

BOOKREVIEWS

Noël Carroll, *Beyond Aesthetics: Philosophical Essays*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. ix + 450 (ISBN. 0-521-78656-8).

The volume contains essays published by the author covering a period of the last decade and a half of the last century where he had been consistently advocating for a distinction between aesthetics and philosophy of art, two areas of cultural practices, according to him, that are confusingly identified causing thereby a severe intellectual error that one generation suffers from. Therefore he argues strongly that we must go “beyond aesthetics” in order that we may understand and appreciate artworks appropriately.

According to Carroll, aesthetics as a branch of knowledge developed during the second half of the eighteenth century and made progress through a large part of the twentieth century through the critics who identified artwork by its formal and sensuous properties and in terms of a specific response to it called “aesthetic experience,” that is defined by its “disinterestedness” of the audience called otherwise an “aesthetic attitude.” *Art qua art* is the slogan of this aesthetics wing that ignores several other important aspects of our cultural practices that help, define and determinate artwork such as the historical perspectives of art history and the social practices of a community that enfranchise an object or a product as an artwork. Carroll confesses the influence of his teacher George Dickie, the propounder of the “institutional theory of art.” The way Carroll thinks might be understood in terms of a difference between linguistics and philosophy of language. The aesthetic properties or the formal aspects of art identified with the property of art by critics like Walter Pater, Roger Fry and Clive Bell, and the advocates of an “aesthetic attitude” following the Kantian notion of disinterestedness such as Edward Bulloch as also the American pragmatist John Dewey who viewed aesthetic experience as the paradigm of human experience are all the targets of Carroll’s attack. Dealing toward an institutional theory of art, Carroll argues for the relevance of social and historical contexts of art in identifying and appreciating art: “I have always resisted the idea that art can be defined in terms of the intended capacity of certain objects to support aesthetic experience as well as the idea that the aesthetic is best conceptualized in terms of disinterestedness.” (p. 2) Nevertheless, unlike Dickie, Carroll is willing to accept a notion of aesthetic experience that explains man’s response to art: “Unlike George Dickie, I do not contend that aesthetic experience is a myth, but rather something is an aesthetic experience if it involves design appreciation or the detection of aesthetic or expressive properties or the contemplation of the emergence of the formal, aesthetic, or expressive properties from their base properties, or a combination of any or all of these responses.” (p. 3) But why again the term “aesthetic” is going beyond “aesthetics?” Why should “aesthetic properties” be identified with expressive properties, where the very modification “expressive” has been highly controversial in the writings of philosophers like Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Michel Foucault? The Husserlian phenomenologists who interpret expression as an eidetic signification explaining the very core of consciousness, its intentionality Richard Wollheim’s distinction between “natural expression” and “expression of/by correspondence” remains a great question. Despite Derrida’s severe critique Husserl’s exclusion of gestures and postures from “expression” with its distinct formation of indication warrants a philosopher’s immediate attention. So, why should we take the aesthetic/ expressive properties, into account in dealing with philology of art?

In current philosophical discourses, the authorial intention has been removed from the intention of the Romantic subject, where intentionality (directedness) of phenomenological vocabulary has been the key to understand the role of interpretation essential in all our verbal and non-verbal cultural properties. It is highly risky to argue that aesthetics is different from philosophy of art as linguistics is different from philosophy of language. The glaring example of a health fusion of these two disciplines already was available with the Russian Formalists of the early decades of the last century who assimilated both Husserl and Saussure in their linguistic treatment of poetry that turned to be a semiotics of art in the Prague structuralists during the 1930s and 40s.

The question is why should we associate the discipline of aesthetics with only the Kantians and formalists? If this association is a need for critical convenience, we should specify a wing of branch. If aesthetics is used as philosophy of beauty, then what harm, if we consider philosophy of art as a wing, as species of the genre aesthetics. A philosopher of art, then, can work comfortably in the area of aesthetics without any need for going beyond it.

But of course, we all must agree with Carroll that a comprehensive account of art needs the travel of an aesthician far beyond the limitations of the formal properties of art with an attitude of disinterestedness. An audience while appreciating a work of art, always participates in it (*svamānupraveśa*, as Sanskrit critic Abhinavagupta called it), never views it disinterestedly (*taṭastha*). The present reviewer has elaborated these points in his essay “Aesthetic Experience, and the Experience of Art and Nature” in *Art and Experience*, Praegar Publishers, 2003. The grounds on which Carroll wishes to distinguish between “aesthetics” and “philosophy of art” are no more attractive in intercultural perspectives.

