INTRODUCTION

MODERNISM IN SOUTH ASIAN MUSLIM ART

*T*his book traces the emergence of modernism by artists associated with "Pakistan" since the early twentieth century, but it is not a broad history of a national art, nor does it seek to offer a complete account of the selected artists considered here. It traces one influential genealogical trajectory—the emergence of artistic subjectivity in relation to a constellation of conceptual frameworks, *nationalism*, *modernism*, *cosmopolitanism*, and *"tradition."* Although artists contributed to national life by forming new institutional frameworks for the patronage, exhibition, and reception of modern art—a labor that is an inextricable aspect of their personae—the addressee of their art cannot be simply equated with a Pakistani nationhood marked by aporias and impasses as a consequence of complex historical developments. Pakistani nationalism has provided painting with no "ancient mythopoetic or iconographic anchorsheet," a critic noted as early as 1965.[1] Rather, artists drew selectively from broader Persianate and Islamicate cultural and religious legacies,[2] yet also situated themselves as modern cosmopolitans addressing the quandaries of the self in modernity. In this book, therefore, the nation-state functions as only one frame of meaning in designating the artists' complex practices: in a larger sense, this project can also be viewed as a deconstructive study of nationalism that attempts to fashion a new narrative of a transnational South Asian Muslim modernism from within a national art history.

Postcolonial scholarship has demonstrated that translating concepts initially developed for the study of metropolitan cultures for the study of the postcolonial context is a persistent and unavoidable issue.[3] While acknowledging the limitations of using broad descriptive markers, this book offers fresh interpretations of the terms "nationalism," "cosmopolitanism," "modernism," and "tradition" by inflecting, stretching, estranging, and translating their metropolitan meanings to characterize the art and writings of the artists and their critics.[4] Informed by postcolonial theory and globalization studies, this account views modernism as inherently transnational, rather than as national or even international. Indeed, Andreas Huyssen has advanced the term "modernism at large," by which he refers to "crossnational cultural

forms that emerge from the negotiation of the modern with the indigenous, the colonial, and the postcolonial in the 'non-Western' world."[5] The terms "cosmopolitanism" and "tradition" gesture toward the complexity of modern South Asian Muslim subjectivity, whose genealogy includes fragments from Persianate humanism, Hindu and Buddhist mythology, the orientalist construction of the discipline of Islamic art, colonial governmentality, nineteenth-century theological and modernist reform, modern pan-Islamism, twentieth-century metropolitan and transnational artistic modernism, mid-twentieth-century nationalism and developmentalism, and contemporary debates on race, gender, and globalization.

The term "tradition" is especially vexed and liable to be seen simply as opposed to the modern. This study argues against such a reduction and demonstrates how artists strategically reworked fragments of classical Islamic tradition into modern formulations characterized here by the term "modern Islamic art." The category of "Islamic art" usually denotes artistic practices over a specific geographic area *before* the advent of modernity, but this definition is not found in Islamicate intellectual and discursive formulations. Primarily an allochronistic orientalist construction forged during the age of colonialism, Islamic art as a discipline was viewed through European hierarchies of fine/applied art and by denial of any relationship to modernity. "Islamic art" marks a catachresis. It is precisely this *antifoundationalism* of the discipline of Islamic art, along with the discursivity of other Islamicate disciplines, that provided artists with a "tradition" that they investigated in their practice with an increasingly incisive understanding rather than remaining limited to reworking subject matter and style. It may be noted that academic work on *modern* Islamic art is lacking; indeed, many scholars of classical Islamic art view the term itself with suspicion.[6] This study, however, argues that a decolonization of "Islamic art" was taken up as a critical modernizing *practice* by the artists examined here, who drew upon "tradition" by remembering lived practice, by turning toward its discursive articulations in poetry, literary criticism, ethics, and art. Modern artistic practice unceasingly seeks adequate discursive and aesthetic ground but never quite secures it; this crisis-ridden quest characterizes an important facet of its modernism and contributes to its ongoing development.

This book undertakes extended readings of the work of key artists between the early decades of the twentieth century and the present—Abdur Rahman Chughtai paintings in relation to Mughal aesthetics and late colonialism from the 1920s onward, works of mid-century artists Zainul Abedin, Shakir Ali, and Zubeida Agha with reference to transnational modernism and national

independence, Sadequain's oeuvre in the context of Islamic calligraphy during the 1960s and 1970s, and the works of Rasheed Araeen and Naiza Khan with reference to issues of race and gender since the late 1970s.[7] The epilogue examines how emergent contemporary practice continues to grapple with the quandaries of tradition and subjectivity. All the artists studied here have sought to situate their practice in the broader intellectual and social contexts of their eras and have also devoted considerable effort to building new institutional frameworks of exhibition, patronage, and reception for modern art.

The relation between modern artistic practices and the intellectual history of Muslim South Asia is of particular significance for this study, undertaken through an analysis of the art and writings of twentieth-century artists and their critics. One of its larger goals is to exemplify the richness of intellectual and discursive legacies of important regions of non-Western modern artistic practice, rather than seeing all such artists as "hybrid" and migrant figures drawing only on lived traditions or in mimicry of Western art. The conceptions of "hybridity," "mimicry," and "in-betweenness" have prompted important scholarly work over the last two decades, but the generality and imprecision of these conceptions has become a methodological straitjacket in purportedly accounting for the work of all modern non-Western artists.[8] A particularly common understanding of "hybridity" fails to distinguish between lived traditions and discursively articulated ones. "Mimicry" suggests that the primary motivation for artistic practice was with reference (and sly opposition) to the West, which I hope to show is not primarily the case for artists studied here. And although the "in-between" space is seen as beyond enunciation and articulation (and although recognizing that all good art enacts singular dimensions of meaning that cannot be fully articulated), this book, by contrast, does argue for analytical and conceptual comprehension of many of the artists' concerns, provided one accounts for their intellectual trajectories.

The discipline of art history has until recently largely omitted consideration of modern art outside Western canonical developments. There are few existing academic studies on artistic modernism in South Asia, for example,[9] but recently, there has emerged a growing interest in the scholarly study of non-Western modern art.[10] In discussing artistic modernism in Muslim South Asia, this book hopes to contribute to the emerging body of scholarship by employing recent comparative and interdisciplinary approaches.[11] It provides for a departure from previous histories of South Asian modern art, many of which are inscribed within the horizon of the national and do not acknowledge the full force of transnationalism until after the advent of globalization

in the 1990s. It also differs from other anthropologically inflected studies of non-Western art by its strong emphasis on discursive, intellectual, and conceptual articulations. Histories of intellectual developments primarily focus on elite discourses (even when they urge toward broader social engagement), and this study is no exception in this regard. But while it is a gross mistake to simply equate intellectual debates with all significant social and cultural developments, they also should not be sidelined in the name of an ersatz populism. Moreover, one cannot study modern non-Western societies and cultures without assessing the considerable labor its intellectuals and artists have undertaken to articulate their place in modernity.

This work specifically traces the genealogy of the South Asian Muslim artistic self and the emergence of global and public Muslim subjectivities in recent times. It locates a set of contingent relations between artistic subjectivity and social frameworks over the course of a century—these relations are neither teleologically inevitable nor continuous in a historicist sense, but have been enacted fitfully by artists' creative praxis. The subjectivities traced here are not reducible to other political and ethical subject formations, which would require other critical accounts. And not being historically and structurally stable or unified, these subjectivities defy easy summarization, but they are above all viewed here as psychic and sociocultural artifacts. Accordingly, South Asian Muslim identity in this study primarily refers to contestations over sociocultural self and society, rather than to questions of adequacy of religious belief or adherence to ritual.[12]

By largely refusing to address the social world directly during the early decades, artists experimented with subjecthood and artistic form as metaphors and allegories of a deeper and more nuanced exploration of the quandaries of modernity than did either the programmatic formulas of the "progressive" leftists of the 1930s and 1940s or the emergent nationalist and religious rightist ideologies from the 1940s onward that had gained new valences by the late 1970s. These subjectivities are not reducible to "liberal humanism" either but enact a difficult process of working out antinomic relations between the self and society. By refusing easy ideological positions, artists sought not only to reimagine the past but also to create new analogues for conceiving a future that could not be easily articulated under existing closures. Indeed, this study shows how a deeper engagement with the social world has emerged in recent art as a result of an extended artistic debate and praxis, whose genealogy is traced here. Wendy Brown has perceptively noted that "genealogy neither prescribes political positions nor specifies desirable futures. Rather it aims to make visible why particular positions and visions of the future occur to us."[13]

Aesthetic, ethical, and political effects of emergent artistic subjectivities are neither fully calculable in advance, nor do they necessarily follow or seek to overtly and immediately resist existing hegemonic values. Their importance lies precisely in highlighting antinomies of self and society beyond formulaic positions and in fostering new imaginaries beyond the urgency of immediate events.

This book also bears upon the study of contemporary global art, marked by the rise during the last two decades of dozens of artistic biennials around the globe. Contrary to some studies that claim that the works of contemporary "biennial" artists simply spectacularize an exotic difference by participating in the superficial global culture of late capitalism, this book offers a longer durée, intellectually nuanced understanding of artistic subjectivities. Although artists do participate in broader contemporary dilemmas, a proper accounting of their work still requires a deeper engagement with their specific intellectual and processual trajectories. This has remained a challenge for scholarly understanding of much modern and contemporary global art in which historical and intellectual context remains largely unexplored—and which this book hopes to partially remedy by tracing one significant thread in its formation.

To launch into the extended examination of the book's conceptual framework, it is instructive to begin with an example. Abdur Rahman Chughtai's etching *Mughal Artist* (ca. 1930s) depicts the profile of an artist holding what appears to be an Indian Mughal miniature painting, which shows a female figure against an empty background, enclosed in a wide, illuminated border (Figure I.1).[14] Because the miniature is folded in half, we are prevented from seeing whether any other figure, text, or compositional device accompanies her, although one suspects that the figure would not be alone, as it is placed only in the right half of the miniature. The Mughal Artist clasps the miniature with exaggeratedly long fingers, a handling of anatomy that parallels other exaggerations in Chughtai's work since the mid-1920s, such as the drawn-out neck, the distorted rendering of the ear and the arms, and the voluminous swell of the Mughal Artist's chest. The Mughal Artist is placed among a landscape of rocks, flowering plants, and trees whose sparse linear and rhythmic composition recurs in the shape of the Artist's turban and the decorative motif of the Artist's outer garments. He looms as a separate figure in the foreground, yet also remains an integral part of the landscape, as the linearity of his scarf and the botanical motifs on his tunic echo the surrounding foliage and rocks. The miniature's border, composed of foliate arabesque patterns,
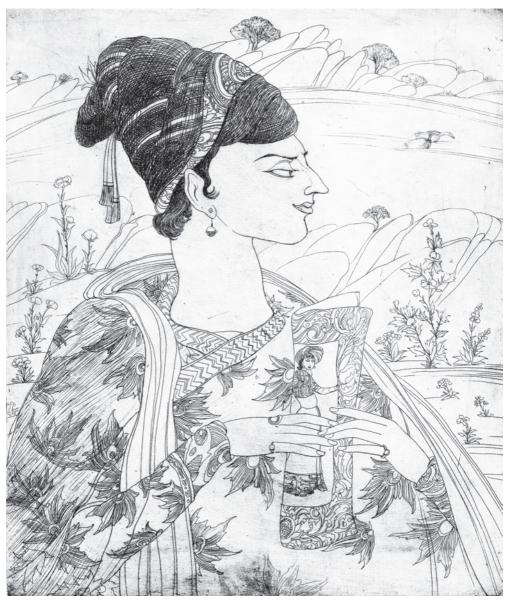
FIGURE I.1. *Abdur Rahman Chughtai, Mughal Artist, ca. 1930s. Etching.*
24.7 × 20.9 cm. (Collection of Nighat and Imran Mir. Reproduced with permission
of Arif Rahman Chughtai, © Chughtai Museum Trust, Lahore.)

and the rendering of the miniature figure in the same linear manner as the Artist suggests continuity among the landscape, the artist, and the painted miniature as inhabiting a shared aesthetic realm united by their linear, ornamental handling.

Chughtai's etching clearly draws upon seventeenth-century Mughal miniatures, such as *Poet in a Flower Garden* (ca. 1610–15) (Figure I.2) and *Khan Khanan Abd ar-Rahim* (ca. 1626) (Figure I.3), which depict Mughal nobility.[15] Chughtai's portrait, however, foregrounds its own stylistic character at the expense of the specific historical identity of the portrait. Indeed, we are not informed about the identity of the Mughal Artist; rather, the portrait begins to approach allegoresis, depicting the unplaceable time of the Mughals as one characterized by enviable aesthetic accomplishment. Is this allegory of the Mughal Artist intended as a self-portrait of Chughtai? If so, how does one become a "Mughal artist" in early twentieth-century Lahore, long after the end of the Mughal era? We may further compare Chughtai's *Mughal Artist* with *Daulat the Painter and Abd al-Rahman the Scribe* (ca. 1610) (Figure I.4), in which miniature artists and calligraphers are busy at work as artisans in an interior. Indeed, these arts of the book would have been performed in a *kitabkhana*, a royal bookmaking atelier that included activities, such as bookbinding, generally considered among the applied or decorative arts. Chughtai's *Mughal Artist* is not occupied in working as an *artisan* but now emerges as a contemplative and philosophical *artist*, a thinking, reflecting subject.[16]

Chughtai is widely considered the first major modern Muslim artist in

FIGURE 1.3. *Hashim*, Khan Khanan Abd ar-Rahim *(detail), Mughal period, ca. 1626.*
Opaque watercolor and gold on paper. 39.9 × 25.6 cm (with borders not shown).
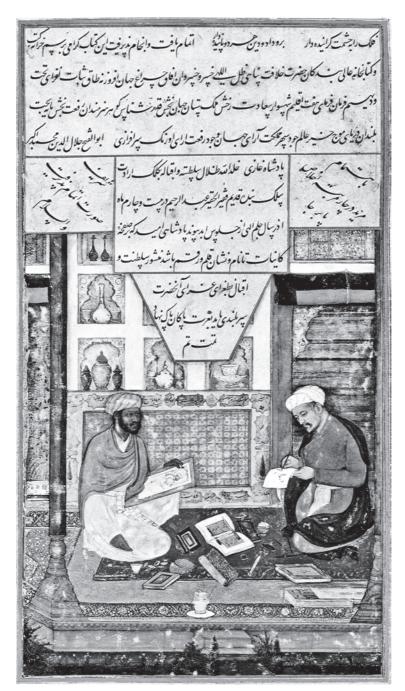*(Freer Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., F1939.50a.)*

FIGURE I.4. *Daulat, Daulat the Painter and Abd al-Rahman the Scribe,*
Mughal period, ca. 1610. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper. 22.5 × 14 cm.
(© The British Library Board, all rights reserved, 2010. Or. 12208, f. 325b.)

