of the poetry of Pablo Neruda. In anticipation of what will be a broader emphasis on the operations of the aesthetic in our quotidian existence, Roelofs wishes, generally speaking, to achieve with her theory what Neruda achieves with his poetics. When Roelofs writes that, in the robust brand of modernist poetics Neruda represents, "the objects and our relations with them take on a new significance" (p. 14), this is suggestive also of the "modern materialism" of a writer like Benjamin and the "metaphysical anthropological inspiration" he found in surrealism, for example. Notably, such an inspiration is not something to be found "beyond" our quotidian reality, but, on the contrary, as part of the search for a deeper foundation and experience *within* that reality. This is also where, crucially, Roelofs's aesthetic theory is deeply intertwined (if more implicitly in her treatment) with the "everyday life studies" we might attribute to such writers as Debord, de Certeau, Giard, Lefebvre, and Perec. Her aesthetics is resolutely a quotidian aesthetics, though she is careful to point out that this does *not* mean "a rounding up of everyday objects in their self-evident, indisputable facticity" (p. 14). (Case in point: Roelofs's deft analysis of Gabriel Orozco's *La DS,* which features a shrunken Citroën. Orozco's art articulates "the threat that the promise of naturalized artifactuality, indifferent to disassembly, cannot ever be destroyed" [p. 190]. Barthes's own concept for such "naturalized artifactuality" was, of course, *mythology.*)

Notably, this general orientation around the quotidian will also inform both her praise of the "promise" and her concern with the "threat" vis-à-vis the aesthetic at work in a number of artistic figures and examples. In her discussion of Neruda's "The Ode to the Table," for example, Roelofs writes that the "authorial and textual act of differentiation" in Neruda's work undermines his "claim to the representation of the whole, and precludes his establishing an equitable, homogeneous fabric of connections with the people" (p. 19). But here, as at other points in the book, one still wonders about how exactly Roelofs sees the contemporary meaning and relevance of this "egalitarianism." Is it aligned with a discourse of "identity politics," for example? How does contemporary egalitarianism confront difference? Assuming the "interpretation" and "consensus" that Roelofs will emphasize throughout, what, then, might be the place of, for example, "experiment" and "dissensus" (as Lyotard might have put it), respectively? Assuming "intersubjectivity" and "relationality," what, then, is the place of "subjectification" and "becoming"?

Roelofs also writes that "Neruda's poem falls short of vindicating his authorial stance" (p. 21). But one might legitimately ask why the poem should have to do so in the first place. Roelofs asks: "How can the poet discern all the people expressed or pass on everything they implicitly or explicitly transmitted about themselves? A number of responses are open at this point." Even before we survey those responses, we are tempted to offer that the poet simply *cannot* "discern all the people expressed or pass on everything . . . " (p. 21). But is that even what we ask (or should ask) of the poet? Or, more broadly, of the artist? It seems at times that Roelofs is walking a fine line between, on the one hand, wanting a further commitment from Neruda's poetry than he, or it, is willing to give (which, admittedly, seems reasonable, given a poet and a body of poetic work that aligns himself/itself with a communal, politicized ethos) and, on the other hand, asking of it what we might more reasonably, and explicitly, ask of politics or theory or both.

The very title of Chapter 2, "Whiteness and Blackness as Aesthetic Productions," indicates nothing less than a new, fresh way of reframing the discourse on race, even beyond the necessary, but now exhausted,

cliché that race (along with a number of other categories) is a "social construct"—and, for the most part, Roelofs delivers.

Evoking de Certeau's discourse of "strategies," "tactics," and "making do" in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (which is, however, conspicuous in its absence), Roelofs's discussion of Agnès Varda's documentaries emphasizes the practice of "gleaning" (in essence, collecting, gathering), which "transpires in the peripheries of formal economies" and "operates in the margins of standardized cultural life. The gleaner sets forth where an element's designated functionality has gone astray or has been found wanting ... realizing a space where experimental forms and meanings can take off" (p. 42). (In a sense, Roelofs should take her rightful place in the reader's mind as an exemplary *theoretical* gleaner.) There may, however, be some clarification needed. Roelofs writes: "Certainly, the gleaner's strategy of foregrounding the ancillary and the incidental challenges the functioning of aesthetic norms in the service of agro-business interests ... but the aesthetic critique with which gleaning confronts capitalist aesthetic operations downplays powerful procedures driving the aesthetic domain that this critique contest" (p. 43). And yet, are these procedures not things like overconsumption, pollution, and wastefulness? Or, are these not themselves "procedures," but rather the *result* of certain procedures?