Joseph Margolis, *What, After All, Is a Work of Art?* University Park: Penn State Press, 1999, pp. 143.

The work collects different lectures Margolis, delivered at different universities of Japan in the spring of 1997. The prologue to the book was delivered at the Thirteenth International Congress of Aesthetics in Lahti (Finland), in the summer of 1995. The author writes in the preface, “But the lectures do now confirm the organizing question of the entire set—namely, the sense in which artworks and human selves mutually inform the work of interpreting and understanding one another... for artworks and selves are both mutually fashioned artifacts—of however profoundly different sets.”

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Preface

Prologue: Beneath and Beyond the Modernism/Post-modernism Debate

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Epilogue: Interpreting Art and Life

The Epilogue unifies the arguments of all the separate pieces where Margolis puts up a common interpretive way for artworks and human life. Human beings change over time as they grow from childhood to maturity whereas artworks do not. Yet artworks are “like” persons: “What is common

to selves and artworks is not biology but intentionality: selves and artworks are materially embodied in different ways, but what is embodied are Intentional structures, and it is those structures that are affected in similar ways under interpretation. So there is nothing strange in saying that artworks are 'like' persons—without their being persons themselves... "What persons and artworks share, in virtue of which the interpretations of them behave in similar ways, is their possessing or being histories rather than possessing natural kind natures or being natural-kind entities."

In the title essay Margolis observes that in spite of several theories (as also analyses) of artworks what remains constant is that artworks are not natural-kind entities—they are very strange "entities"—"artworks are physically embodied and culturally emergent entities"—a view that Margolis held long ago in his 1980 book *Art and Philosophy*. Restoring the same view of artworks in spite of controversies raised in the past (for example, Stephen Davies, *Definitions of Art*, 1991) Margolis states that "cultural entity" needs some more explanations. One way of explaining this cultural entity is to view phenomenologically that considers artwork as an intentional object—not the physical object in itself, but this object as it is experienced by the audience—an idea that this reviewer has sufficiently elaborated up on in his recent discussion on Abhinavagupta's definition of art (See Stephen Davies and Ananta Sukla, *Art and Essence*, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2003). The Western critics who familiarized this view of artworks are Hasserlians like Roman Ingarden and Wolfgang Iser. A reader being a historically based cultural entity, and the properties of artworks being cultural such as linguistic, semiotic, gestural, political, religious and environmental, both the nature of artworks and their appreciation and interpretation will be inevitably determined by the cultural contexts concerned. Margolis elaborates upon these points in this title essay (pp. 87 ff.)

In the prologue essay "The Modernism/Postmodernism Debate," Margolis perceptively remarks that one cannot really discern what is uniformly "postmodernist" in the diverse art forms such as architecture, film and literature, nor are there particular critics who can be relied upon for uniformity. He then observes that "Modernism is the old option championed now against the challenge pressed in terms of (1)-(3). Postmodernism is the abandonment of modernism in the face of (1)-(3) or (1)-(4), and, as a consequence, the abandonment of any and every effort to legitimate our truth-claims, our claims to knowledge, "Western philosophy has, since French Revolution, divided its allegiance between items (1)-(2) and (3)-(4)." "The dispute confronts us with a bogus choice: fall back to invariance and neutrality ... or give up the very idea of objective knowledge anywhere (which, we are told, cannot be rescued, if not by the failed first narrative). The business of the modernist/ postmodernist dispute blinds us to the fact that *objectivity* is constructed and endlessly reconstructed in the flux of history..."

In the essay "The History of Art after the End of the History of Art" Margolis perceptively disputes Danto in claiming that "we have now eclipsed the periodization of history itself as an expression of an essentialized history." End of the history of art means "end of the canonical history of art." Danto's notions of the end of art and history of art follows Hegel's philosophy of art and history of art. Coming to the questions of relativism and cultural relativity, Margolis exhibits his erudition and analysis in a masterly way that is rare in contemporary scholarship. "In the West" he says "the subject of relativism is relevant in the postmodern era that rejects any essence or unchangeable structure that

