

## Art History, Epistemic Injustice, Ideological Violence (Florence, 17–18 Oct 25)

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut, Florence, Italy, Oct 17–18, 2025

Deadline: Jul 31, 2025

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Art History, Epistemic Injustice, and Ideological Violence, Transdisciplinary Workshop.

The workshop looks at the concept of epistemic injustice or even violence and its relation to the art historical realm. We are interested in how the criteria of ‘modernity’ shaped the birth of the discipline and how the geographical foci of art history—and the assumptions that come with it—determine the discipline’s epistemologies, which, despite efforts to broaden perspectives and question the canon, often still involve epistemic injustice and violence. On one hand, our interest is informed by the epistemic injustices embedded in the past and present practices of art history and the wider cultural sphere; on the other hand, by the ideological violence exerted upon and through art history and its narratives within various political and social systems of the 20th century.

What has served as basis for the critical evaluation of art historical production, and how have these criteria been shaped by the paradigms and geographies of modernity? What are the consequences of adopting a linear teleology of historical progress in the study of art? Which alternative ways of knowing art—such as those grounded in affective and sensory modalities— have been excluded or actively repudiated? And, finally, how can we confront art history’s ‘epistemological monoculture’? Of particular interest is the uneven distribution of attention within art history’s epistemic territorial practices, and their roots in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century nationalisms, political structures and hegemonies. We aim to explore the geopolitics of the art historical discourse from its inception until today, ranging from the distribution of academic interests and the perpetuation of established artistic geographies through research funding policies to the geopolitics of musealization.

Since the nineteenth century the modern nation-state has appropriated select artistic patrimony and incorporated it into its system of social control, often with the support of art historical institutions. The state dictates and controls how artistic patrimony is consumed, channeling its reception into forms aligned with modern concepts of the nation, society, and art history, while at the same time suppressing other, premodern ways of experiencing art. Of interest are the social and material dimensions and consequences of art history’s epistemological and physical appropriation of the objects it studies, from the nineteenth century until the present. This includes the violation and cancellation of premodern cultural and social ecologies through the often-forced removal of artworks from their original contexts. It also encompasses the destruction of premodern episte-

mological diversity, including alternative ways of engaging with art such as object-related ritual practices. Finally, it includes the ontological and physical transformation of these objects once they are incorporated into the realm of art historical study.

We welcome papers from art history, history, history of ideas, and related fields that focus on broader systematic questions. Scholars are also invited to present single case studies in their specific socio-political background that might shed light on underexplored material.

Papers should not exceed 20 minutes and will be followed by a discussion.

Please send title, abstract (max. 2000 characters) and a short bio summarised in one PDF-document to ResearchGroup-Gruendler@khi.fi.it by 31 July 2025.

Organizers: Hana Gründler (KHI – MPI) and Joanna Smalcerz (University of Warsaw). A Collaboration between the Research Group “Ethico-Aesthetics of the Visual” and the Institute of Art History, University of Warsaw.

Reference:

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