Particularly insightful and valuable was Roelofs's analysis of Fanon, which appears primarily in the provocatively entitled section "Racial Violence as Aesthetic Control" (provocative not just because of its intersection of race, violence, and aesthetics, but in the very implication that the aesthetic can be complicit with a form of control). Roelofs writes: "Oppression transforms—rather than extinguishes—aesthetic proclivities, which retain the ability to engender novel forms" (p. 46). Here again, Roelofs's underlying orientation seems very much in the spirit of de Certeau, for whom the relationship between "tactics" and "strategies" was, fundamentally, that of reappropriation *within* appropriation/assimilation (tactics being to reappropriation what strategies are to appropriation/assimilation).

Roelofs thoughtfully observes how "Fanon's own texts evince an intimate engagement with aesthetic registers that he downplays at various points," and how "his language unleashes aesthetically suffused political energies that surpass what allows itself to be captured under the rubric of aesthetically depleted types of struggle or aesthetically barren modes of consciousness raising" (p. 47). And yet, as such, we seek some confirmation as to whether the moral of the story is something about reaching an aporia at the intersection of politics and aesthetics, which Fanon's work seems to suggest. Furthermore, when we come to such an aporia, is it there that *culture* takes over where politics leaves off?

Another related discussion at the intersection of race and aesthetics that was particularly powerful involved the work of Billie Holiday, about which Roelofs singles out the analysis of Angela Davis. "Rather than accepting performative terms intimated by preexisting vocals," Roelofs echoes from Davis's treatment, "Holiday works the songs aesthetically, shaping them through tempo, timbre, and phrasing, as well as shifting expressive emphases, into intricate artistic forms that challenge social relationships outlined by the lyrics ... thereby appropriating sentimental white popular love songs within an African American tradition of subverting imposed sound and language" (p. 51). Such "subversion" is analogous to what Nathanial Mackey refers to as "aesthetic othering," which is what we might call an affirmative response to, and reappropriation of (however implicit or explicit), "social othering." For his part, Mackey gives the example of the aesthetic othering enacted by John Coltrane's famous version of "My Favorite Things" from *The Sound of Music.*

While it kept to its promise (in a sense, practicing what its preaches!) vis-à-vis the emphasis on the value of a quotidian aesthetics for an analysis of the most pressing contemporary themes, the chapter more explicitly geared toward gender ("The Gendered Aesthetic Detail") was somehow less compelling. Here, we might crystallize (admittedly, in short order) our concerns with reference to Roelofs's treatment of two figures—a poststructuralist who might be less radical than we thought and an Enlightenment thinker who might be more radical than we thought. In the first instance, Roelofs, referencing the work of Naomi Schor, claims that "Barthes' aesthetics coincides with its degendering ... accompanied by defeminization" (p. 58). But then, somewhat abruptly, this claim, and Barthes himself, are left behind. But this seems shortsighted: if Barthes's aesthetics are being mobilized here as a "degendered," "defeminized" aesthetics (which seems less than certain), such a claim warrants further substantiation. In the second instance, while the reader should applaud the provocative spirit behind Roelofs's claim that "Hume's standardized taste represents an aesthetic that valorizes *feminine* detail" (in other words, that Hume's work entails certain "feminized promises") (p. 63), there is some concern here—suggested by Roelofs's own analysis, it would seem—that such a claim might be somewhat oversimplified. "To be sure, Hume is in the business of transforming and regulating these systems [of taste]. But the metamorphosis he sets into motion fundamentally draws on already operative aesthetic practices that have a different organization than the one he seeks to found" (p. 64). So, is this to say that Hume's "feminized" aesthetics

appears somewhat *in spite of* Hume's ultimate theoretical goals? Is taste really "feminine"? This could be made clearer.

As it turns out, Hume—and the Enlightenment more broadly—represents what is perhaps a surprising thread of sorts in Roelofs's book, one that reappears at different points and in the context of a range of discussion. Along these lines, although it is a bit unclear as to the premium she would want to place on such an assertion, there is some sense in Roelofs's project of a broader, and yet somewhat implicit, claim that, on the one hand, for all of our postmodern, poststructuralist, postcolonial, feminist theories, we have not yet shaken the influence of the Enlightenment à la Hume and Kant, and, on the other hand, that perhaps that is actually not such a bad thing.

