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Publication(s):

**subTerrain: artists dig the contemporary**

Geeta Kapur

**Politics of place**

As art gains ever-higher visibility through the economy and ideology of globalization, the *politics of place* – community, country, region, nation, even the margin or exile – tends to lose the privilege of direct address. I want to suggest that we investigate the interstices of urban archipelagoes to obtain (not underground art, which is rarer today than in the twentieth century, but) suppressed, subversive, punctual signs of place and belonging in and through the practice of art.

The rights of belonging were won by large populations of ordinary people in the world as new continents of *possibility* in the process of decolonization. The ideologies of these liberatory claims were subsequently elaborated and critiqued by post-colonial discourse. With the triumph of global capital, the ground won in the cause of self-determination may have become only a marker of identification and the national reduced to a territorial defence-base. Further, the global malediction of greed is likely to encourage the elites of the world to make common cause with the new, twenty-first-century phase of fascistic belligerence by super-imperialist nations – letting the politics of place collapse into retrogressive nostalgia.

With this in view, I propose situating the artist (here, the Indian artist) in an uneasy ‘subterrain’, in the ‘dug-outs’ of the contemporary, where s/he reclaims memory and history; where the levelling effect of the no-history, no-nation, no-place phenomenon promoted by globalized exhibition and market circuits is upturned to *rework* a passage back into the politics of place. Then, as we reckon with the loss and gain of place, we may discover, *through the force of interpretation*, forms of absence – of pain or fear or guilt or desire; forms mediated by a public performance of subjectivity whereby the artist tries to witness, and re-place, the self in the contemporary historical moment. But we should have to accept that even such an expression of subjectivity that can count for being political is now likely to be ironical, elusive, liminally present, rather than direct.

If, on the other hand, the artwork has a surface directness (read seductive or, in current slang, ‘sexy’), it could be a pragmatic move to make the art object accessible in terms similar to
the bargains struck every moment in the domain of everyday life in the consumer economies of
the world. This move is exactly opposite to the historical role of the avantgarde to disrupt
received relationships within the social. It is also exactly contrary to the high modernist dictum
in favour of an esoteric status for the artist and of complex and opaque meaning in art. Today, in
order to attest their position of alterity, artists will more likely play the role of a ‘drop-out’ or
maverick or cyborg in a simulacral world, exchanging tokens of gratification, setting up
fabrications that are functional (/dysfunctional) in an over-mediatised city. They may float a
narrative on the atomized abject-hero and at the same time compete through their own fetish
production in the global market with its excessively visual culture – a market bursting with the
‘commodity as image’. The point I make is that we have to read against the grain to appreciate
new forms of identity/alterity; that even when we encounter a complicity with kitsch – in art and
in life – we must look for camouflaged marks of dissent such as they are today, light and canny
and touched with parody.

It is part of my larger theoretical and curatorial intention to unmask what can now be
called the post-modern aesthetic of global negotiation, to see if I can rescue at least a residual
politics where the artist as citizen, at home and in the world, dreams of a more democratic and
just society.

My focus is on art practice in the social, political and psychic ‘subterrain’ of third-world
‘global cities’. Here too the contemporary is an inevitable part of the deconstructed history of
modernity that valorized the ambiguously masked artist and set up an elaborate masquerade
around the theme of what Freud called ‘civilization and its discontents’. This civilizational
discourse was furthered by the revolutionary working-class history of the twentieth century and,
subsequently, by the history of decolonization that added new contours to the very idea of
civilization by revealing the vast limitations of a Europe-centred universe. The latter half of the
twentieth century saw the emergence of differently situated modern artists all across the third
world whose acknowledged presence shaped a hermeneutic retake on the (political) unconscious
of the contemporary. It necessitated the relatively privileged interlocutor – the artist – to assume
the position of a conspicuously underprivileged subject of an unequal social order, and this led to
reasonably located (in regional, national and third world terms) interventions in and through art.

In India, this protest has often tended to assume identification with the bearer of a
subaltern consciousness (envisaged to abide in, besides peasants, the urban poor and, on specific
occasions, workers, women and such differentiated categories of the oppressed as dalits). In this
transaction an artist (writer, film-maker), like any other citizen, has to accept being subjected to
the pressures of a given, often turbulently unsettled, society and state, and it becomes the very
task of art practice to try and hold off oppressive ideologies: in present-day India, those of a
growing right-wing nationalism and coercive globalization. The political price of such deliberate
‘entrenchment’ is not translatable into an aesthetic value, but the very recognition of the
problem, of new types of marginalization promoted by hegemonic powers in national and
international politics, sharpens the language of art.

In strict terms, the responsible and transgressive artist–citizen is one who can imagine
appropriate forms of praxis in historically specific situations, as also wider solidarity with
exemplary artists across the world. We have to remember that the twentieth-century figure of the
romantic exile, or flaneur, is now too easily subsumed by global travellers and culture-shoppers.
I speak instead on behalf of artists who struggle from within the rapidly changing and competitive but systematically ravaged third world; artists who make art practice a politically viable proposition not only in the grand manner but also through smaller initiatives, articulating criticism, dissent and transformation in the ‘norms’ of civil society at the level of the everyday.

But these are hypotheses on the continuing necessity of art that are full of pitfalls, pretensions and trepidations about bad faith. I return therefore to a more modest understanding of the artist–citizen where practice involves an allegorically styled struggle for sovereignty, but where practice also yields an unaccounted-for joie de vivre that can be extrapolated from the pain of survival, from creative productivity, from the very ‘work’ of art.

In a sense it will be more judicious to accept that the implied locus of the artwork is not the social but the body – of the artist and the artist’s subject (-matter). Perennially seductive, the body in its more recent rearticulation as gendered subjectivity is a site for contestations about sexual identity. The body provides immanent ground for desire, the body in extremis reveals the anatomy of pain. Correspondingly, the body of the colonial subject is marked by volatile signs of struggle against the multiple hierarchies of race, colour and class, of religion, ethnicity and caste. This ontological field, shot through with renewed forms of ‘iconoclasm’, becomes the ground for an entire investigative mode termed in overall shorthand as the politics of representation.¹

Apropos the body, let me adopt the attitudinal term ‘body-language’ for polemical effect. Body-language is about gender discourse; it is also about the pleasure in beholding repossessed bodies, about material metonymies that map desire, about allegories that spell mortality. It can refer simultaneously to the depletion of the sensuous body, to its after-life as simulacrum, and to the ironical inscription of sexuality in the non- (or neo-) aesthetic of the virtual. In the more recent phase of global capitalism, the unprecedented media investment in a consumerist blitz addressed to the body tells us, more than ever before, that we must complement the emancipatory potential with an evaluation of the reified, regressive, sometimes sadistic tendencies in contemporary attractions for the body.

