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The Body of Eve in Andrea Pisano's Contiui Relief
Traceable to the tenth or eleventh century, the standard iconography of Eve created from Adam's side was not designed for naturally rendered figure. In the Creation of Eve (1334-37) from the campanILE of Florence Cathedral, however, Andrea Pisano rendered the bifurcated Eve in accordance with Aristotle's theories about the natural relation of body and soul. The current among theologians and later assumed by art theorists. The naturalistic treatment of Eve's body necessitated subtle revisions to the traditional iconography, raising a key issue for Renaissance art and significant for the role of painting in the confessional program. In the work of Pisano, modernism's pursuit of purity, and a common sense notion.

In Form We Trust: Neoplatonism, the Gold Standard, and the Machine Art Show, 1954

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The Museum of Modern Art's Machine Art show (1954) displayed ordinary things as works of art. It thus provides a useful case study for investigating interwar American modernism as a negotiation between meaning and material—seen as elements in the making of the Great Depression. Through Alfred H. Barr Jr.'s catalog essay and Philip Johnson's installation, Machine Art presented a Neoplastic model of materiality—one consistent with Johnson's undergraduate training in Harvard modernism's pursuit of purity, and the rank of gold leaf that spread in the United States after American gold standard was abandoned in 1933.

The Subversion of Gravity in Jackson Pollock's Abstractions

It is generally acknowledged that Pollock's mode of painting was contingent on an ahistorical employment of gravity, pouring paint, after all, is a gravitational phenomenon par excellence. This defining aspect of Pollock's technique—the existence of fluid dynamics in the artistic process—overshadowed the perspective of both art and science. By close collaboration, an art historian and a physicist investigate, for the first time, the mechanics of Pollock's handling of liquid paint under gravity, permitting an exploration of the formal advances thereby enabled and their broader implications for the meaning and ethos of his work.

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Visual Resources: An International Journal of Documentation
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Interventions: Decentering Modernism: Art History and Avant-Garde Art from the Periphery

Partha Mitter

With its collapse of earlier certainties, the last two decades have witnessed a series of soul-searching among art historians about the future of the discipline. This is strikingly expressed in Hans Belting’s two theoretical works—one with the melancholy title The End of the History of Art—accepting the demise of art history as a grand Hegelian narrative.1 There is, he points out, a progressive disjunction between the awareness of the enormous diversity of art forms and practices and the narrow focus on canonical art histories. However, his fear that the canon looks increasingly vulnerable may be somewhat premature. Take, for instance, Art since 1990, the magisterial volume on the avant-garde published in 2004. The book raises immensely important questions that demand engagement. The authors display intellectual sophistication, an exemplary attention to detail, and a masterly grasp of the advances made by this work, which brings into question the canon’s relevance today. The four authors display intellectual sophistication, an exemplary attention to detail, and a masterly grasp of the advances made by this work, which brings into question the canon’s relevance today. The four authors display intellectual sophistication, an exemplary attention to detail, and a masterly grasp of the advances made by this work, which brings into question the canon’s relevance today. The four authors display intellectual sophistication, an exemplary attention to detail, and a masterly grasp of the advances made by this work, which brings into question the canon’s relevance today.
that today it embraces with enthusiasm all ethnic groups in an unprecedented expansion of the canon of beauty. Yet what comes across is the fact that representations of multi-ethnic supermodels are homogenized within the prevailing ethnic supermodels are homogenized within the prevailing

classical framework of beauty.1 Looking at economics, we see that models of development, based on a Western definition of well-being, are presented as a panacea to the pervasive hold of bourgeois values and bourgeois artistic models, the portentous pomanders priests of the Victorian era.

Adrian Stokes argues that The Bathers by Paul Cézanne, which inspired Picasso's Demoiselles d'Avignon, encouraged artists to turn to African sculpture in replication of classical vase. This prompts him to speculate "in the most far-fetched manner whatever one day it will be possible to claim for The Bathers that it is the first and perhaps the greatest works of a deeply founded cosmopolitan art which was to prefigure the eventual evolution of a multi-racial society." Surrealism, with its distance from colonial rule, enjoyed a mutually beneficial cross-fertilization with black cultural resistance, as suggested by the friendship between André Breton and the Martinique poet and intellectual Aimé Césaire.4 Indeed, it is only in the liberal atmosphere of bohemian Paris that the creative genius of the black chanteuse Josephine Baker could flourish, the Jazz Age and "negrophilia" helping to release Europe from its versatility. Today the pre-eminence of modernist art is universally assured, as its control on art and market mechanism hold the so-called peripheries in its thrall or in its grip, depending on one's point of view. Even postmodern and postcolonial thinking, which arose partly in revolt against the avant-garde in the twilight years of the last century, was a child of this worldwide movement, though a child in revolt against some of its fundamental tenets. These enormous achievements of the heroism of the avant-garde cannot be gainsaid, as the modernist technology of art, not to mention the formal language and syntax of Cubism, allowed artists in far-flung regions to devise new ways to imagine the visible world. One of the favorite projects of the colonial powers in the nineteenth century was to inculcate "good taste" in the subject nations through the introduction of academic naturalism that was thereafter the only way to image the visible world. The universal canon of art substances either the classical canon or the modernist canon that supplanted is in the twentieth century.

The Shock of the New

The embedded hierarchy implied by the modernist canon and its impact on contemporary art of regions regarded as the cultural periphery can be understood only in historical terms. In the late nineteenth century, the modernist revolution began to alter European sensitivities, gradually spreading to other regions throughout the twentieth, shaping global perceptions of contemporary art and literature, a transformation that has left few societies untouched.5 Imagine the profound shock on first encountering Pablo Picasso's Les demoiselles d'Avignon, the porcelain urinal signed R. Mutt. Even from this distance in time, we can still sense the dislocation and bewilderment with which the general public greeted these radical assaults on their vision and sensibility. Nor is it difficult to be impressed by the radical outlook of the early Cubists, Expressionists, and Surrealists, who declared war on bourgeois values and bourgeois artistic models, the portentous pomanders priests of the Victorian era.

1 Wilfredo Lam, untitled, 1946, ink on paper, 12¼ x 9¼ in. (31 x 23 cm). Private collection (artwork © Arison Rights Society [ARS], New York; photograph © Banque d'Images DADCAP, provided by Art Resource, New York)


Above all, modernism's experimental attitude that constantly sought to push intellectual frontiers, its ideology of emancipatory innovation, and its agonistic relation to tradition and authority released new energies in artists raised in a more traditional mode. In short, its revolutionary message furnished ammunition for cultural resistance to colonial empires, as each colonized nation deployed the language of modernism to fight its own particular cultural corner. In the

3 Raghubir Singh, Pedestrians, Comer, Amboli, 1989, color photograph (artwork © Succession Raghubir Singh)
Indian Empire, for instance, the nationalist artists asserted their own cultural identity against the colonial-capitalist complex.

Non-Western nations were no less persuaded by the Western theorists' critical engagement within modernism that kept it in its toes, so to speak, preventing it from becoming complacent and formulaic in the aftermath of its public acceptance. Marxists have taken the lead in interrogating the troubled relation between modernity and tradition, between the social usefulness of art and the avant-garde aesthetics of autonomy, and between high art and the mass culture of consumption in capitalist societies. Walter Benjamin's idea of an "aura" is one of the most important to underline the fact that the capitalist "borrowings" of Picasso and other modernists from simple "primitive" cultures did not amount to a debt to these societies. On the contrary, the European "discovery" of ethnographic art redeemed these feigned objects for the modern world and elevated them to the level of high art. Importantly, the New York exhibition was at pains to emphasize the selected pairings of modern and tribal objects demonstrated the common denominators of these arts that were independent of direct influence.

