For decades now, critics have charged that autonomous histories of the "visual arts" as "histories of vision" first proposed in the late nineteenth century are grounded in formalist and "essentialist" perceptual categories that are no longer tenable. Art, defined on the Western model of optical painting, viewed as a "natural" sign because it is compatible with our actual visual experience of the world, is itself not a natural but a conventional way to identify what "art is." Yet at the same time, the notion that the "visual" has its own history, preserved in works of human material culture broadly defined to include print culture, photography, digital imaging, film, video, multimedia, even performance art, has also taken root. "Visual culture" studies, journals, departments, and websites have given this category a material presence far beyond the disciplinary debates that originated the terminology. One recent development that is directed to art history, and merits acknowledgment in the context of this volume, is the new emphasis accorded to "global art history." Global (or world) art history today arguably offers an escape from the deadlock of art versus artifact, West versus the Rest, the hegemony of modernism defined on Euro-American terms, and many other disciplinary headaches. Current discussion about the possibility of constructing a world art history raises the question anew: how universally regarded is the visual?

Before the beginning of "visual culture" studies, in his 1988 anthology, Vision and Visuality, Hal Foster distinguished between sight as a physical action and "visuality" as "a social fact," calling for efforts to "historicize modern vision" in ways that do not privilege the "purely optical in visual art." Often cited as the origin of the term "visuality," Foster's anthology appeared at a time when a generation of recently minted PhDs were absorbing the (post) structuralist concerns of Ferdinand de Saussure, Claude Levi-Strauss, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and other continental writers working in a variety of other disciplines. By 1982, when Henri Zerner edited a special issue of Art
Journal devoted to "the crisis in the discipline," art history's epistemological foundations and interpretive aims were a matter of widespread, inter-generational debate. As Zerner articulated the problem then, the history of art told as a history of style "embodies profound contradictions." Instead of assuming the existence of "human universals," we should be searching for "the historical determination of mental attitudes." The chief difficulty is in fitting anything considered to be a permanently available aesthetic experience into a historical framework:

On the one hand [art history] holds on to an idealist theory of art according to which art is an absolute autonomous value that transcends history, that is not subject to the constraints of time and place, so that, strictly speaking, there can be no history of art. On the other hand it is attached to an optimistic form of nineteenth-century positivism, to a belief in facts that can be ascertained as the basis of definitive explanation.

At present, "visual culture" and "visual art" are ubiquitous terms widely applied to all kinds of cultural production as neutral, inclusive language, even a fitting sequel in an expanded field of interdisciplinary scholarship to the more restrictive category "art" of European origin. Much is owed to understanding the category "visual art" as a historically and culturally specific construct. Yet as this volume attests, we are still addressing the vexed question of what it means to historicize vision.

Foster's own understanding of "visuality" was informed by the writings of Theodor Adorno, as he discussed the issues in another edited collection of essays, The Anti-Aesthetic (1983). In this earlier volume, Foster promised a similar "critique of origins" of the aesthetic, citing Adorno's counter-notation of the aesthetic as a subversive action. "The anti-aesthetic," wrote Foster in emulation of Adorno's call to "de-aestheticize" art, "signals that the very notion of the aesthetic, its network of ideas, is in question."14

Between Adorno and Foster, connotations of the term "visuality" changed considerably in ways that bear directly on studies of visual culture. For Adorno, the problematic origins of "visuality" were quite specific: Kant's Critique of Judgment, 1790, section 9, where Kant describes "the beautiful [as] that which pleases universally without ... a concept," Adorno used the word Anschaulichkeit, which his 1984 translator rendered as "visuality," in direct reference to Kant's term Anschauung.15 Anschaulichkeit, according to Adorno, is a "normative" term that denies the "implicidy conceptual nature of art." "Visuality" is "an idea of art that dispenses with intellectual effort" at a time when "art has long since relegated the pleasant to the dustbin of dated ideals." Yet, Adorno laments, aesthetics had not done the same—it still has not rendered "visuality" useless.

