

example, the work of James Rosenquist. It is difficult to read anything specifically Indian in them, and there is really no need to do so. I would like to look at the video work, *Pure* (2000) [FIG.7], in terms of this attention to surface. The artist appears in the video, fully nude and covered with cow dung. The direct use of cow dung refers to everyday and sacred qualities unique in India and has associations with bathing, based on views of cleanliness and pollution that are quite different from the hygienic ideas of Western modernity. In its outward aspect, this work is strongly related to Indian culture, but it has a directness that precludes complicated iconography or ethnography that makes it especially fascinating. At the same time, this straightforward approach of presenting the artist's body as is can be seen as a brilliant example of directly connecting concept and body, discarding the mediation of art forms like painting and sculpture, which have dominated contemporary art from the 1960s to today. It also impels us to change our perspective on Indian artists, looking beyond representations of India or the tendency to see their artworks as links in a chain of such representations. With the actual presence of mud and skin rather than a reproductive representation, the subjective agent appears unobtrusively in the gap between these two membranes. The manifestation of the agent in this neutral medium is what moves us. Looking at the captions, we learn the artist's name and nationality, becoming aware of the symbolism of purity and pollution appropriate to India and this alleviates the shock of the work.

That is, the presence of Gupta in his work is prior to that of India. Or perhaps it would be better to say that Gupta becomes India in his art. And prior to Gupta's presence, there is an excess of surface or membrane, whether cow-dung coating or metal plating. Subodh Gupta seems to be bringing characteristics of India into the context of contemporary art, but he is actually seizing on particular methods of contemporary art and giving them a special quality through repetition as he urges us to reread them as "Indian." With an enormous capacity of awareness and understanding, Gupta is entering fully into the context of contemporary art, using cow dung as collateral. Let us go back to Venice. The title of the skull shown in front of the Palazzo Grassi, a part of the collection of François Pinault, is *Very Hungry God*. Most likely it refers to a Hindu god who creates and destroys. It can also be seen as a portrait of Gupta



FIG. 7
Subodh Gupta, *Pure*, 2000

himself, who has swallowed up all sorts of everyday objects and artistic mediums and used them to restructure contemporary Indian art. As we have seen, Gupta works energetically in a variety of mediums—painting, sculpture, video, and installation—and this whirlwind of activity coincides with the image of fertility and abundance that we project onto the great country of India (the image that connects the old world of myth and today's economic power), and this gives him an even greater presence as a representative Indian artist. This impression, however, is deceptive. It is knowledge that comes after the fact. Gupta's work in itself does not provide detailed documentation of India. But what about the work of other Indian artists?

Let us look at Nalini Malani (1946–), who belongs to an earlier generation. Malani was born in Karachi before the division between India and Pakistan. While still a child, she moved to Kolkata and later graduated from the Sir J. J. School of Art in Mumbai. After studying in Paris, she began participating in exhibitions in India. She appropriated imagery from the work of oil painter Ravi Raja Varma (1848–1906), who had achieved a high reputation during the English colonial period for paintings taking subject matter from ancient Indian and Greek myths, and she is seen as a representative practitioner of postmodernism in India. She has consistently maintained a position of speaking out to the common people, especially women, who have historically been robbed of their voices and their lives. Resisting or mourning the violence of Hindu fundamentalism, which arose in 1992 and 1993, Malani created installations with video images projected in the exhibition space, bringing viewers inside the work. Adding or eliminating images of the body and irregular forms, she has also produced animated films that comment allegorically on the violence that casts a shadow on contemporary India.

Atul Dodiya, who was born in 1959, is more clearly involved in popular culture. He appropriates the diverse images that inundate contemporary India—such as comics, films, and colored prints of the Hindu gods—and uses actual urban structures as a support for his paintings rather than canvas or wooden panels, combining the history of contemporary times with art history. An example is the painting on a shop-front shutter of women without dowries hanging themselves (dowry death is a serious social problem in India) behind an image of Laxmi, goddess of fortune

and beauty (*Mahalaxmi*, 2001).

Dodiya's influence is especially apparent among artists coming after Subodh Gupta. For example, Jitish Kallat, who was born in 1974, uses images from newspapers, magazines, billboards, and graffiti, images that make up the strata of the urban environment, to depict the everyday life of ordinary people and people who are impoverished. He also calls attention to the political crisis caused by religious friction in India. Shilpa Gupta, who was born in 1976, makes use of the internal reality and interactive capability of the Internet in projects that focus on religious and ethnic conflicts and illegal trade in human organs, clarifying the injustices and contradictions affecting everyday life in India.

By looking at these four artists, who emerged a little before and after Subodh Gupta, I believe it is possible to get a better understanding of his art. Briefly stated, they seem to be more concerned with descriptively perceiving the distresses and difficulties of Indian society. In other words, they deal with conditions in India as an object. Gupta has not been an exception, dealing with mobility, and, consequently, producing works that imply the distribution of labor under global conditions [FIGS. 8,9]. But it seems to me that his main focus remains to be on the coated surface, and that he suppresses the will to analyze his object. Does this make sense? What should we make of this?

It is impossible to find a simple cause, but in any case, I think it would be advisable to examine the social conditions prevailing in the 1990s, when Gupta left his hometown and began working in New Delhi. This was a period of serious rupture in Indian society. There was a growing income gap resulting from the economic liberalization that began in the 1980s and the increase in religious conflict that had been barely kept under control under the previous socialist system. In 1992, Hindu

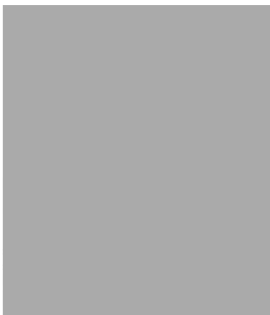


FIG.8 (left)
Subodh Gupta, *Kuwait to Delhi*,
2006

FIG.9 (right)
Subodh Gupta, *Saat Samunder Paar
VII (Across Seven Seas VII)*, 2003

nationalists destroyed the Babri Mosque and anti-Muslim riots broke out in Mumbai and other cities, leaving thousands of people dead. At the same time, the Indian economy entered a period of rapid growth under the far-reaching economic liberalization policies of Manmohan Singh. This was the time when Bangalore became India's Silicon Valley. India had maintained a position of non-alignment under previous national and international conditions and become the world's largest democratic country, but the old framework was broken down as waves of post-Cold War globalism swept over the country. It was during this critical juncture in India's development that Gupta jumped into the chaotic art scene in the capital. Geographical factors were also important. It seems that the backwardness of Bihar, Gupta's home province, was especially significant. This area, known for its connections to the historical Buddha, is one of India's poorest regions and has the lowest literacy rate in the country. In 1989, it was the site of large-scale riots. Even today, those blue collar workers from this region who works in Mumbai are targets for discrimination and assault in discriminated and attacked. Of course, Gupta's position is different from those blue collar workers. Born in the modern city of Khagul in Bihar to a family whose father worked for a railroad company, he has had training and a career as an artist. But, the move from this area to the capital in itself had the potential for bringing about major changes in the artist's thought and actions. In fact, his self-portrait in 1999, in which he used cow dung, was entitled *Bihari* [FIG.10]. We could read Gupta's perverse attitude towards Bihar in this painting.