defines truth and reality which are no more metaphysical, but political or cultural, and this cultural relativity is due to the differences in cultural phenomena such as language, history, art, religion, social customs and the political norms that determine its ways of living for the debate. For example, while thinking of modern painting one must take notice of Clement Greenberg and Rosalind Kraus. Thinking in terms of architecture calls upon Robert Venturi and Charles Jencks; thinking in terms of film invites Fredric Jameson's review of capitalism; and while thinking philosophically one takes Habermas, Lyotard and Rorty into account most reasonably. So the debate is more a symptom than a full problematic of its own. If one hesitates to believe with Kraus that postmodernism simply does away with referential processes or with Greenberg that modernist painting is or ought to be committed to not violating the absolute validity of the two-dimensional 'flat' surface of easel painting, one equally disagrees with Lyotard that second-order "meta-narratives" (legitimation) may be discarded without a sustained argument. Margolis thus comments, "The modernists are as bad as postmodernists." (p. 3) One sincerely ponders whether there is really any conceptual transformation in our time that is fundamental to the historical changes, and whether the debate has successfully attacked or eclipsed all the canons they claim (or aspire?) to do so. The conventional postmodernists Lyotard and Rorty, despite their subscription to the postmodernist theme, have gone much further in their arbitrary way, "recommending dismantling philosophy altogether and constructing such advice as the logical upshot of their own discovery." (p. 5)

Margolis observes some notable changes in the Western intellectual terrain: 1. Neutrality and objectivity are no longer thought to be self-evidencing assured; 2. All cognitive privilege is abandoned; 3. We acknowledge that our cognitive powers are historically (hence contingently and variably) formed; 4. We concede, as a consequence, that the recovery of objectivity cannot consistently be secured, except in constructivist terms, under conditions collected as 1-3. Viewing phenomenologically, Margolis holds, "All that would be needed would be to abandon the standard conviction that bivalence can not be coherently breached and that reality must possess determinate unchanging structures." Along that line artworks, like persons, actions and sentences, are not *fully determinate*, but are *interpretively determinable* in intentional ways; and intentional properties are not as determinate as physical objects. They are flexive, inherently subject to interpretation and reinterpretation and the historicized conditions of human life. (p. 65).

Graham Frankland, *Freud's Literary Culture*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 260.

Modernism's supersession of the Freudian psychoanalysis was due to its change from the personal to the transpersonal reflected in the Jewish/Aryan/Vienna-Zurich/Freud-Jedug conflict that was finalized in Jung's withdrawal from Freud in May 8, 1913 when Freud was writing his last section of the *Totem* and wrote that this essay "would serve to make a sharp division between us and all Aryan religiosity. For that will be the result of it... In the dispute with Zurich it comes at the right time to divide us as an acid does a salt." He also wrote, "Certainly there are great differences between the Jewish and Aryan spirit... Hence there would assuredly be here and there differences in outlook on life and art... We Jews have an easier time, having no mystical element." This lack of mystical (or religious) elements in

Freud was the reason for his misunderstanding of the significance of the Femionine, the Mother-Goddess who preceded the Father-God in the prepatriarchal level of the unconscious that Jung discovered by his thorough study of the Indo-Aryan mysticism. The phallus-centrism of Freud, as the feminists rightly detect in him, is due to his ignorance of this primordial feminine principle that is represented in the creative energy of myths otherwise known as the creative psyche.

But, viewed otherwise, the drama of his Oedipus complex, representing the killing of the Father-God in primitive rituals that represent the patriarchal society and the phallus-centrism was enacted in his own life, when Jung left him (killed him). In being left (killed) Freud felt he was glorified, as it is the core-point in the patriarchal rites of patricide represented in the myth of Oedipus. It is because of this unconscious (Jewish) bias for the phallus that he was almost obsessed with Sophocles, and wrote his scientific treatises in a language that transforms them into literary texts.

The present author Frankland, in his Liverpool Ph.D. Thesis elaborates this fundamental point in both the biography of Freud and his narratives by using a German term *dichter* (meaning poet, dramatist, novelist) for Freud who had himself great fascination for Sophocles, Shakespeare, Milton and Goethe. Frankland writes "to a significant point, Freud reads dreams as if they were poetic" (p.122). When critics like Erich Newmeann observe that before Freud psychology was a mere stepchild of philosophy, implying that psychology attained the status of science introducing the term "psychoanalysis," contemporary writers like Paul Ricoear call him a philosopher and Harold Bloom a 'strong poet.'

