

insists, "between the density of human population and the tolerances of nature. This balance, in the case of the United States, would seem to me to have been surpassed when the American population reached . . . two hundred million people, and perhaps a good deal less."

Kennan hews to the belief that the great mass of people exist to be *de facto* slaves, ruled over by a small elite.

Early in the book, he muses on the heredity versus environment debate. "One of the most common features of the American outlook is the traditional belief that heredity has very little importance," he laments, and then goes on to insist that, "On the contrary, a great deal of what the newborn child was destined to be was plainly written into it before its birth."

That particular statement goes hand-in-hand with Kennan's long-held belief that the U.S. should be ruled by a non-elected elite.

In a book he began in 1938, but never finished, Kennan urged the U.S. to move "along the road which leads through constitutional change to the authoritarian state," adopting such measures as "very extensive restriction of suffrage" for women, Blacks, and immigrants.

*Around the Cragged Hill* revives these prescriptions, albeit packaged in a less extreme form. For example, Kennan carries on about the need for a servant class:

"Of particular importance . . . is the preservation . . . of domestic service as an institution. . . . There are people for whom service in or around the home pretty well exhausts their capabilities for contributing to the successful functioning of a society. There are others who have different and rarer capabilities; and it is simply not a rational use of their abilities that they should spend an inordinate amount of time and energy doing things that certain others could no doubt do better, and particularly where these are just about the only things the latter are capable of."

As a stepping-stone to his wished-for "authoritarian state," Kennan suggests the creation of a Council of State that would develop long-term policy for the U.S. Kennan's proposed Council of

State would be composed of individuals drawn from the business, government and corporate elite, appointed solely by the President.

"The establishment of such a panel would admittedly be a novel undertaking, outside the American tradition," Kennan freely acknowledges, but is nevertheless necessary because traditional methods of governance do not work.

### Geopolitical Theology

Kennan has developed a theology to match this sordid and despairing view of the world. In a bizarre reworking of the Gnostic belief structure, Kennan posits the existence of two gods.

The "Primary Cause," created the universe, and is "almighty . . . so far as the physical universe is concerned."

However, the Primary Cause is not only not "benevolent," but is an impersonal force, without interest in the fate of humanity.

The second god is the god of mercy, who is "filled with understanding and compassion for the agonies inflicted on man." But this god is impotent. This "Spirit" "bears . . . no responsibility for the natural order of things in which the human individual is compelled to live," and its role is simply to give succor to man in his struggle with his "semi-animalistic" nature.

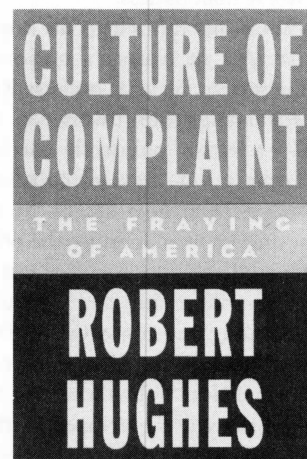
There is no unity between these two gods, and it is this chasm between power and mercy (or morality), which lies at the rotten core of the geopolitical mind.

—Kathleen Klenetsky

## An Immoral Moralism Confronts 'P.C.'

The Liberal Establishment is getting scared of "Political Correctness." The last eighteen months have seen the publication of a dozen books, and a few-score magazine and journal articles, by prominent liberal intellectuals who have finally decided that the "P.C." mania in our culture has become too dangerous to be dealt with by the dry academicism of scholars like the late Allan Bloom, nor by the simple-minded scandal-mongering of neo-conservatives like Dinesh D'Souza.

The most polemical, and most humorous, of this lot is *Culture of Complaint*, by Robert Hughes, the Australian-born author and chief art critic of *Time* magazine. Hughes' phenomenology is angry and precise: America has become a "culture which has replaced gladiatorial games, as a means to pacify the mob, with hi-tech wars on television that cause immense slaughter. . . . Meanwhile, artists vacillate between a largely self-indulgent expressiveness and a mainly impotent politicization, and the contest between education and TV—between argument and conviction by spectacle—has been won by television, a medium now more debased in America than ever before."



**Culture of Complaint:  
The Fraying of America**  
by Robert Hughes  
Oxford University Press,  
New York and Oxford, 1993  
224 pages, paperbound, \$19.95

The nation's universities, says Hughes, have lost all sense of reality: "When the old New Left students of '60's academe re-entered the university as teachers, they saw the exhilarated hopes of their youth deflate after 1968, collapse under the backlash of the '70's, and become mere archaeology by

1980. . . . Their response to this trauma was to shift away from classical Marxism . . . and embrace the more diffuse and paranoia-driven theories of the Frankfurt School. . . . The writer who drops in on this world is bound to feel like Gulliver visiting the Royal Academy of Lagoda, with its solemn 'projectors' laboring to extract sunbeams from cucumbers."