What is crucial to realize is that Picasso's borrowings from "simple" ethnographic objects in no way compromised his cultural integrity as an artist. A noted authority, writing a decade later on Vladimir Tatlin's discovery of a tribal mask in Picasso's studio, could thus claim that "it is one of the wonders of our age that such a simple tribal artifact, which could justifiably be called primitive, should have given birth indirectly to Russian Constructivism, one of the most technically visionary of all twentieth-century art movements." As opposed to appropriations by the Western avant-garde, let us now see what happens to the art of a colonial subject who responds to an intellectual product of the "dominant" European culture. The widely held view that modern art has been a window on the external world. 32 Artists worldwide were drawn to Cubism's flexible nonfigurative syntax, which could be put to different uses, but they were not concerned with the formal revolution of Analytic Cubism as such. To take an example pertinent to my argument, the motivation behind the Western Expressionists Franz Marc (Fig. 7), Leonid Reisner, or Georg Grosz (Fig. 8), and the Indian artist Gaganendranath was analogous: objects could be distorted and fragmented to produce dazzling patterns. Although they shared this formal language, the specific cultural contexts of the Indian artist were at best a derivative exercise reflects the implicit assertion of the "intellectual property rights" of the West. 32 In 1959, the English art historian William George Archer published India and Modern Art, which remains a classic example of colonialist art history. Even though the work was written nearly half a century ago, I believe its underlying assumptions about the lack of originality of non-Western modernism continue to be symptomatic of a widespread bias. Archer posed a pertinent question: Can modern art be appropriated by Indians, and if so, in what manner? In answer to this, he provided a succinct analysis of the paintings made between 1921 and 1928 by the pioneering Indian modernist Gaganendranath Tagore (1867-1938), who was among the first Indian painters to adapt the revolutionary syntax of Cubism (Fig. 6). Archer claimed that such appropriation must be "absorbed into the blood stream" of that society to be a genuine item. But as the next defining passage makes clear, this did fail miserably in the case of the Indian artist:

His style was, at first sight, not unlike the early followers of Braque and Picasso. . . . Yet apart from their very evident lack of power—a power which in some mysterious way was present in the work of Braque and Picasso—Gaganendranath's pictures were actually no more than stylized illustrations . . . weak as art, but what was more important, they were un-Indian. . . . As a result, his pictures, despite their modernist manner, had an air of triviality.
styles past and present could be appropriataci to generate strikingly new meanings.

As his critique of Gaganendranath makes clear, Archer follows Roger Fry's revision of "significant form" as the aesthetic to weak "feminine" aesthetic principles. In addition, the word "power" in the passage expresses its primitivist longing for the "masculine" formalism and simple geometry of Indian tribal art.47 However, the overpowering reason for Archer's dismissive evaluation of Gaganendranath's "Cubist" works lay in the Indian painter's use of the visual language of a culture to which he did not belong. In other words, Gaganendranath suffered a loss of self by becoming a colonial hybrid. We can find interesting parallels in "Primitivism" in 20th Century Art, which while relying tribal artifacts as timeless high art ceased Third World modernism, denying the existence of contemporary tribal artists in the name of authentic traditional art. Interestingly, according to Shelby Errington, genuine living "primitive" art ceased to exist in the twentieth century for complex reasons, such objects becoming denizen of the corridors of European ethnographic museums or objects of a nationalist tourist industry.48

Unlike Picasso, whose use of African sources did not compromise his integrity as an European artist, Gaganendranath's use of Cubism resulted in the loss of self as an Indian. I have called the complex discourse of power, authority, and hierarchy involved in the study of the Western avant-garde the Picasso masquerade syndrome, as Archer's endeavor consisted almost entirely of tracing Picasso's putative influence. Inevitably, he reached the conclusion that Gaganendranath was a "primitive" and his derivative work, based on a cultural misreading, were simply pale imitations of the Spanish master. In short, the use of Cubism, a product of the dominant West, by an Indian artist who belonged to the colonized world, immediately locked him into a dependent relationship, the colonized mimicking the superior art of the colonizer. Archer's analysis of modern art in India rests on the assumption that the art he did not belong to. In other words, Gaganendranath's art belongs to a colonial hybrid. We can see these tendencies in the passage below. I have added the text of the passage in brackets for clarity.

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The evidence that Kandinsky's spiritual progress from the mystical Russian faith to Eastern philosophy, including yogic meditation, paralleled the dissolution of corporeal form in his art is even more persuasive. 47 Although publicly reticent about his debt to Eastern thought, Kandinsky was prepared to express it in sympathetic company. When Michael Sadler, a leading British theosophist and artist, visited Kandinsky in Paris, the painting *The Black Square* being the ultimate expression. 48 These metaphysical ideas were no less important than his intellectual standpoint, for they were central to his art.

Kandinsky seems an anomaly in the Russian's worldview. 51 His arguments in support of their particular point of view. Theosophy's role in the genesis of expressionism as an art form was recognized by S. F. Clarke, who proposes that a theory of art that transcends the antagonism between thought and intuition is what to accept that the triumph of modern science was a product of a historical situation in the eighteenth century that drew on different traditions, including those that were extraneous to the West but central to the East. 53

The advent of modernism in Asia, Africa, and Latin America could thus be studied as the transfer of technology, which in other fields is accepted as part of the global process of cross-fertilization. However, each a discourse of power, colored by anxieties of Western colonial domination, denial, and resistance on the part of non-Western nations. In the nineteenth century, this political dimension was exacerbated during a period of the West's ascendency, when people were ranked within a global hierarchy of chains of being, race, and evolution. Borrowing from outside the West was inconceivable to the Victorians, who would concede only the Greeks and the Romans the twin classical glories on whose shoulders European civilization stood. It was seen in the field of science, which was in awe of classical empiricism as the preeminent method. Yet was the union of empiricism with the Hindu place value system of numbers that laid the foundations of the great scientific revolution that came to fruition only in the eighteenth century. Nor should one ignore the enormous contributions of the Chinese to Western technology—paper, printing press, distillery, gunpowder, and the compass, to name a few. But because the classical world played a role in European cultural formation ( *Bildung*), the Greek heritage was increasingly taken to be the sole repository of the thought of the modern period. In the context of this pervasive ideology of progress, "borrowing" implied the dependence of the inferior culture on the superior and dominant one, as no idea more stigmized than in the field of art, was the term "Orientalist" not only his equal but also someone worthy of emulation. Elizabeth Cropper also deploys emulation to challenge influence as a convenient analytic tool. Drawing on Thomas Ganesan's reading of the Italian Humanists, who attempted to reproduce the French Cubists. He once explained to the art historian John Rothenstein confirmed this where he mentioned that Gaganendranath remained an Oriental "inanimatist with an eye for exquisite lapidary details." Equally, despite grumbles from the nationalists for abandoning his earlier "Orientalist" style, the artist insisted that Cuban had simply "enabled me to [express] better with my new technique". Therefore, I propose here another explanatory tool for understanding the process of cultural exchange between Eastern and Western art, which has taught us the truth of the theory of the Orient. The selection of this source is slowly being undermined even by historians of European art. 56

The advent of modernism in Asia, Africa, and Latin America could thus be studied as the transfer of technology, which in other fields is accepted as part of the global process of cross-fertilization. Nonetheless, the Indian painter's visual conventions continued within the bounds of Ori­entalist and romantic conventions, and the seeing eye of the Western modernist who was already de­picted by the nationalists for abandoning his earlier "Orientalist" style, the artist insisted that Cuban had simply "enabled me to [express] better with my new technique." Therefore, I propose here another explanatory tool for understanding the process of cultural exchange between Eastern and Western art, which has taught us the truth of the theory of the Orient. The selection of this source is slowly being undermined even by historians of European art.
A Counter Discourse of Modernism

With such a powerfully embedded ideology that privileges certain definitions of art to the exclusion of others, how can we shift the center of gravity of the modernist discourse? We need to develop a counter-prestige to history painting, transcending the periphery while loosening the linearity of art history, something given unique authority in Hegel's theory of artistic progress as the inevitable unfolding of the world spirit. First, I want to seek expedient tools that adapt to the realities and practices and their social and cultural milieu in the so-called outlying areas, taking into account the peculiar contextual needs and expressions of regional artistic productions and consumptions, along with the local ascensions of global centers. I propose below some tentative strategies for recovering the counter discourse of modernism, largely drawn from my own work on Indian modernist contemporary oral declamations, which I hope will be of relevance to other "peripheral" regions, as well as help fashion more nuanced art histories.

At the heart of modernist history painting, and Venice as centers of innovation, categorizing other regions in Italy as sites of delayed growth and imitation, as it has been argued in studies of Renaissance art inspired by Vasari, permeated through representations of technical inventions that unproblematically equated the west with the East.