In contrast to Subodh Gupta, the four artists mentioned above are all citizens of the international city of Mumbai and studied at the Sir J. J. School of Art, established as an institution of Western-style art education in the 19th century. From their vantage point, India was seen as "figure" against the "ground" of the world. When Gupta arrived in New Delhi, the given condition of India was one of fragmentation, whether on the level of contemporary events or his own personal history. That is why he experimented with ways of becoming "India" by concentrating on concrete objects, including accumulations of kitchen utensils and his own body, and localization (an interest in shiny surfaces) rather than philosophical speculation on the nature of India or taking a bird's-eye view of the country. If Mumbai's cosmopolitan artists play the role of

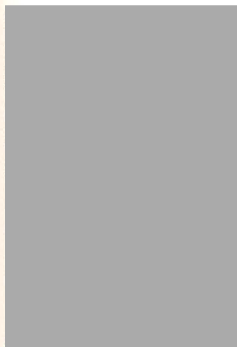


FIG.10
Subodh Gupta, *Bihari*, 1999

talking about India to the outside world, Gupta becomes the India that is talked about. When, almost intuitively, he selected the strategy of mimicry, his success was virtually guaranteed.

Finally, I would like to add some remarks about the auctioning of Indian art, which is a barometer of this success. The economic crisis originating in the United States seems to have substantial impact on Subodh Gupta and other contemporary Indian artists. The number of unclosed bids is on the rise after October this year. As is well known, the great success of contemporary Indian art is being fueled by a newly wealthy class of Indians. Their investment in Indian art might be described as a new version of the *swadeshi* (self-sufficiency) movement of Mahatma Gandhi, a trend facilitated by the economic opening of the country a half century after independence. At the same time, radical Hindu nationalists living inside the country are still attacking 93-year-old M. F. Hussain, the greatest modern painter of India, for his rendering of a nude Hindu goddess. This is indicative of an irreparable polarization between world of art and the forces of nationalism. What will be the future of this Indian trilogy of exuberant economic growth, rising nationalism, and a contemporary art boom. These trends, as well as the development of individual artists, are likely to keep our attention for some time to come.

Translated by Stanley N. Anderson

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Discussion

Maeda Kyoji | Moderator (MC)

Kim Bog-gi+Hirayoshi Yukihiro+Kanai Tadashi

Kamiya Yukie | Commentator

MC | Thank you for the presentations, each containing very dense contents. I would like to first ask Ms. Kamiya for her comment.

Kamiya | The three artists discussed in the case studies in Session 2 — Suh Do Ho, Huang Yong Ping, and Subodh Gupta—are each leaders in the contemporary Asian art scene, but, equally important is the fact that each has plotted a very different path in their career.

First of all, when we discuss “Asian art,” ethnicity and the place of origin are accepted as premises by which we argue our case and also as indicators that help make the categorization.

For example, let’s say we decide to talk about American artists. By looking at the transitions of the Whitney Biennial over the years, we could see the changes in the definition and the scope of what is considered as American art. Initially, the participants were limited to artists who were born in the United States. But eventually, in response to the globalizing age, the invitation was extended to artists who were not necessarily born in the United States, but those who reside and work there. For example, Rirkrit Travanija, as well as Cai Guo-Qiang, who is based in New York since 1995, have been included as a result. In 2005, Kusama Yayoi was selected on the basis that she had once lived and worked in New York. So, now, an American artist is defined as someone who is either working now in the United States or someone who has worked in the United States in the past.

In 2007, Germany was a host to some international exhibitions such as the Documenta and the sculpture projects muenster. In Hanover, three museums co-hosted a contemporary art exhibition entitled, “Made in Germany.” This show introduced many artists who were based in Germany, but those who were not necessarily born there. It reflected the fact that Berlin now attracts various international artists, after New York

and London. An artist like Yang Hae-gue, who is originally from Korea, or others who are from originally from other countries, but are now all working in Germany, were selected for the show. As seen in these examples, artists with specific culture/country of origin still hold as a very strong guiding principle when it comes to discussing the subject. How do we make sense of the artists' cultures of origin? The differences among the three artists who were presented today reflect the different trajectories and distance from the home countries. In the case of Huang Yong Ping, as a result of the political turmoil surrounding the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, he could not return to his country after participating in the exhibition in Paris ("Magiciens de la terre"). His ties to his homeland were severed and he relocated to Europe. In Subodh Gupta's case, the artist relocated himself from the countryside to the city. As India's economy developed and its society got exposed to the waves of globalization, the local and the global became contiguous and he did not have to leave his country to gain his international standing. With the spread of English language in India, as consequence of the past colonization, probably is also a factor that enabled the artist to connect to the world without leaving his home ground. Suh Do Ho received an education in both Korea and the United States. While he lived between the two, he adapted to the foreign culture while maintaining an objective perspective on his original culture. He established a new identity, while connecting the two cultures in the manner of a translator in his artistic activities. The case studies of these three artists show how judgments and discourses on contemporary Asian art are generated in the artists' home countries, other parts of Asia and also the Western nations where they choose to work. The discourses on "Asian art" and "Asian artist" are a result of three contexts crossing and blending together. What makes the situation complex is the fact that the presentations were made by people who stand in different positions. In other words, the viewer's position has affected the outcome. The presentation we heard today about Suh Do Hoh was by Kim Bog-gi, who is from Korea, like the artist. The two other presentations were given by Professor Hirayoshi and Professor Kanai. They are both professionals who work in the fields of theory and education, and speak a different language nurtured in

Japan, a cultural background that is different from these artists in their presentations. So from the outset, they stand in a position where they make judgments based on the information sourced from the outside. I suspect that the evaluation and the acknowledgement of the artist would change according to the position of their viewers. So, it may have been also useful to pick up one artist and to have presentations on him/her by critics in different standpoints: one from the same country as the artist's country of origin and another from the region where the artist is now based. By comparing the two voices, there would be a possibility of making an analysis based on the differences and the commonalities between them.

In 1997, I had an opportunity to see the exhibition of Huang Yong Ping at De Appel in Amsterdam. At the time, I was taking part in their curatorial program, which recruits five to six young curators from different countries every term to discuss and organize an exhibition. I was participating in their fourth year, and was the first one to come from Asia. That was where I saw Huang Yong Ping.

Although I came from Asia, it was then in the Netherlands that I saw the exhibition of Chinese artist Huang Yong Ping for the first time. It was before the single currency was adopted in Europe and the 9.11 happened in the United States. It was a time when people had hopes in opening their doors and connecting to a new and broader world. Europe was being introduced to the artists from Asia, making its way towards integration with the global wind on its wings. Galleries specializing on Chinese art emerged in Amsterdam. In Breda, the Netherlands, an exhibition of Chinese contemporary art called "Another Long March" was organized. Other examples followed suit and Asian art was being introduced at multifarious levels. Huang Yong Ping's exhibition was right around this time when getting to know Asia had an optimistic connotation.