Kant had first set himself the task of explaining how the supersensible "mediates" between nature in itself and nature as it appears to us by positing that the laws of nature are not derived from reason alone—they are also discovered through experience.2 For example, in the mathematical subject of geometry, judgments describe the world we experience, yet geometry is derived from logic. The only way this can be possible is if we have a priori knowledge of spatial relations that we use in experiencing the world. Anschauung refers to this mediation between mind and world. Thus, Anschauung, translatable as "visuality," also entails "intuition," and a better translation of his term, as Frances Ferguson suggests, might be "the intuitive experience of objects."2

Anschauung is actually the linchpin in Kant's Critique of Judgment (1790) because it connotes the "purposiveness" of nature perceived as "the beautiful" in the act of aesthetic judgment. This is the foundational argument of "formalism" that anchors the modern, Western idea of art as the timeless (ever-accessible) object of perception. This is also the argument to which Adorno objects, first of all because he rejects Kant's assumption of the artwork's underlying unity or integrity, perceived as being in harmony with nature. Thus he re-aligns Kant's understanding of Anschauung with the merely phenomenal, meaning the purely visual. For Adorno, as art becomes progressively more intellective, it loses its phenomenality. The Hegelian strains of this argument are audible when he writes that "the immediate sensuousness which used to be the basis of pure visuality in art works diminishes."22 For Adorno, the "bourgeois mind" clings to pure visuality (Anschaulichkeit) as if art's only virtue were to copy reality, rather than respond to it. He complains that this is not authentic, spiritual art.11

It is important to note—a lot is at stake—that Foster folded Adorno's criticism of Kant into the term Anschaulichkeit itself, thereby changing the previous, historical meaning of "visuality" into something like its opposite. Foster wrote about "visuality" critically, as if it meant something akin to Foucault's discussion of "visual field," or film critic Christian Metz's discussion of "scopic regimes," or other terms in use at a time when art historians were becoming aware that writing histories of art as if all art were the object of perception might be a problem. "Ocularcentrism" and "perspectivalism" are two more closely related coinages to designate the hegemony of vision in modern life.2 And we are still talking about the dynamics of gazing, the proliferation of surveillance, the production of spectacle, and other ways of exerting institutional, social, and political control that extend the province of seeing far beyond images.

At present, there remains a disturbing lack of clarity about the relationship between the historical term "visuality" leading up to Kant and its recent appropriation as a critical term. Seeing Across Cultures is an important contribution to this as-yet poorly understood history. A volume like the present one aims to dislodge the continuing status quo, to encourage that we put into question European understandings of visuality and our "stereotypes
of the Other" as they are connected to political actualities. The imposition of European values on extra-European cultural objects did not become central to art historical debates immediately after the appearance of Edward Said's groundbreaking *Orientalism* (1978), even though critique within the discipline was indebted to the same developments in continental philosophy (the writings of Foucault in particular were influential in both arenas) as was Said's challenge to contemporary scholars to re-examine the European construction of the Orient. Perhaps the critique of disciplinary practices fell short because it was led by modernists with an interest in Euro-American art for whom the grounding of issues in Kant was sufficient; or perhaps the critique fell short because it was absorbed into the broader critiques of modernity that I have just mentioned regarding the hegemony of vision in modern life. In any case, the deleterious effects of Kantian definitions on extra-European, pre-modern, and colonial forms of cultural production were slow to receive attention.33

Ironically, Foster and his colleagues were in personal contact with Edward Said, and Said even contributed a chapter to Foster's *Anti-Aesthetic* anthology. Said's argument is therefore interesting to consider in retrospect because he did not focus on the Eurocentric historical practices central to his own critique (as might be expected); instead, he discussed the isolation of academics from political power and social issues, as in this opening statement: "Who writes? For whom is the writing being done? In what circumstances? These, it seems to me, are the questions whose answers provide us with the ingredients making for a politics of interpretation."34 Said's essay in Foster's anthology, originally published in the interdisciplinary journal *Critical Inquiry*, decried the diminished role of intellectuals during the Reagan era in the following terms:

> The present moment, in which the social and historical setting of critical activity is a totality felt to be benign (free, apolitical, serious), uncharacterizable as a whole (it is too complex to be described in general and tendentious terms) and somehow outside history ... The challenge posed by these perspectives is not how to cultivate one's garden despite them, but how to understand cultural work occurring within them.35

A large part of Said's essay was devoted to analyzing the harmful effects of subdisciplinary specializations, particularly the inability of academics who write "advanced criticism" to examine social issues, or even to understand how their own scholarship participates in commodity production and marketing. Said's closing words were: "One must refuse to believe, however, that the comforts of specialized habits can be so seductive as to keep us all in our assigned places." Today, Said's critique of the inability of specialists consumed with guarding their home turf to engage in methodological and disciplinary self-questioning is more relevant than ever.36 And the consequences of privileging modern European epistemologies in our curricula are still not at the center of disciplinary concerns.