Taking a further glance at it, Roelofs's rich discussion and adaptation of Hume recalls Luce Irigaray's discussion and adaptation of Plato's *Symposium*, particularly concerning the figure and attending speech of Diotima. We recall that Diotima is, possibly, Socrates's "feminized" alter ego, which, in terms of the treatment of love and Eros, suggests for Irigaray that their significance and singularity lies precisely in how they represent an *un*mediated, *un*resolved, *un*dialectical, amorous *becoming*. For Irigaray, love is—as philosophy should also be, as it turns out—becoming. Of course, since Plato could never accept such an outcome, Diotima (perhaps now truly speaking as Socrates again?) eventually moves toward the loftier goal of realizing love as a means to some other end—in essence, beauty and the Good. But this is precisely the threshold crossed by Diotima that Irigaray laments: love has ceased to be an end in itself.

From another vantage point, the critical and somewhat recuperative project of *The Cultural Promise of the Aesthetic* is analogous to Lewis Gordon's similar type of project with respect to existentialism. Despite what appears to be an innocent discursive move, Roelofs, as we have seen, contextualizes and unpacks "aesthetics" to arrive at "the aesthetic" in the same way that Gordon contextualizes and unpacks "existentialism" to arrive at "philosophies of existence" (in this case, including black and Africana existentialist philosophy). And yet, crucially—and perhaps somewhat controversially—it is clear that Roelofs wishes to retain and integrate an Enlightenment figure like Hume in the same way that Gordon insists on the relevance of Sartre vis-à-vis his theoretical, and not just historical, significance.

Interestingly enough, it is not until Chapter 8 that two of Roelofs's key concepts lead the way more explicitly. Initially, Roelofs offers what strikes the reader as another new and provocative look at the rather old, yet fundamental, aesthetic discourse around "interest" and "disinterest" by way of an analysis of Claire Lispector's *The Hour of the Star*. Here, on the one hand, the "entwinement of aesthetic and socioeconomic factors ... challenges beauty's claim to disinterestedness" (p. 179), which neglects these factors. On the other hand, "the novel does not condone beauty's alignment with upward mobility or the parallel association between ugliness and marginality" (p. 179). Instead, Lispector's protagonist, Macabéa, "loves sounds ... listening to words on the radio, *dissociated from their referential meanings* ..." (p. 179, my emphasis). In this sense, however, "disinterested contemplation appears to reassert its promise" (p. 179). This kind of "dissociated disinterest" (which is nevertheless *not* "disengagement") evokes the example and enduring legacy of Dadaist and surrealist montage (whether written, visual, sonic, and so forth).

Notice, however, that Roelofs does not say that disinterest reasserts *itself.* No—it reasserts its *promise*. This "promise" is, of course, with its inextricable other, the "threat," also a fundamental concept underlying Roelofs's entire critical project here. (Indeed, we might perhaps read the slightly more sanguine title of the book as "The Cultural Promise [and Threat] of the Aesthetic.") It is also another example of how Roelofs holds the aesthetic to a higher standard, how she sets the bar for aesthetic discourse higher—and, in doing so, reaps infinitely more reward.

However, here, as elsewhere, we are missing the interpretation that the (cultural) promise of, in this case, such (aesthetic) disinterest might, again, be that of *reappropriation,* which, from another view, would seem a kind of "third way," a transversal that cuts across the axes of disinterest/interest. Despite the fact that numerous discussions and examples would seem to testify to its relevance, we are surprised to read no mention of reappropriation in Roelofs's treatment.

Roelofs travels further along the road of aesthetic promises and threats by way of highlighting, à la Adorno, the significance of the distinction between the "promise" of art and the assertion of a "moral character" of art, which might perhaps be conventionally rendered in an old adage like, "the moral of this story is ..." This is not the kind of promise the aesthetic makes. Roelofs writes: "The promise [of the aesthetic] brings into view a better future. Yet it does not do this by conceptually specifying the good. Authentic artworks avoid proffering a vision of a moral state of affairs ..." (p. 187). That is, despite their unavoidable intersection with the ethical and political, art and aesthetics are nevertheless not "moralizing" enterprises. In this sense, might we view Adorno's "negative dialectics" concerning "art's critical and utopian character" as rather marked by the promise of art as a kind "holding out," or, a "holding out *for* ..."?