In Huang Yong Ping's career, Hou Hanru played a definitive role as curator and critic. He was the "translator" from the same home country who found placement for Huang's work in the European discourse. Professor Hirayoshi described how Hou Hanru's description of Huang's work is "typical." It was this one curator and his discourse that pushed Huang to represent Asia and China in the process of establishing a discourse. In Venice Biennale, Huang Yong Ping exhibited in the French

Pavilion as an artist to represent France and its global artists. By exhibiting together with another artist who is French, the pavilion in the international exhibition turned into a microcosm of the globalized world. Murakami Takashi also has had a critic of his contemporary, who critiqued him in a discourse that not only articulated the impact of the work, but also brought the cultural background into context. As a result, he has been able to present himself to regions outside Asia and establish his own discourse. Yesterday, Professor Flores talked about the artist-curators and their role. There are only a few who play that role, but they have become the core members generating and introducing Asian art. Back to the topic of Huang Yong Ping, his comprehensive retrospective was organized at Walker Art Center in Minneapolis in 2005 that is known for its unique program of a global perspective to take a central role in the city having large population of immigrant. When he introduced Huang Yong Ping at Walker Art Center, the French curator Philippe Vergne presented the artist as somebody embodying Asia. And in the process, Huang became an artist who represents "Asia," rather than China, and somebody who signifies the global trend in art. This exhibition eventually traveled to Beijing to be mounted at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, a space run by a European collector. When we talk about Asia, we cannot deny our connection with the West and its system. Asian art discourse is influenced by the Western institutions and their coverage of distribution. I am not making a criticism, but simply acknowledging that this is already a well-established fact.

There were various responses to the issue of the market. I think that the market is not something that should be distinguished as insatiable. It is one of the wheels that drive the art world in the capitalist society. When an artist holds an exhibition in a museum, their public acknowledgement and fame heightens, and pushes the artist's market value upwards. The system is designed in a way that different agents support and complement each other. I think the market response is one of the ways in which we can measure the interest in Asian art among the general public.

The diasporas from China and India have crossed the national borders, spreading and thriving in a globalized world. Sharing a common cultural

background, they have supported and reinforced the rapid development back in their homelands. At the same time, they have also held respect and support for their original cultures. This has turned them to support artists of their homeland in the market. Their desire to collect artworks has translated into large sums of money that influence the market. This could be seen as a kind of nationalism and a sense of ethnic pride. The interest among the new economic powers to revisit their own cultures is probably reflected in their performance in the market.

How can we discuss and articulate Asian art and develop its discourse, while adapting to the individual culture as well as the various cultures to which they are to be exposed? We would need to deal with a diverse range of factors in the course of discussion. This symposium is one of the ways in which we can deepen our understanding.

MC | Thank you, Ms. Kamiya. I think you have indicated some factors that should be taken into account, when we consider the relationship between discourses and the process of production. Fundamentally, the intentions of those who produce artworks and those who receive them do not balance out equally. Particularly so, because each of them carries the weight of their own contexts. So, it is not easy to solve the formula that has so many variables to take into consideration. But it is something we cannot ignore.

I would like to ask some questions to supplement some things that Ms. Kamiya presented in relation to discourse and context.

I would like to first ask Mr. Kim Bog-gi. Ms. Kamiya said that Asian art and its distribution in the international art scene is based on the information that is propagated in English, and how that information, in return, influences the way in which the artist is evaluated within the Asian region. In the case of Suh Do Ho, which critics were involved in the process of his gaining recognition after his debut in America? And did you find any gaps between how the artist was being acknowledged in English-speaking countries and how you (as a Korean) understood of his artwork?

Kim | As Ms. Kamiya pointed out, it is inevitable for the artists in cultures which use Chinese characters, Japan, Korea, and China, to have

to deal with English language. That is why they go abroad to study. We often joke in Korea, saying "If you want to be a famous artist, a good artist, you should marry a foreign curator." (laugh) This is the kind of situation we face.

Suh Do Ho went to graduate school at Yale University. A gallerist in New York discovered him at his degree show. Through his participation in the Bienal de São Paulo, Venice Biennale, among others, he gained recognition overseas, more so than in Korea. It was only later that he held his solo show in Korea and exhibited in the Korean Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

So, how has he been received and evaluated in Korea? I have tried to approach the artist from various angles, but I found out that most of the critiques were made outside Korea. There are some by Korean critics, but they would be quoting opinions from outside Korea. So, within Korea, Suh Do Ho's importance is yet to be fairly justified.

I have had opportunities to speak with Suh Do Ho, and I am under the impression that he is not necessarily conforming to postmodernism. In his interviews, he has mentioned how his philosophical foundation is based on Eastern philosophies, such as Buddhism, Confucius or Zen. So, we have different situations at hand, but we should have many more discursive discussions on Suh Do Ho in Korea. I would think that we could apply or establish a Korean or an Asian discourse in doing so. Suh's art, be it in forms of installations or sculptures, share a certain spiritual quality of an artist practicing Eastern painting. I think that this feature, inevitably as well as instinctively, emanates from his body of works.

MC | I agree. It caught me by surprise to know that Suh Do Ho's first retrospective in Korea was held only in 2003.

Let me get back to Suh Do Ho later. In relation to the topic on discourses, Professor Hirayoshi quoted Hou Hanru's text that he wrote for the 1997 exhibition at De Appel, Amsterdam. Ms. Kamiya mentioned this show, too. It was about the same time that Ho curated the "Cities on the Move" exhibition with Hans Ulrich Obrist. I have not seen the show, but I have heard that the exhibition changed its format every time it traveled to a new city. This may be a similar way the "Under Construction" exhibition, organized by the Japan Foundation,

was carried out, and it may be that it was influenced by “Cities on the Move.” I do not know if I am describing the situation accurately, but I have the impression that the nomadic, postmodern context pushed Hou Hanru to rise as the curator of the new generation, representing Asian art or Chinese art. Professor Hirayoshi, do you have any comments regarding Hou Hanru as Huang Yong Ping’s companion?

Hirayoshi | Thank you. Unfortunately, I have also not seen “Cities on the Move” and have not researched on Hou Hanru’s activities so seriously. But as Ms. Kamiya mentioned in her comment, Chinese critics/curators have played an important role in the 1990s in introducing Huang Yong Ping and other Chinese artists to Europe and America. Other than Hou Hanru, there is Fei Dawei, also based in Paris, and Gao Minglu, based in America. These three curators formed a kind of collective voice to promote Chinese art during the 1990s in Europe and America. At the same time, these critics generated a discourse, in which Huang Yong Ping would gain recognition and by which his works would be read. Hou Hanru’s nomadic approach and the judgment to validate nomadic qualities in Huang Yong Ping’s work are two separate issues. In the 1990s, there were contesting forces for seizing hegemony on Chinese art and constructing its discourse. In the Venice Biennale in 1999, Chinese artworks were exhibited in volumes, but most of the works from the Uli Sigg collection. In other words, it was a comprehensive show of a European perspective on Chinese contemporary art, using the collection of an individual person. I think what Fei Dawei or Hou Hanru, or even Fan Di’an, who was present yesterday—those who took part in the “Chinese Contemporary Art Exhibition” at the National Art Museum of China in 1989—meant to do was to take an active part in creating their own discourses from a Chinese point of view in order to modify the kind of view Sigg collection was presenting. So, Hou Hanru and others who could generate discourses in English or French, played a very crucial role to enable Huang Yong Ping and other contemporary Chinese artists’ works to be read by the Euroamerican audience. I would also like to add to what Ms. Kamiya said. Huang Yong Ping’s retrospective was held at the Walker Art Center in 2005. This Center is a very interesting American institution, proclaiming to take an anti-

MoMA position. In other words, it makes an effort to create an alternative to the modern art history that MoMA aims to establish. And it is in this context that Philippe Vergne eagerly picks an Asian artist for his exhibition. Actually, a solo exhibition of Kudo Tetsumi, an artist from the East who later moved to Paris, is currently on show. As you can see, the Walker Art Center takes anti-MoMA stance, so it would be interesting to follow up on their programs on non-Western arts and watch how they generate their own discourse.