This is not the place or the space to offer a full account of the current, often contentious, debates to consider art and art history as "global" phenomena in need of a universal foundation.37 Yet it is also not an idle question to ask in a volume of essays devoted to "visuality across cultures" whether the category "visuality" can avoid falling into the Eurocentric trap as long as the signifiers "art" and "visual" remain intact. The earliest efforts to arrive at a world art history date back to German scholarship of the 1880s and 1890s, although these schemes were justifiably forgotten after World War II, writes Ulrich Pfisterer in a recent overview of German art historiography.38 After 1945, the topic of world art was too controversial to maintain in an art history curriculum; but now it seems that "visual studies" is promoted as evidence of human universals and of "the psychic unity of mankind."39 What surely should be the object of investigation is treated once again as an a priori assumption. The editors of the present volume stress that what is potentially new is the critical and historiographical dimension of visuality; in the present telling, "visuality" is a hermeneutic project that studies the history of the category "visual" along with its contents. The possibility that "other cultures" (however they are defined) do privilege the visual is an important question to investigate when considering whether and how the "visual" is a legitimate analytic category for writing history.

The study of art broadly defined to include all forms of human manufacture might help us conceive how the integration of self and space works in a less ethnocentric way than European histories of art have done. If this is a theoretical desideratum, it is one that casts its net wider than the disciplinary formation of art history. As the editors note, the present volume builds directly on an earlier collection of essays edited by Robert Nelson that, while largely grounded in the Western tradition, also looked beyond the sources of Western thought—for example, to Senegal and Sufism, two cultural sites that the present volume also includes. Indeed, Nelson emphasizes that encountering visual practices and theories of vision different from "ours," helps us to avoid projecting unexamined assumptions of normality or universality on prior practices in science and art, both of which are "prone to teleology and presentism."40

There is an inherent relationship between the two volumes in seeking out other cultural formations that privilege the visual register, recognition of which enables new lines of investigation within the broader field that can operate as alternatives or correctives to traditional art history. But the primary problem has not been the neglect of other peoples' visualities (however that is defined); rather, the problem has been the imposition of European understandings of art as primarily visual on world culture. "Visual studies offers equal treatment of all visual production irrespective of their origin," argues Kitty Zijlman in a volume devoted to new approaches to "world art."41 I am not so sure that this does more than sidestep the
problem for historians. As several contributions to this volume emphasize, the "visual" is not exclusively a European prerogative. By the same token, another culture's "visual" is still not European. It requires careful analysis of images, material objects, and broader cultural contexts of use to see processes of inscription, accommodation, resistance, reframing, and so on at work in the "event" of cultural interaction. Such attention to the complex processes of cultural interaction is the project of understanding "visuality" that the present volume undertakes—in opposition to contemporary world art history schemes that have either forgotten or discounted the problems with earlier efforts to encompass all forms of cultural production under the one umbrella of "visuality." By contrast, one of the main advantages to treating "visuality" and categories associated with it as specific cultural constructs, and not as universals valid for all space and time, is that such exercises raise awareness of how cultural values are projected onto whatever subject matter is at hand. The contribution on Mesoamerican relief sculpture by Patrick Hajoysky to the present volume is a case in point. Another advantage is the possibility of understanding art-making as an exemplary manifestation of what some linguists and anthropologists call "multimodal integration of the body and the environment."21

One advantage of a shared research agenda is the creation of a community of scholars. Discussing problems with scholars from different subfields with different knowledge bases often leads to framing research that is more systemic or more structural in nature. Initially, poststructuralist approaches to knowledge production emphasized individual experimentation with the new methodologies, rather than any identification of shared research agendas that would come to terms with untenable racialist assumptions, taxonomies, categories. Individual experiments with new interpretative strategies such as "semiotics" were considered more important than collaborating on substantive research agendas collectively defined. Should we proceed differently now, collectively pursuing issues in common, or are we running the risk of remaining divided along the lines that Said and others identified over 30 years ago as endangering society in general and jeopardizing the continued existence of the humanities in particular? The main themes of the present volume emerge along the interstices between individual case studies that the editors selected partly for their geographical distribution. The rest of my comments focus on the commonalities that present themselves as elements of a new, non-totalizing "big picture."

