LIFE OUTSIDE THE CANON – HOMMAGE TO FOTEINI VLACHOU (1975-2017)

«So, I am not sure what kind of post this is, if it is a literary one or what, but the photo to accompany it, naturally, was one of my most favorite paintings ever, from Mariano Fortuny, a late nineteenth-century Spanish painter – a painting whose poster I have framed in life-size format and which is hanging in my son's room (framing posters, I used to look down to the activity as the worst kind of petty bourgeois habit, but there are few things that afford me greater pleasure than sitting across from it and staring at it for long intervals). I know that art historians can be insufferably pretentious, insisting that it's not the same looking at reproductions, as opposed to the 'real thing' at a museum, but there are truly (relatively – OK, probably not true…) few things I would insist upon seeing in a gallery or a museum (one day, I'll make a list). Fortuny's paintings are one of those things, his brushwork is so lively, in a way that it deceives you into thinking that it's actually swaying before your very eyes. And it's so fortunate (pun intended) that the Prado finally, finally opened a sumptuous new wing dedicated to nineteenth-century Spanish painting, because there's so much Greco, and Goya, and Zurbarán and Murillo a decent person can put up with, and one cannot imagine the *treasures* or the versatility of nineteenth-century Spanish painters (digression).»

I Know where I'm going, blog by Foteini Vlachou

EDITORIAL

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In March 2019 over thirty scholars and researchers coming from different parts of the globe met in Lisbon for three days (14-16) to pay homage to the art historian Foteini Vlachou, who had left us on June 8th 2017, not long after her forty-second birthday. The *Art in the Periphery* conference was held at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Universidade NOVA de Lisboa (NOVA FCSH), organized by the two research centres that had welcomed Foteini Vlachou since she settled down in Lisbon in 2009 coming from Greece — the Art History Institute (IHA) and the Contemporary History Institute (IHC). The scholarly exchange during the conference was intense, occurring in a warm atmosphere of shared emotions, as Foteini had been a dear colleague, and a close friend to many participants, and the attendees included her family. We want to express our deepest gratitude to all those who were involved in the *Art in the Periphery* conference, especially: Pedro Aires Oliveira, Luís Trindade and Rui Lopes from the IHC for all their work and support during the preparation of the conference; Terry Smith and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel for their key-note addresses, as well as for enriching the debates and the round-table discussions together with Eleonora Vratskidou, Barbara Pezzini, Raquel Henriques da Silva, Alicia Miguélez, Alexandra Curvelo, Nuno Senos and Maria Vlachou. After the conference, a call for contributions to this special issue of the Art History Institute's *Revista de História da Arte* online series was launched, and we are now happy to present the results of the long peer review and editing process that followed.

In this volume, you will find the work of scholars who deliberately chose to research life outside established artistic canons, be it because of the kind of peripheral subjects and geographies they decided to study, or because their approach to the history of art questions the prevalence of canonical art historical writing. As we shall see, that choice draws them closer to Foteini's long-standing historiographical project. One of the most prominent expressions of that project was the 'art in the periphery — life outside the canon' network she launched back in 2013. This international platform succeeded in bringing together scholars working on/with the notion of periphery, discussing it from the point of view of whichever chronological period or geographical area (especially those areas and topics that had so far been neglected by traditional and canonical art history). As Foteini stated in the network website herself: "Eschewing models that have been for the most part produced in artistic centres and often uncritically reproduced in the peripheries, [the network's approach] will seek to populate the discipline with alternative narratives on the specific and complex ways art (conceived in the widest sense imaginable) was/is produced, displayed and consumed."

Nevertheless, Foteini's commitment to the study of the periphery went farther back in time. Her singular educational and academic journey between Greece and Portugal had it right at its backbone. She arrived in Lisbon with a scholarship awarded by the Portuguese Foundation of Science and Technology (2009), for the PhD project she would complete

in the University of Crete (2013) under the supervision of Nicos Hadjinicolaou — with the thesis (in Greek) *Art in the European Periphery: History Painting in Portugal at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century*. She received other research fellowships from the Panagiotis and Effi Michelis Foundation (Athens), the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon), and eventually a postdoctoral fellowship from the Contemporary History Institute (NOVA FCSH), for a project entitled *Art and Culture in the Iberian Peninsula and Latin America 1870-1914: Making/ Unmaking National and Imperial Identities*. She worked as a researcher (*Crossing Borders* Project, 2014) and taught art history and non-western arts as a visiting assistant professor at the department of Art History of NOVA FCSH. She published chapters and articles on Portuguese art, matters of historiography and reception, keeping the discussion around the notion of periphery ongoing. At the time she got ill, Foteini had a contract with Routledge for a book titled *Painting History, Monarchy and the Empire, Portugal c. 1799–1807*. She was also co-editing a book about collecting and displaying in Portugal, a special issue on Portuguese historiography of art for *The Journal of Art Historiography*, and another special issue for *Visual Resources*, titled *A View from the Periphery*. She had furthermore launched the basis for other future editorial projects, namely a special issue for the *RIHA Journal* on transnational nineteenth-century landscape.

In 2016, Foteini's project *What Time for the Periphery?* was awarded an ICI Fellowship (Berlin), which she eventually had to decline. Her project was built on her developing research about the notion of periphery she had been working to redefine: "no longer understood to mean 'secondary, derivative, dependent, passive', the 'periphery' will be understood as a structure with distinct characteristics and priorities that might in turn undermine values espoused in artistic centres, such as authorship and originality. More importantly, the periphery will not be framed in exclusively geographical terms (as a region distinct from the centre), but rather as situated at the margins of dominant art history. As such, it may refer to areas, periods or even materials that have been delegated to a secondary position in the hierarchy of fine arts (the decorative arts can serve as a prime example of this process)" (quoted from the network website).

Foteini would finally argue for the study of the periphery as a temporal rather than a spatial concept, highlighting the political implications that could be driven from this perspective. By 2016, and following the ever growing activity of the 'art in the periphery' network, in the scope of which many scholars applied to present their work in Lisbon, she indeed had convincingly made a case for the return of the periphery to the centre of scholarly concerns. In her thought-provoking essay "Why Spatial? Time and the Periphery" (*Visual Resources* 32, 2016) the argument does not respond to the prevalent interest in geography, and the notions of place and space, rather contending that in order to discuss periphery we should reconsider the dominant conceptions of time. That is, we must consider the full ideological implications of linear, homogeneous historical narratives where notions of influence, progress, and development provide the seemingly neutral and universal accounts of culture and the production of art.

At the peak of her illness, and at the suggestion of the editors and friends at Edições do Saguão, Foteini began to gather her disparate writings for a prospective book. The resulting anthology includes a vast number of previously unpublished seminal art historical writings, partially meant for the ongoing publishing projects that she was unable to finish. It also includes two PhD thesis chapters (translated into English from the original Greek), scholarly articles published

in academic journals (including the *Visual Resources* essay), and papers presented in conferences. A final part is devoted to essays about other interests, namely her long-lasting passion for cinema, about which she often wrote in her blog — named after the marvellous and happy Michael Powell/ Eric Pressburger 1945 film, *I Know Where I'm Going*. Even though the book was left unfinished, Foteini gave precise instructions for the final editing. She chose the humorous cover and title — *The Disappointed Writer. Selected Essays* (Edições do Saguão, 2019). She was comfortable with the hybrid character of the volume that assembled all her interests, from eighteenth-century painting to Hollywood movies. She found it eventually stressed a historiographical perspective dear to her: an art historian should not limit herself to observe a specialized confined subject, or a limited chronology; on the contrary, different interests and experiences fertilize writing transforming art history into a more daring, demanding, and enriched field of knowledge.

We can surely experience this challenging approach to art history in Foteini's ground-breaking writings about Portuguese art from the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries (a topic noteworthy for its radical 'canon *outsideness*'). Her chapter on "The Basilica da Estrela: Iconography and proselytism", contrary to the rather plain common analysis that the late-eighteenth-century Basilica was built on account of Queen Mary I's fervorous Catholicism, points to the ideological and political reasons behind the consecration of the new basilica, namely the willingness to support Portuguese imperial ambitions with the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. Other examples would be the chapters dedicated to the study of 'new history painting' in Portugal. Foteini coined this term, elaborating on how this new genre was being developed at the end of the eighteenth century, though it barely had the time to establish

itself, since its developments were cut short by the departure of the king and his court to Brazil, fleeing the French invasions. She perceptively points out how 'new history painting' adapted to the absence of the king, and to the novel French circumstances, with foreign generals ruling the country and the expectations of a visit from Napoleon that never happened — Foteini exposes in delicious and humour-filled pages how iconography changed to please those newly in charge. Another important study is devoted to Columbano Bordalo Pinheiro's decorative mural paintings, traditionally considered as minor achievements in his otherwise highly praised late-nineteenth-century painting. In fact, Foteini approaches the concept of the "decorative" as a peripheral theme in art history, and therefore worthy of renewed attention, exploring its political uses and analysing the reasons why art history refers to it mainly in derogatory terms.

For sure, Foteini found life outside the canon, significantly contributing to change art historical established assumptions on the grounds of her interest in the presumably most 'insignificant' objects ever observed or in the deliberate non-canonical approach to canonical objects.

As Terry Smith wrote in the introduction to her book: "[Foteini's qualities were] definitive of her approach to her life and work: bold intelligence, fearless self-confidence, independence of thought, and absolute commitment to the discipline of art history as a practice of theory that was, in its essence, a worldly, consequential — indeed, political — project." Foteini Vlachou's work is still very much present in the discussion of the periphery, and the daring and brilliant analysis she brought to art history writing ensures that she will continue to take part in this conversation for many years to come.

The articles collected in this special issue of the Art History Institute's *Revista de História da Arte* definitely contribute to enrich the conversation about the periphery that her work started and fuelled. The authors add their voices and perspectives to the questioning of established chronologies and hierarchies, and continue tackling the notion of periphery as a foundation for the revitalization of art history coming from its margins.

The discussion opens up with a reflection by Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel on the concept of time discordances between geographic or cultural spaces, the way it feeds the rhetoric of centres-peripheries, and its usefulness as a tool to understand the driving forces behind artistic and cultural circulations. Katarzyna Cytlak then considers contemporary exhibitions and artistic projects in Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe as defining a new periphery-periphery paradigm that escapes the Eurocentric narrative inherent to the centre-periphery model.

The peripheral as the belated is the theme of Sofia Katopi's paper, in which she examines the ideas of stylistic anachronism and provincial delay as they have been used in art historiography to characterise a seventeenth-century urban planning project in Venetian Crete.

Annie Kontogiorgi and Manolis Karterakis discuss the notion of folk art and its nationalist implications as it applies to the doubly peripheral embroideries created by craftswomen in Greece at the turn of the twentieth-century.

A hierarchical binary, that of the amateur and the professional, centres Lucy Mounfield's paper on American photographer Vivian Maier. Working from Foteini Vlachou's reflections on the peripheral as a time-related construction, Mounfield questions the established notion of the amateur as a delayed, unartistic response to the professional.

The conceptualisation of time, in this case a collapsible time encompassing all eras within itself, grounds Eliana Sousa Santos's analysis of George Kubler's approach to the study of seventeenth-century religious structures in Mexico.

Iveta Slavkova reflects on the status of abhumanism at the periphery of the Parisian avant-garde following the Second World War, through the figure of German-born Otto Wolfgang Schulze-Wols and his critique of humanism as the founding principle of Western civilization.

The idea of periphery is discussed with regard to hierarchical distinctions between 'high' and 'low' art in Nóra Veszprémi's exploration of museums in nineteenth-century Hungary and their role as definers of a canon that would elevate the local applied arts to the status of universal, while relegating the objects produced by rural communities to the category of ethnography.

We also include as an extra publication the Portuguese translation (with minor changes) of Mariana Pinto dos Santos' essay *On Belatedness. The shaping of Portuguese art history in modern times*, previously published in English in *Artium Quaestiones* (Poland). Her text addresses the concept of *belatedness* in Portuguese art historiography and how it was associated with the idea of 'art as civilisation', taking into account the constraints of writing a master narrative in a peripheral European country with an Imperial past.

In addressing objects and problems from geographical, temporal and historiographical peripheries, and doing so in a way that engages with the broader issues of today's scholarly discourse, this collection of papers invites us to consider the wealth of life that can be found, indeed, outside the canon.

THE TIME DISCORDANCE OF ART GLOBALIZATION (AT WORK AND IN ART WORKS)

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Some places seem to live at different times, at the same time. In global art history, the idea has good and bad sides. On the good side of the thing, it reminds us that we cannot compare everything with just anything. As historian Christophe Charle pointed out in 2011, in *Discordance des temps. Une brève histoire de la modernité* (A Brief History of Modernity)[1], one of the weaknesses of comparative global history is to study cultural globalization as if it were played out in a homogeneous space. He suggested taking greater notice of the space-time discrepancies in history: these discrepancies produce permanent cultural misunderstandings. They can help us to better understand cultural rejections, as well as astonishing fashions and unexpected fads.

However interesting, the notion of "time discordances" risks supporting what Dipesh Chakrabarty denounced in the narrative of modernity, as one considers as real the precedence of certain cultural places or spaces over others in cultural innovation. This position is well summed up by the expression "first in the West, and then elsewhere".[2] It has a corollary: the binomial "centers and peripheries", which is just as dubious and debatable as the idea of cultural hierarchies.

What is then the best way to use the concept of time discordance? I argue that it is better used when we study it at work, and in artworks, rather than if we use it as an axiological and evaluative interpretation grid.

What do I mean exactly with "time discordance at work and in artworks"? Since the 1850s at least, cultural actors (artists in the first place) have *experienced* the discordance of time between the spaces to which they had access - be they cultural or geographical spaces, or even social spaces situated in aesthetic eras different by their knowledge and tastes. Not only have people experienced

these cultural discrepancies, but they have also played with them.

In French, the expression "discordance of times" has an original meaning that can help us to comprehend the issues at stake. "Discordance des temps" means, first, a "discordance of verbal tenses": for instance, "I thought I will be happy" instead of "I thought I would be happy". To a native speaker, it sounds weird. To the person who does not master a language, but who understands s.he spoke mistakenly, tense discordances produce the impression that people think your way of speaking is very basic. The discordance of tenses is the burden of the subaltern –so is the discordance of times. However, the subaltern is not stupid. S.he knows what happens in cultural difference, and probably knows it much better than the person who does not speak any foreign language. Through experience in interlinguistic and intercultural exchange, some people perceive that they also bring novelty to their interlocutor, and that they can play with that cultural distance. This is where "Time Discordances" can be put *at work* in artistic globalization. My intention is to dissect the modalities of this functioning, between actors' practices and representations, but also within the *works of art*.

1. Ravages of the Discordance of Times

The historiography of modern art and the avant-garde has always had difficulty in emancipating itself from the value system of its own object. Its scale of values is systematically associated with a time scale oriented from the past to the future, the best being on the side of the future. Despite efforts to rehabilitate academic art (marked in France by the opening of the Musée d'Orsay in 1986 for instance), museums, art critics and the media world have not given up this scale of temporal values: to deserve consideration, the *pompiers* must be qualified as modern who ignored themselves.[3] Still today, in the art world, despite the numerous observations of "postmodernity", "disruption" and "innovation" remain the most highly valued terms.

The future-oriented narrative is inseparable from a global time geography structured into zones of past, present, and future. The critic Pascale Casanova used the metaphor of the "Greenwich meridian" to illustrate the phenomenon in literature: generations of non-French-speaking writers have passed through the French language to establish themselves in their national literary field in the 20th century.[4] In art history as well, many still believe that the time of the future has been given by a few successive centers –Athens during the classical period of ancient Greece, Florence during the Renaissance, Rome for the Early Modern Times, Paris at the time of realism, impressionism, fauvism, cubism, abstraction and surrealism, New York since abstract expressionism, ... The trajectories of many artists would have endorsed this idea, designating e.g. Paris as the "world center of modern art" before 1945, New York after that date.[5]

This interpretative grid, hitherto hardly thematized except in favor of the so-called "centers" (in Charles Baudelaire for Paris for example, or in Clement Greenberg for New York), has preoccupied artists from the "peripheries" since the end of the 1960s. Around 1965, a generalized rush against the so-called "center", New York art, emerged in Europe, in California and in Latin America. The international avant-garde became enthusiastic, somewhat belatedly, for Cuba and against US imperialism –a political option that theoretically could have come earlier but was in fact nourished by the perverse effects of the new world system of art led by the North American market after 1964.[6] Around 1970, New York conceptual art circles also began to reject New York. Anti-centralism was becoming a new fashion, even more shared as it emanated from the so-called center.[7] In 1974, Australian art historian Terry Smith, who was associated with the Art and Language movement, published his article "The Provincialism Problem" in *Artforum*: the situation seemed inextricable.[8] Smith regretted the impossibility for artists far from New York

[1] Christophe Charle, Discordance des temps. Une brève histoire de la modernité (Paris: Armand Colin, 2011).

[2] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe. Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 6.

[3] Two examples : *Alexandre Cabanel, 1823-1889. La tradition du beau*, exhib. cat. Montpellier, musée Fabre (Paris : Somogy, 2010); *Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904). L'histoire en spectacle*, exhib. cat. musée d'Orsay, J. Paul Getty Museum, and Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza (Paris : Skira/Flammarion, 2010).

[4] Pascale Casanova, *La république mondiale des lettres* (Paris: Seuil, 2008).

[5] Some examples Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); Sarah Wilson, Éric de Chassey (ed.), *Paris: Capital of the Arts, 1900-1968*, exhib. cat. expo. Londres, Royal Academy of Arts (26 January -19 April 2002), Bilbao, Guggenheim Museum (21 May-3 September 2002) (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2002).

[6] Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, *Naissance de l'art contemporain 1945-1970. Une histoire mondiale* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2021).

[7] Sophie Cras, "Global Conceptualism? Cartographies of Conceptual Art in Pursuit of Decentring", in: Thomas Dacosta Kaufmann, Catherine Dossin, Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel (ed.), *Circulations in the Global History of Art* (New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 167-182.

to assert themselves with the same ease as those from the center. He wrote for a magazine that had moved itself to New York in 1967, five years after its founding in San Francisco.[9] Smith appealed to everyone's responsibility to ensure that the pressure to take time in New York would finally stop stifling contemporary art.

Since the 1980s, the debate on the discordance of times and provincialism in art has been further nourished by postcolonial theories, and since the 2010s by decolonial theories.[10] The difficulty of getting out of the interpretative scheme of the discordance of times and tenses is not lifted, nevertheless. How can we integrate the peripheries of global cultural geopolitics, without the work of the artists concerned quickly appearing retarded, exotic, or offbeat? The solution would be to adopt other ways of appreciating art; to value a multiplicity of time scales. Numerous projects are working on this issue, with a variety of methodologies. Yet the call to "decolonize" our rationalist ways of thinking[11] seems easier to make than to follow. Forcing ourselves to consider the periphery as the center is not more convincing: the strength of the canonical narrative remains if its inconsistencies have not been demonstrated; it will also remain until its mechanisms have been dissected.

The idea of a *real* discordance of times in the history of art is the result of a biased reading of historical phenomena. It is an ethnocentric historiographic tendency, forged at least since the time of modern art. It has become generalized by research on sources limited to the so-called centers Paris and New York; research works that repeated each other and neither verified nor questioned the global geopolitics of modern art. A simple example: Serge Guilbaut's book *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art* relies on New York (majority) and Parisian (slightly minority) sources. How can one talk about the global domination of "American art" (i.e., the New York avant-garde)? One of the limits of our discipline is also to have studied only a few cases that have fed the axiology of the discordance of times, rather than considering these cases as exceptions in a world that is much more varied, complex, unpredictable, and polycentric than our prejudices would imply.

Deconstructing the times-spaces of the history of modern art as a representation rather than as a fixed historical datum, is not sufficient. It is also necessary to confront the thesis of the discordance of times with measurable historical facts: dates, figures, objects in concrete circulation. Computational approaches erase time discordance, and we need not fear that Paris, New York, and the usual modern art canon will prevail in the game of historical comparison. We are several art historians who have been working in this perspective for the last twenty years. The horizontalization and de-hierarchization of statistics make it possible to verify whether artists migrated more to such or such place; whether there were more so-called avant-gardes here than elsewhere; where modernist magazines and their illustrations circulated, etc. Paris is not the center of the world, nor New York, even for the history of artistic innovation. A computational approach is also an incentive to broaden our search for sources, and not to be satisfied with what has acquired the most exposure and visibility in art history.

It is also necessary to verify whether the works of such and such at a so-called center were really *seen and recognized* throughout the world. What the actors of the so-called centers perceived as world domination. Baudelaire explained in 1855 that Paris had taken the place of Rome; Clement Greenberg proclaimed after 1945 the fall of Paris and the world domination of New York – but art and culture was not experienced as such in their fantasized peripheries. I showed this for Paris in the inter-war period, and for New York after 1945.[12] The spaces and times of modern art have been experienced differently depending on the place. Even modernism was polycentric.

2. A Commonplace and its Practical Uses

The discordance of times has always been the object of symbolic struggles; a perfect argument in manipulative discourses and

[8] Terry Smith, "The Provincialism Problem", *Artforum*, 13/1, 1974, p. 54-59.

[9] In 1965 already *Artforum* had moved to Los Angeles. Amy Newman, *Challenging Art: Artforum 1962-1974* (New York: Soho Press, 2000).

[10] On this turn see Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, "Art History and the Global: Deconstructing the Latest Canonical Narrative", *Journal of Global History*, 14/3, 2019, 413-435.

[11] Boaventura de Sousa Santos, "Beyond Abyssal Thinking", *Eurozine*, https://www.eurozine.com/beyond-abyssal-thinking/ (consulted 15 April 2020).

[12] Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, "Provincializing Paris. The Center-Periphery Narrative of Modern Art in Light of Quantitative and Transnational Approaches", *Artl@s Bulletin*, 4/1, 2015, pp. 40-64. And Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, "Provincializing New York: In and Out of the Geopolitics of Art After 1945", *Artl@s Bulletin* 10, no. 1 (2021): Article 12 (www.artlas.ens.fr/bulletin).

ideologies of submission. Therefore, we can study it both as a practice and as a representation.

From the 1850s until at least the 1970s, as artists and their supporters *experienced* the discordance of time between the spaces to which they had access, some understood the productivity of these information discrepancies. They took advantage of the collective emotions associated to it: inferiority complexes, nationalist jealousy, cultural contempt – they knew how to activate the pride or shame of their audience to better value their own work.

As early as the 1850s, the discourse of the discordance of times recurs in the writings of those who claim to be at the right time, for instance when Champfleury defended Gustave Courbet in the 1850s.[13] The metaphor takes on the character of a commonplace in the 1880s: those who considered themselves "avant-garde critics", like Théodore Duret, advocated those, like the Impressionists, "who have not yet arrived at the place that the future certainly holds for them".[14] In the literary field, where the same critics often crossed paths, the trend was similar. In 1889, Charles Morice protected "la littérature de tout à l'heure"[15] ("the literature of just now") –symbolism, Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Rimbaud or Verlaine, writers of the future at a time supposedly bogged down in tradition.

To make the genealogy of this commonplace is not my objective with this paper; even if it should be mentioned that these vocabularies were invented as early as the quarrel between the Ancients and the Moderns, and chiseled in the Romantic period. I rather wish to further characterize the uses of this metaphor among modern artists, and the socio-historical profile of those who have used it. Is it a mere source effect? The time-discordance rhetoric unfolds above all in the printed press. It is not so much found in *private* correspondence. It was a public statement, in and for the artistic and cultural field of the time.

The reference to a present future allowed artistic groups claiming to be innovative to underline their discordance with their competitors. In 1883, Émile Verhaeren wrote in the aptly named *Jeune Belgique* in favor of the *Groupe des Vingt* in

Brussels: the poet placed his painter friends ahead of the realists who had hitherto occupied the place of the moderns: "À jeune, jeune et demi"[16] ("to each young, a young and a half"). The age of the individuals was not the issue; in 1912, the critic André Salmon called Odilon Redon the "prince" *of La jeune peinture française* – the prince of "young French Painting" Redon was 52.[17]

Until the 1920s, in Europe, it was common among groups with modern pretensions to assert their youthfulness in relation to their contemporaries – I mentioned the French "jeune peinture"; for Germany one can think of the *Jugendstil* and the magazine *Jugend* (1896-1940) of the late 1890s; or the artists' group *Junge Rheinland*, founded in 1919. The adjective "new" became more important than the word "youth" in the interwar period; it can be found in the titles of several magazines claiming to be avant-garde: *Neue Jugend* (Berlin, 1916-1917) claimed to be new among the young; same for the *Neue Blätter für die Kunst und Dichtung* (Dresden, 1917-1919), *Les écrits nouveaux* (Lausanne, 1917-1922), *Le nouveau spectateur* (Paris, 1919-1921), *Esprit nouveau* (Paris, 1920-1925), *The New Coterie* (London, 1925-1927), *The New Cow* (New York, 1927), or *New Verse* (London, 1937-1939).

Parallel to the diffusion of the commonplace of the discordance of times, there is a *conscious expression of an awareness* of it, and the claim to change things for a better national place. In 1899, the German art critic Julius Meier-Graefe condemned the *Epigonentum* of German art with respect to French painting. He encouraged Berlin to modernize and take the leading role.[18] Among the Secessions, the modern groups and Salons founded in the 1890s in Germanic and Central Europe, there is none whose foundation was not justified by the rhetoric of lost time and necessary update compared to more advanced neighbors.[19] The same rhetoric also recurs in modern circles in Paris: The Société nationale des beaux-arts (1890) was inspired by the Salon des Vingt

[13] Jules Champfleury, *Le réalisme*, 1855 (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1967).

[14] Théodore Duret, *Critique d'avant-garde* (Paris: Perrin, 1885); (Paris: École Nationale des beaux-arts, 1998, p. 47-48)

[15] Charles Morice, *La littérature de tout à l'heure* (Paris: Perrin/Didier, 1889).

[16] Émile Verhaeren, "Chronique artistique. À Messieurs les artistes de l'Union des Arts", *La jeune Belgique*, 28 April 1883, p. 232 (*Écrits sur l'art*, ed. Paul Aron. T. I.: 1881-1892, Brussels: Labor, 1997, p. 84).

[17] A. Salmon, *La jeune peinture française* (Paris: Société des Trente, Albert Messein, 1912), avant-propos, p. 7.

[18] Julius Meier-Graefe, "Epigonen", *Dekorative Kunst*, II, 4/10, 1899, p. 129-131.

[19] See Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, *Les avant-gardes artistiques, 1848-1918. Une histoire transnationale*, (Paris: Gallimard, 2015).

created in Brussels in 1883. The founders of the Parisian Salon d'Automne in 1903 justified the opening of a new modern Salon as a response to competition of the German Secessions in the autumn season.

The above suggests the strategic utility of the discordance discourse. Whatever the period, we find the same phenomenon. No assertion of delay or spatiotemporal advance is separable from a strategy of self-promotion. When Julius Meier-Graefe deplored the *Epigonentum* of German artistic circles, it was to establish himself as a privileged informant of the foreign art situation, capable of discerning which direction would help Germany. Six decades later, the Argentinian collector Guido Di Tella followed the same path, to show the civic role of his teams in the promotion since the turn of the 1960s of a hard avant-garde trend in Buenos Aires:

> We took up impressionism when it was finished in Europe; we did cubism a couple of decades later, but we did geometric art only a little later and some say we did it a little before Europe; informalism, two or three years later and the pop movement two or three hours later.[20]

For many groups that proclaimed themselves avant-garde, the rhetoric of discordance was efficient in gaining acceptance not so much for their belonging to the future, but for the idea of their welcome in centers considered more advanced. This supposed foreign reception meant that locally one had to, one must recognize these artists. Even if no one knew if their foreign reception was real in practice. I have shown, for example, that the alleged foreign reception of Picasso the cubist was in fact a reception of his symbolist, post-impressionist and Cezanian paintings until at least 1912. Yet the art critic Guillaume Apollinaire continued to write about Picasso: "No man is a prophet in his own country".[21] In that respect, abroad, the Prophet had shown a very gentle modernity.

The argument about a so-called discordance of times could work because of a compartmentalization of information between places. Artists and their friends could say they were misunderstood here, received there. This was the case for impressionism, symbolism, cubism, etc.[22] No one could really verify what was received abroad. Similarly, an alleged foreign reception legitimized surrealism. Prophetic rhetoric justified the need for a reception here because of a so-called reception there; reception here was not long in coming – and a virtuous circle could begin. This strengthened the Parisian "informel" movement, just as it did for abstract expressionism and New York pop art in their respective local markets.[23]

My books discuss this in greater detail. The strategy that I have called "detour abroad" is common for artists from regions considered peripheral as well as for those from so-called centers. It has always worked thanks to the spontaneous comparisons, jealousies, and inferiority complexes of international cultural circles in relation to each other. It has been fed by information deficits between countries and cultural scenes. This compartmentalization has often been maintained by those who are usually designated as the greatest mediators of artistic modernity between countries – especially art dealers. The ethnopolitical effects of the discordance of times are still vivid today, despite the accelerated circulation of information: international comparison remains an everyday sport. Even the Internet has not totally erased the empty zones of cultural exchange. The Internet has not abolished the possibility of non-transfer, nor that of the manipulation of meanings and of the re-semantization in the transfer.

By playing this game, the artists and their promoters maintained, and still maintain the bad conscience of their close audience. They also entertain a spontaneous jealousy between artists, between local and national scenes. For the logic of the "*No man is a prophet in his own country*" has a corollary: "*The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence*". What an astonishing anthropological constant of the moderns, the modernists, and the so-called post-moderns, this anguish of being surpassed, the conviction that the other is ahead, and the compelling need to act because of that. *The anxiety to catch up* seems to me even more

[20] Quoted in Andrea Giunta, *Avant-Garde, Internationalism, and Politics: Argentine Art in the Sixties* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 95.

[21] Guillaume Apollinaire, "Peinture espagnole modern", *Les Arts*, 6 July 1914 (Apollinaire, *Œuvres en prose complètes*, vol. II, Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade, pp. 809-810).

[22] Joyeux-Prunel, "L'internationalisation de la peinture avant-gardiste, de Courbet à Picasso: un transfert culturel et ses quiproquos", *Revue historique*, 644/4, 2007, p. 857-885.

[23] Catherine Dossin, T*he Rise and Fall of American Art, 1940s-1980s: A Geopolitics of Western Art Worlds* (New York: Ashgate, 2017); B. Joyeux-Prunel, *Naissance de l'art contemporain*.

decisive than the famous *Anxiety of Influence* highlighted for literature by Harold Bloom.[24] It is a major spring in the history of artistic modernity, as well as in the progressive elaboration of its narrative of centers and peripheries. The rhetoric of the discordance of times feeds on and nourishes the fear of the other, the desire to be more like them. It gives strength to mimetic desire mechanisms, which maintain the idea of belatedness by ricochet.[25]

3. Discordance and its Malaise

Art works, still, show that artists could not keep up with this permanent overbid. The speculative bubble began in 1909. Seen from the workshops, the discordance of times became a pressing issue for the avant-garde after the explosive publication of the Futurist manifesto in February 1909 between France, Italy, Rumania, and soon the whole continent, Russia included:

Nous sommes sur le promontoire extrême des siècles !... À quoi bon regarder derrière nous, du moment qu'il nous faut défoncer les vantaux mystérieux de l'Impossible ? Le Temps et l'Espace sont morts hier. Nous vivons déjà dans l'absolu, puisque nous avons déjà créé l'éternelle vitesse omniprésente.[26]

"The eternal speed omnipresent ..." The Futurists suddenly relegated everyone to the past. They also delegitimized the so-called centers of modernity - Paris in the first place: driving around Europe, they stopped in no capital city more than any other. They recognized no other place but their vehicle, which could take them at full speed to the unknown destinations of the future. Their proclamation of a "Death of Time and Space" forced their entire generation to reformulate their relationship to time, past, present, and future, as well as their relationship to space and global cultural geopolitics.

One can detect this shift in artistic production throughout the reception of the Italian movement - not only in the 1910s, but also in the 1920s, when Marinetti's tours went as far as
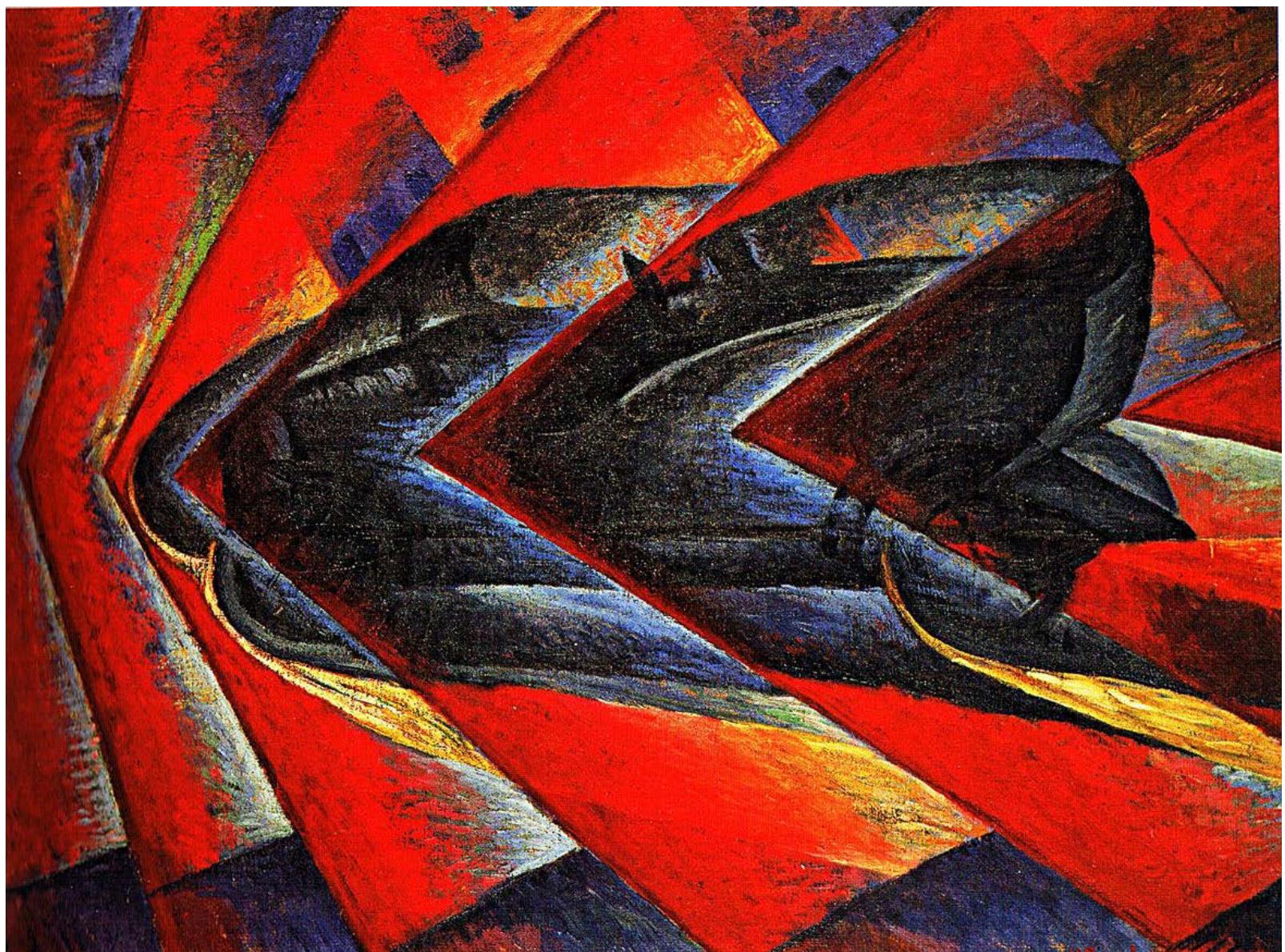
Latin America. Avant-garde artists suddenly felt collectively compelled to show through and in their works that they were still beyond the space-time and expectation horizons of their time. Hence the success after 1910 of paintings representing fast means of locomotion such as the train, the airplane, the car. Artists simply applied the equation "vehicle = speed". The original idea was not innovative: the development of transportation had been creating a new dimension of time for many years.[27] But the works of art echoed it with a delay. As with the Italian Futurists, many works of the Parisian cubists, the London vorticists or the Russian

FIGURE 1 : Luigi Russolo (1885-1947), *Automobile in Corsa (Composition, Dynamism of an automobile)*, 1912-1913. Paris, Centre Georges-Pompidou, backdated (signed « Russolo, 1911 »).

