

notwithstanding, the overall trend of sincere and conscientious eudaemonism cannot be dismissed.

In this sense Ingrao has gone to some lengths to give a more positive image to a political phenomenon which it has been fashionable to disparage in North America: enlightened absolutism. He has further done so with an enviable lucidity, verve, and economy. This volume, therefore, is a model of its kind. No library should be without it; scholars and students both within the field will profit from it.

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Franz A.J. Szabo

Art in an Age of Revolution, 1750-1800, by Albert Boime. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1987. xxviii, 522 pp. \$35.00 U.S.

This thoroughly illustrated and readable book is the first volume of a proposed series on the social history of art in the modern period. In this volume and, presumably, the volumes to come, Professor Boime's overriding aim is to examine art in a broad historical context and thus to move beyond the stylistic divisions and object-centred formalism that have traditionally characterized the study of art history.

Art in an Age of Revolution is accordingly set against the backdrop of three major events: the Seven Years' War, the English Industrial Revolution, and the French Revolution. The study's analyses consistently illuminate the often complex relationship of the content of art and artistic thought to a wide range of contemporary attitudes and conditions – for instance, the growth of interest in scientific and technological advances, the diverse social and political tensions of the time, the social and commercial aspirations of industrialists and entrepreneurs, and the profit motives of artists, patrons, and critics. As a result, there emerge many new or, at the least, neglected connections between art and other spheres of life. Burke's aesthetic thought, for example, embodied technological metaphors; Fuseli's painting, *The Nightmare*, was not only fantasy but also an allegory of the social fears of the artist and the patrons he represented; the "visionary" Blake had both reformist social and political ideals and entrepreneurial ambitions; David's collective work signalled his commercial opportunism as much as his political progressivism; and artists of the stature of Flaxman, Reynolds, Stubbs, and Wright were not above accepting lucrative painting commissions from, or producing industrial designs for, manufacturers like Matthew Boulton and Josiah Wedgwood.

Boime's revisionist approach is not only directed toward such established icons of art history as Fuseli, Blake, and David. He also considers many lesser-known artists and gives due attention to the work of women such as Angelica Kauffmann, Marie Lavoisier and Elisabeth-Louise Vigée-Lebrun. He is further concerned to show how varying forms of male hegemony have been expressed through art. Of particular interest are his analyses of Blake's images of female slavery and David's tendency to portray women as weak or subordinate, and often isolated in a pictorial space that signals their separateness from the male-dominated centre of action.

But, despite its many strengths, this study also has some of the weaknesses that are perhaps inevitable in any large survey. A few of the pictorial analyses are not as well substantiated by written evidence as one would like, and there are several quotations from one or another "observer" or "contemporary" who is neither named in the text nor specifically cited in the notes (pp. 57, 70, and 252, for example). In addition, Boime's interest in revealing the commercial face of art leads him on occasion into the anachronistic use of terminology. His reference, for instance, to the mid-eighteenth-century "mass production" of views of Rome and its ruins (p. 62) implies a level of mechanization and wide-scale distribution that in fact had not yet been achieved with respect to the dissemination of art. And although the author rightly recognizes the inseparability of art production and ownership from social and economic privilege, power relations, profit motives, and professional ambition, his zeal to do so sometimes results in overstatement of the case. In the first two chapters especially (on pre-revolutionary conditions and the Seven Years' War), artists, patrons, and critics alike emerge as a singularly grasping, self-serving, and social climbing group with very little redeeming artistic or other sensibility. The reader thus cannot help wondering uneasily if so many could truly be so completely and consistently unsavoury. Is it, after all, either fair or accurate to dismiss art historian J.J. Winckelmann as just one more opportunistic profiteer "in the wheeling and dealing circles of [art patron] Cardinal Albani and Company" (p. 74)?

The three remaining chapters, however, are more nuanced in their approach, and the study is on the whole to be applauded. For, rather than those old, tired, and somewhat mystifying art historical concepts of creative genius and stylistic evolution, Boime offers us material historical explanations that cannot but enhance our understanding of art and society in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

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Pat Anderson

The World They Made Together: Black and White Values in Eighteenth-Century Virginia, by Mechal Sobel. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1987. xii, 364 pp. \$25.00 U.S.

Writing in 1971, Wesley Frank Craven in *White, Red and Black: The Seventeenth Century Virginian*, asserted that the surviving record is so incomplete as to impose a decided limit on what we are ever likely to know about the Negro in seventeenth-century Virginia, free or slave. But he hastened to add the observation that historians, whether black or white, have been too content to have it this way. Craven, among others, was struck by the fact that historians who have dealt with the subject have been concerned mainly with the question of the Negro's status, the origins of the institution of slavery, why Negroes proved peculiarly vulnerable to enslavement by the English colonists, and American attitudes toward the Negro. Until fairly recently they have remained indifferent to other questions they may have investigated.

Now we have a new study by Mechal Sobel which exhibits some of the positive and negative features suggested by these observations. Drawing on her considerable knowledge of the related literature, in particular, that on the