

authenticity through ethnicity are expressed in eclectic combinations of the sheer embroidered baro typical of the Christianized lowlands with a woven Maranao or Maguindanao skirt from the Islamic south. This strategy is not infrequently used by couturier Jose Moreno, such as his 1980s design for Philippine Airlines stewardesses meant to entice tourists with feminized re-invented forms [FIG.3].

Despite the continuing hybridization of the *baro't saya* and the *barong tagalog*, there is the inevitable return to “tradition”—a return to the “classic” lines of the 19th-century *baro't saya*, or the vintage 20th-century *terno*. This repertoire of re-formulated “traditional” garments is used during special occasions specifying the “Filipiniana” dress code. The colonial rules of proper dress according to rank or official position, however, no longer apply. Fashion has been “democratized” as re-interpreted, hybridized “traditional” styles are appropriated by groups not normally entitled to them, breaking barriers of class, gender and ethnicity in a less circumscribed society that looks upon an idealized 19th century with admiration and nostalgia.

In the postmodern era, hybridity becomes a strategy of self-representation in the re-invention and re-negotiation of tradition. How, then, does one locate authenticity in Philippine culture, and specifically, in Philippine dress? Are the phantasmagoric hybridities of the 20th and 21st centuries—such as the T'boli inspired, eclectic gown designed by Jose Moreno for Miss Philippines that won Best National Costume in the 1994 Miss Universe Pageant—less authentic than the similarly hybridized colonial and precolonial forms? Or is acceptance of such bizarre hybrids consistent with the democratized, postmodern spirit? Does one return to the “ethnic purity” of the primitive, clad only in tattoos? Does “ethnic purity” exist today? This conundrum brings to mind Spivak’s reassuring assertion that, as the substance of cultural inscriptions, “programs of cultural self-representation are never correct or incorrect.” [•18] One could also seek comfort in Bhabha’s tirade against the notion of “purity”:

—

The very concepts of homogenous national cultures [...] process of redefinition. The hideous extremity of Serbian nationalism proves that the very idea of a pure, “ethnically cleansed” national identity can only be achieved through the death, literal and figurative, of the complex interweavings of history, and the culturally contingent



FIG.3
Design for Philippine Airlines
stewardesses by J. Moreno, 1980s,
from *Philippine Costume* by J. Moreno
(Manila, 1995)

borderlines of modern nationhood [...] there is overwhelming evidence of a more transnational and translational sense of the hybridity of imagined communities. [19]

For, if we attempt to rid ourselves of the “demon” of hybridity, peeling away the many layers superposed upon the other like so many translucent skins of onion in search of the purity of its core, are we not left with nothing?

Selected References

- Homi K. Bhabha, *Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).
- Homi K. Bhabha, “Cultural Diversity and Culture Differences,” *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*, B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths, and H. Tiffin, eds. (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).
- Salvador Bernal, G.R. Encanto, and Francis L. Escalier, *Patterns for the Filipina Dress from the Traje de Mestiza to the Terno (1890s–1960s)* (Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines, 1992).
- Florina H. Capistrano-Baker and Sandra Castro, “Clothing in the Central Philippine Lowlands,” Encyclopedia entry in *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*, Jasleen Dhamija, South and Southeast Asia volume editor, Joanne Eicher, editor-in-chief, forthcoming.
- Florina H. Capistrano-Baker, Pieter Keurs, and Sandra Castro, *Embroidered Multiples: 18th–19th Century Philippine Costumes from the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, The Netherlands* (Makati City: Royal Netherlands Embassy and Ayala Foundation, Inc. 2007).
- Sandra Castro, *Nipis* (Manila: Intramuros Administration, 1990).
- G. Coedès, *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, W.F. Vella, ed., S.B. Cowing, trans. (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1968).
- J. Moreno, *Philippine Costume* (Manila: J. Moreno Foundation, 1995).
- Sandra Niessen, Ann Marie Leshkovich, and Carla Jones, eds., *Re-Orienting Fashion: The Globalization of Asian Dress* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2003).
- Elizabeth Mary Holt, *Colonizing Filipinas: Nineteenth-century Representations of the Philippines in Western Historiography* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2002).
- Carlos Quirino and Mauro García, *The Manners, Customs, and Beliefs of the Philippine Inhabitants of Long Ago: Being Chapters of ‘A Late 16th Century Manila Manuscript,’ Transcribed, Translated, and Annotated* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1961).
- Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450–1680* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988).
- Mina Roces and Louise Edwards, *The Politics of Dress in Asia and the Americas* (Eastbourne, UK: Sussex Academic Press, 2007).
- Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward the History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).
- Nicanor Tiongson, “Costumes,” *CCP Encyclopedia of Philippine Art* (Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines, 1998), 88–93.
- James F. Warren, *Iranun and Balangigi: Globalization, Maritime Raiding and the Birth of Ethnicity* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2002).

An Inquiry into the “Modern” Through Drawing Nara Yoshitomo, Empathy, and Localization

Hosaka Kenjiro

Assistant Curator, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo



Hosaka Kenjiro

01 | “A Perspective on Contemporary Art 6: Emotional Drawing” was co-organized by the Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, the Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, and the Japan Foundation in two cities, Tokyo (August 26, 2008–October 13, 2008) and Kyoto (November 18, 2008–December 12, 2008). This exhibition was organized as an outcome of the “Asian Museum Curators’ Conference” that has been held since 2005. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the initiator of this conference, Furuichi Yasuko of the Japan Foundation.

02 | The following artists were exhibited: Leiko Ikemura, Amal Kenawy, Avish Khebrehzadeh, Kim Jungwook, Jose Legaspi, Nalini Malani, Nara Yoshitomo, Julião & Manuel Ocampo, S. Teddy D., Sakagami Chiyuki, Pinaree Sanpitak, Mithu Sen, Aditi Singh, Shooshie Sulaiman, Tsuji Naoyuki, and Ugo Untoro.

I would like to start with a little art world gossip.

First story. In 2003, Murakami Takashi’s sculpture *Miss Ko*² (1997) sold for 567,500 US dollars at Christie’s in New York. This was the highest price ever paid for a work by a living Japanese artist. In 2008, again at Sotheby’s, his *My Lonesome Cowboy* (1998) brought approximately 15,160,000 US dollars, breaking his own record.

Second story. In 2007, 3 drawings by Nara Yoshitomo shown by Christie’s were found to be forgeries. The estimated auction price was somewhere between 7,000 to 20,000 pounds.

Third story. In 2008, Murakami Takashi brought the case before Tokyo District Court, in which one of the owners of his work had breached a contract by attempting to put his work up for auction at Christie’s. The contract forbade resale within 10 years in order to prevent speculation.

Fourth story. In 2008, at an exhibition opening, Nara Yoshitomo was seen making drawings while signing autographs, mostly in response to the request of the visitors. People around him wondered if this was the right thing to do.

I was one of those who was there and shared the anxiety, because I was the curator of the exhibition, which was called “Emotional Drawing.” During the course of preparing for the exhibition, I was surprised more than ever when I learned about the economic value of his work. [•01]

“Emotional Drawing,” co-organized with the Japan Foundation, presented contemporary drawings by 16 artists from Asia and the Middle East. Watercolors, installations, and animation were shown along with drawings in the narrow sense. [•02]

The works presented in this exhibition created an emotional relationship between the art and viewers. Murakami Takashi was not included, as his works obviously did not match the concept. Therefore, there may be a question as to why I decided to compare him with Nara and in this

presentation.

I felt that a comparison between the two would shed light on a special characteristic of Nara's art that is relevant to the present age. This characteristic, as I see it, is a function that can, or should, be performed by drawing.

By the way, this symposium is held to discuss a theme related to Asian art, but the functionalities of drawing that I am going to examine here should not be limited to those in the geographic region of Asia. But during the survey that I made to prepare for the exhibition I found that the desire to bring out this aspect of art is still strongly rooted in a number of Asian countries. What is it? It is the function of eliciting *Einfühlung* (feeling into) or, as it has been translated into English, "empathy." [03] I have chosen the example of Nara Yoshitomo's drawings in order to show how new attention is being given to the arousal of empathy, a unique effect of art. In this discussion I would like to show how drawing as a *model*, in other words, a structure that enables the medium to continuously seek a renewing relationship between the "individual," the ultimatum of the localized entity, and the ego of the Other, could indicate the role of the locality in the globalized age.

Let me go back now to the reports with which I began. In spite of the fact that Nara is a famous artist for whom drawing is a major form of expression, he still makes drawings for people while signing autographs. This shows that his attitude toward creating art makes it difficult to manage his work effectively. This attitude plainly contrasts with that of Murakami, who has established a large workshop and manages the business of selling his work very efficiently, even putting anti-speculation clauses into purchasing contracts.