Throughout the book, Roelofs offers variations on the assertion that "an artwork can fail to deliver what it promises" (p. 99), but then, might we not ask a more fundamental question: Do artworks *themselves* really make promises? Is it really the artwork itself that "promises" anything? Or, differently put, to what extent *should* we hold artworks to such promises? After all, is it not *we* who, "in engaging these works ... [help] to fabricate and realize" such promises? (p. 11). Is offering a vision of another possibility, of other possibilities, of life, the same as offering a *promise*? For example, it seems quite clear that, if there still exists something we might call "avant-garde"—now perhaps "experimental"—art, it would most certainly have a place in the framework of "aesthetic relationality" Roelofs espouses. And yet, although not at all ostensibly "socialist realist" (!), one might somehow envision someone like Adorno waving his arms in the air in protest, insisting upon the *politics* of Schoenberg's apparently detached twelve-tone serialism as the last bastion of a nonregressive art form. The socialist realist aesthetics of orthodox Marxism—which made its own aesthetic "promises"—was an obvious target here, but so was the proto-postmodern pastiche of Stravinsky.

Perhaps it might have been useful for Roelofs to have defined earlier in her analysis such slippery (by her own admission) terms like "aesthetic," "anti-aesthetic," and "nonaesthetic" even more clearly, even if merely in terms of our own conventional understanding of them. But such clarification could extend more generally as well to the broader categories of "aesthetics," "culture," and "politics." At certain points in the book, one might speculate whether the book should not have been titled "The *Political* Discourse of the Aesthetic," for example. There are some lingering questions having to do with the fundamental distinction (or lack thereof?) between what is meant by "cultural" and what is meant by "political." At other points in the book, what we might commonly attribute to "an aesthetic" seems nearly synonymous with "a culture." Another possible title (or not): *The Aesthetic Discourse of the Cultural*. In saying as much, our intention is not to be flippant or simply split semantic hairs, but rather to acknowledge and prod a bit the significant (and laudable) challenge that Roelofs has undertaken here, which simultaneously seeks to both *isolate* aesthetics in order to reevaluate its particular relevance and *expand* aesthetics in order to rejuvenate the breadth and depth of its intersectional potential.

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ALLEN, BARRY. *Striking Beauty: A Philosophical Look at the Asian Martial Arts*. Columbia University Press, 2015, xiii + 253 pp., $30.00 cloth.

Starting with the play on words that the main title embodies, this unusual tome packs together a plethora of sources and themes to assert a number of philosophical assessments in aesthetic and ethical judgments. It involves a good number of interpretive surprises that defy any simple assumption that this is "merely" one philosophical look into Chinese, Japanese, and Korean forms of martial arts. Constituted primarily in four major chapters, each about sixty pages in length, this book is garnished by a brief epilogue, a Chinese–English glossary, a section of endnotes stretching to nearly thirty pages in length, and a fairly extensive index. The index includes references to themes and key figures related to "Asian martial arts," but also major and minor philosophers in ancient Greece and late medieval and modern Europe as well as interpretive positions taken by other philosopher–practitioners from a large international grouping. The book is dependent on English language sources, providing in most cases reliable references to scholarly renderings of important works. In addition, Allen refers to works by proponents and scholars of a wide area of expressive arts and sports from India, North America, Europe, and primarily East Asian contexts. It is an interdisciplinary cornucopia of historical, cross-cultural, inter-sport, somaesthetic, and ethical analyses that does not avoid taking distinct interpretive positions and making some strong claims. Written sometimes in a disarmingly frank, informal style and other times in a more technical and yet flowing prose, Allen proffers some elaborate justifications based on an impressive range of scholarly and popular English language sources related to both Asian martial arts produced primarily during the last sixty years as well as studies in ancient Olympic and modern sports history.

In addition to discussions of the changes in the ancient Greek Olympics, the first chapter spends extensive time developing themes from primarily Daoist, Chinese Buddhist, and Ruist ("Confucian") source texts. Subsequently, the second chapter offers a sustained argument opposing some general accounts of mainline ancient, modern, and contemporary Western European and North American epistemologies and metaphysics, taking alternative perspectives from selective sources in those traditions that overcome mind–body dualistic accounts of human experience.