Thus, even when the body is figured as replete within a precise set of contextual references, we have to reckon with a contradiction in the phenomenological encounter: the body is experienced more and more as fragmented – the fragments ingested, disgorged, relayed, to the receptor as a series of signs.

I speak here of signs read in and through the criteria of art, but equally of those embedded in and ‘found’ across the less hierarchical field of the city’s visual culture. The cross-sectioned profile that exposes the inner fabric of the city also unravels the urban body inscribed within its core. The mode of cross-referencing is indexical: the body is positioned in a contiguous relationship with the city. It is at the same time metonymic: there is a part-to-whole equation between the body and the city. Indexical in the sense that we look for mutual trace and imprint in the body–city interface. Metonymic in the sense that we discover the displaced (sometimes invisible) parts of discrete human entities in the urban topos. Or follow trails of body-fragments imbricated in the city and refigure the space in temporal terms: a palpable flow, a subterranean narrative.

People develop intricate relationships between their internal bodies and the operative structures of urban space. It is our purpose to see in these connections the fragility, malleability
and ambiguity that characterize human as against systematized, technologically-driven exchange, and to signpost – as in a labyrinth – the points of maximum disorientation as a means or gesture towards understanding the extreme vulnerability to violence, alienation, subjection, of the would-be citizen.

Unfolding the urban morphologies of a generic city or several city-loci (including specific, culturally differentiated cities) engages the contemporary imagination with ever-greater fascination, dread – and insight. For if the city is the locus of contemporary cultural praxis and the paradigm for gauging a nation’s declared norms regarding its civil society, it provides at the same time criteria for judging the state of determined neglect of populations awaiting admittance to the status of ‘proper’ citizens within and outside the city. The city is the subject of intensive work being conducted at research centres in India. For example, Sarai’s new media initiative, which places steep stakes in the contemporary mediascape, sees the urban entanglement as available for express interpretation through the media connectivity of the city.²

It is obvious that the discourse about the city and the citizen, democratic politics and the state, is too complex to be realized in any single expository project. Even, for that matter, the limits of the relationship between art practice (however self-conscious, radical, vanguard) and actually existing politics that has a stake in material transformations of society, and contestatory politics at local, national and international levels, are less and less obvious. But there may be a possibility of selecting and configuring artworks so as to signify, through a set of allusive strategies, this ambiguously positioned identity of the artist as ‘citizen–subject’, to bring to bear some aspects of the interface between body, city, polity.

The ‘urban turn’

Around the early 1970s, the Nehruvian model of a modernizing nation-state began to be questioned by versions of post-colonial theory attempting to deconstruct the purportedly unviable nationalist framework into its component parts: region, city, village, community. A claim was staked for gaining a better sense of multiple ‘Indian’ identities and their democratic rights than the state had provided.³ Just around then an ironical ellipse in the argument surfaced. After an initial focus by subaltern studies historians on the dispossessed peasantry, the urban and, more emphatically, the metropolitan city emerged as the unit of preferred study: the metropolis as the very symbol of modernity and its aftermath. In the 1990s, the city discourse moved farther, towards a notion of global cities that pitches the city against the nation (and decidedly against the national), thus displacing the locus for examining such national issues as identity, citizenship and political struggles for democracy on to the negotiating powers of atomized individuals (and voluntary groups) presumed to hold world citizenship on a hypothetical ground zero.

If the point is to find a way to imagine, and theorize, the city and the nation in terms relevant to our needs – in terms of a coherent critique of the political economy of this country⁴ and in relation to the needs and struggles of citizens-to-be,⁵ it is necessary, I believe, to position the modern at the heart of the investigation. This would bring to light both the critique and the uses of the ‘utopian’ model of development articulated (by Nehru and other third world leaders) in the aftermath of decolonization. It would also help to understand why the accelerating ‘urban turn’⁶ serves vested interests ready to drive yet another nail in the coffin of the nation, and to
question in particular the stakes placed on that demise by imperialist nations deploying the expansive rubric of globalization.

As, however, this exposition is about locating artworks within the context of visual culture, it will have to bracket the ideological and make way for a more phenomenological approach. The city looked at in this way is materially real: its economy, social environment, seductive grip and emotional volatility are matters of immediate and sustained experience. It is also real in that it is derived from, among other things, realism, the magisterial genre of nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature and cinema. But then the city is simultaneously a surrealist construct of the imaginary – part-utopia, part-purgatory. We know this from its representation in cinema, the twentieth century’s preferred medium of cultural articulation, developed in India to deeply interrogative and spectacular power.7

Visual artists in India have pointedly addressed the city and it, the morphology of their own urban experience, from about the 1940s. Almost for the first time the city of Calcutta was graphically featured in contemporary terms during the great Bengal famine of 1943 when it became a focus of national shame and anti-colonial confrontations led by the freedom movement and the left militants of Bengal.8

But it is Bombay that has been the privileged metropolis since the Victorian vantagepoint of the empire.9 It was first the centre of colonial trading power, then the seat of the national bourgeoisie. In the present age of finance capitalism, the India–global elite manipulates currents of ‘hot money’ in and through Bombay. Correspondingly, Bombay, until the 1980s, nurtured some of the world’s biggest urban industrial working class movements; and the city continues to belong to common citizens, artists of all genres, subaltern protest movements and socially disenfranchised populations.10 Not least, its large film industry, with its power of popular representation, contributes to making Bombay, now Mumbai, the city that is conjured up when anyone addresses ‘urban India’.11

In terms of modernist imaging in art, it was not until the Progressive Artists’ Group (set up at the very moment of independence in 1947) that the city was brought into the frame.12 The Progressives and their associates found a deferred batch of legatees two decades down, in the 1980s, who were determined to pin down an ideological (and indeed pedagogical) stand about urban Bombay: I refer to artists like Gieve Patel, Sudhir Patwardhan and Nalini Malani.13

**Allegories of the nation: mourning, recouping**

Since the 1990s, Nalini Malani, along with other artists whose number rapidly increased by 2000, has diversified her art practice to include painting as well as elaborate video installations. I put her at the start of an argument where I suggest that Indian artists typically continue to address national issues head-on – this is the politics of place that I speak about and it goes beyond the space allocated to us in the local/global framework. It is a politics that refuses to be restricted to a simple localism based on questions of ethnic identity or to be subsumed by the maw of globalism.14 For example, in her video installation *Remembering Toba Tek Singh*15 (1998), Malani sets up the *mise-en-scène* for a tragic replay of wars and violence and inscribes a voice-narrative about the nuclearization of India and Pakistan in the South Asian subcontinent. But the narrative is the more searing because it shows glimpses of belligerent nationalisms the world
over with a direct indictment of capitalist nations – crucially the USA during and since the Japan bombings – perpetrating devastation on grounds of logistical deterrence.

