

## Postcoloniality Between The End Of History And Metamodernism

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### Abstract:

*This paper seeks to examine two principal issues: postmodernism (and post-postmodernism) within the dual contexts of Fukuyama's contested 'end of History,' as well as developments in postcolonial thought. These will be followed by an attempt to relate these issues with metamodernism as a post-postmodernism. The postmodern condition, defined by Lyotard as 'incredulity towards metanarratives,' connotes a scepticism towards all truth claims and metaphysical dogmas: not simply the decentering but the uncentering of all totalizing metanarratives. The modernist 'hermeneutics of suspicion' gives way to a rejection of 'the nostalgia of the whole and the one,' liberating a polyphony of subjectivities. Fukuyama's 'end of History' thesis, on the other hand, does not presume the refutation of historicism as much as a purported completion of it: the fundamental principles inherent to history, as a grand Western metanarrative, stand completed. As such, it is not a postmodern undoing of history as a metanarrative, but rather follows in the lineage of teleological thinkers like Hegel and Marx. One may argue, as Habermas does, that postmodernism responded to a distinctly European Enlightenment modernity, which was located within particular historical material contexts, defined by what Schmitt termed *jus publicum europaeum*. While postmodernism eschews this subject, the presumption of plurality also problematizes postcolonial modernities. This paper attempts to examine these aporias within postcolonial thought against the background of a post-postmodern world, where history is more alive than ever, rife with (metamodernist) grand narratives: nationalist myth-making, millenarian climate crises, religious fundamentalism, refugee crises, culture wars, discourse on economic precarity, etc.*

**Keywords:** *Plurality of histories, postmodernism, postcolonialism, metanarratives, metamodernism, subaltern studies*

### Introduction

"In a postmodern era at a post-colonial locus, we find purpose and consensus equally contestable and the criteria for the adjudication of differences themselves must be sought as the discussion proceeds and its parameters become negotiated."

– Djelal Kadir<sup>1</sup>

### The Postmodern condition

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<sup>1</sup> Kadir, Djelal. 'What are We After?' *World Literature Today* Vol. 69, No. 1, *Postmodernism/Postcolonialism* (Winter, 1995), pp. 20.

The postmodern condition, defined by Lyotard as ‘incredulity towards metanarratives,’ connotes a scepticism towards all truth claims and metaphysical dogmas: not simply the decentering but the uncentering of all totalizing metanarratives. The modernist ‘hermeneutics of suspicion’ gives way to a rejection of ‘the nostalgia of the whole and the one,’<sup>2</sup> liberating a polyphony of subjectivities.

One may trace this impulse to Nietzsche’s declaration of the ‘death of God,’ whose notebooks instead espoused a radical conceptual polytheism without unity, ‘the subject as multiplicity.’ For Nietzsche, the death of God did not entail disenchantment or secularization, but the liberation of heterogeneity and polyphony from the master-signifier of the One. As such, it heralds a different metaphysical modality, formed by the ‘incoherence of the impulses’, ‘intensity of forces.’<sup>3</sup> Drives and impulses constitute a lucid, rich, vigorous plurality of intensities. This is not a radically modern idea, but harks back to Heraclitus’ ‘ever-living fire, being kindled in measures and being put out in measures.’ This complimented the displacement of the pillars of Metaphysics, God and the Self with the theories and doctrines of Nietzsche, Freud, Darwin etc., followed by language itself with the instability of the dyadic Saussurian sign-system, leading up to Derrida’s ‘liberation of the signifier,’ and onwards to the postmodern dismissal of all such edifices. Adorno wrote that “the ancient concepts [of metaphysics] are essentially secularized gods.”<sup>4</sup> This, Bielik-Robson insists, means “that concepts are gods who might have died for simple faith, but nonetheless come to life again in knowledge.”<sup>5</sup> As Schmitt proved, all political doctrines are merely secularized theology. These remarks, then, form the theological grounds for the emergence of modernity, for modernism and postmodernism.