Now, Frankland considers him "a creator, both in therapy and theory of fictional narratives" and views his work from the most radically literary perspective: as the obliquely "autobiographical product of a—frustrated or suppressed—would-be Dichter." (p.162) "I seek to reevaluate Freud's entire hermeneutic—that is, his mode of interpreting dreams, symptoms, jokes, slips serene memories, and so on—and I do this by viewing his interpretation of these 'texts' as the substitute gratification so to speak, a frustrated literary critic." (pp.3-4) "For when Freud does analyse visual symbols he tends to use verbal associations to reconstruct them to the linguistic fabric of the dream." "Freud is often pleased by the beauty of a dream interpretation." (Pp.126-127).

Frankland's enthusiasm apart, poststructuralist critics like Jacques Lacan have discovered Freud's intuitive contributions to theories of linguistics and the structures of both visual and verbal images that constitute painting and literature. But the major question is—Can we call Freud a poet? A literary autobiographer, a novelist, a dramatist? A literary critic, that too a frustrated, or suppressed/ would-be *Dichter*? There is certainly no reason for so much of enthusiasm, obsession for the paradigm of literary creativity. Freud, like many other philosophers, natural or social scientists or linguists is a creative man par excellence. But creativity does not consist only in literary creations or criticism. For that matter Jung, Saussure, Einstein, and Wittgenstein all would be literary figures. This obsession carries no sense indeed. Why again a frustrated or suppressed or would-be literary talent? Does it mean that Freud's ambition has to be a likely creator and critic, but unfortunately he could not be so? It is difficult to appreciate Frankland's views either against or in favour of Freud. He amasses information, views, references, race materials with reference to the Freudian writings, but the reviewer is disappointed to

note any precise contributive use of them. There is no point in assessing Freud as a frustrated literary talent, which he never wanted to be either consciously or unconsciously.

Nick Zangwill, *The Metaphysics of Beauty*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001, pp.224.

Beauty is undoubtedly an enduring object of human experience that is being investigated and analysed unendingly in each and every generation of human civilization in both its absolute and relative perspectives. Beauty is essentially an object of *aisthesis* or sense experience. The Greek sense of beauty meant by the word *Kalos* refers to sensuous properties of an object such as colours in painting, and Aristotle says “The most beautiful colours laid on without order will not give one the same pleasure as a simple black-and-white sketch of a portrait” (1450). According to the Greeks, then, what is essential in art, is not only its sensuous properties or the object of *aisthesis* unless they are arranged in an order, and this order is the formal cause of Aristotle. Following him, the formalists argue that beauty is an *aisthesis* of *logos*, or in other words, the embodiment of *logos* represented sensuously, as poetry is the *mythos* of the *logos* or the verbal representation (speech or *mythos* in Homer) of *logos*. Defined so, beauty in art and beauty in nature are of the same category, with the basic difference that art is a human *techne* that completes what is incomplete in nature. Contemporary philosophers (such as George Dickie and Noël Carroll) reject this aesthetic concept of beauty, because they are relativists in considering several other factors such as social and cultural contexts as determinants of beauty rather than any representation of a universal form or principle. They reject formalism altogether.

But the present writer defends formalism in a relativist stance. “Beauty does not stand alone. It cannot exist by itself. Things are beautiful because of the way they are in other respects. Beauty is a property that depends upon other properties. Moreover, when we appreciate the beauty of a thing, we appreciate its beauty as it is realized in its other properties.” For example, suppose we find a rose beautiful. What we find beautiful is a specific arrangement of coloured petals, leaves and stems. Beauty cannot float free of the way things are in other respects, and we cannot appreciate beauty except in so far as it is embodied in other respects. “Beauty cannot be solitary, and we cannot appreciate it as such.” Clearly, the author’s use of the phrase “specific arrangement” is the same as the Aristotelian order (*logos*), and his principle of is equivalent to the Aristotelian *mythos* the very linguistic structure that represents human action.

