

he localizes it, questions it, and even adds to it. He complements Francesca Orsini and Sheldon Pollock by contributing to the larger project of vernacular literary history in South Asia. But he challenges them by valuing non-canonical forms of writing and centering arguments on the intra-vernacular conflicts. Thus, Satpathy has provided a template for how vernacular literary histories can write back to larger paradigms in global theory.

Unlike other works, *Modernity, Print and Sahitya* represents a critical departure from Eurocentric or metropole-focused literary histories. It draws attention to the asymmetries and inter-lingual rivalries within Indian language traditions themselves, especially the tension between Bengali and Odia. In doing so, Satpathy complicates the field's habitual binaries (East or West, colonizer or colonized) by highlighting the inter-regional politics of literary canon formation. The book insists that comparative literature must take seriously the dynamics of the so-called "minor" languages and examine how they negotiate both the pressures of dominant regional languages and the broader forces of global modernity. His exploration of how Odia intellectuals mobilized print technology to assert their cultural autonomy not only contributes to our understanding of a polyphonic literary modernity in South Asia but also calls for a rethinking of what constitutes the "comparative" in comparative literature. The interplay of translation, adaptation, and terminological transformation serves not only as a formal strategy but also as a politically charged process. Like Williams, Satpathy understands literature not as an autonomous aesthetic domain but as a material practice which is deeply embedded in institutions like schools, presses, periodicals and beyond. His study is both particular in its focus, meticulously grounded in the literary and material history of Odia print and expansive in its implications for how we theorize language, literature, and modernity.

In outline, Satpathy's writing is clear and accessible without being simplistic. His logically built arguments and his apt examples from textbooks, grammar primers, or essays not only speak to seasoned scholars but also welcome new readers into the conversation who want to navigate such theoretical texts. Though the book offers an incisive reading of colonial structures, class and culture, the conversation around the gendered nature of print culture and elitist tendencies of public spaces in colonial Odisha remains comparatively limited, suggesting avenues for future research.

The book concludes by reminding readers that modernity is far from being a linear progression and is best understood through complexities. *Modernity, Print and Sahitya* is more than a regional literary history. Its interdisciplinary approach to the theories of print capitalism, the public sphere, and language politics provides a nuanced account of how a new literary culture was marked by both continuity and rupture. Satpathy challenges universal models of literary modernity by focusing on the philological and linguistic dynamics of the Odia language. The book is a profound reflection on how print reshaped modernity, public life, and linguistic identity in colonial Odisha. It encourages us to consider the historiography of vernacular languages as rich, autonomous narratives that challenge our assumptions about what it means to be modern, literary, and Indian. At the end, the question that remains urgent and open-ended: If the printing-press enabled regional languages to enter modernity, will digital platform amplify their voices or absorb them into a new kind of homogenizing globalism?

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APPRECIATION POST: TOWARDS AN ART HISTORY OF INSTAGRAM. By Tara Ward. Oakland: University of California Press, 2024. 322 pp.

Instagram, to say the least, has democratized the phenomenon of creating and sharing images. Instead of dismissing it as just another social media nonsense/discourse, this phenomenon deserves

to be anchored within the concerns of art history. Indeed, several scholars have turned to Instagram in the process of pursuing gender studies, popular culture or visual culture. However, Tara Ward's *Appreciation Post: Towards an Art History of Instagram* is likely to be the first book-length study of the platform that speaks to its images from the perspectives of making, disseminating, and interpreting images, along with engaging with them while also witnessing how wider audiences engage with them. Ward does not claim to provide a definite art history of Instagram; she does not call all of Instagram as art; neither does she make a general argument about the varied and often conflicting trajectories of image making and reception on Instagram. Her contribution is towards identifying the unique characteristics of the platform as especially visible in certain accounts and images and the phenomena of engagement with these accounts as these intersect with the concerns of art history as a discipline. The points of intersection she chooses to focus on are: the practices of dealing with a deluge of images, the notions of beauty and attractiveness, and the phenomena of art collection, and the-artist-as-genius.

Instagram, the largely photography-based app, was launched in 2010. It is a platform that allows users to share images. In this sense, it “decenters the archival function” (30) in that it allows one to see pictures posted by other people. Ward further elaborates on the specificity of Instagram while also explaining her approach:

The claim of this text is that Instagram is best understood as a structure of the visual. It is something that organizes and supports what I pointedly call “visual” rather than “vision.” The former is a broader category that includes not just the process of looking, but what can be seen and by whom, as well as the means by which things are brought into view and left out of it. Yet studying Instagram does not reveal the eternal nature of optics. Instead, with a nod to Michel Foucault, it functions as a diagram of some parts of contemporary ocularity. Instagram not only defines who or what can be seen, but also how those things are understood (knowledge) and their relative value (power). (13)

Understanding this visuality, as Ward expresses it, brings many insights that add further nuance to concerns of art history.