### **The End of History (?)**

Fukuyama’s ‘end of History’ thesis, on the other hand, does not presume the refutation of historicism as much as a purported completion of it: the fundamental principles inherent to history, as a Western metanarrative, stand completed. As such, it is not a postmodern undoing of history as a metanarrative, but rather follows in the lineage of teleological thinkers like Hegel and Marx. Fukuyama’s imagines the vindication of Whiggish notions of history as an unrelenting march of scientific progress. Liberation was promised through the flattening of history within the consumerist utopia of free market democracy: with the principles of history realized, the final form achieved, all conflict would henceforth lack any grand historical significance. Ironically, in spite of postmodernism’s cynical suspicion of metanarratives, it is the inertia and cultural logic of late capitalism consolidated (in theory) by a Fukuyaman end of history that provides an optimal playing field for the irreverent unreliable free play of signifiers and referents under the postmodern condition. A postmodern approach to history renders History/history itself an unstable referent, vulnerable to the plurality of subjectivities and frameworks that operate in the absence of the transcendental unifier of Eurocentric Enlightenment historicism.

The purported End of History was, after all, only the end of a distinctly Western (notion of, project of) history, meant to be exported via the universal messianic system of global free market democracy. History (or rather histories—entwined, knotty, embroiled in a plethora of tangled complexities and consequences), in fact, continued to churn beyond the metropolises. Fukuyama was discerning enough to accommodate within the grand teleological machinery of History the volatile potential of thymos: ‘spiritedness,’ man’s

<sup>2</sup> Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Translated by Bennington, G. and B. Massumi. University of Minnesota Press, 1984, pp. 81.

<sup>3</sup> Smith, Daniel W. ‘Klossowski’s Reading of Nietzsche: Impulses, Phantasms, Simulacra, Stereotypes.’ *Diacritics* 35(1):8-21, 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Adorno, Theodor W. *Metaphysics: Concepts and Problems*. John Wiley & Sons, 2015, pp. 85

<sup>5</sup> Bielik-Robson, Agata. ‘Secret Followers of the Hidden God,’ *Bild und Idol Perspektiven aus Philosophie und jüdischem Denken*, ed. Beniamino Fortis, *Apeliotes – Studien zur Kulturgeschichte und Theologie* 16, Peter Lang, 2022, pp. 196.

desire for recognition, for conquest and worthiness, “the fundamental source of the emotions of pride, anger, and shame.”<sup>6</sup> Since, as Kojève’s reading of Hegel categorically stated, man-as-master required recognition, and this recognition lay in overcoming and subjugating the other, man’s inner thymos yearned for struggle, “for the struggle against injustice is what calls forth what is highest in man.”<sup>7</sup>

This observation portended the ‘revenge of history,’ so to speak, which commenced within a decade of Fukuyama’s declaration of the End of History: the attack on the World Trade Center, followed by the War on Terror, the financial crisis of 2008, etc. Challenges that emerged not just through Huntington’s clash of civilizations, but inherent to the inert cultural logic of late capitalism. History and historians themselves stand historicized, implicated in their own play.

### The Modern

Weber’s comment on man’s inherent ‘metaphysical need for a meaningful cosmos’<sup>8</sup> reveals the basis for master-narratives, and their enduring necessity. Religion, mythology, and in the modern, secular world, ideology, politics, and eventually the self, have all fulfilled this cognitive need. The secular, disenchanted nomos of modernity replaced the medieval cosmology of the enchanted body of God. The modern must be understood not in chronological terms alone (for, after all, one is always ‘modern’ in relation to one’s past), but as a specific socio-historical, if not (anti-)metaphysical, modality. Grounded in the principles of Renaissance Humanism<sup>9</sup> and the Enlightenment, traditional hegemonic structures were eschewed in favor of a rational, scientific, increasingly complex instrumental epistemes, which were driven by and meant to maximize man’s inherent agency. It is within this disenchanted world of autonomous natural forces and fundamental laws, that modernity operates.

As Heidegger laments, the world is reduced to a ‘standing reserve,’ a resource possessing economic value to be exploited. These systems of exchange flatten appeals to ‘innate’ value, relying instead on instrumentality and efficiency. So it is that Harvey sees modernity as the cultural manifestation of modern capitalism, grounded in world systems oriented around the Europe (and later, North American; ‘Transatlantic’) enterprise of colonialism.<sup>10</sup> Jameson, in turn, relates postmodernism to the economic system of multi-national or late capitalism.<sup>11</sup>

The modernist worldview, further, should be understood as, to quote Joyce, ‘the ineluctable modality of the visible’<sup>12</sup> sliding gradually into (to rephrase Joyce) the ineluctable modality of the invisible. The scientific and rational temper that had displaced Providence now laid bare the world through its disenchanted gaze. But the dawn of quantum physics, of the atomic age, heralded the age of the invisible visible, so to speak, as the scientific eye

<sup>6</sup> Fukuyama, Francis. *The End of History and the Last Man*. The Free Press, 1992, pp 163

<sup>7</sup> Fukuyama 1992, pp. 311.