South Asia. His artistic oeuvre shows a remarkable consistency since the 1920s in referencing the Mughal painting tradition. Chughtai filters this influence through his stylistic markers, rendering his later work immediately recognizable, which unmistakably invokes Mughal painting and yet plays up its stylistic individuality. His work performs a double maneuver, referencing "tradition" yet also enacting the artist as a modern subject. Chughtai's works ceaselessly seek a common ground, a continuity, with tradition. The very act of striving to secure this ground over the chasm of the centuries of decline of Mughal painting, while acknowledging the impossibility of its recovery by deploying a style that is consistently and unmistakably that of Chughtai, paradoxically marks him as the first significant South Asian Muslim artist in the modern era.

Lack of good critical work on a major artist like Chughtai is indicative of the state of scholarship on modern Muslim South Asia, which has focused primarily on political, social, religious, and literary developments. Beginning in the twentieth century, however, the traditional emphasis on textuality in South Asian Muslim intellectual life was fundamentally reconfigured to accommodate a new relationship with the visual arts. The advent of colonial modernity in nineteenth-century South Asia was tightly intertwined with new articulations of knowledge, authority, and culture, which arose concurrently with the rise of print culture and also with the formation of a new institutional domain of fine art by the Calcutta-based Bengal School of Painting at the beginning of the twentieth century. By the 1930s, Indian artists had embarked on a sustained engagement with modernism, in a context of dizzying social and political change, which included decolonization, the rise of mass media, and the onset of developmentalism following the national independence of India and Pakistan in 1947. Despite his nostalgia, Chughtai inaugurates a kind of artistic modernity in Muslim South Asia, which was pursued by successive modernist artists after national independence. More recent artistic practice has productively engaged with developments in contemporary global art. This study, traversing the periods of colonialism, national independence, and globalization, argues for the artists' engagement with modernity since the early twentieth century by demonstrating how their aesthetic and social concerns refer both to modernism and to their understanding of "tradition" itself as transnational.

Before launching into a detailed discussion of modernism, cosmopolitanism, nationalism, and tradition, a brief summary of historical developments in Muslim South Asia is necessary. The idea of tradition embraces

the intellectual and cultural resources of the Persianate cosmopolitan world of the Mughal empire since the sixteenth century. Muslim rule in key regions of India became associated with a wider Persianate and Islamicate culture, which became pronounced at the zenith of the centralizing Mughal empire between the mid-sixteenth century and the end of the seventeenth century and its aftermath. The dissolution of the empire in the eighteenth century gave rise to the increasing entanglement of British mercantile and political interests and weaker regional rule in many parts of India. British colonialism at its high noon in India from the mid-nineteenth century onward deployed technologies of classificatory governmentality to understand and shape Indian society itself. This, associated with the rise of decolonizing nationalism among Indians from the late nineteenth century onward, led to the emergence of "Hindus," "Muslims," and other groups as marking distinct identities, above, and sometimes against, regional, ethnic, and linguistic specificity. Elements of resurgent Hindu identity began to view the Indian nation in terms of territorial integrity and a valorized golden Hindu and Buddhist past—in which Muslims were often characterized as marauding invaders. The later nineteenth century also brought a growing awareness by the South Asian Muslim intelligentsia of their being reduced to minority status and the formation of Muslim identity in relation to pan-Islamic ideas. Modern Muslim identity has accordingly been fashioned as "minoritarian" in Indian nationalist terms. But, on the other hand, it has also created complex affiliations with a larger Muslim religious and cultural past and present, in which the Persianate cultural past and the transnational Islamic revivalist movements active since the late nineteenth century have cultivated powerful nonterritorial imaginaries. It also encompasses the reformist movements allied with the rise of print culture that flourished in the wake of the Indian Mutiny of 1857. These movements sought to shape Muslim life in India by initiating religious and educational reform and by modernizing Urdu language and literature. The treatment of "tradition" in this study includes the rise of progressive cultural politics in South Asia during the 1930s and the growth of literary journals and criticism. Urdu poetry—in particular, the poetry of Ghalib and Iqbal—provided many of the artists considered here with imaginative tropes. Tradition also includes the rich iconography of Hindu and Buddhist South Asia drawn on by artists such as Chughtai, even as he articulated his art as "Islamic."

The departure of the British in 1947 from the territories of colonial India created the independent and divided nation-states of India and Pakistan. The latter was made up of territories in the eastern and western Indian prov-

inces that held Muslim majorities. The process involved much bloodshed and the transfer of very large numbers of people, as Hindus from the areas designated as Pakistan moved to India and many Muslims moved to Pakistan. Modern independent India emerged as a result of anticolonial struggle by Indian nationalists, but the independence of Pakistan was arrived at without a similar struggle against the British. Rather, it was fashioned out of the fear of domination of Muslims by Hindus. The appellation "Pakistan" is pure invention, possessing no historical resonance — the founding of the nation itself was irresolvably caught between providing simple "affirmative action" type of protections for economically and politically backward Muslims and transnational aspirations beyond the realm of politics itself. Moreover, not all Muslims agreed with the goals of the Pakistan movement itself. Indeed, many distinguished leaders and elites continued to view themselves as Indians and opted to remain in India. But most Muslims of colonial India were trapped in this dilemma of having to belong to India or to Pakistan, an impossible choice — that of minoritization in India or exclusivist nationalism in Pakistan.[17] In 1971, East Pakistan seceded from Pakistan to form Bangladesh, a consequence of the economic and cultural domination by the West Pakistan wing. The majority of South Asian Muslims since have been divided equally between Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. Arguably, these uncertainties and quandaries of South Asian Muslim identity are themselves emblems of its vexed modernity.

MODERNISM, MODERNITY, AND TRADITION

The "modern" is hardly a self-evident category, even in metropolitan scholarship, usually refracting into the pair of terms "modernity" and "modernism." The former typically denotes social transformation — especially in the wake of the Industrial Revolution — while the latter denotes a range of artistic practices characterized above all by anti-illusionism, medium-specificity, and reflexivity.[18] The terms "modernism," "modernity," and the "avant-garde" continue to demarcate central problems in the study of modern art but are rarely discussed in the context of non-Western art.[19] Following Dipesh Chakrabarty's discussion of how non-Western history as an academic subject remains in thrall to paradigms developed for the study of Europe, one sees how the close association of modernity and modernism *as* the West serves as an invisible template of comparison for non-Western modern art.[20] By the early twentieth century, however, the trope of the "modern" increasingly dominated the making and the study of South Asian art, a process that finds

parallels in other regions as well. As recent studies continue to show, modern art was enacted on a transnational scale during the twentieth century, but canonical studies of modern and contemporary art and visual practices have continued to assume the centrality of Western art in specific geographic and cultural sites.[21] Simultaneously, Western modern practices have also been understood as constituting the "universal" modern. Consequently, modern non-Western art is seen as inevitably lacking both a fully realized modernist subjectivity and a cultural authenticity. Non-Western artists are viewed as failing to measure up to the aesthetic standards of the purported tradition of the artist that is invariably *always* situated in the premodern era, and their works are also seen simply as a belated and impoverished derivative response to Western modernism.[22] This is a well-established debate within postcolonial scholarship. Tabish Khair, for example, questions the premise of looking at the modern in isolation from capitalism, as he clearly sees the latter as the underlying motor of aesthetic and political change—the capitalist West exercises a monopolistic "patent" on the deployment of the terms "modernity" and "modernism": "Modernism or modernity is and (under Capitalism) will always be, by definition, identical with the hegemonic capitalist culture. But it is not modernism or modernity that creates the hegemonic capitalist culture in its own image; it is the capitalist culture that determines what we see and recognize as modernism and modernity."[23] Khair also cogently characterizes the problem of "tradition" and "modernity" in relation to Eurocentrism: "Western modernity is seen as a response to *Western* tradition. But in the non-West, modernity is seen as disjunct from tradition. Modernity is something that is traced to another space and time—either Europe or the effects of European colonization. The 'fragments' of the 'non-European' present come from the two separate/d spaces of 'tradition' (read: the recent 'native past') and 'modernity' (read: the recent Euro-American past)—and, hence, one or the other space has to be forcibly vacated in any conception of a holistic future. That is the tragedy of 'modernity' in the non-West."[24] Indian art critic Geeta Kapur also recognizes this dilemma: "Imposed on the colonized world via selective modernization, modernism transmits a specifically bourgeois ideology. With its more subtle hegemonic operations, it offers a universality while obviously imposing a Eurocentric (imperialist) set of cultural criteria on the rest of the world."[25] Despite these reservations, however, Kapur recognizes the critical and affirmative potential of the term "modernism" as it is practiced in postcolonial India. "Yet, as modernism evolves in conjunction with a national or, on the other hand, revolutionary culture it becomes reflexive."[26] This book corroborates Geeta Kapur's insight but also modifies

it by demonstrating that modernism of the artists considered here indeed becomes reflexive, *despite* its vexed relationships to Pakistani nationalism, as none of the artists discussed in this book comfortably inhabit territorial nationhood. Chughtai's *Mughal Artist* is neither national nor revolutionary—it negotiates a cosmopolitan tradition yet asserts the reflexivity of the Artist-as-Chughtai figure, alerting us to some of the complexities of modernity in Muslim South Asia beyond the stock binary divides of equating the West with modernity and the non-West with its lack.

If modernism is understood to reference cultural production that is experimental and reflexive, that inhabits new patronage arrangements, that seeks new audiences and venues and is generally concerned with exploring the predicament of South Asian Muslims in modernity by drawing on a ruined tradition that nevertheless persists as an imaginative force, then the works discussed in this book certainly undertake that project. In order to secure a better understanding of the reflexive quality of modernism, South Asian Muslim artistic practice needs to be contextualized by the insights afforded by formalist analysis. It may be noted that formalism has often been viewed, especially by Pierre Bourdieu and his followers, as perpetuating the disinterested autonomy of metropolitan modernism, and thus as retrenching the inequalities of power by silently and invisibly disregarding institutional inequalities. While acknowledging the considerable force of this critique, this study retrieves formalist analysis because of its critical analytical possibilities for art that has been created with a nonmimetic and nonreferential relationship to social history.

THEORIZING MODERNISM

In his influential essay "Modernist Painting," American critic Clement Greenberg has argued that modernist painting pursues purification and the deeper exploration of modalities specific to painting, even as this long-term trend remains invisible to the practitioners themselves. Greenberg's formulation traces a process spanning decades, if not a century, in which painters, beginning with Manet in the mid-nineteenth century, looked at the achievements of their predecessors as continuing to develop more intensively the possibilities opened up when the aims of painting were no longer tied to illusionism. Greenberg's formulation offers a reading in which no sharp break with the past is posited. Rather, modernism emerges as an autonomous practice by advanced painters when painting no longer has to serve ends other than those of medium-specificity and reflexivity.[27]

In his appreciative critique, art historian T. J. Clark has interpreted Greenberg's formulation to emphasize that modernism embarks on this autonomous course because the European bourgeoisie of the later nineteenth century dismantled aristocratic art and invented mass forms of expression that were easily understood by all social groups, in order to extend their reach over larger segments of society. As an extended and inward response to the age of kitsch, modernism carves out an aesthetic utopia by persistently engaging with and preserving the difficulty and density of high culture.[28] Clark claims that Greenberg's account of modernism, which brackets out the social world and assumes a conflict-free and teleological optical valence, is fundamentally incomplete. Greenberg is unable to account for hesitancies and contingencies in modernism's development and fails to consider modernism's complex engagement with the social.[29] For Clark, if modernism no longer has a constituted ruling or aristocratic class to address, it seeks its elusive addressee in the social order through ceaseless experiment.[30] Clark's formulation has the merit of combining a formalist reading of modernist art, one that continues to grant autonomy to technique and practice, with one that is also cognizant of how the social world constantly presses upon artistic form. His account is salutary in highlighting the roles of patronage and addressee, without sacrificing the relative independence of artistic experimentation, and thus it refuses to reduce modernist art to merely a simple reflection, affirmation, or negation of modernity. A sophisticated reading of modernist art, it incorporates the insights of social history and formalism, methods that have otherwise been seen as antithetical.