In one of his projects during his solo exhibition at the Yokohama Museum of Art in 2001, "I DON'T MIND, IF YOU FORGET ME," [FIG.1] people sent Nara handmade stuffed dolls and he sent messages with his drawing to them in reply. [04] Nara's attitude is such that it allows space for works with an unspecified provenance. His practice obviously leads to the possibility of forgeries. On the other hand, we should note that through these actions, he keeps his words, "I draw any things that I like in any way that I like."

As has been shown in this symposium, the price of an artwork is a factor

03 | The concept of *Einfühlung*, or empathy, is taken from the classic writing of Theodor Lipps, who attempted to understand aesthetic experience based on psychology. In relation to this symposium, it is interesting to point out that Wilhelm Worringer points to the fact that Eastern art (or its characteristically decorative art) is interesting, because although he cannot "empathize" with it as he would with Western art, he could appreciate it as a form to which he responds with abstract impulse. (sourced and summarized from the Japanese translations of Theodor Lipps's *Ästhetik: Psychologie des Schönen und der Kunst* [Sato Tsunehisa, trans., *Bigaku* (Tokyo: Shunjusha, 1936)] and Wilhelm Worringer's *Abstraktion und Einfühlung: Ein Beitrag zur Stilpsychologie* [Kusanagi Masao, trans., *Chusho to Kanjo Inyu: Toyo Geijutsu to Seiyō Geijutsu*, Iwanami Bunko (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1953)])

04 | Nara Yoshitomo + Murakami Takashi "Onsen Taidan (Zenpen) Itsumademo Owaranai Natsuyasumi no tamen [Talking in the Hot Spring (Part 1) A Summer Holiday that Never Comes to an End]," *Bijutsu Techo*, November 2001, 18 (the issue with a special feature on Murakami Takashi). It is worthwhile to note that Nara reveals as follows: "I send a hand-written thank you postcard with my drawing on each one, to stay equal with the person who sent me the stuffed doll. I wanted to achieve even communication, without one being on the top or under the other one, through my action." (italized by the author)

that certainly helps to affirm the status of an artist. That is one reason that I mentioned several examples of prices at the beginning of this presentation.

The works that bring high prices, however, are mainly paintings, sculpture, and installations. In other words, they are usually fairly large in size. Some small works, like Damien Hirst's *For the Love of God* (2007), bring a high hammer price, but this is usually because they are constructed of precious materials. Most drawings are small and quite simple in structure, made with nothing but paper and pencil. Even if they are put up for auction, they do not break any records.

So what happens to drawings? Unfortunately, they do not create a sensation in the world. They exist quietly. Considering, however, that drawings are made not only as studies for paintings, sculptures, and installations, but also in the conceptual stages of musical composition, novels, and films, one wonders why drawing is regarded so lightly? Let us listen to the voice of Gary Garrels, formerly chief curator of drawings at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in a quote from his introduction to the catalogue of "Drawing Now: Eight Propositions," held at MoMA Queens from 2002 to 2003.

—
The strong presence of drawing in contemporary art remains relatively unrecognized, because drawing often stay in the gallery's drawers and backrooms, or may not even leave the artists' studios. [05]
—

The appearance of the word "gallery" here is very interesting because it plainly recognizes the role played by galleries in the art scene since the 1990s. One might even say that it suggests a clear awareness that the existence of art is not fully realized unless it is marketed as a product rather than simply presented as a work of art produced by an artist. It should be noted, however, that intentionally or not, drawings are comparatively free from playing on its value in economic exchange like some other art forms.

I have alluded here to the unfairly low status given to drawings, but of course there have been times when they were given more academic and art historical attention than others. During the 20th century, for example, there were three periods, the 1920s, the 1960s, and the 1990s,



FIG.1
Exhibition view of "Yoshitomo
Nara: I DON'T MIND, IF YOU
FORGET ME.", Yokohama
Museum of Art, 2001

when drawings were seen as important. More specifically, drawings were noticed in connection with French Surrealism in the 1920s, with German Socialist Pop in the 1960s and 1970s, and with subcultural trends in Japan and the West Coast of the United States in the 1990s.

Art critic Matsui Midori has accurately observed and described the arts of these three periods as radical manifestations of the “unconscious,” “mass imagination,” and “the concerns of youth.” She points out that the drawings of each period were intermittent attempts to restore categories that had been marginalized by a discourse developed to justify avant-garde art. [106] They restored the margins; or, more precisely, they revived those that were forced to be marginalized. But why was it necessary to do so? It may be that there was a need to criticize aesthetic judgments based on “analysis of pure form,” a rationale by which the avant-garde was striving to justify themselves with some vehemence. Such criticism was necessary because art has another function; that is, arriving at spiritual ideas through the sense of vision. This function might be described as anti-aesthetic, as I will discuss later, and it is the function that Nara attempted to carry out in his drawings. It is the function of eliciting empathy through the projection of emotion, in the process creating a new relationship between the work and the viewer, or between the artist and the viewer as individuals.

However, the academic reception of Nara in the West has focused on finding the *non*-aesthetic aspects of this work rather than recognizing its *anti*-aesthetic function.

Let us look at the way Nara was treated in “Drawing Now: Eight Propositions” at MoMA Queens in New York. The eight propositions were sections structuring the exhibition: “Science and Art, Nature and Artifice,” “Ornament and Crime: Toward Decoration,” “Drafting and Architecture,” “Drawing Happiness,” “Mental Maps and Metaphysics,” “Popular Culture and National Culture,” “Comics and Other Subcultures,” “Fashion, Likeness, and Allegory.”

Where was Nara placed? It was not in “Drawing Happiness” or “Popular Culture” but “Comics and Other Subcultures” along with Murakami Takashi and Barry McGee.

The idea to combine “Nara with comic” or “Nara with subculture” is probably derived from the images of little boys and girls with large eyes that he frequently draws. However, the images in his work are not based



FIG.2

Nara Yoshitomo, *untitled*, 2008
© Yoshitomo Nara, Courtesy:
Tomio Koyama Gallery, Tokyo

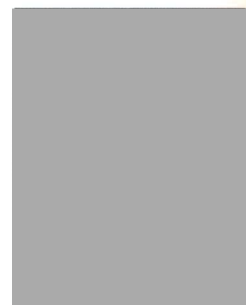


FIG.3

Nara Yoshitomo, *untitled*, 2004
© Yoshitomo Nara, Courtesy:
Tomio Koyama Gallery, Tokyo

06 | Matsui Midori “Hirakareta Seishin no Utsuwa [An Open Mental Vessel],” *Bijutsu Techo*, April 2000, 63–71 (the issue with a special feature on drawings).

07 | One of the portraits that Nara had produced over and over is that of "Hinagiku," which was featured as illustration in Yoshimoto Banana's novel *Hinagiku no Jinsei* [The Life of Hinagiku]. *Daisy*, the epoch-making portrait, was conceived as fruition of "Hinagiku." On *Daisy*, Nara states: "She shows no anger, but shows something sublime. Have confidence! This is a good piece!" For discussion on the lineage leading to "Hinagiku" within the broad context of art, including film and punk rock, see Azumaya Takashi's "Playing with Death," *Bijutsu Techo*, July 2000, 65–69 (the issue with special feature on Nara Yoshitomo). For discussion on "sublime" in Nara's work, see Goda Masato's "Furueru Te to Chisana Suko: Nara Sakuhi ni Miru Kyokai no Tetsugaku [Shaking Hands and Small Sublime: The Philosophy of Border in Nara's Artwork]," *Bijutsu Techo*, December 2001, 74–78 (the issue is a supplementary reader on Nara Yoshitomo).

08 | To acquire a sense of non-distinction as a result of empathy, in effect, could encourage reflection on the way of thinking that supposes the subject-object opposition. This is discussed by Omori Shozo in *Shin-Shikaku Shin-ron* [A New Theory on Vision] (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1982) and *Tokuwa Nagarezu* [The Time Stays Still] (Tokyo: Seidosha, 1996). Tsurumi Shunsuke points out that since Nara renders children faces with some fluid muscle showing on the surface, the portraits have expressions that cannot be easily identified as "being happy" or "being dissatisfied," and the "expression of the subconscious is more apparent than those of the adults." This discussion is recorded in Tsurumi Shunsuke + Nara Yoshitomo "Taidan: Hitoride Arukeru Hito ni Narukoto [Dialogue: To Become an Adult Who Could Walk on his Own]" *Bijutsu Techo*, December 2001, 104–112 (the issue is a supplementary reader on Nara Yoshitomo).

on any particular characters [FIG.2]. With the exception of a very few examples, he does not repeat the same figures. Therefore, it is necessary to criticize this view to a certain extent. [07] I would also like to point out is that the figures in his work are rendered in a typological manner rather than being made into cartoon characters. In this respect they resemble the figures in religious paintings.