Malani’s room-size video installations invite the viewer’s attraction for darkened space; they evoke the cinephilic imagination, a play with flicker and effulgence. She devises various and complex phenomenological propositions where moving images and ghost-objects are encountered in corpussular light; devices for mediating an imminent, part-realized, part-dreaded and always slightly hallucinated knowledge of the ‘real’. *Hamletmachine* (2000), a four-projection video installation based on Heiner Mueller’s text with that title, refers to fascism in Germany, then Japan, then India, where Malani, like her twelve million compatriots in the city of Bombay, was witness to a communal carnage during 1992–93 (*Figures 1 and 2*). As she transforms iconic images into the grotesque and then into the documentary, a voice taken from live footage screams through the conflagration and demands that ‘we’ tell her why when we are all kin within this country she/they are being sacrificed to a game of political profit. *Hamletmachine* recalls an incipient fascism as a sign of the contemporary.

Exactly a decade later, a pogrom led by the right-wing government singled out the Muslim population in the city of Ahmedabad and then in towns and villages all over Gujarat. In a multi-projection video installation titled *Lacuna in Testimony* (2003), Navjot Altaf recounts, through spoken fragments/silence, the testimonies of women who survived the Gujarat genocide. Inscribed on the ebb and tide of the ocean – the Arabian Sea – a succession of subliminal images navigate the victims back, as it were, to a healing shore. Her artworks, like *Between Memory and History* (2001), have often dealt with peoples’ testimonies in the aftermath of social violence (*Figures 3 and 4*). Working with physical structures, books, video and audio installations, she puts together incomplete testimonies to notate the loss sustained by the modern consciousness in its psychic structure. She thus positions herself as a witness for the witness, mediating the distance between different and specific sites, identifying with the historically situated but liminal presence of the ‘citizen’ bowed in an act of reparation.

In his sculptural installation titled *Speaking Stones* (1998), N.N. Rimzon brings to culmination a three-part homage to a classical but palpably human (male) body, each time encircled by symbols that suggest an allegorical reading: through them he asks the viewers to consider the possibility of transcending aggression, celebrating labour, mourning the violence within the polity to which we belong in such a way that we ingest and overcome its bitterness (*pages 000–00*). The sculptural ensembles recall the betrayal of civilizational promises; or ask to reinvent, yet again, an enlightened nation. Recasting the social body in the mould of ancient icons of austere and non-violent (Buddhist and Jain) religions, Rimzon’s compact statement is in fact an example of the way modern India has aspired to position – most credibly through Gandhi – a selfhood that allows one to extrapolate an exemplary nationhood or at least exemplary communities within the nation. And, significantly, Rimzon does this not through a discursive art form but in an artisanal mode. In *Speaking Stones* the mourning man, sculpted in clay and cast in fibreglass, is surrounded by a large circle of flint-like rocks, miniaturized mountain peaks, giant paper-weights, holding down a short history in newspaper-photographs of what we call in India communal violence – from Partition in 1947 to the contemporary moment – through which he speaks of a people’s responsibility to grieve.
Gandhi, who stands alone in India and in the world for realizing his vision of a peaceful struggle for truth and justice, has been an absent witness in his home-state, Gujarat, to one of the most cruelly motivated instances of religious and ‘ethnic’ violence in modern India. In recent years, several artists have tried to articulate the loss betokened by Gandhi, Atul Dodiya prominent among them. Placed crucially within his large painterly output, Dodiya’s recent installation, *Broken Branches* (2002), consists of a room fitted with wooden, glass-fronted, display cabinets – like a room in the museum dedicated to Gandhi at Porbandar, Gujarat – wherein he finds a way to allegorize a national tragedy (*Figures 5, 6 and 7*). He uses melodramatic means, a display of human dismemberment, to present a state of humiliation: he subjectivizes this into a condition of masochism; he objectifies it through an array of photographs ranging from those of Gandhi, to family, to ‘species’ specimens, to journalists’ picture-files of local travails. The abjection is at the same time fetishized, through the packed, decorative, loving display of workmen’s tools and traders’ measures with shelf after shelf of human bones and prosthetics for amputees. Referring to the leftovers of a serial autopsy, torn fragments of body and hope, the title almost completes itself to mean ‘broken branches – from the great tree of a nation-to-have-been’. The entire installation is arranged to make up a whole that will always elude the mourner’s desire for a complete narrative.

**City document**

These are examples of artists who address the national through allegories that are built on actual events and places; artists who select a specific city as a *mise-en-scène* to stage the politics of the nation or, in other words, condense the malaise afflicting a people and find ways to critique the state from within the terms set by its own democratic promise. There are also artworks where the city itself is seen to generate and bear the wounds on account of its in-built obsolescence of soul and material; or on account of the hubris within civil society and the self-serving disciplinary measures of ‘proper’ citizens against the populace. Artists who address this aspect of the urban often use documentary material, documentary means like photography, film/video, and a documentary mode of representation.