<sup>8</sup> Weber, Max. *Essays in Sociology*. Translated and edited by H.H. Gerth, C. Wright Mills. New York OUP, 1946. pp. 281

<sup>9</sup> Burckhardt: “In [Renaissance] Italy this veil first melted into air; an *objective* treatment and consideration of the State and of all the things of this world became possible. The subjective side at the same time asserted itself with corresponding emphasis; man became a spiritual *individual*, recognized himself as such.” *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, New American Library, 1960, pp. 88.

<sup>10</sup> Harvey, David. *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry Into the Origins of Cultural Change*, London, 1989.

<sup>11</sup> Jameson, Frederic. *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1990.

<sup>12</sup> Joyce, James. *Ulysses*. Penguin Classics, 2000, pp. 45.

floundered in the face of this new subatomic, radioactive scientific-aesthetic reality, unreliable and elusive to any method of empirical inquiry.

Meanwhile, Heidegger's *Destruktion*, preceding and presaging Derrida's deconstruction, interrogated the very grounds upon which (Western) metaphysics operated, the grounds on which it understood what being is. Further, Derrida's deconstruction of the West's logocentrism problematized the firm foundations on which it had built its conceptual apparatuses. The undoing of the secure, firmly grounded grand narratives of colonial modernity, Western logocentrism and metaphysics, Nietzsche's God—the edifice of European Enlightenment itself—heralded the lateral shift from modernism to postmodernism: a shift in the modalities of the West's (and the colonies') engagement with their historical context. Herman astutely notes, "modern to postmodern suggests a kind of lateral movement—not so much an advancement as a realignment."<sup>13</sup> The modern and postmodern conditions are merely turnings of the same mode of engagement. Where modernism sought to engage with modernity's (this-worldly, immanent) aporias, postmodernism questions the earnestness of these attempts.<sup>14</sup> If modernism's urgency and radicalism was driven by the trauma of the impending decline of western civilization (the edifice of Enlightenment) ultimately precipitated by the World Wars—then postmodernism's posture of cynicism and irony was informed by the promise of the End of History itself. This brings Fukuyama's quasi-eschatology in consonance with the postmodern condition. The aesthetic language of postmodernism has, arguably, been appropriated and cannibalized by the forces of neoliberal capital, and can respond neither to the retrenchment of the strong nation-state nor the emergence of third-world modernities.

### **European Enlightenment modernity**

One may argue, as Habermas does, that postmodernism responded to a particular modernity, to a distinctly European Enlightenment modernity, which was located within particular historical material contexts, defined by what Schmitt termed *jus publicum europaeum*. This became the *nomos* that laid the grounds for European imperialism, spatially dividing European polities as equals and expelling their prior hostilities outwards towards the uncivilized other. This modernity, understood to be universal, was seen as the inevitable endpoint that the world as a whole must assimilate to (this is also the underlying assumption that Fukuyama made). This metanarrative privileged constructions of selfhood which legitimized the European project of colonialism. Modernism has likewise inherited this metanarrative borne by the West with the Enlightenment; as Kadir notes, it casts itself in terms 'emancipatory, soteriological, progressive, amelioration.'<sup>15</sup>

But as theorists like Eisenstadt<sup>16</sup> have shown, this has not come to transpire in the post-World War II scenario. The post-Nuremberg world order set about constructing a (neocolonial) global architecture of bureaucratic and financial organs, that retained the (now US-led) Atlanticist west at the helm of affairs, unveiling new regimes of power. Despite this, the emergence of multipolarity, and the entailing multiple registers of histories, has been inevitable. The messianic impulse, what Jenkins calls 'self-referential [. . .] an ideological-interpretive discourse,'<sup>17</sup> gives way to the polyphonic polycentric polytheistic imagination of a rudderless, free play. Having problematized the notion of a

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<sup>13</sup>Herman, David J. 'Modernism versus Postmodernism: Towards an Analytic Distinction,' *Poetics Today* Vol. 12, No. 1 (Spring, 1991), pp. 57.

