

Lastly, I cannot forbear to remark that I have read a good deal of Marx in my time, and I cannot recognize in any of the dozens of, mostly nasty, swipes at Marx that Stove makes, anything of the Marx that I have read. There are indeed criticisms of Marx that can be made, but Stove scarcely comes within a country mile of any of them. To use one of Stoves own favourite expressions, it's a billion to one that Stove never read much, perhaps any, Marx.

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Ananta Ch. Sukla, ed.

Art and Experience.

Westport, CT: Praeger 2003. Pp. xxii + 202.

US\$69.95. ISBN 0-275-97494-8.

This collection of essays represents a serious attempt to analyze the phenomenon of experience in the domain of aesthetics. All contributors are solid scholars and provide detailed interpretations of almost all aspects of the subject. Apart from that, the book, as part of the series *Studies in Art, Culture, and Communities* by Praeger, fulfils a second task. Ananta Sukla mentions in the preface that 'the present century should also find its own modes of analysis and examination of the issues in lieu of the last century's dominating analytic style and method.' The book is thus a test case for aesthetic methods of the post-analytical style.

The general stock of quotations comes from George Dickie, Beardsley, Danto, and Nelson Goodman, which makes the volume appear to be rooted in the tradition of analytic aesthetics; however, references to Derrida, Heidegger, and Gadamer are also frequent. The question is if this combination is original enough to create a 'new style' in aesthetics. It seems instead that most authors rely on pragmatist methods and the authority of Dewey.

One of the problems with this book might be the overly general design of the project. It is possible that the subject 'Art and Experience' cannot be approached unless one has made the firm decision to defend *certain ideas* about experience in art and to reject others. A possible focus could have been a reflection of contemporary ideas on experience in art against those of the main author who has written, in the twentieth century about experience: William James. Strangely enough, James is hardly mentioned. I am not saying that James should be the starting point of any study of experience in art, but classical themes like inner experience, pre-conceptual experience, verbalization of experience, etc. could have provided a central concept with

which interested readers are already familiar; the rest could have been grouped around this center.

In the introduction, Ananta Sukla provides a brilliant survey of works on experience in the Western philosophical tradition. His presentation of Indian thought is perhaps a little too abstract and remains rather inaccessible to non-specialists. Sukla continues his compelling survey in his own contribution to the volume. His chapter is, together with Carvalho's (who discusses in a very interesting way the aesthetics of images, 'unreality', reexperience, etc.), the only chapter which I really appreciated.

Keith Yandell's contribution on religious experience does not refer to James' fundamental insights into the subject, and is far too analytical for my taste, working with symbols, equations and algebraic propositions.

The enigmatic title 'Close Reading, Distant Writing' by John Llewelyn does not become any clearer, in spite efforts to drag us away from Foucault on a more analytical field, and then push us back into Foucault and into Peirce's idea of signification. I asked myself if this is analytical philosophy made with continental elements.

T. J. Diffey's intention is 'to register the idea that since the nineteenth century both art and the theory of art have pulled away from an affinity with nature, an affinity that was long-established in European culture _ ' (55). In his chapter, things that have been said before are put into the new context represented by 'the experience of nature'. The problem is that this new context does not prevent these statements from tasting a little stale because one has heard them too often: 'that listening to a piece of music is not to be included in the same category as, say, walking in the countryside' (44); that 'beauty is no longer the aim of art' (43); that 'does not look created by human agency' is not an exact enough analysis of 'natural beauty' (49); that 'art offers aesthetic experience not available in nature' (55).

Joseph Kupfer's chapter entitled 'Experience as Art' classifies different types of aesthetic experience: 'Where the plastic arts evoke the physical performance of hanging a painting or perambulating around a sculpture, the performance of literary texts is cognitive and imaginative. We must conspire with the writer or speaker _ ' (63). All this is perfectly correct, but some at least slightly provocative thesis about the subject would have made the reading of the chapter a more valuable experience.

Richard Woodfield's chapter on 'pictorial experience' reads like a course syllabus on the thought of Alois Riegl.

Robert Stecker writes a chapter on the aesthetic experience of literature. Some interesting points can be extracted about the problem of cognition, but I wonder if these points are really new: 'It might be suggested that when statements occur within a work of fiction this often functions to make explicit what is already implicit. This is precisely the grounds on which Hardy is criticized regarding the final sentence of *Tess*' (98). Or: 'Hence the conceptions found in fictional literature (but not only there) have cognitive value not only in giving us new conceptions, in presenting them vividly to the imagination

so that we get a real sense of what it is to accept them or to live according to them ...' (101).

At least Stephen Davis makes provocative statements, emphasizing a pragmatic tendency. In his chapter on the experience of music he opposes the idea that 'music conveys to the listener important truths that are special in not being expressible in language' (110). Here old Jamesian ideas are mentioned though not made explicit. Davis rejects Jerrold Levinson's idea that the largest part of our enjoyment of music is 'in the moment' (112), and defends his own thesis that 'the relevant differences between the pieces [are] lying not in what is expressed but in the musical means — means that are linguistically describable ...' (111).

Graham McFee claims to talk about 'Cognitivism and the Experience of Dance', but the largest part of his contribution treats general problems of 'the ascription of beauty'.

In spite of the high intellectual level on which all studies are pursued, the general tone of the book remains rather bland and overly academic. There are very few *claims* in the book. The volume consists mainly of correct observations that seem to have been collected in order to provide a comprehensive perspective on a subject that has so far been neglected. In other words: everything the book attempts to do is rewarding but not very exciting. The largest part of the book reads a little like a textbook for a class on 'the experience of art'.

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John von Heyking

Augustine and Politics as Longing in the World.

Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press

2001. Pp. xvi + 278.

US\$37.50. ISBN 0-8262-1349-9.

It takes little imagination to see that the most ready candidate for idolatry among humans is the state. But why? Simply to the extent that it embodies power — the customary aphrodisiac for males? Yes, says Augustine, whom ambition had captured during his young manhood; but there is a yet more profound root for such idolatry: our 'longing for a kind of wholeness' which Augustine recognized to be endemic to the pursuit of politics (1). Von Heyking's study intends to correct standard renditions of Augustine, which