Among the major photographers who have fulfilled the mission of commemorating ‘India’ from the core of a national paradigm, Raghu Rai stands out as one who has, throughout his career, merged the civilizational and the national in order to create an irrefutable sense of identity for contemporary Indian culture. His published books of photographs range from *My Land Its People* to *Indira Gandhi*. In 1984, Rai did something that could be read as contradictory to his own mission. He produced an extraordinary body of work on what has come to be known as the Bhopal Gas Tragedy: on 2–3 December 1984, the American-owned Union Carbide Corporation’s pesticide factory in the city of Bhopal allowed, through criminal neglect, a massive leakage of poisonous gas that engulfed its poor neighbourhood to produce what has been called ‘the worst industrial disaster in the history of mankind’, killing 8,000 people besides injuring half a million and leaving 1,50,000 chronically ill to die a slow death. In 2001–02, Rai was invited by Greenpeace International to revisit the site and document the plight of its abandoned, desperately sick and embittered survivors. This straight chronicle of human agony has been shot by Rai in the grand tradition of black and white photography, in an unerringly realist manner that does not flinch at the melodramatic and indeed uses it to force the viewer to
witness the living presence of man-made death (Figures 8 and 9). These photographs are at the same time a human document and a testimony against the criminal complicity of national and global corporate interests. Raghu Rai is not an ideologue, but the photographs from Bhopal are as definitive a statement as you will get on the cruel farce played out in the name of human rights and international justice in the present phase of capitalist globalization.

How the city can still be ‘documented’ through painting is demonstrated by the young artist Jitish Kallat, who announced his birth as a painter with the idea that Bombay’s image-glut required of him a response whereby his (neutral/inflated) identity could manage any form of masquerade without loss to the ego – because this identity could negotiate the terms of its survival within the interstices of the city. It is a tribute to the intelligence of the artist, or perhaps to the force of history in a country like India, that games played across the shifting ground of visual culture do not suffice for the sense of politics required to survive the demands of the everyday; that citizenship here requires some form of commitment. Kallat’s work of the last few years records the growing violence and the tragedies it entails in the ‘advanced’ cities of this troubled nation. He records this by a frontal presentation of close-up/mid-shot images – photo-documentary images using a low-tech camera, fax and photo-copy machines. He foregrounds bodies clogged with accretions from the city, stamped with coded signs of their identity, marked by abuse and common suffering that he presents quite literally by scraping layering overwriting graffiti on the surface of his monumental, mural-size paintings. And a more cruel offering – men and women wearing their malfunctioning organs – heart, lung, liver, hands, tongue – on the clothed bodies like latter-day stigmata: Italics (War Dance) (2002), Tragedienne: Taste, Lick, Swallow and Speak (2002) (page 000). Kallat, an accomplished ‘billboard’ painter, working with degraded images, sends a coded FIR to become a citizen among the divided body of citizens. He thereby upturns his post-modern, cool-dude aesthetic, offering to play, instead, the classic role of a political commentator.

I interrupt the city-narrative to introduce the importance of lens-based work, specifically photography, in the enterprise of finding an interface between documentary ‘evidence’ and the social imaginary. In India, photography entered the artist’s basic vocabulary in the 1990s. Even for itself, photography may be said to have enlarged its intrinsic value of indexicality – of being, as it were, an ‘imprint’ of the real – by entering the expanded frame of installation art, whether this is object-based or sculptural ensemble, or video and new-media installation. Thus photography begins to share the peculiarity of the phenomenological encounter that the museum/gallery space encourages. Particularly in combination with video, it acquires a kind of contingency value: there is a loss in so far as its insistence on authenticity is concerned (sometimes to the despair of the classic photographers); there is a gain when it enters into a dialogue with the informal and ‘degraded’ images of new media to create a more calibrated, therefore complex, connection with reality and realism.

To the few artists who began, in the 1990s, to use the aesthetic and ideology of photography to transform their practice (Vivan Sundaram, Rummana Hussain, Pushpamala N., for example), many more have been added in the unfolding decade, some of whom feature in this discussion. There is another category of artist, like Sheba Chhachhi, who has become an installation artist on the strength of being a documentary photographer. In a recent installation, Neelkanth: poison/nectar (2000–02) she calibrates the use of photography, translites and video
within a ‘sculptural’ ensemble to create a virtual city seen on a moonless night: an overhead view of miniature ‘windows’ atop scores of miniature steel ‘towers’ arranged in the form of a miniature mandala-shaped ‘city’ (pages 000–00). The tower-tapers are fitted with lit photographs that allude to real/symbolic sense organs (presented as scores of tiny images of the eye, nose, tongue, ear and fingertips) surrounding the transcendent universe of myth: in the centre of the mandala, a video zooms in on the real-size throat of ‘god’ – call him Shiva – which is stained a luminescent blue. When you see ‘him’ gulping miniaturized carrion (from real wayside rubbish-heaps seen in the translites positioned at the four corners of the room), the throat becomes by contrast monumental. Concerned as she is with urban ecology, Chhachhi takes the trivializing middle-class discourse about pollution and gives it a mythic/feminist turn by linking it to resuscitating, sublimating drives: through attention to the five senses, through a belief in bodily recuperation, through a desire to understand the forces that arraign themselves along the fundamental binary of poison/nectar.

Complementing Chhachhi’s is Sonia Khurana’s double-projection video-work titled Meat (2002–03). Shooting in a butchers’ bazaar in old Delhi, she turns around an imagery of pure revulsion, through an adjustment of playing speed, to one that has a strangely meditative aspect (page 000). In the continuous viewing of the loop, a pariah dog eating entrails becomes something like a monk with a mantra pouring in and out of his mouth. Accompanied by a continuous low growl, the dog’s image enlarges and reduces as if in rhythm with the level of attention it receives from the viewer, like a creature mesmerized by the human gaze. A second image, juxtaposed at a right angle on a corner wall, shows a young lad plucking a chicken, the sanguine hues of blood and feathers presenting an aesthetic deeply familiar from paintings of dead fowl through the ages. The work is about ‘ugly’ spectacles, something that interests Khurana across the board as a kind of reverse data on the vulnerability of secret desires. In this sense, it is not so unlike the video-work she does with her own body (Bird, 1999; Closet, 2002), where she seeks the self in a form of excess and redundancy, in an avatar of the imaginary, thereby circumventing the (disciplining task of the) symbolic that is still always too closely hitched to male art and metaphysics (page 000).

**Body in city**

Interwoven through this entire exposition is a discourse on the body that has specific importance in Indian art; indeed if one were to name a single contribution that Indian artists make to the resources of the ‘universal’ imaginary, it is the corporeal, passionately enduring ‘human image’ – male, female, gay, bi-sexual and hermaphrodite. Going beyond simple notions of the figurative, I suggest that artists here foreground the body as concept, gesture and rhetoric, stretching it to include more difficult questions of subjectivity and subject-positions as these are debated in contemporary, usually feminist-led revisions of art history. The interlocutors of what it is that constitutes the ‘human’ have also often come from the colonized world: recall the foremost among them, Frantz Fanon. He made representation a matter of rights and of psychic transcendence, and he made it a reprieve for the humiliation lodged in a body afflicted at birth by history. Can Indian artists claim a share in this larger discourse, where the dispossessed in terms of colour, class, caste, are seen to be armed with a peculiar knowledge of the human body?
I set aside this wider reading of the politics of representation to signpost some of its concerns as they appear in recent Indian art.