<sup>14</sup> Kadir 1995, pp. 20.

<sup>15</sup> Kadir 1995, pp 18.

<sup>16</sup> Eisenstadt, S.N. 'Multiple Modernities,' *Daedalus*, Vol. 129, No. 1, *Multiple Modernities* (Winter, 2000), pp. 1-29.

<sup>17</sup> Jenkins, Keith. *On 'What is History?': From Carr and Elton to Rorty and White*. Routledge, 1995, pp. 9.

firm, objective, empirical foundation upon which historical knowledge rests, the emphasis comes to be on the creation rather than the seeking of truth.

It is here that we make use of Habermas's retort to Lyotard: even the 'incredulity towards metanarratives' presumes a standard it derives from the very thing it critiques and questions. Even in its oppositional stance to modernism, postmodernism is still beholden to modernism. It is unable to accommodate (or even countenance) a pluralistic vision of modernities through the decentering of History (and with it, methods of historical inquiry and production rooted in Enlightenment rationality, historicity, etc.). The obsolescence of European modernity is not greeted with the liberation of plural modernities, but with resignation and cynicism towards the History/history referent altogether. Postmodernism, even as a critique or self-indictment, is invariably still part of Western universalism, and unable to proceed beyond self-indictment.

Anthony King asserts that postmodernism is a belated prism through which the West recognized 'the world outside themselves – and the decenterings, cultural relativizations and contradictions' that follow this recognition.<sup>18</sup> The decentering of all metanarratives replaces 'bilateral asymmetries'<sup>19</sup> with an open-ended, porous, heterogeneous network within a global(ized) economy of economic, cultural and referential exchange, which in turn signals a renewed subjugation of the local.

### **Postcolonial modernities**

At the same time, all postcolonial modernities are invariably inflected with the trace of the Western project, unfolding within the universal colonial framework, and making use of its conceptual apparatus. While Eisenstadt questions the identification of the West with modernity, he nevertheless concedes that it remains a basic point of reference. Indeed, Menon complicates the referent of 'colonial modernity' by questioning whether it is determined spatially ("i.e., modernity occurring within a colony rather than the metropolis (as in Partha Chatterjee's idea of 'our modernity'"), temporally ("i.e., modernity experienced while under colonialism") or as "some perversion of Modernity occurring in the colonies."<sup>20</sup> This aporia continues to complicate and compound the contradictions inherent to postcolonial third world nationalist, religious, and other projects of identity-formation. The Subaltern Studies school's intervention questioned the legitimacy of colonial, nationalist and Marxist historiographies alike, revealing the contradictions, contestations and lacunae that remain to be addressed in India's process of decolonization, from the perspective of the subaltern (or what Eisenstadt terms 'center-periphery relations'<sup>21</sup>).

In India, religion and caste have emerged as a potent vector of political and personal meaning-making and identity-formation. These formations, it must be stressed, are invariably refracted through a colonial lens. Despite being so fundamental to political experience in South Asia, they are not unreconstructed, but encoded with the exigencies of colonial-era governmentality. Which is to say, the trace of colonial-era constructions of the self, of social formations and power relations continues to orient the lifeblood of postcolonial polities.

What must be retained is the fact that these postcolonial critiques must invariably take place within the same universal hegemonic framework (which, even as a globalized post-postmodernism, continues) that it seeks to criticize: they have developed in tandem with,

<sup>18</sup> King, Anthony. *Spaces and Global Cultures: Architecture, Urbanism, Identity*. Routledge, 2004, pp. 76.

<sup>19</sup> Kadir 1995, pp. 20.

<sup>20</sup> Dilip M. Menon. 'Religion and Colonial Modernity Rethinking Belief and Identity,' *Economic and Political Weekly*, April 27, 2002, pp. 1162.