There remain, however, a number of troubling issues in Clark's account, as it is premised upon developments in modern European history and it focuses exclusively on canonical European works. Clark's analysis relies on Western Marxist thought and the travails of anarchist and socialist ideals in the West, effectively precluding global political, social, and aesthetic developments during the twentieth century, which include but are not restricted to the rise of anticolonial movements, the onset of decolonization, and the presence of an increasing number of migrant intellectuals in metropolitan centers. The failures of Western anarchical socialism seen in isolation from the rest of the world lend a melancholy tone to Clark's otherwise brilliant readings, and his more recent book on modernist art is suffused with this elegiac tenor, conveying an impression of the blockage and death of modernism and of cultural politics altogether.[31]

Charles Altieri affords an important critique of Clark that views modernism as a profound response to *difference*.[32] Altieri questions Clark's reliance

on artistic form as a failed attempt to address the social and insists instead that the value of modernism cannot be reduced to its quest to find a nonexistent or nonconstituted addressee. Altieri faults Clark for wanting to diminish modernist art as ultimately referential of the social and for failing to grasp that modernism is precisely not realism.[33] Rather, for Altieri, it is because modernist artists realized that all referential and realist tropes in modern art reduced its role as a handmaiden to bureaucratized, nightmarish politics that they felt empowered to create works that enact a metaphoric utopia within the work itself. The role of modernist art is not to continue seeking Clark's elusive social addressee but to suggest metaphoric alternatives, especially in an age when differences across the globe cannot simply be subsumed under one set of referential or illusionist tropes, or even under a particular social formation:

> Perhaps the modernists knew better. Perhaps they realized what is only now becoming painfully clear — that any assertion of values based on particular social and political structures is doomed to seem partial and to create *differends* whose grievances cannot be heard within the dominant structure. Once we enter a world where cultural differences are deeply valued and where there is no clear way to adjudicate among those differences, it may be incumbent on art (as well as on philosophy) to locate and foster modes of political consciousness sufficiently abstract to locate values and principles in the very possibility of making commitments to different structures. . . . It may be wisest to surrender the fantasy that art ought to provide effective forms for a particular social imaginary. . . . [The] critical force [of modernism] seems to me still to depend on two features . . . very much worth keeping alive — its awareness of how playfulness itself can take on ethical import and its faith that any force able to sustain a compelling imaginative life as a direct, perceptible feature of a work of art has claims on us that extend beyond the work's specific historicity.[34]

Like Clark, Altieri focuses his analysis on canonical works yet emphasizes the playful, constructed, and metaphoric dimensions of modernism and its passage beyond referencing a particular social landscape or instantiating itself in a singular political horizon. This allows for a more open consideration of noncanonical modernism in the periphery than does Clark's formulation, which remains tied to developments within Europe since the mid-nineteenth century. Theorizing a modernism that does not demand an immediate social referent is cogent for the purposes of this book, as early modern South Asian Muslim art since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries bears closer

analogues to abstracted forms, such as the lyric *ghazal* poetic tradition and Sufi conceptions of the universe.[35] Twentieth-century modernism draws on this classical Islamic art, broader Islamicate poetic and philosophical articulations, and post-cubist transnational modernism, all of which are nonrealist forms. Accordingly, the works analyzed in this volume do not primarily attempt to represent the social mimetically. This general disinclination for direct social address in artistic modernism in Muslim South Asia was stressed in comments made by the important modernist painter and teacher Shakir Ali during a discussion with artists, critics, and filmmakers published in 1974.[36] Participants who were not painters questioned why modernist artists in Pakistan failed to develop social consciousness in their art. In his reply, Shakir Ali pointed out that while literature, which is broadly understood, might express social concerns in a more accessible manner, modernist painting evokes pain, frustration, and pleasure, which is not easily comprehensible to the wider public. Above all, Shakir Ali questions the very demand for accessibility and direct social reference:

> Someone once remarked to Picasso that his paintings were beyond understanding, to which Picasso replied why it was necessary to understand the song of a bird? We [modernist artists] acknowledge that we are unmoved by national and social events. If we do happen to respond to them, this response becomes merely urgent and passing [with no lasting impact]. For example, during wartime [with India in 1965], Intizar Husain [a prominent Urdu writer] had written that while bombs were falling outside, Shakir *sahib* had withdrawn to his home, and was busy painting pictures of flowers and the moon. Its true that I had blacked out my studio [sealed my studio in order to continue working there] and was indeed painting moon and flower motifs, as it was belief [*iman*] that flowers bloom in both India and Pakistan, and the moon shines on Pakistan but also on the graves of my ancestors in Rampur [India]. I was therefore involved in creating an alternative expression of the war.[37]

This passage is remarkable in several respects, not least for Shakir Ali's summary dismissal of the need to situate modernism in realist modes and in national and social frameworks even during a grave national emergency. Nevertheless, he appears to offer a stock "humanist" explanation of the thematic content of his own activities (Plate 10). Yet this book demonstrates that the desire for social address cannot be simply be forever bracketed (which Shakir Ali himself had also recognized elsewhere) but persists—resurfacing in the works of Zainul Abedin, Sadequain, Rasheed Araeen, and Naiza Khan. The

readings offered here are thus formalist in the sense that the social and the historical are usually enacted on the picture plane as a struggle over form and in new patronage and addressee relationships, rather than depicted as theme or content. Here, in further support of my claim, it may be noted that even artists such as Chughtai, who work with the figure, move away from the possibilities of realism and representation available in later Mughal painting, even while drawing from this Mughal tradition. This is evident in the exaggerated stylization of *Mughal Artist* (Figure I.1), arguably relatively less "realist" than seventeenth-century Mughal painting from the Jahangir era, which was imbued with realism to a marked degree, in part due to later Mughal appreciation of European works, as seen in *Jahangir Preferring a Sufi Shaikh to Kings* (ca. 1615–18) (Figure I.5).

This study frames its arguments in broad sympathy with Andreas Huyssen's appraisal of recent approaches to postcolonial modernism.[38] Huyssen notes that postcolonial theory and globalization studies enable new ways of writing histories of modernism that are *transnational* rather than *national* or even *international*: "Despite the celebrated internationalism of the modern, we still experience obstacles in the very structures of academic disciplines, their compartmentalization in university departments of national literatures, and their inherent unequal power relations in acknowledging what I call *modernism at large*, namely, the crossnational cultural forms that emerge from the negotiation of the modern with the indigenous, the colonial, and the postcolonial in the 'non-Western' world." Huyssen further notes the inadequacy of "traditional approaches that still take national cultures as the units to be compared and rarely pay attention to the uneven flows of translation, transmission, and appropriation."[39] From this perspective, one can productively revisit "varieties of modernism formerly excluded from the Euro-American canon as derivative and imitative, and therefore inauthentic." Accusations of one-way European influence and the belatedness of the modernism of non-Western modern art have been persistently used to close off comparative investigation of modern art produced beyond the canonical centers of Paris, Berlin, New York, and a few other cities. Huyssen's emphasis on the geographical spread of modernism, "which cut[s] across imperial and postimperial, colonial and decolonizing cultures," being a process in which "metropolitan culture was translated, appropriated, and creatively mimicked in colonized and postcolonial countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America" and which "supported the desire for liberation and independence," provides a more nuanced way to understand the salience of modernism beyond the metropole than simply privileging technical advancement and attack on tradition by avant-

FIGURE 1.5. *Bichitr,* Jahangir Preferring a Sufi Shaikh to Kings *(detail), Mughal period, ca. 1615–18. Opaque watercolor, gold, and ink on paper. 25.3 × 18.1 cm (with borders not shown). (Collection of the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., F1942.15a.)*

gardisms.[40] In the absence of powerful but outdated institutional and academic codes against which to rebel, the avant-garde simply cannot exist, as modern art requires complex institutional frameworks—which are primarily metropolitan—for its legibility. Innovation in sites without such established frameworks, therefore, consists in *creating new institutions* (rather than in attacking nonexistent ones). It is striking that all the artists examined in this study have dedicated considerable effort to establishing new institutions, by publishing journals, creating exhibition spaces, teaching, and running art foundations. Above all, one needs to underscore the powerfully affirmative potential of modernism itself in stimulating new imaginations during the decolonizing era rather than searching solely for modernist experimentation or avant-gardism or for projects that carry an overt sociopolitical charge.

South Asian modernism clearly developed under the tutelage of metropolitan modernism yet cannot be fully understood by reference solely to it. An understanding of its opening toward metropolitan modernism but also the assertion of its historicity, its openness toward commensurability but also its positing of incommensurability—in short, the doubled character of its historical and contemporary valences—is required. This work may be understood as "cosmopolitan," a fraught term used here not to fetishize its placelessness but rather to define its relationship to transnational modernism and to also mark how it draws on a memory of the early modern and modern cosmopolitanism of Muslim South Asia.

COSMOPOLITANISM AND MUSLIM SOUTH ASIA

The term "cosmopolitanism" has a long history and has recently been the subject of considerable scholarly debate. For our purposes, the recent discussion on cosmopolitanism may be divided into two broad streams. The first view privileges the European genealogy of the term, stretching back to Greek philosophy, political developments during the Roman empire, vernacularization of European languages, Enlightenment conceptions expounded by Immanuel Kant, debates on the weakening nation-state and globalization since 1990, and political and institutional developments in global civil society and universal human rights.[41] The second view seeks to detach its moorings from its European anchor and to see how the term might characterize imaginative affiliations in other geographic areas, in which formal institutional or political affiliation is not necessarily central. Sheldon Pollock, who has examined the world of Sanskrit during the first millennium, has forcefully critiqued the narrowness of the first conception of cosmopolitanism as Eurocentric.

Pollock emphasizes that in sites such as the Sanskrit world, encompassing South and Southeast Asia, cosmopolitanism was not theorized as such, but its effects were clearly visible as practice over a vast geographic and temporal realm, by creating imaginative and expressive ideas of a world beyond the local, rather than in installing institutional structures and political articulations.[42] Roxanne Euben, in her recent study of Muslim travel accounts, has similarly traced a "particularly rich countergeneology of cosmopolitanism"[43] spanning the premodern period into the nineteenth century.[44] Her gleanings and summary of how various scholars of Islam have understood this affords a convenient capsule account:

> What this genealogy does do is foreground the *umma* as a cosmopolitan social imaginary . . . a history in which extensive Muslim social networks largely flourished independently of territorially based state power, where institutions of the state constituted but one of "the dense knots where many network lines crossed." Here is a civilization whose preeminence in the Middle Periods was secured less by the systematic consolidation of political power than by the extensive social and cultural mobility of Muslims bearing a moral code at once fixed and flexible enough to apply "whenever Muslims were to be found in sufficient numbers, being dependent upon no territorial establishment nor even on any official continuity of personnel, but only on the presence of Muslims committed to it, of someone at least minimally versed in it to see its application." Here is a "global civil society" before the age of globalization, one constituted in part by a principle of free movement that simultaneously confounded state aspirations to total control and conferred legitimacy to those empires willing and able to safeguard routes of trade and pilgrimage. And here is an organizing image of "networks" that actually corresponds to the "conceptual world of Islamic culture . . . [where] society is an ever living, never completed network of actions."[45]

Not only was the *umma* conceived via this networked transnational imaginary during the premodern era—but it remains "undimmed and in some ways even intensified (albeit in complex ways) by the advance of European colonialism, the rise of the nation-state, and now the march of globalization."[46] Euben's view is also shared by recent scholarship, as exemplified by the volume *Muslim Networks from Hajj to Hip Hop*, consisting of essays exploring modern and globalized networks and part of a new book series devoted to understanding Islamic civilization as networked.[47]

The cosmopolitanism of the artists examined in this book is thus doubled,

emerging from their translation of historical and modern Muslim cultural forms that were themselves cosmopolitan and from a second translation of transnational modernism. In order to adequately study the cosmopolitanism of art during the twentieth century, Kobena Mercer emphasizes the "three-fold interaction among non-western artists, minority artists within the West and western art movements that have engaged with different cultures." According to this view, cosmopolitanism is not flattened into a single register but retains a perspective on differentiation according to specific artistic encounters and geographical locations. Moreover, he cogently notes, "the term is not being proposed as an evaluative or judgmental banner heading (in the sense that it is a good thing if you have it, too bad if you don't)." Complementing this view, I stress the need for understanding conceptual formations and practices that were prevalent *prior* to Western colonialism and the need to trace their subterranean transformations in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Only if this genealogy is accounted for in North Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia can we do justice to Mercer's prognosis that "matters of cultural difference can now be moved on from the reactive critique of Eurocentrism and brought into a proactive relationship with a range of artistic traditions and lineages that are worthy of study in their own right."[48] The artists' relationship to transnational modernism is examined in subsequent chapters as it pertains to each artist. Here a broad summary of their engagement with Muslim consciousness in South Asia as it has been articulated since the late nineteenth century is traced.

