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Gill Perry, ed., *Gender and Art* (Art and its Histories: 3). New Haven and London, Open University and Yale University Press, 1999, 267 pp., 69 colour plates, 132 black-and-white illus., $27.50 (U.S.), $41.25 (Cdn) paper

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places by the author, which provide an immediacy to the discussion of other-worldly art. Scholarship on non-Buddhist Japanese religious art is rare, and while most Western scholars in the field have visited shrines, few have been allowed the opportunity to investigate the art or the beliefs of this fascinating facet of Japanese culture.

This book is an original contribution amongst Western-language studies. It is a welcome addition to Toyo Ishida's book, *Esoteric Buddhist Painting*, as well as ten Grotenhuis' other publications on the Taima mandala.[1] Other books in Western languages generally deal with mandalas more broadly, crossing Asian borders.[2] And, while ten Grotenhuis' work is focused on the Japanese mandala, it is, nevertheless, easily accessible for non-specialists, being written in a lucid non-technical style. The bibliography of the book, mostly art historical books and articles, is comprehensive. Nearly every major book and article in Western languages up to the year 1998 is included; it is obvious that ten Grotenhuis has read extensively in her field. Therefore, this book is very useful for students of Japanese art, especially for those who teach in the field.

There are some who would criticize ten Grotenhuis for her broad approach to the history of the Japanese mandala, but this should be recognized as evidence of her erudition on the topic. Most Buddhist art historians in Japan and elsewhere are trained to work within one sectarian tradition, such as esoteric or Pure Land. This is because the field requires the specialist to understand the sectarian doctrine and the vocabulary of the art thoroughly. Reading and coming to terms with Buddhist primary sources and contemporary secondary materials is an onerous task; ask anyone who has read an article from Mochizuki's ten-volume encyclopaedia of Buddhism written in pre-war period style Japanese.[3] Few native Japanese or non-Japanese can approach the reading of a sutra, a primary Buddhist source, with ease. Most of us, including the Japanese, read with a wide array of dictionaries, and we require years to master a single genre of Buddhist art, so ten Grotenhuis should be applauded for taking on the task of such a broad topic that crosses sectarian borders.

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Notes

1 Hisatoyo Ishida, *Esoteric Buddhist Painting*, trans. E. Dale Saunders (Tokyo and New York, 1987); and Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis, *The Revival of the Taima Mandala* (New York, 1985).

2 For example, Denise Patry Leidy and Robert Thurman, *Mandala: The Architecture of Enlightenment* (New York and Boston, 1997).

3 Mochizuki Shinkô et al., eds, *Bukkyô daijiten*, rev. edn, 10 vols (Kyoto, 1954–63).

Gill Perry, ed., *Gender and Art* (Art and its Histories: 3). New Haven and London, Open University and Yale University Press, 1999, 267 pp., 69 colour plates, 132 black-and-white illus., $27.50 (U.S.), $41.25 (Cdn) paper.

In the preface to this book we are told that it forms part of a six-part series published in 1999, for an Open University second-level course aimed at students who are new to the discipline of art history and for those who have already undertaken some study in this area. The six books cover the following subjects: *Academies, Museums and Canons of Art*, eds Gill Perry and Colin Cunningham; *The Changing Status of the Artist*, eds Emma Barker, Nick Webb and Kim Woods; *The Challenge of the Avant-Garde*, ed. Paul Wood; *Views of Difference: Different Views of Art*, ed. Catherine King; *Contemporary Cultures of Display*, ed. Emma Barker; and this book on *Gender and Art*. This review will comment on the latter, based on my experiences using this text in a course that was aimed specifically at two types of students: those who were new to the study of feminist methodologies within art criticism and art history, and students who had had a limited exposure to theoretical ideas in other courses, such as film studies or women's studies. My course had no prerequisites, and the book seemed to fill a niche, as it was "designed to introduce readers to the role and importance of gender in the study of art and art history" (p. 7).

I should explain that my specialization in Late Medieval and Renaissance Studies influenced my placement of the book on the course reading list. Part of my motive in selecting the book was to address an important point within the discipline, a point sometimes lost on scholars who focus on modern and contemporary art: the gendered human subject, part of whose identity may be to produce or consume visual culture, can be examined in terms of systems of representation and social experience, as constituted in particular moments in time and space, for *all* periods in history. Although this book is certainly not ideal for those of us who wish to attract students to undertake historical research in pre-Modern periods, the book does at least assume that the gendered self can be studied from the Renaissance or early Modern period onwards. But I must also point out a limitation of Perry's editorial choice: this book represents a restrictive vision of earlier cultures around the globe. It is not uncommon, even amongst Renaissance scholars, to invoke the presence of earlier periods in history, such as the classical or medieval eras, as ahistorical others in the postmodern focus on modernity, in the search for an originary moment of modern culture and consciousness.[1] This book does not indicate the

richness of scholarship in feminist and gender studies that is currently taking place within prehistoric, classical or medieval studies around the globe, about the globe.[2]