Just as there are various ways of depicting angels, Nara's prolific number of boys and girls are rendered in a variety of ways [FIG.3]. Their bodies, hands, and feet are freely enlarged or reduced to fit the size of the picture. Individualized as well as typologically categorized, they are awkwardly self-sufficient in the pictorial space. Viewers put their feelings into these boys and girls, projecting their own childhood or youth on them. As a result, feelings of empathy arise. They recall a time when hatred and love were unified, words and music were undifferentiated, and there was no distinction between sense and nonsense. These phenomena come back to them in their originally undifferentiated condition...and this is exactly what makes experiences of Nara's drawings so unique. [08]

Just the same, Nara does not make his art with the aim of creating empathy with others. In fact, the reverse is true. To quote the artist:

—
I try hard to entirely eliminate any awareness of "you." The reason is that I do not want to add a main dish to the meal. If I am thinking about you, I will provide various services in the picture. I try not to do this. Unless I take this approach, my true self will not come out. When I think about "you" or "all of you," I cannot work with my own hands. [09]

—
Because Nara uses such casual words as "main dish" or "service," we may not fully appreciate what he is trying to say, that it is necessary to recognize that there is an absolute distinction between self and other, a distinction that causes the other to disappear. By strictly recognizing this distinction, Nara shows a desire to restore the primary relationship between self and other.

Nara's drawings appeared in the 1990s, the same decade as the new aesthetics of Gernot Böme and Wolfgang Welsch, which were based on sensory perception and opposed to German Idealism. The timing was not

a coincidence. In that period, I believe theorists and artists shared the view that art is a peculiar, artificial thing that can make people feel something undifferentiated, keeping it in an undifferentiated state, before it conveys or demonstrates anything in particular. [•10]

Because Nara's drawings are always open to this sort of new and fresh relationship, they are sometimes felt as necessary even by people who do not ordinarily need art. In this sense, they can be described as "objects" rather than "artworks." The word "object" is made up of *ob*, meaning "in front of," and *jacere*, meaning "thrown," so it means something thrown out in front of a person. Nara made another bold pronouncement that should be understood in relation to this condition of his work:

—
I believe that the concept of what society calls "art" is something that I can completely ignore. [•11]
—

Nara Yoshitomo makes drawings from a point of view that is suspicious of the concept of art as such. His drawings, which always continue to be "objects," cast doubt on the project of modernity, which is giving meaning to everything and stripping the objectivity from the object through rational intelligence. This issue is not limited to the example of Nara's art but has a wider application.

Drawings since 1990, as represented by the work of Nara, have aimed at carrying out a simple function in the society into which they are thrown. They have often attempted an "anti-oedipal" escape from economic activity. Also, by retaining an extremely personal quality, they have aimed at staying on the level of objects of empathy rather than objects of interpretation.

Their works, which in a sense reject interpretations, are criticized as "weak," exactly for that reason that they "try to retain themselves to be objects of empathy." Also, as is demonstrated in the case study by Theodor Lipps, the understanding that a self exists in others is made possible by the projection of emotion rather than a mental operation like analogical inference. Furthermore, it was no other than art that brought Lipps to this understanding (the self-other issue turned more radical after then).

Finally, I would like to consider the role that might be played in Asia by the art of drawing, which seeks empathy in this way.

09 | Nara Yoshitomo + Murakami Takashi, *Bijutsu Techo*, November 2001, 21. See note 04.

10 | Omori Shozo reached an understanding of *Tenchi Ujo* (nature is also emotional) in 1996. "To put it simply, the world is emotional, as in *Tenchi Ujo*. Humans exist only as a small foreground that connects to the heaven and the earth, sharing their emotions. Such emotions are, in fact, what we understand as those feelings that we 'keep to ourselves,'" *Asahi Shimbun*, Evening Edition, November 12, 1996.

11 | Nara Yoshitomo + Murakami Takashi, 20.

I organized an exhibition entitled “Emotional Drawing,” which presented drawings from Asia and the Middle East [FIG.4]. The title did not specifically refer to these geographic regions because I wanted to avoid the use of the word “Asia” to be used as an adjective that describes a certain formal or conceptual characteristics, something that happens too frequently.

Since the 1990s, there has been an increase in the number of artists who specialize in drawing, and many of them are from areas like Asia, South America, and Africa which lie outside of the West, narrowly defined. Laura Hoptman, curator of the “Drawing Now” exhibition at MoMA Queens in 2002, published an article titled “Drawing is a Noun” in 2000. While paying tribute to the words of Richard Serra, “Drawing is a verb,” Hoptman declared the independence of drawings as works of art. The artists she referred to were all non-Western, with the exception of Raymond Pettibon from the West Coast of the United States. They included William Kentridge of South Africa, Barry McGee, a Chinese-American, Gabriel Orozco of Mexico, and Toba Khedoori, born in Sydney of Iranian parents, among others. From this lineup, it is possible to imagine a story of a peripheral force becoming the primary motivation for making drawing into a noun or a story of marginal artists moving toward drawing rather than painting with the same result. But this is the story of the creator. What about the audience? This



FIG.4

Exhibition view of “A Perspective on Contemporary Art 6: Emotional Drawing,”
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, 2008 Photo by Kioku Keizo

question leads us to a different understanding. In the Asian art scene, where the institution of the art museum is not fully mature, the alternative spaces are showing rapid growth, I feel that making direct access in and experience of art is still highly relevant. In this region, artists and viewers are not concerned about whether art is a noun or a verb, but both have a strong interest in how a drawing functions for them personally. In other words, "Drawing is a function." This is one of the advantages of drawing (or art in general) in Asia.

Of course, we might be concerned that this localizing attitude, privileging a certain region such as Asia, might lead to exclusionism. In this context, one is reminded of the English sociologist and geographer Doreen Massey's suggestion that this can be prevented by changing the community's basic way of thinking from essentialism to nominalism. [12] With be bold and succinct, Massey says that we should look at the characteristics of communities as acquired rather than inborn. In a nominalist community, identity is not maintained in the same way as in an essentialist community. It is not guaranteed. It is not overtly acknowledged. A nominalist community is entirely reformulated as a relational space with all purposes eliminated. And this space is a relative product of the will of each individual to make this relationship continue. It is often pointed out that Massey's theories have a utopian character, but I do not believe that the story they tell is especially fantastic for people who know Nara's work. Because, as Nara's works indicate, drawing, leads to empathy, enabling continuous update of the relationship between the ultimately localized entity of the self, and the ego of the Other. In this way, drawing is a critical model in today's globalizing world.

Translated by Stanley N. Anderson

12 | Doreen Massey, "Power-geometry and a progressive sense of place," J. Bird, B. Curtis, T. Putnam, G. Robertson and L. Tickner, eds., *Mapping the Futures: Local Cultures, Global Change* (London: Routledge), 59–69.

The Politics of the “Decorative”

Tanaka Masayuki

Associate Professor, College of Art and Design, Musashino Art University



Tanaka Masayuki

The title of my presentation today is “The Politics of the ‘Decorative,’” but what I plan to discuss are two tendencies one notices regarding particularly decorative expression in recent “Asian art” (a concept which is itself obviously open to debate in the context of this symposium). The first is the tendency to think of decorativeness as being peculiar to a culture, in other words, the tendency to see it as linked closely to the traditions, heritage and assets of one culture (what I will refer to as being “closed”). The other tendency, which is its opposite, uses decorativeness as something that severs associations with a particular culture, breaks down restrictive borders and, thus, creates a situation of openness. As an example of the closed tendency I will look at Murakami Takashi’s concept of “super flat,” while as an example of the open tendency I will look at the work of Pakistani painter Shahzia Sikander.

One of the defining characteristics of Japanese art is “decorativeness”—thus argued the famous art historian Yashiro Yukio. In the lecture entitled “Sekai ni okeru nihon bijutsu no ichi [The place of Japanese art in the world]” he conducted in May, 1935, he stated:

—
I think the key underlying trait of paintings in Japan was its remarkable decorativeness [···] The flat and decorative depictions, which were charming and full of feeling, were one of the wonderful and unique characteristics of Japanese art. [·01]
—

Why is Japanese art “flat and decorative”? Yashiro seeks the reason in “the nature of the Japanese land.” Japanese nature, he says, is “colorful,” and “Japanese art again and again demonstrates this decorative quality due to its development within this decorative nature.” [·02]

As the most archetypal example of this kind of decorativeness, Yashiro discusses Ogata Korin’s *Iris*, from a scene of the *Tales of Ise*. He praises the

01 | Yashiro Yukio, *Sekai ni Okeru Nihon Bijutsu no Ichi* [The Position of Japanese Art in the World], Kodansha Gakujutsu Bunko (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1988), 137.

02 | Yashiro, 138–139.

work as follows:

—
Who besides the Japanese could have produced such a bold composition, could have taken so daring and luxuriously decorative an approach as to fill a pair of gold screens with just blue flowers and green leaves? [·03]
—

In other words, he says decorativeness is connected so closely with Japan's nature that it is also linked inextricably with the Japanese people. Extending Yashiro's argument, decorativeness is something that transcends Japanese art and becomes, in fact, an element of the national identity.