[24] Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[25] On mimetic desire see the seminal book by René Girard, *Mensonge romantique et vérité romanesque* (Paris: Pluriel, 2011 [1961]).

[26] Federico Tommaso Marinetti, "Manifeste du futurism", *Le Figaro*, 20 Feb. 1909, p. 1.

[27] Christophe Studeny, *L'invention de la vitesse. France, XVIIIᵉ-XXᵉ siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1995).

Manifesto's ode to the "roaring automobile [...] more beautiful than the Victory of Samothrace":

> ***Martín Fierro*** **is more at home on a modern transatlantic liner than in a Renaissance palace, and believes that a beautiful Hispano-Suiza is a much more perfect work of art than a Louis XV chair...[29]**

In Vassily Kandinsky's painting *Trame noire* (Figure 2), the ships that struggled against the raging elements in his 1910s apocalyptic compositions give way to the decided direction of the transatlantic liners. The modernity of the liner goes along with the constructivist grid. At the same time, a young man entering the field of the avant-garde, Salvador Dalí, painted ocean liners in his half-cubist, half-return to order compositions.[30] In the spring of 1927, Dalí praised the machine that "changed everything"; he criticized his friend García Lorca for not introducing aeroplanes into his poetry.[31]

Futurism suggested that modernity was perhaps no longer so much a matter of keeping a watch on time, or choosing the right meridian, as it was a race of speed between groups located in multiple places on the planet. No matter what time or place one started from (after all, the futurists had started from neo-impressionism or even impressionism): what mattered was to go faster than the others, and to give it to believe. The space-time of modernity was constantly advancing. We can understand the need for certain Parisian circles to get out of this exhausting logic by following closely in the footsteps of philosopher Henri Bergson and his criticism against the mechanic notion of space.[32] Picasso, for his part, mocked slogans such as "Our future is in the air". And when his colleagues ran after the daily press in search of the next scoop, he recycled press clippings and made the news the concrete material of his work.[33]

FIGURE 2 : Vassily Kandinsky (1866-1944), *Trame noire*, 1922, huile sur toile, 96 x 106 cm. Musée d'arts de Nantes.

[28] Françoise Lucbert, Stéphane Tison (ed.), *L'imaginaire de l'aviation pionnière. Contribution à l'histoire des représentations de la conquête aérienne, 1903-1927* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2018).

[29] "Manifesto", *Martín Fierro*, Buenos Aires, n° 4, 15 May 1924. Available on: *Documents of 20th-Century Latin American and Latino Art, a Digital Archive and Publications Project at the museum of fine arts, Houston*, ICAA-MFAH, http://icaadocs.mfah.org/icaadocs/THEARCHIVE/FullRecord/tabid/88/doc/732817/language/en-US/Default.aspx?

[30] For instance Salvador Dalí (1904-1989), *Venus et Marin*, 1925, oil on canvas, 216 x 147 cm, Shizuoka, Ikeda Museum of 20th-Century Art; Id., *Composition avec trois personnages (Académie néo-cubiste)*,1926, oil on canvas, 200 x 200 cm, Barcelona, Museo de Montserrat.

[31] Ian Gibson, *The Shameful Life of Salvador Dalí* (New York: Norton, 1997), p. 200.

[32] See Mark Antliff, *Inventing Bergson: Cultural Politics and the Parisian Avant-Garde* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Id. and Patricia Dee Leighten, *Cubisme et culture* (Paris: Thames & Hudson, 2002).

[33] Brigitte Leal, *Picasso, papiers collés* (Paris : Réunion des musés nationaux/Seuil, 1998). Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, *Nul*

rayonists depicted speed after 1910, although it had not been a subject for them until then. The artists' fascination with airplanes has been the subject of detailed studies.[28] The bicycle and automobile races of the Parisian cubists, the Russian rayonists and their international colleagues would deserve the same treatment. It should be added that the works were often backdated, to support the idea that they were already the future in the past (Figure 1).

In the 1920s, the race continued, with an iconography of airplanes, automobiles and now, ocean liners - particularly in constructivist magazines. In Argentina, the manifesto of the journal *Martín Fierro* (1924) paraphrased the Futurist

Others noted that the requirement to keep moving forward obliterated the destination. In 1911, Wassily Kandinsky explained "the question of form" as follows:

> In practical life it will be difficult to find a man who, wanting to go to Berlin, gets off the train in Regensburg. In the life of the spirit, getting off at Regensburg is commonplace. Sometimes even the locomotive engineer does not want to go any further and all passengers get off at Regensburg. [...] How many people who were looking for art have been trapped in a form that an artist had used for his own purposes, be it Giotto, Dürer or Van Gogh![34]

Kandinsky was older than his fellow artists. He was coming from the world of economic analysis. He was an experienced cosmopolitan traveler. He was perhaps more aware than others of the impasse to which the constant demand for innovation had led his generation. He left the race, or rather he went in a different direction: preferring blue horsemen to red automobiles, ending up abandoning figuration.

Others were not eager to affirm their solution. Blaise Cendrars' *La prose du Transsiberian*, written in 1913, marks the astonished awareness of the new spatiotemporal regime of art, and the contrasting emotions - even anxieties - that it aroused.

> Je suis en route
> J'ai toujours été en route
> Le train fait un saut périlleux et retombe sur toutes ses roues

Modern had gone mad, like Cendrar's somersaulting train. I could quote much more of the poem – but will just translate some last lines:

> "Say, Blaise, are we very far from Montmartre?"
> But yes, you're getting on my nerves, you know it, we're a long way off.
> Overheated madness buzzes in the locomotive

The plague and cholera are rising like ardent embers on our road [...].
We are the legless of space
We are rolling on our four wounds
Our wings have been clipped
And then the poet goes on :

The modern world
Speed can't help but
The modern world
The far away are too far away
[...]
There are trains that never meet each other
Others get lost along the way
[...]
For the universe overflows me
Because I neglected to insure myself against railway accidents
Because I don't know how to go all the way.
And I'm afraid
I am afraid
I don't know how to go all the way

4. Ending up on an Old Bicycle

How to be more modern than the modern? When everything seemed to have already been done? There is a rarely commented on passage in the Futurist Manifesto, which particularly struck me: The Futurist Manifesto was born from an accident, after an animal race in a car. Let us read this in the original version of the manifesto:

> Nous nous approchâmes des trois machines renâclantes pour flatter leur poitrail. Je m'allongeai sur la mienne… Le grand balai de la folie nous arracha à nous-mêmes et nous poussa à travers les rues escarpées et profondes [...] Donnons-nous à manger à

n'est prophète en son pays ? L'internationalisation de la peinture des avant-gardes parisiennes, 1855-1914 (Paris : Musée d'Orsay/Nicolas Chaudun, 2009, chap. 12).

[34] Vassily Kandinsky, "Sur la question de la forme", in Id., Franz Marc, *L'almanach du* Blaue Reiter *(Le Cavalier bleu)* (French version Paris: L'Esprit et les Formes, 1981), p. 192.

l'Inconnu, non par désespoir, mais simplement pour enrichir les insondables réservoirs de l'Absurde !

Comme j'avais dit ces mots, je virai brusquement sur moi-même avec l'ivresse folle des caniches qui se mordent la queue, et voilà tout à coup que deux cyclistes me désapprouvèrent, titubant devant moi ainsi que deux raisonnements persuasifs et pourtant contradictoires. Leur ondoiement stupide discutait sur mon terrain... Quel ennui ! Pouah !... Je coupai court et, par dégoût, je me flanquai dans un fossé...

The accident that led to the Futurist Manifesto was caused by something slower than a car: a bicycle.

One artist was particularly a victim of the race of space-time set up by futurism: Marcel Duchamp. In 1911 he took the avant-garde train - always after the others, as Thierry de Duve pointed out.[35] The *Jeune homme triste dans un train* (Sad young man in a train, 1911-1912)[36] depicts his fate as an unfortunate cadet, constantly in the wake of his colleagues and even his two older brothers who went over to fauvism and cubism before him. The Paris *Salon des Indépendants* of 1912 sealed Duchamp's misfortune: his *Nude descending the staircase* risked proving that the Parisian cubists were imitating the futurists who had exhibited with fanfare a few weeks earlier in the same city at the Bernheim-Jeune gallery.[37] Duchamp reacted with disgust. In April 1912, he made the drawing *Le roi et la reine traversés par des nus vites* (The King and the Queen Crossed by Quick Nudes): it questions the difficult chess game where speed clouds the slow reflection of intelligence. Duchamp eventually left the French art scene and its patriotic cubist heralds (such as Robert Delaunay), to get some fresh air in Munich with an old friend. I have shown in another essay that in Munich he actually found what he was fleeing: Parisian avant-garde art; the paintings of the cubist Delaunay were exhibited in the neighborhood where he dragged his disappointment.[38] Duchamp saw even more; he witnessed a cultural transfer in which discordance was at its peak: Parisian cubism, proclaimed patriot in Paris, figurative, antifuturist, took on the contrary, in

Munich, cosmopolitan, fraternal, non-figurative clothes, akin to the futurist reflection on movement.

Once back home, Duchamp stopped painting; he also performed an astonishing gesture: he placed a bicycle wheel on a stool, with the fork turned upside down. The 1913 wheel mimicked Robert Delaunay's Wheels; it mocked, above all, the work on pure speed, on light and the chromatic prism. Marcel Duchamp's old wheel creates speed more efficiently than an oil painting imitating chronophotography. This is the "eternal omnipresent speed" - without any motion. A short, efficient reply to the Futurist Manifesto – with the very machine that put Marinetti in a ditch. Duchamp was both mocking and subverting the general injunction to speed up.

The philosopher Hartmut Rosa rereads the history of modernity in the light of the notion of acceleration.[39] Whether it concerns technical innovation, social change or the pace of life and its leisure time, acceleration is self-sustaining rather than freeing up time to live and feel alive. One of its main effects is simply suffering - depression and demobilization of the actors. It is indeed gloominess and diminished motivation that emanates from Marcel Duchamp's works and texts after the spring of 1912. What can be called *acedia.*[40] What Duchamp's work expresses at that time is also that the injunction to constant acceleration was already undermining the project of modernity - that of autonomy through art, as well as that of new plastic possibilities. Duchamp's work pointed out the correlation between incessant acceleration and alienation.

Would Duchamp have been told in 1913 that his Bicycle Wheel would obviously either lose or win in the avant-garde race? It was not the point. The 1913 wheel was so out of focus that Duchamp does not even seem to have shown it to his comrades. It was considered art only in the surrealist circles of the interwar period, to whom Duchamp had transmitted a photography. In the 1950s, on the other hand, it was considered "ahead of its time" at a moment

[35] Thierry de Duve, *Nominalisme pictural. Marcel Duchamp, la peinture et la modernité* (Paris: Minuit, 1984).

[36] Marcel Duchamp, *Nu [esquisse], jeune homme triste dans un train*, 1911-1912, oil on cardboard, 39 3/8 x 28 3/4 inches, New York, Guggenheim Museum, Peggy Guggenheim Collection.

[37] Marcel Duchamp, *Nu descendant un escalier*, 1912, oil on canvas, 146 x 89 cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection.

[38] Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, "Géopolitique des premiers readymades", *Revue de l'art*, 85/3, 2014, p. 27-33.

[39] Hartmut Rosa, *Accélération. Une critique sociale du temps* (Paris: La Découverte, 2013).

[40] Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, "On acedia and avant-garde", *Les avant-gardes artistiques. 1848-1918*, pp. 655-676.

[41] See the exhibition *Dada* organized buy Duchamp at the Sidney Janis Gallery from 15 April to 9 May 1953; and in Europe the exhibitions *Dada. Dokumente einer Bewegung*,

when the history of Dada's disruption was being written.[41] The Duchampian proposal was reintegrated into the gears, with the complicity of Duchamp himself. In the meantime, Duchamp had taken a transatlantic liner– a real one. He had reached New York. He had appreciated the discordance of times between the two sides of the Atlantic, and he started to use it for himself. As if he had stepped out of a time machine, in 1917 he witnessed the creation of a local *Salon des Indépendants*, with New York taking up the admired example of Paris. Duchamp, who had felt rejected by the Parisian Independents in 1912, did not hesitate to introduce his own touch into the overly well-oiled mechanism of modern New Yorkers. He had been solicited as a juror for the new salon. Did the organizers believe that with his collaboration, they would gain the legitimacy of a Parisian coming from a more up-to-date center? He sent a urinal to the Independents under a false name –we know the story. New York was suddenly propelled into the hour of Dada –at least this is what people said when the time came to write this story in the 1950s.

Back in Paris in the early 1920s, then again in New York, sometimes passing through Berlin, Duchamp the "anartist" would again play on the gaps between metropolises whose elites were eager to be at the time he brought –but a time and an hour which he could invent at his leisure. Through his works that never really were, his contempt for technical progress as well as his break with the expectations of his era, Duchamp would unfold in his life and work the antinomies of modernity, and the productiveness of the shifts of time and space.

As Tancredi Falconeri puts it in Lampedusa's *Gattopardo* (1958)*,* everything must change for nothing to change. In the 1950s, the mad rush of the avant-gardes came back at full speed – and on a global scale. Rivalries between art groups had already been exasperated when the market for abstract painting resumed in the early 1950s. The development of European highway infrastructures and then of transatlantic airlines accelerated communications between artistic scenes. After 1955, and even more so after 1960, there was a resurgence of competition between cultural capitals for international cultural domination: Paris had to be supplanted,

and the United States was not alone in trying to do so. In most democratic countries, local audiences began to expect more and more from artists, to embody the country's advance in cultural geopolitics. We then witness a return of the same phenomenon: the ardent use of the machine by artists to do more and better, faster and before the others. The question of movement came back into the works of art, as early as 1955 with the exhibition *Le mouvement* at the Denise René gallery, which traveled between Paris and Northern Europe. In 1958 the exhibition in Paris of one of the best pupils of the avant-garde of that time, Yves Klein, was entitled *Vitesse pure et stabilité monochrome*. The future new realists in Paris, the ZERO group in Düsseldorf, the Nul group in the Netherlands, then soon the kinetics and optics of the GRAV – in the early 1960s artists were all working on movement. The art of the moment had exchanged ocean liners for Sputnik (silver spheres, slender antennas), futuristic architectures for structures of fire and air. In the meantime, the books and exhibitions devoted to Dada and its actors[42] nurtured a historiography of the avant-garde as disruption, as a rejection of everything that had been done before. Artists then began to claim their precedence. They filed patents for invention. Soon airplanes and automobiles were also back in artworks, with New York pop art after 1962.

It was at this time that old Duchamp brought out his old bicycle. He produced a "third version" in 1951, kept by the merchant Sidney Janis who was going to associate it with Dada. It is now at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The reception was immediate in the losing circles of the avant-garde of the time. A wheel appears in a photograph of Robert Rauschenberg's studio around 1953, after the Dada exhibition at the Janis Gallery.[43] It recurs like an old tire in other compositions of the late 1950s, when Rauschenberg was still waiting his turn behind the abstract expressionist generation.[44] In 1964, amid the triumph of pop art and its superheroes driving their dazzling cars, Duchamp rebuilt the wheel in several copies marketed by the Schwarz Gallery in Milan. Admittedly, there was

cat. expo., Düsseldorf Kunsthalle (5 September-19 October 1958), Düsseldorf, Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, 1958; *Dada. Zürich, New York, Paris, Berlin, Köln, Hanover*, exhibition catalogue, Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum (23 December 1958-2 february1959), Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum, 1958. On dada's reception in the United States see Judith Delfiner, *Double-Barrelled Gun: Dada aux États-Unis (1945-1957),* (Dijon: Presses du réel, 2011).

[42] *Dada 1916-1923*, New York, Sidney Janis Gallery (15 April-9 May 1953). Curator: Marcel Duchamp.

[43] Allan Grant, Robert Rauschenberg in his studio, 1 October 1953, Time Life Pictures/Getty Images.

[44] Robert Rauschenberg, *Monogram*, 1955-1959, Stockholm, Moderna Museet.

now a market for the readymade, and Duchamp was always in need of money. But the bicycle wheel also supported the choices of artists who were not satisfied by the game of the future and the clean slate of the past. It justified an aesthetics of recycling, of waste as well as of creative destruction, going back years of avant-garde pretensions to reinvent everything.

Caesar's or Chamberlain's broken cars, Rauschenberg's wreck tires, Jean Tinguely's stationary machines – for a part of the avant-garde, speed became impure, instability polychrome. These artists, whatever the canonical account of modernism says, did not choose one center over another; they were neither from Paris nor New York. Space was to be negotiated. The objects spoilt the aesthetics of presentism, as much as they conveyed an attention to the peripheries of any place: the dumps, the garbage, the places of poverty. Once again it was necessary to say, or rather to make feel, that movement for movement's sake led to nothing – if not to anguish, to acidity, to acedia, even to suicide. It had to be reiterated that the constant surpassing of the horizons of expectation of the time, for the sake of a cultural center, produced nothing but pontificacy, artistic *clichés*, suffering, and alienation. The aesthetics of the recycling and the assemblage also pointed out, by choosing scraps rather than new, that the possible future of art is always a present built on a past. The elements from the field of experience must be combined to produce the new –if only to respond to the injunction of the new. The aesthetics of the old bicycle wheel was the announcement, and the proof, or even the history, since 1913, that the possible combinations of the art of tomorrow and its place are indeterminate. And that from the relics of the past, located in social and cultural peripheries, from lost time, inefficiency, unusefulness, with new reinterpretations of history from one place to another, magic always emerges.

Conclusion

Acceleration has come back recently. Are we facing a phenomenon like those I described for the 1910s, the 1920s and the end of the 1950s? The circulation of works, people and information has further accelerated, competition between artists has become globalized, and the emulation between artistic scenes is indeed maintained, if only by the various prize lists that the press regularly comments on. I would like to draw attention to the despair that is brewing here again, and that as historians we must take into account: the discordant times of artistic globalization create uneasiness, unhappiness –not only beautiful successes. However, one might think that culture has become globalized, that everyone lives at the same time, and that artists today address a totally global audience, there has never been such a rush against centralities. In the meantime, the rush towards innovation has integrated a clear postcolonial and local consciousness. While contemporary artists are making "artificial intelligence", they call themselves "artivists" and call for more balanced geopolitics of culture.

As far as the work of the historian is concerned, we shall retain a simple lesson: a cultural object (a work, possibly, but also a style, a biography, an artistic trajectory), depending on how it is approached, and where it is seen, reveals the simultaneous presence of multiple temporalities and places.[45] Beyond the artists' speeches and strategies, the discordance of times has to be considered as an interlacing of representations and practices which feed off each other. "Time discordances between places" then becomes a very useful analytical concept to better understand the processes of globalization, and more generally to understand the driving forces behind artistic and cultural circulation. From this perspective, we can keep in mind the permanent indeterminacy of space-time in the history of art: which means abandoning the hierarchies that the idea of the discordance of time according to place seems to impose; forgetting the stories of precedence and the myth of perfect innovation. Farewell, the meaning of history. In contrast to the modern relationship to time and its evolutionism, the history of art is not, has not been, and will never be a linear process, nor a map with one or two centers and many peripheries.

[45] Hervé Mazurel, "Présences du passé, présences du futur", *Écrire l'histoire*, 11, 2013, http://journals.openedition.org/elh/310. Consulted April 6, 2021.

DOSSIER

ARTISTIC RELATIONS BEYOND THE CULTURAL CENTRES: THE PERIPHERY/PERIPHERY MODEL AS A NEW PARADIGM IN GLOBAL ART STUDIES AND CONTEMPORARY CURATORIAL PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

By analysing examples of exhibitions and artistic projects that bring together art produced in Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe, the article aims to respond to questions and issues related to contemporary discourse on the concept of the periphery: how can one escape from the Eurocentric narratives inscribed in the Center/Periphery model? Is the Periphery/Periphery model that is becoming an emergent paradigm in contemporary curating practices a good alternative? Is there any reason to relate distant world regions, such as Eastern Europe and Latin America or Eastern Europe and Africa, and how would this kind of rapprochement function nowadays? And finally, could this rapprochement of very different regions and cultural contexts result in more horizontal and decolonial narratives in art history?

KEYWORDS THE PERIPHERY/PERIPHERY MODEL, CONTEMPORARY CURATORIAL PRACTICES, TRANSNATIONAL ARTISTIC RELATIONS, HORIZONTAL ART HISTORY, PERIPHERAL ART

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PRINT

Periphery on Periphery

In February 2019, the Met Breuer — a branch of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, located in the iconic building designed by the Hungarian-born architect Marcel Breuer — hosted a retrospective exhibition of the Iranian-American artist Siah Armajani entitled *Follow This Line* (February 20 — June 2, 2019). Based in the US since 1960, Armajani quickly became part of the American art scene: he was member of the Minneapolis branch of Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.), an organisation founded in the US by, among others, the engineer Billy Klüver and the artist Robert Rauschenberg; he later became involved with New York post-minimal and conceptual artists (Collingwood 2019). His work was included in Lucy Lippard's seminal 1973 book *Six Years: the Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (Lippard 1973, 163 and 204). His installations are connected with utopian, experimental and radical architectural projects of the 1960s, as well as with postmodern architecture of the subsequent decades.[1] The exhibition included many never-before-seen and recently rediscovered works from the 1960s and 1970s, as well as the artist's landmark *Dictionary for Building* series (1974-75), composed originally of thousands of small-scale architectural models. The presented artworks were sometimes difficult to classify, oscillating between high art, design and experimental architecture. Defining himself as a "sculptor" (Hodge 2016, 381-400), the artist adopted an approach to architecture that was both highly sensual and highly conceptual. His architecturally based artworks — especially his reading rooms, bridges and gardens — were in several cases socially engaged: he designed spaces for socialisation that generated or mediated a critical commentary of everyday reality, including the global sociopolitical situation, economic conditions and social-class relationships. This was the case with Armajani's *Sacco and Vanzetti Reading Room n°3* from 1988. More of an installation than furniture design, this artistic project was dedicated to Fernando "Nicola" Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, two American workers and anarchists of Italian origin, controversially convicted of murdering a guard, sentenced to death in 1921, and executed by electric chair six years later (Avrich 1996). *Reading Room* was created originally in 1987, on the occasion of Siah Armajani's first solo exhibition in Europe, which took place first at the Kunsthalle in Basel, and then at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.[2] Inspired by Soviet constructivism, and more specifically by *Workers' Club* designed by Alexander Rodchenko for the Soviet exhibition at the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes that took place in Paris in 1925, Armajani's project proposed a new collective space for leisure and self-education.[3] It was composed of several pieces of green and red wooden furniture, including chairs, small tables and pulpits, a structure resembling a newsstand, and an arbor-like structure containing a table and benches. Spectators were invited to not only see, but also use the furniture: to sit on the chairs and go inside the arbor and kiosk. They could have a rest, take notes using the pencils provided by the artist, or read books that were placed on the tables and shelves of the designed furniture.

For this retrospective exhibition, *Reading Room* was filled with an installation of the Slavs and Tatars collective. Founded in 2006, Slavs and Tatars is an international artistic group whose members remain anonymous. According to its members, the group's eclectic art is a response to the cultural, political and social contexts of Eurasia: a region situated "east of the former Berlin Wall and west of the Great Wall of China" (Volk 2016). The group uses several mediums — installations, videos, artistic objects and public interventions — to create a colourful subversive and provocative life-time art project that "aims to 'resuscitate' Eurasia" (Monod-Gayraud n. d.). The collective operates through parody and pastiche, and explores stereotypes about "barbarian" Eastern Europe in order to construct a critical and often ironical comment on the issue of globalisation, the contemporary human condition, Euroasian history and world politics (one artwork claims "*Noblesse oblige, précariat exige*" [Nobility

[1] In 1978, Siah Armajani stated that he was "strongly influenced" by Richard Venturi's book *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* from 1966 — a source text on postmodernism and a manifesto against architectural functionalism (Armajani, 1978, 17). Quoted after: (Collingwood 2019).

[2] In 1987, Armajani also participated in the "Skulptur Projekte Münster" with his project *Study Garden* for the outdoor spaces of the Geological Museum. See: (Collingwood 2019).

[3] In 1990 Armajani stated that since the beginning of his artistic career he had been "interested in the Constructivists because they were political, because there was no separation between the citizen and the artist". It was this lack of distinction between the two positions that he was "trying to do now in public art" (Tomkins 1990, 54).

obligates, precariat demands], 2018[4]). Exhibited in leading art institutions, Slavs and Tatars' artworks critique with doses of humour both Western concepts of modern art (*Nous Sommes Les Antimodernes* [We Are The Antimoderns], 2005) and West European and North American societies: the works target their ignorance not only of Eurasian cultures, but also of their own politics — as in the case of a project entitled in Spanish *Hagamos Mongolia grande de nuevo* [Make Mongolia Great Again] from 2016 (Slavs and Tatars a n. d.). Their works address issues related to multiethnic and multicultural identities, migration and diasporic life, and racist considerations of non-Western cultures. Part of their collective activity explores books as artistic material: Slavs and Tatars frequently uses books and printed matter in their installations, and its members have organised several "lecture-performances" (Slavs and Tatars b n. d.).

In Siah Armajani's exhibition at the Met Breuer, the geo-cultural and geo-aesthetic interests of the Slavs and Tatars expand to the "Global South". Titled *Red-Black Thread* and created by the collective in 2018, the installation aims to "look at the construction of race, namely black identity, from the perspective of Russia, the Soviet Union, and the communist intellectual tradition" (Slavs and Tatars 2019). It contains a reading list and several books and printed matter — mostly published in English — on this subject that were displayed among Armajani's furniture in *Reading Room n°3*. The reading list prepared by the collective includes books about culture, migration and bi-continental African and East European identity, including *Russians in Ethiopia* (Jeśman 1958), *Soul to Soul: A Black Russian Jewish Woman's Search for Her Roots* (Khanga 1994) and publications developing the issue of Black identity in Alexander Pushkin's poetry (Gnammankou 2015) (Nepomnyashchy et al. 2006). There, the spectator could find publications publications concerning African and East European politics, namely work addressing the issues of communism Pan-Africanism and internationalism, such as: *The Political Life of Black Communist Claudia Jones (Davies 2007), Pan-Africanism and Communism* in the 1920s and 1930s (Adi 2013), *A Negro Looks at Soviet Central Asia* (1934*), and Beyond

FIG. 1. Slavs and Tatars, Red-Black Thread, selection of books and reading material, 2018. In: Siah Armajani, *Sacco and Vanzetti Reading Room #3*, 1988. Installation view of the exhibition *Siah Armajani: Follow This Line*, Walker Art Center, Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Met Breuer, February 20 – June 2, 2019. Courtesy: Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Met Breuer and Slavs and Tatars.

the Color Line and the Iron Curtain: Reading Encounters between Black and Red, 1922—1963 (Baldwin 2002*)*. A special place on a separate shelf was accorded to the publication *Red

[4] Slavs and Tatars, *Noblesse Oblige (Sunflower)*, 2018, *Raster Gallery,* http://en.rastergallery.com/prace/noblesse-oblige-sunflower/(Accessed: July 22, 2019). All translations from French, Polish, Spanish and Portuguese are by the author.

Africa. Affective Communities and the Cold War — a collective publication edited by the British curator Mark Nash (Nash 2016 a) that "explores the crosscurrents of international solidarity and friendship" (Isaac Julien Studio n. d.). By taking Leela Gandhi's concept of 'affective communities' — informal groups bounded by feelings of friendship and solidarity — and their role in the anti-imperialist struggle (Gandhi 2006) as a starting point,the book included essential contributions by African contemporary artists and European scholars dealing with the subject of the Cold War on the African continent.

Slavs and Tatars' *Red-Black Thread* that parasitically draws on *Sacco and Vanzetti Reading Room n°3* adequately exemplifies several questions and issues concerning cultural, sociopolitical and economic relations between regions designated as "peripheral" in hegemonic and Western-centric narrations concerning art and culture. The colonial Center/Periphery model of relating cultures from different contexts in a vertical way is rejected by researchers of global art studies, who have proposed alternative terms, such as "cultural transfers" (Espagne and Werner 1988), "circulations" (DaCosta Kaufmann et al. 2015) or "cultural translations" (Bhabha 1990), with the aim of redefining artistic transnational and transmodern relations. However, the issue of artistic contact between remote regions not directly linked by a colonial past requires us to formulate additional questions related to contemporary discussion on the concept of periphery: could non-Western artistic contacts be considered horizontal and non-hierarchical, or might they only be repeating the schema of power relations with a colonising Europe (Cytlak 2018)? Is the Periphery/Periphery model symbiotic, and when/why could it turn into a dependency, interference and *parasitism*? Is a Periphery/Periphery model free from the main demons of the Center/Periphery model, such as visual racism and the idea of cultural superiority? Does Eastern Europe belong to the "Global South"? And finally, how to organise exhibitions today that will highlight this "different" type of artistic exchange between artists from so-called "peripheral" contexts?

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FIG. 2. Slavs and Tatars, *Red-Black Thread*, 2018–present, lecture-performance. Courtesy: Slavs and Tatars.

"Peripheries Unite!" — comparative and decolonial approaches

In recent years, Periphery/Periphery artistic relations have become a new challenge for global art studies. The methodological framework of these new curatorial approaches is inspired by thinkers such as Dipesh Chakrabarty. In his book *Provincializing Europe* (Chakrabarty 2000), he expressed his engagement in both questioning European thought and seeking to renew it. By proposing a more horizontal vision of history, Chakrabarty argues that Western theories are both "indispensable and inadequate" (Chakrabarty 2000, 19) for dealing with non-Western contexts. By questioning the universalism of European thought, he advocates its renewal and re-inscription "from and for the margins" (Chakrabarty 2000, 16). As Chakrabarty observed, the objective is not to abandon the (imaginary) figure of Europe (Western and colonialist), but to move it symbolically from the privileged position that it occupied in other regions of the world. Chakrabarty's thinking resonates in the theoretical approaches of art historians who propose new insights into global art studies, aiming at a decentralisation of Western modernism, and who respond

to the insufficiency of theoretical frameworks in subaltern and postcolonial studies (Bhabha 1990) that discuss Latin American, Asian and African culture by means of the concepts of alterity and difference. Chakrabarty's position influenced Piotr Piotrowski, a Polish art historian who claimed the importance of a horizontal and comparative approach — one that will allow Western canonical art to be defined on equal terms with artistic production from the so-called "peripheries" — world regions that were previously considered "marginal" in Western/canonical narratives of art and culture (András 2012). However, Piotrowski did not merely advocate a more horizontal vision of world art history, transcultural and transnational exchanges and cultural translations. In his posthumously edited and seemingly unfinished publication *Globalne Ujęcie Sztuki Europy Wschodniej* [A Global Approach to the Art of Eastern Europe], Piotr Piotrowski called for "*Peryferie wszystkich części świata — łączcie się*" [Peripheries of all parts of the world — unite] (Piotrowski 2018, 28). In his opinion, comparing cultural experiences between even distant non-Western regions, and highlighting the similarities between artistic strategies adopted in the non-West, made the "provincialization of Europe" possible and and the valorisation of non-European artistic production (Piotrowski 2018). He argued that, because East-Central Europe as a specific geo-cultural region had suffered under processes of political and cultural hegemony — above all, Soviet domination during the Cold War period — comparable to those experienced in other non-Western world regions, such a comparison was justified (Piotrowski 2018). Similar objectives, but from a very different position — that of a Latin American decolonial perspective (Mignolo 2000) — is defended by the US-based Argentine scholar Walter Mignolo. More radical than Chakrabarty on the need to abandon European logic and Europe's system of values, Mignolo's assertions on art and culture come close to Piotrowski's attempts to respond critically to postcolonial theory — both thinkers claimed that a simultaneous cultural proximity to and distance from Europe was experienced in both Eastern Europe (Piotrowski in: András 2012) and in Latin America (Mignolo 2000, 58). Like Piotrowski, Mignolo also searched for allies in other non-Western world

regions, particularly Eastern Europe: he invited Manuela Boatca from Romania, Marina Grzinic from Slovenia, and Russian researcher Madina Tlostanova to participate in his projects and publications. The lack of an experience of direct colonial domination by Eastern Europe in Latin America or Africa — though some awkward and ultimately unsuccessful attempts were made by the Polish government after World War I to create "Polish missions" in Liberia, Angola, and Mozambique (Hunczak 1967) — allow this region to be considered as belonging to the "Global South".

The above-mentioned theoretical frameworks inspired curators organising exhibitions to highlight these "different" and more horizontal type of artistic exchanges between artists from so-called "peripheral" contexts. Moreover, in his above-mentioned last publication, Piotrowski expected artists and contemporary curatorial practices to be more "advanced" than academic research in reacting to the globalising art world (Piotrowski 2018, 44) — more apt to react quickly to the necessities of the global art studies and to visualise the need to rethink power relations in the art world and exclusions from canonical and Western-centred art history. However, current curatorial practices reveal several problems encountered when defining and exhibiting art that was produced in world regions considered "peripheral" in canonical and Eurocentric or West-centric narrations concerning art and culture. They also exemplify the difficulty of "catching", then defining and mapping, Periphery/Periphery artistic relations. As we will observe, recent exhibitions that ambitiously focused on artistic production from the non-West and on artistic exchanges that are not inscribed in the Center/Periphery model are still not free from curatorial errors, simplifications and unexplained omissions.

Exhibiting South-South-East relations — difficulties and controversies

Over the past decade, the tendency to juxtapose artistic practices from different world regions has become increasingly visible at exhibitions. Several exhibitions, artistic events and manifestations have aimed to map the artistic

production of countries belonging to the "Global South" and located in Asia, Africa, Latin and Central America. East European or Central European art,[5] shown in the 1990s in the former West (Western Europe and the United States) as representing a specific and separate geo-cultural region, began to be displayed primarily with art produced in Latin America. We can mention here the exhibitions *Subversive Practices: Art under Conditions of Political Repression: 1960s-1980s, South America, Europe*, organized in Stuttgart in 2009 (Christ and Dressler 2010); *Transmissions: Art in Eastern Europe and Latin America, 1960-1980*, held at MoMA New York in 2015/2016 (The Museum of Modern Art, New York 2015); and *The Other Trans-Atlantic. Kinetic and Op Art in Eastern Europe and Latin America 1950s-1970s*, which was shown in Warsaw, Moscow and São Paulo in 2017/2018 (Dziewańska 2018). Cold War politics, and especially the experience of authoritarian regimes, censorship, and the persecution of political opponents became a bridge between these two distant world regions. *Subversive Practices* was focused on the "heterogeneity and divergence of resistive artistic practices" (Dressler 2010, 49) in nine geographical contexts: "GDR, Moscow, Hungary, Romania, Catalonia, a Brazilian museum, Argentina, Peru, and Chile" (Dressler 2010, 49). The exhibition juxtaposed the artistic production of these regions by also emphasising certain formal and conceptual affinities, for example, between an action involving laser removal of a tattoo bearing the word "Romania" by Dan Perjovschi (*Romania*, 1993-2003) and a performance of the Brazilian artist Letícia Parente, who embroidered on her foot the words "Made in Brazil" (*Marca registrada* [Registered trademark], 1975).