Vasari did not just valorize the three centers within Italy; he also displayed prejudice against the art of other nations. In his Avanti painted in 1553, which Salimbenge has shown to have been for Greek art, reconfigured and refined these prejudices by formulating climate, national, and racial differences in art as objective facts. Vasari's praise of Persian miniatures, in particular, was not a matter of cultural hybridity and challenging hierarchy and value in art history, pruning open the narrow empirical connoisseurship-focused discipline of art history, reinventing analysis of style, iconography, and documentation. Its objectives derive from a post-Marxian discursive approach based on semiotics, poststructuralism, and psychoanalysis. The theories of visual culture seek to erase the distinction between the fine arts and a range of material objects that had been excluded from the cannon, thereby seeking to destroy the exclusivity of the concept of "high art." Kesey Moreover makes a valuable point in support of the inclusive concept of "visual culture" that is not restricted to what is generally defined as high art in the West, which tends to perpetuate the global inequality in power relations. His views is analogous to Pierre Bourdieu's persistent concept that art is the same in all places and in all times.

John Clark, basing his view on the semiotic theory expounded by Umberto Eco, describes the objects of history painting, which cannot accommodate new modernist discourses to which the regions beyond the West have given rise. Yet the most exciting aspect of modernisms across the globe is the diverse discourses of "visual culture," which cannot be identified and the role of the local communities in the global process of modernity. The difficulties of studying contemporary art forms that do not conform to a particular avant-garde discourse have led art historians to seek alternative ways of understanding the modernist art, which are major players in the global process of modernity. One of the most significant contributions to the enlarging of the canon has been a set of essays entitled Cosmopolitan Modernisms, edited by Roberta Meyers, who comments on the unanticipated consequences of the global process of modernity that creates a transnational trajectory between the West and the rest.

Cosmopolitan Primitivism

Modernism is generally presented as a hypernorm, beyond time and space. Yet the Western avant-garde, with all its achievements, we may remind ourselves, has been historically and ideologically bound to the national avant-garde, whose experience has and has enriched other traditions. Therefore, we may renounce Art History in the sense used by Hans Belting but pay closer attention to particular art histories, the construction of regional narratives from the local entrenchment to their engagement with modernity. To my mind, multiple local possibilities illuminate the global processes of modernity, challenging the essentialism of cultural difference asserted by the colonial as in countering the monolithic discourse of the avant-garde. Some concerns have been raised about the theory regarding its limited ability to explain the role of artistic agency and the transformation of material culture through the integration of foreign elements. In causing the formation of an art history in the academy or in regional politics, Andrew Causey, for instance, cautions, "[hybridity] is a metaphor that diffuses agency and unintentionally masks possible relations of power." 

While the theory of hybridity undoubtedly offers empowerment to the minorities of multiple heritage who are marginalized by what are characterized as "modern" rooted in a culture, there are artists to whom the concept of hybridity can hardly do justice. For these artists outside the West, national identity has furnished a language of resistance to colonial art, especially in a period when many Asian, African, and Latin American countries were struggling to create a counter-discursive discourse to the dominant discourse. A group of Latin American artists were unhappy with Art since 1900 precisely because it failed to recognize that in the countries south of the United States, modernism, modernity, and modernization have been intimately tied to the construction of cultural identity or relate to the disjunction "where the dreams and desires of modernity are fully developed but modernization is not yet wholly established." The very concept of hybridity is, an unintended consequence of valorizing it to the exclusion of other possibilities would be to conjoin oblivious artists such as Roy by the very fact of their not recognized. In the end, despite the usefulness of these concepts, they are major players in the global process of modernity. The difficulties of studying contemporary art forms that do not conform to a particular avant-garde discourse have led art historians to seek alternative ways of understanding the modernist art, which are major players in the global process of modernity. One of the most significant contributions to the enlarging of the canon has been a set of essays entitled Cosmopolitan Modernisms, edited by Roberta Meyers, who comments on the unanticipated consequences of the global process of modernity that creates a transnational trajectory between the West and the rest.
draws our attention to the contradictory pulls of homogenization and heterogenization, to which the colonial orders, based in European capitals and spread throughout the non-Western world, gave rise. Marx prefers the term "cosmopolitan," as a sharper conceptual tool in the study of worldwide interactions of artistic modernism, to the confusing array of terms such as "global," "international," "world," "national," and periphery, allegorized in the mutual relationship of Lapp and periphery. In his autobiography, Jamini Roy, with whom I began, was one of the most striking exponents of artistic primitivism in India, but the tendency spawned other remarkable figures as well.100

Primitivism, we are aware, represents the romantic longing of a complex society for the simplicity of a primitive society. The concept, which was traced back to Enlightenment rationality, made nineteenth-century utopians embrace primitives with fervor. Though primitivism helped artists to escape from the confines of industrial modernity, one cannot ignore the inner tensions and contradictions within the concept, described by Edward Said as "the age-old antithesis of Europe... a second right out of which European rationality developed." 100 Primitivism stands charged with complicity in sustaining colonial hegemony in its representations of the non-West and in its consumption of primitive art.101 It is characterized as a fetishistic discourse of a work of art, the twin hallmarks of colonial art.119

These were the structural affinities between: Roy's primitivism and the avant-garde critics of modernity in the West such as Humeinerism, although they arrived at their respective critiques of modernity through different routes. 117 Another feature shared by Roy and the Western primitivists was the rejection of universals, whether from a unifying "capitalist" or from a "nationalistic" perspective. Roy argued that the mythology that nourishes this sudden access to identity can be local and time-bound.118 Roy's belief in political heterogeneity, his insistence on "locality" as the site of the nation, and his preference for multiple aesthetic possibilities set him consistently, similar to the ideal of the German Expressionists, I call these similarities structural affinities in a virtual global community, since neither knew the existence of the other. 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fellowships at Cambridge, the Institute for Advanced Study, New York, and the University of California, Berkeley. This will go a long way toward correcting the commonplace that periodical modernism is engaged by the socially constructed meaning of artistic production. I have contributed meaning to the idea of a non-Western modernism, and that idea has already been adopted by other scholars of modernism.

Despite its radical agenda, the Western avant-garde failed to take into account either the progressive heterogenization of art or the richness and cre dors of art practices in the peripheries. It is limited in its view of modernism and yet modernism's radical message inspired non-Western discourses to a more heterogeneous definition of modernism. The rich variety of contemporary art around the world and the new jazz of Meredith Monk. The consequences of this prescription are charted by E. H. Gombrich's classic study of the Indian modernists, and it was shown at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. His most recent work, "Interventions: The Theory of the Tribal and the Modern," was a project in "rediscovering an ancestor in its own image."


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interventions: decolonizing modernity

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response: thoughts on difference in india and elsewhere
alastair wright

Imagine, for a moment, standing between Mehmet Ruki Arsl's 2002 Stone Sculpture, or between his 1997 Russian Revolution. I, too, imagine a British art historian, partly trained on the Eastern seaboard of the United States, standing in a museum in Istanbul, faced by a Turkish painting. Immediately, the art historical machine sets itself in motion, forming forth memories of paintings seen elsewhere. Something about the repeated constructed brush-strokes and the angular planes of rock and flesh recalls Paul Cezanne's Presence. There are echoes, too, of a more famous Stone Sculpture, that of Gustave Courbet. The specter of both French masters seems to inhabit the image; each seems to have migrated across Europe to alight on the shores of the Bosphorus. And behind these journeys lie others: Courbet had seen his figures while on the more, on the road near his home in Ornans. They in turn had traveled to the painter's studio to pose, whence their image would move on to Paris and hence to Rome, to be preserved in 1845 in the firestorm delivered by the Royal Air Force. But along the way, a detour awaited them: from a French canvas to a Turkish.

The next, richer journey. They stand together, a tight group, posing for the camera (Fig. 2), a mixture of the confident and the sturdily casual in front of the Parisian café. This is our own court of honor, whose staged poses assert Ruki is there. As had others of his generation, he traveled to Paris in 1909, staying on until the outbreak of war. He stands third from the right, restrained in pose, with his ever-present pipe and pipe (the fee that would be utilized by Remi AtascI in 1927; for now, though, it is safe to wear). Some of his companions seem more willing to dress the Parisian part: Hikmet Oztas to the right, with his captain's cap and gold watch chain, waistcoat and bellly thrust out; over to the left, a tall man, another chapati nelson and a cravat—this is Ibrahim Galli, dressed as the perfect French gentleman-painter; and between Ruki and Ozt a uniformed colleague, stare hatted, standing elegantly side on, cigarette held casually within an open palm, a Turkish Oscar Wilde.