<sup>21</sup> Eisenstadt 2000, pp. 6.

in response as well as in opposition to the latter. This cannot be wished away. India's encounter with modernity was couched within the experience of coloniality. To address India's self-representation vis-à-vis the idea of an Indian modernity and/or postmodernity, one must engage with 'internalized modes of coloniality.'<sup>22</sup>

### **Catachresis as strategy**

To address this complicity, we take recourse to the strategy of catachresis. Derived from the Greek katakhresthai, 'to (mis)use,' Spivak, via Derrida, defines it as 'a concept-metaphor without an adequate referent.'<sup>23</sup> There are no absolute and literal systems of meaning in language, and so there is a 'violent and forced abusive inscription of a sign' onto a meaning that has not yet secured a signage of its own, leading to the irruption of 'a secondary original.'<sup>24</sup> And so, there are no 'true' referents: no 'true' woman, no 'true' proletarian, no 'true' subaltern. Between the master-signifier and the heterogenous array of subjectivities it seeks to appropriate and assimilate, there is a gap, aporia; hence the imprecision and free play of language and the political use of words. The tactics of catachresis, then, Spivak says, is the 'reversing, displacing, and seizing the apparatus of value-coding.'<sup>25</sup> Bhabha similarly uses the term 'hybridity' for this concept.

Within a field of all hegemonic metanarratives ineluctably upended, flattened and heterogenized by postmodern modalities, the strategy of catachresis is a potent means of navigating one's path through the still amorphous, chaotic domain of the post-postmodern. The decentering of History also frees us from the bilateral dialectic of colonizer and colonized, Occidental and Oriental systems of knowledge production, etc. in favor of a lateral field of self-determining, emancipated signifiers. Here, again, we see the trace of the theological: Derrida mentions Angelus Silesius' fascination with the 'rose without a why' (which also figures in Gertrude Stein's works as "Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose"<sup>26</sup>), gelassen (serene, calm, composed, blissful). He imagines a theology where each finite being enjoys 'autonomous ontological status,'<sup>27</sup> freed from the despotic apparatus of an Absolute (God, the privileged center, the transcendental signified) that all beings are bound and beholden to (Here again emerges Nietzsche's death of God, the world of many liberated impulses and drives, luxuriant and ecstatic).

### **Metamodernism, bricolage**

Novel conceptual structures only emerge when extant ideological projects prove inadequate. Where postmodernism rejected the liberatory grand récit (which carries messianic connotations), where Fukuyama concluded the grand telos of history, the 'revenge of history' upends both. Metamodernism may be seen as a response to this revenge. It is, of course, only a speculative, provisional placeholder for the still unknown epoch that must fill the bracket of post-postmodernism. The emphasis is on 'metaxis,' meaning 'with,' 'between,' 'beyond': as such, metamodernism is unable to overcome the hangover of modernism and postmodernism, instead opting to negotiate their interstices. It opts for a 'contrived depth,' the resurgence of the 'transcendental or archetypal impulse,'<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Kadir 1995, pp. 21.

<sup>23</sup> Spivak, Gayatri. 'Poststructuralism, Marginality, Postcoloniality and Value.' *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*, ed. Padmini Mongia. Routledge, 1996, pp. 204.

<sup>24</sup> Derrida, Jacques. *Margins of Philosophy*. University of Chicago Press, 1982, pp. 255.

<sup>25</sup> Spivak 1996, pp. 206.

<sup>26</sup> Stein, Gertrude. 'Sacred Emily,' *Geography and Plays*. Four Seas Company Publishers, 1922, pp. 187

<sup>27</sup> Bielik-Robson, Agata. 'The Void of God, or the Paradox of Pious Atheism: From Scholem to Derida.' *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, Vol 12, No. 2, 2020, pp. 117.

<sup>28</sup> Dempsey, Brendan. '[Re]construction: Metamodern 'transcendence' and the return of myth,' metamodernism.com, October 21, 2014.

a self-aware and self-reflexive affirmation of metanarratives, ‘between naïveté and knowingness.’<sup>29</sup> This recenters liberation theologies (“a romantic response to crisis”<sup>30</sup>), especially in the wake of such critical scenarios as climate crises, resource scarcity, nationalist myth-making, economic precarity, etc.

It is useful to contextualize this orientation through the alienating, disorienting cognitive ambience created by one’s interaction with post-truth, virtual, synthetic digital environments: despite the proliferation of easily-accessible information, our capacity for meaning-making, for making sense of the world stands undermined. Akin to the fog of war, this overabundance of data thwarts our attempts at meaningful narratives. In such a scenario, the tactics of belief, of faith, of investing in sincerity and myth-making, in mythopoesis, in re-enchantment, serves as a meaningful shield against the discombobulating unsurety and relativism fostered by the levelling of all moral and ontological hierarchies by the ‘surface’ and ‘simulacra’ of modern media consumption.<sup>31</sup> However, this is also performed with a knowing self-reflexivity, a self-awareness that harks back to postmodern ‘structures of feeling.’