The present author interprets “beauty” in a broader sense, without identifying it as the only object of aesthetics that he views in its genus, i.e., a science of sensation in general. Therefore, he does not consider beauty as the only aesthetic property, but one among many other properties, beauty as we (subjects/audience) represent it in our experience and judgement, and beauty as it is in itself—the beauty of “folk metaphysics” and the beauty of “pure metaphysics.” From the very beginning, then, the author is categorizing beauty according to the Kantian division between phenomenal and nonmenal realities, although, he says, he has, left out the “deep psychological nature of our experiences and judgements of beauty” that concern Kent. Concept of beauty is one of the other aesthetic concepts that are dependent of other non-aesthetic concepts. Zanguill’s approach to beauty is quite original and sheds fresh light on

the observation of many earlier philosophers like Roger Scruton, Donald Daudson, Kendal Walton, and even in a way, Aristotle. He disputes Walton's antiformalist and Scruton's anti-realist arguments. The famous Aristotelian dictum that the ugly of nature is transformed to the beautiful by the mimesis of art is countered by Zangwill—"I believe that there is a single *notion* of beauty applicable to both art and nature and that there is a single *property* of beauty that both possesses." (p.125) This unitary and univocal concept of beauty tends to propose a self-sufficient notion of beauty as a value called aesthetic and has been disputed earlier by critics like Arthur Danto and his followers. But Zang will supports the univocal aspect of beauty including its self-dependence arguing for a dependence or related view of aesthetic properties that are dependent upon non-aesthetic properties, at the same time stressing the formal sensory properties of the facts and events that are called beautiful.

Zangwill's analysis of the aesthetic language or language of aesthetics correlating it with the most relevant issues of "metaphor" and "expression" is extremely persuasive. He does not attack his rival Scruton and his follower Davidson directly, but he does so dialectically. Scruton holds that the aesthetic (otherwise called expressive) language or the language that describes the beauty of art and nature is essentially metaphorical, and in this sense aesthetic language is expressive. But Donaldson, developing this view further, says that Scruton's thesis needs an appendix that all those metaphorical expressions are essentially literal, but used metaphorically. Thus metaphor is a matter of use only whereas all meanings are literal. But what is, after all, a literal meaning, other than a matter of use? A convention—an arbitrary sign system—to use the Sausarian idiom?

Jacques Derrida has impressively argued against the priority of literality of language in his argument for metaphoricity of all language. Derrida's argument apart, Zangwill points out that words like "beautiful," "elegant" and "dainty" are used literally in aesthetic contexts whereas they are used metaphorically in non-aesthetic contexts. "For example, we might speak of a 'beautiful hand' in cards or an 'ugly mood.' There is no significant parallel in moral philosophy, so the ensuing arguments could be developed there."

Zangwill's study of the ideological view of beauty developed during the postmodernist era, by the Marxists, feminists, historicists and subaltern studies that include postcolonial/colonial banners of scholarships, is precise, substantial and highly perceptive. Universality as such is rejected in to by postmodernism. The social studies undertaken by current scholarship hold beauty either as a myth or reduces it to a phenomena of political ideology—deployed as culturally and historically local, and thus in this sense is contingent or marginal. "The concept has its source in a specific period of history or specific social arguments—perhaps bourgeois or patriarchal specifically." (pp.209-210) The aesthetic skeptics should stop, says Zingwell, their experiments and judgements not only in the spheres of aesthetics, but in all other spheres, such as morality that are equally historical and relative without any universality, and huge condemns all our value-judgments. This imperative is not an order, but certainly a caution for rethinking the rejection of all human values by considering them only *ideological*.

Mark Bevir, *The Logic of the History of Ideas*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 337.

The present book approaches history of ideas from analytical point of view. The author's intellectual wisdom exhibits itself in the very first page where he pronounces his sound opinion regarding the "Validity of different *approaches* to a single intellectual issue with mutual complementation rather than incompatibility." He proposes to study the logic of history of ideas from analytical point of view, triggered by the influence of Quentin Skinner, opposing the phenomenological understanding geared by the ontological hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer, although he does not reject the validity of phenomenological understanding itself. He says, analytical and phenomenological understanding are valid in their own respective approaches—"surely they can complement one another as different approaches suited to explorations of different issues" irrespective of his disputing specific arguments of hermeneutic theorists. At the same time, he also differs from Skinner, who (along with Pocock) argues at defining a method for the history of ideas. Instead, holding the view that no method can constitute of form of justification, although it can perform a useful heuristic role, his concern is with the logic of history of ideas, not its heuristics, not with the question—how we can grasp the meaning of a text, but with the question—how we can explain the beliefs we postulate as the meanings of past works, the author wishes to explore the nature of the tradition by giving content to a concept of tradition, art and "to say that a particular concept of tradition does not help us to explain beliefs need not be to say that it tells us nothing about the process of human understanding of the pre-conditions of historical knowledge."