The body has featured prominently in the earlier sections relating to the artist and the city: recall the discussion on Raghu Rai, Nalini Malani, N.N. Rimzon, Atul Dodiya, Jitish Kallat and Sonia Khurana. The virtual master in this realm is the veteran painter Bhupen Khakhar who has, over four decades, fashioned a male body so oddly gendered that his gay sexuality barely suffices as explanation. For here sexuality is evidence of the soul, the soul an irrepressible agent of pleasure. Yet this looped connection of body and soul encloses within it such dark premonitions, such an excess of mortality, that Khakhar’s figures are at their core more about death than about life (pages 000–00). The figures, iridescent puppets in the master’s hands, exist in states of auto-eroticism or forms of male bonding that always anticipate but do not finish the act of fornication. It is a condition of ‘being’ entirely of the artist’s making, and so is the public/private, domestic/landscaped space in which these personages revolve; indeed the entire oeuvre is in a sense a narrative of self, a self-portrayal. Yet the lasting impression is that this delimited setting – of male sex within provincial middle-class city-communities – dissolves into a many-hued vortex, disintegrates into meaningless violence, into a state of entropy. And all that remains is Khakhar himself whose body, even in an informal rendering, aspires to iconicity, but whose spirit is in a state of profound submission – not to his sexual obsessions but, ultimately, to the act of painting.24

Continuing with the thematic of self-portrait, consider Vasudha Thozhur’s representation, premised on an assumption – almost an annunciation – about the birth of a protagonist whose identity distantiates itself, ‘allowing her to take several forms and incarnations in successive roles and lifetimes’.25 In her paintings titled Secret Life-I and II (2000–01), the artist goes on to say, ‘The script for the enactment of the narrative was based on life – aspects of it which are an unspoken taboo . . . and therefore lived in private, subterranean realms’ (Figure 10).26 The scale of the work being almost life-size, you enter Thozhur’s painting with the familiarity of entering an actual middle-class home in urban India – and then confront the uncanny sight of a frontally posed woman in trousers with a tiger that is the carrier of the goddess Durga sitting beside her, burning her ankle-boots. Her series of work starting with Untouchable (2002) is based on a principle of even greater defamiliarization: in India the term carries, as she says, ‘a heavy semantic load, focusing for the main part on caste taboos. I implicate these but widen the context to include other forms of marginalization/exclusion/subordination . . . framed within the familiar (in India) act of self-immolation . . . and other rituals of purification, rites of passage into states of deprivation, renunciation – the entry points are . . . social, personal, topical, fantastic and historical.’27 Thus a deliberate paradox is set up: when juxtaposed with her earlier self-valorizing images as a catalyst for fire, the sacrifice by fire gains, in intellectual reversal, a peculiar agency. And by presenting the cruel ritual of Hindu civilization and encrypting the ‘message’ of Christian martyrdom (her body is surrounded by stigmata in inscriptions of blood), the artist gains a double identity that is moreover androgynous (she wears trousers as always) and sufficiently debriefed in social terms to win a claim on spiritual autonomy.

Consider another self-representation. Subodh Gupta, a young artist from a small town in Bihar, makes his journey to Delhi and thence into the global village of internationally-pitched
artists. Owning his body before all else, he adopts a strategy of ‘playing the native’ with all the props and accessories required for the act – benign symbols of village life (cow, dung-patties, milk cans), weapons of the rustic mafia (crude guns), icons of the migrant, upwardly-mobile working class (bronze-cast motorcycle hung with milk cans: Figure 13) – and a male chauvinism that one could read as deliberately post-feminist, in video-works like Pure (1998) and the photo-based installation Vilas (1999). In Vilas, meaning erotic pleasure, the artist says here I am in my present journey and reclines stark naked and smeared with vaseline on a sofa-chair also smeared with vaseline (Figures 11 and 12). The low-angle shot foregrounds his exposed genitals, the indifference of his returned gaze and performative stance giving him the audacious persona of a vagabond nagababa (naked holy man) from a local akhada (wrestling school). The actual rexine sofa-chair, placed beside the almost life-size photo, is likewise loaded with vaseline and slit to reveal gashes of pink foam that complete the sexual import of the work if there should be any doubt. All this excessive lubrication in and outside the image speaks about male penetration so emphatically as to make it a spoof, fitting it into the history of ‘in-the-face’ self-representations by black, native and well-endowed ‘others’ who prefer to play it cool.

In exact contrast to Gupta’s is the video-work of Ranbir Kaleka, whose aesthetic is based on the principle of liminality. The use of the digital medium allows him to achieve a transparency, a hallucinatory quality where the (male) character/person/body is both present and absent, reducible to a pixel-puzzle and conjured as a simulacrum – a copy of that which does not exist in material terms or just enough to throw a shadow and create a contemplative moment of identification. Or, on the other hand, to tantalize vision itself with a fleeting grasp of desire. Whether it is his pock-marked model in a vest, a carpenter threading a needle in a superimposed image, at once painting and video-shot (Man Threading Needle, 1998/99: page 000), or a placid bald man with the face of the buddha clutching and letting go then clutching and letting go a plumed fowl (Man with Cockerel, 2001), Kaleka presents the body as an index of mortality – at the edge of its dissolution, and disappearance. Precise name, identity, gender and profession are subordinated to a fragile sense of being where no assertion, no action is necessary except that which trusts in a minimal continuum of survival; the form itself resembles a haiku in that the hypothesis it offers is profoundly about a lived life that needs no backing of proof.