In order to bring Japan and Japanese art's decorativeness into relief, Yashiro sets up several dualisms. For example, in a comparison with Western art, Yashiro contrasts Japanese decorativeness with a Western "realness" or "realism." To borrow Yashiro's words, Western art constitutes a "depiction of nature made with profundity and seriousness; it confronts nature head-on and penetrates to its very core." [·04] He also compares Japanese ink painting with Chinese ink painting, saying Chinese works have a "depth and solemnity," "a sense of inscrutability like it is closed and inaccessible" that makes viewers feel "like they have glimpsed a dark, dark world devoid of color." The Japanese works, he continues, are "vibrant and dignified" in their color, "vivid and stylish." [·05] Many of you would have already noticed that in contrast to Japanese art's two-dimensionality "flatness," the "depth" and "profundity" of Western and Chinese art is emphasized. With this dualistic way of thinking, as in the cases of Japan versus the West or decorativeness versus realism, clear line is established between two opposing ideas and thus Japanese art—not to mention Japan and its people themselves—is brought into relief.

Japanese art might well be "flat and decorative." But it also goes without saying that decorativeness is not unique to Japan. Another example of particularly decorative art is that of Islam. It seems Yashiro himself realized this, writing that "the decorativeness and symbolism of Japanese art is not simply abstract decorativeness and symbolism like that of, for example, Arabian art. It is in fact connected extremely closely with

03 | Yashiro, 140.

04 | Yashiro, 139.

05 | Yashiro, 150.

06 | Yashiro, 156.

07 | Rémi Labrusse, "L'Épreuve de tanger," *Le Maroc de Matisse* (Paris: Gallimard, 1999), 32.

08 | Labrusse, 32.

09 | For example, we can consider the following dichotomies: art/decoration; high art/low art; art/kitsch; artist/craftsman; creative/repetitive; spiritual/material; autonomous/submissive; central/peripheral; Western/non-Western; civilized/primitive; cultural/natural; male/female, etc.

nature and arises out of a love for nature." [·06] He distinguishes the decorativeness of Islamic art from that of Japanese art by assessing whether they stem from nature. Personally, I think this assertion is deeply mistaken.

Now, in the West, from the end of the 19th century on, an anti-Naturalist form of expression developed reacting against realism. One example of an artist who rejected realistic depictions in favor of a flat decorative expression is the oft-cited Henri Matisse. Among his works are the particularly "flat and decorative," *Arab Café* (1913, State Hermitage Museum) and *The Painter's Family* (1911, State Hermitage Museum), and, as we are told often, it was Islamic art that most influenced these works. Exhibitions of Persian art were held in Paris in early 20th century, and it is with the Persian miniatures that Matisse's work is often connected. For example, it is argued that Matisse was inspired to fill *The Painter's Family* with plants and decorative motifs as a result of seeing the miniature *The First Meeting of Prince Houmay and Princess Houmayoun*, which is owned by the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. [·07]

Not only is it possible to sense the proximity of Islamic art in Matisse's *The Painter's Family*, but at the same time the work also refers to Cézanne's *Card Players*. [·08] In other words, the image is constructed as a fusion of elements from Cézanne and Islamic art. Personally, I get the feeling that the flow of modernism running from Cézanne through Matisse is pierced deeply by what you could call the wedge of Islamic artistic decorativeness. I believe in this work you can get a sense of the negotiation, or give-and-take or struggle that was taking place between Western modernism and the decorativeness of Islamic art.

Of course, if anything it was the suppression of decorativeness with which modernism developed over history. Decorativeness is associated with craftspeople more than artists, with traditional and imitative reproduction rather than creativity, with physicality rather than spirituality and with subordination to commerce rather than autonomy and freedom. Decorativeness is seen as an inessential evil, a crime. [·09] The issue of the decorativeness lurking in Matisse's work has been suppressed as a kind of inconvenient other, a impediment to the theory of purity. I would like to quote from Clement Greenberg, who (rather brusquely) discusses Matisse's later works using paper cut-outs, as follows:

[These cut-outs] are more truly pictorial than decorative, in spite of the fact that Matisse intended several of them to serve mainly decorative ends. [10]

The Pakistan-born Shahzia Sikander is perhaps an artist who is attempting to address this problem of the relationship between Western modernism and Islamic decorativeness today. [11] After entering the National College of Arts in Lahore in 1988, she studied the miniature technique. However, that is not to say that miniatures were respected in Pakistan as a traditional artistic technique or that their value as cultural heritage was even actively taught. According to Sikander, “miniature painting supposedly represented our heritage, yet we reacted to it with suspicion and ridicule. I had grown up thinking of it as kitsch.” [12] So, in a Pakistani art school where the teaching had probably been greatly influenced by Western modernism, miniatures were considered kitsch and old. They were nothing more than the kind of cheap paintings sold at souvenir shops to tourists. I think the fact that these miniature paintings were considered kitsch is very important. Sikander did not start studying miniatures as a culturally important technique related to her own heritage, and likewise she did not believe they would help



FIG. 1
Shahzia Sikander, *Perilous Order*,
1997, Whitney Museum of
American Art, New York

10 | Clement Greenberg, “Partisan Review ‘Art Chronicle: 1952,’” *Art and Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), 148, note 1. Greenberg’s passage is quoted in Norma Broude, “Miriam Schapiro and ‘Femmage’: Reflections on the Conflict between Decoration and Abstraction in Twentieth-Century Art,” Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, eds., *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 320. This article skillfully argues the relationship between modernism and decorativeness.

11 | See the following for Shahzia Sikander. Vishakha N. Desai, *Conversations with Traditions: Nilma Sheikh and Shabzia Sikander* (New York: Asia Society, 2001); Lynn M. Herbert, “Regarding Spirituality: Shahzia Sikander,” *Art 21: Art in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001), 93–99; Robert Mc Carthy, ed., “Miniaturizing Modernity: Shahzia Sikander in Conversation with Homi K. Bhabha,” Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, ed., *Alternative Modernities* (Duke University Press, 2001), 165–171; Fereshteh Daftari, “Beyond Islamic Roots—Beyond Modernism,” *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 43, Spring 2003, 175–186; Ian Berry and Jessica Hough, *Shahzia Sikander: Nemesis* (Saratoga Springs, NY: The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery, Skidmore College, 2004); Fereshteh Daftari, Homi K. Bhabha, and Orphan Pamuk, eds., *Without Boundary: Seventeen Ways of Looking* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2006); Séan Kissane and Homi K. Bhabha, eds., *Shabzia Sikander* (Milan: Chatra/Dublin: Irish Museum of Modern Art, 2007); *Contemporary Miniature Paintings from Pakistan* (Fukuoka: Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, 2004).

12 | Fereshteh Daftari, *Without Boundary: Seven Ways of Looking*, 14.

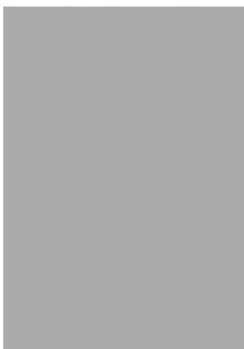


FIG.2

Shahzia Sikander, #1 from the series *51 Ways of Looking*, 2004, Private Collection

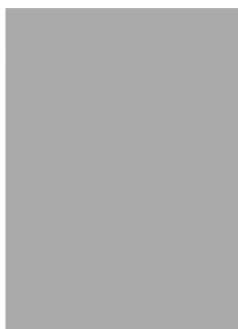


FIG.3

Shahzia Sikander, #2 from the series *51 Ways of Looking*, 2004, Private Collection

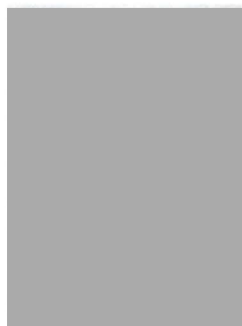


FIG.4

Shahzia Sikander, #3 from the series *51 Ways of Looking*, 2004, Private Collection

establish her identity. She was neither trying to preserve the technique for posterity, nor position herself within the history of Islamic art. She chose to incorporate the miniature technique into her own art for no other reason than that it was kitsch. In so far as she was trying to invert the value system, her choice was sufficiently defiant.

In order to receive postgraduate level education Sikander moved to America. As a result, her unlikely mixture of traditional Islamic art techniques with Western modernism became an even more important part of her art. Furthermore, miniature-like rendering becomes more than something that could simply “turn over the existing values.”