Presumably the use of the term "gender" in the book's title was employed to appeal to a broader audience than might exist for explicitly feminist texts, and readers are introduced to the social construction of masculinity at places in the individual essays. My first criticism of the book is that it perpetuates a binary model inscribed in terms of the masculine/feminine dyad. It does not adequately disclose, even for students new to the field, how gender has been reconceptualized in the 1990s: in a performative sense, according to Judith Butler; as a transient identification amongst a plurality of gendered configurations, according to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick; or according to Donna Haraway's focus on the emergence of the cyborg, a technological entity that does not claim an organic identity.[3]

The Introduction (pp. 8–31) by Gill Perry provides students with introductory-level definitions of terms such as "gender," "queer theory" and "feminism." As it is a primer in the complex terrain of gender and art history, it sets out to present readers with clearly focused answers to the following questions: "How can issues of gender be useful for the study of visual imagery?"; "What is feminist art history?"; "Why is gender important in our understanding of the processes of looking?" Students quickly took up an oppositional stance to the book because of its reductionist answers to complex questions, even though I provided them with supplementary reading material from other sources on key concepts such as "agency" or "multiple subjectivities."[4]

Very early on, we encountered a major stumbling block: Perry points out that the construction of sexual identities can also be applied to the study of race and ethnicity (p. 10). She also acknowledges that the book will look at gender in relation to the development of *western* art history (emphasis mine). What she fails to highlight sufficiently, however, is that this book perpetuates the relegation of categories of race, ethnicity and national origin, to another book in this same series, King's *Views of Difference*. The editor and various authors of this book fail to signal for readers that *Gender and Art* maintains dominant knowledge systems about white, Eurocentric art history. Of course, I found myself implicated within this very script through my placement of the book on our reading list, despite my best intentions to supplement what was lacking with additional readings that would address issues of race and ethnicity. From the very start, this book is (and was) doomed to fail: although the book ended with an invocation of "difference" theory (p. 257), white[5] art history remained at the centre, the defining core, in opposition to the other, which was split off into King's *Views of Difference*. It would not be possible to use the two books together because of the lack of gender analysis in King's book; the work of female art producers is only mentioned five times in an otherwise predominantly masculinist text about colonial and postcolonial art practices. Thus, the cultural narratives produced in these two texts ended up reinscribing hegemonic patterns of thinking, with questions of race, ethnicity, and works of art by women of colour conceived in colonizing terms, as "minor" and marginal notes in an otherwise white Eurocentric narrative. I found that I had unconsciously and unintentionally participated in the production of this skewed type of knowledge. A colleague in women's studies pointed me toward Gloria Anzaldúa's analysis of the complexities of racial dynamics within the classroom, both for the students and instructor[6] – the seemingly endless circulation of what Susan Stanford Friedman calls "narrative [scripts] of denial, accusation and confession" when whites are asked to confront their privileged forms of knowledge.[7] This textbook is not effective in preparing art history students to explore the dynamics of racialization, gender construction and class stratification, as they impact on systems of social inequality and practices of subordination within visual cultures.[8]

The book is divided into four main sections that cover thematic material in Western European art, spanning a chronological period from the sixteenth to the late twentieth century. The following is a brief overview of the diverse topics covered in the book.

Part I is focused in the main on biographical approaches to Italian, British and French women artists in the pre-Modern period. In both Case Studies 1 and 2 Catherine King examines evidence about the psycho-social positioning of women artists during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Case Study 1 looks at the ways in which women artists represented themselves or were represented by men (pp. 37–60). Case Study 2 focuses on the shifting patterns of value assigned to different art practices during this period and the emergence of gendered categories of art, such as the textile arts, history painting, genre, or still life (pp. 61–85).

Part 2 features two essays: in Case Study 3, Gill Perry discusses the restrictions imposed on eighteenth-century women artists in Britain with regard to contemporary ideas of feminine and masculine norms and the social relations of the dominant culture; she concentrates in the main on the careers of Angelica Kauffman and Mary Moser (pp. 90–107). Case Study 4 by Emma Barker compares the careers of Elisabeth-Louise Vigée-Lebrun and Adélaïde Labille-Guiard, suggesting the differing ways in which women negotiated the constraints of masculinist culture.