Nowadays, as Slavs and Tatars' *Red-Black Thread* (2018) exemplifies, the artistic and political relations between not only Eastern Europe and Latin America but also Africa have become an emergent tendency in curatorial practices. Some shows focus on the issue of the communist project in Africa: *Socialist Friendship* (Nash b 2016, 8-9), Russian imperialism and its presence in Africa, Soviet propaganda, and the aftermaths on the continent of communist visual culture and the Cold War. This was the case of the large project *Red Africa. Affective Communities and the Cold War*, which included the exhibition Things Fall Apart, held at the Calvert 22 Gallery in London in 2016 (Nash 2016 a), and was subsequently presented in Bayreuth, Lisbon and Budapest. The same topic was explored in the exhibition *After the End: Timing Socialism in Contemporary African Art,* organised at the Wallach Art Gallery at Columbia University in New York in June-October 2019. The show displayed works of young artists from Angola, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, responding to the history and legacy of "African socialisms" (*The Wallach Art Gallery 2019*). The question of the struggle for capitalist and communist domination within the African continent and that of historic and contemporary colonialisms raises questions about what alternatives for this world region could have helped it escape both traps of foreign hegemony. This question is often connected to the issue of two historical events organised beyond the control of the rivalling Cold War blocs: the Bandung conference organised in Indonesia in 1955, which promoted close cooperation between the Asian and African continents in the field of culture and economics (Mackie 2005), and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which held its first Summit Conference in Belgrade (Yugoslavia) in 1961, and included countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as Yugoslavia itself (Mišković et al. 2014). Both initiatives acknowledged the common struggle against colonialism, racism, imperialism or any other kind of foreign dominance. Both became a reference for the exhibition *After Year Zero. Geographies of Collaboration Since 1945*, shown in 2013 at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, and two years later, in 2015, at the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw (Busch and Franke 2015). The exhibition *Southern Constellations: The Poetics of the Non-Aligned*, inaugurated in 2019 at the Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova in Ljubljana (Soban 2019), took the NAM as its starting point in order to emphasise the "disruption in the Cold World map, a quest for alternative political alliances, for 'alternative mundialization'" (Piškur a 2019).

[5] In several exhibitions organised after 1989, art produced in Russian territory was excluded. However, Yugoslavian art was part of so-called East-Central Europe, which included countries that were satellites of the Soviet Union during the Communist period (Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria) or that were part of its territory (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia).

Although the above-mentioned exhibitions responded, as Piotrowski expected, to the new insights into global art studies and highlighted Periphery/Periphery cultural relations, they were not free from controversy. First and foremost, the majority of exhibitions that aimed to put together together artistic production created in the so-called peripheries have been organised in the former West by leading Western institutions and galleries, and, in several cases, by Western curators as well. The catalogues and research materials available on the websites of those institutions were usually written exclusively in English, which could have excluded potential readers from the peripheries, who are less familiar with academic and literary English. In several cases, the exhibitions did not travel to "peripheral" countries in order to be confronted with the original contexts of the artistic production they presented — and in particular, none of the above-mentioned exhibitions were displayed in Africa. Moreover, although the shows were focused on art and culture created almost exclusively by artists from the former "peripheries", in numerous cases they did not include art historians and curators from those regions, nor gave adequate space or importance to their research. This last issue concerns especially the absence of African scholars, such as Romuald Tchibozo, based in Benin (The University of Abomey-Calavi), whose research deals with the Cold War divides, African cultures' presence in Europe and Socialist projects in African art (Tchibozo 2003 & 2014).

A second question concerns the definition of Periphery/Periphery relations in terms of horizontality (friendship, non-hierarchical or anti-imperialist and anti-colonial cooperation, and so on). While African and Latin American cultures are inseparably linked by the common experience of European colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade — African cultures are commonly considered an integral part of Latin America's cultural heritage, as was shown recently in the exhibition *Histórias Afro-Atlânticas* [Afro-Atlantic Histories] organised by the Museu de Arte de São Paulo[6] —, both continents' relations with East European culture are less direct and less evident. East-South-South cultural exchanges are connected to the history of East European migrations into the Americas,

motivated by hunger, pogroms and wars, and, during the Cold War period, to the international spread of communism, and also to the Soviet Union's project for expansion, motivated by its imperialist ambitions. For both African and Latin American artists, Eastern Europe could be perceived as an integral part of a colonising and hegemonic Europe (Cytlak 2018). The Eastern Bloc's attempt to gain importance in Africa, in particular, had an imperialist character, even if the Soviet Union supported national liberation struggles, as in the case of the economic or military assistance it provided to Angola. This relation was far from horizontal — beyond the thin mask of the propaganda of friendship, it hid the rather paternalistic attitude of the East European allies towards African countries. Moreover, cultural exchanges

FIG. 3. Teja Merhar (design Đorđe Balmazović): SFR Yugoslavia's International Collaborations in Culture with Developing Countries, Exhibition: *Southern Constellations. The Poetics of the Non-Aligned*, Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova, Ljubljana, 2019, Photo: Dejan Habicht, Courtesy: Moderna galerija, Ljubljana.

[6] The exhibition "Afro-Atlantic Histories", displayed at the MASP — The Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand and at the Instituto Tomie Ohtake, in São Paulo (2018) aimed to retrace and reconsider the rich and strong cultural bounds between Africa, both Americas and the Caribbean from the 16th to the 21st centuries (Pedrosa and Toledo 2018).

that resulted from the Soviet Bloc's politics towards Africa never treated East European and African art in equal terms. For these reasons, a discourse of solidarity and horizontality seems too idealistic and fails to respond to the reality of these cultural, political and economic connections. Moreover, racism was an intrinsic component of European-African relations, especially during the early post-colonial period. Eastern Europe and the Soviet Bloc were far from abandoning or even improving their prejudiced and racist view of African cultures, despite propaganda messages about the communist "*fraternité*". Projects such as *Red Africa* remained silent and failed to confront this issue.

The idealisation of a horizontal relationship as an "alternative" to the Western character of Periphery/Periphery relations leads directly to the idealisation of the artistic production relevant to these exchanges. Although the political and economic partnerships of the Non-Aligned Movement did not result in any "specific" kind of art that might constitute a real alternative model to West-centric modern art, they help us to imagine and consider alternative articulations of global cultural relations and, as Bojana Piškur claimed, to "pluralize the experiences of modernity" (Piškur b. 2019, 11). Transatlantic and transmediterranean "peripheral" artistic relations between Eastern Europe, Latin America and Africa, developed since the mid-twentieth century, are distinct from those developed between these regions and the West, as their character has remained more "private" and "punctual": very often — as in the case of dense Latin American and East European mail art exchanges —, they are not supported by institutional structures and not inscribed in the logic of the globalising art market. However, these relations have not been free of dependencies, hierarchies and *parasitages*, as displayed in Slavs and Tatars' *Red-Black Thread*, which both complemented and appropriated Siah Armajani's *Reading Room*. In some cases, East-South contacts could be defined as counter-hierarchical: inversing the habitual hegemonic relation between Africa and Latin America and Europe. This was the case of the Chilean artist and poet Guillermo Deisler, living in exile in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, after Pinochet's *coup d'état*

in 1973. Deisler's art — created in Latin America, a continent where artistic production is habitually perceived as "derivative" in comparison to European canonical art — was far more "avant-garde" (more "international" and "cosmopolitan") than the artistic production of his new European colleagues, who, living behind the Iron Curtain, had very fragmented contact with the Western and international art scene. As the Bulgarian writer Stefan Stanev observed, Deisler — a Latin American refugee in Europe — was considered by Plovdiv's artistic milieus as a "master" (Stanev 2001, 41-56). Deisler's "cosmopolitan" art was a model to which those local artists could aspire (Cytlak 2020).

Finally, in analysing the above-mentioned examples, we can observe a disruption between the curatorial narratives explaining the main aims and objectives of these art shows, and the visual or sometimes conceptual aspects of the exhibitions. The curatorial texts included in the above-mentioned exhibitions' catalogues do not correspond exactly to the realities of the artistic production they analyse. The curators of the named exhibitions have proposed an off-centred and de-Westernized vision of conceptual art, performance, kinetic art, and so on. The starting point of these exhibitions was the artists' marginal position in relation to the West. The exhibitions, which could be seen as *la mise en pratique* of Chakrabarty's and Piotrowski's theories, seemed to have been based on the idea of formal similarities and loose associations that were not supported by the history of those artistic movements, artists' biographies or the artworks' detailed interpretations. As was previously stated, the curators of *Subversive Practices* made an effort to build a bridge between artworks and artistic projects from Eastern Europe and Latin America. The only performance explicitly associating the regions in question was the realisation of the Hungarian artist Gábor Altorjay's project from 1967, in tribute to the Argentine artist Marta Minujín (*15 actions for Marta Minujín*, 1967, 2007).[7] The exhibition *Transmissions: Art in Eastern Europe and Latin America, 1960-1980* aimed to highlight the diversity of MoMA's collection. Although the curatorial board was

[7] Altorjay envisioned this performance after having read a description of Minujín's action entitled *The Destruction*, completed in Paris, in 1963, during which the artist burned the paintings that she had created during her stay in France.

composed by highly esteemed young researchers from both regions, the exhibition would have benefitted from a more profound dialogue between them. Moreover, the title of this exhibition was as promising as it was misleading. Like the title of the current exhibition *Unvergleichlich / Beyond Compare*, organised at the Bode-Museum in Berlin in 2017/2019, which, contrary to its title, juxtaposes masterpieces of African art and European art, namely German sculptures from the medieval period through to the nineteenth century (Chapuis 2017), MoMA's *Transmissions* was neither about transmissions, nor about artistic relations between the East European and Latin American artistic milieus. Dialogues between artworks were created *post factum* on the basis of formal resemblances by MoMA's curators in the gallery space.

The Other Trans-Atlantic. Kinetic and Op Art in Eastern Europe and Latin America 1950s — 1970s had the ambition to reveal the specificity of the functioning of kinetic art and op art in 'non-Western' artistic circles in Warsaw, Budapest, Zagreb, Buenos Aires, and Caracas or São Paulo, as opposed to the "mainstream Northern-Atlantic art production" (The Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw 2017). By adopting a comparative approach, the exhibition highlighted the similarities of artistic production in the named regions, which resulted, at least partially, from differences in their socio-economic and political situation compared to that of the West: notably the difference in the dynamics of modernisation processes and economic development after after World War II, or a different approach to the concept of utopia. The latter, abandoned by Western artists, still remained operative, according to the curators, for artists from South America and Eastern Europe, for whom "the fascination with science, new technologies and cybernetics symbolized a continued commitment to building a better future through art" (The Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw 2017). As the curators of this exhibition, Dieter Roelstraete and Abigail Winograd, have pointed out, the exhibition attempts to ask a question:

Co właściwie sprawiło, że artyści z tak różnych kontekstów kulturowych, jak Wenezuela lat 60 i Jugosławia w tym samym okresie skupili się wokół paradygmatu estetycznego, który został potem tak pośpiesznie wykreślony z kanonu historii sztuki XX wieku przez przedstawicieli północnoatlantyckich ośrodków władzy artystycznej. **[What exactly led artists in such divergent cultural contexts as 1960s Venezuela and 1960s Yugoslavia to rally around an aesthetic paradigm that was so hurriedly written out of the 20th-century art-historical canon in the power centers of the Northern Atlantic?] (Roelstraete and Winograd 2018).**

However, those curatorial statements did not correspond to the visual material and especially to its sociohistorical contexts. The main fault of the curators of *The Other Trans-Atlantic* was the omission of the artistic production of the former West. Paradoxically, this exclusion, which constitutes the force of Piotr Piotrowski's publications centred on East European art (Piotrowski 2018), and which was thought by the curators to be their contribution to the contemporary debate and practice of new and 'horizontal' curating, became instead its main flaw and weakness. This omission contradicts historical facts, as we shall see. First of all, the emergence of kinetic art in Latin America and Eastern Europe is strictly related to the artists' contact with Paris. Relations with Parisian artistic milieu and Parisian critics were especially crucial to Latin American artists, who in several cases were living in France as refugees. Paris acted as a meeting point for Latin American and East European artists. Moreover, the absence of Western art causes a dissonance between the exhibition and the texts in its catalogue. These connections with Paris were highlighted by the authors of texts published in the exhibition's catalogue that seem to contradict the general curatorial statements (Turowski 2018, 91-92). Additionally, the exhibition likewise overlooked some crucial historical facts concerning artistic relations between Eastern European and Latin American artists engaged in the kinetic art that could have contributed to justifying and reinforcing the curators' discourse. This included the impact of the Hungarian-born artist Victor Vasarely's monographic exhibition at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, in Buenos Aires in 1958 (*Victor

**FIG. 4.** *The Other Trans-Atlantic. Kinetic and Op Art in Eastern Europe and Latin America 1950s–1970s*, Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, 2017/2018, Photo: fot. Bartosz Stawiarski, Courtesy: Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw.

Vasarely),and the artistic contact of the Argentine Gyula Kosice with the Hungarian and Czechoslovak art scenes, namely with the Slovak artist Alex Mlynárčik, established via the French art critic Michel Ragon (Cytlak 2013).

Provincializing the curatorial practices

The above-mentioned examples led us to two crucial questions of relevance to contemporary curators and scholars: 1) how to reveal the complexities of Periphery/Periphery relations without falling into the trap of essentialist and reductive views or simplistic conclusions?; and 2) How to deal with peripheral asymmetries? While organising any exhibition focused on non-Western cultural connections, it is crucial not to forget that peripheries are not equal. Firstly, the peripheral situation of Eastern Europe, Africa and Latin America in relation to the figure of Europe is different in every world region. Secondly, cultural exchanges between peripheries can likewise have their own hierarchies, exclusions, and dependencies. As we have learnt from Immanuel Wallerstein, the status of periphery is performative and depends on the context and scope adopted. His concept of "semi-periphery countries" presumes that some countries, for instance Argentina, could be perceived as peripheral from a global geo-political perspective, but could at the same time occupy a central role locally (Wallerstein 1976). The inclusion of Eastern Europe within the "Global South", in particular, can provoke uncertainties.

The lack of a well-defined East European position within colonialism (Eastern Europe did not participate directly in the European colonial project) is the main difficulty for scholars and curators. Without such a clear characterisation we cannot pretend to establish a horizontal dialogue between these three regions. Unfortunately, curators and scholars nowadays rarely share the Bulgarian philosopher Alexander Kiossev's thesis about East European self-colonialisation: the unconstrained acceptance of West European values as superior (Kiossev 2011). In their discussion of the advantages and inconveniences of postcolonial theory, Eastern Europe's most respected scholars, such as Boris Groys or Piotr Piotrowski, placed Imperial Russia
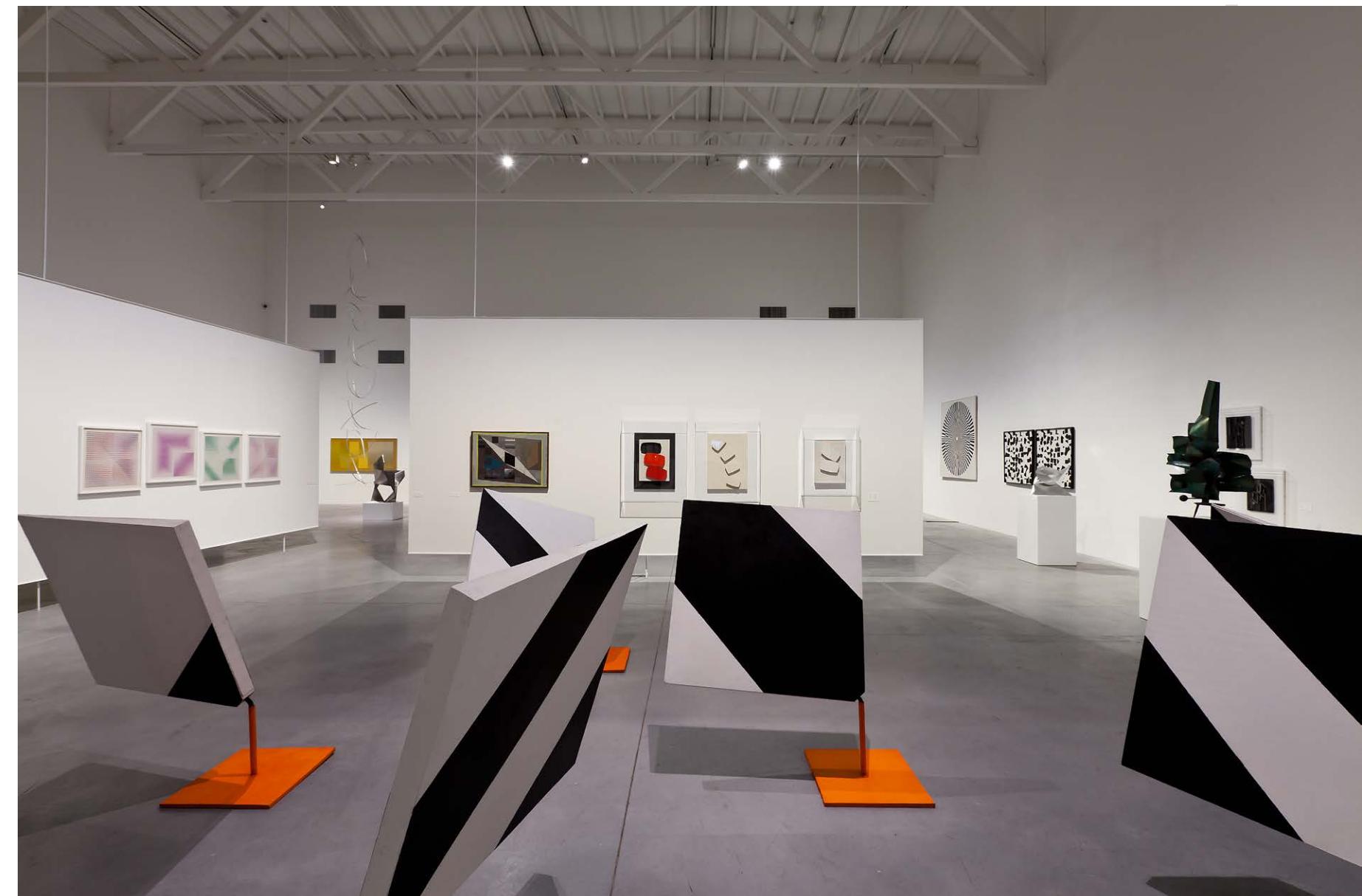
and then the Soviet Union in the role of a colonial hegemon — which locally dominated several East European regions countries and remove regions (Groys 2016) (Piotrowski 2014&2018). However, only if we agree with Kiossev, who through the above-mentioned concept of colonialisation speaks about East European responsibility for European colonialism, might Eastern Europe belong to the "Global South". Moreover, only on that condition can we presume the horizontality of East European relations with Africa and Latin America.

Slavs and Tatars' *parasitage* on Siah Armajani's installation at the New York museum once again raises difficulties of connecting and displaying together art from sometimes remote

FIG. 5. *The Other Trans-Atlantic. Kinetic and Op Art in Eastern Europe and Latin America 1950s–1970s*, Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, 2017/2018, Exhibition view, Photo: fot. Bartosz Stawiarski, Courtesy: Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw.

and diverse peripheral contexts without recreating the model of colonial relations — one of hierarchies, paternalistic attitudes, and false friendships. The issue is even more demanding when the exhibition is organised at a well-established Western institution, such as the New York Met. There is no doubt that the rapprochement between Eastern Europe, Latin America and Africa — which has become a new paradigm in art criticism and curatorial practices — responds critically to the profound need to rethink artistic modernism, Eurocentric or West-centric canons and narrations in art history. For that reason, it may be very useful and promising for contemporary (globalised) art studies and as a subject of ambitious exhibition projects. There is also no doubt that artistic production of these world regions could be articulated and displayed together in a better way. It seems that contemporary curators may take Chakrabarty's postulate of provincialising Europe seriously, which provides a good theoretical apparatus for these aims. Yet it would be preferable if, following Chakrabarty, the curators and institutions of the former West could abandon their positions of authority. It is difficult to present and nuance the complexities of Periphery/Periphery cultural relations without inviting a scholar from the region involved, without a confrontation between the exhibition and the local public and its peripheral contexts. To reduce these risks, it would be better if exhibitions about "peripheral" art had been organised with a greater engagement of "peripheral" curators and scholars, and had been held in the peripheries as well. No one questions the point and purpose of holding exhibitions of East European, Latin American and African art in Western Europe or North America. But they should be conceptualised and organised in a more horizontal way. After 1989, we observed the tendency in Western curatorial practices to organise shows featuring one world region (displaying artistic production labelled 'East European art', 'Latin American art', 'Chinese art', 'African art', etc.). These were largely criticised for giving an artificial view of artistic production, local art scenes, and above all, cultural inter-relations between the countries labelled by these denominations. The new curatorial paradigm that links together these "exotic" and "peripheral" regions will

FIG. 6. Slavs and Tatars, *Red-Black Thread*, 2018–present, lecture-performance. Courtesy: Slavs and Tatars.

continue to be doubly or triply reductive and simplistic as the previous shows — especially when exhibitions displaying East European with Latin American or African art together are articulated in a neglectful way. Moreover, by coupling artistic production from two peripheral contexts in one show, Western curators and institutions fail to engage a crucial question for contemporary art studies and global art history — that of decolonising discourses on art and culture. Essentialist views on artistic tendencies from the so-called "peripheral cultural contexts" will always be condemned to being another "Western discovery" of what Achille Mbembe categorises as a "*sauvage extériorité passible*" [savage exteriority liable to…] (Mbembe 2013, 30). Moreover, these exhibitions only stretch and diversify Western artistic canons. Since they are controlled by Western institutions, their potential role in deconstructing Western art paradigms seems to be limited from the start. The same criticism concerns inter-periphery relations, as well. As Wallerstein taught us, peripheral connections can become hierarchical and hegemonic (Wallerstein 1976). The Periphery/Periphery model, which presumes horizontality, can turn into a Semi-Periphery/Periphery model, where one peripheral context enters into the role of the centre (Cytlak, 2018).

Following Chakrabarty's postulate of provincialising Europe, contemporary shows are expected to advocate a

less Western-centric (colonial) and more dialogic view of the world's art, culture and art history. The exhibition *Art in Europe 1945-1968: Facing the Future* organised in 2016/2017 at the ZKM | Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe, Germany (Gillen 2016) could be considered an advancement in presenting artistic production from Eastern and Western Europe on more equal terms. However, paternalistic attitudes in the former West and a colonial way of considering non-Western cultures as inferior and derivative is still present.

The only possibility to improve the situation is to make an effort to understand non-Western artistic and "peripheral" production properly. A perfect opportunity for this is the organisation of retrospective and monographic exhibitions of non-Western artists, prepared in the same way as major solo shows of canonical European and North American artists like Andy Warhol, Gerhard Richter, Joseph Kosuth, Anselm Kiefer, and so on. Non-Western researchers and art historians are waiting patiently to see monographic shows of the works of Moshekwa Langa, Luis Pazos, Paulo Kapela, and Paweł Petasz at the MoMA, New York and at the Centre Pompidou, Paris. Until that moment arrives, "peripheral" scholars and art critics will remain in the ungracious role of critical malcontents, because without deeper and more careful studies of peripheries and their contexts, and without taking seriously Chakrabarty's advancements, exhibitions about inter-peripheral connections will always be unsuccessful in their essence. Showing the complexity of the cultural connections between several world regions in one exhibition requires several years of detailed study, numerous research travels, interviews, collaborations with local artistic milieus, and a lot of devotion. Abandoning a West-centric scope, ignorance, a search for exoticism, and colonial and paternalistic attitudes — the desire to stretch and diversify the canon in order to control knowledge — requires a changing of the vision of the world that we — Western and non-Western curators and scholars — once had, of the interests that motivated us to organise exhibitions about non-Western art, of the heart that we gave to experience peripheral artistic production.

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"STYLISTIC ANACHRONISM", "PROVINCIAL DELAY" AND ECLECTICISM IN THE PERIPHERY OF VENICE: THOUGHTS ON AN URBANISATION PROJECT IN VENETIAN CRETE

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ABSTRACT

This paper concentrates on the contradictions we are confronted with when trying to interpret the stylistic choices made by the Venetian *Provveditore Generale* of Crete, Francesco Morosini, for an urbanisation project he implemented during his service (1625-1628) in the centre of the capital city of Venetian Crete, i.e. Candia, present-day Heraklion. The urbanisation project included a public loggia and an aqueduct and fountain. In this paper, it is argued that the deliberately "anachronistic" architectural style of the loggia can be interpreted through the commissioner's connection to the Venetian politics of the time. The extravagant design and lavish decoration of the fountain, on the other hand, indicate that the Venetian official, being in the periphery, could be more eclectic and did not feel obliged to be consistent with the ideology that guided him to choose the more sober and static design for the loggia.

KEY WORDS   *ALL'ANTICA* ARCHITECTURE IN CRETE, LOGGIA OF CANDIA, MOROSINI FOUNTAIN, *STATO DA MÀR*, VENETIAN URBANISM

I N D E X

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Between the years of 1626 and 1628, an important urbanisation project was launched by Francesco Morosini, the *Provveditore Generale* (superintendent general) of the Venetian colony of Crete.[1] The project concerned the central square of Candia, the capital city of the island, present-day Heraklion (Fig. 1). It included the completion of the soldiers' quarters of San Zorzi, the public cisterns carrying the same name, a military hospital, a public loggia (Fig. 2) and, most important of all, an aqueduct bringing fresh water to the Morosini fountain in the city centre (Fig. 3).[2] All of these edifices were built with the *all'antica* architectural idiom, namely they incorporated stylistic or thematic allusions to antiquity. However, the loggia and the fountain were quite exceptional, each in its own different and, as we shall see, contradicting way to each other. Their particularity is that even though they were both very thoughtfully designed, they seem to belong to somewhat different architectural styles, despite their contemporaneous designing and construction by, in all likelihood, the same engineers, supervisors and sculptors.

All'antica **architecture in Venetian Crete and the "Cretan Renaissance"**

The *all'antica* architectural style made a "late" and sudden appearance in Crete during the last peaceful decades of Venetian rule on the island. That period, between the Battle of Lepanto (1571) and the year that the Ottoman assault on the island began (1645), was a time of intense war preparations. After the loss of Cyprus, during the fourth Ottoman-Venetian war (1570-3), the Venetians became convinced that a war with the Ottomans over Crete was inevitable. Even though an attempt to fortify the island had taken place some thirty years earlier, with the assignment of the fortifications' design to Michele Sanmicheli, for various reasons that plan did not advance.[3] The works were taken up again in the 1560s and intensified during the next decades. Not only were huge amounts of money spent on the design and construction of the new fortifications, but highly specialised military engineers,

FIG. 1. Original plan of the fortress and city of Candia designed in the years 1666-1668 by the lieutenant-general Hans Rudolf Wertmüller (Zentralbibliothek Zürich — Zurich Central Library). The Ruga Magistra, the street leading from the port to the administrative centre of Candia (Piazza di San Marco) is marked in yellow. The soldiers' quarters of San Zorzi, the fountain, the loggia, the ducal palace and the ducal church of San Marco are marked in blue.

[1] Crete came under Venetian domination in 1211 and remained part of the Venetian *Stato da Màr* [Maritime State] for the next 458 years, until 1669, when it was finally surrendered to the Ottomans. The Ottoman assault began in 1645 and in the next two years, the whole island but the capital city of Candia came under Ottoman rule. The siege of Candia or what came to be known as the "Cretan War" began in 1647 and lasted for twenty-two years. Francesco Morosini's stay in Crete as *Provveditore Generale* lasted for three years from October 1625 to October 1628. He had also served as *Duca di Candia* in the years 1612-1614. For the different official positions in the Venetian *Stato da Màr* and the way its administrational system operated, see O'Connell 2009. It should be underscored here that Francesco Morosini,

FIG. 2. The Venetian Loggia of Candia (1626-1628), Heraklion, photograph by Giuseppe Gerola in 1900.

FIG. 3. The Morosini Fountain (1626-1628), Heraklion (IMS/FORTH, photographer Efi Moraitaki, 2006).

architects and craftsmen were sent from Italy to carry them out (Steriotou 1998). The cities were fortified in accordance to the latest developments in fortification architecture. At the same time, through various infrastructure and embellishment projects, the Venetians sought to strengthen their position, gain local population support and emphasise their permanence on the island. Through all these building projects, *all'antica* architecture was introduced to the Venetian colony of Crete. The Italian engineers acted not only as carriers of the know-how, but also as proponents of the "new" aesthetic ideals. The *all'antica* architectural idiom spread very quickly everywhere on the island, as the Veneto-Cretan upper class at first and the prosperous upper middle class subsequently adopted the prestigious style coming from Venice for their private city dwellings and country villas, for the churches and their funerary monuments (Katopi 2021). A vital role in this

process was played by the countless local workers, craftsmen and sculptors who were trained in the new building and decoration techniques while working at the big public construction sites. Consequently, they applied the newly acquired knowledge in different private commissions, while enriching and adapting it to local preferences (Vakondiou 2018).

The previous literature on the *all'antica* architecture of sixteenth-and seventeenth--century Crete has concentrated on locating the prototypes in Italy or in the architectural treatises of Sebastiano Serlio and Andrea Palladio, while simply classifying it under the prestigious title of "Cretan Renaissance" (see for example Dimakopoulos 1970, 1977 and

the "protagonist" of this article, should not be confused with Francesco Morosini the Peloponnesiaco who was responsible for the defense of Candia and its surrender to the Ottomans in 1669, who conquered the Peloponnese during the "Morea War", bombarded the Parthenon and was eventually elected doge of Venice in 1688.

[2] Of all these, only the fountain survives today, albeit not in its original state. It is still the most important landmark of contemporary Heraklion, known as "the lions".

[3] Michele Sanmicheli, who was in charge of the military defense of all Venetian territories since 1535, was sent to Crete during the third Ottoman-Venetian war (1537-1540), in order to plan the defense of the island. For a detailed study of the defense planning of the Venetian territories and for the fortification programs of the cities of the *Terraferma*, Dalmatia, Cyprus, Corfu and Crete in the years 1517-1570, see Concina 1983. For the life and works of Sanmicheli, see Davies and Hemsoll 2004.

Fatourou-Hesychaki 1972, 1983). In these approaches, little attention has been paid to the different conditions of each architectural commission. No differentiation is made if an edifice was built in the 1570s or in the 1630s, if one edifice was built in the city centre and another in a faraway village, if one edifice was an official and the other a private commission or even if the style of the individual architectural works under discussion is different.

Any reference to Greco-Roman art, even if mediated through Venice, as is the case of the *all'antica* architecture in Crete, suffice to classify it as "Cretan Renaissance". The term is usually used with pride, as it implies that Cretan society somehow partook in the Italian Renaissance or had an equivalent of its own. At the same time, though, it implies a serious delay on the part of the periphery, as the "Cretan Renaissance" began well after the "original" Italian had ended. The above reading of *all'antica* Cretan architecture does not view this "delay" as a problem, because it is in accordance with the predominant history of art view in relation to the spread and reception of the styles born in Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries — that is, the works of the great Italian artists functioned as models for the rest of Europe and the Italian Renaissance was spread with greater or lesser success from the Italian "centre" to the European "periphery" (Guillaume 2005, 37). As Nicos Hadjinicolaou has shown, the use of the term "Cretan Renaissance" creates confusion and misunderstandings, as it is unclear when the term is used to refer to the phenomenon of Italian Renaissance and its spread to Crete or when it refers to the cultural flourishing that occurred on the island during the last century of Venetian rule. In the first case, most studies dealing with the issue of artistic relations with Italy usually refer to "creative assimilation of foreign influences by Cretan artists", while at the same time, the term "Renaissance" is limited to referring to forms, patterns and themes of ancient art (Hadjinicolaou 2000, 777-9).

For these reasons, I have chosen to use the term *all'antica* instead of "Renaissance" or "Mannerist" architecture because these carry meanings and express periodisations that do not apply to Crete. As Foteini Vlachou pointed out, dealing with art

created in the periphery stumbles upon the problem that the traditional vocabulary of art history is not sufficient to cover the description of "peripheral" phenomena. Terms describing styles, such as "Renaissance" and "Mannerist",[4] present the following issues: 1) The general problem of reinforcing a linear perception of history, as their use implies a chronological succession, one replacing the other, sooner or later. In addition, the identification of a style with a specific period of time inevitably leads to negative evaluations of delay when stylistic features survive in peripheral art in later periods (such as Renaissance and late-Gothic elements in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century architecture in Crete). 2) The problem that all of these terms have been invented by history of art in order to describe artistic phenomena that developed in the artist centres. Their use in order to study corresponding artistic phenomena in the periphery usually creates more problems than it is supposed to solve, most often forcing the material into classifications that do not allow their dominant features to emerge (Vlachou, 2013, 21).[5]

The public Loggia of Candia

The loggia (Fig. 2), constructed during Francesco Morosini's service as *Provveditore Generale* of Crete between 1626 and 1628, was the fourth public loggia to be built in Candia since the Venetians took control of the island in 1211.[6] As all Venetian loggias, it was a multifunctional administrative building, where the declarations and announcements of the State were made by the town crier, court decisions were announced, official receptions were hosted, and taxes and fees were auctioned. It was also a space for socialising and leisure activities, such as gambling, which was forbidden in places other than the city loggia.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Venice initiated numerous building campaigns and urban plans in the cities it

[4] It should be noted that Vlachou was commenting on the usage of the terms Romanticism and Neoclassicism in discussing Portuguese art of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but her criticism applies very well in the case of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Crete and the use of the terms Renaissance art and Mannerism.

[5] It should be underlined that the same problem may arise even in relation to the different artistic centres, as the example of Venice's "refusal" or "delay" in accepting the high Roman Renaissance architecture shows. This issue will be addressed later on in this paper.

[6] The first public Loggia of Candia was built in the thirteenth century, the second in the fourteenth and the third in the middle of the sixteenth century. The loggia built by Francesco Morosini in 1626-1628 survived until the beginning of the twentieth century, but was gradually demolished during a number of restoration attempts in 1904, 1915 and 1937. The building was reconstructed using concrete and modern construction materials between 1962 and 1987 and it is used today as the town hall of Heraklion. For this reason, in order to study it, we are obliged to rely on early-twentieth-century photographs of the building by Giuseppe Gerola (see below) and the scant sculptural remains of the original building stored in the Historical Museum of Heraklion and the Ephorate of Antiquities of Heraklion (Katopi 2013, 488-489 and Katopi, 2016, 284-354).
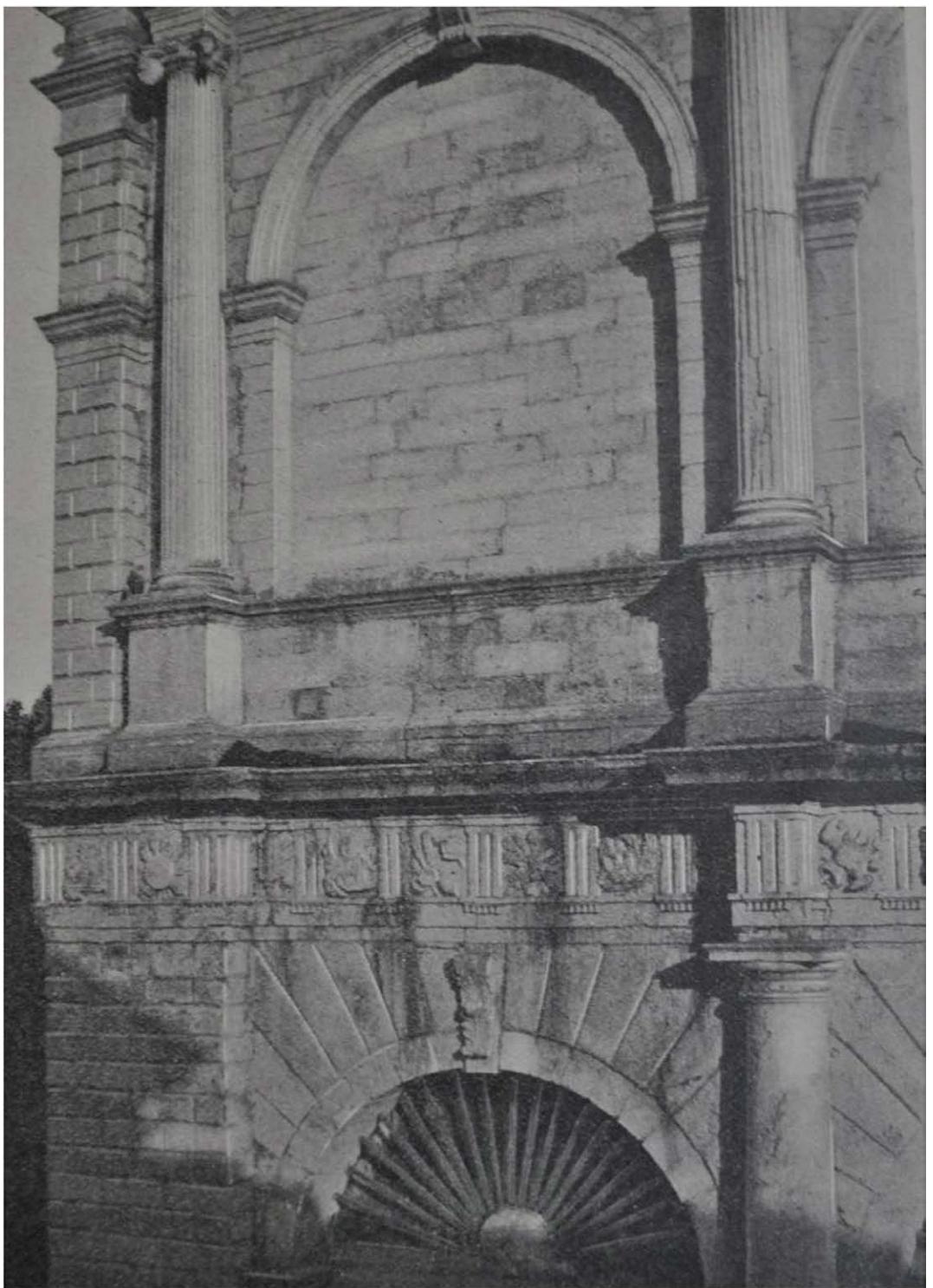
FIG. 4. Detail of the Venetian Loggia of Candia (1626-1628), photographed by Lucio Mariani in 1893.

annexed in the *Terraferma* and the Adriatic.[7] The works concerned the utility and ornamentation of public spaces in an attempt to increase civic pride and respect of the Venetian State (Calabi 1997, 9-33). To a remarkable degree, these building campaigns involved public loggias. They became a kind of trademark in Venetian towns, as they were erected in every single central square of every single town, big or small, of the Venetian State (Zucconi 1989, 27-38). As they became emblems of *il buon governo* [good governance], they also functioned as a vehicle for public imagery.[8] For this reason, they were among the most highly decorated public buildings in the Venetian towns and it is not a coincidence that the first public edifices to be built in the *all'antica* architectural idiom in the towns of the Venetian State were public loggias. Examples are the loggias of Padua, Verona, Brescia and Vicenza (for these Italian loggias, see respectively: Maffei 1994, Porfyriou 1997, Frati et al. 1993-1995, Moretti 1997).