Visuality in the Early Modern Period: Making Knowledge, Seeing Culture

The contemporary critical term "visuality" has not previously been applied to the study of cultural interaction in the early modern period, but it is an apt frame of reference, especially when used in conjunction with two other terms: "modernity," which, as I have discussed, is already integral to the contemporary study of "visuality," and "coloniality," which can be briefly defined as the logic of domination in the modern world. As described by Walter Mignolo, coloniality and modernity are entangled concepts working together to concentrate capital and power in increasingly fewer hands while poverty increases all over the world.22 In exploring further the convergence of indigenous American, European, African, and Asian cultures, "coloniality" and "visuality" together emphasize the burgeoning commerce in material culture. Not only are conventional labels of artistic identity often rendered irrelevant in the face of such massive and impersonal cultural collaboration, but as the introduction and many of the chapters in this volume attest, the scale of trade and hierarchies of social power implicated are mind-boggling.23

Even though the term "visuality" may be new to early modern studies, the closely related terms "visibility" and "invisibility" have already entered the discussion of coloniality to articulate the complexity of interactions that develop in inherently heterogeneous cultural formations. The new material presented in this volume complicates the existing topic of "visuality" considerably. Peripatetic lifestyles and transculutral processes characterize artists as well as their art, even if individual identities are difficult to document. Nor does cultural mixing always result in visual features, as Carolyn Dean and Dana Leibson emphasize in a recent essay on the terminology in use to describe visual culture in colonial Spanish America.24 For example, some forms of cultural interaction elicited no comments that have been preserved in the historical record—such as an absence of textual responses by indigenous people to patterns of mixing themselves. Meanwhile, other aspects, such as collecting practices, have left varied and often contradictory traces in our archives and museums. More complex than either of these possibilities, Dean and Leibson emphasize, is what they call the "deceit of visibility" that has effaced the presence of those dispossessed by colonial authority. The effacement during the initial process of contact is repeated in modern historical accounts that deny, ignore or overlook the existence of indigenous activity altogether, for example, in architectural practices in the colonial world, unless the result "looks" indigenous. Once masonry prepared according to Andean methods was re-formed into European-looking structures, the indigenous component was easily erased from historical accounts based on "style."25 "Visuality" as a category is thus well placed to include the study of those traces of mixed ancestry that are not apparent on the surface, and to articulate the historical processes of misrecognition that favor political and social hierarchies of power.

First and foremost, the construction of knowledge itself—its production and consumption—aligns this study with other interdisciplinary studies.
in the history of science that explore ways in which knowledge was more holistically conceived before modern distinctions between art, science, and religion emerged in the eighteenth century. One such project is the volume of essays edited by Pamela Smith and Benjamin Schmidt, *Making Knowledge in Early Modern Europe*, which addresses many of the same basic questions that the contributors of the present volume do, such as: how did people go about obtaining knowledge and making it convincing? How did they disseminate it to others? How was cultural difference understood—through what practices, performances, and issues, such as the recurring question of idolatry? How and why was sensory knowledge valorized and what effects did this valorization produce? And most basic of all, who benefited and who did not from these attempts? In the present volume, the visual components of knowledge construction surface more insistently. The essays trouble those existing accounts that imagine exchange as a one- or even a two-way street. The recursive nature of exchange stands out as the main theoretical challenge in all of these essays.

**New Representational Practices**

The construction and operation of new representational practices is a concern shared by several of the authors contributing chapters here. Bronwen Wilson writes about a variety of intersecting practices in Bologna, where the Carracci developed objectifying modes of visual description and Alcibiades assembled an unprecedented museum inspired by writings about wondrous flora and fauna (and artifacts) in the so-called New World, as articulating a new morphology of scientific illustration that isolates the object and focuses on the surface of appearances, so that painting extends the visual register into the realm of touch. Todd P. Olson writes in similarly complex terms about the Protestant publisher Theodor de Bry’s illustrations of various voyages of discovery in terms of mark-making as a feature of print technology that distanced the object, breaking down the iconic resemblance between sign and significati that was so important, for example, to medieval modes for representing the sacred. Together, these chapters appear to offer glimpses into processes that lead in opposite directions: on the one hand, to fix the identity of strange new objects through representational practices that value verisimilitude and, on the other hand, to break down the model of transparent resemblance between sign and significati that provides the ontological ground for scientifi naturalism.

