

able. It provides up-to-date scholarship on a wide variety of topics, as well as their historical context. Extensively illustrated, this is a source book that no one with an interest in Chinese art should be without.

Craig Clunas' experience in working with both artifacts and historical Chinese texts on connoisseurship as deputy curator of the Far Eastern Collections at The Victoria and Albert Museum is evident in his *Superfluous Things*, a work that examines Chinese objects in conjunction with contemporary literature within a social and cultural context. Clunas states very clearly at the outset that this is not a book about "things," but of ways of looking at things, specifically items from the late Ming dynasty (1368–1644).

This is a fascinating study that examines in detail treatises on connoisseurship and the role they played in late-Ming dynasty society. The title of this book comes from one of these works, the early seventeenth century *Treatise on Superfluous Things* by Wen Zhengheng. These "superfluous things" include paintings, jade carvings and metalwork. Clunas' focus on "things" is evident in his chapter titles: books about things; ideas about things; words about things; things of the past; things in motion (this refers to luxury objects as commodities); and anxieties about things, which deal with class and consumption.

Clunas devotes much of his introduction to discussing material culture and cites many of the current theoreticians. Oddly, though, he does not attempt to define the term, nor does he mention the pioneering writings of Ameri-

can material culturalist Thomas Schlereth or the recent work being done at the University of Leicester by Susan Pearce and her colleagues.

This book shows one of the more interesting and unusual approaches to the use of texts in understanding artifacts within their social and cultural milieu, revealing the attitudes of the scholar class toward collecting and the hierarchy of collectables. In addition to vessels, furniture and clothing, birds and fish are also included in Wen Zhengheng's treatise. "Parrots," he states, "are capable of speech and, thus, must be taught short poems and harmonious phrases ... however, these birds ... are all categorically things of the women's quarters; they are not among the necessities of value" (p. 42). Clunas is quick to point out that these writings need to be viewed as having severe limitations, as they reveal largely the attitudes of upper-class male society.

This is the most scholarly of the three books here reviewed. While none of these publications contains a glossary of Chinese characters, this would have been of particular value here not only for the titles of these treatises but for the discussion of the terminology of aesthetics.

Clunas assumes little prior knowledge on the part of the reader, and thus provides clear and succinct explanations of Sino-specific terms and concepts. His comparisons of Ming dynasty China with contemporary Europe places the book's appeal beyond the sinologist, to include all cultural historians. *Superfluous Things* is one of the more interesting books to appear recently and is particularly valuable in its approach of linking artifact with text.

## **Bill Rawling, *Surviving Trench Warfare: Technology and the Canadian Corps, 1914–1918***

**JACK ENGLISH**

Rawling, Bill. *Surviving Trench Warfare: Technology and the Canadian Corps, 1914–1918*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992. 325 pp., 17 illus. Cloth \$55.00, ISBN 0-8020-5017-4. Paper \$19.95, ISBN 0-8020-6002-1.

Canada's greatest military historian, the late Colonel C. P. Stacey, maintained that the Second World War was the second-greatest event

in Canadian history. The greatest event, in his view, was the Great War, with the "creation of the Canadian Corps ... [being] the greatest thing that Canada had ever done." Though the passage of time has left others less convinced, and some have even argued that Canada's 1914–18 effort was not worth the candle, the Great War remains by at least one important measure Canada's greatest war. The conflict cost the

Dominion over 60 000 dead, more of whom fell in battle than their 48 000 American comrades killed in action. Indeed, the Canadian death toll in this far distant war exceeded that of the United States in Vietnam; but whereas the latter drew its soldiers from a population base of more than two hundred million, the young Dominion of Canada in the summer of 1914 boasted fewer than eight million souls.

From an operational perspective, the Great War still lies heavily on the military landscape, shrouded in the mists of history and myth. The forlorn images of the Somme and Passchendaele continue to dominate our memory, overshadowing the fire and movement victories of 1918. Yet, the more one studies the Second World War and later military operations, the more one is inexorably drawn back to this watershed in war fighting. From a military as well as purely Canadian historical perspective, therefore, the study of the Great War remains especially relevant. Unfortunately, few Canadian or even military historians have dared or deigned to peer behind the broad arrows and rough outlines of the grand strategic picture. The critical question remains, however, what do armies do when strategic alternatives have been exhausted and there are no flanks to manoeuvre around? In the Great War, tactical solutions had to be found. The war was fought from the bottom up. True, the perception lingers that massed armour would have ended the trench stalemate, but the lumbering, mechanically unreliable, fume-spewing tank of the day suffered severe limitations. In the 64 days following the beginning of the Battle of Amiens on 8 August 1918, the Germans knocked out 819 tanks representing 41.4 per cent of the total British production of fighting tanks for the entire war period. In fact, the Germans destroyed them faster than they could be replaced. For the last offensive actions of the war the British were never able to muster more than 48 tanks.