Turkish painters in Paris. They worked, for the most part, in the studios of Edward Corton. On this recent claim they hold onto a network of old friends in the great art capital, yet maintain their hometown habits; others are more willing to adopt Parisian modes of dress—and, of course, of living. Why, then was it for Ruki to leave the Ottoman Empire for Paris, to learn her craft at the epicenter of advanced European art? What was at stake when, back in a land now called Turkey, he joined the Stone Sculpture movement of such as Remi AtascI or Hikmet Oztas to the right, with his captain's cap and gold watch chain, waistcoat and bellly thrust out; over to the left, a tall man, another chapati nelson and a cravat—this is Ibrahim Galli, dressed as the perfect French gentleman-painter; and between Ruki and Ozt a uniformed colleague, stare hatted, standing elegantly side on, cigarette held casually within an open palm, a Turkish Oscar Wilde.

Response: Thoughts on Difference in India and Elsewhere
Alastair Wright

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among others); like Gandhi, he reworked his source material in ways that cut against the grain of his European model. Mitter describes Gandhi, who idealized the indigenous (in British Raj. Like Gandhi, Roy picked up his conception of European primitivism, in its assumption of non-Western versus urban decadence, for example) that, while familiar to any student of the history of primitivism thought in the West, were utilized in the Indian context in specifically anticolonial ways. European primitivism, in its assumption of non-Western backwardness (however noble or pure), had long sustained an overarching colonial hegemony even as it articulated the desire for freedom (from repressive monarchical rule, say, or from the dulling conformity of Victorian morality). In Roy’s hands, primitivism spoke to the desire for a different kind of freedom—the rather more cerebral wish for an end to the British Raj. Like Gandhi, Roy picked up his conception of primitivism from Europe (he was influenced by Karl Marx, among others); like Gandhi, he rewound his source material in ways that cut against the grains of his European model. Mitter describes Gandhi, who idealized the indigenous (in particular, the Indian peasant), as “the most profound ‘primitivist’ critic of the twentieth century—which is to say, the most profoundly critical primitivist. We could say much the same of Roy.

Mitter’s reading of Roy is part of a wider argument against a conventional understanding of “influence” (he cites Michael Baxandall’s famous complaint about the limitations of the term). Believing that understanding is crucial for non-Western modernism, which has often been seen as weakly aspiring to the advances of Western painting—as was earlier the case in critical writing on, to take another of Mitter’s examples, Gaganendranath Tagore. Mitter demonstrates earlier accounts, most notably William George Archer’s 1959 India and Modern Art, that described Tagore’s relationship to Picasso both as derivative and as the sign that Tagore was no longer a properly Indian. Tagore’s turn to a Cubist-influenced vocabulary, Mitter counters, was not slavish imitation but an intervention in an artistic and critical field in which pictorial form took on specific local meanings. Colonial administrators had fostered academic nationalism on Indian artists (adopting this style could lead to a successful career: Ravi Varma went great acclaim in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when he made use of the realist conventions of European painting in his depictions of Indian heroes and gods.) In reaction, a number of Indian writers promoted the idea of a Pan-Asian “orientalism” mode that spoke to the synths of a recoverable precolonial identity (here Tagore’s older brother Abanindranath led the way, rejecting Western-style realism in favor of influences such as Japanese ink painting). Tagore’s combination of Cubism with elements drawn from the Indian miniature tradition charted a middle course that challenged both the official colonialist paradigm and the essentializing claims of Pan-Asianism.

Mitter’s attention to the concrete sociocultural meanings that visual forms (Cubism, say) and critical discourses (primitivism, for example) generated in the context of early-twentieth-century Indian painting is an effective effort to any lingering assumption that non-Western modernisms were simply a secondhand iteration of developments in Europe or the United States. There may have been a time lag (Tagore picked up Cubism in the 1920s), but certain inequalities of power may have determined the direction of influence (that Tagore looked at Picasso and not vice versa had to do with perceived European prestige), but what got produced had the potential to undo these power relations. Although European modernism spread around the world in part because of Western power, its forms could be co-opted to bespeak resistance to that power. Western dominance ended up undoing Western dominance, a conclusion that seems right in every sense (both historically and ethically). Mitter’s intervention on these issues seems entirely to the question of difference and the colonizing and the colonized society. We might look, that is to say, not only at the line between the British and their Indian subjects but also at the lines that crisscrossed the imperial landscape—economic, cultural, ethnic—of each of these cultures. To fail to do this is to run the risk of essentialism. On the British side, for example, it is too simple to say, as Mitter does, that “[h]aving been imposed from outside the West was inescapable to the Victorians, who would concede only the Greeks and the Romans as the twin classical giants on whose shoulders European civilization stood.” Many in thirteenth-century Britains, one could think this way, but not all. To cite just one counterexample: in Owen Jones’s landmark The Grammar of Ornament (1856), objects from a range of cultures were presented as models for domestic emulation (from the ornament of “Savage Tribes” to that of Egypt and Ancient Greece and Rome and from Persian and Indian decoration to that of the Elizabethan age). It is true that the book echoes to conventional Western models of progress, part chronological, part cultural (even the most recent work by the “primitive tribes” is located in Jones’s first chapter: geographic and temporal distance are thereby equated in entirely predictable primitivist ways). It is true, too, that Jones accepted conventional mid-nineteenth-century evolutionary models that—as Mitter points out—placed India at midtable, below the achievements of the West but above the primitive societies of Africa and South America (despite the vast scope of Jones’s project, no space is given to works from sub-Saharan Africa). What is most striking, though, is how his evaluation of individual objects underscores this hierarchy.

Jones insisted, for example, that his fellow Victorians could learn something even from the “savage tribes” of the South Pacific, contrasting a Maori paddle with what he feared a “modern manufacturer” would offer in its place. There is, again, a lingering primitivism in the evaluation of the “New Zealanders’ instinct” over the debased industrial production that for Jones represented the low point in ornament’s global history. But there is also an openness to the lesson to be learned from other cultures. Similar sentiments structure Jones’s account of Indian decoration, in which he perceived a unity lacking in European manufactures. “The Grammar of Ornament” is, again, a primitivist note sounds here: he looked not at modern Indian art but at traditional forms. Nonetheless, however problematically framed, India was held up as a model for British designers to follow. And follow they did. Though Jones’s views old
calls for fidelity to putatively Turkish ways of doing things. In arranged for his mausoleum to echo the neoclassical architectures of fascist Italy and Germany, there were increasing echoes of their own culture. In what ways did Tagore’s patrician point of view conflict with those of the tribals? How was this reflected in his quarry is an example meant that by the turn of the century British visual cultures. We cannot there­ in any course, to say anything about what they wrote in the Occident, his views on the purity of medieval art he borrowed in his work. The straitjacket of the ‘orientalist’ style. The polluted stream of the populist painting, as in the cultural allegiance of the Muslim faithful to touch the ground, was banished. Ruhí, in turn, made his own way aligned with those of the British. To fully understand Tagore, we must ask questions about the strati­ the divisive politics of this intra-Indian nationalism as it is by the need to offer up an alternative to the divisive politics of this intra-Indian nationalism as it is by the need to offer up an alternative to the divisive politics of this intra-Indian nationalism as it is by the need to offer up an alternative to the divisive politics of this intra-Indian nationalism as it is by the need to offer up an alternative to the divisive politics of this intra-Indian nationalism as it is by the need to offer up an alternative to the divisive politics of this intra-Indian nationalism as it is by the need to offer up an alternative to
From the University of London supervised by no less a figure than Alastair Wright is uncertainty between the history of art and Tutorial Fellow, St. John's College, University of Oxford. He has published on French, British, and Turkish modernistas, and his current research interests 1. On Picasso, see Alastair Wright, "The Work of Invention: Turkish Modernistas and the Critiques of 1914," in Edges of Empire: Colonialism and Subversion, ed. by R. North (London: Routledge, 2007), 209-210. 2. The study of "Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London: Routledge, 1994), 38-42. 3. Among the most important, see ibid., vol. 1, 83, emphasis added. 4. Pauline Kael's "Time Out," New Yorker, 1969, 82. 5. Ibid., vol. 1, 1. 6. Ibid., vol. 2, 82. 7. One of the main British hand here was that of E. H. Blunt, director of the National Gallery of Art London: 1908), 125-27. 8. For a discussion of the work of the Algerian artist Nasser Ovissi, see bikini, against the official British policy of supporting academic modernism. See E. H. Blunt, Indian Studies and Painting in the Muslim World, ed. John Hervey, 1900, esp. 256-59. Herold's emphasis on Alastair Mitter's recent book has been seen as typical of the propaganda of neo-colonial powers. The interest here is in the limitation of autonomy of Indian and British modernisms within the context of the modernist canon. For this reason, it is important to see the book as a contribution to the dialogue about the role of Indian art in the global art world. 9. See Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse," October 28 (Spring 1989): 125-49. 10. The main British hand here was that of E. H. Blunt, director of the National Gallery of Art London: 1908), 125-27. 11. The study of "Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London: Routledge, 1994), 38-42. 12. The main British hand here was that of E. H. Blunt, director of the National Gallery of Art London: 1908), 125-27. 13. The study of "Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London: Routledge, 1994), 38-42. 14. At roughly the time that Tagore responded to Picasso, the Algerian artist Mounir Fakhri worked on his book "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse," October 28 (Spring 1989): 125-49. 15. Rohe, ed., Michael Baxandall, 