A good example is her work *Perilous Order* (1997, Whitney Museum of American Art) [FIG.1]. The central part of the painting is drawn with a decorative border in the way of a miniature. Also, around the miniature-esque and decorative border is a plane of color reminiscent of abstract painting within the Western modernism tradition. Over the entire surface of the painting is a grid of round dots. According to Sikander, these dots represent Minimalism because of their repetition of an identical form. The works in which the connection between Western modernism and decorativeness is most clearly (almost too clearly) addressed are the first three sheets in Sikander's *51 Ways of Looking* series. The first is an extremely simple work, with just a black rectangle painted in its center [FIG.2]. Anyone vaguely familiar with modern art will immediately recall the modern tradition running from Kasimir Malevich's *Black Square* (1914–15, State Tretyakov Gallery) through Ad Reinhardt and others' so-called black painting.

In the center of the second sheet there is a similar black rectangle [FIG.3]. However, in this work the rectangle is surrounded by a decorative border of organic motifs similar to those found in miniature paintings. The composition sees modernism in the center and decoration on the border. In the third work the same motif is repeated, but here the central black rectangle bleeds into the surrounding organic border, thus losing in part its geometric form [FIG.4].

The work can obviously be read as saying that decorativeness is encroaching on modernism. You might even say that by introducing decorativeness, which in theory would have been criminal or kitsch, Sikander is launching an attack on modernism. However, I think in so categorizing the work, one loses sight of an important point. The work (#3)

gives one the impression that the black plane of color and the decorative motif are blending with each other. I do not think it is the case that the decorative is simply being shown as triumphant over the modern.

What Sikander is doing is blurring the boundary between the two. She often repeats herself how important this is to her work process. Let's turn to the work *Flesby Weapons* (1997, collection of the artist) [FIG.5]. It looks unmistakably South Asian, religious maybe, like it's got something to do with a Hindu goddess of destruction. But, this goddess is wearing a veil of the type that an Islamic woman would wear. In other words, this is an image that renders a strange integration of the Muslim and the Hindu religions. Sikander's origins are in Pakistan, so she is a Muslim, while Hinduism—it goes without saying—is the religion of Pakistan's enemy, India. A goddess is depicted in the picture; in Hinduism goddesses are common, but in Islam they are inconceivable. The artist herself explains that the aim of the work is to question the very simplicity with which things are conceived of in dualities: Hinduism and Islam, Pakistan and India. As though to resist this division, this separation and drawing of boundaries, the strings attached to the goddess' feet are intertwined.

"The square is the expression of a dualist way of thought. Dualist ways of thought distinguish between stimulus and no stimulus, one and nothing." [13] These are the words of Malevich, but they describe well the very Western modernist way of thinking against which Sikander was resisting—in other words, the way of thinking whereby each genre is

13 | Rosalind Krauss, "Reading Pollock, Abstractly," *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, UK: MIT Press, 1986), 238.

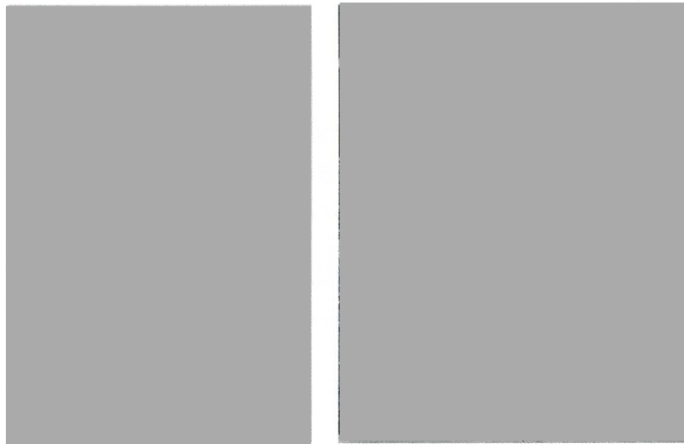


FIG.5 (left)
Shahzia Sikander, *Flesby Weapons*,
1997, Collection of the Artist

FIG.6 (right)
Shahzia Sikander, *Pleasure Pillars*,
2001, Private Collection

14 | Homi Bhabha uses the term “kinesis” to discuss mobility in Shikander’s work. See Homi K. Bhabha, “Beginning Again,” in Kissane and Bhabha, *Shahzia Sikander*, 35–41. See note 11.

made discrete so that there can be no mixing. Sikander’s deliberate obscuring of distinctions, divisions and boundaries occurs in a kind of hybrid or unifying way (different things are mixed together), as in *Fleshy Weapons*, but it also occurs in a more chaotic, mixed form of expression. *Pleasure Pillars* (2001, private collection) [FIG.6] is an example of this kind of work. Here dancing girls have been taken from miniatures and placed at the work’s four corners. Dots have also been spread about on top of them. In the top center of the work, as though to symbolize the West, there is a fighter plane and to its immediate right is a mythical flying monster. Fighter planes are located in the lower portion of the painting, too, but there they are arranged to form a flower pattern immediately behind which is a plant made to look like the leaves of the flower. Here, as with the painting overall, many elements have been brought together. Eastern elements and Western elements, traditional elements and contemporary elements: all are in fact mixed together and none has precedence—there is no conception of a choice between one or the other.

In the center of this work is a female head wearing what appear to be sheep’s horns. Under that are two headless torsos in a line. One of them is a Western body taken from *The Venus of Milo*, while the other is a South Asian body taken from miniatures or sculptures. I don’t think the artist is postulating a choice between one or other of the torsos. On the contrary, the head floating in the middle can choose either of them freely, and can always switch back and forth between the two. Instead of choosing once and for all to belong to one, you can go with one and then go back to the other, completely freely. I think it is this kind of mobility (or maneuverability or changeability) that is being expressed in the work. [14]

In *Riding the Written* (2000, collection of the artist) [FIG.7], this same mobility is shown in the decorative border, in which text melds with horses and horses meld with text. As a result the text is given meaning completely different to that it possesses literally. The mobility found in Sikander’s work is the ability to shift freely from one meaning system to another and from one value system to another. Islam or Hinduism, India or Pakistan, West or East, or perhaps center or border, modernism or decorativeness, art or kitsch: the idea is that these distinctions (borders) are blurred. No one value system or meaning system based on one particular culture is given precedence. I believe that the miniature-esque decorativeness found in Sikander’s works resist reductionist theorization



FIG.7
Shahzia Sikander, *Riding the Written*,
2000, Collection of the Artist

of identity. Instead, it allows them to function as a heterogeneous picture plane on which diverse things are mixed.

I am sure many of you have already realized that the expression “the heterogeneous picture plane” comes from the argument at the center of Leo Steinberg’s essay “Other Criteria.” [15] I am also thinking of Sikander’s paintings in a similar way to what Steinberg described as the “flatbed picture plane.”

Zeroing in on the use of the word “flat,” some commentators have drawn parallels between Steinberg’s “flatbed picture plane” and Murakami Takashi’s “super flat.” However, an examination of the work of Sikander makes plainly clear that these two (“flatbed picture plane” and “super flat”) are in fact in opposition.

As is lucidly explained in Murakami Takashi’s “Theory of the Super Flat Japanese Art,” “super flat,” is something rooted in his conscience that reminds him that he “cannot meet my real ‘self’” under the present circumstances, as he would have to “ponder ‘Japan’,” where he grew up, or else, he would be unable to “give Japan a fixed shape.” [16] Accordingly, “super flat” is a “term that integrates artists and works possessing that unique Japanese sensibility.” By his telling, Japan is reappraised as “the country that gave rise to these original forms of expression.”

In Murakami’s formulation, “super flat” expression must be clearly distinguishable as something unique to Japan and there must be a clear line delineating it from other forms of expression. This is the very antithesis of the mixture seen in Sikander’s artwork. Murakami’s is a pure and exclusionary “unique Japanese sensibility” that does not permit impurities. On that basis it might sound like it has something in common with modernism, but in fact it contradicts it. That is to say, it presents something limited and localized—something that is not universal—in order to resist a modernism that pursues the kind of universalism seen in geometric abstraction, and for those in the peripheral to challenge the center.

Sikander’s mobility and Murakami’s localism: I have today discussed two tendencies discernible in art where particularly decorative means of expression are adopted. You could say I have presented them as a duality. However, to conclude I would like to point out that this division itself

15 | Leo Steinberg, “Other Criteria,” *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art* (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 55–91.

16 | Murakami Takashi, *Super Flat* (Tokyo: MADRA Publishing Co., Ltd., 2000), 8–25.

17 | Sawaragi Noi, "Doubutsu ka, Oraku ka, Cho-heimenteki ka, Heimen no Chokatsu ka [Animal? Oraku? Super flat-like? or Overcoming Flatness?]," *Bijutsu Tacho*, November 2001, 98–101.

might be blurred. A question exists as to whether Murakami Takashi's conception of Japanese artistic uniqueness can really be borne out or not. For example, take the *otaku* culture on which his works are based: there has obviously been a giant influence exerted on anime pioneer Tezuka Osamu by American popular culture (such as Disney animations). One can also recall Sawaragi Noi's assertion that despite Murakami setting up "super flat" as the "Japanese reality," it is in fact less a Japanese reality than the embodiment of an ideal form of American painting. [17] In fact, within Murakami's "Theory of Super Flat Japanese Art," he discusses the difficulty of making distinctions between the Japanese words *geijutsu*, *bijutsu* and the English term "art." He raises, as an opposing concept to the *geijutsu-ka* (artist), the *geino-jin* (entertainer) and discusses the nature of creators who straddle both professions. Despite the limitedness proclaimed in Murakami's "super flat" theory, it seems that it too possesses a latent mobility.

