
The critical analysis of the works of Barth and Nabokov, the postmodern fictionists of repute, is the most challenging area of study, with great applicability to an examination of American Studies. The key terms in the thesis are carefully analyzed, interpreted, and evaluated. The method adopted is one of close analysis. The sociological and the psychological significance, relevance, and consequence receive critical attention.

Certainly, Barth and Nabokov, the paradigmatic postmodernist, creative genius-artists, see themselves ensnared in the web of silence, exile, cunning, but they, with their American ingenuity, have delivered themselves of restrictive, constrictive, and limiting influences and forces. It could even be argued then, that in their problematic relationship to the tradition of authority, as well as to the authority of tradition, Barth and Nabokov are the major
precursors of all the postmodernists, the *avant-garde* of the *avant-garde*.

Barth and Nabokov project America in their *works* as a social and political organization. And America as a land of freedom is committed to the policy of striking a positive note always, and takes always a cheerful way of life. Barth and Nabokov, the American genius-artists, reflect on the American accent on dynamism, pragmatism, progressivism, self-reliance, self-respect, honor, dignity, and above all on candor.

Barth and Nabokov stress in their *Fictions and ShortFictions* that there is immense value, significance, relevance, and consequence for all in American Experience. They fail not to refer to the cold, silent violence inherent in American society. But they highlight the truth that America can only be discovered through its myriad parts that together make up the American Quilt.

The perspective of Barth and Nabokov, shaped by their postmodernist, progressive, and positive concepts and notions, accept and acknowledge humans in their irrational and rational behavior, and Barth and Nabokov argue that it is America that creates continually the economic, social, intellectual, and spiritual
foundations of freedom-loving notion, and by extension the creation of the freedom-loving world. They perceive the postmodernist attitudes and approaches of American individuals and intellectuals, the real and striking instruments of progress and improvement.

Energized by an aggressive and innovative style of writing, Barth and Nabokov have projected themselves as great trendsetters to a new generation of poets and fictionists in America, and in the emerging democracies. They maintain in their _Oeuvres_ that America’s vision of the world is purely based on the fundamental tenets of equality before law, equality of opportunities, freedom of worship, freedom of speech, freedom of expression, and on democratic processes.

This Doctoral thesis should best be considered as a useful overview of the significant literary achievements of Barth and Nabokov. In fact, the _Oeuvres_ of Barth and Nabokov are perfect, diverse, and complex. Through their literary products Barth and Nabokov have given America her most distinctive form of cultural expression.

Moreover, Barth and Nabokov display in their art works their extraordinary breadth of knowledge, acuteness of perception, and
maturity of judgment. Barth and Nabokov cohesively and brilliantly project the truths related to life situations.

This Doctoral thesis carefully and analytically examines the *Oeuvres* of Barth and Nabokov and projects them as committed artists. They are chiefly concerned with *individualisme*, identity, freedom, and the quest for the absolute in art and life. Undeniably, the contribution of Barth and Nabokov to the growth, significance, and relevance of American literature is real, great and significant.

Incidentally, it ought to be stressed that through their democratic postures, as reflected in their fictions, and short fictions, and prose tracts, Barth and Nabokov have vitalized America and Democracy, which to them are convertible terms.

It is an acknowledged fact, that Barth and Nabokov are individuals first and artists next. It is only in this context that a careful and perceptive reader learns to critically and analytically appreciate, analyze, interpret, and evaluate the works of Barth and Nabokov for their contextual values and artistic brilliance and significance.

The literary works of Barth and Nabokov have earned for them a lasting fame. Their reputation is only on the ascendancy. But then,
Barth and Nabokov have had to strive hard to earn the recognition of the American academics and critics.

Perceptive and critically oriented readers have come to accept the fact, that literary aristocracy marks the tones of Barth and Nabokov, the postmodernists of verbal brilliance and verbal adventure, and textual strategies. It ought to be stressed that the literary products of Barth and Nabokov are visible texts, and as such pose series of challenges to the elite audience. The fictions and short fictions of Barth and Nabokov are not meant for casual browsers. Furthermore, they are the works of cerebration and lend themselves to a fascinating and inexhaustible study.

In the carefully created fictions and short fictions of Barth and Nabokov inspiration meets with the right kind of expression. Moreover, there is a balanced fusion of form and content, and a neat balance of intuition and intellect.

A critically oriented and perceptive reader detects in the corpus of Barth and Nabokov, the genius-artist, technical excellence, functionally valid, and functionally varied innovative tools, and innovations, and language experimentation, and language maximization.
The fictions and short fictions of Barth and Nabokov are sheer artifacts, marked by technical \textit{finesse}, structural perfection, and contextual purpose. In fine, they conform to the best traditions of the \textit{Gestalten} theory. In other words, every literary product of Barth and Nabokov is governed by \textit{Gestalt} a perfect form, tight organization, and a unified structure.

