

NOTES & COMMENTS

Dichotomously Stiffened Dialectics in the Entangled Modernity of the Colonized and the Colonizers: A Critical Comment on Professor Singh's Article, "Colonised's Madness, Colonisers' Modernity and International Law: Mythological Materialism in the East-West *Telos*"

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A primary purpose of this paper is to critically evaluate Professor P. Singh's Article, "Colonised's Madness, Colonisers' Modernity and International Law: Mythological Materialism in the East-West Telos" published in Volume 3, Number 1 of the Journal of East Asia and International Law. In his article, Singh attempted to overlap various conceptions of modernity taken from a wide range of academic disciplines, and experimentally collapse them into one with a post-colonial point of view. In spite of incomplete argumentation and obscurity in the conceptual formulation, I found his original ideas on the internal connection of modernity with the operating mode of international law to be highly impressive. The most critical

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point against him was the firm and stereotypical dichotomy of the colonizer and the colonized without any potentiality of sublating the state of colonization, that is, disconnecting the colonizers with their colony and liberating the colonized from their colony. By such sublation (Aufheben) of the existing oppressive relation between the colonizers and the colonized, we can plan to build a new world of peaceful co-existence between the colonizers and the colonized of the past. But although Singh's conception of modernity is dangerously one-sided, I expect his further research to penetrate into the deep life-reality of the Indian subaltern, which would make a great contribution to the establishment of the new vision of international law in this global society.

Keywords

Mythological Materialism, Mythical Materialism, East-West Telos, Modernity, Classical International Law

1. Problems: Post-Colonial Conception and Alternative-Suggesting of Modernity

When I first read Professor Singh's article titled "Colonied's Madness, Colonisers' Modernity and International Law: Mythological Materialism in the East-West *Telos*,"¹ it appeared to me as a tentative draft still in thinking rather than a completed monograph ready to publish. The key concepts were not fixed in such a way that his ideas could be clearly comprehended. To name one example, Singh applied two denotations on one theoretical connotation such as 'mythical materialism'² and 'mythological materialism.'³ However, his conception of modern art as 'violence-boosting' (79)⁴ in the modern Western civilization was, in my view, considerably exaggerated. It is also not so persuasive that the analysis of Western modern art would necessarily imply its inherent promotion of violence and inevitable result in concluding mythological materialism. Moreover, a much expected discourse on international law, announced in the title of the article, was too short for me to fully understand the main theme of his post-colonial

¹ This draft was originally titled, *The Madness of Art, the Myth of Modernity and International Law in the East-West Telos*.

² See the original draft, at 2.

³ *Id.* at 8-13 (IV. Politics, Art and Modernity: The Vision of Mythological Modernity).

⁴ P. Singh, *Colonised's Madness, Colonisers' Modernity and International Law: Mythological Materialism in the East-West Telos*, 3 J. EAST ASIA & INT'L L. 79 (2010).