Response: 

Provincializing Modernity: From Derivative to Foundational 

Rebecca M. Brown

Partha Mitter's "Deconstructing Modernity: Art History and Assumptions," which makes explicit a major shortfall within recent efforts to include the art of regions outside the broadly defined northern Atlantic, simply by providing in-depth, complex, and convincing readings of both Constantinople and Tagore's Joan Miro. Mitter's work makes clear that South Asian modern and contemporary art can no longer be ignored in our understanding of the landscape of global art in the twentieth century. Mitter's critique of the neat package (European modern) and his call to contextualize twentieth-century art and artists within their particular relation to colonial, imperial, or indirect forms of Western hegemony move us closer to a time when ignoring Roy or Gajendra Mohan will be impossible. The rereading of these artists and their peers in Bengal, within the context of the growing resistance to colonial rule in Bengal politics from the 1880s onward, allows us to see their art in light of their history rather than as lesser derivatives of a grand European tradition. Mitter's research, along with that of others working in these areas, will enable colleagues concentrating on other global regions (including Europe) to obtain a more precise and focused understanding of the development of modernism (ideas within this particular regional and national context). Mitter's work makes it possible to produce a "more inclusive art history" that expands the definition of modernism to encompass the "artistic modernities" of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Australia. The discipline demands this kind of expansion as an artistic history. Mitter's research on European modernism also makes it possible to "think both about India as a nation and about cultural inter­

Readability: 1.0
Certainly, different concerns shape readings of the challenge modernity when it comes about merely the temptation to happen across generations—Husain, and the articulation of the modern body through colonial dependence of modernity on colonial relations of power. But its later adapted to European the modernist tale of the relation between the modern West to bring about the modern, for that argument reifies the regions of Meiji Japan that imported German architects to its own constructed periphery or the art it deems part. To do so, however, would be to ignore the centrality of the imperialistic, European, Paris-New York narrative for those artists working both within it and outside it. In the same way, we cannot merely discard the temporal dimension of modernity. In our desire to overcome the "not yet" of modernity's temporality, we must still acknowledge that the gap—the feeling of "being behind" or "catching up"—remains ever present in the pursuit of modern art.

The two foundations of modernism, spatial and temporal, need to be examined and revealed as the consumed universals that they are. It is in this respect that the modernist project would not see a "true" narrative of modernism—one that encompasses the global landscape of visual culture and yet acknowledges the specificity of all cultural productions outside colonized spaces. These examples demonstrate the dependence of modernity on colonial relations of power. But it is inaccurate to conflate colonialism and modernity, or to help build the nation's world status; one sees it in the fabric of the modern itself. I argue that the deconstruction of the "western" art canon instead of the contributions of feminist, antiracist, queer, and postcolonial theorists. She takes the authors to task not for the exclusions of various marginalized identities but for the more silent collapse of heteronormative universalism in the role for the modern on art. Jones reviews of art at the end of the section for Paniker, see Rebecca M. Brown, "Art, Modernity, and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and Modernity. Also echo of modern art, like modernity more broadly, consists of the central role for the author on art. Jones, review of Modern and the Ancient: Twentieth Art since 1900—Art for the Americas: An Exhibition of Modern and Contemporary Art in Baroda (2000) and articles in Art Journal, Screen, Archives of Asian Art, Journal of Urban History, and Journal of Asian Studies (Department of the History of Art, Johns Hopkins University, Temple Press, 2004: 23-6). Notes

1. My thanks to both Partha Mitter and The Art Bulletin for including me in this dialogue, to collectors who have helped me think about this topic over the past ten years and tell me what is wrong with it and why. I do not mean to imply that... 2. The list of publications on line-oncursive and over-twentieth South Asian art is lengthy grows longer each year. In addition to Mitter's The Triumph of Nihonga: India's Artists and the Ancient Greeks, 1937-1987 (London:... 3. London: Reaktion Books, 2006). 4. See Delia Soyinka's "African Modernity and Postcolonial Art: A Brief History," in The Art Bulletin, 88, no. 2 (June 2006): 376-397. I anticipate the reader's attention to a sifting discourse of modern art, which we find in 2. a number of key ideas in the "look-West" studies. For examples see John...
Response: Belonging to Modernism

Saloni Mathur

In the art history department in which I teach, there has been for some time now a collective concern about two categories that organize our curriculum. They are called, innocuously, Categories A and B, and they express a commitment to scholar-bred students are required to take classes from both categories to broaden the historical and geographic range of their knowledge. Category A embraces such course offerings as Greek and Roman art, American art, Renaissance and Baroque art, modern art, and contemporary art (defined as after World War II). Category B, on the other hand, is an international set of courses. Category B includes African art, South and Southeast Asian art, Chinese art, Korean art, Japanese art, Islamic art, and pre-Columbian art. It is clear to all that Categories A and B and were introduced to replace the earlier categories "Western" and "non-Western," which were perceived at some point in the past two decades as monolithic, homogeneous, bounded, and therefore limiting. Similarly, "Western," or "non-Western," were themselves introduced when the disciplinary signifiers of an earlier era, such as "art," were rejected. One concern is the confusing pallidness that has been created by the reification of the old; another is the sometimes clumsy meeting between a chronological framing (for instance, "medieval" or "contemporary") and the geographic emphasis of an area-driven approach. Moreover, there is a broad consensus that this inherited curriculum, however revisionist initially, is no longer able to accommodate the introduction of new course topics like art and empire, or art of the diaspora, or modern and contemporary Chinese, Indian, or African art, or courses concerned with discursive formations like Orientalism and primitivism— all of which probably belong to both (or neither) Categories A and B, depending on how you view it. Our extended discussion about these categories has to reflect the changing questions and contexts of the fields in which we work— have repeatedly led to the frustrating fact that they are too difficult to uproot. It is simply not a matter of semantics, of finding new words or letters for A and B. The tug at the stems of these deeply rooted ideas is to realize the extent to which they remain firmly attached to the epistemic cultural bedrock of the discipline itself.

The discussions in our department are not unique; rather, they are symptomatic of much larger changes in art historical thinking, as Farida Mitter's provocative intervention essay, "Decentering Modernism: Art History and Avant-Garde Art from the Periphery," suggests. The project of a "truly global" art history, in Mitter's terms, one that confronts the persistent Eurocentrism of our disciplinary categories, has implications for the intellectual legitimacy of the discipline, its history and raises theoretical, methodological, and institutional concerns. For Mitter, such a project takes the form of a historical and theoretical questioning of modernism in the twentieth century: he is concerned, in particular, with the enduring marginality of the non-Western avant-garde by modernism's universalist canon. One primary aim of his essay is to "reconsider the importance of the artistic modernisms of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Australia," which are viewed as derivative of the Western avant-garde. To this end, he advocates a shift in the center of gravity from an "original discourse to a more heterogeneous definition of global modernism" and calls for a "more inclusive art history" that recognizes the work of "artists in the periphery," who have for too long been written out of art history.

Few art historians would oppose the basic goals of Mitter's vision: who, after all, would support a more homogeneous, less bounded, and less inclusive view of the twentieth century, in any field? It is the critical diagnosis and the prescription for change offered here that is more substantive, specific, and perhaps contentious. Mitter deftly exploits a large body of knowledge in the service of his vision for a more global modernism. His essay weaving through thinkers as ranging as Giorgio Vasari, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Hans Belting, and Thomas Kuhn; it repositions artists like Pablo Picasso, Piet Mondrian, Jamini Roy, and the Bengali Cubist Gaganendranath Tagore; it elaborates key tenets inherent within modernism's models, like the burden of influence and the problems of derivation and belatedness; it levels an uncompromising critique of the canonized volume. Art since 1900, sees a powerful instance of the modernist canon; and it introduces several new concepts relevant to the task of placing modernism within a world historical frame, in particular, the figure of the "virtual cosmopolitan" and the "Picasso manqué syndrome." My response will be a limited and selective exploration of but a few of the issues that Mitter has raised. I will consider, in particular, his affirmative message and its potential for breakthroughs, whereas the colonial subject's appropriations and reconfigurations of modernism's aesthetic forms, or at least its literary forms, the self-determination of anticolonial nationalisms.