MC | It is true that people were competing to take control of the discourse on Chinese art. We have seen many slides so perhaps we should discuss topics in relation to the specific artworks.

First of all, we saw two categories in Suh Do Ho's body of works: home and clothes. Both of them create a border that separate the inside from the outside. The clothes represent a collective effort, but also relate to specific physical bodies and individual identities. Subodh Gupta was discussed in a similar context. In his case, the individual was revealed in the gap between the local and the global. This is exactly how the individual was dealt with in Suh's homes and clothes: using the concept of inside and outside.

By the way, in Session 1, Professor Hayashi touched on a very interesting point. He said that the idea of individuality spawns from Western modernity. If this is so, how could the individual manage to resist the West? Does Suh Do Ho understand the individual as such? In his view, is the individual a very strong and solid self, or is it something that is rather unstable and immobile? Mr. Kim, could you comment?

Kim | That is a very important question. We may need to ask, "Have we actually experienced modernity in Korea or in Asia?" By the same token, we could also ask, "Have we experienced postmodernity?" Suh Do Ho's thought on the individual, in the Western context, would be to think of the individual as a subject. The clothes in his works, for that matter, signify the concept of "me and the world, the border." But this does not necessarily mean that he has agreed to the idea of "I" as the "subject." He would claim that the individual is like Zen and Buddhism in the East; it is a state of being liberated, with its border interfacing the external

world obliterated.

MC | By the way, I think humanism plays an important role in Korea, and this is, perhaps, related to its political situation. Suh's father, Suh Se-ok produced a series called *People*. I remember that the works referred to the pro-democracy movement that took place at the end of the 1970s, demonstrating the conflict between the collective value and the individual value. Suh Do Ho's art works in two tiers: he carries this tension between the collective and the individual at one level and works in a global context on the other.

Next, I would like to ask a similar question concerning Subodh Gupta. Professor Kanai showed us Gupta's *Pure*. I recall that the sequence is made by running the film in reverse. So, although, in reality, he applied the cow dung to his body first before rinsing it off with the shower, in the film, the cow dung gradually covers his body as he stands in the room and in the end, it looks as if he is exiting the room. It shows him walking out of the room to meet the world.

I think this work is important because it shows how Gupta, as an individual, goes out to engage with the society. Professor Kanai, you described how he has a fetish-like interest in working on the coated surface and how he rises as an artist from a very thin gap. Could you elaborate on this point?

Kanai | Yes. What I wanted to say about the Gupta and his surface was this. When we view *Pure*, we first see his body coated with cow dung. Of course, as we follow the images, we see a kind of narrative that refers to society and also carries a message, talking about the individual returning to the community. But it is the cow-dung-coated body surface that has an impact on the viewer. The surface shows the premise of an amorphous individual, whose "self" is not socially determined, but physically captured with the sticky cow dung.

I am not sure to what degree Gupta has been aware of his manipulation of the surface. But I think we should focus on the fact that he was a member of the local theater group in his home town and have had experiences of performing on stage. He is an individual who could act out different roles as an actor. He could change his surface to become

whatever he is acting. So, he is more of an actor than an artist. On stage, he would be one of the many individuals ready to perform. I think these qualities make him unique. I see surface-like and the plaster-like qualities in Gupta's act of mimicry.

I may be jumping into something that is slightly out of context, but let me elaborate on the idea of individual a little further. Individuals and the society or the community are not necessarily divided; they are mostly linked to each other. For example, we could agree that the memory of an individual is the source for creating a collective tradition. In other words, the individual is the starting point for creating a community. But there are things to consider beyond that. Once a community is established, it turns into a source for exclusion. This is what I have in mind when I talk about the individual undergoing transition. The individual engages with the community, but the community attracts immunity. The immunity allows the community to exclude the Other. As a result, the individual could be dragging himself through this risky area of community and immunity. Gupta's art makes this kind of issues surrounding the individual visible. This is why I think he has potential. I am sorry if I talked about too many things at once.

MC | I think you touched on several important points. First, about the theatrical nature of Gupta. I think the reason Gupta incorporates a variety of media is related to his experience in the theater.

The other point is on the topic of memory. Tradition is something that is rooted in a community, but memory is something that is based on personal experience. But in some cases, personal experiences could overlap with collective, communal experience. As in these cases, we could should make references to tradition and memory whenever it becomes necessary. This reference could be useful when we discuss an artist like Suh Do Ho, too.

Let me also talk about Gupta's *Pure*. The importance of the body and its surface is indisputable. But we could draw more implications from that. So, I would like to turn to Professor Hirayoshi now.

The "Avant-garde China: Twenty Years of Chinese Contemporary Art" exhibition was shown in Tokyo until last month. Ma Liuming and Zhang Huan, who use their body, were among the exhibiting artists, and

some of their expressions were shocking. In comparison to what Professor Kanai talked about on Gupta, I wonder if Professor Hirayoshi would have any comment on Chinese artists and their physical expression which tend to be direct.

Hirayoshi | Watching Gupta's performance using cow dung reminded me of Zhang Huan's performance, in which he sits in the toilet with his body covered with honey and fish oil. In this performance, he first sits attracting many flies, and then walks to the pond to rinse himself off. In this work, the honey, the fish oil, and the fly do not carry any meaning directly related to tradition or religious ritual, unlike the cow dung in India. The same goes for Ma Liuming in his use of body. These artists started using body as a way of expression to evade the political oppression. Because they could not produce any subversive works to remain in solid forms, performance using their body was the only means that enabled them to deal with their reality. At the same time, in the process of criticizing the society or resisting oppression to pursue freedom of expression, I think the body of the individual within the collective group became a signifier of the individual who would confront the dominating power.

MC | By the way, I went to see the "Avant-garde China" exhibition, and I observed that there are two types of avant-garde: one that is conscious of its meaning in the Western context, like Huang Yong Ping, and the other, that is fundamentally an activist. I thought that if we were to call the Chinese contemporary art as avant-garde, it would probably cover both of these types.

Huang Yong Ping's position is, nevertheless, very interesting. I think Professor Hirayoshi mentioned that Zen and other similar thoughts are not incorporated as representations of Chinese tradition, but are drawn simply for the benefit of making a comparison with the avant-garde in the West. In China, the two systems may collide or overlap. I thought that this is like appropriation in some ways. But then, "Where is Huang Yong Ping's identity based?" Professor Hirayoshi, could you comment on this?

Hirayoshi | I think your question is a difficult one. Huang Yong Ping's

position is very unique among the Chinese artists. As early as the mid-1980s, he made assertions that rejected individualism. So, he first eradicated his personal identity as an artist, and then started from nil to see what he could do. That is when he absorbed Duchamp. It was in Paris that he ended up taking on the identity of a Chinese. While in China, he did not have to be conscious of his Chinese identity. In China, he had eradicated his individual identity and his community. But because he got relocated to a place outside his country, he had to deliberately, or strategically, take on the collective identity of a community of a specific ethnic group. That is when he started bringing the symbolic “traditional” icons, such as *I Ching* and augury, into the foreground in his art. So it was not so much as Huang reinstating his Chinese identity in Europe, but it was his decision to swathe himself in a kind of Chinese cliché. I have not spoken to Huang Yong Ping directly on this matter, so I would not be able to speak on his behalf, but my personal view is that, to him, the identity of the individual is like a residue stuck in the mesh of relationships. He would not consider it to be a premise for his own standing.