Muslim intellectual and cultural life in South Asia since the early modern periods (sixteenth to eighteenth centuries) was decisively shaped by interaction and exchange with West Asia, creating a rich and vibrant cosmopolitan outlook.[49] Precolonial and early colonial South Asia cultural practices were important participants in a Persianate cultural universe, and this contribution increased in intensity during the Mughal period from the sixteenth century, as may be seen in poetry, literature, painting, and calligraphy. Persian was the language of bureaucracy and administration in India for several centuries from the Mughal era till the 1830s. Persian was also a privileged language of cultural expression for the North Indian elite well into the nineteenth century and even the twentieth century—indeed, the greatest poets of Urdu in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, Ghalib and Iqbal, respectively, both composed what they deemed to be their major works in Persian. Since the time of Akbar (reigned 1556–1605), India had attracted a flow of Persian-speaking scholars and artists from West Asia, allowing India to be

more closely connected to Muslim intellectual life in West Asia. The extent of this participation in the Persianate world has yet to be fully explored, but historian Juan Cole estimates that, during its height in the late seventeenth century, the number of Persian speakers in South Asia outnumbered those living in Persia itself by a factor of seven.[50]

As an example of this cosmopolitanism in the early modern period, one might consider Mughal painting since Akbar's era.[51] The aftereffects of Timur's domination of Central Asia and Persia during the latter half of the fourteenth century resulted in the development of "an entirely new visual language under which the Timurids articulated their monarchical claims, religious commitments, and personal glory."[52] This new visual language developed in sites such as the Timurid *kitabkhana* (royal bookmaking workshop), which functioned as a highly influential design studio, producing designs for architectural facades, carpets, and decorative objects, along with its central function of producing illustrated and illuminated manuscripts and albums (*muraqqaʿ*) composed of calligraphy and painting.[53] The status of the painter, which until the fifteenth century had been generally considered lower than that of the calligrapher, grew in importance.[54] The Persian artist Kamal al-Din Bihzad, who lived during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, has become legendary, and for modern intellectuals and artists, such as Iqbal, Chughtai, Sadequain, and Shakir Ali, Bihzad serves as an antonomastic figure characterizing perfection in the art of painting.[55] During the Safavid dynasty (1501–1722), which followed that of the Timurids, the general status of painting rose further and acquired greater diversity and a degree of independence as an autonomous medium, rather than remaining confined to its earlier role as textual illustration.[56]

It was this later Timurid and Safavid Persian element that was brought to India in 1555 by the second Mughal emperor, Humayun, on returning from his exile in Iran and Afghanistan during 1544–55. The Safavid court of Shah Tahmasp received Humayun during his exile, where the latter also recruited Persian artists. After Humayun's recapture of Delhi, these Persian artists settled in Delhi and helped to establish bookmaking ateliers and train local artists.[57] His successor, the emperor Akbar, greatly expanded the royal support of the ateliers, leading to the flowering of the highly influential school of Mughal painting and bookmaking, which was patronized by the next two emperors, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, through the mid-seventeenth century.[58] During Akbar's later years, the character of painting changed, becoming less action oriented and more subdued, more naturalist and realist. Mughal painters were also keenly interested in learning from European painting tra-

ditions brought to India by the Jesuits and European ambassadors, which demonstrates another facet of their cosmopolitan outlook.[59] As Gregory Minnisale has argued in an analysis of a manuscript illustrated under Akbar, the Mughal painting repertoire was expanded to include European techniques and motifs, now utilized in complex compositional and semantic structures leading to greater reflexivity of Mughal art. "The Mughal response to European art was not slavish imitation but creative reinvention," he notes.[60] During the reign of the emperor Jahangir (1605 to 1627), this trend toward naturalism continued; painting relied less on narrative from Akbar's early years and focused instead on the external observation of nature and the specificity of individual portraiture, in addition to allegorical portraits of the emperor, such as in *Jahangir Preferring a Sufi Shaikh to Kings* (ca. 1615–18) (Figure I.5).[61] By this time, the aesthetics of Mughal painting had departed considerably from its initial Persianized formal mannerisms, and individual styles of various painters were appreciated for their particularities and their realism.[62] The emperor Shah Jahan (reigned 1628 to 1658) patronized a type of elevated jewel-like self-presentation, in which his own portrait depicts a "flawless visual facade," characterized by formality, which "achieved a perfection that functioned as a kind of heraldic art."[63] Later Mughal painting thus emphasized individualism in portraiture in a double sense — in the personal style of the artist and in realist depiction of the subject. With the ascension of the more religiously conservative Aurangzeb to the Mughal throne, painting lost a great deal of royal patronage, starting around 1668; instead it witnessed a partial dispersal to regional courts, which led to its relay into regional schools of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[64]

Another example of Indo-Persian cosmopolitanism is the scientific and scholarly contributions of Persianate intellectuals during the eighteenth century, studied by Tavakoli-Targhi. He has shown that scholars based in India made key contributions to the study of comparative linguistics and religion that directly informed European scholars, but the contributions of these Persianate scholars were effaced during "the late eighteenth-century emergence of authorship as a principle of textual attribution and accreditation in Europe." In addition, Tavakoli-Targhi has traced the keen interest Persianate scholars (many traveling to Europe) demonstrated in European scientific, philosophical, and social developments. His work conclusively documents that cosmopolitan intellectual and cultural life in South Asia, specifically in scientific and literary spheres, contributed to wider Persianate currents that were not confined to political borders but that unfolded in a prolonged

period of interaction with West Asia and with an awareness of and openness to European developments.[65]

Beginning in the later eighteenth century, reform movements in South Asian Islam increasingly turned away from Persianized Sufism and modes of education toward creating a new modality based on the cultivation of individualized morality. Due to the loss of political power, Muslim identity could no longer be supported by state patronage. Two consequences were the massive translation of Arabic, Persian, and English classical, religious, and secular texts into Urdu printed books and the creation of new educational institutions in the nineteenth century. Francis Robinson has argued that the *ulama* were central to this reform effort, but the wider availability of classical works in printed Urdu and the political inability of any institution to enforce its juridical and moral imperatives led to a fracturing of religious authority, leading to the rise of numerous sectarian movements. Reformist movements also articulated critiques of literary Persian's rhetoric and mystical tropes, conducting a linked series of reforms targeting Muslim religious and secular intellectual life during the middle and later nineteenth century: propagating through print a modernized vernacular expression in Urdu, identifying with Arabicized rather than Persianized Islam, and developing a new mode of ethics and observance of religious life under the institutional and juridical framework of colonial modernity. The Urdu language itself underwent reformation in a dramatic manner from the middle of the nineteenth century, discarding elaborate Persian rhetorical flourishes, now reshaped by expressive and realist modes made available from English, which included the novel, journalism, and new poetic structures and images. Reformed Urdu spread by a vigorous program of lithographic print, which allowed for a massive increase in the number and range of books and newspapers published since the later nineteenth century. In the realm of the fine arts, the close of the nineteenth century saw the virtual demise of miniature painting traditions, shorn of their patronage by courts and by loss of their place in manuscript illustration, as manuscripts were fully displaced by inexpensive printed books created by lithography. Painters ended up either illustrating stereotypical Indian scenes for British souvenir albums or turned to oil and canvas–based styles of British academic portraiture.[66]

The availability of print in vernacular Indian languages also led to the precipitation of religious-based identities that were reinforced by the classificatory modes of colonial governmentality. Materially and educationally, the Muslims now perceived themselves as falling far behind Hindus and other

تہذیب کی گھوڑ دوڑ

انگریز۔ یہ تو ہوا سے باتیں کرتے ہیں۔ پارسی۔ غنیمت ہیں۔ بنگالی۔ سوق کے عوض چلی باندے کے پچھے پڑے ہیں۔ اگرچہ بٹھنا نہیں معلوم مگر کشتم پشتم چلے جاتے ہیں۔
مسلمان شہسوار۔ آپ کا دل تو چھلتا ہے مگر گھوڑا نہیں چلتا۔

FIGURE I.6. Horse Race towards Civilization, *illustration in* Oudh Punch, *1881.*
(From Archibald Constable, A Selection from the Illustrations Which Have Appeared
in the Oudh Punch from 1877 to 1881 *[1881], plate 14.)*

groups in India. In contrast to the Muslims, these other groups had confi-
dently emerged to take advantage of opportunities available under colonial
modernity, whether in government service or in trade. A cartoon in an 1881
issue of *Oudh Punch* sarcastically depicts this crystallization of communities
according to religion and ethnicity and their relative social status, in a *Horse
Race towards Civilization* (Figure I.6).[67] An Englishman, a Parsi, a Bengali
(Hindu), and a Muslim, arranged on a racetrack by order of superiority, are
depicted in stereotypical outfits and poses, racing on mounts whose bodily
postures indicate their relative swiftness. The caption asserts the following:

ENGLISHMAN: *Rides like the wind.*
PARSI: *In a fine state.*
BENGALI: *Although he doesn't quite know how to ride, he manages
with difficulty.*
MUSLIM KNIGHT: *His heart races, but his mount refuses to move.*

Although a Western-educated Muslim middle class did emerge in the later
nineteenth century, much of which was employed by the government, Mus-
lims continued to perceive themselves as trailing far behind the more edu-
cated and enterprising Parsi and Hindu communities. However, since the

later nineteenth century, better information and communication about the condition of Muslims in other regions of the world, especially those under or subject to British imperialism, and the increasing ease of travel under British rule helped to give rise to a reformulated transnational pan-Islamic consciousness, which created new imaginative and affiliative links among Muslims in India, Egypt, the Ottoman empire, and other areas.[68] Ironically, the quixotic and utopian character of pan-Islamism in India was a consequence precisely of the loss of Muslim political power. The Khilafat Movement (1919–24), the first mass movement in India in support of the Ottoman caliphate (a movement in which Gandhi played a major role), exemplifies an important expression of this pan-Islamic imaginary.[69] The poet Muhammad Iqbal's powerful articulation of an Islamic universalism during the first half of the twentieth century also shaped a cosmopolitan and universal consciousness in the Muslim intelligentsia.

Twentieth-century modernism in South Asian art developed with an awareness of the early modern Islamicate cosmopolitan world, but this relationship was also shaped by nineteenth- and early twentieth-century factors — the loss of symbols of political power in South Asia to colonialism beginning in the late eighteenth century, reaching its full dismemberment in the wake of the 1857 Mutiny, and the further loss of the external identificatory symbol of the Ottoman caliphate, which was dissolved in 1924. Twentieth-century artistic modernism revisits and renews the cosmopolitanism of the early modern era, but does so in a manner that self-consciously foregrounds the impossibility of inhabiting a continuous tradition. Rather than referencing the contemporary Muslim world beyond South Asia, especially when decolonization was beginning to bring about the rise of fractured and divided nation-states, South Asian Muslim modernist art draws selectively upon its own cosmopolitan tradition. Referencing this tradition involves a complex operation, in which tradition is lived and remembered practice in some cases, but is also available discursively, not only through the increasing availability of classical works in print but also as a result of orientalist art historical scholarship of Mughal and Islamic art. When drawing on modernist Western ideas and forms, South Asian Muslim modernism no longer participates as an equal, as might have been the case during the intellectual exchanges of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but does so from a position of institutional weakness.[70] Twentieth-century artistic cosmopolitanism not only references earlier cosmopolitanisms but also negotiates the poles of commensurability and participation in transnational modernism in an attempt to secure its own fraught location and voice.

Late colonialism and political decolonization beginning in the twentieth century were deeply laden for Muslims in South Asia. Unlike nationalist struggles in which the nation was coherently imagined, the pressure toward minoritization of South Asian Muslims and their increasing perception of powerlessness in the face of Indian and Hindu nationalism led them to occupy political positions that were divided and unstable. The Khilafat Movement quixotically attempted to prevent the demise of the Ottoman caliphate and eventually led to increased polarization between Muslims and Hindus; this interlude exemplifies the conflicted position of the Muslim intelligentsia. Many influential public figures supported the Khilafat Movement, but out of its crucible emerged diverse trajectories. Some later joined the Indian nationalist struggle; others emerged from the experience as separatists. Still others were deeply skeptical of the aims of the movement from the beginning. In a recent work, Ayesha Jalal has argued at length that from the late nineteenth century until 1947, key terms such as *millat* (community) and *qaum* (nation) were sites of an extended struggle among the intelligentsia, many of whom continued to shift their views as the onset of decolonization in 1947 loomed closer. Jalal has also shown that, until the 1940s, Mohammad Ali Jinnah's demand for political representation for Muslims was not necessarily intended to carve out a separate nation-state. The political partition of British India in 1947 was deeply bound up with the vexed question of choosing clear sides in this highly charged and contradictory social space.[71] Indeed, Jalal has argued persuasively for recognizing individualized understandings among the Muslim intelligentsia of their political and social roles, understandings that cannot be captured by official Indian and Pakistani nationalist accounts. Celebrated poets, such as Faiz Ahmad Faiz, who wrote a deeply ambivalent poem on the onset of independence of Pakistan in 1947 and who was jailed during the 1950s by the Pakistani government for conspiracy, were hardly nationalist in a simple sense.[72] Official Pakistani history has been narrowly ideological even as many members of its intelligentsia were more skeptical, but even Indian Muslim scholarship has been viewed as self-censorious since 1947.[73] Rather than seeing these equivocations and shifts—and even the propagandistic and blustery claims by intellectuals—as expressions of insincerity, it is better to understand their positions as struggles to align their aspirations with difficult political realities—especially as expressed in the nation-state formation—which failed to supply an adequate aspirational horizon for numerous South Asian Muslim intellectuals before *and* after 1947.[74] Essentially, Mus-

lims were eventually forced to choose between becoming a minority under Indian nationalism or having charge of their own backward space. The sense of minoritization here follows Aamir Mufti's account of "culture, language, community, and identity as irreducible processes inherent in the transition to modern forms of culture and society, . . . a continuing process and recurring application of pressure at numerous points across the social field."[75] And Vazira Zamindar's research has shown how both India and Pakistan since 1947 deployed a set of elaborate — and often Kafkaesque — bureaucratic and juridical regimes over several years to sort out the paradoxes and contestations of residence, property, and citizenship, in order to establish "proper" national affiliation and belonging.[76]

Since the publication of Benedict Anderson's influential *Imagined Communities* in 1983, scholarship on nationalism has explored the distinctively imagined character of the idea of a nation.[77] Pakistan offers both an especially vivid example and a pointed counterexample in this regard. It openly betrays the constructed and contingent nature of the "national" even as it disputes many of Anderson's theses, especially his contention that the modern nation is a universal, secularized formation. This is especially evident when one undertakes a comparative analysis of the national question in India and in Pakistan, which have developed in markedly different ways. David Ludden has pointed out that the word "India" conflates the sense of India as a "civilizational entity" with the sense of India as a "nation-state."[78] This conflation has never been available in the appellation "Pakistan." To be a "Pakistani" is to evoke only the second of these identifications — a political affiliation to a crisis-ridden state. Indian and Pakistani nationalisms are not equivalent, and Pakistani art is marked by this qualitative difference. This renders the idea of "Pakistani-ness" as not so much civilizational as merely political and is thus much less resonant as an identifying marker than "Indian-ness." Recent scholarship has reopened the question of the problematic intersection of nationalism and identity. In the context of the imagined character of nationalism, the use of the term "Pakistan" to mean a nation (rather than to mean a state) is particularly slippery. To briefly summarize the historical context, Pakistan was carved out of British India in 1947. It was composed of the geographically divided East and West Pakistan, with the territory of Kashmir in dispute with India. The partition of British India led to massive migrations and set the stage for a series of hostile encounters between Pakistan and India, which still continue to take place as violent exchanges — in the form of hot and cold war, clandestine operations, and physical, rhetorical, and symbolic struggles.[79] The founding of Pakistan failed to resolve persistent quan-

daries about the position of Muslims in South Asia, a population that was now divided into three equal parts in West Pakistan, East Pakistan, and India after its 1947 independence. Pakistan experienced further loss of people and territory when the East Pakistan wing, containing the majority of the population, seceded in 1971 to form Bangladesh—following widespread civil unrest, its brutal suppression by the (overwhelmingly West) Pakistani army, and the breakout of war between India and Pakistan. The formation of Bangladesh immediately led to the further movement of refugees and migrants back and forth between the three countries and abroad. These losses have continued to exert a major, if unacknowledged, force on many intellectuals, including artists like Shakir Ali. Therefore, in the last six decades, the answer to the question of who a Pakistani might be has seen at least two large-scale shifts, and the ambiguities and hesitancies subsumed under the "national" have played out only too openly.