We tend to forget that Edward Said himself saw the arguments of Orientalism as quite specific to the logic of the nineteenth century, with its universalists, imperialists, and expansionists. Claims. In Linda Nochlin's influential essay "The Imaginary Orient"—undoubtedly art history's most canonical response to Said—the connection between nineteenth-century painting and Orientalist discourse was presented as more or less a perfect fit. For Said, however, it would have been wrong—or "incomplete," to use his words—to merely extend the paradigm of Orientalism to the complexities of the twentieth century. The arguments that this book did not account for the massive, world historical response to Western domination that culminated in the great movements of decolonization, the assertion of Third World cultural identities, and the institutionalization of "local" or "non-Western" nationalisms. A "huge and remarkable advance in perspective and understanding" was required, he believed, to account for modernism's posures and events, along with colonialism. His later book Culture and Imperialism may be seen as an attempt to make such an adjustment, which he did in part by placing modernist art in the context of "the great movements of decolonization and anticolonial nationalism in the twentieth century."

Mitter further demands that we confront the difficult fact that the spatial horizons of this historical era of separate "the 'huge' European modernist from the geopolitical contexts in which he operated. It is this legacy that is of concern to Mitter—a legacy that has helped to prevent a 'true' perspective of modernist's art historical object, in Said's specific sense of that term.

If Apollinaire's judgment reveals how formalism and the supposedly neutral character of modernist abstraction collided with the prevailing chauvinism of the period, it also displays the longstanding tendency in art history to separate the "high" European modernist from the geopolitical contexts in which he operated. It is this legacy that is of concern to Mitter—a legacy that has helped to prevent a 'true' perspective of modernist's art historical object, in Said's specific sense of that term.
case. Their omission left Mitter to demand more from these authors, but I believe these limitations do not, at the same
time, undermine the broader contributions they have made:
A more vigorous and sustained examination of many of the canonical
subjects of modernist feeling saturated.

Needless to say, the decentered vision that Mitter has pro-
sed, to which I have appended these additional thoughts,
would have had few of the broader implications for pedagogy in
history and the curricular structure of the discipline itself. It
would place difficult demands on our existing areas of exper-
tise and require the reorientation of a new language expec-
tations would become more difficult still; historicographic dif-
culties would undoubtedly emerge; the relations between “area” and “theory”
be bound to impede. The preparedness of the field
mental art history for the less comfortable aspects of such a
transformation is, of course, something that remains to be
seen. But it should not prevent us from grasping and under-
standing in more detail the ambitions, if somewhat sorrowful,
project of “belonging to modernism” that Mitter has pro-

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versity of California Press, 2007) ([Department of Art History,
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Notes
1. Edward Said, Crusading (New York: Penguin Books, 1970); and
Linda Nishida, “The Imaginary Orient,” in The Politics of Theory: Essays on
3. Tadashi Sogo, The World, the Past, and the Colonies (New York: Vintage,
1980).
4. See Jack Flam and Miriam Deutsch, eds., Primitivism and Twentieth-Cen-
tury Art: A Documentary History (Berkley: University of California Press,
1983).
5. David Craven, “C. L. R. James as a Critical Theorist of Modernist Art,”
in Cosmopolitan Modernism, ed. Jolanda Jansen (London: Intim/iCam-
6. Guillame Apollinaire, quoted in Roger Benjamin, “Matisse in Mor-
Cultural Production (New Delhi: Tulika, 1998).
10. See the essays by Nancy J. Troy, Geoffrey Batchen, Amelia Jones,
Fiona Butler, Richard Shusterman, and Daria Lee, “Brecht and Modernism,”

Bringing these alternative voices into view might well mean an
“unfamiliar and uncomfortable dialogue” with the
canon. At the same time, it would also generate new topics for investiga-
tion, at a moment when many of the canonical
subjects of modernism feel saturated.

Mahmud’s blush permeates the history of modern India and shapes not only the consciousness of British-
educated Indians Ahmed Khan embodies, namely, the urban
class, but also contemporary interpretations of that
consciousness. I would like to explore the shape and struc-
ture of this originary blush, especially since it contains a
bundle of impulses that becomes visible in various strands of
modernist cultural practices, one of which is Mitter’s
essay.

In a letter he wrote from England to a fellow citizen in
India, Mahmud recounts a visit with his two sons to the
India Office Library. In this essay, Mitter argues that
Mahmud’s book in which the races of all
beings both in pictures and letters,” when
an Englishman interpreted and asked if he was
a “Hindustani” (Indian). Mahmud’s account of his son’s reaction to this
interchange is significant: “Mahmud replied in the affirmativ-
ally, but blushed as he did so, and hastened to explain that he was
not an Indian, but that his ancestors were
formerly of another country.”

John Falconer and Christopher Pinney identify the book
Mahmud’s “slip” as triggering through as one of eight
photographic record of Indian tribes and cases called
The People of India, published between 1866 and 1875. Falconer
reviews the long and checkered career of this first and major
documentation of Indian ethnographic photography, which was
Pinney analyzes in this photographic project a Sachsenko of the
conditions of Englishman’s blushing of the volume may have seemed to
him like looking into a magic mirror that
renders him invisible. It is this shocking double take that
prompts Mahmud to the third aspect of his blush, namely, a
basically insane exposition in which he disengages himself from
this "abortion" shown in the volume and produces an ancestry in
another country.

In the letter, the “country” of Mahmud’s ancestry remains
unnamed. For now, it can be read as an expressive aspect of
Mahmud’s bruised desire to shake loose the universalizing
and colonizing impulses of humanist knowledge, to which
his father is otherwise deeply committed. Betraying an
innovative departure from the "national country"5 to the
"another country," Mahmud’s blush expresses an
resentment he felt at finding himself the object of such objectifying
primitivist discourse.6 Falconer disagrees. The overall one of the
letter suggests to him that Mahmud is “almost embarrassingly

## Response: Modernism in India: A Short History of a Blush

**Ajay Sinha**

Partiv Mitter’s argument about the universalized canon of
Western modernism reminds one of another Indian named
Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, who similarly rallied against British
imperialism in the nineteenth century that have remained just beyond our peripheral
vision. This reemergence of racist and fundamentalist
drama of multiculturalism and immigration in the metropol-
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Countermodern Virtualism

As in Ahmed Khan, we see in Mitter a robust vision of modernism's potential for interconnecting humanity across the globe through the 'colonial ideas' that might enable it to surpass the tenaciousness of the West that haunts Mitter and Pushpamala N.

However, the colonial modernism of the West is at odds with the self-critical, historicist modernism of the Eastern scholars such as Partha Mitter. But if modernist impulses began for Mitter at such sites of cultural encounter as the Indian Office Library, modernism suggests several alternative endings to the original moment. In his response to Mitter's provocation, I want to hear about three articulations of that historical encounter, which I name virtualism, feminism, and minnessa, exploring them, respectively, in the work of the art historian Mitter himself, art critic Geeta Kapur, and artist Pushpamala N.

The notion of alter-ethnic group. The equation between geography, lineage, and the history of an Indian against an unmarked Western modernism, leading to the notion of "upmarked" Southern Calcutta. He also established a workshop of assistants and family members for grinding minerals, preparing color, filling pots, and even making paintings of his signature style of solid, black lines and simplified, readymade shapes, enabling him to sell his works cheaply to a large bourgeois and middle-class consumer. Just as he did in his own workshop, Jamini Roy's workshop radically differed from Western primitivism, namely, "of making the signature meaningless" and "thereby repudiating artistic individualism and the private nature of art," thereby creating a new artistic idiom of bold, black lines and highly simplified figures with robust limbs, all set in a new artistic idiom of bold, black lines and highly simplified figures with robust limbs, all set in

The second intention conflicts with the first. While Roy's first strategy confirms Mitter's idea of "making the signature meaningless," it is precisely his synthetic, signature style that legitimizes a middle-class sensibility. Today, among thousands of workshops assisted Jamini Roy, circulating internationally, a consubstantial search for the artist's hand continues in a community of collectors as well as of upwardly mobile, dispassionate Indians. Kapur presents my second alternative ending to Mahmud's origin/blasphemy. Kapur is a major critic who has almost single-handedly shaped the terms of Indian art criticism in the last four decades. In the 1980s, when her view of Jamini Roy appeared as a small essay in an exhibition catalog, Kapur was formulating some of her most polemical statements regarding modernism in India. In an important exhibition catalog in 1981 on figurative paintings, "Painted Place for People," Kapur sketched an ambitious claim for the political mission of a "visionary artist" in India. She described the project in the following quotation from Walter Benjamin: "As flowers turn towards the sun, by dint of a secret phototropism, the past turns towards the sun which is rising in the sky of history. A historical materialist must be aware of this most inconspicuous of transformations." Within this frame, a visionary artist is charged with visualizing moments of figuration that lead to the historical experience of a community toward the possibility of self-awareness.