Attention to matters of “style” at the meta-critical level emerges as one of the main preoccupations of individual case studies that go beyond the mere fact of the global circulation of goods. Potentially, such issues foreground the blurred boundaries between art, science, and religion in this time period. The issues also resonate with concerns raised by scholars studying the function of sacred art in Europe during the same period.

This volume responds to the pressing need to revise disciplinary practices at an epistemological level. The translation of physical objects into virtual images that circulated to a wide range of audiences resulted in a remarkable range of new representational practices. It is not surprising, therefore, that the critical role of print technology is emerging as one of the most significant areas of research in early modern studies inside and outside Europe. Point well made in this collection is that we cannot understand what happened without considering the entire arc of translation from point of origin to point of reception, unless we acquire deep knowledge of cultural history on both the indigenous and European sides of the main cultural divide. Visuality, historicized, is more complex than the re-use of print sources, the transportation of objects, or the divide between Europe and Other. By looking at the intersection of different cultural practices, stressing the complex intersections, multiple filters, and numerous transfers resulting in interpretation as “the beholder’s share” (to draw upon a phrase used by John Shearman, we learn that nothing about Renaissance art studied in the context of global networks of commerce is a binary operation. There is nothing “purely” indigenous about the colonial subject or its European counterpart.

Yoriko Kobayashi-Sato and Mia Machizuki make a similar point in their co-authored chapter dealing with the translation of perspectival constructions available through prints into a thoroughly Japanese idiom associated with the mobile viewing positions and spatial illusionism of theater scenes. Saleema Waraich, extending and complicating earlier studies by Gauvin Bailey, shows that the Christian subjects of prints brought by Jesuit missionaries invited to the sixteenth-century Mughal court of Akbar in southwestern India were reinscribed into a dialogue with Muslim and Hindu factions: the Catholic imagery provided an iconographic tradition that made aniconic Muslim art capable of competing with the visually potent pantheon of Hindu deities. Mary and Jesus as the ascetic prophet Isa legitimated the unconventional Muslim ruler Akbar, who assimilated so many diverse religious practices to serve his own purposes.

**Diachronic Studies Replacing Period Studies**

One way in which individual studies outplay the conventions that organize the volume, such as the delineation of “early modern” as a “period,” is in attaching importance to diachronic study and the need for understanding global interaction beyond conventional period designations. The designation “early modern,” while more generous than “Renaissance” in its time frame, is still insufficient to track the historical fortunes of cultural exchange involving
European art outside Europe. Much later, in the late nineteenth century, as Warach writes (this volume), the Italianate style introduced by the Jesuits to the court of Akbar was branded "foreign," symbolic of Rupat (that is, Hindu, associated with "pure" Indian-ness) resistance to Muslim domination and British rule. Natasha Eaton also emphasizes the need to maintain a diachronic frame of reference when she considers the popularity of panoramic views in north India that on the one hand allied tourism with colonization, but on the other hand made it possible to understand the portable sets of views of monuments that tourists carried home as akin to the legacies of Sufism in which an eighteenth-century poet writes of existence through travel, and of traveling as a! form of home.

The importance of studying visuality in the langue durée with adequate cultural grounding is essential, as Liza Oliver also demonstrates, taking to task past interpretations of the monumental Description de l’Egypte, conceived during the Napoleon expedition from 1798 to 1801, for paying too close attention to specific engravings and not enough attention to the broader intellectual landscape with its "entrenched political propaganda, military failure, conflict, and disease." Oliver’s study on the political context of the “encyclopedic gaze” provides a telling complement to Wilson’s chapter. The convergence between these two chapters is one point in this volume of essays that approaches the recursive attention required of self-reflexive historical writing discussed at the beginning of this essay.