MC | I see. Tatehata Akira described the work, “*The History of Chinese Painting*” and “*The History of Modern Western Art*” Washed in the Washing Machine for Two Minutes as a kind of work in which “the seriousness of the Dadaist-conceived object is transformed into a kitsch-like sensitivity.” I think he read the work as being hybrid, and was responding to the fact that hybridity could turn into trash. His observation touches on an important point. In the 1980s, mobility and wandering were praised as being nomadic. I think Huang’s work makes us think about being nomadic and hybrid once again. Could I invite Ms. Kamiya to share with us her idea of nomadic?

Kamiya | In response to the discussion on the individual and the body, I would like to point out that Asian art does not have many opportunities to be discussed at the “individual” level. For example, artists in “Avant-garde China” and “Chalo! India” are grouped by nationalities, and the identities of China and India are each presented as an integrated image. As the artworks are representations of a country, the viewers receive them

by national categories. Many Japanese contemporary art shows were presented in the same manner abroad in the late 1980s to the 1990s. In a similar way, Asia was represented as an integrated form, not breaking it down to individual properties. "Cities on the Move" was novel in that Hou Hanru was able to represent "Asia." Up until then, Fei Dawei and Hou Hanru were introducing Chinese artists to the West. But in this exhibition, Hou Hanru and Hans Ulrich Obrist working together as partners represented Asia and Europe. They were able to travel the show from Europe to America. What they did was not to introduce Asia by countries, but to show Asia as an integrated entity. And that entity was presented as something that is changing and moving, just like the rapidly transforming Asia.

When the show first opened at the Secession in Vienna, the exhibition was presented in a very chaotic way. I think it was related to the image of Asia and the media that represented that image. Installation was the media that was incorporated to represent the reality and the changes in Asia. Together with performances, installations were taken in as a style that counters formal artistic expression. They were presented as Asian to counter the position of Euroamerica.

The show presented a new style of exhibition, in which the format was open to changes, depending on the location, the size of the venue, or the amount of finance that supported it. This concept had meant to propose a new format for exhibition making and also represent an Asia that is chaotic.

It was very radical in comparison to the conventional exhibition format, and it articulated the new and dynamic energy in Asia. But it also led to a misunderstanding that Asia is "underdeveloped" and "incomprehensible." "Under Construction" exhibition took a different path. Until then, Asia was frequently being represented by Europe and America. Artists were selected and invited to exhibit and to be viewed by those who represented them. "Under Construction" was conceived to for us to make our own judgments and to articulate ourselves from within Asia. It was initiated at a time when Japan was shifting from its position outside of Asia to the inside, to work together with its Asian neighbors in thinking about Asia. The Japan Foundation was the organizer, and curators from seven countries met in 2000 to kick off the three year project.

It was a process which questioned “What is Asia?” from within, drawing a line from looking at Asia through Western perspective. It was also an attempt to send our own voices out from Asia. Whereas we were initially frustrated of being merely gazed upon, the project unfolded in a way that we talked to our peers to discuss about ourselves. We were able to start looking at Asia as an individual, whereas up until then, it was never seen in that way. And I think this is becoming more common now.

MC | Thank you. Now that we have touched on “Under Construction,” we seem to have gone around the circle. I would now like to open the discussion to the floor.

| **Ming Tiampo** | My name is Ming Tiampo. One tension that I see emerging throughout all of your papers, and in particular, in Professor Hirayoshi’s paper, was the question of whether or not the entrance of non-Western art into the global system constitutes an assimilation and commodification of non-Western art, on the one hand, or a destabilization and provincialization of the West as center, on the other hand. I think that some of the works that you showed today really sort of showed that tension very clearly. Suh Do Ho’s *Home* series, *Pure* by Subodh Gupta, and Huang Yong Ping’s “*The History of Chinese Painting*” and “*The History of Modern Western Art*” *Washed in the Washing Machine for Two Minutes*, as well as the radicality of the late work shown in Professor Hirayoshi’s presentation.

What I’m curious about is what you think are the possibilities of de-centering the West. And Ms. Kamiya, you were gesturing at that in the end a little when you were referring to the concept of peer-to-peer communication that Professor Kajiya was talking about yesterday through the “Under Construction” project. So, I was wondering if any of you, all of you, had thoughts on how we should proceed, what are the prospects of de-centering the West.

And in considering this question, I would also ask you to think about a category of artists that we haven’t really discussed so far, which is the category of Asian diasporic artists, who are generally categorized by their so-called countries of origin or, on the other hand, ignored. And when I say diasporic Asian artists, I mean Asian artists who were born abroad or

who grew up abroad, not necessarily those who immigrated as adults, like Huang Yong Ping, but people like Jin-me Yoon and Ken Lum, who have not benefited from the recent interest in Asian art, partially because they are not “Asian enough” for the market. Thanks.

MC | Professor Hirayoshi, could you answer this question on decentralization?

Hirayoshi | So, the question is about the possibility of de-centralizing Europe or deconstructing its dominant power? I think we would need to continue with our effort to “relativize” the values, in the way that Huang Yong Ping with his practice. Let’s say that we are creating a peer-to-peer network or a peer-to-peer-like expression, we should step into the art system that the West has created, and relativize it or deconstruct it from within the existing system. Such effort should be necessary, separately from dealing with “Asia” specifically in the context of Asian art. So, we need to continue with our effort to negotiate with the West.

In terms of political dynamics, we may relativize and deconstruct the West in order to internalize and recover it, and to create a new system, in a way related to Giddens’ reflexive modernity. Although they may simply be all ingested in the end, it is important that we are aware of this when we establish our own method for negotiation.

I don’t think it is fundamentally necessary for us to read “Asian art,” according to the European system, to counter Europe. What we need to create, or should be creating, is an alternative system. But in reality, the market, as well as the institutions, are based on the European system, so we need to continue negotiating with the existing Euro-centric system.

MC | Does anybody else have any comment on the effectiveness of the strategy of decentralization? Ms. Kamiya, please.

Kamiya | I think the more we continue with our effort to compare Asia and the West, we risk ourselves to fall into a trap. We become trapped in a process where we reinforce the Euro-centric way of thinking. To evade falling into this pattern, I suggest that we look at the non-Asian region

that has also received heavy influence of Europe and America. This is a perspective that we have not talked about at all this time, but something that is very important.

This year, we are celebrating the centennial of the Japanese immigration to Brazil. Brazil is an interesting case in discussing the differences and commonalities between Latin American art and Asian art. The American influence, as well as the European influence starting from the time of colonial times under Portugal, is prominent in their culture. For example, the Tropicalia movement is a movement that was conceived in Brazil. It combined music, literature, and art to advocate their thoughts on society and politics. I think art in Asia is similar to theirs because our creativity is also closely knitted into the fabric of society.