Mark Bevir defines the study of history of ideas most precisely—"To study the history of ideas is to study meaning, and so culture, from a historical perspective... The study of culture must always be parasitic on history." (p.1) Meaningfulness of human life combines with a historical consciousness, although scholars have assessed cultural phenomena epistemically, morally or aesthetically. Historicism of Bevir has marginalized the areas of knowledge counted under mainstream and considered self-sufficient and self-complete by the cultural traditions of different countries and continents. In searching for an adequate theory of culture Bevir proposes to explore the forms of reasoning appropriate to the history of ideas by asking questions: What is a meaning? What constitutes objective knowledge of the past? What are beliefs and traditions? How can we explain why people held the beliefs they did? In the first seven chapters, he deals with subjects of different categories such as analytic philosophy, meaning, objectivity, belief, synchronic and diachronic explanations and distortions. He clarifies that his approach is anti-foundational as exemplified by later Wittgenstein and phenomenology of Heidegger, particularly the post-analytic anti-foundationalism undermining precisely the logical positivist's concept of analytic of that designs the philosophy of history.

Bevir distinguishes three categories of meaning: wermermeutic, semantic and linguistic, the latter two concerning the truth conditions and conventional usage respectively whereas the first one that concerns the intentions of the author's phenomenological consciousness, not the individual intention that is rejected by the New Critics. Bevir argues that it is this meaning that constitutes the subject of the history of ideas: "whereas strong intentionalists regard intentions as conscious and prior to utterances, a weak intentionalism allows for the unconscious and for changes of intent doing the act of marking an

utterance... Weak intentions are individual view points.” (p.27) In the third chapter, dealing with objectivity, the author asserts that objectivity cannot rest on a particular method, or on a logic of vindication or refutation. Instead, a general concept of objectivity based on appeals to shared perceptions of certain facts, a critical attitude, and the possibility of comparing rival webs of theories should be developed. Talking of belief, the author asserts that the historians of ideas study works in order to recover hermeneutic meanings understood as expressions of beliefs. The conceptual priority of sincere, conscious, and rational beliefs implies that historians initially should presume the beliefs expressed in works are sincere, conscious and rational. Consequently, the fifth chapter deals with the question how can historians account for the meanings they reconstruct from the relics available to them? And in the answer, he rejects all forms of scientism that claim reductionism, i.e., matters of belief can be reduced to physiology and social positivism. “Because our synchronic and diachronic forms of explanation presume rationality,” the author observes in the sixth chapter, “they work by uncovering the conditional links between serious beliefs.” Conditional links are neither necessary nor arbitrary as are those defined in terms of “pure chance.” In the seventh chapter, dealing with distortion, the author considers the forms of explanation appropriate to cases in which the presumption of sincere, conscious and rational belief fails. Thus the concluding remarks are: “Historians should adopt, first, the form of justificatory reasoning detailed in the discussion of objectivity; second, the forms of explanatory reasoning for sincere, conscious, rational beliefs detailed in the discussion of webs of beliefs, traditions and dilemmas; and, third, the form of explanatory reasoning for deception, self-deception and irrationality detailed in the discussion of the operation of rogue pro-attitude.”

This long project of Mark Bevir detours several intellectual fields that are confined neither to history nor to the political issues that constitute and interpret historical events or history of ideas. The vast body of material he gathers and the way he categorizes them in correlating for a consistent and systematic point of view exemplifies his perceptive intelligence as well as the scholarly skill for formulating a self-conscious theory that can be used and applied variously. “My principal aim has been to describe how historians of ideas should explain the historical objects they postulate and justify the narratives they tell.” To form and analyse a notion of history, of idea, and of history of ideas under a single cover is a very hard task indeed.