—
Translated by Edan Corkill

Discussion

Hayashi Michio | Moderator (MC)

Florina H. Capistrano-Baker + Hosaka Kenjiro + Tanaka Masayuki

Maeda Kyoji | Commentator

MC | I would like to open our discussion now. The three presentations each referred to different fields, but happen to draw on common issues, such as the issues related to tradition, genre/medium-specific practices, and decorativeness. We can approach them from various angles, and that is why I find this session to be more challenging than the others. It is difficult to find a focus.

I would like to first invite Mr. Maeda to comment, and then invite others to join for a discussion.

Maeda | This is Maeda again. I have talked far too much today, and since we started out in the morning today, I feel that I am starting to slowly recoil. So, let me be short and touch on three points.

First, is about the word “media” that Professor Hayashi mentioned earlier. In Session 2, we discussed Suh Do Ho and the clothing that he incorporates in his work. As Dr. Baker described in her presentation, clothing or dresses are symbols that represent class, position, or power, and their role is to appeal to the external world. They are also close to the skin and have qualities that are physical. According to Dr. Baker, during the course of hybridization, subtle shifts were made in the configuration of Filipino dresses. For instance, although they visually followed the forms of European mode, their tactile qualities consisted of thin *nipis*. So, in this context, clothing or dresses are like agents that mediate between the self and the Other; it is, in fact, a media.

Mr. Hosaka’s point was that although drawings would not be able to articulate the differences between the self and the Other, it would be able to mediate between the two. Drawing, then, is a media that interfaces the self and the Other.

Professor Tanaka’s presentation was to posit decorativeness against the dichotomy that divides the self and the Other. Decorativeness is often

considered to be the fringe of what is essential. Although it is in the periphery, it laces the border, decorates the edge and affects the main body. And, it eventually obliterates the margin that divides the two. I could call decorativeness a *parergon*, or media. Determining which term to apply could be a delicate issue. But I think Professor Tanaka meant to discuss decorativeness as a metaphor that could agitate the existing dichotomy. So I suggest that we first discuss the idea of media.

My second suggestion is to discuss the term “borderline” in relation to dichotomy. The word “borderline” includes the word, “line.” I have once heard Professor Hayashi talk about lines and their qualities, but I would like to add my own views to suggest yet another topic for discussion.

In the West, a line is considered a form that is clear and rational. The same view is shared in Asia, where lines in calligraphy are respected with great care. In the culture of *kanji* (Chinese characters), the number of strokes (lines) is counted by *kaku* units. *kaku* means to separate, so the lines separate entities. To connect this with Mr. Hosaka’s presentation, lines in drawings are drawn just once and non-repetitive.

Lines could be one off but could potentially be repetitive. For example, William Kentridge produces video works out of his drawings. His approach is not to simply impose a repetitive method into an exhibition space. Also in the Eastern sense, calligraphy is an embodiment of the spirit, so tracing over the lines is likened to inheriting the spirit of the original writer. That is why *rinmo*, or the act of copying, is revered. Through the process of copying, the spirits unite. Lines are what mediate this process.

Recently a book entitled *Enpitsu de Oku no Hosomichi* (Following the Narrow Road to the Deep North of Matsuo Basho with a Pencil) was published and much talked about. Probably if you don not live in Japan, you would not be familiar with this. The book has the text of *Okuno Hosomichi* is printed in light gray, and you trace over the characters printed on the page. It is like a textbook that we use in schools for penmanship classes. As we train our penmanship by tracing over the lines, it also becomes a process of regulating our spirituality. The tradition of calligraphy becomes live, and turns into a modern medium. Lines could be repeated, and therefore, it has the potentials to become communal.

My third suggestion is for us to think about the planes, in relation to the

lines, because there was a comment on Murakami Takashi and the concept of “super flat” in the presentation. If the surface is flat, it would be too slippery, and any attempt to draw lines on it would fail. This is the notion that is embedded in Murakami’s theory and his “super flat” paintings. That is why it is ominous and invites a kind of panic that turns his work into a contemporary one, with an attractiveness that also rides on the artist’s personal marketability.

So when we talk about lines, we need to also look at the plane that enables the lines to exist. For example, we could say that Raushenberg’s “flatbed” is something that traces the media. But I have a feeling that under the current circumstances, it is the market and other unsparingly brutal events that emerge on to the plane.

MC | Thank you for a succinct and pertinent comment. Mr. Maeda suggested three topics for discussion.

Let us first start with the discussion on the nature of lines. Mr. Maeda said that in the West, lines are media that symbolizes rationality. Similarly, in the East, they are media that embody spirituality. And it is also suggested that the repetition plays a double role of making the artist to incorporate/embody the tradition and of degenerating into a mere formula betraying the expectation of its uniqueness as an event. I thought you meant to alarm us in this context. But, if I may add, it also seems possible to argue that the automated practice of line provides the basis for potential diversion by its very automation.

Mr. Hosaka, do you have any comment on this issue?

Hosaka | First of all, when we say that lines are “repetitive,” we have to identify the person who will repeat the action. Mr. Maeda, you talked about an artist drawing a line, and then repeating the action. But does the repetition or the tracing refer to the aesthetic experience of the viewer who traces over the lines in his view? Or, were you talking about a different context?

Maeda | I was not referring specifically to artists. I was talking about it in a more general way. But, in the case of forgery of Nara Yoshitomo’s artwork, the replication or the tracing was certainly not carried out at a

spiritual level. Of course, in some cases, act of replication could produce forgery.

Hosaka | I'm not sure if I can give you a convincing answer, but let me talk about Nara first. During the "Emotional Drawing" exhibition that I curated, Nara always carried papers with him and told me that he would like to draw whenever he has free time. We must be careful about what drawings mean to him, because he is often misunderstood. When he draws, he never repeats what he draws. He is, in fact, keen on drawing new things every time. Of course, young boys and girls are his typological subjects. But each new drawing is a slightly deviated version of the former. So, it may be an act of "repetition," but "deviation" is more central in his activity.

Furthermore, I would like to draw Nara's example again to discuss the repetition's propensity for developing a communal context. Nara is actually trying to evade building a community around him. He does produce works in large sizes, but basically, his preference is to draw on small pieces of papers like envelopes. By drawing on something as casual as an envelope, he enables his viewer to easily access his work.

So, to him, establishing a communication with an individual person is important. So getting back to yesterday's discussion, the "peer-to-peer" communication introduced by Professor Kajiya, somehow gives an impression of a very transparent communication. It may be my personal impression, but this is because the word is related to the Internet. But aesthetic experiences or artistic experiences are about engaging with uncertainty. Artworks have residues that resist elucidation. This quality is crucial and is also an important feature in Nara's drawings. So, I wanted to draw Nara as an example, because, if I had not misunderstood, "one-to-one communication" is slightly different from "peer-to-peer communication."

MC | Thank you. Lines can be replicated, and, therefore, forgeries can be produced as a result. But lines could also be automated, and the automation could trigger deviation, and I believe this was what automatism in Surrealism was about. I have an impression that Nara's activities are slightly different from this, because there is a moment for

“exchange” in the process of his art making that may be analogous to what Surrealists did in their group activities. This is apparent in the episode about him signing his autograph on his drawings, or sending his drawings in exchange to the people who made contributions to his exhibition.

In other words, he is obviously conscious of the Other while he makes his drawings. But, interestingly, he consciously creates an environment where he shuts out transparent communication and says “I am not thinking about you.” But again, exposing himself to the Other is a serious business for him. Drawing as a media is probably effective in activating this paradoxical relationship.

The community is developed and renewed each time. It is not something that is already there and granted, but something that gets modified and leads to multiple directions.

So I would like to ask Professor Tanaka about whom, which Others, are the artworks meant for. Murakami Takashi, for example, had the desire to market himself in the West. He took it on as a self-conscious strategy. He talks about “Japan,” “decorativeness,” and “flatness,” in this context. I do not know how Shahzia Sikander became known in the international art scene, but I wonder who her target audience is. I would like to know how the strategies of Murakami and Sikander affected each of their activities.

Tanaka | I am not sure of the details, but from what I know, Sikander went to study in the United States for a master’s course, where she continued to work on miniature expressions. I suspect that she had some motivations similar to Murakami’s. That is, instead of working in styles similar to Americans and Europeans, she could have used Islamic and Pakistani elements as a strategy to attract audience.