So, although Latin America and Asia are far apart, we both developed ourselves under the influences of West. We could compare the problems we both face and examine the unique ways in which we have unfolded our histories. I am not suggesting that we need to merely communicate with cultures from a different region. I am suggesting that this kind of exchange could be useful in analyzing Asia's unique qualities and its position, and would enable us to expand our discussion into the future. So, when we objectively look at ourselves from a distance, we would start seeing other regional areas and their own discourses. By becoming actively involved in the exchanges with the other regions, we could probably come up with a very different discourse. For example, instead of grouping the artists by nationality in an exhibition, we may be able to build on individual artists' conversation.

MC | Thank you. I still have one pending question on diasporas. I will briefly comment on this issue from a very personal view. I think on the one hand, crossing the border or being nomadic was once read as signs of an ideal state of being. But, now, the state of diaspora has become a severe issue in the globalized world. There is no more space left in our world for the margin and the center to negotiate with each other to generate dynamics. We could be at a geographically marginalized location or in the center of a big city; either way, there is hardly any space left for us to breathe and mobility no longer holds any meaning. This is just my intuition. Professor Kajiya, can you comment?

Kajiya Kenji | Regarding artists who are diasporas from Asia, I think you meant to point to artists who were born and raised in Europe or America, not the ones who were originally born in Asia. I recall that Mr. Kuroda had dealt with this issue in the symposium in 1994 “The Potential of Asian Thought.”

MC | You just passed the ball beautifully to the side.

Kuroda Raiji | Thank you.

I already talked yesterday, so I was hoping to let other people have their chance to talk today. I think there is a difference between the group of people who went to study in the United States by their own will and then was picked up by the gallery right away, and those who migrated to the United States as immigrants and refugees, as a result of a family problem or a war. Vietnamese who arrived in Los Angeles, or others who landed in the United States but have not enjoyed the freedom of movement or relocation, as well as freedom of choice in their jobs would fall into this group.

What is obvious to me now is that things have drastically changed since 1994, when I wrote my presentation on the Asian artists in Europe and America. For example, the Asia Society organized an exhibition called “One Way or Another: Asian American Art Now” two years ago. It was an exhibition of Asian American artist, but most of them were born in the United States and most of their works did not have any expressions that incorporated their Asian identity as a counter-expression against mainstream art.

By the way, in the presentation by Mr Kim Bog-gi, I was disappointed to hear that Suh Do Ho’s discourse is mostly developed in Europe and America, and that the Koreans are quoting from them, instead of making their own critiques. I feel particularly disappointed because I think the formal characteristics of his work are reflections of very Korean qualities. I just wanted to comment on this point.

MC | I think we will break for lunch after we hear Professor Hayashi’s comment.

Hayashi Michio | I listened to all the presentations and found all of them

01 | Financial capitals can invest in specific locations, and instantly pull out when it gets risky to stay there. But when they leave, the leave behind the negative outcomes and all the liabilities. [Hayashi]

very interesting. I think I would comment on two points.

One is on the concept of diaspora and nomadic. I think the financial capital is the most nomadic thing in our world today. So, I think taking nomadic or diaspora as concept to counter the existing system is no longer effective unless we carefully reexamine the concepts.

And, we need to think about who we are talking about when we discuss diaspora. Mr. Kuroda has a point. I completely agree with him. So, when the financial capital acquires such mobility as today's market system, there would be a situation in which an ironical reversal occurs. That is, some people will inevitably get locked into their local terrain. They would not have the means to move locations, and in a way, their situation is like "refugees." [01] In the same way that people are forced out of their land, some people are forced to be locked in and not allowed to leave. We could say that these people are also a kind of diaspora.

One more point. When Professor Hirayoshi quoted Huang Yong Ping in his presentation, I found it interesting that the discussion touched on the savages. Professor Kanai touched on the topics of utensils and elements of eating in Gupta's art. I was reminded of "cannibalism" in Brazil, since the "Neo Tropicalia" exhibition is currently on show at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo. This concept was very influential, particularly when Brazil's relationship with other cultures was taken into the postwar avant-garde movement. In the 1920s, the poet Oswald de Anderade said that they will eat the West. He meant to make the West his own by devouring it. Eating is about absorbing and about changing the constitution of the body. But it is also about a process that cannot be reversed; what is being absorbed cannot be broken down to the atom level to trace its origins. Lévi-Strauss explained that the encounter with the culture of the Other would have an outcome that is either emetic or cannibalistic. He did not consider either of them to be positive; emesis excludes the Other, cannibalism digests the Other to eradicate its existence. But, listening to this session, I thought we could imagine a cultural "cannibalism" different from the way Lévi-Strauss formulated it.

I wanted to share my thoughts with you, because this issue is stimulating for our imagination.

MC | Thank you. I would like to close Session 2.



Session 3

Liquidation of “Asian-ness”?: The Specter of Locality

The third and last session will focus on the artistic genres such as craft, drawing, decorative art, and installation art (in the term's broad sense) that have traditionally been considered the central field where “Asian” character is believed to make its appearance. Do these genres still function as privileged *topoi* for the inscription of the local difference? If not, what are the roles that they are playing now in the context of local-global interactions?

Opening Remarks for Session 3 | Hayashi Michio [Moderator]

Presentation 1 | Florina H. Capistrano-Baker

Locating Authenticity: Is this Asian Dress?

Hybridity and Postcolonial Identity in the Philippines

Presentation 2 | Hosaka Kenjiro

An Inquiry into the “Modern” Through Drawing:

Nara Yoshitomo, Empathy, and Localization

Presentation 3 | Tanaka Masayuki

The Politics of the “Decorative”

Comment | Maeda Kyoji

Discussion (Q&A)

Opening Remarks for Session 3

Hayashi Michio

Professor, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Sophia University

Before starting Session 3, I would like to first review the development in our discussion up to now. In Session 1, which took place yesterday, we focused on the discursive issues related to Asia, postmodernism, and postcolonialism. In Session 2, which took place this morning, we focused on individual artists and their practices, to examine the specific issues pertaining to the collision of the local and global, and how the artists have been appraised and evaluated in this context. Nomadism and diaspora were some of the topics that came up during the course of our discussion.

In this last session, we are going to examine the issues from different dimensions: fashion, drawing, and decorativeness. One of the important issues that have come up since yesterday is about the individual and realism, which is about placing art in the everyday context and making connections. So, in other words, we will be looking at the “object (fashion),” “action (drawing),” and “media (decorativeness)” in the quotidian space. The three presentations will each make references to these elements.

In the process of developing our discussion, one of the issues that may come up is the problem of culture and its “authenticity” which has already been mentioned in previous sessions. At the other end of “authenticity” is the concept of “hybridity,” which also has already been discussed in passing. I conjecture that various issues connected to this opposition will be explored.

In the meantime, the issues such as realism, the relationship between art and local culture, as well as sub-art activities, or something that is developing into art, may also be examined in view of their inter-relationships and contact points or interfaces.

The presentations will be made by Dr. Florina Capistrano-Baker, Mr. Hosaka Kenjiro, and Professor Tanaka Masayuki. Mr. Maeda Kyoji, who moderated Session 2, will be making his comment on these presentations.

Locating Authenticity | Is this Asian Dress? Hybridity and Postcolonial Identity in the Philippines

Florina H. Capistrano-Baker

Director, International Exhibitions, Ayala Museum

... the postmodern postcolonialist is the triumphalist self-declared hybrid.

