

the fringe as the avant-garde of critical theory (though I dearly hope I am wrong). Because, to say one of the two eyes on the human face doesn't exist is not to say very much about the human face — unless you happen to be Picasso; then you can picture two noses and one eye; then you will be saying more about a perceptive self as Picasso and much less about the human face and its future evolution. So, to construct such sentences as: "The artist does not exist" or "The work of art does not exist" — *whatever* the qualifications following such statements — is simply to re-write *Ubu Roi* in a humorless fashion, Impressionism turned Dadaism, and with all the political risks of being caught in a 1930's right-wing Europe. The mentors behind this book, the Stanley Fishes, the Terry Eagletons, or the Paul Feyerabendes are too clever to fall into the avant-garde trap. And they have and do influence the mainstream, for their ideas did not have to wait for Derida to arrive on the scene. Lambropoulos is less fortunate. He has taken the step with their theories they would never dare take themselves. And what has yielded both good and bad results: good for the Greek literatti to hear these things, bad for the person saying them, for in his perceived (necessary?) excess he has brutalized himself politically and robbed himself of dependability as a theorist. And that is why it is a book fraught with ambivalence, which is a pity, for it has a good share of brilliant moments, moments of real insight into the vagaries of canon formation; there are here segments of sheer daring (and head-on) in uncovering the awful and uncouth mischief of philologists, literary historians, and critics of Greek literature. Yet one may hope that even though the Greeks have never taken well to the avant-garde, this book will find its audience; for it may, as the first of its kind, be a profoundly useful book.

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