The persistence of difficult relations between India and Pakistan is thus symptomatic of the vexed issue of Muslim identity in modern South Asia, which affects the nature of Pakistani identity and makes any simple ascription of national affiliation deeply problematic.[80] Indeed, David Gilmartin has argued that the contradictions of the Pakistan nation-state project and the difference between the aspirations of its citizens and the goals of the elite "points us back to the continuing power in the modern world of the medieval models of state-society relations that defined Islam as a networked civilization."[81] Pakistani artists could not ignore the power wielded by the state, of course, especially during the first four decades of the country's independence. Even while artists were insufficiently interpellated into state ideology, they nevertheless relied upon the financial, institutional, and symbolic support that the Pakistani state provided—unsystematic patronage that depended on the individual relationship between state functionaries and the artist. This relationship is specific to each artist and is discussed in greater length in individual chapters.[82]

Due to minority status in India and Muslim memory of belonging to the larger Muslim world during the early modern Persianate and Islamicate cosmopolitanism and since the later nineteenth century under pan-Islamic movements, South Asian Muslim experience differs from other experiences of nationalism. In Pakistan, at least, none of the representational vehicles of imagination identified by Benedict Anderson—national language, the novel, census, map, and museum—are fully valid. For example, the insistence on Urdu as the national language, spoken by a minority of Pakistanis in 1947,

was in fact instrumental in the breakup of Pakistan in 1971 and continues to exacerbate ethnic tensions. No great national Pakistani novel exists in Urdu; indeed, Aamir Mufti has argued that Urdu literature in the twentieth century, as a minority artifact, excelled in fragmentary and extremely short forms that refused to offer a totalizing narrative.[83] Census remains a fraught undertaking in Pakistan due to tensions between ethnic groups. The map of Pakistan is not primordial in any sense; British colonial officials unacquainted with India drew it up only a few months before partition in 1947. Moreover, the loss of East Pakistan in 1971 and the ongoing Kashmir dispute continue to haunt the map of Pakistan. It is therefore not surprising that "the writing of history has been an important critical activity to the making of the nation in modern India," as Vazira Zamindar notes, "in striking contrast to Pakistan."[84] Finally, the museum as a repository of the national past has been a resounding failure in Pakistan because of its irrelevance to public life and because many of the most important monuments and treasures of Muslim heritage, such as the Taj Mahal and illuminated manuscripts, are primarily situated in India or housed in Western collections. "Pakistan" has thus largely failed to provide an adequate cultural aspiration for many of its intellectuals.

For all the above reasons, modernist art in Pakistan did not simply work out an agenda framed by nationalism, unlike perhaps Indian modern art, as Geeta Kapur has persuasively argued.[85] And while a case may be made for considering Indian Muslim artists, such as Maqbool Fida Husain, as primarily addressing the Indian national imaginary, such a case is infinitely more difficult to make for most Pakistani artists, certainly for the artists discussed in this book, who adopted a studied distance from Pakistani nationalism and have largely eschewed direct identification with it. Even in cases when the artist is patronized by the Pakistani state, the addressee is hardly ever the nation. Rather, these artists availed of the opening toward reflexivity and articulation of an alternative universe offered by transnational modernism but also investigated possibilities in the cosmopolitanism of early modern and modern South Asian culture. As Altieri has pointed out, modernism should not be understood as representing social formations or as finding a constituted addressee. Rather, modernist "works of art possess reality rather than refer to it."[86] But exploration of an alternative aesthetic and phenomenological world was available not only via modernism. Apart from textual and discursive referents, "Islamic art," a relatively new discipline, also provided another discursive "tradition."

This book also undertakes to reformulate current scholarly ideas regarding *modern* Islamic art. The term "Islamic art" is arguably a catachrestic signifier (without adequate referent) even for the premodern era; it covers a vast geographic area for a period exceeding a millennium and is not primarily seen as a religious art, or even as made by or for Muslims, in this respect being "quite different from terms such as 'Buddhist art' or 'Christian art,' which are generally reckoned to deal specifically with the art of faith."[87] And, apart from architecture, its significant genres, which include calligraphy and the applied arts (for example, bookmaking, metalwork, ceramics, and textiles), fail to line up with primary Western fine art categories of sculpture and painting.

Even more significant is the question of Islamic art's conceptual legitimacy, for it is emphatically not a term that emerges from within Islamicate intellectual history—"the concept of a universalist 'Islamic art' remains specific to the West."[88] The term emerged fairly recently in the West through the activities of connoisseurs and orientalists since the mid-nineteenth century. Unlike literature and poetry, whose development and analysis can be undertaken by a critical examination of conceptions from within Islamicate intellectual life, there is no significant aesthetic theory that might inform the majority of what we consider to be Islamic art.[89] Although scholars have attempted to articulate the philosophical and aesthetic principles underlying Islamic architecture, applied arts, and painting, these are largely conceptions not found within the tradition itself. Moreover, these efforts have been partial and tendentious and have not succeeded in grounding the field with any degree of coherence. In the absence of internal criteria, Western connoisseurship and orientalist scholarship have defined the field, with the following implications:

1. Until recently, collection and display of Islamic art was largely a Western enterprise. Moreover, with the emergence of nationalism during the twentieth century, nation-states valorized the ancient past—Egyptian, Hittite, and Assyrian—more than objects and buildings from the Islamic era. This led to the neglect of Islamic art in national collections—and even when such objects were displayed, they tended to be seen as part of national histories. In his 1993 review essay on the field, Oleg Grabar noted, "Only in Cairo was there a building for what was then called 'Arab art' but even today, it is hardly ever on the map of mass tourist visits." Until very recently, much of the intelligentsia

in the Muslim world was simply not very interested in the category of Islamic art.[90]

2. Many Islamic art objects were meant to serve as useful implements: "Unlike much art in other traditions, whose primary character is its inutility, much Islamic art involves transformation of everyday utilitarian objects into works of art, often through decoration."[91] Similar objects could also be bought as crafts and souvenirs in bazaars: "Islamic art was transformed into the art of the 'natives'"[92] and became subject to what Grabar has characterized as the "Orientalist effect," which he identifies as "a perception which keeps comparing it to Western European art and to set up the paradigms for its evaluation by defining it in terms of Vitruvius, Alberti, Vasari, Focillon or Wolfflin or else envisaging it exclusively in archaeological terms. . . . Orientalism fostered single explanations for an art without the full credentials of Western art. Calligraphy, the arabesque, geometry, nomadic memories of textiles, unity in form and purpose, these are only some of the slogans around which an immense variety of experiences found simple explanations and . . . has had the tragic result of limiting the intellectual range with which the study and understanding of Islamic art was undertaken."[93]

3. Islamic art is seen by scholars of its classical period to have definitively ended by the nineteenth century.[94] "Islam continues to be a major force in world events, but Islamic art is generally said to have ended at the beginning of the nineteenth century with the advent of European colonialism and the emergence of distinct national identities."[95] Not coincidentally, this is precisely the period that sees the rise of the orientalist study of Islamic art, when Western society was undergoing the process of industrial modernization. The field is thus constructed as part of a long-standing Western scholarly assumption that structures other geographic and cultural domains in art history, in which all artistic traditions—other than the Western—have definitively come to crisis in modernity.[96] But one wonders how Islam can continue to exert a "major force" in the modern world without enacting itself in material and representational contexts.

4. As a result of this Western construction of the field of Islamic art and the absence of an aesthetic theory anchoring the field, the categories that describe Islamic art are essentially without discursive ground, unlike classical literature and poetry, for which a rich set of concepts are available under the umbrella of *adab* (humanism) and exegetical ana-

Iftikhar Dadi, Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia (University of North Carolina Press 2010)

lyses of poetic and literary tropes.[97] Accounts of individual artists and architects are exceedingly rare. Indeed, in a review essay on the field published in 2003, Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom report that "there has never been a major exhibition devoted to any individual artist from the [classical] Muslim world."[98] The difference in status between Islamic art and Western art could not be more glaring—one cannot imagine a major period of Western art that failed to generate a single exhibition catalog on its individual artists. This absence of subjectivity in classical Islamic art is also very evident in the difference between the manner in which Islamic art and literatures have been studied; again, one cannot imagine even cursorily looking through classical Arabic, Persian, and Urdu literatures without encountering dozens of individual authors, each exhibiting their characteristic literary and poetic style. Partial exceptions to this anonymity are in the fields of architecture, painting, and calligraphy. But even in the case of architecture, the only category of "Islamic art" that can be considered on par with the Western hierarchy of fine art, lack of subjectivity remains the norm. Robert Hillenbrand, who has noted in his 2003 review essay that "Islamic architectural history is a field invented by Westerners and cast in Western terms," pointedly claims: "Even though hundreds and hundreds of Islamic architects left their signatures on their buildings, those buildings might just as well have been signed by Joe Bloggs; for the indispensable biographical information, the kind of thing that Vasari gives us so prodigally, is simply unavailable. These are effectively anonymous buildings."[99] In the case of Mughal painting, one sees the development of individual stylistic markers during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as well as a growing sense of a type of realism in depiction. Calligraphy possesses elaborate stylistic genealogical histories, as well as interpretive schemas derived from poetic and Sufi metaphors.[100] Calligraphy could have attained an individualized "artistic" status in the Western sense, but its importance has not been central to the category of Islamic art because it has largely been an orientalist project.[101] Nevertheless, in the early modern era in the Persianate and South Asian world, a process of individuation can be traced, both as personal subjective expression of the creator and in allowing greater possibilities of depicting an individual through representation. This process will be of signal importance to modernist artists, as argued in chapter 3.

5. Analysis of Islamic art has varied from universalist assumptions de-

rived from "perennial philosophy" approaches claiming how Islamic art embodies the unity of Islam and the oneness of God,[102] to accounts that describe artifacts specific to regions and dynasties, to their delineation by materials and media. Other scholars have attempted to map specific ornamental motifs as functioning as semiotic markers that signify shifts in patronage and power.[103] Structural taxonomies are also offered and cohere around a limited number of themes, such as "calligraphy, geometry, the arabesque and the treatment of figuration" in a 1976 exhibition. Similar organizing principles of "figures, writing, geometry, and vegetation and the arabesque," along with a "hybrid section" that incorporates more than one theme, have been proffered for a 2006 exhibition titled Cosmophilia.[104] The latter term is a coinage by the curators, denoting "the love of ornament,"[105] which, according to the catalog essay, serves as a sort of supercategory denoting the distinctiveness of Islamic art.[106] But, despite the importance that the curators accord to ornament, and for which they provide a further taxonomy of ten aspects (color, symmetry, and repetition among them), they nevertheless remain unable to provide an adequate aesthetic and philosophical ground: "Does all this visual delight have some deeper significance or is it all just superficial candy for the eye?"[107] This telling observation is not due to lack of study and reflection on the part of the curators, who are distinguished specialists in the field, but rather is characteristic of the constructed and "groundless" nature of the discipline itself.

To sum up, the study of Islamic art has historically been primarily a Western scholars' and connoisseurs' endeavor, one that remains unable to situate a discursive ground in the Islamicate tradition. The anthropologist Talal Asad has articulated the idea of "Islamic tradition" as a discursive practice open to contestation and debate, a conception that fosters a very different understanding of the relation between tradition and modernity than simple opposition between them. Summarizing some of the implications of Asad's approach, Ovamir Anjum notes: "The most fascinating questions about any contemporary Muslim society, those of reform, revival, modernity, and tradition, cannot even begin to be addressed until the mutual interaction of the Muslim world within the framework of a global Islamic discursive tradition is accounted for. And hence the idea of discursive tradition, which by definition is attuned to the idea of teaching and argument through time, becomes capable of transcending local dimensions and encompassing various Islamic

spaces."[108] The "problem" for modern Muslim artists, however, is precisely that such a tradition is lacking in the visual arts but is displaced toward literature or available primarily via orientalist projections. This lack is not necessarily disabling, however, as it permitted artists to explore the self in relation to modernity and tradition in a more open and experimental fashion.

Because the study of Islamic art unfolded in close association with orientalism, Islamic art was also compared unfavorably with the development of Western art, because it was not seen to privilege figuration and largely did not participate in codes of illusionism and representation based on Renaissance principles of perspective and modeling. Rather, Islamic art created decoration and ornament on utilitarian objects, which caused them to be seen as mostly applied art rather than fine art, under Western artistic schemas. Moreover, Islamic art has been viewed as having definitively ended by the beginning of the nineteenth century, resulting in approaches that are based in archaeology, taxonomy, or connoisseurship—all of which create the sense of allochronism of Islamic art and deny its coevality in relation to Western modernity.[109] Here, more scholarly attention to transformations of material and visual cultures in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is clearly needed. New architectural forms, the rise of print culture and mass culture, and the advent of new reproductive and representational technologies have meant that many so-called Islamic visual forms are more prevalent than ever. For example, calligraphy is arguably more dynamic today than in the past, and it is deployed in inventive ways in signage, print, and advertising. Yet these manifestations are seldom characterized as being part of Islamic art.