I personally find her interesting because I do not think that she has intentions to emphasize Islamic or Pakistani identity. Even if I tried hard to search for elements that reflect on her self-assertion or claiming the rights of her marginalized identity, I would be frustrated because it is not easy. And that is what is so interesting about her.

MC | I agree that Murakami and his references to Japanese art are very strategic. His “super flat” theory is based on a very distorted

understanding of Japanese art history. I think this problem could be related to our discussion on installation from yesterday. For example, when he describes his theory on “super flat” referring to Japanese traditional art, Murakami uses photo plates and illustrations, placing one image at a time on each page. This kind of presentation takes Ito Jakuchu’s painting out of the context and “flat,” ignoring the way it was originally “installed” in a three dimensional space. This is not something we are here to discuss today, so I will not delve into this any further.

So, I have a question to Dr. Baker. Mr. Maeda said that clothing or dresses could be strategic, or an important media that shapes an identity in the context of relating to the Other.

You point out that tradition is always being reconfigured in response to the current demands. So, we must pay attention to the fact that authenticity or tradition goes through a series of relocation or retranslation. This process is what makes it hybrid. But what I see, in the current postmodern environment, are hybrid items that are being distributed as consumer goods in forms of ethnic food or ethnic fashion. This is what I would like to describe as “cosmetic hybridity.” In Japanese fashion, one could find a number of Japanese designers who incorporate Japonistic elements. But someone like Kawakubo Rei takes these elements to a different level. She integrates new structures into her design to deviate from the Western concept of fashion. In that sense, what happened in Japanese fashion in the 1970s seems very interesting to me. I wonder if the Filipino fashion designers face the same problem. Is there, for example, a difference between the ones who use traditional elements to strategically market their designs and the ones who go beyond that to propose more radical ideas about fashion?

Baker | I think that’s a very good question. And I think the Japanese case that you cite and the Philippine case are two very different things, because you’re talking of cosmetic hybridity and how cosmetic hybridity was used in order to commodify products, to make them more sellable in the West so that they could insert themselves into the Western fashion arena. But my perception of Philippine culture is that it tends to be invisible overseas, because we are such a hybrid culture. In other words,

we have been hybridized for the last half century and, therefore, have become invisible because we have this uncanny ability to assimilate into Western tradition. So that it is very difficult to define, in fact, what is a Filipino element besides the butterfly sleeves that everybody knows about. It's very difficult to pinpoint what is the Filipino element in fashion besides this very literal cosmetic strategy that you referred to. So, I think in the Philippine context I do not see a deliberate use of cosmetic hybridity, talking of fashion, in order to market it overseas. We do produce traditional and invent traditional forms for the foreign market, where we use *nipis*, from banana fibers, pineapple fabric, embroidered clothing that visitors might want to bring home with them. But this is not a deliberate merging of disparate elements. I hope that answered your question.

Tanaka | Professor Hayashi's question is interesting, so I want to follow up but putting it into a context closer to my own interest. Commodification of hybridity is an important issue, but I had not considered this before making my presentation. I wonder what would happen if I examined Sikander's work from this point of view. Before I make this attempt, I should verify what hybridity is. It is originally a strategy, right? It is a de-constructive strategy, theorized by theorists such as Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha. These postcolonialists studied Jaques Derrida to construct their theory, so they are obviously working on the basis of deconstructive concept. For example, hybridity was first used in a strategy to agitate the clearly dichotomized constructions, such as white versus black, or the civilized versus the barbarians. So, hybridity is a strategy to undermine Western conceptions. For example, one would see high tea is something very English. But what we acknowledge as typically English would not have been possible without the British colonization of India. So, as high tea undermines the Englishness in this way, we could conclude and say that it is hybrid. And in this case, the hybrid strategy has transformed into something that imparts identity and eventually resulting in commoditization.

MC | The situation surrounding hybridity is currently quite convoluted.

Twenty years or so have passed since hybridity became the topic of discussion in the contexts of postmodernism and postcolonialism. It has certainly been a very legitimate theoretical tool. But the overwhelming forces of capitalism are now turning anything hybrid into commodity, and are all being recalled onto a smoothed out surface.

Under such circumstances, the historical process gets lost and the resulting hybridity remains in the foreground on its own. For example, to examine the English high tea, which is presently perceived as quintessentially English, in the context of hybridity would be a very critical exercise today. But unless you trace the history that leads to this outcome, the criticality of the discussion gets brushed over (inviting a simplistic response, "How interesting!") and is readily consumed.

So, when we discuss hybridity or multiculturalism, we need to be aware of the issues involved in discussing these topics. For once we start tracing the history or memory, the once-forgotten "tradition" (as a fictional construct) could be summoned back, and perhaps the whole exercise may turn into a cat-and-mouse game.

Let us also reflect on Mr. Maeda's comment about the "plane," in relation to how the world is becoming flat and even. Murakami renders the surface as a smooth and ominous plane. It resists all the traces of lines, and indicates the flatness of the global market in a metaphorical way. Professor Tanaka, do you have anything additional comment?

Tanaka | I don't have any good answer, but I have some thinking over to do. If we were to look at Murakami's surface as a smooth and shiny plane, we should also refer to the flatbed-based paintings in our analysis. We should remember that Leo Steinberg discussed the "flatbed picture plane." But the surface in his concept was a very hard plane.

MC | Mr. Maeda, is there anything to add?

Maeda | I'm not able to give you an answer, either, but I think I do have a comment. When Murakami talks about flatness, he uses this term with double meaning; one of the meanings sees flatness as consequence of modernism. And I think this is what has heightened his presence in the United States. So, even if he is talking about flatness, what he means by

it is totally different. It is a strategy that cleverly switches meaning and it is very much like an appropriation.

When I interviewed Subodh Gupta the other day, he told me that he uses everyday material just like Marcel Duchamp. So, I identify his strategy with Murakami's. It may be a useful strategy, but personally, I would say it is, somewhat superficial and, in a way, calculating.

MC | Thank you. I would like to invite Professor Kanai later to comment on Gupta.

Before then, I have a question to Mr. Hosaka. You used the idea of empathy to analyze Nara's drawings. You suggested we consider drawing as an incentive to create a kind of network. I agreed to some of your thoughts but had some reservations as well. Nara could say, "I will not think about you" when he is drawing. He could send his drawings as presents. But in return, the audience could reply by saying, "I don't like this." They could resist accepting his offer. So, if drawings could encourage empathy and develop a network of people that share the same emotions, it means that the network could be exclusive. They could ultimately shut out others who do not share the same emotions.

Hosaka | I used the word "empathy" with a kind of positive connotation this time. I thought it was interesting that Mr. Maeda used the word "flat" as a metaphor to describe today's global market. It is the flatness, or similarities in the contents, that makes the artworks more accessible and marketable. As a result, some of the works are sold at very high prices.

To tell you the truth, I am personally not interested in the works by the artists discussed in Session 2. (I should perhaps say that I cannot "empathize" with them.) The reason is that the works are quite accessible. I feel that they suggest a certain framework that does not leave anything to offer beyond it. Once we figure the framework out, that is all. In other words, they do not exert the qualities of continuity and sustainability that are essential to visual experiences.

What I find interesting in drawings, or particularly in Nara's drawings, is that they evoke the physicality, for example, personal traces of Nara's physicality. Nara knows that there would be people who would not care

for his works. He secures himself so that he can deal with facing responses that say “I hate it.” In other words, he is actually expecting to get incomprehensible.

The title of the exhibition at the Yokohama Museum of Art, “I DON’T MIND, IF YOU FORGET ME.”, describes Nara’s determination: You now have empathy or sympathy to send me a doll, but maybe in five years time, you will not need me any more. But I don’t mind. I can live. Nara is determined to live in isolation while he creates his works. To put it lyrically, he gives presents and produces many works to create as many opportunities as possible to ascertain his isolation. That is why his work has a quality that is in quite the opposite of the seemingly accessible style.

MC | Thank you.

Mr. Maeda commented that Gupta’s work is calculating. Mr. Hosaka said that once he’s figured the work out, it’s enough to see the works in a catalogue. Professor Kanai, what is your view?

Kanai Tadashi | Let me first respond to the comment about being “superficial and calculating.” This may be the unfortunate circumstances of the latecomers into the scene in general. It is the destiny for all artists after Marcel Duchamp. And this may be an outcome of modernity. And another point. If you could be satisfied with the catalogue photos, after having seen the real work once, then we could generalize and say that the opposite is true, too. Once you see the catalogue photo, you feel as if you know the work already even before you see the actual one. The reason I decided to present Gupta in a very particular context, is to see if the viewers could acquire a perspective that does not simply brush Gupta aside for the reason of being calculating. I wanted to see if I could argue my case as a model for new way of reading art. So the case study was actually not about Gupta, but about was about testing my own views. I wanted to focus on how I see the works. I understand where Mr. Maeda and Mr. Hosaka’s comments are coming from, but I wanted to take the existing value standards and attempt to turn it around. I hope you understand my intentions.