Ground zero: games of exchange and communication

In the 1980s, India’s realpolitik changed in favour of direct links between the national bourgeoisie and global capital, and it came to be recognized that the Indian middle class would now negotiate its terms of consumption in and through (its own ‘global’) cities. With many of the younger artists, the sensuous, mythologized body, powerfully represented by an authorial voice and gesture that distinguishes Indian contemporary art, lost ground once the primacy of pure exchange and manipulated communication surfaced. It was at this time that young artists, by now inevitably a part of Indian middle-class culture, began to shed the problem of identity appropriate to a civilizational/national frame of reference. It was also the moment when the vexed questions of tradition were shed, as also an iconography that would refer to tradition even if to critique it. One may say that the particular form of ethics that entails consideration for a history of struggle, whether in the name of decolonization or potential revolution, was also put
The 1990s saw these young Indian artists ‘liberated’ almost in exact correspondence to the ‘liberalized’ Indian economy on the path of near-total ‘disinvestment’ of national resources.

This was when the Indian city-bred artist, in Bombay before anywhere else, began to define her/his politics in terms of readily available signs of exchange and alienation, of commodification, fetishization and pleasure; signs directly readable from the over-signified realm of advertising and media networks, billboards and the internet. That is to say, from the city-street and the cyberworld in the public and private domain. This new mass culture is outside the ‘folk art to commercial film’ syndrome that hitherto defined the urban popular in India. It is in a sense more homogeneous in its purposes but requires diverse strategies and a negotiating wit within the rubric of the ‘new’ media deployed in the hard-sell of consumer commodities. Take three artists from Bombay: Sharmila Samant, Shilpa Gupta, Anant Joshi.

With titles like Global Clones (2000), Loca Cola (2003), Hand-picked Rejects (2003), Sharmila Samant frequently deals with recycling/cloning/displacing a commodity culture by introducing aspects of research on the antecedents of use over exchange value of objects (page 000). Or a foregrounding of labour-intensive production in a commodity market flooded with standardized goods that claim originality and fetish value. Or a play on the difference between material culture and imaged products in what is more and more a suppliers’ market for unremitting consumption – replacing the sweat and blood of labour with a glittering array of objects. Shilpa Gupta, who has a similar ideological take on the market-driven culture of globalization, uses and comments on new media manoeuvres to gain client conformity and docility, subjection and surveillance, under the ruse of ‘infinite’ choice within the ‘free’ world (not unlike the recent claim of the US for ‘infinite justice’ when destroying nations, countries, peoples outside their sphere of influence). Gupta’s comment is wry (page 000) and, like Samant’s, whimsical – not forcing, only teasing the game-partner into something of self-recognition in the web interaction that she designs (sentiment-express.com, 2001; DiamondsandYou.com, 2002). The recognition requires that the casual player knows where s/he stands in the scale of global inequalities perpetrated by the one-world panacea of ‘infinite’ profit. In ‘play’ of another kind, Anant Joshi’s installation Black to Play and Draw (2002) uses the trick of setting up a game of chess and the metaphor of stalemate where dialogue begins/stops/begins again (Figures 14–20). Using a flat-bed city scenario, a pop device, he lays out a set of tabletops with tiny sculptural objects that are made and found toys. The lilliputian figurines act like squiggles for the art of animation or props in a theatric ensemble, activating a magic-lantern shadow-play: the toys amplified by a light projector make the walls of the room dance with images of a city skyline. In the sophisticated web of the virtual created by new media, Joshi’s is a proto-cinematic allusion (featured in the vocabulary of a child’s play) to the illusionism of the cinema, which has always wooed the city.

Return to place
The metropolis has faced almost two hundred years of critique based primarily on the single complex issue of alienation; but it has also for as long and in equal measure attracted the most passionate and often utopian engagement. The metropolitan exile has defined the very terms of modernity, especially of course the terms of representation in modernist art practices, most
emphatically in the cinema. Now, in the vastly extended, less romantic but still obsessional discourse, the city virtually exhausts the resources of every discipline.

Speaking about the contemporary made visible in a telescoped view from the vantagepoint of a country, city, place and circumstance in the life and work of an artist, take a 2003 installation project by Vivan Sundaram titled *New New Delhi: Room with Bed* (participation: Romi Khosla, Ram Rahman, Raqs Media Collective, Shantanu Lodh and Manmeet). Here, in an adjoining set of rooms (small in actuality, relatively monumental in a gallery space), the basic unit of a habitat, a room with a bed, is presented as a dismantlable, ‘site-specific’ structure, and a condensed site for the viewers’ participation in the poetics and politics of urban space: *situation Delhi* (pages 000–00).

Delhi has taken decades to take shape as a metropolis in the cultural imaginary of the nation and has only recently become an urgent topic of discourse and activism. Now it is time to talk about a new new Delhi – beyond the medieval city of Islamic dynasties, beyond its imperial status as a twentieth-century colonial capital and beyond even the post-Partition city of north Indian refugees, to a city that is the territorially expanding/annexing/globalizing capital of the Indian state. Delhi’s new middle class has over-run indigenous small industry and trading communities by a multiplication of politicians, civil servants and service-sector employees, but is in turn imbricated in terms of labour, services and space with poor migrants, usually impoverished villagers, coming in great waves from the hinterland to work as daily-wage labour. These disparate groups carve out sector after sector of new housing colonies – from elite enclaves to ‘slums’, from extra-legal real estate gambles to ‘illegal squatter’ colonies. It is this Delhi, spreading into the vast neighbouring provinces like a corporate/suburban giant, that encourages the creation of an aggressive neo-native identity, and a new (non- or reverse) ethics of survival. And it is this that is at the hub of a representational drive by artists and media practitioners situated in Delhi.

Sundaram’s first room belongs to architect Romi Khosla, who is interested in medieval Tibetan aesthetics and utopian futurist visions and is invited to help re-plan historical cities/sites like Samarkand, Kosovo, Jerusalem, Palestine. The second room is Ram Rahman’s, photographer/graphic designer, who lives in Delhi and New York and straddles countries, cultures, religions and class in a consciously internationalist stance. He is, at the same time, committed to the artists’ organization SAHMAT, based in Delhi, a platform for the creative community to devise new forms of protest to confront the communal policies of the state and of right-wing organizations that seek to exploit religious divides through an escalating politics of hate.