The historical materialist's view of Jamini Roy differs significantly from Mitter's idealistic perspective. As opposed to the retaining, countermodern primitivist, Kapur's Jamini Roy derives "an emblematic form for his subject matter recognizing this to be a major point of coincidence between the progressive tradition of image-making and the modern." Kapur bases her analysis of Roy's "emblematic form" on the idea of figuration she was developing in the 1980s. For a start, she argues that Roy opens up "the decorative principle" of modernist painting to include indigenous materials, such as cow dung and lime coating on homespun cloth, board, or paper, and earth and mineral pigments. The material texture of these surfaces recalls unorthodox and well of walls, village homes, painted cloth, and narrative scrolls. The subject matter also shifts. Instead of the city landscapes, cafes, and brothels familiar in the West, Roy paints Vilasazara religious themes, such as the divine love couple Radha and Krishna, and especially the "social encrustation of the Saffron tuhals, the Bihariya saints, and the Bauls—the most模样ia of native Hindu-Muslim origin." Roy's affinity with the inhabitation of rural Bengal, as well as village and tribal arts, comes to rest in a new articidic form of bold, black lines and highly simplified figures with robust limbs, all set in a "right framing" against brightly colored backgrounds. For Kapur, Roy's originality is precisely in his rephrasing of the modernist "decorative principle" as to make his indigenous, subaltern subjects spring forth into a configuration and coherence as a "self." While Mitter interprets Jamini Roy's folk idioms literally, as a return to rural and tribal forms of art, Kapur points to Roy's primitivism as "visual and spiritual". The 1980s were in many ways a decade of fruition for Kapur's materialist vision, to which her idea of figuration is foundational. As the decade progressed, Kapur's work reflected major changes, shifts taking place within India, expressing a crisis in the secularist socialist ideology on which India was first imagined and institutionalized after independence, and in which the critic's idea of figuration remained invested. Her key essays of the period are collected in When Was Modernism? and in the

Dissonant Feminization

Art critic Geeta Kapur complicates Mitter's countermodern notion of artistic clichés in India. For Kapur, Jamini Roy's "decorative principle" approach to an artist's workshop demonstrates not merely his noble retirement but two competing intentions. "The first intention of the workshop was to replace the bourgeois notion of the artist's uniqueness with an artist's modernity and the second, to make art available to the Bengali middle-class robbed of its sensibility by colonial culture." The second intention conflicts with the first. While Roy's first strategy confirms Mitter's idea of "making the signature meaningless," it is precisely his synthetic, signature style that legitimizes a middle-class sensibility. Today, among thousands of workshops assisted Jamini Roy, circulating internationally, a consubstantial search for the artist's hand continues in a community of collectors as well as of upwardly mobile, dispassionate Indians.

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The historical materialist's view of Jamini Roy differs significantly from Mitter's idealistic perspective. As opposed to
The essay is a catalogue raisonné of the paintings, sculpture, and graphics that constitute the artist’s body of work from the 1990s. It is a comprehensive study of the artist’s thematic engage...
Performative Identification

In reflecting on Mitter's challenge to consider modernism in the "periphery," I hope I have demonstrated that modernism in India is centered in it, and formed by, something I have called a historical "blush." The blush rises at key sites of modernity, such as the India Office Library in London (or a British art school in India), where an Indian subject becomes aware of its own performative appearance. I have elaborated three articulations of that original moment, in which the desire to approach the historical subject necessarily turns the modernist practitioner into an ethnographer, who is strongly fascinated by its own mirror image and beholds it as the historical and cultural Other. The three modes I have called virtualization, feminization, and misrepresentation appear beyond an interplay and cultural memory through which history becomes problematic, enchanted, and visible in India. For me, the real provocation of Mitter's essay is in its daring proposal that a mimetic identification with the ethnographic subject is a viable strategy for visualizing and interpreting historical encounters in India. The strategy of identification—and the emotions of longing and fascination that accompany it, as expressed by Kapur and Pushpamala—goes against the grain of a well-considered position in the West, what Hal Foster calls "critical distance" in dealing with "the cultural politics of alterity" in ethnographic scholarship and art making.

To a great extent the over-identifies with the other as victim, which locks it into a hierarchy of suffering whereby the wretched can do little wrong. To a much greater extent the right disidentifies from the other, which it blames as victim, and exploits this disidentification to build political solidarity through fantastic fear and loathing.

In response to Foster's weariness over "reductive over-identification" and "murderous disidentification of the other," Mitter may well point out that the very distinction between the left and the right expressed here relegates the Third World to the "periphery" of a dichotomous debate relating only to the First and the Second Worlds, and that there may be other modes of addressing the politics of alterity in contemporary, globalized encounters. Mitter's key intervention, in this context, is in his idea of a "virtual cosmopolit." In spite of the problems of sublimation I have pointed out, the idea suggests a "thoroughly globalized and networked space of cultural interactions in the Third World, where Foster's identification and distancing blur into a single, performative mode we may call 'the other's identification.' Mitter redraws the old-"}

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2 Pushpamala N. and Clore Armi, Toto, from Native Women of South India: Masters and Castes, 2000-2004, sepia-toned gelatin silver print, 24 x 20 in. (color) Pushpamala N.; photograph provided by Pushpamala N.

Illustrations, she discovers an intersection between the visual accumulation in the popular imagination and an interior image archive that was racialized and authorized by the middle-class with her elaborately staged figuration, reimagines the compelling presence of the found image and produces a photographic record from it. Partial sharing in Gough-Thakurta's poetics of nostalgia, Pushpamala's Toto points to a third solution to Mitter's project in the India Office Library. If Mitter's solution to a colonial encounter is to recoil into primitivism, and Kapur's to reveal and contest the colonial archive, Pushpamala's is to reveal in a performative exchange with the image world of the popular bazaar in order to invoke and activate the material presence of the historical archives underlying it.

How might Mitter's countermodernist artist appear within Pushpamala's angle of vision? I suggest that Pushpamala would see Jassini Roy's folk idioms as a visual schema not unlike the colonial grid, against which his village and tribal subjects are similarly made visible and normalized as authentic citizens of premodern India. Instead of a noble return to the village folk, Roy's primitivism would appear under Pushpamala's gaze as a museal effect. Just as a museum scrutinizes visual signs of cultural heritage and history through collecting, classifying, and displaying loose archaeological objects, so the transformation of a wide range of premodern imagery into the folk style of a modernist indicates a new kind of cultural self-referential reappropriation. Pushpamala, however, would be interested not in "diamantizing" Roy's pictorial conceit, as Kapur, but rather in rekindling the productive power of his primitives through a mimetic exchange and real encounters.
Interventions: The Author Replies

Partha Mitter

With "Decolonizing Modernism," I hoped to provoke a debate on "modernism and its discourses," which is possibly one of the central art historical concerns of our day. In the process, I sought to provide a more complex and decentered global art history for the twenty-first century, one that challenges Hegelian teleology and allows different trajectories to flourish. I feel a vindication that the respondents in general share my objective of decentering and decolonizing the history of modernism, although it is quite natural that their interpretations would express different inflections from mine. Faced with such closely aligned, intellectually engaging, and comprehensive responses, I will try not to comment on each of the respondents, because the essence of the demarcation is perhaps better captured by the following responses of the interlocutors. (The complete responses of the interlocutors are available at the website [link].)