The Loggia of Candia was also highly decorated and, as Giuseppe Gerola put it, it was the "most illustrious edifice built by the Venetians on the island of Crete" (Gerola 1917, 35).[9] The names of the designer, the engineer(s) and the sculptors that constructed it are unknown, as is the case of many administrative edifices built during the same period in the *Stato da Màr*. As we have no space to meticulously describe it here, suffice to say that it was a very attentively designed building in all its details. It had three free sides formed with two superimposed arcades in a column-arch arrangement. The ground floor's half columns were plain Doric, while the fluted half columns of the upper floor were of Ionic order (Fig. 4). Metopes featuring war trophies and lions of Saint Mark decorated the entablature of the Doric ground floor. Built between 1626 and 1628, at a time when Baroque architectural style was flourishing in Italy and in Venice itself, the newly constructed Loggia of Candia, with its carefully balanced horizontal and vertical axes and a sober, self-contained classicism,

[7] For the process of "homogenization" or "Venetization" in the Venetian territories of the *Terraferma*, see Cozzi, 1984, 495-518.

[8] It has been pointed out, for example, that Sansovino's Loggetta in Venice can be seen as a type of screen onto which the "best visual expression of the myth of Venice" was projected (Howard 1975, 34, Boucher 1991, 86-87).

[9] Giuseppe Gerola was sent by the Reale Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti to join the Italian archaeological mission of Crete in 1900, with the aim of documenting the glory of Venice in the East. Over the course of two years, he travelled all over the island, documenting Venetian architectural and sculptural works, taking photographs, making drawings, copying inscriptions. Upon his return to Venice, he cross-referenced his findings with information from the sources in the Archivio di Stato di Venezia [from now on A.S.V.]. The results of his researches were published in the monumental, five-volume work *Monumenti Veneti nell'isola di Creta* between 1905 and 1940 and in a number of other studies.

belonged stylistically to the previous century. This "stylistic anachronism", as it has been called, has been justified in the past as an indication of the supposedly delayed way that style travelled from the Venetian centre to the colony (Gerola 1917, 41). The literature that followed, more than 50 years after Gerola made the above remarks, mainly concentrated on the "Cretan Renaissance" rhetoric and the search for the Italian models while lamenting for the building's demolition in the early twentieth century and blaming it on "ignorance". As already mentioned, in those approaches, "delay" of style or "stylistic anachronism" are not considered problems requiring interpretation.

On the contrary, the aim of this paper is to ask exactly these questions. How can the "stylistic anachronism" of an administrational building that was erected in the central square of the capital city of the most important colony of Venice, in a time of the foremost importance, be interpreted? It is obvious that what we deal with here is intentional, deliberate anachronism. The fact that the design of the building is so well thought out, so sophisticated, one might say, indicates that its style was purposefully chosen. It has already been pointed out that the Cretan loggia clearly alludes to the Piazzetta and the Library of San Marco of Venice (Calabi 1998, 268, Katopi 2016, 179-181). The similarity to the Library lies not in the size of the buildings or the quality of the sculptural details, but in the choice of architectural orders and the iconography of the metopes with war trophies alternating with the lions of Saint Mark. In addition, the Cretan loggia's topography in the centre of Candia, opposite the ducal palace and next to the ducal church of San Marco, alludes clearly to the Venetian Piazzetta. It is well known, of course, that in any administrational building in a colonial environment, the commissioner wants to convey messages that most probably have to do with power relations between the dominant and the dominated. So, it is quite clear that the stylistic choices for the Loggia of Candia, reminiscent of the Venetian splendour of the previous century, were used in order to proclaim the enduring authority of the State and, at the same time, glorify its aristocratic representatives.

But it seems that there is more to it. My proposal is that the "anachronistic design" was used not only as a reminder of the piazza San Marco of Venice or as a tool of the homogenisation process going on in the *Terraferma* and *Stato da Màr* towns, but also to convey specific political ideas and rivalries originating from the Venetian centre. In Venice itself, it is generally accepted that there was a relative "delay" in adopting the vocabulary of the so-called high Roman Renaissance in architecture, especially in administrational buildings (Howard 2002, 166, Ackerman 1982, 42). As Manfredo Tafuri has shown, the reason was the rivalries in Venice related to political tendencies in the centres of power, i.e. the Great Council, the Senate and the Council of Ten, and the constant effort to balance between two factions. On one hand, the *vecchi* (old), belonging to the oldest and richest aristocratic families, tried to assume powers through their participation in the Council of Ten, had the most ties with the Holy See and secured the monopoly of ecclesiastical privileges. They supported the "innovations" and the introduction of the *alla romana* architecture in Venice. On the other hand, the *giovani* (young), in their attempt to curb the tendency to concentrate excessive power in the Council of Ten at the expense of the Great Council, were in favour of the traditional *prudentia*, which constituted the measure of the "good governance" myth of Venice.[10] They viewed the new pompous, triumphant architecture coming from Rome as moving away from the Venetian ideal of *mediocritas* and thus showed "conservative" tendencies in artistic choices.[11]

Because of the institutional crisis of 1580-1582, the struggle on the political scene between the *vecchi* and the *giovani* escalated during the last two decades of the sixteenth century. In the same years, some very important architectural projects were launched, in which the controversy between the *vecchi*, who supported a more pompous *alla romana* architecture, and the *giovani*, who supported a more traditional "Venetian" aesthetic, made a dynamic appearance. In all cases, the "conservative" view of the *giovani*

[10] On the myth of Venice there is extensive bibliography, indicatively: Fasoli 1958, Gaeta 1980, Grubb 1986, Crouzet-Pavan 1999, Rosand 2001, Raines 2006, Fenlon 2007, Paul 2014.

[11] For the connection between the Venetian politics, the *vecchi-giovani* controversy and the architectural projects from the mid-sixteenth to the early seventeenth century, see the excellent analysis by Tafuri 1995, 1-13, 104-138 and especially 161-196.

prevailed.[12] The controversy was rekindled in 1596 in relation to the *Procuratie nuove*. The *giovani* reacted to the excessive rhetoric of Vincenzo Scamozzi's plan, which, as they claimed, constituted an insult to the image of the Piazza San Marco and the "traditional" Venice. They proposed instead the completion of the *Procuratie* according to the design of Jacopo Sansovino's Library.[13] It seems contradictory that the *giovani* saw the traditional values of Venice in Sansovino's Library when this building, together with the *Zecca* (mint) and the Loggetta, were the main projects of import and acceptance of the high Roman Renaissance architecture in the *Serenissima* fifty years earlier, supported and promoted by the *vecchi*. These three buildings that transformed the piazza San Marco in the middle of the sixteenth century were considered part of the "sacred" tradition of the city by the 1590s and were already incorporated into the urban side of Venice's myth of prudence, good governance and *mediocritas*. Meanings changed with time.

It is important to note that, between 1625 and 1629, in exactly the same years that Francesco Morosini served in Crete as *Provveditore Generale* and commissioned the Loggia of Candia, the *vecchi-giovani* controversy "erupted" in Venice once again. The conflict broke out when Renier Zen, one of the *Capi* of the Council of Ten, accused the new doge Giovanni I Cornaro of using his position for his family's benefit. After an attempt on Zen's life, involving one of Cornaro's sons, the controversy climbed to a level of "civil war", plunging the State into total chaos.[14] Venice was divided into two factions: a pro-Cornaro, pro-papal one, backed by the Venetian oligarchs (*vecchi*) and a pro-Zen, anti-papal faction, backed by the poorer nobility (*giovani*). It is well documented that the *vecchi-giovani* controversy was transferred to the *Stato da Terra,* and there can be no doubt that the political struggles and rivalries of Venice also travelled to the *Stato da Màr* (Manno 1987). The Venetian officials who were sent to Crete for a time period of one and a half to three years to occupy the highly prestigious offices of *Duca, Provveditore Generale* and *Capitano di Candia* undoubtedly participated in the political discussions and controversies taking place in the capital. As for

Francesco Morosini, the commissioner of the Cretan Loggia, it seems that he belonged ideologically to the *giovani*. This is supported by his general attitude towards the Latin Church and his particularly negative attitude towards the Jesuits. For example, he took an assertive, openly anti-papal stance during a confrontation with the archbishop of Candia.[15] In addition, his obsession with the economy and the functionality of the public constructions, as it emerges from his *relazioni* and letters addressed to the Senate, points to the same direction. If that were the case, it very well justifies choosing a design for the Loggia of Candia that in 1626 would seem "archaic", anachronistic and outdated in the circles of the *vecchi* of the centre. What I am proposing here is not necessarily that Francesco Morosini commissioned a building with the values of *mediocritas* and *prudentia* in mind, as there is not enough evidence to support it. Rather, I am proposing that he chose a design that alluded to what the *giovani* thought at the time to be "traditional" Venetian architecture, i.e. Sansovino's Library of Saint Mark.

The Morosini Fountain

Things get complicated when we take into account the Morosini Fountain (Fig. 3), which was constructed at exactly the same time as the public loggia, a few metres away from it, on the same piazza, by the same commissioner. Both edifices belonged to the same urbanisation project, but stylistically they differ. The Morosini Fountain was a far more ambitious, more expensive and above all innovative project compared to the loggia: innovative due to the 15.5-kilometre aqueduct that brought water to it, the large number of people that could simultaneously use it (40) and also its extravagant design and lavish decoration.

The aqueduct brought fresh water to the centre of Candia, solving the age-long

[12] After the fires of 1574 and 1577, the Doge's Palace was reconstructed according to its old Gothic design and not according to that proposed by Andrea Palladio. In 1582, Vicenzo Scamozzi's plan to complete the Jacopo Sansovino's Library was rejected because nobles belonging to the radical wing of the *giovani* strongly opposed. At the same time, in the controversy over the construction of the new Rialto Bridge, the "old" were also defeated. For these projects and their relation with the politics of the *vecchi-giovani* factions, see Tafuri 1995, 161-184.

[13] There is extensive bibliography concerning all these projects, see for example: Howard 2011, 151-191, Cooper 2005, 207-211, Morolli 1994, 13-116, Calabi and Morachiello 1987, 219-300.

[14] On this controversy see Cozzi 1994, 112-114. On doge Giovanni I Cornaro, see Povolo, 1983, 229-233 and Da Mosto 1977, 357-365.

[15] About his stance towards the Jesuits, see his *relazione,* A.S.V., *Relazioni,* b.80, Relazione di Generale Morosini, 1629, (Spanakis 1950, 107-122). See also his correspondence with the Senate, in the A.S.V., *Dispacci di Candia*, 787, especially his letter of the 18th of July 1627, where he describes his clash with the archbishop of Candia.

FIG. 5. Detail from the relief decoration of the Morosini Fountain (1626-1628), Heraklion, photographed by the author.

problem of water scarcity in the city. Building it was not an easy task. Morosini managed to bypass the serious doubts of the other Venetian officials who found the task difficult, costly and with dubious results, and succeeded in completing his plan. It involved designing the path of the water, going through valleys and mountains, by engineers who had a very good knowledge of the Cretan landscape. Their names are not known, but in all probability they were among the military architects that were sent to Crete to design and supervise the fortifications, and minutely chart the island's landscape.[16] The plan also involved hundreds of workers. From Morosini's *relazione* we learn that they were Russian captives on an Ottoman galley who rebelled and sailed to Crete, but found themselves captive again, constructing an aqueduct on a "foreign" island under Venetian rule (Spanakis 1950, 40).

With a series of underground conduits and impressive water bridges, good-quality water was channelled from the springs of Mount Yuhtas to the centre of Candia. Morosini, by enacting a series of laws (*ordini*), ensured that all residents of the capital had free access to the fresh water (Spanakis 1950, 139-159). Venetian authorities sought to represent themselves not only as a military force ensuring the security of the territories, but also as the benevolent guardians that guarantied the well-being of all

[16] During the years 1625-1629, *ingegnere pubblico* of Crete was Rafaello Monanni, but he was absent from the island during the crucial period from the spring of 1626 to the fall of 1627. The engineer most often thought to be the designer of the fountain is Francesco Basilicata, who was also a cartographer responsible for surveying and mapping the island. The Veneto-Cretan Zorzi Corner, who was responsible for supervising the project of the fountain, was not an engineer, but an amateur architecture enthusiast and a friend of Basilicata and he might have taken part in the designing of the fountain. For these engineers see, Chrysochoou 2004, 406-416. On the importance of the cartographic surveying of the island by the Venetian engineers, see Porfyriou 2004.

citizens. In this context, urban planning was envisaged as part of a social and political cohesion programme. Accordingly, Morosini, in the final *relazione* he addressed to the Senate, emphatically referred to the aqueduct and fountain and insisted on the health (*sanità*) and well-being (*benessere*) of the citizens, the public interest (*interesse pubblico*) and comfort (*comodità*) achieved through his project (Spanakis 1950, 28-42). All these notions, along with *decoro urbano* and *funzionalità,* constituted the new necessities of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italian cities. We find them as well in all the *relazioni* of the Venetian officials serving in Crete when asking for approval from the Venetian Senate for their different urbanisation projects.

The Morosini Fountain was built in the centre of the central square of Candia, opposite the ducal palace, the ducal church of San Marco and the loggia, right at the spot where the *ruga magistra,* the city's main road leading from the port to the main piazza, ended (Fig. 1). It has a basin of eight lobes decorated with reliefs depicting Poseidon's marine entourage: nereids, tritons, sea horses, sea bulls and dolphins (Fig. 5). In between the coats of arms of Venetian officials that occupy the central panel of each lobe, naked, corpulent, feminine and masculine figures, both human and fish-like, play, fight or simply float on the waves, holding musical instruments or other symbols, along with sea bulls, winged galloping horses, dolphins and other imaginary animals. Seated, upright or inclined, they engage with each other or with the marine creatures in a grid of horizontal, vertical and diagonal axes that give the feeling of continuous movement, with twists and swirls, towards the panels depicting the coats of arms. In the centre of the eight lobe basin stands an octagonal pillar, on top of which four lions sit radially (Fig. 6). The water squirts from their mouths and fills the tank below. Their slightly raised tails join in the centre of the pillar and form the seat for a circular basin, which rests upon the lions' backs (Varthalitou 2021, 114-122).

On top of it all, there stood a larger-than-life statue of Poseidon. It made such a big impression that the fountain was called the giant (*zigante*) for decades after it was pulled down. As Morosini put it, the statue and the reliefs "were
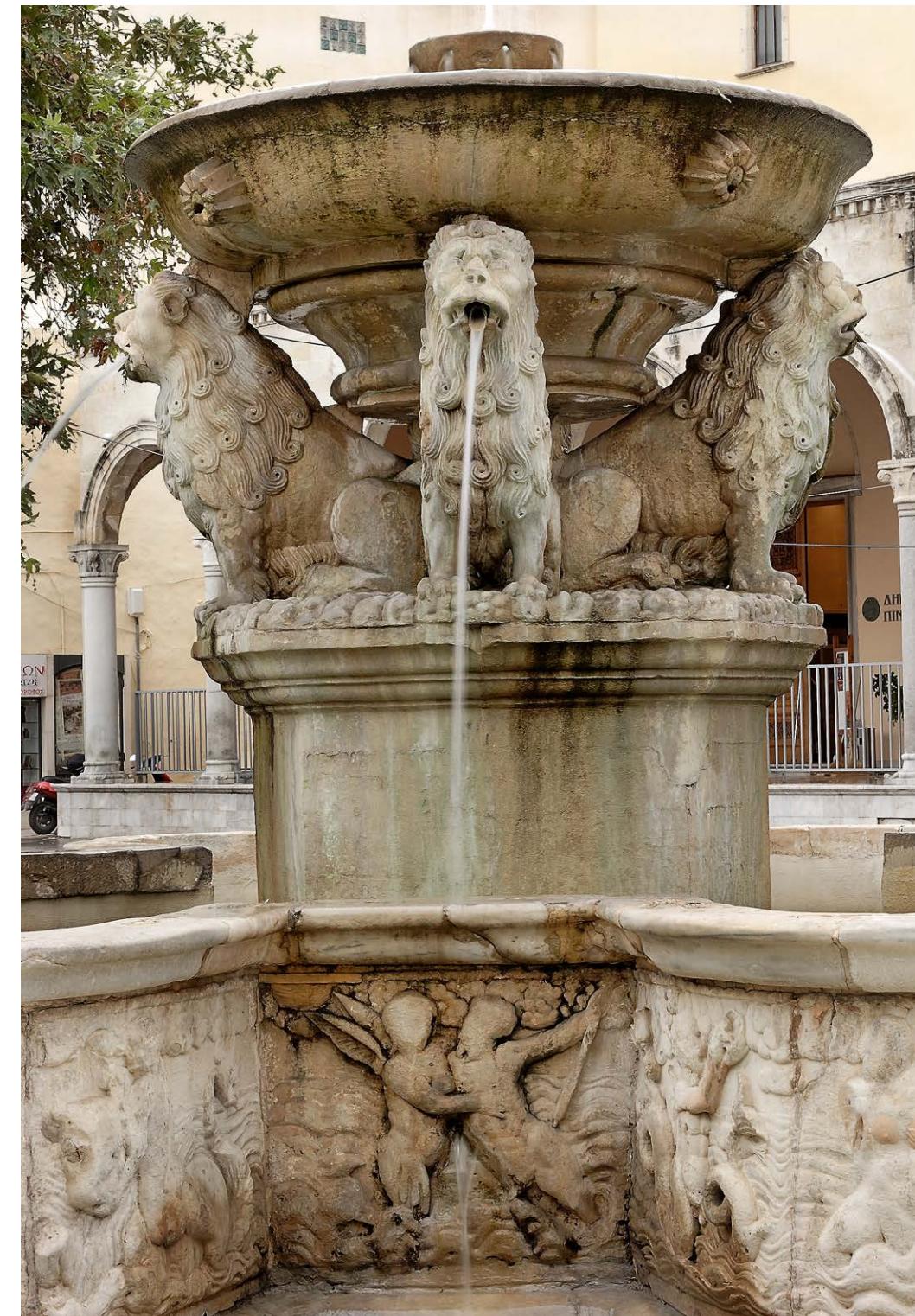
FIG. 6. The lions of the Morosini Fountain (1626-1628), (IMS/FORTH, photographer Efi Moraitaki, 2006).

made by good enough sculptors for the place", whom he praised, along with the supervisor of the project, Zorzi Corner, a member of the Veneto-Cretan nobility (Spanakis 1950, 42, 134-136).[17] The sculptural decoration of the fountain was as sophisticated as it could get in

[17] Morosini not only repeatedly mentioned Zorzi Corner in his letters and in his *relazione*, but suggested to the Senate that the services he freely offered to Venice be acknowledged (Spanakis 1950, 135-136). And indeed, the proposal was accepted, and on 13 December 1629, the Venetian authorities decided to honour Corner with a gold chain worth one hundred ducats, awarded to him by Morosini's successor, Francesco Molin (Vincent and Chrysochoou 2004, 372). The sculptors of the fountain

Candia and, compared to the war trophy reliefs of the loggia, of far superior quality. But the differences with the loggia go beyond the quality of the reliefs; the whole feeling is different. The motion of the human bodies and the mythological creatures, along with the motion and the sound of the running water, give the fountain a triumphal, festive character.[18] It should be added here that the triumphal element also existed in the loggia due to the metopes depicting war trophies, but overall the loggia is a sober, static building compared to the fountain. The fountain's refined antiquarian iconographic programme was exquisitely designed, even if its execution was not of very high quality compared to Italian equivalents. It was obviously designed to attract attention and was celebrated as such. In his memoirs from Candia, Zuanne Papadopoli, a Cretan refugee in Padova, narrates how during the hot summer nights,

> **The nobles of both orders, Venetians of the colony and Cretan nobles, as well as the cittadini, gathered around the fountain to take their leisure and get relief, enjoying the coolness; for indeed there was a great deal of spray from the impetus and commotion of the water [...] These gentlemen would disport themselves almost the whole night, especially in the season of scorching heat, May, June, July and August, and there would be continual merrymaking, with music, songs and dances. (Papadopoli 2007, 54).**

In Venice, this type of fountains did not exist, as the special conditions of the city's construction on the lagoon permitted only the use of wells. This means that the prototype for the Morosini Fountain must have come from a centre other than Venice. It bears similarities with the famous Poseidon fountains designed by Montorsoli in Messina (1557), Ammannati in Florence (1560-1565) and Giambologna in Bologna (1563-1566), even though none of these fountains was its exact prototype. They too were older designs, built 60-70 years earlier, but they were still considered very innovative in Italy as they involved complex aqueducts (Ferretti 2018, 32-35). These three Italian Poseidon fountains had become extremely famous by the early seventeenth century and served as prototypes for Poseidon fountains built in Seville, Gdansk and elsewhere at around the same years as the Morosini Fountain (Cámara Muñoz, 2019, 92-96). So, one part of the problem is to look for the ways the design arrived in Crete. Was it brought from Italy by the commissioner, Francesco Morosini, or was it proposed to him by somebody else, and by whom? The previous literature on Cretan architecture of this period has shown that engravings and architectural treatises were travelling from Italy to Crete,[19] so it was not mandatory for the fountain to be designed in Italy. In all probability, the fountain was designed in Crete by an engineer or engineers employed by the Venetian State for this particular project. Our question here is the difference in style between the two edifices, the loggia and the fountain, as the style of the latter does not fit with the Morosini *giovani* profile delineated above.

It seems that Morosini did not feel obliged to be consistent with the style he chose for his architectural projects. I would suggest that Morosini, being in the periphery, felt free to be eclectic, namely to choose between different models. As Vlachou has shown, eclecticism is a very typical characteristic of the periphery, as more than one centre can constitute the source of the prototypes. As she successfully argued, eclecticism in the periphery "is predicated upon choice — that is, as an activity that indicates a process of selection, rejection, and adaptation to culture-specific goals" (Vlachou 2016, 12). What is interesting with the Morosini case is that the representative of the centre felt free to be eclectic in the periphery.

I believe that one of the reasons for this licence that Morosini took in relation to his prototypes has to do with the different nature of the two works and their different audiences. The public Loggia of Candia was an administrative building representing the central power of Venice. Its users were the aristocratic and upper middle classes. All the rhetoric of the myth of Venice as the guarantor of freedom, peace, stability, justice and good governance achieved through prudence and

reliefs and the statue were the Benetos brothers from Rethymno (Thomas, Michelis and Mathios). The designer of the iconographic programme could be Zorzi Corner or even Morosini himself (Varthalitou 2021, 120-121).

[18] For the relation of this type of fountains with the ephemeral constructions for triumphal entrances and their festive character, see Ferretti 2018, 29-39.

[19] See for example, Dimakopoulos 1970-1972, 233-245.

moderation had to be explicitly expressed on the building that represented the Venetian State.

The aqueduct and the fountain, on the other hand, was a project to be used by all. Mainly through its utility, but also through its elegant decoration, it aimed to impress the local population and possibly to convince the dissatisfied Veneto-Cretan nobility that Venice cared for them as much as it cared for the aristocracy and the citizens of the metropolis itself.[20] In addition, this was a far more personal project for Francesco Morosini. It was a considerable personal accomplishment, especially if we take into account the short time in which it was completed (a little over one year). Through it, he posed as a major benefactor of Candia, while with the loggia he acted as a mere representative of the State. He even cast a medal depicting his profile on one side and the fountain on the other (Fig. 7). The description of his pains in order to construct the aqueduct and the fountain takes up one fourth of his *relazione* (Spanakis 1950, 26-44, 134-159).

Besides the obvious symbolism of Poseidon, as the god that dominates the waters and as such the proper ornamentation for a fountain, Neptune was also an appropriate allegory for the maritime power of Venice.[21] In addition to that, being the second in order after Zeus, Poseidon was an appropriate god for viceroys, rectors, *provveditori* to identify with (Cámara Muñoz 2019, 96). It is very possible that Morosini, through the giant statue he commissioned, identified himself as Poseidon. In addition, according to opinions of Neoplatonists, Poseidon was also identified with *ratio superior* that guarantied "good governance", strength, peace, abundance and prosperity (Laschke 2003, 98-102). Above all, what the fountain embodies is a propagandistic artistic presentation of water delivery to the public.

Models of all building projects were submitted to the Senate of Venice for approval and Morosini specifically mentions in his *relazione* to the Senate that he did send the model of the fountain to Venice (Spanakis 1950, 42). It should be underlined that the different construction projects carried out by the Venetian officials in the different posts across the Venetian State, not only in Crete, but also in the rest of the *Stato da Màr*

FIG. 7. Bronze medal cast by Francesco Morosini for the inauguration of the aqueduct and fountain in 25 April 1628, (Historical Museum of Crete).

and *Stato da Terra*, functioned as opportunities to promote themselves and their family's name. Going against Venetian sumptuary laws, many of them pursued personal prestige through elaborate building projects. Officials presented the plans that were sent for approval to the Senate, as necessary for the "public interest" and the *decorum* of the city. In addition, they argued in their *relazioni* that the works were being done in order to praise Venice. This is exactly what Francesco Morosini did in the *relazione* he addressed to the Venetian Senate. The various organs of the Venetian government, but especially the Senate, were aware of the behaviour of its officials and usually turned a blind eye to the extent in which the works displayed Venetian authority, and there were no specific allegations challenging "good governance" of the State. Occasionally though, inquisitors sent by Venice intervened, summoning officials to Venetian courts, usually for misappropriation of public funds, and sometimes scraped off its officials' coats of arms from public works done during their service.[22]

Francesco Morosini is one such case. Less than ten years after the completion of the fountain, the inquisitors sent by Venice to investigate its officials' behaviour in the *Stato da Màr* ordered the pulling down of the Poseidon statue and apparently scraped off

[20] There were always conflicts of interest and economic rivalries between the Venetian State and the Veneto-Cretan aristocracy. The elites of the island were severely criticised by the Venetian officials for their greed, mistreatment of villagers, lack of military readiness and commitment. The main reason for the hostility was that Venice was unable to persuade the local elites to adapt the economy of the island and place the military interest of Venice above their personal economic interests. For the reasons of the conflicts see Greene 2000, 45-65.

[21] See for example, the Poseidon statue on the Scala dei giganti in Venice.

[22] For an overview of the sumptuary laws in the Venetian dominion and examples of law enforcement from both the *Stato da Terra* and *Stato da Màr*, see Fortini Brown 2017, 53-76. For examples from Crete see Vakondiou 2021, 75-85.

FIG. 8. The coat-of-arms of Francesco Morosini scraped off from the fountain, photographed by the author.

Morosini's coat of arms (Fig. 8) (Spanakis 1969, 391-392). Even though the inquisitors did that occasionally,[23] it is possible that the scraping off of specific nobles' coats of arms had to do with power struggles within Venice itself.[24] Whatever the case, it seems that Morosini went too far in relation of his personal boasting and display of his family name.

To conclude, with this paper I tried to address certain questions concerning centre-periphery issues in the Venetian colony of Crete. I attempted to show that the supposed stylistic anachronism of the Loggia of Candia can be interpreted through the commissioner's connection to Venetian politics. The parallel construction of the extravagant Morosini Fountain also undermines the position of provincial delay of architectural styles and demonstrates that the same state official could use two different styles for different purposes, as well as to convey different messages to different audiences.

[23] Examples from Treviso, Belluno, and elsewhere are well known. See for example, Zaggia, 2014, 150-151.

[24] Needless to say that more research in the Venetian archives needs to be done in order to ascertain our hypotheses concerning Francesco Morosini and his deeds.

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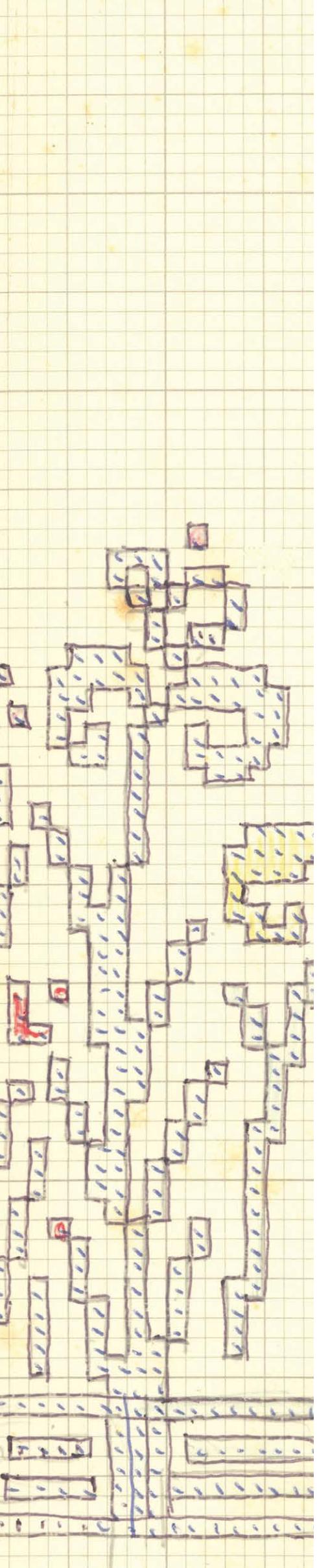
THE DOUBLE 'PERIPHERIES' OF FEMALE CRAFTSMANSHIP IN GREECE

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ABSTRACT

The paper seeks to examine the reconsideration of folk art and especially aspects of female craftsmanship within the narrative context of the unbroken continuity of the Greek nation and territorial claims at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. Focusing on the cases of the painter and craft designer Florentini Kaloutsis and the founder of embroidery schools Loukia Zygomalas, the paper will attempt to shed light on how folk art, neglected and considered a derivative artistic expression until the late nineteenth century, started to be considered an authentic popular expression.
Moreover, the paper will also show how the long-neglected female craftsmanship of weaving and knitting became crucial financial endeavours, at the end of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, mostly by working-class women, within the framework of the early industrialisation of the country.

KEYWORDS   PERIPHERY, FEMALE CRAFTSMANSHIP, FOLK ART, SELF-COLONISATION, GREEKNESS

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Introduction

[...] the periphery has the potential to subvert categories that have dominated (art) historical thinking since its inception (centre, canon, nation), while bringing to the fore the fundamentally unequal power configurations that have characterized the discipline and its various practices. (Vlachou 2019, 335)

I t is claimed by various scholars (Vlachou 2019, 333-352)[1] that the notion of periphery in artistic production ought to be examined in the art historical discourse. Focusing on the cases of two female artists and craft designers, Florentini Kaloutsis and Loukia Zygomalas, this paper will discuss the concept of periphery, not as a Western-centred idea developed in a linear, pre-determined evolutionary scheme, but as a spatial and temporal analytical category for the interpretation of artworks outside of the canon, such as modern and folk art in Greek art, without considering them as being marginal.

This interpretation has close relevance to the perception of *tradition* in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, emphasised in the material culture of Greece. We will explore the value of judging the "delayed" reception of modernism, especially through the example of the Arts and Crafts movement. In addition, the reception of Romanticism in Greece at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century will be explained as a case study of national Romanticism. Finally, the notion of periphery in Greek art will be debated via the cultural narrative of *Greekness* examined in respect of two poles: the exportation of "peripheral" Greek art as "exotic" by Greek artists who visited and studied in Western Europe; and the importation of the visual perception of the hegemonic Western concept of art, defining what is "Greek" in Greek artists' works under a "self-colonial" gaze.

The rise of the Greek state in the nineteenth century and the revival of folk tradition in Greece

When the Greek state was established in 1830, it extended to less than a third of today's Greek borders (Clogg 1992, 45) and was urged to rapidly adopt Western political, social and cultural norms so as to be identified as a Western European country (Herzfeld 2002, 19-23). During the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, wars for the liberation of Greek communities outside of the new state's frontiers continued, with the aim of expanding the state.

In the early 1830s, Athens was chosen as the capital of the nascent Greek state, though at the time it was little more than a dusty village. In the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries, much of the efforts of the state were oriented towards the construction of Athens as a European capital. On the other hand, the agricultural populations of the country suffered from hunger and lawlessness and the economy followed the old Ottoman model of feudalism (Clogg 1992, 42). The urbanisation of Athens resulted in explosive population growth in the capital, but at the same time, poverty had also increased hugely. Thousands of people had no access to basic social benefits. In particular, women and children, being more vulnerable, faced misery and exploitation in a number of ways.

Consequently, organised charity came from various unions, mainly from the mid-nineteenth century on. The bourgeoisie, and particularly bourgeois women, found in charity a broadly respected social activity (Kouki 2008, 20-21), which had gradually become a common practice observed in many European countries from the second half of the nineteenth century (England, Finland, Hungary, etc.) (Greensted 2010, 125, 129). Those ladies focused especially on impoverished women and children. Very soon, many unions, societies and other organisations appeared (Korassidou 1995, 173, 175), initially as shelters for lower-class girls and women, which ensured their survival. The residents were trained in different techniques that helped them to earn a living, often without having to be away from their homes (Greensted 2010, 129 and Kouki 2008, 21).These charity unions were very active

[1] Extended discussion about art in the periphery can be found at the following site, created by Nandia-Foteini Vlachou: https://artintheperiphery.wordpress.com/bibliography-2/

during the second half of the nineteenth century and at least until the 1930s, and their substantial decline only occurred after the Second World War (1944-1945) and the Civil War (1946-1949) (Bounia 2017, 156).

The first half of the twentieth century was a very turbulent period in Greek history, marked by the implosion of the Ottoman Empire, successive wars among the new emerging Balkan states (1912-1913), the doubling of the territory of the Greek state, and also the Asia Minor Catastrophe (1922). The Asia Minor Catastrophe led to the death of hundreds of thousands of Greek soldiers and civilians from among the Greek populations of Asia Minor and almost 1.5 million refugees being forced to find shelter in Greece (1922-1923).