There are similar *bons mots* on almost every page, usually delivered with the wicked, almost catty, sharpness which is convention among today's professional critics. Hughes skewers, among other things, Afrocentrism, postmodern architecture, and attacks on Christopher Columbus by erstwhile "Aztec nationalists"—many of the same subjects which have been critically surveyed in this magazine over the years. On the symptoms of the disease, Hughes is an entertainer; but on its causes, he is effectively silent. And, his prescription for a cure is worse than useless.

Hughes limits himself to his area of expertise. Art in America no longer serves the society, he says, because it has become a battleground between two "P.C.'s"—a leftist "politically correct," and a right-wing "patriotically correct"—with each new attack by one side, causing an escalation by the other. The proposed solution is to cool out the fight by de-politicizing our museums, and by stopping neo-conservatives from using the National Endowment for the Arts as a political hobbyhorse. In this way, artworks will be stripped of their political cover, and will be forced to stand on their own merits.

I think that every reader would agree that the judgment of a work of art cannot be based on the artist's allegiance to a political mafia. However, saying what good art *isn't*, doesn't tell you much about what good art *is*, and as Hughes pursues this aspect, he undoes everything useful in his previous polemic.

#### Is Art Scientific?

Hughes is a militant modernist; in fact, his 1981 book, *The Shock of the New*, was a very effective attempt to break down the last popular resistance to modernism in American culture. For

two decades, Hughes has been celebrating modernism's canonical belief that art's purpose is not universal, but is primarily the exposition of the internal state of the artist, no matter how ugly, alienated, or lawless that internal state might be. "The appreciation of art and literature," he notes in *Complaint*, "has no scientific basis whatever; one is dealing with the unquantifiable coin of feeling . . ." This means that there can be political works of art, but Art (capital A) is not political.

"We know, in our heart of hearts," Hughes adds, "that the idea that people are morally ennobled by contact with works of art is a pious fraud." To prove that point, Hughes cites the case of Renaissance lord Sigismondo da Malatesta, who had the "excellent taste" to have Alberti, Duccio, and Piero della Francesca decorate his home, but yet remained a murderer and Satanist despite the brilliant art surrounding him.

Hughes' point here is clearly pragmatic garbage! Certainly, Plato tutored the tyrant Dionysius; Leonardo painted for Cesare Borgia; and Beethoven

## Multiculturalism: Prescription For Genocide

One of the mandatory textbooks on the reading list for "Politically Correct" U.S. colleges today is the autobiography of the Guatemalan "Indian activist" Rigoberta Menchú. The book is a fraud almost as great as Menchú's being granted a Nobel Prize in 1992 as a *peace* activist! *I, Rigoberta* is not an honest story told to defend oppressed Indians, but a tract scripted by slave-masters, to perpetuate slavery.

The stories told by Menchú of her childhood describe conditions intolerable for any human being to have to suffer. But what does *I, Rigoberta* identify as the causes of Guatemala's backwardness, despite its potential? What are the solutions proposed by Menchú and her promoters as the path to freedom?

Most striking is what is *not* men-

played before the delegates of the Congress of Vienna—and by the simplistic test of pragmatism, they all failed miserably. Yet we do not call them failures, because their accomplished intention was to expose to *all* humanity an advanced understanding of how mankind partakes in God's continuing plan of creation. Their art remains great exactly because it was universal, morally ennobling, scientific, and political.

The modernists' radical re-definition of art to include ugliness, and even psychosis—a revision pioneered by the Frankfurt School theorists [see my articles in Winter 1992 and Summer 1993 *Fidelio's*] whom Hughes elsewhere condemns—is the entire basis of the post-modernist lunacies which Hughes says he opposes. Thus, all Hughes contributes to the battle against Political Correctness are some witty descriptions. On the other hand, anyone serious about stopping this destruction of our culture, will admit that beauty—in opposition to modernist ugliness—is one of the few effective weapons we have to do it.

—Michael Minnicino



**I, Rigoberta Menchú,  
An Indian Woman in  
Guatemala**  
edited by Elisebeth Burgos-Debray  
translated by Ann Wright  
Verso, New York, 1984

tioned. No history is offered, nor any basic facts of economics. There is no discussion of the foreign debt, collapsing terms of trade, or the International