Part 3 includes three essays that focus on gender, class and power in British art, architecture and design during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In Case Study 5, Christy Anderson examines how Inigo Jones, Christopher Wren

and John Vanbrugh relied on differing gender perceptions of the formal qualities of architectural design, which Anderson relates to issues of national and class identity and claims for cultural authority (pp. 130–53). Lynda Nead analyzes the relationship between constructions of femininity by both male and female artists and prevailing concepts of class identity in British nineteenth-century painting in Case Study 6 (pp. 154–74). In the next essay, Case Study 7, Colin Cunningham examines the Great Exhibition of 1851 and presents texts and images of the period that reveal Victorian attitudes to the roles and status of "women's art" and the decorative arts (pp. 173–90). For those of us who want to alert students to the possibilities of gender analysis across art and architectural history, the essays by Anderson and Cunningham were a particularly welcome addition, although neither provide a sufficiently detailed account of how masculine culture was constructed in Britain for these periods.

The last section of the book, Part 4, discusses the intersection of gender, modernism and Freudian psychoanalysis in art practices in France, England and the United States. Case Study 8 by Gill Perry examines the idea of "feminine art" in relation to avant-garde art practices in Paris during the early twentieth century (pp. 196–228). The author seeks to reinscribe less canonical women artists – Lucy Lee-Robbins, Jacqueline Marval, Emilie Charmy, Jeanne Hébuterne, Marie Laurencin, Maria Blanchard, Alice Halicka, Marevna – and the more canonical figures of Berthe Morisot, Mary Cassatt, Sonia Delaunay and Suzanne Valadon, within the dominant discourses on Post-impressionism, the Fauves and the Cubists. Claire Pajaczkowska provides students with a brief overview of Freudian psychoanalytic concepts in Case Study 9, and she explores these ideas in relation to issues of authorship, the canon and the gaze (pp. 229–39).[9] She only briefly and very unsatisfactorily indicates the responses of French thinkers Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray and Hélène Cixous to Freudian models in a couple of paragraphs on p. 228. Case Study 10 by Briony Fer employs Freudian terms of psychoanalysis to analyse the artwork of Eva Hesse, Meret Oppenheim and Mona Hatoum, to reveal what may be both pleasing and disturbing within the visual field (pp. 240–51). Case Study 11 by Gill Perry looks at fetishistic works of art by Meret Oppenheim, Man Ray, Allen Jones and, more recently, Jemima Stehli; this essay helps to problematize the complexities of theories of the gaze (pp. 252–58).

In most of the essays dealing with the pre-Modern period, the authors' analysis was couched in liberal feminist terms, with women artists displaying varying degrees of agency and resistance or complicity within the social order; the masculine is invoked as patriarchal other throughout the book. Some of my students enjoyed the celebratory pleasures of these narratives, despite my efforts to introduce a critique of "modes of subjectivity" and the possibility of multiple agencies.[10] There was a general consensus that Lynda Nead's use of discourse analysis in Case Study 8 to expose gender and class relations in Victorian painting was the most liberatory essay, in terms of the students' pain, pleasure and the social production of knowledge.[11]

It might be asked: "why would anyone want to use a primer-style textbook in a course on theory and methodology?" In the past, I have employed sets of readings from articles or book chapters to teach this class: because *Gender and Art* avoids overly theoretical language, I had hoped to counter the usual hierarchical classroom dynamics, with students conversant with theory "powering-over" those less trained in using these particular academic tools. The course also included a large component of individual or group research projects; although many of the students concluded that the book had failed as a textbook, they were nevertheless grateful for its existence – it served as a base, a place to start from, and they became aware that there was so much more to feminist analysis as a result of our communal critiques of the text. At the end of the course, some students still longed for a text that would help them understand the still relatively uncharted terrain of masculinity studies within art history and criticism, which was insufficiently theorized in this book.

A final note on the pedagogical strategies used in *Gender and Art*. The editors made much of the fact that it includes "discursive sections written to encourage reflective discussion and argument" (p. 7). My students found these sections to be written in a patronizing way because of the adoption of an authoritative, controlling voice throughout. Indeed, Lynda Nead's contribution was the only study that seemed to offer a dialogic space for student discussion; the tone adopted in the rest of the book, the use of phrases like "please look at" and "list ... the features of" was distinctly annoying.

The editor and authors promised to introduce students to the complexities of gender analysis, but the conceptual framework presented here does not provide a sophisticated enough set of tools in terms of understanding key issues in feminist versus/and gender studies; theories of racialization and cultural dominance; and an articulation of the construction of masculinity in different periods. In the meantime, we are still waiting for a text that will address such concerns for students who are new to the field in art history and criticism.