During this period, there was a geometric increase in the population of large urban centres, accompanied by an explosion of unemployment. The employment opportunities for poor and refugee women through handicraft unions also served "patriotic" purposes, as the founding of women's handicraft associations, apart from the visible social implications, also took on the character of preserving national identity (Avdela and Psarra 2005, 67-79, Psarra 2008, 1-28, Kouki 2008, 27-34). Simultaneously, the founding of women's handicraft associations, apart from the visible social implications, also took on the character of preserving national identity. Kallirroi Parren, editor of the *Ladies' Journal* [*Efimeris ton Kyrion*] (1887-1917) (Dalakoura and Ziogou-Karastergiou 2015, 253), founder of the Lyceum of Greek Women and perhaps the leading figure in the women's movement in Greece from the end of the nineteenth century, supported the idea that women's labour, and especially handicrafts, served not only their families but also the nation in creating happy families and citizens.

The question of national identity was fundamental for the nascent Greek state from 1830 onwards (Herzfeld 2002, 23-26). The choice of Athens as capital, a town dominated by the imposing ruins of the Parthenon, symbolised the cultural orientation of the new state towards the classical past. The theory of Fallmerayer (Leeb 1996, 55)[2] came just in time to justify the continuous efforts of Greek scholars, thinkers and philosophers inside and outside of the Greek borders, to prove

that the modern Greeks were the descendants of the ancient ancestors.

It was only towards the mid-nineteenth century that interest developed in Greece's medieval, Byzantine past. Historical attempts were made to link the classical with the medieval and modern periods of Greek history in a theory of unbroken continuity[3] named *Greekness* as an aesthetic value (Clogg 1992, 50). The turn to Byzantine heritage initially, and later in folk tradition, is related to the appearance of Romanticism as a national expression in the late nineteenth century (Greensted 2010, 129).[4]

Despite the theory of *Greekness*, Greek folk art had lost a considerable amount of authenticity after the mid-nineteenth century due to the extended urbanisation and consequent abandonment of the countryside. The small pre-industrial communities, many of them wealthy and prosperous, were gradually deserted. The urbanisation inevitably caused the loss of local identity among the members of the countryside communities (Matthtiopoulos 2003, 408). In the new urban environment, the "villagers" were "welcome" as representatives of an inferior civilisation, in direct opposition to the urban citizenry (Herzfeld Fall 2002, 902).

The revival of folk art, initially through unions and later through various workshops, under the auspices of charity, women's emancipation and patriotic service changed the character of folk art into a new popular practice. In the first half of the twentieth century, charity unions, together with profitable businesses, speculative clubs and cooperatives, followed the path of the charity unions of the nineteenth century in supporting women's opportunities to work (Matthiopoulos 2003, 414). Apart from the Attican Greek Village Embroideries, Loukia Zygomalas' consortium, and the "Double Axe" (Diplous Pelekys), Florentini Kaloutsis' business, which are the two case studies that we shall examine in this paper, Angeliki Hadjimichalis initiated the "Syndesmos

[2] Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer (1790-1861). He developed his theory that the ancient "Hellenic" population of the south Balkans had been replaced during the Middle Ages by Arvanitic, Aromanian, Slavic and Turkish populations. "Not the slightest drop of undiluted Hellenic blood flows in the veins of the Christian population of present-day Greece".

Antonis Kotidis observes: *"If there was no Fallmerayer it would be necessary to invent him"*. (Kotidis 1995, 33).

[3] Paparigopoulos, Konstantinos, *History of the Greek Nation* [Ιστορία του ελληνικού έθνους], 1853 (1st short ed.), then in extended edition in 3 vol. (15 books), 1860-1876, with many renewed editions later.

[4] About the notion of the construction of national identity: Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* [Άντερσον, Μπένεντικτ, 1997. Φαντασιακές Κοινότητες. Στοχασμοί για τις Απαρχές και τη Διάδοση του Εθνικισμού. Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Νεφέλη,], and especially about the construction of national identity of Modern Greece: Herzfeld, Michael. 2002. *Ours Once More. Folklore, Ideology, and the Making of Modern Greece* [Πάλι Δικά μας. Λαογραφία, Ιδεολογία και η Διαμόρφωση της Σύγχρονης Ελλάδας. Μανόλης Σαρηγιάννης (μτφρ.). Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Αλεξάνδρεια].

Ergastirion Cheirotechnias" (Handicraft Workshops Association) in 1931 (Kouki 2008, 61), Eva Palmer-Sikelianou organised and personally supervised the handicrafts exhibitions during the short revival of the Delphic Feasts in 1927 and 1930, and the company "Ellinikes Technes" SA ("Hellenic Arts" SA) was founded in the early 1930s (Kouki 2008, 110), among others.

Zygomalas' Attican Greek Village Embroidery Schools

Loukia Zygomalas (née Balanou) was born in 1863 in Athens into a bourgeois family (Stergiou 2008, 24). In 1888, she married the wealthy lawyer Antonis Zygomalas (1856-1930), a member of an esteemed family. At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, Antonis Zygomalas was directly connected with the strong claims of landless villagers of the Attican mainland, who were fighting against the old feudal system and for the redistribution of land. Antonis Zygomalas not only supported them legally, but he was also given the necessary money to buy them land by Andreas Syngros, one of the most powerful businessmen of the time (Stergiou 2008, 19). That is one of the main reasons why Loukia, after the death of her husband, settled in Avlona on the Attican mainland and inaugurated the Zygomalas Museum in 1937 (Stergiou 2008, 7).

After the death of her only son during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), Loukia found some consolation not only in discovering the aesthetic value of the art of embroidery, but also in helping the poor agricultural populations of Attica and especially the area around the village of Avlona (Kouki 2008, 102). In the northeastern mainland of Attica, from 1915 onwards, she founded several embroidery workshops at her own expense: the Attican Greek Village Embroidery Schools, which were organised as a consortium. After the Asia Minor Catastrophe in 1922, the Schools were enriched and enlarged with the tradition of carpeting by the refugee women (Kouki 2008, 102).

Loukia Zygomalas' interest in the preservation and *revival* of the folk embroideries of the Attica and Boetia regions

FIG. 1. Interior of the pavilion of the Attican Greek Village Embroideries. Zygomalas Museum collection. Source: Stergiou, Spyros. 2008. *The Ebroideries of Zygomalas Museum*. An Artistic Intervention. Thessaloniki: Ph.D. dissertation, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, School of Fine Arts, Department of Fine and Applied Arts [Στεργίου, Σπύρος. 2008. Τα Κεντήματα του Μουσείου Ζυγομαλά. Μια Εικαστική Παρέμβαση. Θεσσαλονίκη: διδ. Διατριβή. Α.Π.Θ., Σχολή Καλών Τεχνών, Τμήμα Καλών και Εφαρμοσμένων Τεχνών].

had a double starting point: on one hand it was integrated in the strong interest in folk art that bourgeois women had shown at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, in the framework of the narrative of the unbroken continuity of Greek history and civilisation (Stergiou 2008, 30-31).[5] On the other hand, Zygomalas highlighted one of the oldest and most common activities in a woman's life, no matter her social or financial situation. Oliver Schreiner observes that the relationship between needlework and women

[5] We mention for example the personal friendship of Zygomalas with Angeliki Hadjimichalis, one the pillars of the consolidation of folk art in Greece, Eva Palmer-Sikelianou, wife of the poet Angelos Sikelianos who strongly encouraged the female villagers from the district around Delphi to weave and many other exceptional members of wealthy bourgeois families of Greece, especially Athens.

throughout history has been major but extremely complex at the same time. Almost all women were obliged to learn to work with needles, in order to keep their households together, to decorate their homes with their own needlecrafts, to express their necessity for artistic creation but also, very often, to support their families financially: "Reviled and celebrated, it has nevertheless been a significant cultural practice of meaning-making" (Schreiner 1982, 187 in Goggin and Fowkes 2009, 3).

More specifically, Jennifer Wearden underlines that embroideries encapsulate the cultural expressions of different communities while at the same time showing "the embroiderer's ability to [...] transform a plain piece of fabric into a pleasing and unique work of art. The power to perform magic with a needle comes through the embroiderer's familiarity with stitches: with their structure, with hand movements required to make them and with their seemingly infinite variation." (Wearden 1999, 129 in Goggin and Fowkes 2009, 4).

The role of Zygomalas was crucial not only for founding the consortium, but also for organising the workshops. She systematically collected old embroideries, usually detached from old traditional costumes (Stergiou 2008, 33). It is said, but could not be confirmed, that she had studied painting in France (Stergiou 2008, 24 & 33). What we do know is that she studied the patterns in these old embroideries and then designed new, much simpler ones which she gave to the workers, who embroidered at home and then gave their handicrafts to the station in Athens, where they were sold.

The Attican Greek Village Embroideries became famous for their quality (Stergiou 2008, 33-34)[6] during the first half of the twentieth century, and the products were awarded prizes several times, both in Greece and abroad (Kouki 2008, 103).[7] In the aftermath of the charity unions and workshops of the nineteenth century, Zygomalas was constantly mentioned by scholars and the intelligentsia of the era as the person who revived the folk tradition, at the same time giving the opportunity to poor village women to support their families

FIG. 2. Embroidery pattern and embroidered pillow. Zygomalas Museum collection. Source: Stergiou, Spyros. 2008. *The Embroideries of Zygomalas Museum. An Artistic Intervention.* Thessaloniki: Ph.D. dissertation, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, School of Fine Arts, Department of Fine and Applied Arts [Στεργίου, Σπύρος. 2008. Τα Κεντήματα του Μουσείου Ζυγομαλά. Μια Εικαστική Παρέμβαση. Θεσσαλονίκη: διδ. Διατριβή. Α.Π.Θ., Σχολή Καλών Τεχνών, Τμήμα Καλών και Εφαρμοσμένων Τεχνών].

[6] The old embroiderers used to say that Zygomalas would examine every handicraft piece very carefully, and if she spotted even the slightest flaw, she would pay the embroiderer as had been agreed and then destroy the work in front of the embroiderer, in order to secure the highest quality of handicrafts produced by the Attican Greek Village Embroideries (Stergiou 2008, 36-37).

[7] In 1925, Zygomalas won two gold medals at the 13th International Exhibition in Paris: one for her designs and one for the Attica Greek Villagers Embroidery Schools.

(Stergiou 2008, 31-33). Because of financial difficulties, however, Zygomalas was obliged to close the Schools in 1936. In 1947, the year of her death, the Zygomalas Museum in Avlona, Attica, was inaugurated and is still today financed by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture (Kouki 2008, 103). The collection of the museum contains both the personal collection of Zygomalas' old embroideries and creations of the Schools.

Kaloutsis' cottage industry Double Axe (*Diplous Pelekys*)

Florentini Kaloutsis (née Skouloudis) was born in 1890 into a wealthy bourgeois Cretan family. Between 1906 and 1912, she studied painting in London — one year at the Dulwich High School and then at the Westminster School of Arts[8]. In 1912, after her return to Chania, she inaugurated her own painting studio and participated in different exhibitions in Athens (Scholinakis-Heliotis 1990, 236-237)[9]. In 1913, already a prominent painter in Crete, she was commissioned to design the stamp celebrating the union of Crete with the Greek State (Clogg 1992, 69 and Stathakis-Koumaris 1982, 4).

At the same time, Kaloutsis visited parts of the Cretan countryside and, influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement, her attention was drawn to weaving, which she considered as a whole and a completely independent art form, although she realised that it had been considerably abandoned. Later she wrote to Angeliki Hadjimichalis: "When I came back from London, where I was studying painting, I realized with regret that the Cretan loom was completely dead, and that the women who used to weave, turned to knit laces and have abandoned their looms. Moreover, most of the wooden looms were used as firewood" (Mitsotakis 1999, 22-23).

With the help of some elderly weavers from Crete who were still working with traditional techniques and materials, she started experimenting with weaving and later organised a workshop. Apart from the native folk motifs, Kaloutsis was the first to focus on and be inspired by the findings of the

FIG. 3. Red living room: curtain. Zygomalas Museum collection. Source: Stergiou, Spyros. 2008. *The Ebroideries of Zygomalas Museum. An Artistic Intervention.* Thessaloniki: Ph.D. dissertation, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, School of Fine Arts, Department of Fine and Applied Arts [Στεργίου, Σπύρος. 2008. Τα Κεντήματα του Μουσείου Ζυγομαλά. Μια Εικαστική Παρέμβαση. Θεσσαλονίκη: διδ. Διατριβή. Α.Π.Θ., Σχολή Καλών Τεχνών, Τμήμα Καλών και Εφαρμοσμένων Τεχνών].

[8] "A Student from Crete", *Dulwich High School Magazine 1929-1930*, 31; cf. Florentini Kaloutsis Archive, George Kaloutsis Private Collection

[9] Scholinakis-Heliotis, mentions that Florentini Skouloudis participated in the exhibitions of the Association of Greek artists [ΣύνδεσΘος Ελλήνων καλλιτεχνών] in 1915, 1916, 1926 & in the Second State Art Exhibition.

FIG. 4. Florentini Kaloutsis at her workshop in Chania-Crete, ca.1915. Source: Florentini Skouloudis-Kaloutsis'archive, private collection.
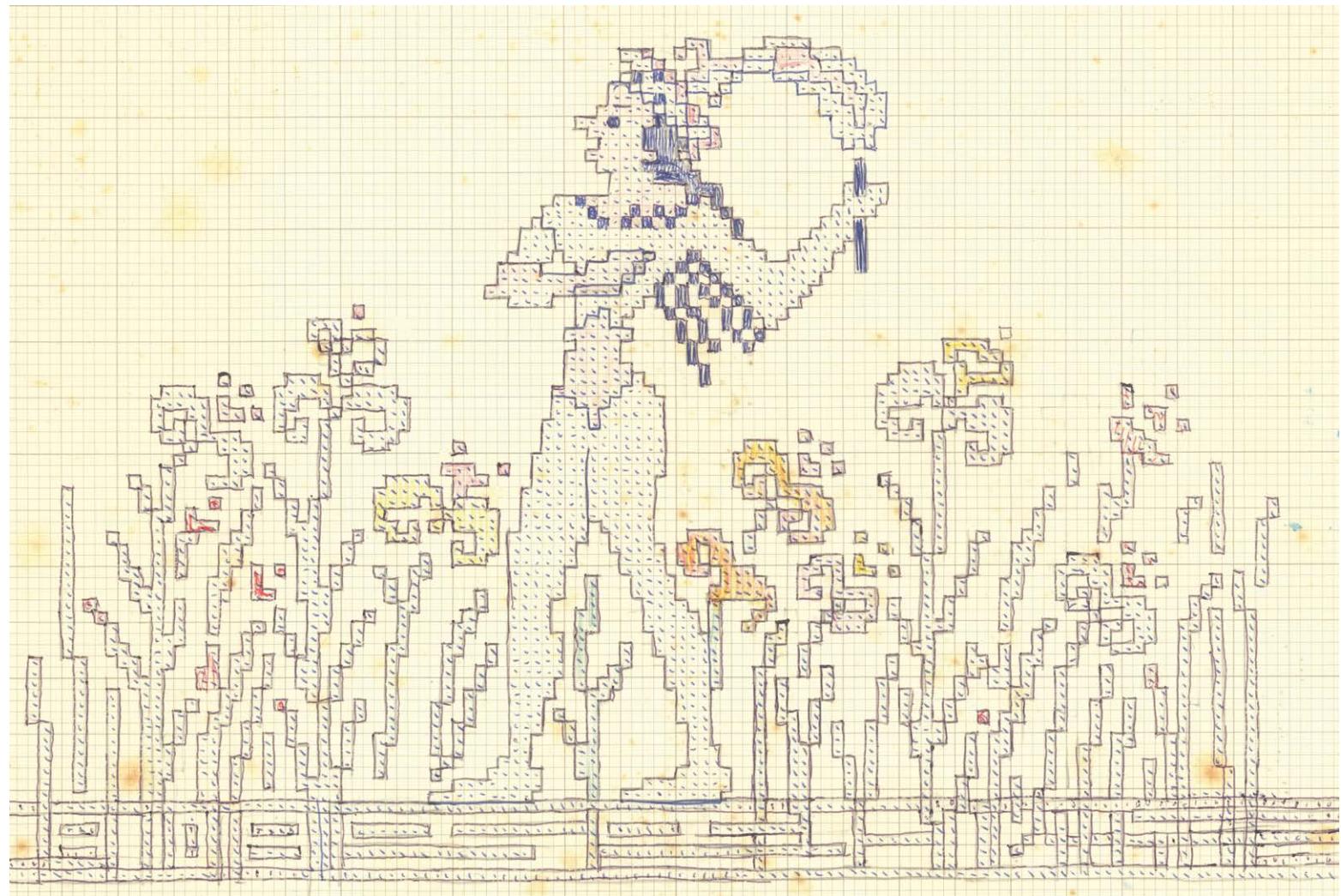
FIG. 5. Design for woven fabric from the Minoan fresco "Prince of Lilies", 1924-1940, pencil and coloured crayons on squared paper, 23 x 34,5 cm. Source: archive of patterns by Florentini Kaloutsis, Lyceum Club of Greek Women of Chania.

excavations in Knossos, Crete,[10] led by Arthur Evans and his team. A Late Bronze Age was unearthed there between 1900 and 1910, which led to the discovery of a prehistoric civilisation, which was named the "Minoan civilisation" and was established by the international scientific community as the beginning of European civilisation (Whitley 2010, 69-85). For the Greeks, it was almost immediately considered as another tile in the mosaic of a brilliant national past, whose starting point was in the extreme depths of antiquity, far beyond the Homeric epics (Hamilakis 2010, 197-221). From the beginning of the 1920s, Kaloutsis studied the excavation artefacts[11] from the site and made drawings of them on millimetre paper (Greensted 2010, 138)[12], transferring them freely, as motifs, to her personal design compositions. Thanks to the accuracy of this paper and following the instructions that she gave personally, the designs could then be transferred in every detail by her assistants to textile applications with traditional weaving techniques and natural materials. Willing to create a strong connection between the prehistoric past of the island and her local workshop, which was based in Chania, Crete, Kaloutsis chose the name *Double Axe* [Diplous Pelekys] for her business, after one of the most characteristic artefacts found in Knossos.

[10] Kaloutsis was systematically and directly informed about the process of the excavations due to the advice of her close friend, the artist Violet Kingsford. The information comes directly from her children. Violet Kingsford had later on settled in Chania, Crete.

[11] Personal interview of Maria Naxakis, relative of Kaloutsis.

[12] Kaloutsis' close friend Violet Kingsford had often brought her millimetre paper from Britain.

By 1925, the female cottage industry had been transformed into a small craft unit. The fine quality of the crafts was highly appreciated at the time, giving her the opportunity to gradually establish six shops in Greece: one in the centre of Athens and others in smaller Greek cities (Chania, Heraklion, Thessaloniki, Patras, Corfu) (Stathakis-Koumaris 1982, 7). In the early 1930s, there were 150 looms in the workshop based in Chania, employing around 200 working women. At the same time, Kaloutsis was collaborating with women who worked from home on her behalf (Mitsotakis 1999, 21).

Kaloutsis organised her workshop not only according to the standards of the already existing workshops in Athens, but also those in Britain (Greensted 2010, 125). Having been acquainted with the Arts and Crafts movement (Brunton 2001, 217-238), she appreciated the modern artistic and commercial dimension of the revival of folk art. In her case, the relationship between preserving folk art and running a successful business was not only focused on the appreciation and promotion of technical craftsmanship and handmade quality; equally important was the variety and symbolic weight of motifs in her compositions.

The response was immediate and led to consistently great success. In 1926, she presented her first exhibition with her design applications inspired by Minoan motifs in Athens, followed by many exhibitions inside and outside Greece, up until 1967 (Mitsotakis 1999, 34, 27, 21). She died in 1971, at a time when, due to the rising tourist boom, handicraft production became increasingly industrial (pre-prepared materials, synthetic colours, mass reproduction of motifs and applications, low prices), leading to the gradual death of traditional handmade techniques.

FIG. 6. Woven robe with Minoan lilies pattern, 1924-1940 (design), cotton, H.: 133cm. Source: Private collection.

The preservation of the "folk" tradition as a commodity

Zygomalas' and Kaloutsis' activities were at their peak in the first decades of the twentieth century. Abroad, their works were directly recognisable, identified and appreciated as expressions of Greek contemporary folk art and design

applications, namely creations of high quality and with distinguished local colours. Thus, they were sold for high prices, especially among their bourgeois clientele (Stathakis-Koumaris, 1982, 7)[13], a market which was gradually augmented through the rise of tourism. At the same time in Greece, Zygomalas' and Kaloutsis' artworks were also highly appreciated as being "genuinely Greek" because of the respect for and preservation of traditional techniques, as well as for their quality and their "patriotic" spirit, in a sense that the revival of *folk* art became a national appeal. Thus, a broad domestic clientele gradually developed: a clientele that considered these handicrafts as traditional, fashionable and classy, using them as decoration in their households (Matthiopoulos 2003: 412-416).

The notion of offering social services as a national duty can already be strongly traced in the British wing of the Arts and Crafts movement from the last decades of the nineteenth century. The movement claimed to be addressed to a very wide range of population, mainly supporting the working class against the inhuman, oppressive capitalistic society. The leaders of the movement, like William Morris, considered the medieval Gothic past as the only solution to offer workers a better life, including

in aesthetic values. However, especially in the British wing of the movement, the products were ultimately quite expensive due to their artisanal quality and were thus ultimately addressed to middle- and upper-class consumers (Kimmel 1987, 388-390).

This story is not only replicated in the cases of Zygomalas and especially Kaloutsis, but also almost all the handicraft workshops, unions, consortiums, and even small industries: the inspiration that the Arts and Crafts movement drew from medieval Gothic art was replaced by the original folk tradition and/or the prehistoric/primitive past correspondingly. Although the textile industry in Greece was never as developed as it was in Britain or the US, the handicrafts became high-quality commodities, cut off from their origins.

After ten years (1912-1922) of continuous wars (the Balkan Wars, First World War, Asia Minor Expedition and consequent Catastrophe), the frontiers of Greece and also its population had doubled. A wealth of craftspeople became part of the country, bringing with them the traditional knowledge of craftsmanship of various aspects like knitting, weaving, traditional painting and sculpture, furniture-making etc. These craftspeople became the critical mass to which the state turned in order to start the reorganisation of the Greek state (Matthiopoulos 2003, 412). At first, there were only few unions and artistic milieus promoting the work of "traditional" workshops, but gradually, during the 1920s, important financiers and bankers started to invest significant amounts or offer low interest loans in order to support unions, consortiums and small industries in producing "folk" handicrafts (Matthiopoulos 2003, 412-413). During the 1930s, there were permanent showrooms and shops in almost all Greek cities, especially in Athens, and handicrafts were constantly presented in all international exhibitions (Paris, Berlin etc.). The Liberal Party and its leader, Eleftherios Venizelos, from the end of the 1920s until around 1935, and then the dictator Ioannis Metaxas from 1936 until the explosion of the Second World War in 1940, both promoted the Greek "folk" art as invaluable national capital, no matter how different their political discourse (Matthiopoulos 2003, 414 and Matthiopoulos 1996, 154).

FIG. 7. Interwar exhibition of *Double Axe*, ca. 1930s. Source: Florentini Skouloudis-Kaloutsis' archive, private collection.

[13] E.g. in 1938, Lady Crosfield organised an exhibition for Double Axe at the Olympia Hall in London, where the royal family bought dresses for the princesses. Moreover, in 1970, Jackie Kennedy-Onassis visited the store of Double Axe and bought a significant number of handicrafts to decorate the Onassis summer villa on Skorpios island. THE NEWS [*TA NEA*] 30/5/1970].

As Matthiopoulos underlines, this is the decisive point of the inevitable appropriation of the folk art: the Greek bourgeoisie dictated the "right" way that traditional craftsmen should create their handicrafts. Just like Zygomalas copied the designs from old embroideries, to give patterns to the consortium's embroiderers, Kaloutsis copied prehistoric patterns to create new, original handicrafts for her workshops and Teriade gave instructions to the folk painter Theophilos Hadjimichail to paint on canvas and not frescoes (Matthiopoulos 2003, 414). The handicrafts had appeal right across Greece, though they were displaced from their region of origin, yet they were also invested with the narrative of saving the tradition (Kouki 2008, 42).

The double "peripheries" of female craftsmanship

The case studies of Loukia Zygomalas and Florentini Kaloutsis are only two of the numerous cases of bourgeois Greek women who encouraged the revival of aspects of folk art between the end of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. These revivals could even be considered triple peripheries: firstly, the handicrafts were produced in Greece, a peripheral country; secondly, they were created by women in a cottage industry environment, far from the milieu of the School of Fine Arts and the artistic institutions; and thirdly, they were the products of "folk" art, which is almost considered to lie outside the sphere of academic art.

This particular period was crucial for Greek art, with it being possible to interpret the reconsideration of folk art in Greece under two different lenses that converge to a singular temporal point. The first being a "delayed" Romanticism that surpassed its long nineteenth century and continued into the first decades of the twentieth century in Greece. The second being the particularities of Greek modern art — especially in its material form of applied arts — trying to define the national cultural identity (each time through the prism of different ideological and political outlooks, from Venizelos' Liberal encouragement to the later conservative nationalistic dictatorships). Those complexities could not be explained within the canonical narrative of a linear progressive perspective of art history. They could be more accurately interpreted by taking into account the analytical category of centres and peripheries, not as predefined judgmental categories of originality and innovation, but as a dense net in different spatial and temporal realities.

At this point, the notion of *Greekness,* used as a cultural identity criterion, is a key element not only concerning the case of Zygomalas and Kaloutsis, but also the consideration of Greek art as peripheral in European art history. The art of a country dominated by both the splendour and the cultural suppression of its classical past, which had been "re-invented" in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by Western foreigners, politicians, "protectors", "supervisors", intellectual philhellenes and travellers.

It is thus not surprising that neoclassicism was dictated as the dominant artistic expression of the new-born Greek state, which was trying to be identified as European; not only because of the archaeological ruins, but especially because of the Western perception, seeking in modern Greece the lost glory of classical antiquity that had been turned into a fashionable — and even official — style of the times. The selection of the young Bavarian prince Otto as the first king meant, for many decades during the nineteenth century, the establishment of both Munich's neoclassicism and the city of Munich as being the hegemonic cultural centre for Greek artists. The latter were oriented to adopt the German neoclassicism within peripheral strategies, such as special post-graduate grants from Munich's Academy of Arts.[14] Michael Herzfeld underlines: "Although the German philologists and art historians who generated the neoclassical model of Greek (and more generally European) culture were not themselves military colonizers, they were doing the ideological work of the project of European world hegemony" (Herzfeld Fall 2002, 900).

The theory of *Greekness*, namely the historical uninterrupted continuity of the nation, also shed light on periods of Greek history previously neglected: firstly, Byzantine art was appreciated as the splendid Greek Christian

[14] E.g. well-known German artists and architects such as Ernst Ziller (1837-1923) worked in Greece and especially in Athens during the construction of the new capital. Moreover, through postgraduate grants, many Greek art students studied at the Munich Academy. Later, many of them taught as art professors in the new School of Fine Arts in Athens, thus creating for an extended period an academic neoclassical style called the "Munich School" (*Scholi tou Monachou*), which was still present up until the twentieth century, being considered the national high art tradition (Kotidis, 1995).

Orthodox art of medieval times; and later the study of folk tradition, as already examined, was encouraged as a national offering within the rise of national Romanticism. In this same context, folk art was appreciated as a remarkable and unique artistic production of a peripheral country, though hiding the fact that it was developed by Greek Orthodox communities within the Ottoman Empire and thus under Ottoman cultural domination, not to mention the various influences from other Balkan ethnic groups, namely Albanians, Bulgarians, Serbs and also the extensive Jewish populations in many Greek areas.

The appreciation of Greek folk tradition and art, as an aspect of national Romanticism at the end of nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, coincided with the rise and establishment of European modernism. However, whilst non-Western, colonial art became a source of inspiration for the modern artists in Western countries, around two decades later, Greek scholars "discovered" the Greek version of Primitivism, in the work of folk artists such as Panagiotis Zografos and Theophilos (who was considered the "Greek Douanier Rousseau"). In other words, in the first decades of the twentieth century, apart from all the above, folk art also played the role of the "primitive" inspiration for Greek modern artists who tried to apply the principles of European modernism to its Greek interpretation (Matthiopoulos 2003, 410).

Vlachou has observed that: "Also useful in explaining how artistic practices are structured in the periphery is the concept of eclecticism, although in its standard usage in art history, meaning the combination of styles from various artists or historical periods, it is fraught with negative connotations, mostly regarding the lack of originality" (Vlachou 2019, 336).

For Greek art, that kind of eclecticism could mean the combination of the modern form with various elements of folk art, in the spirit of the hegemonic narrative of *Greekness*, dominant in the discourse in Greece until at least the 1950s. *Greekness*, however, was "used" by most of the artists as a "safety net", though it was also an obstacle at the same time as artists tried to associate the "Greek" subjects with modern forms from various artistic movements. Most of the time, the result was a formalist perception of modern movements, whilst

Greekness was considered the main virtue for the evaluation of the work of a Greek artist.

Although Greek folk art, including crafts and intangible cultural heritage, has already been studied for over a hundred years, only in the last decades has it been studied within the frame of a broader European or even global art historical context. Michael Herzfeld has contributed with many publications, though approaching the subject from an anthropological point of view (Herzfeld 2002). On the other hand, as Glenn Adamson has underlined in his work, craft was not diminished as a result of modernity, but rather the modern concept of craft was invented as a result of, as well as an antidote to, modernity. Instead of something threatened and in need of revival or protection, Adamson maintained that craft is, and has always been, a potent and pervasive force in contemporary production (Peach 2014, 234). Although Adamson focuses on the craft that is created by the artists of modernism (Adamson 2007), it wouldn't be meaningless to study Greek folk craft under the light of modernism, not only in terms of the form of the produced objects, but mostly as a crucial point where Greek society started to be modernised (industrialisation, emancipation of women through work etc.).

The modernisation of Greek society, especially through female emancipation, is the crucial element of the contribution not only of Zygomalas and Kaloutsis, but also almost all the bourgeois ladies who focused on the revival of folk art in the first half of the twentieth century, although they almost never referred to modernity as their goal. They insisted on the notion of *Greekness* and the particularity of Greek art, shedding light very consciously on the Greek folk craft.

Kaloutsis and perhaps also Zygomalas had studied fine arts abroad, especially drawing. In Kaloutsis' biographies, it is revealed that she had also studied the teaching of drawing, thus it was certainly not difficult for her to evolve into the field of design.[15] The creators of the handicrafts were poor women, coming from agricultural societies, but Zygomalas and Kaloutsis were wealthy bourgeois women who were completely persuaded not only of the artistic value of the

[15] Florentini obtained a certificate as a teacher artist from the Royal Drawing Society (1912), so as to teach drawing in schools. Cf. Florentini Kaloutsis archive, George Kaloutsis private collection.

original old handicrafts that they used as patterns, but also of the handicrafts that were created in the workshops of the Attican Greek Village Embroideries and Double Axe.

The handicrafts received many awards at various exhibitions abroad, namely in Western Europe,[16] emphatically promoting their "otherness" so as to preserve their "uniqueness". Zygomalas and Kaloutsis consciously accepted that the handicrafts could or even should be treated as cases of the almost exotic "Other". This attitude is again rooted in the mediated connection of modern Greeks with their ancient past. During the nineteenth century, the gaze of foreign artists, travellers and photographers configured a perception of Greece as an exotic place in the Near East, a hidden paradise, where classical antiquity crossed paths with contemporary everyday life, which was often untouched by Western culture (Herzfeld 2002, 899-900). In addition, Greek artists were trained to consider themselves as "exotic", adopting the gaze of the foreigners, as Vangelis Calotychos notes, in the framework of "self-colonization" (Calotychos 2003, 52).

Within this context, the re-discovery and *revival* of folk art could not be interpreted in the canonical narrative of a linear progressive perspective of art history. One can realise that the particularity of Greek art could not be explained geographically, considering that Greece is at the edge of Europe, but still a geographical part of it. Maybe for Greek art, the key is another temporality, as Foteini Vlachou underlines (Vlachou 2013, 10, 15 and Vlachou 2016, 8),[17] the moment at which that folk turned into urbanised popular art, detached from its physical environment, becoming the raw material for Greek modernism and therefore one of the main artistic expressions of Greek art of the first half of the twentieth century. It is the time point at which Greek art absorbed selected forms of modernism, combined with definitely simplified forms of popular material culture, in order to compose the narrative of *Greekness*.

Zygomalas and Kaloutsis adopted, inevitably but consciously, the "foreigner's" gaze towards the heritage of their own country: they highlighted the "exotic" folk art while they created commercially attractive artistic products of popular art that were identified with the principles of *Greekness* as

FIG. 8. Woven composition "Tapisserie" (or "Seabed"), ca. 1937, cotton, 87 x 133 cm. Silver medal award at the 1937 Paris International Exhibition. Source: Private collection.

[16] E.g. Kaloutsis was awarded a Silver Medal at the Paris International Exhibition of Arts (1937); as well as honorary medals & diplomas at the Berlin International Exhibition (1938); at Thessaloniki's International Exhibitions (1934, 1937, 1965); and at the Heraklion-Crete 1st Pancretan folk art exhibition (1967) etc.

[17] "…Considering the function and the structure of the canonical mechanisms of the history of art of the centre is absolutely necessary, because what is crucial for a scholar of the art of the periphery is not to prove the equal value of the art of the periphery and to include it in the 'canon' but the understanding of the function of the periphery as a completely different structure, within the context of their meeting…" [«…Το να λαμβάνει κανείς υπόψη του τη λειτουργία και την δομή των κανονιστικών μηχανισμών της ιστορίας τέχνης του κέντρου είναι απολύτως απαραίτητο, γιατί αυτό που επείγει για έναν μελετητή της τέχνης της περιφέρειας δεν είναι η απόδειξη της ίσης αξίας της τελευταίας και της συμπερίληψής της ή όχι στον 'κανόνα', αλλά η κατανόηση του πώς λειτουργεί η περιφέρεια, ως μία δομή διακριτή α®ό την αντίστοιχη του κέντρου, στις ειδικές συνθήκες της συνάντησής τους….»] (Vlachou 2016, 15).

perceived by the Greek bourgeoisie of the time. Archaeology, art and design, all in the service of the nation. In this context, the notion of "periphery" in art didn't have a deprecatory meaning; on the contrary, it emphasised its "otherness", and thus its "uniqueness", in European art.

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QUITE GOOD, FOR AN AMATEUR! VIVIAN MAIER, AMATEURISM AND THE PHOTOGRAPHIC PERIPHERY

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ABSTRACT

What does it mean to be an amateur? This article will implement Fonteini Vlachou's "Why Spatial? Time and the Periphery" (2016) in order to break down the seemingly fixed binary between amateur and professional in order to develop a conception of multiple peripheries forming distinct hierarchies within the amateur grouping. I will examine the ambivalent and multifarious conceptualisations of amateurism to show the uneasy relationship between amateur, art world and art history. Using Vivian Maier (1926-2009) as a case study, this article will dissect her posthumous presentation and global phenomenon in order to understand how her body of work has been organised around the binary of the amateur and professional.

KEYWORDS   VIVIAN MAIER, AMATEURISM, AMATEUR, PERIPHERY, PHOTOGRAPHY.

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What does it mean to be an amateur? The terms 'amateur' and 'professional' exist both in opposition and as a trajectory of accomplishment: the position of the amateur is contrasted with that of the professional, yet implicitly it is the starting point in a process of professional development. The purpose of this article is to disengage the amateur from its coupling to the "insider" art world and, instead, offer an alternative discussion of the amateur using the concept of the "periphery" put forth in "Why Spatial? Time and the Periphery" (2016) by Foteini Vlachou. I will bring out these themes by examining the photographs and phenomenon of Vivian Maier (1926-2009).