The third room ‘houses’ the Raqs Media Collective, whose three members, Shuddhabrata Sengupta, Monica Narula and Jeebesh Bagchi, are now working in the context of Sarai, engaged in ‘examining the changing relations between old and new media and tactical media practices in the city of Delhi’. The Raqs group has moved from strict documentary to new media installations based on video and website interactions, all of which interrogate aspects of the invisible city that lies underneath and outside and, in legal terms, beyond the sanctioned city. Their work takes them into the subterranean and the quotidian of what they call the ‘cities of everyday life’. And, like the work of many dissenting artists/new media collectives around the globe, it questions first world imperialism as well as the nation-state apparatus that inevitably construes a flawed civil
society; that builds a panoptical perspective of surveillance on urban-dwellers (less citizens, more mere denizens) rather than devising means to accommodate their irreversible urban futures in the social dynamics of a democracy.\textsuperscript{32}

The fourth room is for Shantanu Lodh and Manmeet, a young artist-couple who work outside the normative aesthetic of modern Indian art and of the polite society that engulfs art practice through a network of state institutions and galleries. Their subversions relate to the domestic life of the middle class and to the penalties against sexual transgression in public spaces. The juxtaposition of their ‘home/studio’, on the street/gallery floor and in the neighbourhood of three internationally pitched practitioners gives an edge to Sundaram’s installed structure as it does to the discourse it should raise on the work’s theatrically designed \textit{mise-en-scène} for rearticulation of complementary ideologies in a given place and time.

The architectural grid of Sundaram’s installation, a city-street with an easy threshold, works with a concrete contiguity that helps relay collective cultural interventions. It simultaneously introduces a tendentious set-up: the viewer will vacillate between voyeurism and identification; private desires and praxiological motives. In one sense, the installation deploys a literal form of indexicality where the borrowed material is accessible \textit{as it is}; in another sense, there is a necessary condensation when the artist re-presents private ‘archives’ as ‘found material’. The seeming objectivity of Sundaram’s portrayals, gained on the strength of his colleagues’ participation in the project, also stands to signify his own aesthetic ideology: of how a politics of place may be hypothesized not on conclusive evidence about ‘rootedness’ but, rather, on the basis of (concealed and exposed) \textit{processes} that produce transformational practices in art.\textsuperscript{33}

**Navigable terrain**

This brings me back to the specific question of situating artworks within the contemporary city; situating it in a dug-out, in the cityfold, in the creases of the urban matrix. Or, as the title of this essay suggests, in the \textit{subterrain}, which could be extrapolated to mean the ‘political unconscious’ of a citizen-group – less identifiable than class ideology, more open to the force of the collective imaginary and its interpretative resources.

At one level artists, as a category, allow themselves to be conspicuously identified with bourgeois members of any given civil society who seek to wield power on behalf of its institutions. At another, they represent the ‘best’ culture of a well-functioning democratic polity, and position themselves in the enlightened space we call the public sphere, following the mandate to vie with and, when necessary, defy the hegemonic rule of the state.\textsuperscript{34} At yet another level, they function through hallucinatory identifications possible within the ethics and language of surrealism, to ‘represent’ the ‘other’ within any kind of body-politic they find themselves in, not least that of a named nation. And this has aspects of secrecy and displacement and desire, as also of social subversion and sexual transgression and political dissent.

This is a well-argued position; yet, Indian artists’ comprehension of this role – notwithstanding their citizenship of a ‘great’ modernizing/now globalizing democracy! – is not sufficiently understood or documented. Nor, of course, that of innumerable artists living and working outside the first world, outside the mandate of Euroamerican culture. The reasons lie in the too-narrow field of art history, but more in the broad ideological frame where the politics of
place is not understood to be what it is: a steeply differentiated articulation of concerns that are both local/global yet stretched to tension between two poles with an intricately calibrated grid that requires some (though not in any way secretive) process of decoding. While the transformational strategies necessary to comprehend the everyday as a navigable terrain are similar for contemporary artists here and elsewhere, the crux of the matter alters the moment we come to examine actually existing cultural histories of specific regions and time-zones of the globe.\footnote{Recognizing the politically implicated spaces that the artist as ‘global citizen’ must now occupy, what is at stake is for us to understand the global in terms of capitalism’s renewed imperialist putsch;\footnote{\textit{35}} to interrogate the post-colonial nation-state within its internally violated spaces. To inhabit, enjoy, survive and celebrate the various metropolitan clusters in which artists live with the sentience necessary to appreciate that, by condensing economic imperatives within the social matrix (\textit{while maintaining a material account of the cultural resources provided by living traditions and the contemporary vernacular}), these places provide a simultaneous microcosmic view of the global. Once the decolonized and erstwhile third world cities set up challenges for interrogating the seemingly sensational but also often desperate effects of global capitalism, their artists, and media practitioners, produce – and have to be seen as producing – appropriate forms of cultural praxis \textit{on site}.}

\textbf{Notes}

1. Extensive work done in India on the question of class, caste and gender identities leads to considerations of the body in social interaction/in the moment of praxis. It also yields a multivalent discourse on the politics of representation that complements the work done in the broad paradigm of third world/post-colonial studies, but carries its own burden of responsibility within a historical conjuncture. Indicating this field in its barest lineaments, see the work on subaltern (especially peasant) identities by Ranajit Guha, Gyanendra Pandey, Shahid Amin and their subaltern studies associates; literary/political analyses of gender and caste oppression by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Susie Tharu; Veena Das on social suffering in the private/public domain of civil society; and Kumkum Sangari on gender in middle-class Indian society. Essays by Susie Tharu and Kumkum Sangari are included in this volume.

2. I refer to institutions like Centre for Studies in Social Sciences (CSSS), Kolkata; Centre for the Study of Culture and Society (CSCS), Bangalore; and Sarai at Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi. See, for instance, the work done on the city by Sarai’s New Media Initiative: Ravi Sundaram, and Monica Narula and Shuddhabrata Sengupta in \textit{Sarai Reader 01: The Public Domain} (The Sarai Programme/Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi, and Society for Old and New Media de Waag, Amsterdam, 2001); by Shuddhabrata Sengupta in \textit{Sarai Reader 02: The Cities of Everyday Life} (Sarai/CSDS, Delhi, and SONM, Amsterdam, 2002); and by the Raqs Media Collective in \textit{Sarai Reader 03: Shaping Technologies} (Sarai/CSDS, Delhi, and SONM, Amsterdam, 2003). These essays argue that the new communication culture, with its surreal navigational strategies across hard reality, is a new freedom accessible to ordinary, disenfranchised denizens of the city even as it is based on a parallel and often ‘illegal’ economy that challenges bourgeois ethics and hegemonic property rights. Equally, there are glitches in the democratic promise of such media connectivity: it is subjected to perverse forms of statist surveillance, and it easily disintegrates into a cruel condition of entropy for millions of cyber-coolies in the new phase of global imperialism.


