Light in a Socio-Cultural Perspective (Beer-Sheva, 14 Apr 15)

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel, Apr 14, 2015
Deadline: Nov 30, 2014

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Since the dawn of civilization, the concept of light has been central to cultural processes and formulations. Light was regarded not merely as a physical phenomenon, but also as a moral concept, charged – in relation to darkness – with dialectical meaning, such as good/bad, enlightened/barbaric, etc. We witness the significant role played by the concept of light through a variety of societal and cultural phenomena, beginning with the naming of historical periods (i.e. the Dark Ages, the Age of Enlightenment), through religious perceptions, evident in texts and artworks that present God as the source of light, to contemporary scientific discoveries that acknowledge the importance of light in the shaping of human mental states.
In 2003, as part of The Weather Project exhibited in the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern in London, the Danish artist Olafur Eliasson installed hundreds of mono-frequency lamps on the wall, forming the shape of the sun, accompanied by a fine mist. The effect was amazing: thousands of visitors lay down on the floor, yielding to the artificial sun. In 2002, the work Tribute in Light was shown in Manhattan for the first time, featuring eighty-eight searchlights that created two powerful light projections, which visually resonated with the Twin Towers. Tribute in Light constitutes a continuation of Modern artistic practices that conceive of light as a sculptural material.
In the symposium Light in a Socio-Cultural Perspective, organized by Ben-Gurion University of the Negev's Department of the Arts, we seek to discuss the significance of the concept of light in various cultures and historical periods, through the presentation of studies in the fields of humanities and social sciences. By combining ideas drawn from the disciplines of art history, literature, world history, religious thought, psychology, economy, geography and more, we hope to provide a platform for stimulating interdisciplinary discussion of the concept of light and of the ways in which it plays an active role in the shaping of society and culture or in which it is in itself shaped by them.
We welcome proposals in English, of about 300 words, from all disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, dealing with any historical period. Please send your proposal, together with a short biographical note (up to 50 words), to Dr. Ronit Milano, milanor@post.bgu.ac.il, by November 30, 2014.

Reference:
CFP: Light in a Socio-Cultural Perspective (Beer-Sheva, 14 Apr 15). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 28, 2014 (accessed Nov 28, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/8745>.