Gayatri Spivak [•01]

The title of my talk is *Locating Authenticity: Is this Asian Dress?* — with the subtitle *Hybridity and Postcolonial Identity in the Philippines*. I'd like to preface my talk by paraphrasing Sandra Niessen, a Western scholar specializing in the cloth and clothing of Indonesia. [•02] In the volume entitled *Re-Orienting Fashion: The Globalization of Asian Dress* (2003), Niessen posits and challenges the notion that “fashion has been defined a priori as a Western phenomenon,” a definition constructed on cultural alterity. Consequently, fashion historians have bifurcated the world's modes of dressing according to a dichotomy between Western “fashion” and non-Western “anti-fashion” — the latter manifested in the “unchanging” traditional dress. Niessen notes that the transformation of non-Western clothing systems from independent dress systems, to systems that evolve relative to Western styles, is an important facet of the globalization of fashion. Conversely, Western fashion's appropriation and insertion of Asian national costumes in the 1990s (such as the Vietnamese *áo dài* and the Korean *hanbok*) served as a catalyst for the spread of non-Western “anti-fashion” outside the West. This paper investigates one case of a dress system that evolved relative to Western fashion through almost half a century under Western hegemony — that is, Philippine dress in the central lowlands — a hybrid dress system that was employed and deployed to visualize nation.

“Hybridity” is originally a biological term referring to a mixture of breeds issuing impure, and therefore, inferior offspring. Among postcolonial nations, however, “hybridity” has been self-consciously appropriated as a postcolonial marker of identity. Tracing the permutations of dressing styles among the Philippines' majority



Florina H. Capistrano-Baker

01 | Gayatri Spivak, 361.

02 | Sandra Niessen *et al.*, 243–265.

03 | This paper focuses primarily on the clothing traditions of the Christianized populations of the central Philippine lowlands who constitute the majority of the country's population. In view of their different colonial experiences, northern groups inhabiting the Cordillera mountains and Islamic populations in the southern Philippines are only tangentially mentioned here. The specifics of the evolution of Philippine dress are largely based on an essay co-authored by this writer with textile scholar Sandra Castro for the *Berg World Encyclopedia of Dress and Fashion* (forthcoming).

04 | I thank Professor Hayashi Michio of Sophia University for bringing my attention to these and related issues.

05 | See, for example, G. Coedès and Anthony Reid.

06 | Excerpt from the Boxer Codex, translation by Carlos Quirino and Mauro Garcia 1961.

07 | Excerpt from the Boxer Codex, translation by Carlos Quirino and Mauro Garcia 1961.

populations in the central lowlands of Luzon and the Visayas from the time of early contact through the Spanish and American colonial periods to the postmodern era, this paper examines syncretic fabrications within the broader context of social and historical phenomena. [·03] I argue that, in the Philippine case, postcolonial hybridity is not a static state of being, but a strategy of becoming—an ongoing stratagem of creating and defining self. I investigate the notion of hybridity within the theoretical frame of postmodernism, interrogating as well the dichotomy between visual or “cosmetic” versus structural hybridity, and how these strategies are deployed in local and global contexts. [·04]

The transnational inflection of the precolonial, 16th-century Visayan and Tagalog societies, with material elements borrowed from China and Islamicized neighbors in South and Southeast Asia are manifested in their hybrid attire—a visual syncretism that mimics structural hybridities, suggested by corresponding linguistic appropriations in social organization and religious ritual. [·05]

The earliest known documentation of lowland attire in the Philippines is the album of watercolor images called the Boxer Codex, a 16th-century manuscript in the collection of the Lilly Library at Indiana University. Illustrations and texts describe the local inhabitants and their attire:

—

The garments and dresses of Visayan women consist of some mantles with diverse colored strips made of cotton [···] some wear plain taffeta and damask that came from China. They are close-fitting without neckbands and are buttoned at the front with braids or cords of silk. Many wear a lot of gold jewelry which they use as buttons, and small golden chains [···] the women wear crowns and wreaths on their heads made of tinsel imported from China... [·06]

—

The Tagalog inhabitants of the coastal areas of Luzon are portrayed as sumptuously adorned merchants:

—

They also wear many golden chains around the neck, specially if they are chiefs, because these are what they value most [···] They are very fond of trading, selling and bargaining with each other; thus they are great merchants and very cunning in their dealings... [·07]

—

The islands' tropical climate dictated clothing styles and materials. Natural fibers were loosely woven in sheer fabrics that allowed the body to breathe. Headdresses were used for protection from the hot sun. Traditional garment types such as men's loincloths (*babag*) and women's wraparound skirts (*tapis*) were not tailored, but simply wrapped around the body in a prescribed manner. The arrival of the Spanish conquistadors in the 16th century unleashed historical processes that precipitated ruptures between the majority population in the central lowlands of Luzon and the Visayas, who converted to Christianity, and the minority groups in northern Luzon and Mindanao who fiercely resisted Western imperialism. While non-Christian communities preserved their precolonial—shall we say, “Asian”—modes of dress, the Christianized populations of the central lowlands developed a hybrid fashion synthesizing Eastern and Western elements, paralleling the structural East-West syncretism of the emerging *mestizo* society. [•08] There are also descriptions of Visayans who were completely “clothed” in tattoos; the more tattoos adorned the body, the more valiant the individual. Thus, body adornment announced one's group affiliation, status and identity.

Clothing in the 19th Century

Travel accounts by Europeans in the 19th century and contemporaneous watercolor paintings that portray the island peoples and their costumes allow a reconstruction of garment types associated with specific ethnic affiliations, occupations and political positions. Export watercolor paintings by 19th-century Filipino artists such as Damian Domingo provide valuable visual documentation of 19th-century central lowland attire. Elite women are portrayed wearing tailored, ankle-length skirts made from locally woven cotton, abaca, silk or similar imported fabrics from China and India.

It is not difficult to discern convergences that this basic colonial ensemble shares with precolonial clothing. As mentioned earlier, the precolonial woman traditionally wears a long skirt and a loose, long-sleeved blouse, while men wear coordinated two-piece garments. Gold accessories indicate their high status. Despite changes in form, the underlying structure dictating appropriate usage persisted through time. As in autochthonous precolonial society, hybridized colonial clothing

08 | The legal economic and social classifications of the different types of *mestizo* (literally “mixed breed”) in 19th-century Philippines cannot be adequately addressed here. I note simply that social and economic distinctions were made between those of mixed Spanish and local *indio* parents in contrast to mixed Chinese and *indio* parents, who occupied a lower rank in the social hierarchy. The non-hybrid *indio* inhabited the bottom register.

was a strategy of acquiring and affirming one's position and power.

Domesticating Fashion

Despite the syncretism of Asian and European sensibilities permeating the emerging "traditional" attire in the central Philippine lowlands, foreign forms were domesticated with the use of indigenous materials suitable for the tropical environment. In lieu of the heavier fabrics in cooler countries, blouses (*baro*) utilized natural fibers from local plants such as pineapple and banana, woven into delicate gauze generically called *nipis*—literally meaning "thin" or "sheer." In contrast, ankle-length skirts called *saya* were of thicker fabric, usually imported plaids from India.

This basic two-piece ensemble changed over time relative to fashion trends in Europe and America. In many of the illustrations, women are portrayed wearing rosaries and scapulars around their necks, bearing witness to widespread conversion to Catholicism. These Christian markers of faith displaced and disguised the persistent tradition of wearing apotropaic amulets. I argue that these visual hybridities, while overtly Western or Christian in appearance, effectively disguise the "culturally insistent" structure of precolonial beliefs in complex interweavings of "cosmetic" and structural hybridities. Men holding political office were conspicuously clothed in hybrid fashion, wearing the Napoleonic costume or loose, embroidered silk trousers probably imported from China, paired with the native *baro* worn under a tailored European jacket [FIG.1].