To complement the aforementioned catachrestic technics, we evoke the figure of the bricoleur<sup>32</sup>: Derrida’s notion (via Levi-Strauss) of bricolage (“bricolage is mythopoetic”<sup>33</sup>), of the use of tools, of ‘the means at hand.’ The internet meme, for example, functions as a subversive tool for combatting social media’s ‘fog of war.’ As freely circulating digital items, packed with dense combinations of re-inscribable semiotic signs intelligible to those online ‘in the know,’ memes provide an accessible and interactive way of communicating ideas and steering discourse. Memes have become a part of online communication, and seem to grow more abstract and recondite with time. As such, they will continue to function as important tactical tools for navigating the online ‘fog of war.’

As an increasing number of Indians (itself a catachresis: who is a ‘true’ Indian?), primarily the youth, continue to join social media platforms, in an economy that is increasingly receptive to Indian, Chinese and African consumer interests, memes provide a legible way for them to access and contribute to online discourses, and to craft distinct socialities and semiotic languages of their own. Online, one occupies various registers of identity and self-representation (and self-curation). The rapid popularity of reels, memes, and skits on social media sites among Indian youth subcultures, conversant with global memeplexes and discursive currents, signals the potential for developing modern aesthetic and visual languages that are, so to speak, post-postcolonial and post-postmodern, occupying a space all of its own.

Within a global, intricately interconnected network of consumer economies, where all signs are exchangeable, the strategy of catachresis allows for displacing, re-framing and re-coding (and at times undercutting, subverting) freely circulating (‘democratic’) online discursive values, thus recalibrating their value within the global post-postmodern, heterogenous, fluid discursive space of the internet. This strategy is catachrestic precisely because it does not endeavor to mimic and emulate the (pedagogic) discourse presented to it, but instead actively and creatively (and polemically) repurposes it, re-coding and re-

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<https://www.metamodernism.com/2014/10/21/reconstruction-metamodern-transcendence-and-the-return-of-myth/>

<sup>29</sup> Vermeulen, Timotheus and Robin van den Akker. ‘Notes on Metamodernism’. *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture* 2: 1–14, 2010. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.3402/jac.v2i0.5677>

<sup>30</sup> Abramson, Seth. ‘What is metamodernism?’ *Huffington Post*, January 5 2017.

[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/what-is-metamodernism\\_b\\_586e7075e4b0a5e600a788cd](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/what-is-metamodernism_b_586e7075e4b0a5e600a788cd)

<sup>31</sup> Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Translated by Sheila Faria Glaser. University of Michigan Press, 1995

<sup>32</sup> Derrida, Jacques. ‘Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences,’ *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*, ed. D. Lodge. London: Longman, 1988, pp. 115

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.



inscribing the discursive value within a field that accommodates such radical, fluid and porous visual-linguistic oversignifications. To function as such self-sufficient, self-defined, autonomous ontological beings, as Derrida imagines Silesius' rose: this would be, perhaps, the most poetic posture to adopt in the face of the post-postmodern condition and its befuddling and soporific 'fog of war.'

## Conclusion

We have covered the conceptual grounds of modernism and postmodernism, as well as the aporias and blind-spots that have haunted discourses on colonial as well as postcolonial modernities. Fukuyama's *End of History* and the postmodern condition found unwitting common ground through the inert 'logic of late capitalism,' as Jameson puts it. However, the 'revenge of history' soon put paid to this inertia; the rise of global conflicts, economic and climate crises necessitated newer conceptual strategies that may efficiently respond to these ground realities. Metamodernism is one such nebulous strategy that has endeavoured 'a romantic response to crisis,' and utilizes a self-aware sincerity that occupies a middle ground between modernism and postmodernism. Within this renewed cosmos of global flux and crisis, Indian self-representation finds itself at a crossroads. The strategy of catachresis, of exploiting the gaps in 'forcible signification' to repurpose a sign, and of bricolage, allows Indians to re-code and make use of discursive values within today's discursive fields, which occupy real as well as virtual domains.

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