Vivian Maier spent most of her working life between 1952 and 2000 as a full-time live-in domestic nanny looking after both children and the elderly in America. Between 1952 and 1955, Maier lived in New York before moving to Chicago in 1956, where she stayed until her death in 2009. It was not until 2007, when the contents of her repossessed storage lockers were sold at auction, that her photographs were discovered and she began to be known as an iconic and prolific street photographer.

The Maloof Collection, comprising around 90% of Maier's known work, is both printed and exhibited at the Howard Greenberg gallery (vivianmaier.com, n.d.). The collection holds over 150,000 negatives (which have since all been printed) and roughly 3,000 vintage prints (this includes multiples of the same negative), audiotapes, and 150 6mm and 8 mm home movies (Maloof 2014, 3). The figure of 90% is an approximation, as there have only been three main parties to come forward with Maier photographs: John Maloof, Ron Slattery and Jeffrey Goldstein.[1] Slattery has several thousand vintage prints, whilst Goldstein has sold his collection of roughly 18,000 negatives (Godeau 2017, 146).

The aims of this paper are threefold: firstly, to destabilise the extant notion of the amateur as a delayed and unartistic response to the professional. Secondly, in untangling the amateur from its binary, this article will use Vlachou's concept of the periphery to suggest that the amateur inhabits multiple peripheries whereby camera users are taking pictures separate from the institutional framework of the centre. The ongoing debate concerning Maier's status in the canonical history of photography is redolent of the systemic confusion as to the role and function of the amateur in relation to the professional photographer. Therefore, thirdly, in examining the work of a so — called amateur, it is imperative to avoid doing so from the dominant paradigm.

In much of the literature on Maier, the same questions have been asked: 'Why did Maier take photographs? Why did she not print or exhibit her photographs? How did she lose them in the end? (Cahan and Williams 2012, 15)' Questions such as these highlight several key points about the unequal power structures that are at play within the photographic art world. Firstly, there is consistently a desire for a complete (biographical) narrative, an authorial voice that can showcase the value and meaning of a piece. Secondly, the questions are simultaneously asking why Maier, as a woman, took so many pictures. Here, amateurism is acutely gendered female. Thirdly, in asking how she lost her photographs, the question alludes to the physical [in]completeness of a collection or body of work.

Maier's posthumous discovery is not conducive to the canonical narrative of artistic intentionality. The ongoing search for a solution to Maier's life serves to obfuscate the issues that have arisen from the institutional and economic dynamics surrounding her afterlife. These include the copyright lawsuit, changes in access to material, and questions of authorship arising from posthumous printing, editing and curation of an oeuvre. Underlying these issues are driving factors such as the financial pressures of developing all known negatives and, conversely, the burden of driving up demand for prints in order to continue processing her photographs, the need to cater to the public idea of photography and what a photographer is, changes in the way women are perceived as photographers, and so on. These issues are all intertwined, making it harder still to understand Maier's place.

[1] The Jeffrey Goldstein collection was sold in 2014 to a Canadian art dealer who has since sold them onto investors in Switzerland (see http://www.howardgreenberg.com/news-and-vi ews/hundreds-of-new-vivia n-maier-prints-donated-to-university-of-chicago).

In dealing with these pressures, that have coalesced from a need to navigate the processes and infrastructures of the institutional and commercial art worlds, there are numerous ellipses and contradictory narratives emerging. In plugging these holes, biographical details and tenuous psychological assumptions pertaining to Maier's character have been made to answer questions about the stylistic and compositional framework of her photography. The jigsaw puzzle of Maier's biography has been pieced together gradually, and this has happened in public view with the periodic release of images and nuggets of information — with earlier claims often superseded by new ones. In the continual online present, facts and images are posted and re-posted, imparting a non-linear sense of time. Old information resurfaces in confusing ways, creating difficulties for new scholarship and official literature.

At the present time, Maier is often understood as a 'street photographer'. In fact, the way in which Maier is talked about has evolved over time; her status as photographer has been labelled in varying and contradictory terms. I would like to argue that by proclaiming Maier as a photographer first and foremost, thereby reclaiming her into a patriarchal canon, her posthumous life and archive takes form and context from the artistic centre.

Self-Portrait, 1953 [Fig.1] shows Vivian Maier holding her twin-lens Rolleiflex camera whilst looking directly into a shop window. Alongside Maier is a small girl, whose body is slightly angled towards Maier, as if she is consciously posing for her, acknowledging this as a staged photograph. In many such images, Maier uses photography both to record her daily life as a caregiver, and to document her travels alone wondering the streets of Chicago, New York, and abroad. Here, we see Maier in the act of taking the photograph at the same time as balancing her duties of care towards the child: not the figure of a working photographer, but that of a working woman taking photographs. Is this the pose of a photographer? What does a photographer look like?

During the course of Maier's posthumous career, she has been presented as a commercial photographer,

street photographer, documentary photographer, and any combination thereof. The first monograph attests to her status as "an important addition to the canon of street photography" (Maloof 2011, 10), and articles such as Laura Lippman's essay

'The Matron Stays in the Picture' in the foreword to *Vivian Maier: A Photographer Found,* have sought to clarify Maier's position, making clear distinctions between her and outsider artists:

> It's important to note, however, that Maier was not an outsider artist like [Henry] Darger, but an artist who was canny and intentional in her work. I write this sentence, then walk around it, consider it. Why is it important to make such distinctions? …I flinched when I found one essay that described her photographs as a hobby. (Lippman 2014, 8).

For Lippman, Maier's image-taking is far from that of a hobbyist or amateur and, in fact, she seems to find this idea a little condescending. This is indicative of how the work of the amateur is set in opposition to that of the 'serious photographer;' to be categorised as an amateur is almost an insult. Lippman's repudiation of Maier as both outsider artist and hobbyist highlight the perversity of the art world's inextricable maintenance of and succour in the notion of the amateur which, as shall be argued, props up the wider infrastructure of the insider domain.

However, Ann Marks in her biography, *Vivian Maier Developed: The Real Story of the Photographer Nanny* deviates from this somewhat:

> An unfulfilled career as a photographer, likely the result of her mental illness rather than lack of desire, would explain later denial of interest[…]The emergence of vernacular photography, and work made by those on the periphery, largely emerged later. (Marks 2017, 163).

Marks has argued that Maier did approach people, sell her images and put together small portfolios, but she had an obsessive-compulsive hoarding disorder that curtailed her professional prospects. The above passage also locates Maier on the "periphery" (Marks 2017, 163). For her, Maier was a photographer, one that was pursuing a career that was tragically cut sort due to extent anxieties from her childhood that manifested when moving from family to family: 'The photographer lived in constant fear of dispossession lacking space and control in employers' homes' (Marks 2017, 145). A recent article in *Apollo* magazine written by Emilie Bickerton, 'The Double Lives of Outsider Artists' (2018) makes clear links between outsider art and Maier, yet, she ultimately describes her as a "street photographer" (Bikerton 2018):

> […] Maier's case forces essential questions about artistic creativity, and how we might engage with work that was made without any intention of anyone else ever seeing it. We find the richest exploration of these same issues in the work of outsider artists, or the creators of what was originally known in the 1940s as art brut or 'raw art'. There is no suggestion Maier was mentally ill. She willingly chose obscurity whereas outsider artists generally have no choice about the matter, often interned in an asylum, a hospital, or a prison. (Bikerton 2018).

The notion of the outsider continuously re-appears throughout the discourse on Maier, whether as a way to legitimise her as an 'insider', or rather as a point from which to understand how we re-think the space between 'inside' and 'outside.' Maier's story is complex — or is it? The characteristics of her photography and life are exceptions in the canonical narrative of a Photographer, yet when, analysed from the point of view of the amateur context of mid-century America, Maier, I will argue, becomes one of many. Although, Marks has argued Maier did suffer from an OCD anxiety disorder, information such as this has not filtered through mainstream media. The internet is teeming with different, seemingly obscure and contradictory stories (assumptions) about Maier. For Marks, tapping into the language of the periphery and the outsider means that Maier can be canonized without questioning her posthumous fame or whether she desired be a professional photographer. These examples are redolent of the labelling confusion that Maier's legacy has been subject to.

The interchangeability of terms like outsider, outsider art, hobbyist and amateur within the literature on Vivian Maier is

symptomatic of a wider confusion. Much of the literature on the amateur in art history has continued to promulgate outsider art as a catch-all for marginalised phenomena that exist outside the dominant historiography. Within the discourse of outsider art, photography as a creative medium has generally been ignored until very recently. Indeed, photography (made by self-taught outsiders who can be categorised in the framework put forth by Debuffet and Cardinal[2]) has been categorised as 'Outsider Photography', a separate category from Outsider Art. Outsider Photography — peripheralised within a discourse for the marginalised — is a recent phenomenon, garnering media attention since 2013. However, social media and digital technologies have enabled almost anyone to take photographs and store them in a personalised archive. If, as it seems, photography is now all-pervasive, what does it mean to be an outsider, amateur photographer or, indeed a professional? If more and more people are involved with the photographic, how is it that people are marginalised from access to professionalism?

Discourses on the amateur as a separate category to the domain of the outsider artist reinforce the opposition of the insider and outsider realms. Indeed, this tendency to polarise the role of the amateur, according to Henry C. Finney in his essay, "Art Production and Artists' careers: the transition from 'outside' to 'inside" oversimplifies the process of 'admission' to the inside by reducing it to an outcome of a power struggle between the powerful and the powerless" (Finney 1997, 82). Finney avoids the opposition by positing multiple, potentially overlapping, art worlds with their own distinct hierarchies (Finney 1997, 73). Ranging from lowest (outsider) to highest (insider) status, Finney includes naive, hobbyists, serious amateurs, aspiring pre-professionals and, in the highest category, professionals (Finney 1997, 77).

For Robert Stebbins, amateurism is a form of leisure, which in this sense can be a *serious* pursuit overlapping with professionalism. (Stebbins 1992, 3). Stephen Knott, however, rebuffs Stebbins's sociological analysis stating that it is based upon "capitalist notions of productivity and profit". For him, amateurism is a utopian vision of work.[3]

Recent postmodernist discourses in photographic history have revealed the differentiation within the so-called amateur practice itself.[4] Julian Stallabrass in *Gargantua*, has described amateur photographers as "the despised middle" (Stallabrass 1996, 31). Taking influence from Pierre Bourdieu's *Photography: A Middle Brow Art*, Stallabrass postulates that there is a "structural relationship between mass photography and fine-art photography, each defining itself against the other" (Stallabrass 1996, 14). For Stallabrass, conformity is the marker of amateur practice. Amateur photography, in contrast both to art photography and to snapshooting, is characterised by a po-faced seriousness, a preoccupation with rules, and consumerism, a photographic impulse that is no more than a 'dot-to-dot' game — following the rules to get a perfectly formed image, but one that can be reproduced. In a similar vein, Bourdieu discusses two forms of amateur: the occasional and the fanatical camera user. He does not distinguish between the two in terms of "value", believing "amateurs remain faithful to a basic normativeness, and remain attached to the certainty of a body of rules that they could and should know or that are known to others" (Bourdieu 1996, 190) Both scholars express a contempt for amateur photography as a consumerist excrescence of the commercial mass production of camera equipment. This is somewhat reminiscent of how the discourse on the periphery has, for Vlachou, revolved around "value" (Vlachou 2019, 196).

Since the beginning of photographic practice, there has been an ambivalence regarding the meaning and value of amateurism (West 2000, 43), an ambivalence that was keenly debated in American amateur photography magazines and journals. These acted as a forum, allowing for cross pollination of ideas on the nature of photography; questions were posed and answered by those participating in photographic practice. Radically different conceptions of photography emerged: a scientific advancement, art form or shifting conglomeration of the two. Journals facilitated this multiplicity, creating a magazine culture

[2] For more information on the inclusion of the amateur in the discourse of outsider art see: Cherbo, Joni Maya, Vera, L. Zolberg. 1997. *Outsider Art: Contesting Boundaries in Contemporary Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[3] Knott 2013, "The Amateur State," Reconsidering Amateur Photography, either/and.org, 2013

[4] Scholars such as Ben Burbridge and Annebella Pollen have written extensively on the topics of amateur and mass photography (Burbridge, Ben and Annebella Pollen 2018. *Photography Reframed*. London: I.B.Tauris.)

that provided a space for photography to be debated and contested.

There is an amateur self-awareness that can be keenly appreciated when examining the letters pages in photography magazines. In 1886, H. W. Vogel, writing from Berlin, wrote about a letter sent to him decrying the "ever increasing amateur element" active photographically, the repercussions of this outbreak, how injurious it could be to the "professional" photographer and lastly what could be done to repress it[5]. Some unfeasible schemes discussed are "mercantile tax, the raising of the price of chemicals, apparatus etc". Finally, the anonymous letter writer proclaims photography is emerging as a "general art study for everyone". Here, the professional photographer is the practical commercial producer of images who relies upon photography to make a living. The democratic use of the term "everyone" is misleading and belies the splintering of the photographic practice, its users and subjects. Indeed, Vogel asserts:

The extraordinary facility in working has resulted in photography being regarded no longer as a special art, and in consequence a shoal of amateurs has emerged whose performances are quite equal to those of many professionals.[6] [...] The artist photographer who is superior to the amateur, does not fear the competition. He knows exactly the limits which confine most amateurs; he knows how they are deficient in skill and taste in posing a model, in choosing the right light.[7]

The mechanical reproducibility of the photograph, as hinted at by Vogel, is the crux of the amateur/professional binary. Proponents of art photography have vied for the practice to be inculcated into the centre of artistic praxis, namely the history of painting and drawing in the West. For Nancy Martha West, before Kodak, the amateur photographer was "generally male, relatively well educated, often extremely wealthy, and eager to justify his leisure time through a conspicuous demonstration of seriousness of purpose" (West 2000, 41). In other words, for these early amateurs, photography bestowed upon them a

moral and edifying sense of being. Leisure for them pertained to serious pursuits that heightened their intellectual capacity and knowledge of the world around them. From the letter Vogel received it is obvious that with the arrival of simpler and easier camera equipment came greater competition; the boundaries between the amateur and the commercial photographer were becoming blurred. Consequently, to avoid a loss of status, Martha West argues that those who sought photography as a recreational activity were branded "'dabblers' by 'true' amateurs who wished to preserve amateurs' original associations with devotion and industry" (West 2000, 42).

The letter "And Our Amateurs" provides an insight into the competing voices in the photographic periphery, and into the varying terminology used to describe the amateur position from the point of view of a so-called amateur. A letter, written by Shelby Tapps in the January 1950 issue of *Modern Photography*, is thus:

I know that a magazine composed of items by amateurs would be a ghastly nightmare, but more for the amateurs in Modern would please me greatly. Pictures by big name photographers are fine to look at, but I am an amateur and I love my hobby with a passion even though I know little about it technically. Can't you devote more space to those who are really amateurs? (Tapps 1949 "And Our Amateurs," Modern Photography, December 1949, 108-109)

This language — "amateurs," "hobby," "passion" — describes a personal and individualistic involvement with photography. Tapps positions himself in opposition to amateurs; the inflection and use of "really" implicitly separates the serious amateur from the general user. Arguably, terms such as dabbler, hobbyist and snapshooter were created by those who opposed the commercialisation of photography, to set themselves apart from these new breeds of photographer, so that their craft maintained a level of respect to be legitimised by the strictures of the art world. The varying modes of the amateur (serious, snapshooter, familial

[5] Vogel 1886, "The Profession and the Amateur," *The American Journal of Photography*, August 1886, 14-15

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

etc) are, therefore, a consequence of an aspiration, by some, for photography to be absorbed into the centre and acknowledged as a serious and creative medium. In the same vein, by distinguishing photography as more than a preparatory tool used by artists, professionalism was sought and in doing so, the user of photography was thus identified and categorised. Therefore, the construction of amateur spaces, users and practices is by no means simply a response to a centre, but rather multiple competing centres and conversely peripheries. Consequently, the invented terminology and ranking thereof is based upon a biased structure that continues the flawed misunderstanding that the value of photography is determined solely by members of the centre.

Coming back to Vivian Maier, the second half of the article will consider her photography, unshackled from the narration of the centre. Although Geoff Dyer in his introduction to *Vivian Maier: Street Photographer* acknowledges a "discovery-lag" (Dyer 2011, 19) whereby "Maier's work has not played its part in shaping how we see the world in the way that [Diane] Arbus has (even if she seems occasionally to have chanced on Arbusian subjects before Arbus)" (Dyer 2011, 19), he does so in a way that binds her to the extant historiography. As Vlachou has noted by quoting Carlo Ginsberg and Enrico Catelnuovo, the periphery is negatively viewed as a space that can only ever function as a delayed response to artistic development. Yet, for her, it is alternatively a "structure distinct from the centre, with its own characteristics and priorities…a pure artistic centre is an oxymoron," the centre must yield power in order to function as artistic centre (Vlachou 2017, 11/15). Using this as the basis for an examination of Maier's photography, the next section of the article will explore the relationship between photographic centre and periphery and periphery to periphery by comparing amateur photographic magazines with images taken by Maier.

Colin Westerbeck in his introductory essay for the fourth photobook, *Vivian Maier: The Color Work*, traces her colour images, shifting them into themes:

Maier was a self-invented polymath of a photographer who sometimes seems to have been working in one genre and at

other times in a contrary one. That said, in both its essence and its complexity, her career -her essential genre — was street photography…Because her visibility when face-to-face with subjects limited the sort of photograph she could make, she developed the ability to make revealing pictures even, or perhaps especially, when her subjects were turned away from her. If she had a favorite subject she liked to sneak up from behind, it was hairdos. (Westerbeck 2018, 21-23).

Yet, by talking about Maier's "eye" (Westerbeck 2018, 23) for subject matter, we are drawn to different conclusions about these images than first might be considered. Thus far, Maier has been signaled as the next in a long line of street photographers. However, I would like to draw parallels with amateur photography magazines, in order to draw attention to the positive tropes of education, copying, instruction and the mass-appeal of the photographic medium whilst also highlighting dominant transferal of knowledge between the centre and peripheral amateur spheres.

'Let's face it…' — an article in the April 1952 issue of *Modern Photography* — puts forth a "Turnabout picture-taking concept: try backs instead of fronts."[8] Photographs by Saul Leiter as well as those taken by *amateurs* are used as examples as well as the photographer himself offering tips on using this subject matter effectively such as "one great advantage of backs is that they are seldom camera shy. And you'll probably get away with taking the pictures without asking permission…Try a new approach to street photography some sunny afternoon." What was deemed a central theme in Maier's body of work, is here being advocated to amateurs. Therefore, I want to re-examine Maier's vintage and modern prints to establish positive concepts of self-improvement and experimentation.[9] As Vlachou points out, scholars can be unduly negative towards non-traditional conventions of art forms such as copying. Indeed, for her, "artistic freedom" is a "canonical value" and as such its definition derives from the centre. For Vlachou, the art of the periphery is often only recognised if it takes on canonical values such as originality

[8] No author name given, 1952, "Let's Face it," *Modern Photography*, April 1952.

[9] Bannos briefly discusses the difference between the negatives Maier chose to print and those made by Maloof and The Howard Greenberg Gallery in chapter six of her book *Vivian Maier: A Photographer's Life and Afterlife*. See pages 161-165.

and innovation. Moreover, peripherally recognised work is given attention only through the institutional structures of the centre validating work that at once both conforms to previously championed work and that ever so slightly deviates from its precursor. Indeed, Vlachou acknowledges work that deviates from a historiographical compositional norm as being viewed as poor or unoriginal — therefore unfocused and varied in style. As such, Vlachou reinforces "eclecticism" as a choice made by the maker- a kind of value judgment made. In her conception of the periphery, the maker actively experiments and chooses the subject matter "to bypass the static and undirectional notion of influence" that strips the object of "agency" (Vlachou 2016, 11-17).

It is important to note that the public-facing subset of Maier's work encompasses only three aspects of her photography: street scenes (street -portraits), self-portraits and her travels abroad. The prints that Maier herself either developed or had developed on her behalf include mistakes, imperfections, over/under exposure and repetition. This is a large body of her work that she reproduced several times, using varied styles and developing techniques that intimate her self-education. What the public sees is a version of Maier that has been curated based on the collectors' notions of taste and worth. Maier's lifetime prints are only accessible by visiting the Howard Greenberg Gallery or the newly catalogued Maier archive at the University of Chicago Special Collections. While Ron Slattery owns several thousand vintage prints, these are not readily available to the public and have only been discussed by Pamela Bannos in her biography, *Vivian Maier A Photographer's Life and Afterlife* (2017). Bannos points out that, "although Vivian Maier's oeuvre also included landscapes, portraiture, colour work, journalistic reportage, and ethnographic studies, Maloof's choices brought to mind modernist photographers like Lisette Model and Diane Arbus. As a result, Maloof's selection evoked comparisons that Vivian Maier may not have made herself" (Bannos 2017, 161).

Maier developed several different prints of her *Liberty* [Fig.2] image experimenting to find the right angle and style. At first glance, this is an atypical image of Maier's — a

'tourist' hotspot that has been photographed numerous times by sightseers. However, its difference is neutralized when viewed as part of her body of lifetime prints [Fig. 3, Fig. 4]. She would often use mundane subject matter, experimenting with development techniques, paper quality, exposure times, composition and angle. These lifetime prints are surreal, abstract and devoid of the *street*. The only platform on which

FIG. 2. Vivian Maier, *Untitled*, date unknown, Lifetime print, Howard Greenberg Gallery, ©Estate of Vivian Maier, Courtesy Maloof Collection.

FIG. 3. Vivian Maier, *Untitled*, date unknown, Lifetime Print, Howard Greenberg Gallery, ©Estate of Vivian Maier, Courtesy Maloof Collection.
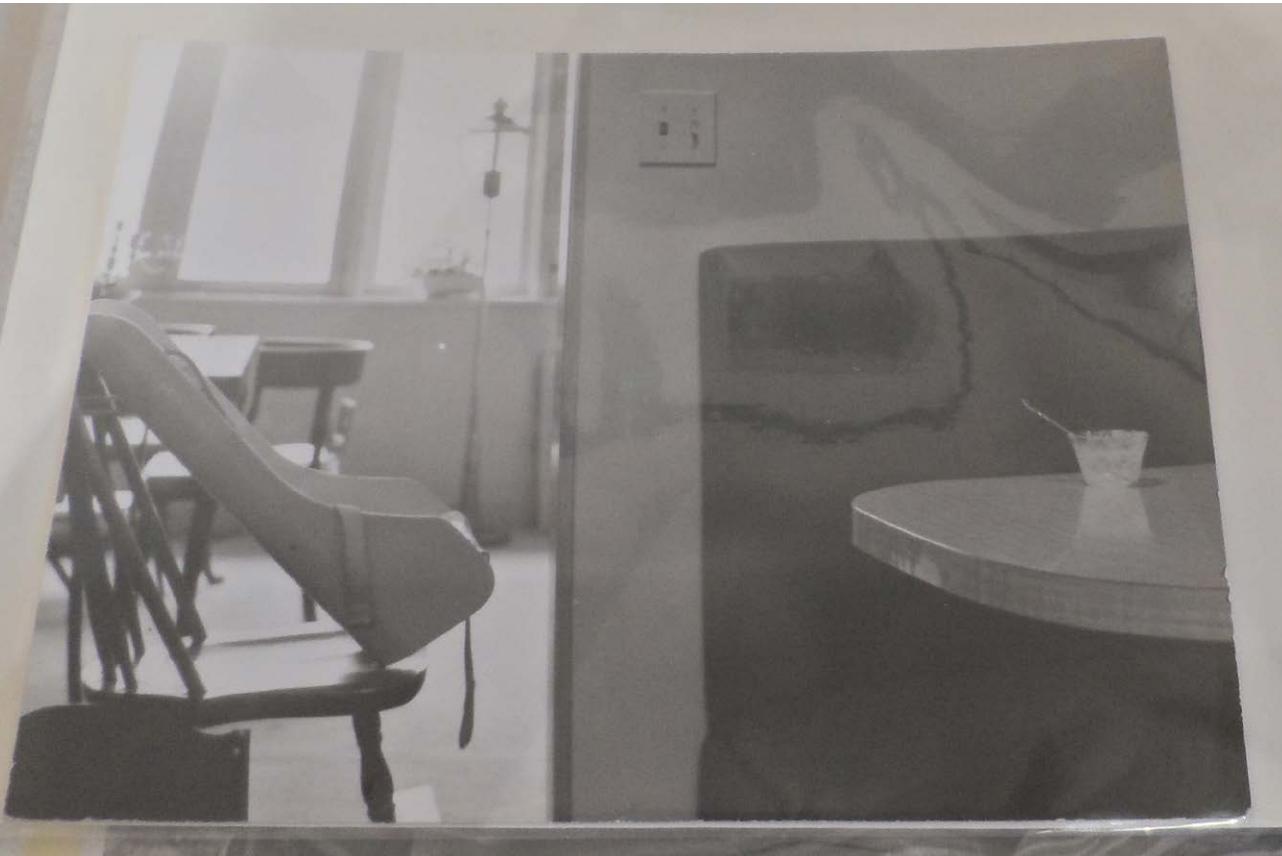
FIG. 4. Vivian Maier, *Untitled*, date unknown, Lifetime Print, Howard Greenberg Gallery, ©Estate of Vivian Maier, Courtesy Maloof Collection.

I can currently find the Liberty image is Pinterest; it is 'pinned' from a link to John Maloof's blog from 2009.[10] Since then, many of the vintage prints that surfaced on the web have sunk to its dark recesses, only to be found when directly searched for. The statue is a well-recognized 'tourist' hotspot that has been photographed numerous times by sightseers. There have been 1,904,776 (as of December 2019) images uploaded to Instagram with the #Statue of Liberty. 95 million images are uploaded onto Instagram each day.[11] Over 40 billion images have been shared onto the platform since its conception in 2010.[12] The ubiquity of images makes it one of the biggest repositories of vernacular photography ever amassed. For the collectors and distributors of Maier's photography, this ubiquity, I would argue, has prevented them from displaying the more *mundane* images.

Yet, throughout the history of amateur photography magazines, the publication of photography has acted as a collegial source for image exchange and educational advice. In the "Last Word" section of the 1952 May issue of *Modern Photography*, there is a letter entitled "Liberty Angle" which was sent into the magazine by Judith Silverstein, a "teen age reader of MODERN with only one year of camera experience".[13] The letter included a picture of what Silverstein considered to be one of her "most successful shots thus far".[14] It is a near-identical image to Maier's, taken from the same angle — from the base looking upwards [Fig. 5].

[10] See http://vivianmaier.blogspot.com/search?updated-max=2009-07-26T23:20:00-05:00&max-results=50&reverse-paginate=true

[11] See https://www.omnicoreagency.com/instagram-statistics/ for more information, accessed December 2019

[12] Ibid.

[13] Silverstein 1952, "Liberty Angle," *Modern Photography*, May 1952, 10

[14] Ibid.

It is important to contrast the printing techniques of Maier herself with those developed for the Howard Greenberg Gallery in order to understand how Maier's images are stylistically and compositionally re-orientated to map onto the canonical history of American street photography. Maloof notes in his film *Finding Vivian Maier* (2014) that the photographs Maier developed were "not printed well" and that the "images are not good" (Maloof and Siskel 2014).

Maier, who made prints of various negatives often cropped the image to create an inner dialogue that frames a central subject.[15] *Armenian Woman Fighting on East 86th*

Street, September 1956, New York [Fig. 6][16] is a photograph printed by Maier in her lifetime. The image shows a policeman tightly holding the wrists and hands of a smaller older woman. Whilst the male figure looks directly down at the woman, she, on the other hand, has her eyes closed, creating the sense of a deliberate refusal. The tight frame that closes in around the torsos of the two figures creates a compositional juxtaposition — one that allows the viewer to focus upon the tight space between their heads, magnifying the woman's defiant stance. If it were not for the title (taken from written notes left by Maier), the geographical location would not be evident from the image; there are no markers of context, place or time.

The modern print [Fig.7], by contrast, has been developed from the negative. Here, the scene has been expanded to include the streets around the focal point of the man and woman. In doing so, the eye is no longer drawn to that v-shaped space. Instead our attention is drawn past the fight, up the vertical axis on the right of the image, where a man is walking along the street. The viewer thus notices the mechanics of the street scene; the central narrative is dissipated, given way to an imprint of nostalgia. The street is physically present in the image, not only reinforcing Maier's ideological position as street photographer, but also her geographical location in the centre of New York's photographic movement. While, for reasons of continuity, it makes practical sense to develop directly from the negative, it does eradicate any sense of Maier's preferences and choices. A question of authorship is clearly at play. In 'Notes from the Periphery: History and Methods,' Vlachou argues that the canon has historically been the main "obstacle befalling the study of art in the periphery" with the concepts of "originality" and "authorship" propping up the central infrastructure of the canonical discourse (Vlachou 2019, 196). Howard Greenberg has acknowledged that he agreed to represent the Maloof collection only when he had found that Maier had developed a portion of her

FIG. 5. Judith Silverstein, photograph of the Statue of Liberty included in her letter "Liberty Angle" in the "Last Word" section of *Modern Photography*, May 1952.

[15] I am building upon an idea put forth by Bannos in her book *Vivian Maier: A Photographer's Life and Afterlife* where she discusses Maier's penchant for cropping the images she chose to print. She does so to illustrate the amplification of Maier as a street photographer and commercial success story for John Maloof. See Chapter Six.

[16] This image is the vintage print, originally found in the Jeffrey Goldstein collection (I have taken the image from the website: http://jillnicholls.net/2013/06/25/vivian-maier-lost-art-of-an-urban-photographer/. Jill Nicholls with Pamela Bannos highlights the significance difference between these two images and Maier's desire to crop) which has been subsequently sold and is now in the hands of an unknown collector. The title was not given by the Jeffrey Goldstein collection. I have given it the title that was attributed to the negative found in notes made by Maier in the Maloof collection. There are multiple examples of the differences between vintage and modern print (made by the Maloof collection), although access and copyright are contributing factors as to why much of this is not written about more extensively.

FIG. 6. Vivian Maier, *Armenian Woman Fighting on East 86th Street, September 1956, New York*, Lifetime Print, Previously owned by the Howard Goldstein collection and whereabouts now unknown, ©Estate of Vivian Maier.

FIG. 7. Vivian Maier, *Armenian woman fighting on East 86th Street, September 1956. New York*, NY VM1956W03428-11-MC, Gelatin Silver Print, Howard Greenberg Gallery, ©Estate of Vivian Maier, Courtesy Maloof Collection.

negatives (although it is repeatedly claimed Maier was not an intuitive developer). Clearly, the concept of originality is not only the basis of the materiality of an image but is also inscribed in the very process of exchange and value within the photographic art market.[17] She has been co-opted as a saleable photographer whose aesthetic clearly sits within the art market. I do not want to compare the vintage print with the modern version in order to prioritise the concept of a Maier original, but rather, to highlight the problematic processes of the artistic centre, many of which the Maloof collection have navigated and subsumed within their ongoing practice of commercialisation.

[17] Vlachou is referencing Michel Melot in her article, 'Notes from the Periphery: History and Methods' (2019), 197.

Here, the "original" is neither her vintage print nor the modern print, but rather her "eye" as encompassed in the negative. In prioritising the image taken, rather than the creative process that occurred after pressing the shutter, the Maloof collection has foreclosed the possibility that perhaps, for instance, Maier's photographic interest lay in experimentation with composition and framing during the development process. The collectors of Maier's photographs are seemingly manoeuvring through the regulations of the centre, in order to avoid her deportation to the peripheral sphere.

Vivian Maier may seem to exist in both centre and periphery, but crucially she exists in multiple peripheries, in both dominant and marginalised positions. Recent photographic discoveries have been described by the press and collectors as 'the next Vivian Maier'. In 2017, Milagros Caturla (1920-2008), newly discovered in Spain, was the first to be given this title.[18] A year later, a new wave of articles appeared about the 'Russian Vivian Maier', Masha Ivashintsova (1942-2000), whose photographs were discovered in an attic.[19, 20] Caturla's negatives were bought by an American tourist, Tom Sponheim at a market in Barcelona[21]. Caturla, a council worker from Barcelona, was an active photographer in her local community, entering photographic competitions and joining the *Photographic Association of Catalonia* in 1957.[22]

Public media attention has described Caturla in the image of Maier. Although her posthumous recognition has been expressed as slower and further removed in terms of geographic location, space and time than Maier, she is for many an echo of the latter. In deeming Caturla a Spanish response to Maier, the media not only controls, but sustains the notion of delay between centre and periphery. By ignoring the difference and social context which separates the two photographers, a narrative emerges positioning Caturla as a witness to the explosion in image-making in mid-century America. A transnational connection is created without consideration of the local, regional and national photographic scene.

* * *

In conclusion, by reconsidering Maier through the lens of Vlachou's concept of the periphery, a relationship between the centre and periphery can be discerned - one that was based upon exchange. Education is organized from the centre, rippling out across the marginalized groups that form a periphery. Yet, the presence of different peripheries is suggestive of competing motivations that cannot be equal or wholly naïve. Education or knowledge is exchanged by the centre to maintain its centrality.

I do not want to suggest that amateur magazines are independent and subsist without influence. Rather, my intention has been to identify a mode of transference between the two structures: art world [centre] and amateur [peripheries]. In fact, the structures and peripheries fluctuate in response to one another. Without people taking up photography, there would be no consumers for camera equipment and, therefore, no readership. Magazines work as agents between the two structures, centre and periphery, acting as both repository and space for amateur exchange whilst proliferating the idea that the space between the two forms can be navigated with, of course, the correct characteristics.

This article has highlighted amateurism as multifarious, with hierarchies existing separately from the centre. Yet these were developed historically, by the those whose investment in the photographic art world necessitated amateurism to fracture and splinter. As a consequence, the centre can divide and conquer. Ultimately, however, this reveals the fragility of the centre — it is counter-balanced by the periphery. Commercial processes have driven the invention of Maier as a respected photographer and her eager adoption into the canon, yet canonization of Maier into an unequal system reinforces and reproduces the authority of those structures and continues the marginalization of photographers who do not fall into format of the centre.

[18] Savchenko 2017, "Spanish Vivian Maier: Photographs by a Talented Author Discovered at a Flea Market in Barcelona," Bird in Flight, April 19 2017

[19] Chapple 2018, "'Russian Vivian Maier' Discovered After 30,000 Photos Found in Attic," PetaPixel, 8 March 2018

[20] Treviño 2018, "Found: 30,000 Photographs by the 'Russian Vivian Maier,'" Smithsonian.com, 20 March 2018

[21] Tom Sponheim (@LasFotosPerdidasDeBarcelona) 2017 "About Milagros Caturla," Facebook, 24 March 2017

[22] Fernandez Diez 2017, "Milagros Caturla: Barcelona 24/03/2017," EmilBeatPhotography.com, 24 March 2017

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PRIME OBJECTS AND REPLICATIONS: GEORGE KUBLER'S NEW MEXICO*

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ABSTRACT

Several parallels exist between the art historian George Kubler's best-known work, *The Shape of Time* (1962), and his research as a Yale student in New Mexico. At the time of Kubler's study, New Mexico was a relatively recent state in the process of establishing a regional identity. In New Mexico, Kubler studied mostly religious structures built in the seventeenth century, in which 'scarce resources were used to great effect' and which were to be invested in the present, creating a transversal connection in time. Those were the objects that eventually would be used as the origin of further developed or reinvented traditions. The idea of a collapsible time, where all eras could coexist, seems to be informed by these examples.

KEYWORDS   HISTORIOGRAPHY, ARCHITECTURE, GEORGE KUBLER, PRIME OBJECTS, REPLICATIONS, TIME

Expanding Empires

If, on the other hand, we should ever have the misfortune really to encounter the future, like the Indians of sixteenth-century America, as the colonial recipients of a gradual transformation, we would have to abandon all our own positions to accept all those of the conqueror.

George Kubler, rough draft of *The Shape of Time*[1]

George Kubler — an art and architecture historian who spent most of his career at Yale University, initially as a student and eventually as the Robert Lehman Professor of History of Art — looked at the artifacts of empires as his case studies. He wrote about artifacts from Mesoamerican empires, the Spanish and Portuguese colonial empires, and the expanding North American 'empire'.