Sense Experience as a Culturally Specific Category

The studies included in this volume exemplify the manner in which the geographical, cultural, chronological, and conceptual boundaries of the Renaissance as it is usually defined need to be redrawn. Taken as a whole, these in-depth exercises in cross-cultural analysis call into question the complacency of the Western language of the senses, of mental images, and of discursive knowledge. It turns out that mental images are equally important for Sufi thought, though they participate in a different worldview. Perhaps the outstanding example of the manner in which encountering theories of vision different from our own puts into question assumptions about the neutrality of our terms is the chapter by Patrick Hajovsky on colonial interpretations of a pre-contact Mexico representation of a sacred ruler. Hajovsky examines the incommensurability of signifying practices due to culturally different ways of conjoining the relation of the visual to a worldview. The sculpted likeness of a Mexico lord at Chapultepec is identified primarily by his name glyph, which subordinates the category of individualism to the ideal of deification. However, interpretations of the sculpture informed by European ideas about portraiture, identity, and visuality treat the

representation as a portrait based on physical appearance. Hajovsky argues convincingly that “visuality” resonates differently across these intersecting cultural configurations. The fundamental paradigm or model operating in central Mexican thought acknowledges only one principle of being, thus the concept that sight resembles smells, which in turn resemble sounds, is intended to convey “phenomenological associations between cognate essences” that can be accessed through language and visual art. Nahua rhetorical metaphors and metonyms go beyond the visual and aural registers to convey a synaesthetic paradigm very different from Western conceptions of the discreetly functioning special senses. Within a Mesoamerican context, multi-sensorial experiences convey the fundamental principle of being, which missionaries like Diego Durán and mestizo historians including Fernando de Alvarado Tezozómoc (mis)understand in terms commensurate with European notions of historical truth.

Multivalence of Visual Signs and Symbols

Many stories of misrecognition, often of the kind that James Lockhart calls “double mistaken identity,” are emerging from the historical record now that processes of identity formation through cultural interaction have become a scholarly focus. Visual homologies signify differently across cultural divides. Jeanette Favret Peterson studies processes leading to polyvalence assigned to something as simple (and loaded) as the color black, where its significance is diametrically opposed on either side of the main cultural divide between Europe and Mesoamerica. Similarly, although the data and situations are different, Mark Hinchman writes about strategic redeployments of signs, symbols, and even glass beads in an attempt to recover voices of the underclass from the material record in West Africa. Imagining the subject position of the culturally dispossessed missing from the archives leads the historian to surprising new insights about the kinds of agencies that were practiced in a heterogeneous colonial society. In the process, both authors take past interpretations to task for not sufficiently interrogating inherited cultural biases aligned with dominant cultural positions.

The multivalence of symbols, like the intersection of previously unrelated systems of representation more generally speaking, is unfolding as a major topic across a very wide range of studies of cultural interaction. Objects previously unstudied because they were “prints” or “decorative arts objects” turn out to be the key players in this new, globally connected practice of art history, leading quickly beyond art history’s perennial desire to both preserve and discard “canon formation.”
From conversations with colleagues to conferences and session topics, we often hear about the “return to the object” or of an opposition between a “theory”-based approach and one based on objects. Yet, in the final analysis, there is no such opposition: for the decision to focus on “the object” is itself a theoretical choice, one historically grounded in the Western history of empirical science. The nineteenth-century category “visual arts” was originally proposed as a way of getting beyond the racial paradigm on which art history cut its teeth, but it no longer serves this purpose adequately (if it ever did) because a lot more is involved in historicizing vision than recontextualizing objects, as the present collection of essays makes eminently clear. The individual chapters in this volume do a fine job of articulating “visuality” at the intersection of incommensurable cultural practices; it is from individual case studies of the complex mechanisms of cultural interaction that shared research agendas can arise. The tendency in cross-cultural studies is to identify a series of shared thematic subjects. However, if a coherent field of investigation is to emerge from these new forays, then even more fundamental issues need to be identified and collectively pursued, such as a shared critical concern with the ways that art historians structure time, especially in comparative analyses, so that we do not repeat the mistakes of the nineteenth century by naively recreating a field of commensurable objects and events from a European perspective without acknowledging the politics of granting privilege to that perspective, to cite just one problem that keeps resurfacing in our new “world histories” of art. The final gesture of this volume is not meant to be read as waving a white flag in an expanded and de-centered field of study, but as throwing down the gauntlet: visuality matters because it raises fundamental questions about the incommensurability of signifying practices—from the short- and long-range effects of translating objects and places into virtual images, to the various kinds of resistance and accommodation to power dispersed across the global networks, and the intersections of consumerism and desire manifested in the visually, sensorily appealing material objects and images that circulated in the early modern world.

Notes

1. The bibliography is too extensive to summarize here. For an introduction to the issues, see Gombrich, 1965, 1984; Sturken and Sturken, 1982, 1989.