5 See Partha Chatterjee, ‘Beyond the Nation? Or Within?’, Economic and Political Weekly, 4–11 January 1997; and ‘Are Indian cities becoming bourgeois at last?’, in this volume.

6 Gyan Prakash, ‘The Urban Turn’, Sarai Reader 02.


8 The reference is to artists like Ramkinkar Baij, Somnath Hore, Zainul Abedin, Chittaprosad, who were associated with the left movement or members of the Communist Party of India.

9 For a seminal study of the city of Bombay from its colonial beginnings to the 1990s, see Sharada Dwivedi and Rahul Mehrotra, Bombay: The Cities Within (Bombay: India Book House, 1995).

10 See Sujata Patel and Alice Thorner, eds, Bombay: Mosaic of Modern Culture and Bombay: Metaphor for Modern India (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995).


13 In terms of the visual arts, Bombay has often worked in tandem with the nearby city of Baroda with its famous post-independence initiative in advanced art education at the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University. Since the 1980s, Bombay and Baroda have been at the centre of an expressly urban art and its related discourse.

14 For an elaboration of the national/modern as an operative paradigm within which to discuss Indian art in the age of globalization, see the section titled ‘Frames of Reference’ in Geeta Kapur, When Was Modernism: Essays in Contemporary Cultural Practice in India (Delhi: Tulika Books, 2000); for an extended discussion on Nalini Malani in the above perspective, see Nalini Malani: Medeaprojekt, edited by Kamala Kapoor and Amita Desai (Bombay: Max Mueller Bhavan, 1996), and Geeta Kapur, ‘Body as Gesture: Women Artists at Work’, in When Was Modernism.

15 ‘Toba Tek Singh’ by Saadat Hasan Manto is a famous story set at the time of the Partition of India.

16 From a documentary, I Live in Behrampada (1993), made by Madhusree Dutta at the time of the 1992–93 communal riots in Mumbai.

17 The artist in an unpublished statement quotes Edward Said (from Representations of the Intellectual, London: Vintage, 1994): ‘To give a greater human scope, to what a particular race or nation suffered, affiliating those horrors with the similar afflictions of other people, does not mean a loss in historical specificity. But rather it guards against the possibility that a lesson learned about suppression in one place will be forgotten or violated in another place or time.’


22 Shiva is referred to as Neelkanth, the ‘blue-throated one’. The legend goes as follows. Driven by greed and the desire for immortality, the gods and demons began to churn the cosmic ocean, forcing it to yield amrit, the elixir of immortal life. As the ocean heaved and spat, a terrible, burning mass of poison emerged. The gods realized that they had generated Death. Horrified, they cried out for help. Shiva, moved by compassion, opened his mouth and swallowed the flaming black mass that was going to destroy the world. He contained the terrible poison in the centre
of purity, which lies in the throat. The poison did not harm him, but left a dark blue stain. He thus became Neelkanth.


26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.


30 See Veronique Dupont, Emma Tarlo, Denis Vidal, eds, *Delhi: Urban Space and Human Destinies* (Delhi: Manohar, Paris: Centre de Sciences Humaines (CSH), Institut Recherche pour le Developpement (IRD), 2000). Also see *Sarai Readers 01, 02, 03* for investigations of the city of Delhi.


32 Okwui Enwezor, artistic director of *Documenta 11* (Kassel 2002), articulated this particular take on radical politics by presenting in a vast exhibition the voice of the ‘diaspora’ as an oppositional citizenry in the first world; he presented in addition a notational map of artists/collectives in their respective countries around the globe, who work on the threshold of art and activism and in direct dissent against the hegemonic rule of the nation-state. Raqs Media Collective was included in *Documenta 11*. See the Introduction by Enwezor and texts by the Documenta team and other authors in *Documenta 11_Platform 5: Exhibition Catalogue* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2002).

33 For Vivan Sundaram’s artworks and exhibitions based on found material and (public/private) ‘archives’, see *Memorial*, exhibition catalogue, text by Ashish Rajadhyaksha (Delhi, 1993); *The Sher-Gil Archive*, exhibition catalogue, text by Katalin Keseru (Delhi, 1996); *Re-take of Amrita*, text by the artist (Delhi: Tulika Books, 2001). His re-presentation/reconstruction of historical material in a 1998 site-specific installation, *Structures of Memory*, at Victorica Memorial Hall, Calcutta, is discussed in Geeta Kapur, ‘Dismantling the Norm: Apropos an Asian/Indian Avantgarde’, in *When was Modernism*; Arindam Dutta, ‘Unmaking Beauty: Aesthetics in the Shadow of History’, unpublished (Department of Architecture, MIT, USA); Christy Phillips, ‘Colonial Museums, Indian Nationalism and Crushed Glass in the Eyes of History’, unpublished (Department of Art History, University of Michigan, USA).


35 There is an exponential increase in biennales in and about the third world, starting with cities in Latin America (Sao Paulo, then Havana in the 1980s) going on to Asia-Pacific (Brisbane, Fukuoka, Kwangju, Shanghai, Yokohama and so on) and taking in African and West Asia. (Johannesburg, Istanbul). Thematic exhibitions now tend to ‘showcase’ art made outside of/in the face of white Euro-american hegemony (the controversial *Magiciens de la Terre* 1989, contrasted with the recent *Unpacking Europe* 2001 and not least *Documenta 11* of 2002). For our purpose it is relevant to emphasize cutting-edge shows of Asian art (for example, *Contemporary Art of Asia: Traditions/Tensions* 1996, *Cities on the Move* 1997), besides country/national exhibitions – under a cloud in the post-national scenario – that have played a crucial role in redefining international art by presenting avantgarde art in relation to a political conjuncture (whether in the Soviet Union or Japan, China or Nigeria, and to a lesser extent Indonesia, India, and so on). All of this has to be considered and critiqued periodically to gauge the ideological import of ‘global’ized art production.

36 A latent imperialism has bared itself after ‘9/11’ in the assault on Afghanistan, followed by the war of fascist aggression unleashed by the US–British coalition against Iraq: the *putsch* is part of the Project for a New American
Century (PNAC) and before long the cultural/ trade/marketing implications for the rest of the third world will begin to be articulated with the same unflinching greed and ambition.