Kubler distilled a synthesis of all this scope in the insightful book *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (1962), which, for a brief period, propelled him as a cult author among artists in the 1960s[2]. In *The Shape of Time*, Kubler proposed a radical philosophy of art history not as the orthodox classification in sequences of styles, epochs and places, but as a complex network of connections. This thesis owed many of its arguments to Henri Focillon, his professor at Yale, but also to the multiple insights Kubler had while studying artifacts of different geographies and time periods:

> **The Shape of Time was written at the end of a twenty-year period when I had been teaching and writing about Spanish architecture (1957), Latin American Art (1959), and pre-Columbian archeology (1962). The three books had occupied me since before 1950, and it seemed timely after the completion of the pre-Columbian manuscript in 1959 to bring together some of the theoretical points that had emerged from these overviews of the art of the New World, both in isolation and in relation to Spain and Portugal.[3]**

In this brief essay, I propose to look at the initial moment of Kubler's career as a scholar, when he was visiting the mission
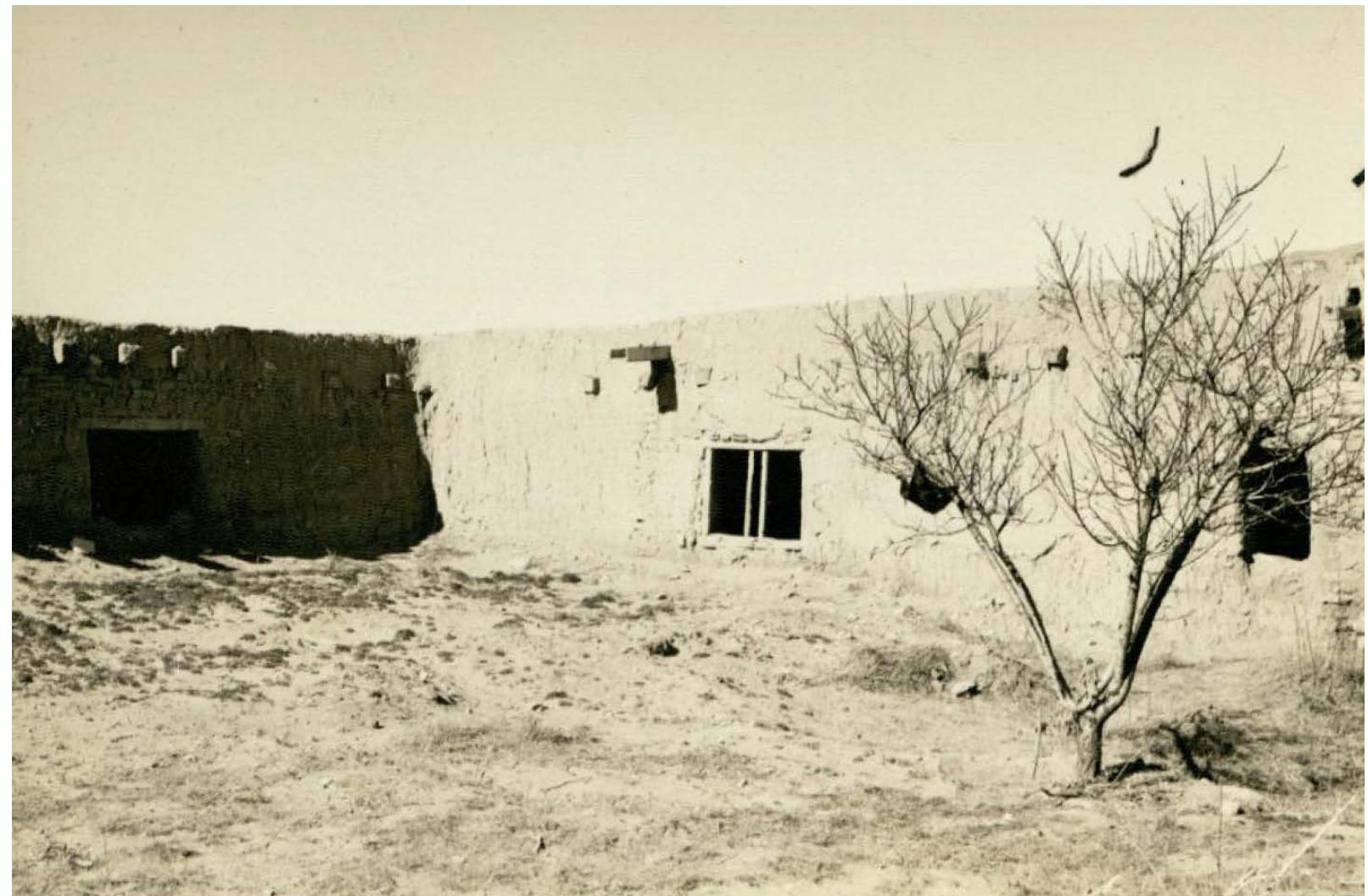
churches of New Mexico, conducting research for his Master of Arts dissertation, written under Focillon, titled *A Critical Study of the Religious Architecture of New Mexico* (1936) — later edited and published as the book *The Religious Architecture of New Mexico: In the Colonial Period and Since the American Occupation* (1940). In this moment of Kubler's career, one can see the foundation for the ideas he would later develop in *The Shape of Time,* namely the concepts of 'prime object' and the sequencing of 'replications'.

It is relevant to note the context of New Mexico when Kubler was doing his research work, since it was a relatively new state in the process of establishing a regional identity

FIG. 1. San Esteban del Rey Mission, Acoma. George Kubler Photograph Collection, Archive 527, Folder 1, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

[1] Kubler, George. "Rough Draft: The Shape of Time." New Haven, 1960. Accession 1997-M-022, Box 4, Folder The Shape of Time Rough Draft. George Alexander Kubler Papers (MS 843). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library. p. 131

[2] Kubler listed many of the artists who wrote about *The Shape of Time* in Kubler, George. "The Shape of Time Reconsidered." *Perspecta* 19 (1982): 112—21. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1567055. Pamela Lee wrote about this and expanded on Robert Smithson's references to Kubler's book in Lee, Pamela M. "'Ultramoderne': Or, How George Kubler Stole the Time in Sixties Art." *Grey Room*, no. 2 (2001): 46-77. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1262542.

[3] Kubler, George. "History: Or Anthropology: Of Art?" *Critical Inquiry* 1, no. 4 (1975): 757-67. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1342847. p. 759.

legitimised by the rising interest in folk art and vernacular architecture. The state of New Mexico was admitted to the Union in 1912, and both art and architecture production were crucial for the development of its image. When Kubler was travelling through the state, photographing seventeenth-century missions, in the 1930s, these same buildings were already an important part of the construction of the image of New Mexico. Kubler studied past artifacts, mostly religious structures built in the seventeenth century, in which 'scarce resources were used to great effect' and which were to be invested in the present, creating a transversal connection in time. Those were the objects that eventually would be used as the origin of 'invented' traditions, and became one of the underlying themes Kubler explored in *The Shape of Time.*

Replicas from New Haven to New Mexico

The bulk of Kubler's papers are kept at the Sterling Library at Yale University in New Haven. The library was in the process of construction when Kubler was a student, and its design was heavily criticised at the time by the students who edited the journal *Harkness Hoot,*[4] in a two-page spread in which they compared the modernist aesthetics of the concrete structure under construction with the finalised neo-Gothic façade. Later, Kubler joined the magazine becoming its art director from 1932 to 1934, and publishing several short stories.

Kubler later recalled the architectural discussion surrounding Sterling Library, and many of Yale's campus buildings following a neo-Gothic style, as part of the reason he embarked on a search for other modernisms in New Mexico:

Yale College in the 1930s was a hotbed of architectural debate. During the years of the Great Depression, the academic Gothic quadrangles for the entire university were built on designs from the office of James Gamble Rogers. This was an effective way to make new jobs using local labor for intricate tracery and sculptured woodwork with the munificent Harkness gifts. To undergraduates reading about the International Style in Europe, however, the immediate

future seemed clear, bare simple shapes stripped down to functional nudity were the way, and for me, the way led to New Mexico.[5]

The few of Kubler's papers that are not stored at Yale are the manuscripts about photos he took in New Mexico, which are kept at the Zimmerman Library at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. The building, designed by John Gaw Meem between 1936 and 1938, is also a revival, but in the Pueblo Style, evoking the thickness of the adobe walls and the nave hall spaces of the mission churches. Meem, who in the 1920s worked for the Committee for the Preservation and Restoration of New Mexico Mission Churches (CPRNMC), participated in the restoration of many buildings in the state, including San Esteban del Rey at Acoma Pueblo, which was barely completed when Kubler travelled through the region. The restoration of San Esteban lasted from 1924 to 1930, and the church became one of the most emblematic buildings of New Mexico. The Committee strived to restore the building with the utmost attention to detail, discouraging the use of modern materials, at least in the visible parts of the building, and insisting on the use of earth-based plastering.[6]

The mission, not least because of its position atop the mesa and its relationship with the surrounding pueblo, has a striking presence. The surrounding landscape, comprised of the Enchanted Mesa and the Acoma mesa, is described in Willa Cather's novel *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927) as an abstracted place: "looking down upon the top of the farther mesa, from the high lands on which they halted, he saw a flat white outline on the grey surface — a white square made up of squares. That, his guide said, was the pueblo of Acoma."[7] Cather's novel became successful and was widely read in the United States just when the churches of New Mexico were being restored and classified as the symbolic origin of the state, or, to put it in Kubler's terms, they were being inscribed as the 'prime objects' of a series that would only reemerge centuries later.

[4] Harlan Hale, Willian. "Art vs. Yale University." *Harkness Hoot* 1/2 (1930): 1-32.

[5] Kubler, George. "Foreword." In Spirit and Vision: Images of Ranchos de Taos Church, xi. Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1987. p. xi.

[6] More information about the diatribe between the members of the commission and the inhabitants of Acoma Pueblo over the restoration of the church is available in Wilson, Chris. The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997. pp. 239-241.

[7] Cather, Willa. *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. New York: Vintage Books, 1990. p. 96.

For Kubler, "prime objects and replications denote principal inventions, and the entire system of replicas, reproductions, transfers, and derivations, floating in the wake of an important work of art. The replica-mass resembles certain habits of popular speech, as when a phrase spoken upon the stage or in a film, and repeated in millions of utterances, becomes part of the language and finally a dated cliché".[8]

After becoming part of the Union in 1912, the representations of the state of New Mexico became more closely connected with the style that would become known as Pueblo Revival. At the Panama-California Exposition of 1915, in San Diego, in celebration of pan-American culture and the inauguration of the Panama Canal, the pavilion representing the state was an example of Pueblo Revival. The architectural firm of Isaac Rapp (Rapp, Rapp and Hendrickson), which had designed the pavilion, "…patterned the plan after the Acoma mission, with the church form on the left, a one-story cloister with recessed entryway in the middle, and a two-story open gallery to the right. Onto this they grafted a facade balcony and towers with tiny horns, from the San Felipe Pueblo mission".[9] This building became the model for the design of the New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe, completed in 1918, which became a replica of replicas, an object that would be an iteration in a sequence of replications, such as those Kubler defined in *The Shape of Time*.

In the early 1930s, while drawing, measuring and photographing 'prime objects', such as the Spanish mission churches built in the seventeenth century, Kubler witnessed the emergence of an array of replicas taking on different functions, such as museums, theatres and hotels, throughout New Mexico.[10] The idea of a collapsible time where all eras could coexist seems to be informed by this phenomenon.

Light, Space and Replicas

Kubler's thesis — *A critical study of the religious architecture of New Mexico* (1936) — is divided into two parts. The first, titled 'General description and analysis of the elements of style', systematises the features of an array of churches and missions according to a series of characteristics such as

FIG. 2. San Esteban del Rey Mission, Acoma. George Kubler Photograph Collection, Archive 527, Folder 1, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.
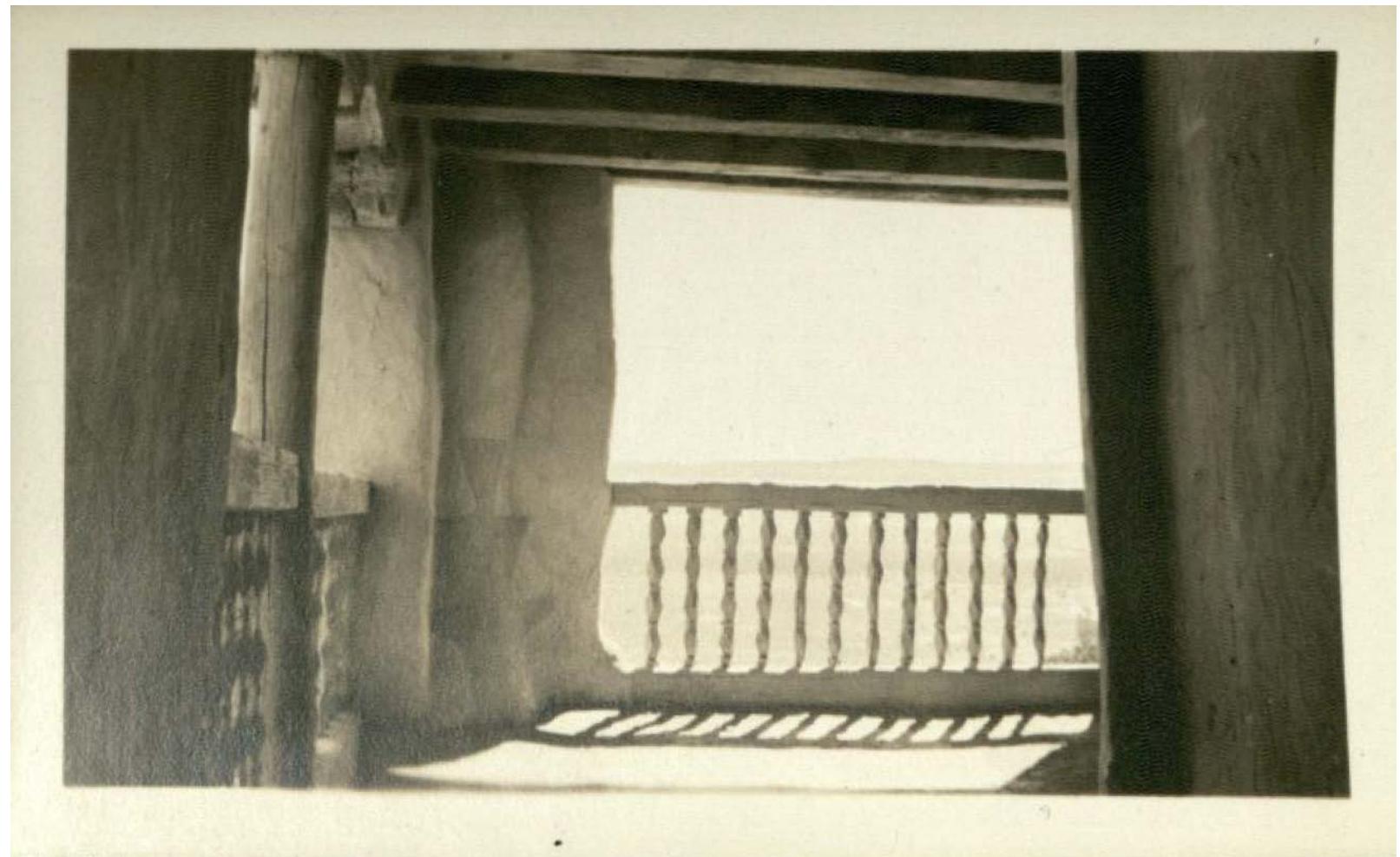
location, materials, fenestration, and volumes. Kubler observed each church's specificities, but made an effort to create a generalisation based on common elements, which would help to classify formal systems and to find archetypes and patterns of replication. In the second part of the thesis, titled 'Chronology of the Monuments', Kubler proposes a chronological sequence according to documents and dendrochronology, the tree-ring dating method. It is this task of dating that provides an insight, since some of those buildings were transformed between the mid-seventeenth and the early twentieth centuries, and they became an amalgam of time periods. Moreover, it was this composite that was replicated in Pueblo Revival architecture.

Kubler is known for his poetic descriptions of architectural spaces,[11] and for an ability to describe simple essential forms and the way in

[8] Kubler, George. The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962. p. 39.

[9] Wilson *The Myth of Santa Fe, 129.*

[10] Wilson *The Myth of Santa Fe,* 138-140

[11] About Kubler's use of metaphor see Wolf, Reva. "The Shape of Time: Of Stars and Rainbows." *Art Journal* 68, Winter 2009: 62-70. And Wolf, Reva. "Stars, Rainbows, and Living Dialects: George Kubler's Vision of History as Metaphor." *CesContexto Debates,* no. 3 (2013): 29-40. http://www.ces.uc.pt/publicacoes/cescontexto/cescontexto.php?col=debates&id=8350.

which the light is trapped by means of heavy walls.[12] As early as his student dissertation, he was already attuned to this mode, which he may have derived from Focillon's elegant descriptions of Romanesque spaces in Europe. Focillon — in *The Life of Forms in Art* (1942), translated by Kubler from the French *Vie des Formes* (1934) — would describe these architectural qualities as mostly evident in Romanesque buildings: "A building, moreover, is rarely a single mass. It is rather the combination of secondary masses and principal masses, and in the art of the Middle Ages this treatment of space attains and extraordinary degree of power, variety, and even virtuosity."[13]

Kubler similarly described many New Mexico mission buildings as amalgams of shapes: "The numerous heavy wall-buttresses which surround the flanks of many churches undoubtedly answer certain structural needs. On the other hand, the number and size of the buttresses surpass the necessary. The rounded conical buttresses at Ranchos de Taos and Isleta, for instance, soften and amplify the silhouette of the buildings. The function of buttressing could be satisfied with less material in more commonplace shapes: actually the buttressing appears to satisfy certain formal, rather than structural needs."[14]

The use of unusual comparisons and metaphors is also present in Kubler's dissertation. To describe some of the Salinas Pueblo ruins, Kubler observes: "The material is the soil itself piled high and thick, pierced by few windows with a roof line that recalls the deck levels of the ships at sea upon the desert."[15]

Kubler wrote a section dedicated to fenestration and his attention to dramatic lighting in the churches, informed by Focillon's descriptions, evokes something that has the quality of transcending the nature of the material. The main element discussed in the section is the clerestory window. In many buildings, these windows had been changed, either enlarged or closed, but they remained a mark of sophisticated design within the interior space of the churches. For Kubler, they were rooted in European architecture: "Overhead illumination, when properly controlled, may be regarded as a means for the concentration of attention on a given spot. Its architectural possibilities were commonly exploited during the seventeenth century in Europe."[16]

Other elements were often associated not with regional traits, but with a series of architectural objects changing through time. At some point, Kubler compares the doorways found in these churches with modernist architectural motifs: "Certain external doorways leading into the priest's house are of irregular shape (Laguna, Acoma), strongly recalling the modern practice of fitting an adjacent window and door into one frame, without support or wall between. In New Mexico and Arizona such doorways are found in prehistoric cliff ruins (Canyon de Chelly) as well as in modern Zuni villages."[17]

Kubler also analyses the use of sophisticated design techniques such as perspective *trompe l'oeil*.[18] Kubler ponders the nature of visual perception of convergent walls and the fact that the illusion only works insofar as the eye cannot perceive the change in perspective: "The mind therefore believes that certain actually convergent lines are not only parallel, but actually longer than reality. Thus the objective reality of convergent lines may be converted into the subjective illusion of parallel and longer lines. The illusion will prevail however only when the actual convergence is not perceived as such."[19]

Kubler admits that the use of the tapered space as a design choice is arbitrary, but he considers that it might be an instance of degeneration throughout time: "It is possible that optical refinements were part of the seventeenth-century formula for the building of churches, and that later generations of repairs were carried out in ignorance of such refinements…"[20]

In all aspects, the initial aim of the thesis was to prove the primacy of the European influence in New Mexico, to identify 'baroque' invariants, design patterns that were transmitted through treatises. Many sentences that convey this idea were crossed out in the manuscript, such as: "The beginning of religious architecture in New Mexico corresponds with that of European

[12] This is especially manifest in Kubler, George. Portuguese Plain Architecture: Between Spices and Diamonds, 1521-1706. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1972. According to Thomas Reese: "The book contains some of his most poetic and evocative descriptions of works of art." in Reese, Thomas. "Editor's Introduction." In Studies in Ancient American and European Art: The Collected Essays of George Kubler, xvii-xxxvi. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985. p. xxix.

[13] Focillon, Henri. *The Life of Forms in Art*. 2nd ed. New York: George Wittenborn, 1948. p. 20

[14] Kubler, George. "A Critical Study of the Religious Architecture of New Mexico," Edited for Publication.," 1936. MSS 527 BC, Box 1, Folder 4. George Kubler Papers, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico. p 61.

[15] Kubler, "A critical study", xiii.

[16] Kubler "A critical study", 35.

[17] Kubler "A critical study", 39.

[18] "The lateral walls of the nave are generally not parallel to one another. Thus at Cuaray and at Gyusiwa, the width of the nave is greater near the entrance than at the altar of the nave. The walls converge, as they approach the sanctuary about four inches. This amount seems slight when distributed over a nave 60 feet long, as at Cuaray, or 80 feet at Gyusiwa, but it is an irregularity sufficient to deceive the eye under certain circumstances." In Kubler "A critical study", 50.

[19] Kubler "A critical study", 50.

[20] Kubler "A critical study", 52-53.

baroque architecture, when a new attitude towards form was crystallising everywhere, proceeding from Rome."[21] To some extent, this argument is still evident in the book. However, it is tainted by questions that eventually lead to an argument about the exchange of ideas and craftsmanship as something more complex than direct influence.

Time and the Menacing Future

The striking quality of New Mexican folk art is its intense and austere religious expression, achieved with the minimum technical and formal means, within a rich and intricate system of traditional meanings.[22]

Many iterations of the idea of creating 'great spaces with limited means' appear throughout Kubler's writings, mostly referring to the character of the buildings that he saw in the Spanish missions in New Mexico. For Kubler, and following his experience in New Mexico, this quality was revealed to be especially evident in the traces left by the Spanish colonisation of the American continent: "Equipping a continent with cities, churches, houses, furnishings and tools required a gigantic outlay of energy at minimum standards of performance. The native labor learned a behavior at the outset which has been perpetuated ever since by small human numbers, by the unfavorable dispersal of habitable zones, by the immense distances between towns, and by the imperfect communications among colonies and the Peninsula."[23] The core of Kubler's reflection about the relativity of time in historical narrative can be found here, in the rough draft of *The Shape of Time*, where he suggests a coalescence of all timeframes: "An instructive fantasy is to imagine the exploration of a historical manifold of dimensions in which all times could coexist."[24] At the beginning

FIG. 3. Trampas. George Kubler Photograph Collection, Archive 527, Folder 6, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

FIG. 4. Santo Domingo. George Kubler Photograph Collection, Archive 527, Folder 6, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

[21] Kubler "A critical study", 77-78.

[22] Kubler, George. "Santos. The Religious Folk Art of New Mexico." *Hispanic American Historical Review* 1 November 1943; 23 (4): 756—758. doi: https://doi.org/10.1215/00182168-23.4.756. p. 758.

[23] Kubler *Rough Draft,* 115.
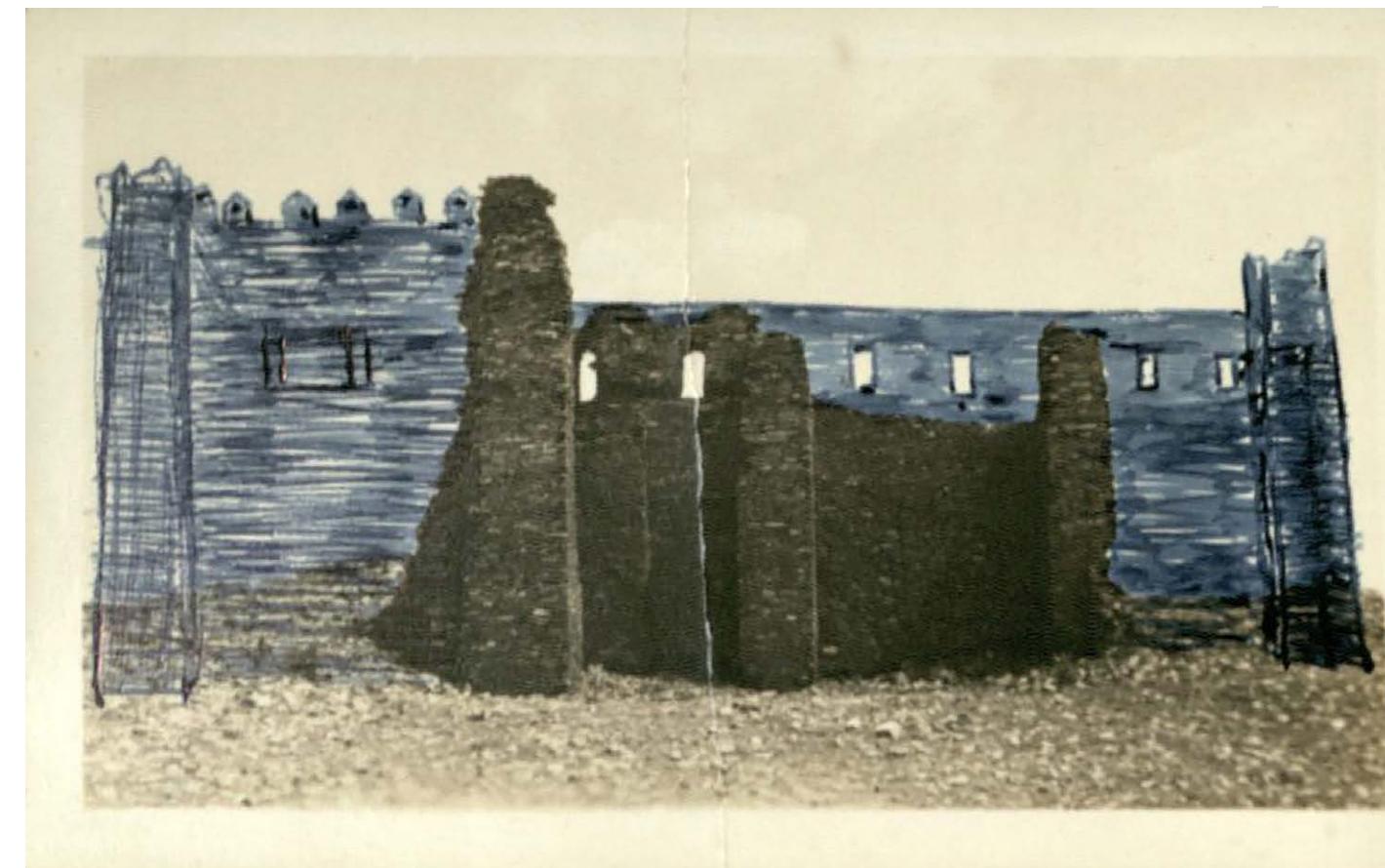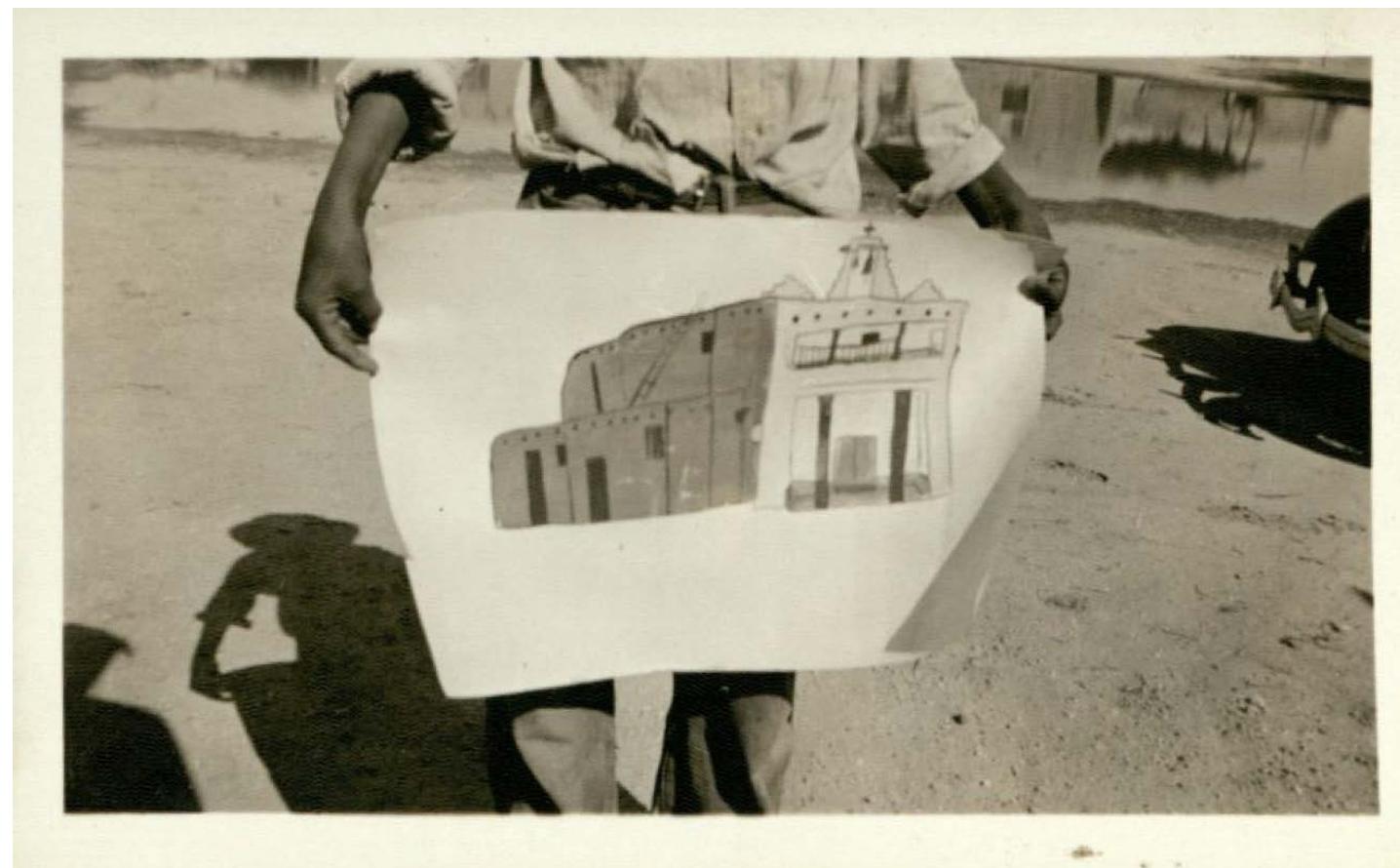
of his reflection, it seems that this would be ideal, since in that imaginary plane there would exist perfect conditions to exchange knowledge. However, to exchange information with the future seemed to carry a menace, that of erasure and "...like the Indians of sixteenth-century America, as the colonial recipients of a gradual transformation, we would have to abandon all our own positions to accept all those of the conqueror".[25] His imagined hypothesis of the merging of all times soon became the premise of destruction of cultures.

Even in the manuscript of Kubler's dissertation, it is not surprising to find the connections between Spanish missions and defense structures, where he wrote the following paragraph, which was subsequently excised: "Originally the churches of New Mexico may have served a military purpose as well as a religious one, necessary during a rude period of conquest." He also wrote that, in the nineteenth century, the traces of ruins at Abó were thought to be the remains of a fortification: "Major Carleton, writing in 1853, mentioned that the upper edge of the walls at Abo was "cut into battlements."[26]

Major James Henry Carleton had led a squadron of cavalry on a reconnaissance mission of the territory of the Salinas Pueblo missions in 1855. He published a diary in which he describes the ruins thoroughly, measures them and, like Kubler, identifies the type of detail that was common to the church in Abó, even though it was in ruins, stating that the roof "...of the church was evidently supported by beams and covered with earth, as in the churches still occupied as places of worship throughout New Mexico", and relates its form with the fusion of building cultures in two brief sentences: "The form of the church alone, proves it to have been designed by Christians. Perhaps the workmen employed in its construction were Indians."[27]

Although Carleton was not timid about using biased language,[28] he also described those great structures as bearing witness to social collapse, something that is still visible today:

FIG. 5. Cochiti, drawing in possession of José Montoya. George Kubler Photograph Collection, Archive 527, Folder 2, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

FIG. 6. Abó. George Kubler Photograph Collection, Archive 527, Folder 1, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

[24] Kubler *Rough Draft,* 131.

[25] Kubler *Rough Draft,* 131.

[26] Kubler, George. "A Critical Study", 27.

[27] Carleton, James Henry. "Diary of an Excursion to the Ruins of Abo, Quarra and Gran Quivira, in New Mexico." In *Ninth Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution*, 296-316. Washington: Beverley Tucker, Senate Printer, 1855. p. 301.

RUINS OF PECOS.
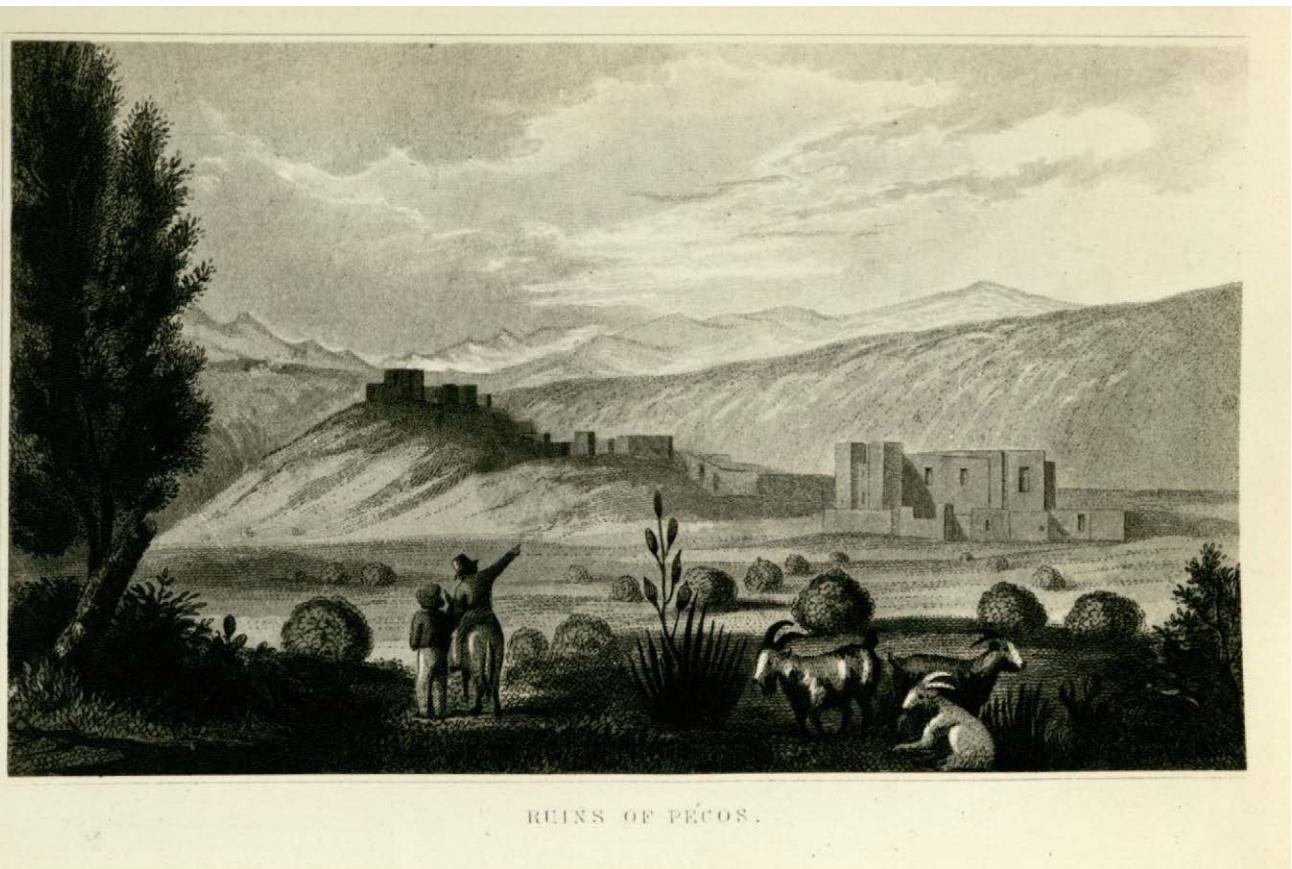
The tall ruins, standing there in solitude, had an aspect of sadness and gloom. They did not seem to be the remains of an edifice dedicated to peaceful, religious purposes, a place for prayer, but rather as a monument of crime, and ruthlessness, and violence.[29]

Perhaps inspired by Major Carleton's writings, Kubler attempts to reconstruct a scene of this violent history, sketching battlement parapets over a photograph of the Abó ruins.