4. Foster, 1989, p. 15. In fact, it was Jonathan Cray, who had contributed a chapter to Foster’s volume, who, in his essay “Visibility, who later cited the source of the term visuality as Adorno’s ‘Erfahrunglichkeit’ (Cray, p. 11, n. 11, citing Adorno, 1984, pp. 139–146; cf. Adorno, 1970, pp. 145, 149–150; Cray, who opens his book by stating that it is “about vision and its historical construction,” glossed the concept of visibility with additional reference to accounts of modernity by Jean Baudrillard, Walter Benjamin, and others. My thanks to Jeanette Petsson for drawing the important reference in Cray to my attention.

5. Adorno, 1984, p. 139, citing Kant, 1953, p. 54.


7. Kant refers his concern to David Hume’s Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding (1748), which claimed that the primary truths derived from logic can tell us nothing about the world, how the world is accessed empirically, through experience. Kant refers to Hume as having awakened him from his “dogmatic slumber,” in Kant, 1902, IV, p. 240, as cited by Werner Pluhar, p. 100. My thanks to Claire Farago’s Critique of Pure Reason is indebted to Pluhar, pp. xxv–xxxv. Kant’s objection that sensibility is different in kind from thought is the basis for his account of the aesthetic as a separate faculty on the order of the reason or the understanding (Hegel and Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, cited in Ferguson, p. 6). It would take us too far afield from contemporary discussions of “visuality” to trace the model of vision that Kant’s theory of knowledge inherited ultimately from formal optics; see, however, Summers, 1987.

8. Ferguson, p. 25. The contest for her definition is as follows. Against deconstructive (that is, Derrida, Lyotard, de Man), accounts of the Kantian aesthetic, Ferguson argues that the emphasis on matter is mirrored in Kant’s account of the aesthetic as a “regulative structure” that treats aesthetic objects as versions of mental images (p. 3). Ferguson is not concerned with “visuality per se, as many 18th-century accounts of the term have been seen to do” (p. 6) but with interconnections between consciousness and matter, given that the “externalized objects of the imagination” are neither pure replicas of objects nor pure projections of pure consciousness. The autonomy of aesthetic objects, memories, dreams, and similar imaginative states is due to their “ambivalence,” that is, our not being able to assign them exclusively to either subjectivity or objectivity (p. 7).

9. Mirensztein, without discussing Kant, traces the origin of this important Kantian category to the Scottish historian and Abolitionist Thomas Carlyle, for first using the English-language term “visuality.”


11. Adorno, 1984, p. 139. For Adorno, alluding to the formalist criticism associated with Clement Greenberg, the compartmentalized separation of the visual from the conceptual is due to the “official curators of culture” who do not tolerate ambivalence and thereby create an illusion of unity based on the “false, thing-like notion that in the aesthetic artform tensions have been synthesized into a state of rest, whereas in fact those tensions are essential to the core of the aesthetic” (Adorno, 1970, p. 150). A full account of Adorno’s complex attempt to retain something of Kant’s emphasis on form while accounting for art’s social function in a capitalist society is beyond the scope of this short essay; see Zuckerman, with further references.

12. Both terms are widely confused, but on “ocularcentrism,” see Jay, on “Cartesian perspectivism,” see Southwell. Both authors preview their arguments in their chapter contributions to Foster, 1980. For an informed historical account, see Brennan and Jarvis, Cook.

13. Said and other critics regard the academic practices they associate with Eurocentrism as misleading because they are based on the false assumption that “external factors peculiar to each society are decisive for their comparative evaluation,” culminating in the achievements of European civilization. See Amin, pp. ix, 85–117. What Karen Lang calls the “unashamedly European” subject of Kant’s critical enterprise has entered into the discussion of analytical philosophy even less. Kant stresses that the judging spectator, that is, the enlightened subject, uses only his own faculty of reason to understand and change the world by working in society. The spectator’s detachment from the natural world is a mark of his control of his inner nature, making aesthetic and ideological judgment (of beauty and of the sublime in nature, respectively) equally important markers of moral society. The humanity of non-European peoples is frequently negated in Kant’s writings, whose best offer for inclusion is through colonization. See Lang, On the cultural production of people who do not separate themselves from nature, see Piet; Connelly.


17. See, further, Silins, devoted largely to a critical discussion of the most intellectually ambitious attempt to date, by Summers, 2003. Even the idea that space is a universal purer “synthetic” intuition, as proposed by Kant, is a cultural construction rather than an actual universal. See also Ingalls.
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