Ian Baucom, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999, pp.249

English studies, and, for that matter, any study of/in literary tradition/history has been far removed from the areas, methods and tools it adopted during the first eight or nine decades of the last century. The issues of personality, individual emotions of the poet, the structure(s) of language the literature in question uses, as also the methods of examinations of the relationship between the poet and the reader, addresser and the addressee, systems of coding and decoding the media of communication are all being substituted/ overshadowed/supplemented by political issues that are responsible for the formulation, growth and identification of a culture that produces its literature. The issues of power and discourse expounded and emphasized in the postmodernist era have toppled the structuralist and modernist linguistic

issues very quickly. Thus soon after the Derridean explosion of the notion of deconstruction critics engaged themselves in correlating Marxist economic and political theories as reviewed by the neo-Marxists, Foucauldian theory of power, Lacanian philosophy/psychology of language and the notions of human will as expounded by Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Immanent results were differences in writing due to political and/or social domination(s) by way of (dis) location of (cultural) identity. Sensibility is no more a given phenomenon. It appears man-made by—a product of political (including administrative) and gender domination. This sensibility the very core of a culture is not anything given to a people from some primordial time, it is a product of history in course of a history of domination of various types.

The remarkable response to such correlations appears in Salman Rushdie's radical statement that the English explored their identity not in the England of pre-imperial/colonial era, but in the very places they colonized. Their identity is a "cultivated confusion." There might be some elements of exaggeration in such a statement as that of Rushdie, but a lot of truth underlies the statement as well. Three exponents of what is called colonialism or post-colonialism—Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak—have stretched the intellectual movements to a point where thoughts appear notoriously attractive in spite of their manifold exaggerations.

Ian Baucon, the author of the present book who teaches English literature at Dake University has drawn upon the ideas of Bhabha and Rushdie. Following Frantz Fanon, Bhabha discovers the geography of imperialism as a "zone of occult instability," whereas, he notes, describing the territories of British imperialism as spaces of bewilderment and loss that continue to trouble and confound English subjects. Rushdie indicates that "such imperial estrangements of English identity survive the formal end of imperialism, that a postimperial England is itself resident to lingering zones of imperial confession." Baucon thus plots in the present work "construction of these spaces of instability in the geography of Englishness," examines "not one but six spaces—Gothic architecture, The Victoria Terminus in Bombay, the Anglo-Indian Mutiny Pilgrimage, the cricket field, the country house, and the zone of urban riot—each of which has housed the disciplinary projects of imperialism and the imperial destabilizations and re-formations of English identity" (p. 4-5). Baucon refers to Lynda Colley's statement that the British were aware of their identity as British not in their own place, because of any political or cultural consensus at home, but in reaction to the "other," out of their shores after 1707, putting it precisely, the British identity is only a colonizer's imperial identity. Baucon amasses historical, political, economic, architectural and other materials that illustrate the anxieties of the imperial administrators to imprint their Britishness on the pages of the colonial history. One such instance is the Victoria Terminus railway station of Bombay, the most elaborated Gothic structure in India modeled after St. Pancras station in London.

When the central thesis is clear, a reader of the book can utilize the materials for a reductionism that the British identity is not an inherent phenomenon as its hybridity emerges in the colonies that the people founded outside their own native place. The book is most gripping and reads like a fiction, which it is indeed, rather than a historical narrative, because of the very attitude of the forerunners of the colonial/postcolonial scholarship. The fact that political ideology structures the character of a culture is simply a naked truth. Subjugation is a binary process of power that effects both the subject and the

subjugator, and there is nothing new to *invent* such a phenomenon. But to argue for and against such a natural phenomenon as domination is absolutely a risky one. Nobody would appreciate being subjugated. But nobody can avoid the circumstantial forces that bring such an unwanted occasion to effect. This does not certainly imply or instantiate that a culture is structured only or to the maximum point by political events or ideology. To say that the British discovered their identity in their colonial imperialism is as humorous as to say that the colonized subject discovers his cultural identity by being subjugated. Sara Suleri has even argued that one should sympathize with the colonizers because of the great pains they took in colonizing. Political invasion by military force or by exploitation of information technology has both its sides—pro and contra. One wonders, why such an attack on the British alone? Edward said has forgotten to note the damage the Islam has imprinted on India. So also how the Marathas looted the Eastern India during the post-Mogul and pre-British period. But could we say that the Mogul's earned their identity only during their rule in India or Islam earned its identity by its forceful conversion, whereas Hindus refrained from such conversion since the direction of the *Gita* in the first century B.C., and, therefore, they have no identity? Cultural identity, like personal identity is always a relative phenomenon. Political or religious factors are only aspects of such relativism. Pure culture is a myth as is a pure religion or pure language or pure nation based on purities of language, religion, art and literature.

A. C. Sukla