In the third and fourth chapters, Allen presents and justifies a methodological position that regularly seeks to overcome epistemological positions denying that the body can generate its own knowledge

and learning, arguing for the principled need to combine both somaesthetic and combative effectiveness in any aesthetic or ethical analysis of Asian martial arts. In addition, he insists at great length that violence is not inherently woven into the fabric of these martial arts. These claims he makes self-consciously, in spite of the multitude of depictions of lengthy violent scenes in Chinese and other martial arts films. In the process, Allen refers to relevant works on aesthetic, technical, and other philosophical analyses of modern dance, boxing, Indian wrestling, and military training. In the same context he refers occasionally to some key figures in European philosophical history (Bergson, Spinoza, and Deleuze in particular) as well as makes briefer references to the Daodejing and some less-well-known scholar–practitioners and martial arts philosophers from China, Japan, and Korea.

Such a study should be written by someone deeply involved in martial arts training and who has had time to take up sustained reflections on that practice, its teachings and traditions, and its contemporary significance. In all these areas Allen perfectly fits the bill and reveals at various points in the volume how over the years he was trained in "kung fu, wushu, taijiquan, wing chun, karate and hapkido" (p. xii). Referring to times spent following martial arts masters in "Canada, Shanghai and Hong Kong" (p. xiii), Allen has been involved for various periods in training that included Chinese (both in contemporary Putonghua and Cantonese), Japanese, and Korean traditions of martial arts learning. Though he also recognizes that there are many other Asian martial arts traditions he has not addressed in his book, Allen takes those he knows and explores their "striking beauty" (also a subsection in the tome [pp. 145–151]) from a wide range of explanatory angles and interpretive methods.

Allen takes the problem of violence very seriously. Ethically speaking, he disagrees with those who assert that violence takes place in all forms of socially sustained hierarchical power structures; notably, he argues that killing in war and harming others in self-defense are radically different kinds of actions with very different intentions. Consequently, Allen's lucid prose seeks at appropriate times to handle disturbing aspects of criminal destructiveness, military strategy, and tyrannical cruelty as human experiences that contrast unfavorably with his account of the combative readiness but nonviolent intentions of the Asian martial arts he has learned and now teaches in his own Canadian setting.

One might expect that there would be some impressive photographic images within Allen's work, but besides the flying kick that captures the reader's attention at the top of the front book cover, one must work with an active imagination to picture the full action of a trained and knowing martial arts' body. Allen argues that this particular form of beauty not only must include its preparedness for violence, but also appears in the more or less sustained spontaneous flow of "endotelic" technical movements (pp. 135, 137, 153) that some more sporty forms of martial arts performance only capture to some degree. They involve intensive, repetitive practices that transform the awkward efforts of beginners' imitations of their master's art into an "unconscious competence" (p. 154), reflected in not only refined combative capability, but also creative developments that embody the "striking beauty" Allen seeks to underscore as realizing the best of Asian martial arts.

Hoping by this means to entice interested readers from a wide range of philosophical and interdisciplinary perspectives to engage in an informed reading of this volume, as a reviewer I have a responsibility to place before the author, and his readers, points where various improvements and sites of contested interpretation might be considered. My own sensitivities to some of Allen's arguments have awakened the memory of taking some *taekwondo* lessons in my undergraduate studies, but dropping it after a new instructor began teaching "killing moves." Here my own experienced concerns heightened my interest in Allen's ethical judgments and practical advice against the use of violence, especially as described in relationship to methods of training in Asian martial arts.

Nevertheless, my primary academic interests rest in employing comparative philosophical and comparative religious interpretive approaches to the study of modern and contemporary Chinese philosophy and religious traditions, with a sustained interest in the presentation and development of modern and contemporary histories of Chinese philosophical traditions, particularly among Ruist ("Confucian") traditions. It is from these interpretive orientations that I will add some constructively critical suggestions and also point to a few other textual matters that might be reconsidered in what I hope will be an expanded second edition of this important work.