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progress is strikingly illustrated by Francis Youngnhabd, a
ruthless adventurer who was responsible for bringing Tibet to
its knees and yet longed for the spirituality of this defeated
nation, as expressed in his Letters from the Heart, which he
conceived to be a spiritual retreat. "In the Confluence of
Occident," John Ruskin portrayed Indians as primitive, cruel,
and despotic, which he found transparently demonstrated by
the 1857 Indian Mutiny. Yet his faith in the empire as a
vanguard of the new world, as expressed in his 1843 travel
account of India as the fountainhead of the new empire of the
West. Regardless of one of the greatest critics of the
Industrial Revolution, this evangelical imperialist profoundly
acknowledged the leaders of the second phase of the
nineteenth century, Indian nationalists found unexpected allies in many of these influential Victorians, whose opposition to urban industrial capitalism bought them the support of British politicians and finally, a valuable consideration of how such a critical global art history would enable the existing pedagogic curricula of Euro-American universities to confront the deep underlying assumptions that inform the canon.

The first interlocutor, Alastair Wright, proposes a high
suggestive approach to global art that goes beyond the simple
one-to-one relation between the art historian and his text. Commenting that the scholar should moreover be sensitive to
cultural nuances and political complexities, he writes that
"any account of non-Western modernisms will necessarily be
filtered by our own cross-cultural lens. In short, this histori­
ography of"translation" is necessarily partial and from
one's own viewpoint. Wright observes perceptively, that, contrary to the myth of
The monstrous shapes of the Puranic deities are unexcelled for the formal lines of classical representation; and this is possibly why sculpture and painting are unknown, as fine arts, in India. 15

Finally, let me take up "hybridity," a concept that has
assumed central importance in global art. I wholly concur with Wright that, contrary to the myth of "purity," all art is a product of cross-fertilization, a phenomenon that goes back to antiquity. 16 Art history has until now failed to give due weight to this idea. In Ayana Jones' history of the Indian

Hybridization in art, as Wright observes perceptively, can
take place within cultural boundaries and contexts. Hence, each new response is necessarily partial and from
one's own viewpoint. Wright's warning that we as art histori­
ians do not study our own subject neutrally recalls the feminist
"standpoint theory" and is well worth taking on board in our
studies of artistic traditions—mainly, that we cannot entirely
avoid our own biases, especially when we are faced with
cross-cultural phenomena. 8 Wright continues with a close reading of my essay, seeking to press "the material barrier" and reassembling it to fore­
shadow a different vision of the colonizer-colonized relation­
ship in order to shed light on its fractured and ambiv­

dent character. This relationship, he argues, runs counter to the "monologic" version of the "homogenizing" colo­
nizer versus the "hybrid" colonized. The cultural "hy·

british" that ensues from the colonial encounters works to
undermine the cultural homogeneity of each participant.
In his "The Colonial," a 1991 study of the 18th-century British
art, he observes that the idea of the British as a colonizing
power, as expressed in the writings of Edmund Burke and
Horace Walpole, "the patent of the British empire," is at its

best British. This is not to deny that the works of these non-Western artists are hybrid products that incorporate culturally diverse ele­
ments. In contrast to Wright's concern with the internal dynamics of the colonizer-colonized relationship, Rebecca Brown turns to the feminist art historians who had
been written out of mainstream art history, anchored in Europe and North America. She right­ly feels confident that recent much-needed researches in
south Asia will help establish the role and importance of
diverse artistic traditions. 9

Agreeing with my view of the necessity of undermining the
great universal narrative of Western art, she maintains that
a simple expansion of the canon by including artists from the
colonial periphery would not resolve the issue of
marginalization. I, in turn, would agree that this alone is
in substantial agreement with her. As I observed in my
discussion of the Western construction of beauty, simply
covering up the problems that I had perhaps either underempha­sized or.

In answer to my hope that "multiple local possibilities"
I ore effectively than a grand globalizing narrative, sheould recognize
modernity; within the global narrative of the avant-garde, the dialogue of the global and the local is powerfully articulated in the work of the Indian artist Jamini Roy. Roy believed that multiple modernities do not necessarily imply an end to Indian nationalism. His deployment of "critical primitivism" and structural affinities with the primitivisms of the German expressionists, such as Wilhelm Hausserstein or Carl Einstein, though Roy and the German primitives were completely foreign to one another. Most modern theorists in them all formed part of a global critique of colonialist/capitalist urban modernity.21
When a cultural apparatus, Brown paints a promising future for the avant-garde of the center and the periphery, capturing what he expects to be the coming avant-garde of the center and the periphery, capturing what he expects to be the coming...
The Body of Eve in Andrea Pisano's Creation Relief

Jack M. Greenstein

Few themes are so fraught with social, moral, and political significance as the Creation. To this day, the Genesis stories of God creating man and woman are read, and misread, by the faithful in the light of their confirming the positions of their church about personal behavior and public policy in an排序和 proper social order, little料及; therefore, that the history of Creation exegesis and iconography is often mined by scholars to reveal the fundamental attitudes and values of the societies that fashioned them. Hence, a consideration of the origins and development of the creation of Eve within the context of the Florentine Renaissance, and its relation to the construction and development of the idea of Eve itself, might even suggest a new reading of the problem and a fresh slant on the issue.

As members of their society and church, Renaissance artists shared the fundamental attitudes and beliefs of their contemporaries. But these "professional values(s) of the history" also had artistic connotations regarding style, technique, and expressive means, which must other interpreters of Genesis did not share. These committers contained not only the manner in which they worked but also the way they read the biblical texts, interpreted the earlier images, and understood the world that they depicted.

Moralistically rendered human figures were the primary expression of Gustavians, the primary expression of the Italian Renaissance art. In addition to the serious appeal of corporeal beauty, they gave art much of its meaning. Artists fashioned the outer appearance of the human body to serve as an index for what was going on within. The narrative subject, or context, of painting was composed of bodies that moved among themselves and with regard to the viewer both to perform the matter at hand and to display how the figures felt about it. In sculpture, the roti, or strength of character, of notable and holy personages was embodied in statues with an upstanding, costopio stance, which made vivid the work of the muscles arranging the limbs to hold the body erect, even when it was cloaked with drapery. This conception of the human body as a vehicle for showing more than one's face was summed up in the most common tenet of Renaissance art: the movements of the body express the movements of the mind.

The Creation of Eve presented a special challenge to this Renaissance conception of artistic expression. The standard medieval iconography of Eve was raised weightily from Adam's side, half formed but living and growing as if truly made, was hardly compatible with the Renaissance commitment to the naturalistic representation of the human body. Yet, the biblical account of God constructing the first woman from a rib extracted from Adam's side, which this iconography suppressed, did not offer the kind of affective and significant narrative that Renaissance artists and viewers prized. For, as John Calvin conceded, without providential interpretation, "this method of forming woman may seem ridiculous, and . . . that Moses is dealing in fables."

The Creation of Eve, by Andrea Pisano (ca. 1295-1348/9), is an early example of how this challenge was met. A hexagonal marble panel from the campanile of Florence Cathedral, it is now exhibited in the beautifully remodeled Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, where the opportunity to inspect its recently cleaned surface at close range partly compensates for state preservation. Carved and installed di sotto di Giotto da Bondone (1267-1375) as capella major project, 1594-37, had been set in place by the architect, Alberti, in collaboration with the master, where it was second in the south of the historiational panels, next to the Creation of Adam to the south were not the usual form of the fall.

In 1654, Adam and Eve at Work and those four a

data: Japhet, the first shepherd; Japhet, the first ast, the first blacksmith; and Noah, the first

The cycle was continued on the other facades of -as Lorenzo Ghiberti put it--the "arts" --Giotina, the first astronomer; Build Hunting, Placing, the inventor of lute, the inventor of float, the smith, the face, Navigation on Compass, Heracles, thePositive; Agriculture, Theatre, and Architecture, and from the first figure to the last the forms of the technical, practical, and civil arts was complemented above by diamond-shaped panels of the Plan Liberal Arts, and Sacraments.

There is no contemporary record dating the Creation of Eve of the other six hexagonal west facade. Early sources state that Giotto, "the great master in painting of his time," was des
tow, and also indicate that Pisano, the sculptor, the brass door bronze doors (1330-36) of the Baptistery screen from the campanile, succeeded Giotto as caped structural artist in the first phase of the Florentine Renaissance, and, in turn, employed Pisano. The works of Ghiberti, also most expert in metalwork, was an early example of how this was met. A hexagonal marble panel from the campanile of Florence Cathedral, it is now exhibited in the beautifully remodeled Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, where the opportunity to inspect its recently cleaned surface at close range partly compensates for state preservation. Carved and installed di sotto di Giotto da Bondone (1267-1375) as capella major project, 1594-37, had been set in place by the architect, Alberti, in collaboration with the master, where it was second in the south of the historiational panels, next to the Creation of Adam to the south were not the usual form of the fall.