Moreover, Barth and Nabokov have American ingenuity. They are committed artists and careful craftsmen governed by a deep passion for revision. They are conscious artists with Right Wing conviction and faith. They intensely peer, absorb, and translate everything into verities. And Barth and Nabokov as representative artists of America are so very transcendent and new.

Barth and Nabokov have enjoyed and passed through perfect preparation strata. They have equipped themselves adequately. In all these respects and more, they measure themselves up to the definition of the American Scholar as enunciated by Ralph Waldo Emerson. And they examine the major themes of America adequately and admirably. In this respect, Barth and Nabokov are meta-fictionists. They have found fiction and short fiction as the fit form to project their mind in art.
In their response to the events and situations between-the-world-war period and after, and the Russian upheaval, and in their acute reaction to the races and cultures of America and Europe, one gauges the artistic maturity and perfection in Barth and Nabokov.

In the first chapter Barth and Nabokov are identified as creative genius-artists. It also brings out the Americanism in their fictions and short fictions, their place in the world of letters, and world literature, the preparation strata that they have enjoyed, the importance of moment, milieu, and race in their life and art, and their language experimentation, and language maximization, technical virtuosity, and how and why they continue to be engaging and arresting genius-artists merit consideration.

There is spontaneity in the literary products of Barth and Nabokov and that accounts for their art gaining sublimity. And their superb literary works enjoy lasting fame. Their craft and design of a high order engage the mind of the perceptive and critically oriented reader.
Furthermore, they are highly individualistic and original in handling the literary tools and in giving expression to their feelings, thoughts, and experiences.

Barth and Nabokov are born fictionists. They are immensely talented. They have a remarkable command over American English. They have profited by formative influences, but they had shed the formative influences, as they turned mature and artistically creative.

A critical debate in the first chapter examines the fact that there is a thematic brilliance and a perceptive growth in Barth and Nabokov, the creative artists. In fact each one of their fictions and short fictions cannot be considered as just wearing monolithic grandeur. The first chapter critically examines all these aspects, and establishes the significance, relevance, and consequence of their *Oeuvres* to our times.

In the second chapter, of the thesis, it is shown how Barth and Nabokov immortalize America and contend that America is the land of freedom. They poignantly argue that in America one enjoys a larger scope to be free as a man and as an artist than elsewhere in the world. Understandably, therefore, they glorify America, her expansiveness, her phenomenal progress, her pragmatism, and
dynamism. They are conscious of the fact that American democracy ensures freedom in a large measure.

In the third chapter there is a careful and critical analysis of how Barth and Nabokov examine life situations and the determinants governing life situations. Barth concentrates on love and sex as the determinants related to life situations. Furthermore, he argues that notwithstanding the present day, a condition of life love is possible, and that love alone is redemptive.

Nabokov subjects the major American theme of life, which is the identity crisis to artistic treatment. Man loses his self-respect, honor, and dignity, and thereby loses his individuality. Because of the societal and institutional impositions and because of the restrictions created by the Establishment he turns into a mere cipher the \( \sqrt{-1} \) a mere nothing. Added to these are the dull monotonous life that he is forced to lead. His life revolves around mechanical, dull routine, dailiness.

Hence, the individual enjoys no individuality. He suffers from an identity crisis. He loses identity and consequential search for identity. All these are carefully examined in the third chapter of this Dissertation.
The fourth chapter endeavors to detect and record the focused thrust areas in the works of Barth and Nabokov.

The fifth chapter conclusively establishes Barth and Nabokov as creative artists, with a great mastery over techniques, American English, and the elements of fiction and short fiction. It displays their writing skills and mastery over language remarkably and convincingly.

The sixth chapter identifies Barth and Nabokov as metafictionists. They are technical virtuosi. The technical excellence, and structural strategies contribute to the lasting reputation of Barth and Nabokov as much as the human values found in their fictions and short fictions. As language experimenters, meta-artists, and technical virtuosi, Barth and Nabokov have liberated and replenished art. Furthermore, they fuse form and content in their own unique, singularly famous, and original manner.

The seventh chapter tries to prove that Barth and Nabokov are essentially American artists who evolve into universalists. Their works abound in universals and capture their humanistic concerns. Some of the arguments and assertions introduced earlier are reiterated in this seventh chapter for the purpose of emphasis. The
seventh chapter tries to project the purpose sense that embedded in their art products. And finally Barth and Nabokov are established as creative writers, with deep-seated notions on life and art.

The researcher has followed the sixth edition of the MLA Handbook.

As the topic relates to American Literature the researcher consistently uses American Spelling in the thesis.