Happily, in Bill Rawling's *Surviving Trench Warfare: Technology and the Canadian Corps, 1914-1918*, historians and students now have a book that places Great War operations, and those of the Canadian Corps in particular, within a more profound and balanced military context. In exploring the relationship between Canadian soldiers and the tools of war, Rawling argues that there "is far more to technology than machines." The manner in which they are used and how they interact with other forms of technology has always to be taken to account. In the case of the Canadian

Corps, technology alone was never enough; "the troops themselves had to be involved in tactical change." As Rawling demonstrates, the technological process did not end with the invention; it had to be adapted by "trench inventors," those ordinary soldiers who initially produced their own "jam tin" bombs, "Tommy Tickler's Artillery," and later cut the stocks off rifles and developed slings for Lewis light machine guns. Canadian soldiers were thus "less sheep led to slaughter than thinking people who set their minds to the challenges of survival and, in the process, contributed to the defeat of a well-trained and well-motivated enemy."

Rawling traces the evolution of the Canadian Corps on the Western Front from 1915 and concludes that, like its British, French, and German counterparts, it responded to "the problems of industrial warfare by adopting or devising a tactical system based on specializing tasks within the infantry and artillery and on the close integration of these specialists and their weapons through effective communications, the whole coordinated through detailed planning." As training was crucial to survival in the lethal environment of the Great War, the concept of the citizen-soldier quickly gave way to that of the military technician. By April 1917, the infantry platoon had been split into Lewis gun, bomber, rifle grenadier, and rifle sections; by 1918 it was reorganized into two Lewis gun and two combined rifle-rifle grenadier sections. While soldiers were cross-trained as far as possible, they continued to fulfill specialist roles. Similarly, engineers took on tunnelling, wiring, mining, and countermining tasks. The artillery, which gained steadily in importance, made even greater advances in the application of indirect fire. Counterbattery operations attained an unprecedented level of sophistication through improved sound-ranging technology, aerial observation and photography, and new survey and calibration techniques that permitted map shoots. Creeping, standing, and SOS barrages were also perfected with precision and corrected as necessary by forward observers equipped with telephones and wireless sets.

In the course of this work Rawling naturally devotes a great deal of attention to weapons systems and related technologies. We are told why Canadian soldiers disliked the Ross rifle, except as a sniper weapon, and how they retained a suspicion of the Colt machine gun. The development and technicalities of other tools of the trade are also discussed in sub-

stantial detail, notably, the Lewis gun, the Stokes trench mortar, Mills bombs, rifle grenades, Newton mortars, 18-pounders, 4.5-inch howitzers, tanks, Bangalore torpedoes, poison gas and countermeasures, signalling methods, and the geophone. The greatest strength of *Surviving Trench Warfare* lies less in the purely technological realm, however, than in Rawling's clever integration of this dimension within the wider context of Great War operations. He manages to weave such disparate aspects as German and Allied high-level aims, air force development, Canadian raiding action, and the use of scouts into one comprehensive whole. His treatment of training, organization, doctrine, and combined arms tactics follows a simple chronology and is finely accomplished through the judicious use of primary source material and an easy-to-read style. In short, for gaining a better understanding of Canadian operations in the Great War there is no single-volume work quite like *Surviving Trench Warfare*.

Of course, there are certain assertions in Rawling's book that may prove contentious. One is whether one can safely say that a "creeping barrage" was employed at Neuve Chapelle. Though it "lifted" from objective to objective, it did not actually "creep" forward in consonance with advancing infantry as did the first credited "creeper" during the Battle of the

Somme. There is also the question of the German system of defence in depth. No doubt the Germans did organize their defences in depth in 1915, but not to the extent they did after the introduction of "elastic defence" (by the General Staff) in the winter of 1916-17. Regrettably, Rawling does not appear to have consulted Timothy Lupfer's excellent work *The Dynamics of Doctrine: The Changes in German Tactical Doctrine during the First World War* (Fort Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute, 1981). On a final minor point, the key Brigadier-General, General Staff (BGGs) appointment within the Canadian Corps was held by a highly competent British officer by the name of N. W. Webber (not Webster as indicated in both text and index!).

Notwithstanding these last comments, Rawling's book is an important work that stands in the reputable international company of Lupfer's work, Dominick Graham's and Selford Bidwell's *Fire Power: British Army Weapons and Theories of War 1904-1945* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1982) and Bruce I. Gudmundsson's *Stormtroop Tactics: Innovation in the German Army, 1914-1918* (New York: Praeger, 1989). For students of Canadian Great War history it is an indispensable text that could also be read with profit by serving officers.

## **Michael M. Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums***

**KENNETH L. AMES**

Ames, Michael M. *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1992. 212 pp., notes, bibliography, index. Cloth \$39.95, ISBN 0-7748-0391-6.

It is hard not to like someone who frankly admits that both anthropology and museums are in trouble. In 14 eminently readable chapters, Michael M. Ames tells us exactly how and why, and in some cases, what we might do about it. But don't read this book if you are looking for quick solutions to current problems. Ames understands museums too well to expect easy or rapid change. In fact, part of what I

found refreshing about this book, even when it dealt with depressing matters, was the author's candor. It is not often that a museum director admits publicly that museum work can be demoralizing, that "despair is ... frequently the shadow to ambition in the museum world" (p. 5), and that people who work in museums "may never be able to surmount their problems, because solutions are frequently outside their control, beyond their means, and alien to their interests" (p. 4). There is no false optimism here.

What there is, on the other hand, is a highly informed and balanced account of the current condition of anthropology within Canada's