The syncretistic fusion of Chinese, Indian and European elements in the central lowlands is echoed in transnational transformations going on elsewhere in the region. In a masterful blend of social history and ethnography, James F. Warren describes the hybrid attire of the Sulu chief in the southern Philippines, whose wealth and power were based on the careful regulation of global and local trade in the Sulu Sea:

—
He is dressed in high fashion; a head cloth of Bengal manufacture, a brightly colored Chinese silk jacket, satin pants and several splendid kris, which were a reflection of his economic power and high status. [109]

—
In the Islamicized Sulu zone, the pronounced transnational inflection derived from cultural crossings with country traders from Bengal,



FIG.1
Watercolor image of elite officials wearing embroidered silk trousers by Jose Honorato Lozano, 1850, Ayala Museum Collection

American mariners from New England, and merchant adventurers from Europe. [10] Analogously in the Christianized central lowlands, the Chinese trade network combined with the Manila-Acapulco Galleon Trade that extended to Europe via Mexico and Peru gave birth to the hybrid postcolonial.

Clothing and Power

—
As we stalk the postcolonial briskly, we may indeed ask: what was the cultural-political fate of this indigenous elite as the great territorial imperialisms began to be dismantled, and the period of decolonization began?

In the new nations, they had a strong hand in fashioning a new cultural identity.

Gayatri Spivak [11]

—
Colonized peoples regard their colonizers with ambivalence. In the Philippines, the colonized elite vacillated between accommodation and resistance. The deliberate appropriation by elite men of Western-style clothing signified complicity as a means to power. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1863 made it easier to keep abreast of fashion trends in the West. Faster water transportation, the use of steamships for international travel, and an open economy encouraged more contact with American and English traders who brought in the fruits of the Industrial Revolution. Machine-made products, especially textiles and threads, became accessible. In turn, exports of sugar and *abaca rope* (Manila hemp) lifted the Philippine economy. New wealth created an upper middle class among *indio* and Chinese *mestizo* merchants and landowners. Women of means followed the silhouette of current Western fashion. Although bustles were never adopted, ladies's studio photographs show that some of the well-to-do wore imported clothing from Europe. [12]

The end of the 19th century marked the turn-over of the Philippine colony from Spain to the United States in 1898. By then, many of the male elite were wearing European and American-style business suits. Some historians have interpreted this adoption of Western fashion as a bid for political equality. [13]

The local *barong tagalog* remained popular, as did the *camisa de chino* (literally, "shirt of the Chinese"), a light shirt without collar or cuffs. The 19th-

10 | James F. Warren, 194.

11 | Gayatri Spivak, 359.

12 | Castro in Florina H. Capistrano-Baker and Sandra Castro, forthcoming.

13 | See, for example, Minas Rocas and Louise Edwards.

14 | Castro in Florina H. Capistrano-Baker and Sandra Castro, forthcoming.

15 | See Sandra Niessen *et al*, *passim* for insightful discussions of the dichotomy between “fashion” and “anti-fashion.”



FIG.2
Example of *terno*, 1929, from
Philippine Costume by J. Moreno
(Manila, 1995)

century male *baro* was the prototype for the *barong tagalog* which eventually became the national attire for men. As the first president of the new Commonwealth of the Philippines from 1935 to 1944, Manuel L. Quezon wore the American business suit as well as the *barong tagalog* for official gatherings, manifesting a hybrid political strategy. Late Victorian styles filtered into the Philippines by way of America. Accordingly, the *baro't saya* assumed the silhouette of late Victorian dresses. The bodice was shaped closer to the body. As the colonial government introduced the American public school system and the English language, Western influences became even more pervasive. The American-style ankle- or knee-length dress increasingly replaced the floor-length *baro't saya* as daily wear. Print and audio-visual media, especially movies, popularized Hollywood stars and their fashion styles. From 1908 until the late 1920s, a beauty pageant was held at an annual event known as the Manila Carnival. Photo postcards of the Carnival Queens of the 1920s and 1930s portray young Filipinas with short waved hair, silk skirts with long trains, tulle overskirts and the *baro* with flatter and shorter, sleeves. Instead of the local *abaca*, a machine-made Swiss net fabric substituted as material for the *baro*. Printed motifs on the imported fabrics used for skirts were cut and appliquéd to the blouse to match the skirt. In the 1920s, *terno* (literally a “matching set”) referred to the new form of *baro't saya* with the short, flat “butterfly” sleeves, and a repeating, matching pattern decorating the entire garment [FIG.2]. Many of the *ternos* from this period acquired the silhouettes of slinky gowns from Hollywood films with the bias cut popularized by the French designer Madeleine Vionnet. [14] Later, the designer Ramon Valera converted the *terno* into a one-piece evening gown which eventually became the standard for the next several decades. The new *terno* with detachable sleeves allowed women to wear something distinctly “Filipino” asserting nationality while keeping abreast of the latest Western styles—thus hybridizing “fashion” and “anti-fashion.” [15] Interestingly enough, American colonials in the islands selectively appropriated iconic symbols of Philippine identity in reverse phenomenon. In her unconventional analysis of gender / power politics, Elizabeth Mary Holt calls attention to the appropriation of traditional Filipina dress by the white American colonial. Holt submits that cultural cross-dressing was a strategy of power by which desirable

qualities associated with Filipinas were appropriated by American women without forfeiting their dominant position as colonizers:

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For a brief time, dressed as Filipinas, white American women could abandon their traditional role in colonial society by wearing clothes that signified, not only romance and excitement but also danger [...] Attired in this manner they trapped the essence of a feminized colony enjoying transgressive pleasure without forfeiture of their position in the colonial hierarchy. [16]

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(Re)Inventing Tradition

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... in signifying the present, something comes to be repeated, relocated, and translated in the name of tradition... Homi K. Bhabha [17]

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As the Philippines moved toward independence (1946), the need to assert a national identity for the newly imagined nation employed and deployed “traditional” dress to visualize nationality. President Ramon Magsaysay (in office, 1953–57), known for his patriotism and compassion for the masses, is generally credited for popularizing the use of the local *barong tagalog*. The garment was officially declared the national attire for men by presidential decree in the 1970s.

The woman’s *terno* continued to follow the footsteps of Western fashion. The open neckline and butterfly sleeves acquired a tiered skirt at one time and a pouf skirt at another. As First Lady from the 1960s to the 1980s, Imelda Marcos appropriated the *terno* as her signature look, wearing it to almost all formal gatherings. Wives of important government officials followed suit. After 21 years under the government of Imelda’s husband, Ferdinand, the use of the *terno* waned after the People Power revolution ousted them in 1986. It had come to symbolize a stigmatized political affiliation.

In the 21st century, philanthropist Bea Zobel de Ayala Jr. leads the movement to revive the *terno*’s popularity. Designers competed in asserting nationality through increasingly fantastic hybrid styles that incorporate “ethnic” (connoting “non-Christian”) motifs from the highlands of northern Luzon or the Islamic cultures of Mindanao. Attempts to achieve

16 | Elizabeth Mary Holt, 70.

17 | Homi K. Bhabha (1995), 207.