

Encounter of (Colonial) Encounters (Florence, 8–9 May 17)

Florence, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut, Palazzo Grifoni Budini Gattai, Via dei Servi 51, May 8–09, 2017

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut

Encounter of (Colonial) Encounters: Methods, Epistemologies and Terms for a Transcultural Art History

Workshop

organized by Jens Baumgarten and Marco Musillo

The first art-historical debates on colonial artifacts focused on the so called "mixed" aspect of their creation; by stressing either their appearance or focusing on the main actors such as the makers, or those who marked processes of appropriation. Terms like syncretism were coined to understand the diversity of objects not epistemologically defined by disciplines – like art history – that based their vocabulary on foundational terms, such as "artist", "aesthetic value", or "authenticity". In turn, the art-historical analysis of such artifacts, seen as products of a colonial encounter, was shaped by the same essentialist perspective. In the last decades many scholars of various disciplines have proposed different approaches for a transcultural – and in some cases trans-historical art history – mainly by focusing on the early modern period. For example, in her fundamental text on materiality, Elizabeth Edwards states that the colonial culture is deeply material. However, even in these cases, the diversity represented by theoretical and historiographical traditions of different countries or regions have often not been taken into account. At the same time, the contemporary academic framework mostly focuses on regional studies – or defined economic and cultural networks – by following the tradition expressed for example by Braudel's concept of the Mediterranean, or in definitions like "Atlantic System". From the same perspective, cultural and conceptual terms such as "Negritude" or "Latinité" came into usage for describing colonial processes; and in the contemporary epoch, with regards to East and South East Asia, concepts such as "exchange" or "global" are becoming terms marking a fracture between institutional powers and local cultural identities.

The present colloquium proposes to discuss the different approaches taken to look at the broadly defined colonial encounter, and to analyze their theoretical and epistemological – often hidden – backgrounds. The main aim is to consider the great complexity arising from the superimpositions of different frameworks and models; to discuss the diverse historiographies and artifacts defined by global circulations, and finally to critically examine their theoretical foundations. The colloquium will focus on examples from two different regions, namely China and the South East Asia on the one hand, and Iberian America on the other. In facing such historiographical frameworks, and

their theoretical and epistemological discourses, the colloquium is looking for dialogues that will transcend the concept of the colonial gaze (such as the Portuguese, or the French etc. as colonial agents), and simplistic comparative art histories. At the same time, the colloquium seeks to trigger an open discussion on the possibilities and issues of a "global" art history by questioning the concepts and epistemologies that have been shaping and problematizing the canons of European and North-American art history.

PROGRAM

Monday, 8 May 2017

18:00

Evening lecture

Jens Baumgarten (São Paulo/Florence)

Can there be European colonial art histories? Early modern arts in a transcultural perspective

Tuesday, 9 May 2017

10:30

Gerhard Wolf

Welcome

10:45

Jens Baumgarten and Marco Musillo

Introduction

11:00

Manuela Ciotti (Aarhus)

The recalcitrant colonial: Notes on framing, displaying and narrating material culture from Asia

11:45

Vimalin Rujivacharakul (Newark)

The Buddha as a System: Imperialist Discourse, Religious Constructs, and Modern-Medieval Divide

12:30 Lunch break

14:30

Agustina Rodríguez (Buenos Aires)

Prints around the world. Colonial encounters and image appropriation in the 17th century

15:15

Astrid Windus (Hamburg)

Object-human relationships and the biographies of things in the church of Carabuco (Diocese La

Paz, 17th century)

16:00 Break

16:30

Marco Musillo (Florence)

The Fractures of Global Art: Quantitative Historiography and Art History

17:15 Final discussion

CONTACT

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FURTHER INFORMATION

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Reference:

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