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Notes

1 See David Aers, "A Whisper in the Ear of Early Modernists; Or, Reflections on Literary Critics Writing the 'History of the Subject,'" *Culture and History: 1350–1689: Essays on English Commu-*

nities, Identities and Writing (London, 1992), 177–202; and Lee Patterson, "On the Margin: Postmodernism, Ironic History, and Medieval Studies," *Speculum*, 65 (1990), 87–108.

2 I use these terms with caution, particularly in relation to non-white visual cultures; they function here only as a convenient shorthand.

3 See Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London, 1990); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1990); Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: the Reinvention of Nature* (London, 1991).

4 At times I used a second-year textbook designed for Women's Studies at the Open University because it discussed some issues with greater complexity. See Frances Bonner et al., eds, *Imagining Women: Cultural Representations and Gender* (Cambridge, 1992).

5 I use the term "white" with caution, recognizing that it is not a unitary category; see in particular Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (Minneapolis, 1993); see also the bibliography in Susan Stanford Friedman, *Mappings: Feminism and the Cultural Geographies of Encounter* (Princeton, 1998), 281–302.

6 See Gloria Anzaldúa, ed., *Making Face, Making Soul — Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminists of Colour* (San Francisco, 1990), xix–xxi.

7 Friedman, *Mappings*, esp. 41–47.

8 For a recent study that addresses these concepts within modern and contemporary art, see Lisa Bloom, ed., *With Other Eyes: Looking at Race and Gender in Visual Culture* (Minneapolis, 1999).

9 For a more integrative study of race, gender and psychoanalytic analysis, see Claire Pajaczkowska and Lola Young, "Racism, Representation, Psychoanalysis," in James Donald and Ali Rattansi, eds, *Race, Culture and Difference* (London, 1992), 198–219.

10 These terms are used to analyse early Modern culture by Valerie Traub, M. Lindsay Kaplan and Dympna Callaghan, "Introduction," in their *Feminist Readings of Early Modern Culture: Emerging Subjects* (Cambridge, 1996), 1–15.

11 The complexity of students' responses to liberatory curricula is discussed by Patti Lather, *Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy With/In the Postmodern* (London, 1991); and Carmen Luke and Jennifer Gore, eds, *Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy* (New York and London, 1992).

AMELIA JONES, *Body Art: Performing the Subject*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1998, 329 pp., 63 black-and-white illus.

Body art first emerged within the nexus of post-conceptual and feminist performance between the late 1960s and 1970s. Although artists have continued to make body-centred work well into the present, the history of body art and performance across the past three decades has remained largely obscure.[1] This history has eluded scholarly attention for several reasons: the ephemeral, often poorly documented and chaotic nature of performance activities have made it logistically difficult to study; the few detailed accounts of the momentous redefining of performance by feminist artists have been confined mainly to feminist histories of art; and even the most recently published and ambitiously revisionist histories of this period continue to marginalize performance by focusing on object-oriented studies of art.[2] Consequently, the history of performance and body art has continued to be shrouded in a "pervasive critical silence."[3]

Amelia Jones' recent book, *Body Art: Performing the Subject*, thus makes an important contribution to this history, even though it does not aim to provide the broad historical contextualization of performance which is still needed. Jones' focus is body art, which she distinguishes from the larger category of performance, with its emphasis on theatrical production and live audience. Jones' interest is in works that are enacted through the artist's body, whether or not in a live "performance" setting, and which can then be experienced through some form of documentary evidence (p. 13). As Jones reads it, body art is a set of performative practices which aim to enfold the actor and viewer together in a relationship of "intersubjective engagement," the significance of which is its capacity to "instantiate the dislocation or decentering of the Cartesian subject of modernism" (p. 1). Her primary concern is to examine why the modernist artistic subject, who is (or was) implicitly masculine (and usually white), came into question during the 1960s and 1970s by means of a performative reconsideration of artistic subjectivity. Because body art proposes the body as a site where the production and reception of art come together, Jones sees it as having more radical potential than performance art to reveal the interpretive desires of modernist criticism. This site of interplay reveals the subjectivity both of the body/self as contingent and particularized rather than universal, and of interpretive acts as projections of interests, biases and desires rather than "disinterested" aesthetic judgements.

Jones' first chapter outlines the theoretical and methodological premises of her investigations into body art through a conception of postmodernism which draws upon theories of subjectivity postulated by phenomenologists such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Jacques Lacan, while revising their sex-blind models through the feminist work of Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray and Judith Butler. The challenge of such work to the ostensible coherence and self-defined authority of the Cartesian, masculinist, modernist subject is by now well established within art discourse, yet Jones' reading offers important new insights into how body art can be theorized as an enactment of Merleau-Ponty's notion of self/other relations as *intersubjective* and *embodied*, whereby the self, who exists in the world as flesh,