

THE WARRING SUBJECT

This special double issue celebrates the fifth anniversary of publication of the Journal. A moment of self-reflection on the intellectual project of the review, on what are really the editorial principles which have guided the theoretical development of the Journal, is not inappropriate. I would think that the intellectual vitality of the review is a sign, and a hopeful one at that, of the refusal of the creative imagination to succumb to the dour pronouncements of positive reason. Ironically, in this the most demoralizing of times, when economic crisis and hostile political pressures threaten intellectual work as a whole, there occurs now a regeneration, almost a rebirth, of critical reason. It is as if the forced reduction of life to the particular, to the grim necessities of economy, stimulates the intellectual imagination to break once and for all with positive discourse, and to come over to the side of culture, of the artistic and theoretical imagination. Certainly, at no point in the history of the Journal have we received such a large volume of exceptional manuscripts or experienced such a close sense of intellectual fraternity with the community of readers which has formed around the review. If the character of an intellectual review is demonstrated by the readership which it attracts, then we are fortunate in having subscribers who demand integrity of theoretical critique and who insist on critical appreciation for contending perspectives. The active support of readers is welcomed by the editors and, in fact, the knowledge that the Journal has crystallized a working alliance among theoreticians, poets, artists, historians and others makes the task of editing the review a creative one. As a journal which encourages the announcement of critical tensions among opposing viewpoints, it may well be that the sheer existence of the review serves as a pressure-point against the bad conscience of the bourgeois personality.

The editorial of the very first issue of the Journal noted that the review was intended to defend the intellectual imagination, against not only the threatening force of public life but as well against the demoralizing indifference of the surrounding population. I think now, in modesty, that the Journal has held true to this project, serving faithfully and well as a refuge for the creative imagination and for serious and critical scholarly work. In addition to a series of critical and, in some instances, now classic articles in theoretical domains stretching from cultural analysis to dependency theory, the Journal has published a provocative number of theme issues. Beginning with such thematisations as "Emancipatory Theory" and "Marx and Marxism Reconsidered" and continuing with "Psychoanalysis, Ideology and Language", "Hollywood, Hollywood", in "Marginality and Mexican Thought", the Journal has both addressed central theoretical debates and typically helped create the trajectory of these debates. It is gratifying that

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many of the articles published in the review have attracted serious and prolonged commentaries, only some of which have been able to be included in the exchange section. It is equally a mark of the Journal's impact that, at this point, many manuscripts first published in the Journal, are now appearing in book form. As a number of reviewers of the Journal have pointed out, we have succeeded somehow, and this against the specializing tendencies of the public order, in creating a discourse which is thoroughly interdisciplinary, including participants from economics, sociology, literary studies, history, political science, law, and, of course, recently from the artistic and cultural communities.

It is not, in fact, an unhappy occasion when a discourse long forgotten in history's twilight returns, in all of its force, in all of its vitality, to describe the contemporary intellectual predicament. I have in mind a wonderful concept deployed in the nineteenth century by John Watson, perhaps Canada's foremost exponent of critical idealism. Watson characterized the best of intellectual discourse as that of the "warring subject" — a protracted, creative struggle in thought between the actual and the possible, between the moral ideal and historical practicalities. Now, generations later, the discourse of the warring subject returns, however falteringly, in the trajectory traced out by contributions to this Journal. This special issue oscillates, for example, between political economy and the cultural imagination. That the theoretical discourse contained here joins together serious reflection on Habermas, Van Gogh, Magritte and Keynes; that, in fact, the issue contains theoretical analyses ranging from hermeneutical critique to structuralist accounts of cultural experience, is illustrative of a sustained attempt at articulating the dynamic, the warring, tensions at the heart of intellectual life.

If there has been a feature common to the often contending perspectives presented in the Journal, it has been the attempt to reconcile the universal claims of the intellectual imagination with the particular demands of Canadian, and, perhaps, North American history. On this, the fifth anniversary issue of the Journal, I sometimes have the temerity to consider that the intellectual fate of the Journal, its success in reconciling culture and history, imagination and necessity, mirrors the agony and possibility of Canadian intellectuality itself. This is, after all, a society which for all of its colonisation of economy and for all of its mimesis in politics, still is unique in producing a succession of philosophies of civilization which expose, in truth, the full dimensions of positive discourse.

The next five years of the Journal begin with a major change of venue. Beginning this summer, the editorial and business offices of the Journal will be relocated to Concordia University in Montréal, Québec. The Journal was in a very real sense, made possible by its inception and development in the unique cultural setting of Winnipeg. The Journal's location in Winnipeg always

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militated against the adoption of a metropolitan attitude, and, indeed, created in the Journal's very texture an implicit understanding of the importance of regional discourse in Canada. The move to Montreal is really part of the same discursive logic, situating the Journal between the two épistèmes which are at the heart of national debate. In a modest way, we are hopeful that the Journal will provide a forum for an active appreciation of the complex and, indeed, advanced intellectual and cultural life of Québec.

In addition to the Journal's impending shift to Montréal, a number of more thematic analyses of crucial theoretical issues are now being developed. Over the next year we expect to publish thematic presentations, appraising, for example, the historical imagination, on the emerging debate between Sartre's and Foucault's perspective, and the crises of culture and society. Readers will be invited to submit contributions to the various issues and, in the best of worlds, general "readers' meetings" will be held in various locales to discuss, among editors, readers, and contributors, the themes being worked out in the Journal. Of course, the mainstay of the review will continue to be the presentation in each issue of a variety of original and serious theoretical *oeuvres*.

Ultimately, of course, the intellectual success of any review is based in good measure on the work of the editorial board and on the degree of rigour and responsibility which manuscript readers bring to the task of evaluating submissions. This Journal has been fortunate in attracting editors from a variety of academic disciplines who have made quite unique contributions to the theoretical development of the review. And, of course, manuscript readers can expect to be rewarded for consistently exceptional reviews by being called on for further work, all in the interest of engendering the intellectual life. I would like to thank, in particular, Allen Mills and Alkis Kontos who were associated with the Journal's early development, and who now are returning to other academic work. Their past contributions to the review are appreciated.

Arthur Kroker