Moreover, at the beginning of the twentieth century, post-cubist art in the West finally broke itself away from the illusionist practices that had characterized Western art since the Renaissance. As Greenberg has argued, modernist painting no longer offered up a window to the world but rather became a reflexive practice that articulated its values in relation to the flatness of the picture plane. This brings transnational modernism much closer to the nonprojective surfaces of Islamic art, and indeed it is no accident that modernism cut its teeth on a complex and sustained engagement with Islamic and other non-Western aesthetics. The influence of Japanese woodblock prints on the postimpressionists, the influence of Theosophy, Anthroposophy, and Zen on abstract painters, the influence of African sculpture on the development of cubism, the influence of Islamic decoration on Matisse, and the influence of calligraphy on Paul Klee provide only a few such examples.[110]

Adolf Loos famously declared that modern man's love of ornament was a

sign of his criminality and degeneracy.[111] There are any number of thematic and formal ways by which modernism strove very hard to distinguish itself from simply being equated with decoration and ornament.[112] Abstraction attempted this by including within it the trace of the brush (as in abstract expressionism), and Matisse attempted it by facture, the retention of the figure, and the denial of exact symmetry, which mitigated against the reduction of the painted surface to "merely" being a decorated surface. Modernism was more invested than ever in fine art being resolutely separate from everyday life, of being conducive to disinterested observation and contemplation, and of possessing no use value. Finally, the subjectivity of the modernists acquires a central value. In this respect, much classical Islamic art, to the degree that it is anonymous and utilitarian, is clearly not modernist. But as Altieri observed in his critique of T. J. Clark, "Clark is clearly right to point to modernism's constantly being haunted by fears of thinness and shrillness and decorativeness and, above all, of not having sufficient social weight for its imaginings. Yet the modernists were at their thinnest and most shrill when they tried to supply discursive models for those grounds."[113] Following Altieri's observation, one can state that it is precisely the absence of a prior discursive ground for classical Islamic art and its arbitrarily orientalist construction that allows one to posit a critical genealogy of a *modern* Islamic art. Discursive and aesthetic ground is precisely what South Asian Muslim modernist *practice* ceaselessly seeks but never quite finds; it is what characterizes its modernism. Clearly its contingency also has certain advantages in terms of affording a relatively open and unconstrained relationship with its own tradition, and with transnational modernism.

Any attempt to delineate the nature of modern Islamic art would also have to account for Oleg Grabar's meditations on the task of describing the nature of Islamic art in his influential work, *The Formation of Islamic Art*. In the second edition of the book, published in 1987, Grabar suggests that the problem of articulating a cultural identity for modern and contemporary Muslim countries—which remain under the cultural influence exerted by the West— might be comparable to the delineation of an "Islamic" art during the seventh and eighth centuries. Specifically, Grabar argues that early Islamic art developed by rejecting overt symbolic and iconological aims, developing instead a flexible, mobile, and abstract system of ornamentation that drew upon older pre-Islamic forms but stripped them of their prior symbolic import.[114] The flexibility of this mode of ornamental practice meant that works derived from this "syntactic" mode endured over a long temporal span across diverse cul-

tural and historical formations, and it is precisely this mode of practice that delineates the "Islamic" character of what we generally understand today as premodern Islamic art.

Although Grabar's provocative reading of the contemporary challenge posed by modernity in conjunction with the formative period of the seventh and eighth centuries needs further reflection, one might argue that the challenge posited by modernity is, in fact, not comparable to the premodern. The direction and thrust of modern art marks a decisive break from premodern art—and certainly from much of premodern Islamic art—in that, for modern art, the artist-subject's existential or conceptual explorations are foregrounded. The second problem inheres in the very understanding of the "modern" as constant transformation and upheaval, which compels one to go beyond reductive typologies of form in attempting to characterize "modern Islamic art," such as calligraphy, historical and folk motifs, arabesque patterns, or geometric abstraction.[115] An understanding of the "modern" as a dynamic process, however, brings to crisis any fixity of form, technique, style, or signification. Nevertheless, Grabar's insistence on the primacy of syntax, structure, or idea over form in early Islamic art remains a useful reminder in articulating a relationship between Islamic art and modernism.

In light of my observations above, I argue that it is more productive to understand modern Islamic art from an *antifoundationalist* standpoint than to seek to secure its ontological status in an originary discursive ground based on primary texts or concepts. Rather than a descriptive marker denoting a fixed typology of objects and artists, the term is employed here as conceptual and intellectual provocation in relation to the analysis of modern and contemporary art. Modern Islamic art should be viewed as a shifting terrain of struggle and contestation between artistic projects that reconfigure "tradition" and critics who seek to understand their work. In this spirit, the following theses on modern Islamic art in South Asia relevant to the artists examined in this book are offered:

1. Modern Islamic art no longer remains purely decorative or ornamental. Artists deny pure decoration through various strategies. Figurative painters in dialogue with Mughal painting, such as Chughtai, develop stylistic markers that foreground their idiosyncratic styles, as argued in chapter 1. Zubeida Agha's paintings develop toward a jewel-like ornamental surface, but the ornament is fractured and nonrepetitive, as demonstrated in chapter 2. Calligraphers such as Sadequain do not

write traditional calligraphic scripts but imbue them with negativity and post-cubist figuration and abstraction, as examined in chapter 3.

2. The need for subjectivity in modernism is central, and the development of strategies that foreground subjective expression is marked in the works considered here and follows as a consequence of negating the artisanal anonymity assigned to classical Islamic art-as-craft. This is manifested in qualities such as incompleteness, distortion, tactility of the surface, and impermanence. Individual chapters discuss how artists deploy these values.

3. Artists recode and reterritorialize the traditional "slogans" that stereotypically characterize Islamic art, such as miniature painting, calligraphy, and ornament. Artists inherit these as lived practices in some cases (Chughtai, Sadequain) and seek to understand their relationship to the past through discursive articulations. These include relationships to literary and poetic aesthetics—such as those marking the works of poets such as Ghalib, Iqbal, and Hali—and through the stock categories by which orientalist scholarship has fashioned the field of Islamic art since the nineteenth century.

4. Artists also bring new values to their works, derived not only from transnational modernism and avant-gardist practices but also from recodings of the Islamic past. For example, Oleg Grabar has suggested that classical Islamic art "provided equal value to everything that was or could be represented," which I understand as the working over of an entire surface, without greater emphasis on a specific area or visual trope, and a refusal to privilege the figure over the ground.[116] He has also perceptively noted: "Works of Islamic art made it possible to imagine a beautiful setting for one's life without requiring the expensive materials. . . . These skills of make-believe in the industrial arts served to demonstrate that nothing is permanent except God, that it is immoral to invest in rich materials, and there should be as few distinctions as possible between what is available to the rich and what comes to the poor."[117] Grabar reads values of equality and justice, which many consider to be central values in Islam, as arguably present in classical Islamic art, but as a formal property rather than by depiction of a theme or subject matter.[118] Projects of social justice have increasingly become important to artists such as Rasheed Araeen, for which a precedent is arguably only obliquely present in classical Islamic art.[119] Artists create a new relationship with social critique, in

sympathy with literary developments since the 1930s by South Asian progressive writings — to which Muslim intellectuals made a foundational and indispensable contribution. Zainul Abedin's drawings documenting the Bengal Famine in 1943 expressed social concerns early on (chapter 3), but generally this book argues that the "progressive" haunted the modernist artists for several decades and resurfaces in the populist dimensions of the reception of Sadequain's works, the critical practices of Rasheed Araeen, and the contemporary feminist art of Naiza Khan.

5. Artists enrich the "tradition" of Islamic art by bringing in new themes absent or avoided in premodern Islamic art — as evidenced by the racialized symbolic and physical violence in the works of Rasheed Araeen and the feminist concerns regarding the carnality and fleshiness of the body, as in the works of Naiza Khan (chapter 4). This awareness of the female body draws from Western contemporary feminist art but also from reformist Islamic movements in South Asia since the nineteenth century that have sought to refashion the female body and women's moral and intellectual character. In this sense, the female body finally emerges in "Islamic" art as a problematic in itself rather than remaining a decorative motif.

This book offers an understanding of the works of the artists examined here as selectively drawing from Islamicate discursive literary and lived traditions and from the understanding of Islamic art offered by Western orientalist scholarship and also in affirmative affiliation with transnational modernism. As we have seen, the resources offered by the tradition of Islamic art were primarily formalist, resources that were recoded by these artists to fashion them to be relevant for modernity. As such, the readings offered here discuss how the national and the social press against artistic form and how critics understood these experiments. Since the 1920s, the artists included in this book have reworked fundamental categories characterizing the study of classical Islamic arts — architecture, miniature painting, ornament, and calligraphy — via the formal and procedural openings afforded by transnational modernism.

Roxanne Euben has reminded us that all genealogies are selective; accordingly, this book offers no attempt to provide a comprehensive or axiomatic definition of modernism in relation to Islamic art,[120] nor does it offer "complete" readings of the artists, whose complex projects are not exhausted by the frameworks deployed here. It traces only one genealogy — the emergence

of the artistic self in relation to tradition and society. Moreover, the relation between subjectivity and society is neither teleological nor continuous in a historicist sense. But instead it is a difficult and interruptive praxis that seeks to metaphorically articulate imaginings of the past and the future against the realist simplifications of the "progressive" left and the reductive rightist ideologies of nationhood and political Islam. Nevertheless, artists have remained engaged with the quandaries of inhabiting modernity as Muslims—not primarily in matters of core belief or ritual, but as a historically shifting and contested marker of modern sociocultural identity. Significantly, all the artists examined in this study also problematize aspects of gender and sexuality, which, although not fully explored here, is clearly worthy of further investigation. Even artists of the earlier decades, who were hardly informed by feminist perspectives and gender theory, connoted crises of masculinity or gender ambiguity by their examination of tradition and of the self. This was set against an official Pakistani nationalism that was aggressively masculinist. In this sense, Muslim South Asian modernism offers lines of departure in reimagining sex and gender roles of the modern psychic and social self.

The subjectivities traced here are also not reducible to other political and ethical formations, which require other accounts, keeping in mind that genealogies are fragmentary, partial, and without locatable origin. Wendy Brown has perceptively observed: "Various marked subjects are created through very different kinds of powers—not just different powers. That is, subjects of gender, class, nationalist, race, sexuality, and so forth, are created through different histories, different mechanisms and sites of power, different discursive formations, different regulatory schemes."[121] Indeed, an antifoundationalist approach to modern Islamic art suggests that other regions of the Muslim world have traversed trajectories not identical to those analyzed in this study, and for which modern Islamic art may not necessarily provide an effective analytical framework. But this book does stake a claim for deploying the terms "modernism" and "cosmopolitanism" and also "modern Islamic art" as marking the works of the artists examined here, in order to delineate their complex engagement with tradition and modernity. It advances the case for rethinking South Asian Muslim modernism as characterized by continuity/rupture and commensurability/alterity.

Chapter 1 analyzes the works and writings of the artist Abdur Rahman Chughtai (1894–1975) in the context of Mughal, Persian, Central Asian, and generally "oriental" nostalgia. Chughtai's deep commitment to a reworking of Mughal aesthetics includes his important writings on Mughal painting that

challenge the influential nativist Indian and Hindu nationalism articulated by Ananda Coomaraswamy. Chughtai's paintings deploy, but also deviate from, the formal language of the Bengal School of Painting based in Calcutta. His assertions of difference between the Bengal School and what he characterizes as the Lahore School are an imaginative effort to ground his work as an authentic modern re-creation of Mughal painting. Chughtai's work is situated with reference to his own writings and those by other critics and scholars, which began a process of Urdu writings on art history and visual aesthetics. Chughtai's nostalgia is projected on earlier Islamicate and Persianate cosmopolitanism, and it de-emphasizes identification with modern nationalism. Although mostly unsigned and undated, they nevertheless remain marked by his signature style, suggesting that the artist is present as a modern subject in his work but also partakes of history beyond individuation, thus incorporating aporias of subjectivity into his reworking of Mughal paintings. Chughtai was innovative in seeking new audiences for his work at a time when exhibition venues were limited. Accordingly, he is best known not for his individual paintings but through the publication of illustrated works of the poetry of Ghalib (1928) and Iqbal (1968) and also by his illustrations on the covers of various literary journals. While not *modernist* himself, Chughtai's contribution to *modernity* includes his stress on artistic individualism, which enacts a transition toward modernism proper by the next generation of artists. His reworking of miniature painting also forms an important precedent for the revival of contemporary miniature painting in Lahore since the 1990s.

Chapter 2 examines three pioneering modernists in Pakistan—Zainul Abedin, Shakir Ali, and Zubeida Agha. All are key institution builders and, unlike Chughtai, have little use for the precedent of miniature painting. Zainul Abedin (1914–76) was based in Calcutta until 1947. His work first attracted public attention in 1943 when he produced a powerful series of drawings of the Bengal Famine. Following national independence, he became founder-principal of the Institute of Fine Arts in Dacca in 1947, which was considered the finest art school in Pakistan's early years, although the "Bengali difference" in his work and the work of other East Pakistani artists, as an aesthetic separate from the development of art in the Western wing, was already noted by observers, and this chapter analyzes writings by critics to demonstrate how Abedin negotiated this difference. His later works, with their ornamental and decorative rhythms that lyrically depict the ethnic primitivism of the Santhal Hill tribes, forge an aesthetic link between the subnational and the cross-national, bypassing the national altogether (Plate 5). By contrast, Zubeida Agha (1922–97), whose works first engage with transnational modernism in

Pakistan, painted largely in seclusion. Her concerns included an intellectual engagement with Greek philosophy, classical Western music, the study of mysticism, and a fascination with the urban. Her later paintings vacillate between depiction and abstraction but are characterized above all by dazzling colorist and decorative motifs (Plates 7, 8). Following Oleg Grabar's conception of ornament as mediation, this chapter argues that Agha's nonrepetitive and fractured ornamental aesthetic, characterized by asymmetry, provides a broken screen upon which modernist individuality is projected and thus marks consequential estrangement of the individual from easy identification with the nation-state. Shakir Ali (1916–75), who arrived in Lahore after training in Europe, introduced cubism to Pakistan in the 1950s. Despite his "progressive" leftist formation, he refused the language of realism and focused on formalism. As principal of the influential National College of Art in Lahore during the 1960s, his example and his teaching helped establish modernism in Lahore and Karachi. His modernist works and writings on aesthetics, suffused with German romanticism and Sufi spiritualism, nevertheless stress the cosmopolitanism of artistic modernism and its freedom from confining nationalist and religious frameworks. He also executed an important series of calligraphic paintings, fashioning an overt link with Islamic art. The three artists are foundational in introducing modernism into Pakistan and for shaping a fully modernist artistic subjectivity for themselves and, by their institutional labor, for subsequent artists.