I try to support my view by making the surface an issue, but I did

struggle to put my theory together. I initially thought of discussing Anish Kapoor. I consider Kapoor and Gupta to be symmetrical; the two having seemingly different interests. I wanted to turn your eyes, as viewers, away from the representation and the narratives specific to India, so I turned the focus onto the surface. Kapoor is popular for his highly sublime, modern style that maximizes the use of the material surface. Gupta, on the other hand, is situated exactly at the opposite and his activities are an exactly a reverse of Kapoor's. However, if we focus on the surface or the flatness of their works, we unexpectedly find commonalities between the two. And if we compared their works to those by the artists in Mumbai, the closeness of two becomes apparent and interesting, too. It is certainly Kapoor and Gupta's interest in the material surface that make their presence in the international art scene strong and firm. So, this is the kind of context that I take into account in observing Gupta. Of course, I have not been able to reach any conclusion.

MC | Thank you. Does anybody else have a comment?

Tanaka | Mr. Hosaka did not seem to be convinced with Mr. Maeda's comment. But I thought I could connect the two. I was impressed with the word "non-distinction," which Mr. Hosaka used to describe the artworks in a state before they could articulate their quality, or materialize in meaning. He discussed how one could try and understand these "non-distinct" qualities. I thought I could apply the word "non-distinct" to the relationship between the self and the Other. For example, my signature is my identity. The lines I draw with my pen are so intertwined with my identity that they could ultimately substitute me. When I trace these lines to study their forms, it becomes an act of accepting elements of the ready-made, absorbing something that belongs to the Other. If I write the letter "A" and Mr. Hosaka writes the letter "A," the different penmanship makes each "A" unique, but the letter "A" is, nevertheless, universally acknowledged as letter "A." So if I could argue that the self and the Other are not distinct, then I could also argue that the state of "non-distinction" could potentially open the channel for communication between the two. And I think that is how Mr.

Hosaka and Mr. Maeda's arguments could overlap with each other.

MC | I would like to get back to the word "drawing." Mr. Hosaka discussed the concept of drawing as a noun and contrasted it with Richard Serra's concept of an artwork as a verb. But, contrary to that, I had an impression that you emphasize the process of seeing and the process involved in the making of a drawing. So, I have a feeling that you don't want to allow drawing to spell out the letter "A."

Hosaka | The curator Hoptman suggested that "drawing is a noun." Her argument was that that the drawing is no longer about presenting the process but presenting the outcome, a completed artwork. It was quite a simple proposal. In her curated show, "Drawing Now," she did not make any distinctions between drawings and paintings, as you saw in my presentation photo and also apparent in the section titles.

Matsui Midori used the word "youth" in describing the drawings from the 1990s onward. This concept of "youth" is drawn from Julia Kristeva's concept that challenges the dichotomies of "adult and child" or "male and female."

Kristeva furthermore analyzes "youth" as "signifiante," trying to generate a meaning that draws a line from the meaning of "signifié/signifiant."

Drawing as a noun or a sign could be also understood at a transcendental level, "drawing is signifiante."

For the benefit of keeping the focus of my argument, I did not mention calligraphy in my presentation. But we should discuss it, particularly when we look at drawings from certain areas in Asia. When I went to see the Soejima Taneomi's exhibition at the Gotoh Museum, I had an experience of feeling the sensation by tracing the strokes with my eyes. It was slightly different from *rinmo*, but it was something that I would not have experienced if I were viewing a flat-surfaced painting. Looking at calligraphy is very physical.

MC | Thank you. I think we now see the problem of how media operates between drawings, decorativeness, and their recipients, the Other. I have a question to Dr. Baker related to this.

I found the photo of the flight attendant's uniform very interesting,

because they are indeed working in the contact zone, where the foreigners meet the locals. In this context (where they will be seen by the foreigners), the Philippine-ness in the uniform design could be taken as deliberate appropriation. It is similar to Murakami's approach to the art market. So, my question is, whether or not the metaphor or the rhetoric of "tradition" in "authentic" Filipino dress is considered attractive and has an appeal to the market?

Baker | I think there is kind of a complex process, where one invention or reinvention of tradition triggers another. It's then replicated continuously until the original is hardly recognizable. In the case of the stewardess uniforms, this was a design by a very well-known designer, Jose Moreno, who was fond of drawing from ethnic, non-Christian traditions and combining this with the Christianized mainstream cultures. And as what happens also in Western fashion phenomena, something that is initiated by a known couturier or designer then trickles down to the mass-produced market, and is then replicated, imitated, by the masses. When it's replicated and mass-produced, the original meanings are lost by those replicating it.

So there is no real consciousness of the discrepancy of the elements of what one is wearing from the original.

In the case of the stewardess uniforms, there was a deliberate juxtaposition by Jose Moreno of these two elements. Of course, for a purist that would be a travesty of tradition. But from this particular couturier's perspective, this is tradition; he's reinventing tradition. Perhaps, maybe consciously or not consciously, he's being inclusive in combining all these different elements from the non-Christian regions and the Christian regions to create an entirely new entity. That is how he proposes tradition.

In 1998, it was our 100th anniversary of our independence from Spain—which as also the 100th anniversary of the coming of the Americans, so it was a little bit ironic that we were celebrating this—there was a law enacted where every Monday we were required to wear Filipina dress to be part of that and contribute my service to the country. All of us were simply putting together eclectic elements from various groups, without really being consciously thinking of how incredible these combinations

were, because they just look pretty. We wanted a supplementary weft fabric from the Muslim regions in the south, and sometimes we would even appropriate Indonesian *kain songket* from Minangkabau (in West Sumatra) or a *batik* from Indonesia, and we would feel justified in combining this with the *kimona*, which is derived also from the Japanese *kimono*, using it with a *baro* (traditional blouse with embroidery). As long as there was something ethnic, something from some part of the country, we felt justified in combining this. It's only when you kind of step back and look at these phantasmagoric combinations that you begin to realize really how incredulous this whole combination is and how inauthentic. But when you then step back again and look at the 15th century and before the 15th century, and you see that even during the early contact period, dress was hybrid, to begin with. There was combination of Bengal silks, as well as silks from China and India. So there was always this hybridity that was ongoing, and perhaps are we culturally conditioned then to see the hybridities of today as disturbing, whereas, is this a cultural conditioning that we have that if we are scholars, for example, of 19th century dress that we are kind of visually offended by these violations of 19th century authenticity, or is it simply cultural conditioning, and is everything then acceptable? That was one of questions I posed.

MC | Thank you. Let us move on to questions from the floor.

| **Namiko Kunimoto** | My name is Namiko Kunimoto. I'm a student at the University of California, Berkeley, and I also had the honor of working with Professor Hayashi last year while I was doing my research. I had a couple of questions. I hope my questions won't detract from that at all.

The first one is about the issue of hybridity and the market. That was the discussion that was just going on. And I wondered if it would be helpful to think about the ways that the marketplace has, in fact, produced hybridity right from the beginning, from the Silk Road all the way down to clothing today as it exists. So that was one issue. And then the second issue was about the nature of the conference topic as a whole, and that would be about postmodernity. And I wondered about the issue of

gender. And if we can exist after postmodernity in a certain state of inequity of gender, particularly when I think about the conference, which I did really enjoy, and the fact that there was only one presenter who was a woman, and this has only brought even further by the very hardworking Japan Foundation staff who were there to greet us and translate and pass out documents, but unfortunately, there was many more women on the service side than there were, perhaps, on the speaking side. I wonder how that reflected on Asian postmodernity, or if it did at all.

MC | Thank you. Let me start by answering your second question. Yes, under-representation of women is an issue, but frankly speaking, I was not aware of it until right before the symposium. I looked at the list of panelists two days ago again and realized that we only have one female panelist. This may be problem. But maybe the real problem is the sexual discrimination that may be looming in the background.

For example, in Japan, I think the problem remains to be a structural one. And perhaps the same is true for other countries and those countries in Asia as well. I'm not sure about how it is in the Philippines, but looking at the number of academics and the number of curators in museums, imbalance of representation is apparent.

But the situation in Japan is changing. There is an increase in the number of female art historians, and women are the majority in the curatorial profession. But that is not to say that we have gotten rid of the structural problem. Those women who finish master and doctoral course remain in the field of art history as curators, because there are not many academic posts available for them at universities. [01] In comparison, I think the Philippines have produced many female academics. Dr. Baker, are you a minority?

Baker | No. It's quite well-balanced in my country.

MC | Thank you. So, let me answer your question on hybridity. I think that was an insightful comment. In fact, in Dr. Baker's presentation, we learned that the Chinese merchants were the ones who contributed first to the hybridization of the Filipino dress in the very early years, proving

01 | Of course, the same could be said for male students, but in terms of academic postings and promotions, men are probably still privileged over women. [Hayashi]