As a textual scholar, I eagerly followed the endnotes and checked the index, as well as the Chinese–English glossary, seeking to discover more about the sources of Allen's inspiration for writing this volume. Allen admits that he relied on a helpful mainland Chinese person to prepare the Chinese–English glossary, but though it does include some characters also for at least one name of a Cantonese martial arts association, there are some key Chinese persons who are not included, such as the major Ruist scholar–practitioner Chang Naizhou (pp. 54 ff.); the Ming loyalist Huang Zongxi (pp. 54–55); the "enormously influential" Sun Lutang (p. 57); the Han Daoist scholar

who died at a young age, Wang Chong (p. 224); the Daoist immortal, Zhang Sanfen (p. 56), and the modern proponent of *taijiquan* as a form of whole person cultivation at the national level in post–World War II China, Zheng Manqing (p. 57). Since almost all Japanese names, and many Korean and Vietnamese names also, can be rendered into Chinese or nonsinic characters, one would greatly appreciate knowing the characters in the name of the founder of judo, Kanō Jigarō (pp. 25–27), and the Korean tradition that Allen now teaches, *hapkido* (p. 205), which I have been told has some historical relationship to the Japanese martial arts tradition of *akido*. Adding a multilingual and complete glossary, including the titles of key Chinese, Japanese, and Korean works in either Chinese or nonsinic characters, would be immensely helpful to those who can also read original sources and secondary materials in East Asian languages.

Principles used in preparing the endnotes included putting only one footnote at the end of more or less long paragraphs, sometimes involving technical discussions where five or six independent endnotes would be more appreciated by readers. Sometimes due to these clumping of the endnotes together into a mangle of references, a quotation cited in the text cannot be located. This is particularly significant at times when a classical or canonical text is cited, or where a person who is considered notable by Allen is quoted. The coverage and references to primary and secondary sources is sometimes inconsistent in the endnotes.

From a historical point of view within Chinese philosophical traditions, one could be distressed by claims that the interpretive position discussing "China has no philosophy" (p. 118, fn. 4) is employed to justify the inclusion of ethical and aesthetic studies of Chinese martial arts. Philosophy departments are thriving in contemporary China and are not so restricted or trenchantly controlled by Chinese Marxist or other Marxist traditions as in the 1970s and early 1980s. That there are concerns to differentiate some major Chinese philosophical categories from those coming from philosophical traditions in the former Soviet Union, Western Europe, and North America are not good reasons for rejecting philosophy as an academic discipline, but in fact this helps to enrich reflective awareness of the diversity of philosophical traditions within China and identify ways those contemporary traditions may contribute as "Chinese philosophy" within a larger international setting. Precisely in this way, then, Allen's claims that Chinese martial arts have largely left their Daoist and Buddhist traditions and taken up residence in marginal Ruist ("Confucian") settings is of great interest, reinforcing the diversity of these philosophical traditions. Nevertheless, outside of the scholar–practitioner Chang Naizhou mentioned earlier, informed Chinese philosophers themselves find almost no contemporary Ruist scholars adopting a philosopher–practitioner form of life within Chinese martial arts. Also, since Allen consciously distances himself from violent "kung-fu" movies and the Buddhification of martial arts by martial monks of the Shaolin Temple, further justifications for this claim would be greatly welcomed.

For example, revisionary interpretations of earlier versions of the so-called *Laozi*—particularly the earliest archeological versions identified in the collections of Guodian bamboo strips, dated to the early part of the third century BCE—surprisingly support a form of wuwei activity that does not oppose Ruist philosophical categories. Another more modern form of Ruist military development was produced by the nineteenth-century Ruist scholar Zeng Guofan, who created military rituals for soldiers fighting against the Taiping forces precisely because they had not existed previously. Such historical references could bring greater justification to the interpretive claim that Ruist traditions are not inherently opposed to martial arts and may have taken a larger role in their promotion after the 1911 Revolution.

If the brief concluding chapter could manifest more of the subtle arguments of the main body of this book, indicating that there are modern European and other non-Asian philosophers (such as Spinoza, Nietzsche, Bergson, and Deleuze, among others) who resist epistemological and metaphysical dualisms that denigrate the body, Allen could avoid an ideological alignment with simplistic "China–West" or "Asian–West" oppositions that hinder our appreciation and understanding of his own philosophical reflections on Asian martial arts.

All things considered, this is a remarkable book providing a fairly comprehensive and generally nuanced account of the somaesthetic, ethical, and technical aspects of Asian martial arts that challenge philosophers and other interested readers to reconsider the philosophical significance and contemporary relevance of these multiform traditions.

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