The celebrated Pakistani artist Sadequain (1930–87), who introduced calligraphic motifs in his modernist paintings and drawings, is considered in chapter 3. His residence in Paris during the 1960s is of fundamental importance for the development of his calligraphic concerns. By the early 1960s, Sadequain's works foregrounded the artist-and-model genre, which investigates the reflexive question incessantly asked by the modern artist: What to paint and how? This question is immeasurably more difficult for an artist from the periphery to answer—in Sadequain's case, if he had depended only upon the conception of modern art as a European formation. But Sadequain was led back to calligraphy and Urdu poetry. By the late 1960s, Sadequain's work was relaying classical, poetic, and textual notions of subjectivity, available to Urdu poetry, into the visual, especially in poet Muhammad Iqbal's Sufi, Nietzschean, and Bergsonian ideas of dynamism and heroic subjectivity (Plate 12). In this process, Sadequain reformulated classical calligraphy as a viable visual "tradition" open to the modern artist, a maneuver that parallels the rise of calligraphic abstraction by other artists in West Asia and North Africa. Sadequain is also distinctive for continually seeking a broader audi-

ence for his works. His zeal in executing large public murals, his roadside displays of art, and his successful popularization of calligraphic paintings created new relays between the artist and an expanded public. This chapter also examines these new relationships that emerged during the course of Sadequain's career.

Chapter 4 situates the work of two artists who have moved to a contemporary modality of artistic practice, which insistently maps aporias and dislocations of the present era. Rasheed Araeen was born in Karachi in 1935 and studied civil engineering, but he was deeply interested in art and moved to England in 1964 to pursue his career. His early Karachi works show some correspondences with those of his contemporaries but include a sense of rhythm and process that he continued to develop later. His works from the mid- and later 1960s are aligned with avant-garde movements such as fluxus, minimalism, installation, and performance but emphasize values of process and equality made visible by decolonization. By the early 1970s, Araeen was thoroughly politicized by the institutional racism of the art establishment in Britain, and he was involved with the wider issues of race, class, and the perpetuation of Western imperialist legacies. He joined the Black Panther movement, and in 1989 he founded the journal *Third Text*, which remains a leading journal devoted to postcolonial critiques of art and culture. This chapter demonstrates how his later works and activities mark a return to direct social engagement. Many of his works, such as his *Paki Bastard* performance (1977), provocatively challenge white supremacy and Eurocentrism by foregrounding racism and the ensuing production of incommensurability between immigrants to the United Kingdom and larger British society. His self-portraits composed of Urdu letters, *Ethnic Drawings* (1982) (Figure 4.7), and *The Golden Verses* (1990) billboard (Plate 15), composed of Urdu text, are prescient in forging a critical public self in an era of the increased visibility of Muslims in media since the late 1970s. Educated in the United Kingdom, the Karachi-based artist Naiza Khan (born 1968) has developed her artistic practice through a persistent meditation on the female body, producing an extended series of works exploring its sensuality, but also its weight, its opacity, and its recalcitrance in relation to the social order. Naiza Khan's works are articulated primarily by the practice of studio drawing and printmaking and are supplemented by a self-imposed, limited use of nontraditional media, such as latex, organza, and henna paste. She earlier made a series of works with reference to the poet Hali's famous epic, *The Flow and Ebb of Islam* (1879). In her project *Henna Hands* (1997–2003), Khan draws screen-printed ornamental nude female figures using henna paste on Karachi streets in an effort to

address an expanded public sphere in which the studio-based language of high art enters into a spirited dialogue with gendered everyday life (Plate 17). Her recent work is even more provocative—for example, in her exhibition of hard and unyielding metal bodily implements such as chastity belts, metal corsets, and lingerie made with steel in the project titled *Heavenly Ornaments* (2005–8). These works were created while the artist was pursuing the study of one of the most important texts of reformist Islam in South Asia—*Heavenly Ornaments*, by Ashraf Ali Thanawi, written a century earlier but still widely considered to contain indispensable moral advice for young women. The association of such charged objects with the Islamic discursive tradition suggests that the tension between the demands of the social order and the intractability of the body has sharpened considerably in the artist's recent work. In this sense, the female body finally becomes visible in Muslim South Asian art as a problematic in itself, rather than simply remaining a decorative motif. Moreover, Khan's engagement marks an attempt by emergent contemporary practice to address the growing strength of scripturalist Islam in Pakistan and indeed in the global arena.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. This is in reference to West Pakistan. Aziz Ahmad, "Cultural and Intellectual Trends in Pakistan," 42.

2. For a succinct yet cogent explanation of these terms and their implications for South Asia, see Lawrence, "Islamicate Civilization: The View from Asia."

3. For example, in the writings of Gayatri Spivak, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Naoki Sakai, and others.

4. Santiago Colas's caveat is apt: "I want at this point to comment on my own use of terms such as 'Third World' and 'First World.' I would be far from the first to question the utility or desirability of such broad and homogenizing terms. And indeed, they can be used only with a continual awareness of their inadequacies, most important among these that they overlook the heterogeneity that exists within those massive geographical areas they designate. . . . If we cannot yet do without such unsatisfactory terms, then we need not resign ourselves to an unreflexive use of them." Colas, "The Third World in Jameson's Postmodernism," 259.

5. The term "modernism at large" is very relevant, as it neatly sidesteps the increasingly fruitless debate over whether modernity/modernism are singular formations or multiple/vernacular. Huyssen, "Geographies of Modernism," 194.

6. Apart from the useful survey text by Wijdan Ali, *Modern Islamic Art*, scholars have largely examined modern art from the Muslim world within national frameworks. Representative studies include Karnouk, *Modern Egyptian Art*; Winegar, *Creative Reckonings*; Naef, *A la recherche d'une modernité Arabe*; Faraj, *Strokes of Genius*; and Balaghi and Gumpert, *Picturing Iran*. Many of these are exhibition catalogs, which document important neglected materials and also advance useful methodological arguments. However, due to their limited length and scope, they are no substitute for academic studies offering extended critical consideration of geographically situated modernisms in relation to the intellectual history of the Muslim world. Catalogs on modern and contemporary Islamic art include Daftari, *Without Boundary*; and Venetia Porter, *Word into Art*.

7. The term "transnational modernism" here refers to Paris- and New York–based artistic movements since the later nineteenth century, such as the artists generally subsumed under the term "School of Paris," including Cezanne, Picasso, and Matisse. It extends to pre– and post–World War II movements based in Europe and the United States. It also broadly characterizes metropolitan avant-gardist artistic movements since the 1960s, sometimes seen as postmodernist. It further encompasses the sense of modernism as a project that emerged as a consequence of

movement, alienation, and exile and which makes serious universalist and transnational claims. Generally, the valence of the term in this book is on movements invested in creating durable visual form, rather than on performance and time-based practices.

8. This is not to deny the force of metropolitan institutions in perpetuating a hegemonic Western canon of modern art that denies the role of mutual exchanges of artistic forms from across the globe and that situates artists outside its limits at great structural disadvantage—but simply to stress that all artists cannot be reduced to working solely from a reactive position. For Homi Bhabha's influential formulations of these concepts, see *Location of Culture*. Bhabha is, of course, not responsible for all the ways his work has been interpreted by his numerous readers.

9. This neglect is striking. Until very recently, not a single book on South Asian modern art had been published by a scholarly press in the United States (and the only survey text on modern Islamic art, by Wijdan Ali, omitted consideration of South Asia). These works are primarily histories of Indian art in relation to nationalism. None offer readings of most of the artists examined in this study or situate the work of Muslim artists in the modern intellectual history of South Asian Islam. These include two scholarly works by Guha-Thakurta and Mitter published in the United Kingdom more than a decade earlier, focusing on the period (1850–1920) that precedes the one examined in this book and studying primarily non-Muslim artists. The recent work by Mitter, *Triumph of Modernism*, surveys the 1922–47 era in colonial India. Critical works published in South Asia include the important set of essays by the Indian critic Geeta Kapur on Indian artists, a descriptive history on modernism in Indian art by Yashodhara Dalmia, and other collections of short essays on twentieth-century Indian art. See Guha-Thakurta, *Making of a New "Indian" Art*; Kapur, *When Was Modernism*; Mitter, *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India*; Gayatri Sinha, *Indian Art, an Overview*; and Mitter, *Triumph of Modernism*. Rebecca M. Brown's *Art for a Modern India* is the first work on Indian modern art as national art published by an American academic press (2009). However, due to the rich intellectual history of Islam in South Asia coupled with the minority experience of Muslims, the predicament of Muslim artistic modernity in South Asia was not nationalist in its orientation.

10. The topic increasingly engages the attention of scholars and art historians investigating Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and other locations. For example, see Craven, *Art and Revolution*; Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow*; Mercer, *Cosmopolitan Modernisms*; Mercer, *Discrepant Abstraction*; Mercer, *Pop Art and Vernacular Cultures*; Ramirez, *Inverted Utopias*; and Sims, *Wifredo Lam*.

11. In a work published over a decade earlier in Pakistan, the critic Akbar Naqvi has undertaken extended readings of many of the artists examined in this study. Although my work draws upon Naqvi's research, his framework is primarily drawn from the insights of an older generation of British scholars and art historians, rather than from recent scholarship influenced by comparative and postcolonial

approaches. And, rather than assuming, as Naqvi does, that artistic symbols and paradigms from Sufism are archetypal and perennial, for example, my approach understands them as being historically shaped in relation to their social and intellectual environment. Finally, unlike Naqvi, this study includes consideration of the manner in which East Pakistani artists were discussed by critics and also includes diaspora practices and the works of younger artists, such as Rasheed Araeen and Naiza Khan, by understanding them as indispensable facets of the trajectory of modernism in Muslim South Asia. Akbar Naqvi, *Image and Identity*. Salima Hashmi's books provide useful narratives, summaries, and sources, which have greatly aided this study; see Hashmi, *Unveiling the Visible*; and Dalmia and Hashmi, *Memory, Metaphor, Mutations*.

12. Although sociocultural subjecthood, of course, cannot always be disentangled from religious practices.

13. Wendy Brown, *Politics Out of History*, 109.

14. The date of this work is difficult to determine. I discuss the problem of dating Chughtai's works in chapter 1.

15. Chughtai also draws upon the aesthetic of the Bengal School (ca. 1900–1930s). This relationship is discussed in chapter 1.

16. On reflexivity in Mughal paintings, see Minissale, *Images of Thought*, chap. 4.

17. For a sustained argument regarding the cultural implications of the minority experiences of Muslims in modern South Asia, see Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony*, especially 11–13. Vazira Zamindar has explored the drawn-out bureaucratic process of establishing citizenship in Pakistan, in *The Long Partition*.

18. See Susan Friedman's excellent discussion of these terms in "Definitional Excursions."

19. For example, Charles Harrison's otherwise provocative summary of artistic modernism wrestles with a purely Western trajectory of art, in which Manet's *Olympia* (1865) and Clement Greenberg's influential formalist ideas delineate his interpretive horizon; see Harrison, "Modernism." Similarly, the recent massive textbook, which was developed collaboratively by leading scholars, devotes virtually no attention to non-Western modern art. Foster et al., *Art since 1900*. For an indication of the significance of this work in defining twentieth-century art, see the reviews by eight scholars, published in *Art Bulletin* 88, no. 2 (June 2006): 373–88.

20. "Insofar as the academic discourse of history—that is, 'history' as a discourse produced at the institutional site of the university is concerned, 'Europe' remains the sovereign, theoretical subject of all histories, including the ones we call 'Indian,' 'Chinese,' 'Kenyan,' and so on. There is a peculiar way in which all these other histories tend to become variants on a master narrative that could be called 'the history of Europe.'" Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 28.

21. A recent series of essays edited by Kobena Mercer attempts to redress this (see note 10).

22. *Third Text*, a journal edited by Rasheed Araeen since 1987, has consistently chal-

lenged this view. For a representative selection of essays from the journal, see Araeen, Cubitt, and Sardar, *Third Text Reader*.

23. Khair, "Modernism and Modernity," 9.

24. Ibid., 13.

25. Kapur, *When Was Modernism*, 276; quoted in Khair, "Modernism and Modernity," 5. On the reappropriation of modernity, see, for example, one of the special millennium issues of the influential journal *Public Culture*, edited by Dilip Gaonkar in 1999, titled "Alter/Native Modernities" and issued as a book by Duke University Press in 2001. In his editor's essay, "On Alternative Modernities," Gaonkar places culture as the mediator between the social and aesthetic realms: "The . . . two intersecting visions of modernity in the West [are] the Weberian societal/cultural modernity and the Baudelairian cultural/aesthetic modernity. Culture is the capacious and contested middle term. In the Weberian vision, societal modernization fragments cultural meaning and unity. The Baudelairian vision, which is equally alert to the effects of modernization, seeks to redeem modern culture by aestheticizing it."

26. Kapur, *When Was Modernism*, 276.

27. Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," 100–110.

28. "It seems that modernism is being proposed as bourgeois art in the absence of the bourgeois, or more accurately, as aristocratic art in the age when the bourgeois abandons its claim to aristocracy. And how will art keep aristocracy alive? By keeping *itself* alive, as the remaining vessel of the aristocratic account of experience and its modes; by preserving its own means, its media; by proclaiming those means and media as its values, as meanings in themselves" (Clark, "Clement Greenberg's Theory of Art," 27). According to Greenberg, the continuous and durable nature of this exploration in a sense creates a "tradition" of modernism, and art derives its values formally only from within this autonomous tradition. These values cannot be posited a priori and are discovered only in the *practice* of art itself. An important value that painting discovers about itself is that of *flatness*—since the picture plane is nothing other than the application of paint on a flat canvas, modernist painting has developed as an extended investigation into this medium-specific value, rather than narrating the social world outside of the medium. Ibid., 20–36.