For instance, regarding her first point (dealing with a deluge of images, as mentioned above), Ward argues that while Instagram has been touted as one of the examples of attention economy, it actually relies on inattentiveness. Thus, it is not a space to discuss the gaze, with all of its focus on a sustained engagement. Rather, it encourages the “glance” which barely allows users to focus on an image as they keep scrolling to see the next image rather than spend time on the image in front of them. Similarly, Instagram thrives on similar kinds of imagery rather than encouraging innovation.

The second theme of the book – notions of beauty and attractiveness on Instagram – demonstrates that ideas and vocabulary around image-making, previously known only to specialists, artists, and art historians (such as the rule of thirds or pose and angle) are now known to wider audiences thanks to the “democratization of expertise.” This democratization is not unqualified though: it comes with restrictions on who can be represented. What is deemed attractive conforms to young, White, straight, cis, bourgeois femininity.

The third theme of the practices of collection of art focuses on a sort of didactic culture around things such as sneakers. The practice of imparting information about the shoes, their pricing, or their fashionability and taste inspires an aesthetics which is evocative of canonicity, as espoused by Harold Bloom, for instance. Related is the theme of the-artist-as-genius as an active audience (a fan following, that is) determines or defines the idea of the artist. Using the example of a Black fashion designer and entrepreneur who appropriates canon of Western art to brand and promote his apparel design, Ward introduces readers to the ways in which art finds a cause and an audience on Instagram.

Together, the three themes leave readers well informed about turning to popular culture in ways that enrich conventional agendas of various disciplines. Ward summarises:

The trajectory of the book moves from viewing, to posting, to achieving Instagram fame, which is the platform's own mythology for how it will be integrated into users' lives. The method involves carefully

looking, considering the construction in both physical and social terms, then placing the work and artist into larger, historical frameworks. By charting a path through these parallel progressions, *Appreciation Post* calls attention to the way we narrate visual phenomena and the impact that process and context have on those stories. (17)

One would find it difficult to unsee Instagram after reading Ward's book. Her observations about the way images are made and consumed are a provocation to examine one's own news feed, while also nudging one to explore other ways of making sense of it. Her style of writing is simple yet rich, unburdened with jargon: "Looking is no longer one-to-one, but a process of incorporating the many" (31).

Appreciation Post is a phenomenology of Instagram that is located in cultural and historical frameworks, and should ideally be followed by studies attempting a similar kind of phenomenology for several other concerns surrounding image-making on Instagram: its deployment by art- and heritage-related accounts, marketing or commercial rhetoric, wellness and fitness discourse and so on.

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THE BROADVIEW INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY. By Andrew Bailey (Ed.). Peterborough, Canada: Broadview Press, 2024. 1056 pp.

Textbooks or introductory course books for students pursuing humanities must walk the tough rope of providing an overview of a domain while also making them familiar with the specificities of the range of models and perspectives that exist among the scholars working in the field. Andrew Bailey's edited volume titled *The Broadview Introduction to Philosophy* easily fulfils these criteria not just in terms of introducing the students to the content of the discipline but also in terms of helping course instructors to frame their own teaching and introductory courses in helpful ways such as generating meta reflections on why and which texts ought one choose for one's course (as opposed to merely prescribing them for reading after which the students are expected to be on their own!). While there is no explicit section on aesthetics and literature that might directly address the interests of the readers and subject matter of this journal, the volume has plenty that students of aesthetics and literature read or borrow from in order to engage with their texts at deeper levels.

Bailey introduces philosophy in terms of premises, key questions, arguments, and methods used within philosophy. While his emphasis on fallacies and bad arguments caution one to approach thought and argumentation with serious care, his definition of philosophy as love for wisdom refreshes one's memory about why one turns to the discipline to answer questions about the world and how to live in the world. Further, every section and chapters within the sections in the book – philosophy of religion, knowledge, metaphysics, ethics, social-political philosophy, and life, death and happiness – have a detailed introduction providing background to the philosophers and their larger projects while contextualising the reading at hand.

The essays that will be of greater relevance to the students of aesthetics and literature include Marx and Engels's *The Communist Manifesto*, Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Jean Paul Sartre's *Existentialism Is a Humanism*, Albert Camus's *The Myth of Sisyphus*, and Thomas Nagel's *What Does It Like to Be a Bat?* These excerpts or essays bring strong foundations to analyses and critiques of texts. While existentialism, Marxism, and feminism are established literary (and cultural and critical) theories, Nagel's essay is a recommended reading in object oriented ontology that so strongly resonates with thing theory and other philosophical positions invoked in posthumanism and art. These,