29. Clark's critique is wide ranging and provocative and its manifold insights cannot be fully discussed here, but two points are salient. First, Clark argues that Greenberg's stress on flatness as a primary value that modernist painters explored is not simply an optical and technical telos but a complex and contradictory value that emerges as the social world of commodity culture constantly presses against the autonomous painterly tradition. The formalist value of flatness thus constitutes a sort of ground over which technical achievement necessarily brings to the canvas the conflictual historical field that exists outside of it. The autonomy of formalism is constantly under threat by its being volatilized as a metaphor for the social. Sec-

ond, Clark emphasizes that modernist artifacts are not merely identifiable milestones in the march toward the horizon of complete autonomy and the recognition of medium-specificity, but that this process is marked at every stage by doubt and negativity. Modernism is indeed medium-specific, but its attendance on the qualities of the medium "has appeared most characteristically as the site of negation and estrangement." Ibid., 32.

30. Clark argues that the utopian autonomy of art, finding no comparable social group that shares its values, embarks upon a dangerous and relentless avant-gardism. For Clark, this addressee cannot be found in a capitalist society, in which there are no human relations not mediated by capital. But this addressee is also absent in bureaucratized socialism: "Art wants to address someone, it wants something precise, and extended to do; it wants resistance, it needs criteria; it will take risks in order to find them, including the risk of its own dissolution." Ibid., 34. According to Clark, modernism as practice, in its quest for social value under capitalism, thus constantly makes dangerous forays into pure negativity. In Walter Benjamin's second version of the artwork essay, Benjamin also notes that the hallmark of modernity and its technologies is a regime of testing and endless experimenting. The test procedure, rather than an aesthetic artifact meant to last thousands of years, is the unit of truth in modern art. Walter Benjamin, *1935–1938*.

31. Clark, *Farewell to an Idea*.

32. Altieri, "Can Modernism Have a Future?"

33. "Perhaps modernism tried so hard to make sense of the idea that the work had to be considered a reality in its own right because it felt that only so radical a view could escape the binary opposition between 'real' and 'unreal.' Perhaps that binary blinds us to the possible social uses of energies and forces that the artists tried to realize as actual properties of their works as they are imaginatively realized." Ibid., 129.

34. Ibid., 140–41.

35. This is despite the relative realism of later Mughal art. Mughal realism remains linked to transcendent and metaphysical conceptions and is not comparable to nineteenth-century French realism pioneered by Courbet, which has formed the basis of modern social realism. On Mughal art as metaphysical, see Minissale, *Images of Thought*, xxviii and passim.

36. Shakir Ali, "Pakistani musavviri men izhar-i zat," in *Pakistani Adab* (December 1974); reprinted in Shakir Ali, *Shakir ʿAli ki thariren*, 29–40.

37. Shakir Ali, *Shakir ʿAli ki tahriren*, 36. For a discussion of Faiz Ahmad Faiz's 1965 war poem "Black Out," which also refused to reify the nation-state, see Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony*, 225–30.

38. Huyssen, "Geographies of Modernism."

39. Ibid., 194. Italics mine.

40. Ibid., 191.

41. Pheng Cheah's "Introduction Part II: The Cosmopolitical Today" (20–41) and Amanda Anderson's essay "Cosmopolitanism, Universalism, and the Divided Legacies of Modernity" provide useful methodological summaries; both are in Cheah and Robbins, *Cosmopolitics*. Other important essays are included in the special issue on cosmopolitanism, *Public Culture* 12, no. 3 (Fall 2000); and in the special issue on the cosmopolis, *Theory, Culture & Society* 19, nos. 1–2 (2002).

42. Pollock, "Cosmopolitan and Vernacular in History."

43. Euben, *Journeys to the Other Shore*, 178.

44. On premodern and early modern Indo-Persian travel narratives, see Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels*.

45. Euben, *Journeys to the Other Shore*, 179–80. Quotations in this passage are from Ira Lapidus, Marshall Hodgson, and Mohammed Bamyeh.

46. Ibid., 180.

47. cooke and Lawrence, *Muslim Networks from Hajj to Hip Hop*. The new series is edited by Carl W. Ernst and Bruce B. Lawrence.

48. Mercer, *Cosmopolitan Modernisms*, 8–13.

49. Representative studies mapping this Persianate world from a variety of disciplines include Tavakoli-Targhi, *Refashioning Iran*; Muzaffar Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam: India*; Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani*; Schimmel, *Islam in the Indian Subcontinent*; and Schimmel, *Islamic Literatures of India*.

50. Juan Cole has provided a concise summary of cultural exchanges between India and Persia from 1500 to 1900, in "Iranian Culture and South Asia."

51. On the technical terms employed in the arts of the book in the Persianate world, see Yves Porter, *Painters, Paintings, and Books*.

52. Lentz and Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*, 20.

53. See chap. 3 on the Timurid *kitabkhana*, in Lentz and Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*; Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image*, 120; and Schimmel, "The Calligraphy and Poetry of the Kevorkian Album." The *kitabkhana* was considered to be part of the *karkhanas* (workshops) that produced other crafts; on the latter, see Verma, *Karkhanas under the Mughals*.

54. On a general description of painting during the Safavid era, see Stuart Cary Welch, *Masterpieces of Early Safavid Painting*; Canby, *Rebellious Reformer*, 9–42; and Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image*, 141, 200.

55. Bihzad is associated with a revolution in painting style that Oleg Grabar associates with a certain realism—an observation of the idiosyncrasies of everyday life; see his *Mostly Miniatures*, 111–20. On the problems of attribution of authorship in Persian painting, especially in the case of Bihzad, see Roxburgh, "Kamal al-Din Bihzad and Authorship in Persianate Painting." On the rising status and greater visibility of painters during the Safavid dynasty, see Heger, "Status and Image of the Persianate Artist"; and Minissale, *Images of Thought*.

56. Grabar, *Mostly Miniatures*, 65–81.

57. A standard history is Beach, *Mughal and Rajput Painting*; see also Stuart Cary Welch,

"Introduction," in *Emperors' Album*, 11–30; and Soucek, "Persian Artists in Mughal India."

58. On gift exchanges between Jahangir and the Safavid ruler Shah Abbas, see Littlefield, "The Object of the Gift."

59. See, for example, Bailey, *Jesuits and the Grand Mogul*.

60. Minissale has argued for the continued relevance of Persianate philosophical ideals in Mughal art, in which European influences were assimilated into Mughal paradigms but which led to greater reflexivity in later Mughal art. See Minissale, *Images of Thought*; and Minissale, *Synthesis of European and Mughal Art*.

61. Beach, *Grand Mogul*, 20–29.

62. Stuart Cary Welch, *Emperors' Album*, 190; Beach, *Grand Mogul*, 85–154.

63. Lentz and Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*, 323.

64. On eighteenth-century developments following Mughal art, see the essays in Schmitz, *After the Great Mughals*.

65. Tavakoli-Targhi, *Refashioning Iran*, 33.

66. Archer, *Company Paintings*; Archer, *India and British Portraiture*; Archer and Archer, *Indian Painting for the British*.

67. Constable, *A Selection from the Illustrations*.

68. The literature on this subject is vast. Representative works in English include Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History*; Robinson, *Ulama of Farangi Mahall*; Barbara Metcalf, *Islamic Contestations*; Zaman, *Ulama in Contemporary Islam*; and Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal ad-Din "al-Afghani."* Sugata Bose's recent study, *Hundred Horizons*, looks at the cosmopolitanism of Indian soldiers, traders, and elites, as well as the formation of nationalist solidarities in exile between 1850 and 1950.

69. An important study is Minault, *Khilafat Movement*.

70. On the symbolic economy of gift exchanges between Indian rulers and the British during the late eighteenth century, see Eaton, "Critical Cosmopolitanism."

71. The question of nationalism and its relation to Muslim identity in modern South Asia is historically complex, going at least as far back as the contentions of Syed Ahmad Khan after the Mutiny of 1857, as the awareness of a distinct Muslim identity and its minority status in India became increasingly unavoidable. The national question became especially urgent by the 1920s, refracted by the Khilafat Movement, the poet Muhammad Iqbal's reflections on Muslim affiliation in Indian nationalism, the pro-Indian nationalist position of the later Abul Kalam Azad, and the rise of the Muslim League under the leadership of Jinnah, to cite only a few key developments. Studies include Hasan and Roy, *Living Together Separately*; Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*; and Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*.

72. Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony*, chap. 5.

73. Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History*, 6. Ideologies of official history in Pakistan are discussed in Aziz, *Murder of History*.

74. Aamir Mufti makes a compelling argument for the dilemmas of a minority existence in modernity, in *Enlightenment in the Colony*. On Iqbal's views on nationalism,

see also Majeed, "The Aporia of Muslim Nationalism," in *Autobiography, Travel and Postnational Identity*, 174–210. Faisal Devji discusses the concept of the nation in the writings of Syed Ahmad Khan and Iqbal, in "A Shadow Nation."

75. Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony*, 11.

76. Zamindar, *Long Partition*.

77. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*. See also Anthony D. Smith's review of Eric Hobsbawm's and Benedict Anderson's formulations, in "Invention and Imagination."

78. Ludden, "Introduction: Ayodhya: A Window on the World," in *Making India Hindu*, 1–23.

79. A recent example is the rhetoric accompanying nuclearization in South Asia; see Aravamudan, "The Hindu Sublime, or Nuclearism Rendered Cultural," in *Guru English*, 142–83; and Dadi, "Nuclearization."

80. For a recent detailed discussion, see Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*.

81. Gilmartin, "A Networked Civilization," 66.

82. My use of "interpellation" follows Althusser's usage. See Althusser, "Ideology."

83. Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony*, 184–85, 206–9, and passim.

84. Zamindar, *Long Partition*, 15.

85. Kapur, "National/Modern: Preliminaries" and "When Was Modernism in Indian Art?" in *When Was Modernism*.

86. Altieri, "Can Modernism Have a Future?" 135.

87. Blair and Bloom, *Cosmophilia*, 11.

88. Blair and Bloom, "Mirage of Islamic Art," 157.

89. In terms of possessing a discursive and aesthetic ground, calligraphy is the exception to this rule. However, many Western connoisseurs, unable to read the Arabic script, did not accord calligraphy the status it might have otherwise secured under "Islamic art."

90. Grabar, "Aesthetics of Islamic Art," 349–50.

91. Blair and Bloom, *Cosmophilia*, 11.

92. Grabar, "Aesthetics of Islamic Art," 350.

93. Ibid., 351.

94. Blair and Bloom, *Cosmophilia*, 11; Blair and Bloom, "Mirage of Islamic Art," 174–75.

95. Blair and Bloom, *Cosmophilia*, 11.

96. Nelson, "Map of Art History." Ashis Nandy has noted that colonial scholarship lauds the archaeological past in order to condemn the present "degenerate" state of the colony. This narrative of a fall from grace, according to Nandy, in *Intimate Enemy*, is how colonial power makes sense of the grand ancient civilizational pasts of their colonies, especially in India and Egypt.

97. Grabar, "Aesthetics of Islamic Art," 336, 354, and passim; Blair and Bloom, *Cosmophilia*, 26. For an example of exegetical readings of Ghalib's Urdu poetry, see Pritchett, "Meaning of the Meaningless Verses."

98. Blair and Bloom, "Mirage of Islamic Art," 161.

99. Hillenbrand, "Studying Islamic Architecture," 5–6.

100. Schimmel, *Calligraphy and Islamic Culture*.

101. Blair's *Islamic Calligraphy* is the first Western historical survey.

102. Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality*.

103. Necipoglu, *Topkapi Scroll*.

104. Blair and Bloom, *Cosmophilia*, 13.

105. Ibid., 17.

106. Grabar, "Aesthetics of Islamic Art," 343; Blair and Bloom, *Cosmophilia*, 9.

107. Blair and Bloom, *Cosmophilia*, 25, 26.

108. Anjum, "Islam as a Discursive Tradition," 670.

109. Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 30–31. For recent approaches to the methodological questions posed by Islamic art, see Flood, "From the Prophet to Postmodernism"; and Carrier, "Deep Innovation and Mere Eccentricity in Islamic Art History."

110. Daftari, *Influence of Persian Art*; Brüderlin, *Ornament and Abstraction*; Mitter, *Triumph of Modernism*.

111. Cernuschi, "Adolf Loos, Alois Riegl, and the Debate on Ornament."

112. Trilling, *Ornament*.

113. Altieri, "Can Modernism Have a Future?" 129.

114. Grabar, *Formation of Islamic Art*, 198–202, 212–13.

115. As is the case in Wijdan Ali's otherwise groundbreaking survey, *Modern Islamic Art*.

116. Grabar, "Aesthetics of Islamic Art," 345.

117. Ibid., 347.

118. For example, Rasheed Araeen's minimalist geometric practice during the 1960s—although made without reference to Islamic art—also recognized this metaphor of nonhierarchy and equality. The Aga Khan Award for Islamic Architecture, which for over twenty years has been awarded to projects that have included slum development projects in Asia and Africa, has also understood this sense of social justice beyond formal or thematic borrowings from the past.

119. "The symmetry of geometry in Islamic art also offers, in my understanding, an allegory for human equality." Araeen, "Geometry in Islam," 12.

120. Euben, *Journeys to the Other Shore*, 179.

121. Wendy Brown, "Impossibility of Women's Studies," 24.

CHAPTER 1

1. The Algerian miniature artist Mohammad Racim (1896–1975) is an exact contemporary of Chughtai. Both artists are of Turkish descent, and they share many thematic and formal concerns, including the striking parallel in their simultaneous reworking of the Persian and Mughal miniature during late colonialism. A comparative study of the artists awaits—not attempted here due to limitations of space and the scope of this study. On Racim, see Roger Benjamin, *Orientalist Aesthetics*, chap. 9.