Abó, Quarai and Gran Quivira were missions built in the early seventeenth century, which were inhabited for several decades and remained abandoned and unknown for two centuries. When rediscovered, they became objects of fascination and awe, the embodiment of the *sublime* ruin in America. Some of the postcards and images that Kubler collected for his research depict these ruins as pastoral views, with shepherds and gentlemen on their tours, travelling on plains of the American Southwest.

In the published and heavily edited version of his dissertation, Kubler mentions the reemergence of the New Mexico 'style' since the 1920s, with the foundation of CPRNMC and the building of several churches under the supervision of Father Agnellus Lammert. Kubler describes these buildings as "...usually modelled after San Felipe, Acoma, or Laguna". [30]

He concludes the book with a note that is evocative of the idea that he would explore further in *The Shape of Time:*

The seventeenth century adaptation of adobe to baroque form, and vice versa, constituted a stylistic end term. The later history of architecture of colonial New Mexico is comparable to that of the tissue which, divorced from its host, goes on proliferating, always identical with itself, until the favorable conditions in which it thrives are suppressed.[31]

In *The Shape of Time,* Kubler proposed a classification of artifacts — a history of things — based on seriation of formal sequences: "...within each sequence, prime objects and vast masses of replicas are to be discovered. Prime objects described as inventions possessing prime traits, remotely comparable to mutant genes, are capable of generating change. They result in copies and variants, which also generate change through minute variants." Kubler's proposal of a theory of time, which could encompass different rates of duration, allowed the historian to look at the long tapestry of historical connections "through invention and propagation *in time*". [31]

By studying historical objects that were being recovered from the past as the origins of new traditions, Kubler encountered case studies that allowed a retrospective point of view that framed series of objects that were clearly being used as motifs in modern revivals.

FIG.7. Ruins of Pecos. George Kubler Archive 527, Folder 4, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

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28 Carleton describes his task as "...an expedition to explore the country around the ruins of Gran Quivira, New Mexico, and for other objects connected with the bands of Apache Indians who often infest that portion of the territory." Carleton "Diary of an Excursion", 296.

29 Carleton "Diary of an Excursion", 301.

30 Kubler, George. The Religious Architecture of New Mexico: In the Colonial Period and Since the American Occupation. 4th ed. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1972. p. 142.

31 Kubler *The Religious Architecture of New Mexico*, 143.

32 Kubler *The Shape of Time Reconsidered*, 113.

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THE STRANGE DESTINY OF WOLS, THE 'FRENCH POLLOCK'. REFLECTIONS ON ABHUMANISM AND THE PARISIAN AVANT-GARDE PERIPHERY AFTER WORLD WAR II

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ABSTRACT

In 1946, the concept of abhumanism came to life in the French capital's creative intellectual hub, the neighbourhood of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. For the writer Jacques Audiberti, its inventor, abhumanism meant to provide a framework to analyse critically, with assumed cruelty, the insufficiencies of the Western civilisation and its founding principle since the Renaissance — humanism; to explore how the latter contributed to the terrible violence of recent European history.
On the one hand, this paper will introduce and define Audiberti's abhumanism, an understudied aspect of the Parisian avant-garde in the post-World War II period. On the other, it will suggest that abhumanism opens new ways to approach the German-born artist Alfred Otto Wolfgang Schulze. Otherwise known as Wols, his work was doubtlessly recognised — to the point that he was labelled the 'French Pollock' — but who, difficult to classify, has remained a peripheral figure in official art history. Wols was considered as the example of abhumanist artist and an "abhuman" by artist-poet Camille Bryen, the co-author of an abhumanist treatise with Audiberti, and was one of the most prominent personalities of the Saint-Germain-des-Prés neighbourhood. I will argue that both Wols' art and abhumanism testify to the vitality and pertinence of Paris as a creative artistic laboratory, against the assumption that it became a weary periphery.

KEYWORDS   ABHUMANISM, HUMANISM, WORLD WAR II, JACQUES AUDIBERTI, WOLS, CAMILLE BRYEN, PARIS

Published in 1952 by the renowned Parisian publishing house Gallimard, *L'Ouvre-boîte. Colloque abhumaniste*, co-written by the playwright/novelist Jacques Audiberti and the painter/poet Camille Bryen, was structured as an imaginary dialogue (Audiberti and Bryen, 1952). Through ironic puns and anecdotes, the authors meant to reveal the piteous state of a humanity that engendered two world wars within twenty years in the heart of civilised Europe. Shortly after, Audiberti published another volume, *L'Abhumanisme* (Audiberti, 1955). Both books invited the reader to ponder man's presumptuousness, and to analyse critically, with assumed cruelty, the insufficiencies of Western civilisation and its founding principle since the Renaissance — humanism. Audiberti and Bryen qualified their own work as "abhumanist" or "abhuman", as they did for a few others: the anarchist Bakounine (Audiberti, 1955, 155-156), the actor/director Charlie Chaplin (Audiberti, 1955, 114), the writer Victor Hugo (Audiberti, 1955, 80-94), the poet/draughtsman/playwright Antonin Artaud (Audiberti 1948, 33-34) and the German-born painter/photographer/poet Wols (Audiberti and Bryen, 1952, 119-123).

Abhumanism was born in the neighbourhood of Saint-Germain-des-Prés (6th *arrondissement* of Paris), which was home to many galleries, publishers, intellectual and/or artistic movements, from Jean-Paul Sartre's existentialism to smaller radical groups such as Lettrism and Situationism. Unlike the latter, abhumanism was not an actual group; however, like them, Audiberti's goal was to redefine the role of literature and art in society after the disillusionment and the horror of the world wars and the Holocaust. He shared with the Lettrists and Situationists, as well as the post-war Surrealists, the rejection of Sartre's exclamatory humanism-existentialism, along with the humanist pathos surrounding the dominant artistic trend of their time: lyrical abstraction.

The goal of this paper is to introduce and define Audiberti's abhumanism, an understudied aspect of the Parisian avant-garde in the post-World War II period. The examples of artist-poet Camille Bryen and Wols will help us see how the term relates to art. I will argue that abhumanism

testifies to the vitality and pertinence of Paris as a creative artistic and intellectual laboratory, against the assumption of its exhaustion as an artistic center, logically replaced by New York City. The case of Wols is particularly relevant to the Paris-New York debate, as he was dubbed the 'French Pollock'. This comparison, applicable to his last paintings, brought Wols short-lived glory, but impoverished and restricted the understanding of his art. I claim that approaching his multifaceted work through the lens of abhumanism, a peripheral avant-garde trend in what became peripheral Paris, sheds light on the topicality of his art.

Despite his relative glory in the 1950s, Wols is not one of the canonic post-war artists and has remained somehow peripheral. His fame is tied to his late abstract oil paintings, even though he is usually not associated with the post-war School of Paris's emphatic claim to restore humanist values (Bois & al., 337-340; Adamson, 17-22[1]). Nor is Wols associated with the Surrealist constellation, though he had connections with some Surrealists, and his figurative gouaches have an oneiric dimension (Slavkova 2010, 143). Wols never adhered to the concept of a French or a German school, despite being claimed by both after his death (Mathieu; Haftmann 1957, 14-15 and 135). He was lauded by Jean-Paul Sartre as an existentialist artist, though the philosopher's grandiloquent prose is often contradicted by facts and Wols's perception of his work (Slavkova 2013, 117-120). Michel Tapié considered him one of the representatives of "*art autre*" or "*Informel*", terms coined in 1952, but never as an outstanding example of them (Tapié 1952).

My reflection on the peripheral status of both abhumanism and Wols will echo Foteini Vlachou's statement that "the periphery has the potential to subvert categories that have dominated (art) historical thinking since its inception (centre, canon, nation)" (Vlachou 335). In our case, the "categories" to be subverted are the reduction of post-war Art History to the competition between Paris-New York, leading to the conclusion that Paris progressively became a weary periphery. The work of Wols, as well as Bryen, subverts

[1] In her book on the School of Paris, Nathalie Adamson mentions Wols only twice, cited in enumerations of large groups; *Art since 1900* (Bois & al.) dedicates one paragraph to Wols, much less than the pages devoted to Dubuffet and to Fautrier.

the rather conflictual categories of abstraction and figuration in post-war Paris. Further, the very idea of the necessity of a dominant school or strong "centralised" avant-garde is potentially subverted by abhumanism, whose minoritary fragmented nature attests the hectic and bold creativity of the French capital in a context of radical interrogation of values. I will start with a definition of the abhumanist creed of little-known Audiberti, to creed to eventually apply it to the art of Wols.

Abhumanism and the Parisian avant-garde after World War II

Abhumanism came out of the fruitful and often conflictual dialogue between two versatile creative personalities: Jacques Audiberti and Beniamino Joppolo. The former was born in Antibes, in the South of France, in 1899, and moved to Paris around 1925 (Fournier, 71). While working as a journalist and cinema and literature critic, and literature critic, he was also a prolific writer. Among the twenty-six plays, twenty-two novels, and fifteen books of poems (not counting his essays, articles and letters), the most famous are the play *Le Mal court* and the novel *Le Maître de Milan* (Fournier, 9-10). Audiberti was also a visual artist, though this aspect of his oeuvre is completely unexplored[2]. Beniamino Joppolo was born in Patti (Sicily) in 1906, and moved to Paris in 1954. Like Audiberti, he was a journalist, writer, and painter. He was another incredibly prolific author — approximately fifty plays and thirty-five novels, to which we should add poem books and essays — whose work remains largely unknown (Resche 2013a, 24-25). His best-known text is the play *I Carabinieri* [The Carabineers], turned into a cult movie by the French *Nouvelle Vague* director Jean-Luc Godard. *I Carabinieri*, together with two of his most renowned novels, *La giostra di Michele Civa* (1945) and *Un cane ucciso* (1949) were translated into French by Audiberti. Joppolo's visual art is better known than Audiberti's because of his association with Spatialism and with Lucio Fontana[3]. As we are going to see, both men had difficulties in adapting to the established literary and artistic milieus to which they remained peripheral.

It was in 1946 that the term "abhuman" appeared for the first time in Audiberti's article "Guéridons abhumains", reviewing Joppolo's novel *La Giostra di Michele Civa* (Audiberti 1946, 33-34)[4]. Shaken by the horrors of World War II, Joppolo made up the story of the soldier Michele Civa who, in an act of madness but also seeking redemption, massacres innocent children near a merry-go-round. The author's suggestion was that the ineffable brutality of war could only be understood and redeemed if brought to an unbearable climax, pushing humans to assume and ponder their cruelty and bestiality (Resche 2013a, 73/note 114, and 171-182). Audiberti admired Joppolo's historical relevance, and his French translation was published the following year under the title *Les Chevaux de Bois*. He reused the term "abhumanism" in the preface (Joppolo 1947, 31). In a letter probably written while he was working on the translation, Audiberti expressed his high esteem of Joppolo and traced some of the essential features of what would become his abhumanist philosophy: "I don't know whether texts like the *Giostra* will practically influence the human destiny, and whether we will be able to develop our demonstration beyond this initial outcry of distress in front of the fatal cruelty and the monotonous hoax of the civilisation" (Archives Audiberti, IMEC)[5].

Joppolo "borrowed" the term abhumanism, and elaborated his own vision of it. In the preface of the 1951 essay *L'Abumanesimo* [Abhumanism], he stated that humanism should have signified the utmost achievement of the human character. However, the exasperation of the rational, from Galileo to Descartes, had led to the atomic bomb; the scientific and rational direction taken by humanism amounted to a cruel, organised massacre against humanity (Joppolo 1951, 3-4). Joppolo invoked his fellow humans to bypass the humanist concept of man and to become "abhumans", i.e. vitalist creatures spurted out but detached from the human.

The following year, Audiberti and Bryen developed similar ideas in *L'Ouvre-boîte*. Here

too, though in a less lyrical style relying on anecdotes and jokes, the pretentious absurdity of the positivist-humanist fate in progress is castigated, whereas the unlimited brutality of human violence, often masked by grandiloquent discourses, is emphasised. For instance, Audiberti and Bryen referred ironically to the fact that it was Alfred Nobel, the owner of armament factories and inventor of dynamite in 1866, who created five annual prizes for remarkable contributions to the fields of science, literature and peace: "Those who love the unexpected are rejoicing the fact that the inventor of dynamite has founded the biggest pacifist prize" (Audiberti and Bryen, 105). Staged as an imaginary flux-of-consciousness dialogue between Audiberti and Bryen, the text abounds with this kind of wacky examples, sprinkled with passionate exclamations and improbable stories. The rhythm is hectic, the prose studded with neologisms, humorous twists, and puns:

> **B[ryen]. — Everything goes as if our life was dependent on a route that is unknown to us. There is no reason the economy of the universe should be subdued to our human investigations. [...]**
> **Man is intoxicated by anthropophagy. Beneath the white medical caps, beneath the big literary *bonnets*, under the political top hats, man continues to graze on man to digest the explanations, melodies, parodies, *hominal sexualogies*. [...]**
> **A[udiberti]. — In the Gorgonzola the eternal penicillin is waiting for Mr Flemming [sic][6]. (41-42)**

Audiberti and Bryen sought to dethrone Men but also liberate them from the weight of their outrageous pretensions for grandeur. Humans should remember that their place in the universe is infinitely small, that human beings are is a very recent element in the history of the Earth and the cosmos. So rather than rambling over the supposedly great human achievements — most of which existed already but undisturbed by the needs of the human race —, the "terrestrial bipeds" (154) should assume their raw vitalism — joy, pleasure, sex, art — without justification, without invoking any noble resolutions,

without premeditation. Humans should not be ashamed by their flesh and drives; they have to get rid of the "fish-filled night" when, fumbling in the dark, they spawn their progeny (52).

In 1955, Audiberti published a collection of essays under the title *L'Abhumanisme*, suggesting how the new term was connected to poetry, philosophy, love, science, language, politics, history and painting. The author situated abhumanism in a broader literary and philosophical tradition and related it to the historical and political context, namely the two world wars. In the first essay, entitled "The War", he qualified the recent conflicts as both the logical outcome and death-knell of humanism (Audiberti 1955, 7-28). Because it stands for the extreme refinement of diplomatic and military strategy, war is, Audiberti argued, the very embodiment of the humanist idea of rational perfectibility: "it is even the perfection of humanity" (19-20). War also shows how humankind fabricates grand discourses to justify brutality (26).

Like Joppolo a few years earlier, Audiberti stressed the necessity of plunging into the brutal reality of human nature. In the wake of Friedrich Nietzsche's radical philosophy, he suggested that the sincere assumption of the drive for violence and the inherent human cruelty is the only path to redemption, to the recovery of a vital strive too long repressed:

> **What is abhumanism?**
> **It is man finally letting go of the idea that he is the center of the universe.**
> **What is the purpose of abhumanism?**
> **To diminish the sense of our eminence, of our dominion and excellence in order to restrain in the same time the sacrilegious gravity and the poisonous stinging of the insults and pains we are suffering. (35)**

Thus, in 1955, abhumanism was a rather mature concept, developed in the above-mentioned publications. Joppolo had settled in the City of Light in 1954, and his move should have been the starting point for a solid abhumanist group in Paris. However, the

[6] Alexander Fleming accidentally discovered penicillin in 1928 for which he received a Nobel Prize in 1945.

opposite happened, and the relationship between Audiberti and Joppolo deteriorated. Their quarrel regarding the play *I Carabinieri* and its flop in Paris sealed the rupture (Resche 2013a, 422-430). Joppolo, the author, held Audiberti, the translator, responsible for the flop; the strong disagreements regarding the plot and the scenography appear clearly in their correspondence which Stéphane Resche has analysed extensively (Resche 2013a, 373-381). In 1958, the two writers put an end to their collaboration.

This conflict is maybe one of the reasons why abhumanism remained in the periphery of the Parisian intellectual life. As we said, both authors were somehow outsiders. Joppolo was at odds with the literary milieu in his native Italy and in Paris. His theatre didn't fit the norm of the period, and his personal reactions were often intransigent and violent (Resche 2013b, 174-175 and 177-179). Audiberti suffered from his isolation in a literary milieu dominated by authors he considered skilful communicators — Jean-Paul Sartre, Jean Paulhan, André Breton[7], André Malraux, Jean Cocteau (Audiberti 1948, 31-33 and Guérin 1999, 22-23). The two dominant ideological trends among the Parisian intelligentsia: existentialism, which Sartre claimed was a humanism, and Marxism, which Audiberti distrusted, offered possibilities of escape and hope. Abhumanism's sceptic call for an uncompromising lucidity facing human abjection only instilled the doubt that the suffering and the cowardice inherent to mankind could ever be healed (Audiberti 1948, 38; 190-197). This position was out of place during the *Trente Glorieuse*s, a period of reconstruction in France professing firm fate in positivism, progress and the human spirit (Fourastié).

Another reason for the peripheral status of abhumanism is the disregard scholars have shown for the concept. Jeanyves Guérin, the academic reference for Audiberti, has dismissed abhumanism continuously (Guérin 1999, 10; 24). In the *Dictionnaire Audiberti*, he affirmed that abhumanism is meaningless and the pages dedicated to it are among the worst written by Audiberti; they are mere chatting, confusion and anecdotes (Guérin 2015, 26). For Guérin, Audiberti lacked the necessary philosophical culture and simply yielded to the

essay genre that was fashionable at the time (25; 27; 28-29). Audiberti is even deprived of the paternity of the word, mistakenly attributed to Joppolo (25).

There are however some rare personalities who expressed more consideration for abhumanism. Among them is the French artist, art historian and writer Michel Giroud. Even though I disagree with Giroud's interpretation that abhumanism's goal was the creation of a pure demiurgic man (27, 44), because Audiberti himself often denied and mocked this pretension (Audiberti 1948, 44-48), I align with his comment on the pertinence of abhumanism as a philosophical statement in the wake of Nietzsche (Giroud 1967, 27). Indeed, like the German philosopher, Audiberti stated explicitly the necessity to reject grand discourses and established moral, to assume cruelty and drive for violence as the first step to liberate oneself[8]. Giroud emphasised the historic relevance of Audiberti's abhumanism: it was a critique of the reassuring but flat humanism which, in the context of a humanism crisis caused by two global wars, could only fuel more cruelty and more catastrophes, compromising any attempt at clear-sightedness (Giroud 1967, 45-46).

In 2008, in his book *Paris, laboratoire des avant-garde,* Giroud qualified Audiberti as one of the most important figures of post-World War II Paris; one of the "transformative singularities who didn't want to impose themselves as a model" (Giroud 2008, 6). The list also includes Marcel Duchamp, Hans Arp, Antonin Artaud, Camille Bryen, Raymond Hains, Henri Michaux and Jean Dubuffet. Giroud doesn't name abhumanism here but, considering the importance he conferred to it in his essay on Audiberti (Giroud 1967, 36-54), one can safely assume that it is implicitly included in the thirty rivaling trends he accounts for in post-war Paris (Giroud 2008, 6 and 8). The book also mentions, and several times, Audiberti's abhumanist acolyte Camille Bryen, a "decentralised" open-minded personality bridging the conflicting trends that coexisted in Paris: geometric and lyrical abstraction,

[7] However, Surrealism and more precisely Breton's worldview has common points with abhumanism. Even before Audiberti, Breton formulated the idea that man is not the centre of the universe in his "Prolegomena to Third Manifesto or Else". I gave a paper on this topic at the inaugural conference of ISSS (Internationl Society for the Study of Surrealism) at Bucknell University (November 2018): https://surrealisms.sched.com/event/FM79/6b-beyond-the-human (accessed Oct. 1st 2019). The research is in progress.

[8] In terms of humanism crisis, the historic continuity between Nietzsche and Audiberti is developed in the prologue of my book *Réparer l'homme. La crise de l'humanisme et l'Homme nouveau des avant-gardes autour de la Grande Guerre* (2020). Dijon : Presses du réel, 2020, p. 11-23.

Dada, Surrealism, Lettrism and sound poetry (Giroud, 45/ note 1[9]). Bryen's centrality of the Saint-Germain-des-Prés neighbourhood is confirmed by a 1951 painting by Georges Patrix, entitled *À nos glories du 6e arrondissement*, where he appears together with Sartre, Jacques Prévert, Juliette Gréco and Boris Vian as one of the "glories" of the 6th arrondissement (*Camille Bryen à revers*, 159).

Bryen: a forgotten glory of the 6th arrondissement

Despite these enthusiastic testimonies, Bryen, like Audiberti, is a peripheral figure in the canonic post-war intellectual and artistic history[10]. Camille Briand (his real name) was born in Nantes in 1907 and we know very little about his early years (*Camille Bryen à revers,* 159). He settled in Paris in 1930. His first poem book *Expériences* was published in 1932 and his first exhibit of automatic drawings took place at the Grenier in 1934. Bryen quickly became a famous figure in Montparnasse and the Latin Quarter. His extravagant look and humor were praised by his peers (*Camille Bryen à revers,* 164). Inspired by Dada and revolving around the Surrealist circles, without ever adhering to the group, Bryen was, like Audiberti and Joppolo, a prolific and versatile writer and visual artist. Among his best-known works is the Dada-spirited book *L'Aventure des Objets* (1937), in collaboration with photographer Raoul Michelet (*Camille Bryen à revers,* 46-55), and his poem-book *Hépérile* (1950) which was "shattered" in a subsequent book *Hépérile éclaté*[11] (1953) by Bryen himself with the help of the future New Realists Raymond Hains and Jacques de la Villeglé. Like Wols, Bryen was mentioned by Tapié as an "*Informel*" artist (Tapié 1952). His works were displayed in the most important post-war group shows in Paris, often together with Wols's: *L'Imaginaire* (1947, Galerie du Luxembourg), *HWPSMTB* (1948, Collette Allendy), *Véhémences confrontées* (Nina Dausset, 1951), and *Signifiants de l'informel* (1952, Studio Paul Facchetti). He regularly participated in the Salon des Réalités Nouvelles.

The publication of *L'Ouvre-boîte* in 1952 sealed the friendship between Audiberti and Bryen, which had started

before World War II in the cafés of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. In September 1941, in his first article dedicated to Audiberti, Bryen evoked the meetings on Rue du Dragon (very close to the Saint-Germain-des-Prés church) of a group of poets who were questioning the future, "astonished by the tragic foolishness of Men" (Bryen, 455). He confirmed on multiple occasions his adherence to abhumanism, even though he sometimes disagreed with Audiberti. In the typescript of an "Open letter to Audiberti concerning the existence of an abhumanist painting" (circa 1951) for instance, he expressed his dissent that abhumanism opened a supposedly "vaster reality" (Bryen, 411).

Bryen suggested a relation between abhumanism and the act of painting in one of his best-known poems "Jepeinsje" (Bryen, 189-191). The title is a neologism contracting the French verbs *penser* [to think] and *peindre* [to paint], doubling the personal pronoun *je* [I] at the end, playing on the identical pronunciation of *je* and *jeu* [game]. It implies the direct relation between brain and hand, between body and mind, the multiplicity and the ceaseless becoming/expansion of the self, a recurring abhumanist trope (Audiberti 1952, 74, 188, 244). Through the constant change of the personal pronouns, the poem affirms the multiplicity of the self:

> You ochre I cavern you troglodyte
> I abhumanise to abhumanium
> I insect we masticate I fry stones[12] (190)

"Abhumanising" is associated with "insecting", i.e. becoming, adopting the perspective of an insect, thus giving up the human stance, but also with ochre painting. This, juxtaposed with "cavern" and "troglodyte", hints to prehistorical humans and their painting materials and techniques. Bryen was fascinated with prehistory: the raw conditions of life in a society where people were tributary to their environment and possessed an abhumanist quality by default. The artist often referred to

[9] This lengthy footnote is almost one page long and mentions Bryen's collaboration with diverse artists: Picabia, Duchamp, Iliazd, Wols, Hains, Villeglé and Dufrêne...

[10] Michel Giroud has done a lot to make Bryen's work better known. His collection "L'écart absolu" with the publisher Les Presses du reel released a reprint of *L'Ouvre-boîte* in 2018. A decade earlier, Giroud edited with Emilie Guillard Bryen's collected writings (Bryen, 2007).

[11] Shatter = *éclater* in French.

[12] Original text: "Tu ocres je caverne tu troglodytes/ j'abhumanise à l'abhumanium/ j'insecte nous mastiquons je poile de pierre".

earlier stages of the development of the Earth when mankind didn't even exist. A canvas from 1956 called *Précambryen* (Fig. 1) alludes phonetically to the Precambrian (*précambrien* in French), the earliest phase of Earth's formation. The title also plays with the artist's name, replacing the "i" in *précambrien* with a "y", suggesting a "preCam[ille]Bryen" era. It recalls the the incommensurable period preceding the artist's birth and thus points to the little or no significance of him as an artist, and of mankind in general. The accumulation of non-descriptive lines and multicoloured little squares in the work itself evokes the the enigmatic abstract signs and diagrams found in prehistoric drawings.

Finally, in Bryen's poem, "abhumanise" is associated with the strange expression "to fry stones", which stems from the quite untranslatable attribute *poileur de pierre* coined by Audiberti for Bryen in 1949 (Abadie, 118-121)[13]. This too alludes to prehistory, as the neologism *poiler* is an anagram of the verb *polir* or polish, so *poileur de pierre* is implicitly linked with the polishing of stones, the first creative activity of prehistorical men, which fascinated many modern artists (Debray & al., 115-124)[14]. Phonetically, *poiler* also evokes the verb *poêler* [to cook on a stove] and the noun *poil* [hair], so a "stone cook" or someone who "puts hair on stones" or "grows hair on stones". Beyond the pun, Audiberti's phrase refers to the vanity of utilitarian action — cooking or growing hair on stones is equally nonsensical and counterproductive —, and to the unsuspected transformative qualities of matter as well as the potential multiple becoming of things — stones mutate into flesh and vice-versa.

In *Précambryen*, this uncertainty of matter is illustrated through the multicoloured mosaics, which may refer to the geological layers, to molecular structures seen under a microscope or floating in the ocean before the advent of humans, banishing the boundary between the animate and the inanimate. The spectator could also perceive a slightly anthropomorphic shape with the upper oval being a head and the circle below a torso; the black lines surrounding them could be arms and legs. At the same time, these black lines form webs alluding to spiders and chrysalides. If the matter
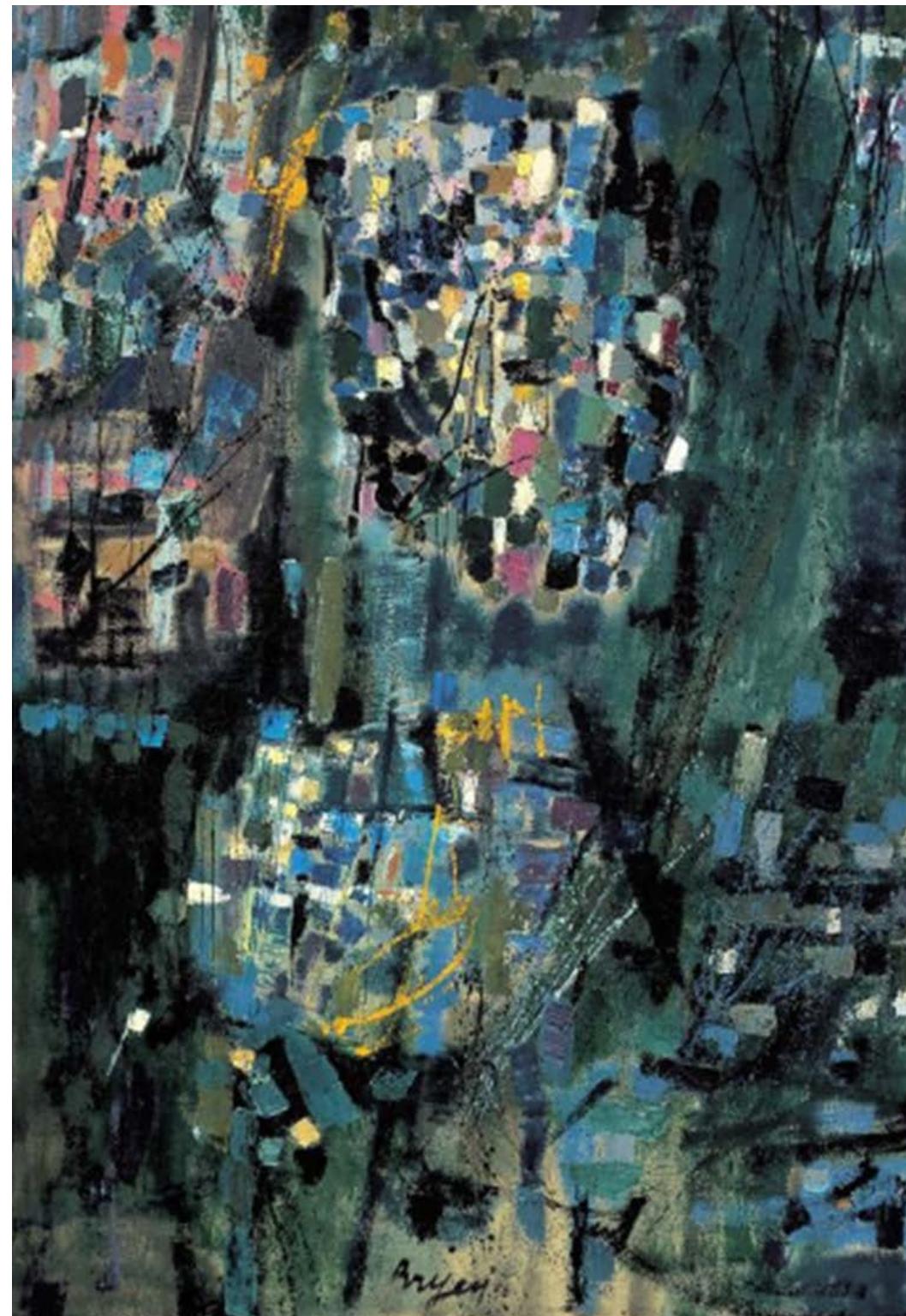
FIG. 1 Camille Bryen, *Précambryen*, 1956. Oil on canvas, 146 x 65 cm. Paris, MNAM/Centre Pompidou.

here is something in progress and uncertain, it is certain that, for Bryen, spiders, humans and molecules have a similar standing; there is no hierarchy among them as an expression of the living. Humans should be considered as just another revelation of natural history,

[13] Entitled *Camille Bryen poileur de pierre*, the text was published in 1949 as preface in Bryen's exhibition catalogue at the Galerie des Deux Iles.

[14] Abhumanism is not mentioned in the recent exhibition *Prehistoire* at the Centre Pompidou even though the world without men was one of the key topics, and a work by Bryen was displayed (Debray & al., 33-55)

destined to evanescence. Artworks are fossils, like any other fossil imprinted on the face of Earth, attesting to the vitalist drive, deprived of any purposefulness. This sets apart Bryen's work from the grandiloquent desire for aesthetic expurgation of the School of Paris aiming at a "redemptive, sublimatory reaffirmation of humankind's humanity" (Bois & al., 337).

Audiberti underlined this aspect of Bryen's work in *Bryen, poileur de pierres*. The artist has distanced himself from humanism, lacking any motivation for glory and spiritual grandeur: "Basically, Bryen is a man and as such is eaten by man. He has a wife. He is listed as a citizen. But his 'cooked' stones are indigestible. They don't fit in the human race which made Dante or the Pantheon" (Abadie, 121). On his side, Bryen assumed abhumanism was central to the understanding of his art, and art in general: "Above all, Bryen wrote in his open letter, it is important to note that one would understand nothing of the actual art if one doesn't take into consideration abhumanism" (Bryen, 411)[15]. And, according to Bryen, one of the key figures who embodied abhumanism in terms of art was his friend Wols.

Wols, the 'French Pollock': mythification versus abhumanisation

Wolfgang Schulze was born in 1913 in Berlin, but spent most of his childhood in Dresden. A brilliant student at first, he had difficulties adapting to high school, and ultimately failed his certificate. In 1931, he trained with the anthropologist and family friend Leo Frobenius, a learning experience that marked him deeply (*Wols. Retrospective*, 275). He arrived in Paris in 1932. Having bought an array of photographic equipment in 1933, Wols took up a rather successful career as a photographer (*Wols. Retrospective*, 275). He worked for different magazines and the International Exposition of 1937 in Paris. He was loosely connected to the Surrealist circles, namely the group "Octobre". World War II put an end to his ambitions. As a German citizen, he was declared the enemy, and was transported from camp to camp. He ended up at the Camp des Milles near Aix-en-Provence, where other artists were

imprisoned and where he started drawing more prolifically than before (*Wols. Retrospective*, 276). He continued writing aphorisms and poems and started a total artwork project called "Circus Wols". His alcoholism became more and more pervasive after this harsh experience. Wols was able to return to Paris in December 1945 when the Drouin gallery held his first one-man show, including semi-figurative/semi-abstract oneiric gouaches and watercolours. This show didn't receive much acclaim, but his second solo exhibition two years later, also at Drouin, displayed his abstract oils and turned him into one of the heroes of the Parisian post-war abstraction (Bois & al., 340). Wols died in 1951 of food poisoning while trying to detoxify from alcohol.

Wols is generally cited as one of the precursors of lyrical abstraction, mostly for his last paintings (1946-1951). Like Bryen, he is considered an artist difficult to classify, not really a member of the School of Paris (Adamson, 178-185, 198-199). As mentioned before, the influential theoretician, curator and art critic Michel Tapié included both Wols and Bryen in "*Informel*", an umbrella term he coined in his attempt to determine the diverse approaches to painting/drawing in post-war Paris. In his major theoretical essay *Un art autre*, he wrote that after Nietzsche and Dada, "art has become the most unhuman of adventures", which invokes Audiberti's and Bryen's abhumanist jargon (Tapié, 1952, [7]). However, the essay doesn't explore the implications of "unhuman", nor does the author dedicate a lot of space to Wols and Bryen; Jean Fautrier, Jean Dubuffet, Georges Mathieu and Henri Michaux are much more frequently cited.

Wols was, however, like Bryen, one of the glories of the 6th arrondissement. This is confirmed by the painter Georges Mathieu, who was the champion of "lyrical abstraction" against geometric abstraction. He literally sanctified Wols: two of the chapters of his book *Au-delà du tachisme* mention the death of Wols as a chronological landmark (Mathieu, 31; 73). The influential art historian Werner Haftmann stated in 1954 that Wols was a major figure in the School of Paris (Haftmann 1954, 463). But Wols's most notorious champion was doubtlessly

[15] The abhumanist axis to interpret Bryen's work was envisaged by Daniel Abadie (Abadie, 27-29) and Michel Giroud (*Bryen*, 67) but there is much to be done.

the philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. The two men knew each other and collaborated on several projects: Wols illustrated *Visages* (Sartre, 1948) and *Nourritures,* followed by extracts of *La Nausée* (Sartre, 1949). Sartre lauded Wols as a doomed visionary, a major example, together with Paul Gauguin, of his theory that self-destruction of the artist's flesh is the only road to the accomplishment of his art (Sartre 1964, 409-410; Bauer, 144-145; Slavkova 2013, 108-110).

Wols's alcoholism was held by Sartre as an essential condition for his in-the-sake-of-art self-destruction and for the quality of his art (Sartre and Sicard, 16; Sartre 1964, 408)[16]. Like the great majority of the artists living and working in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Wols spent a great amount of time in the cafés and numerous testimonies describe him drunk, physically disabled by alcohol. Simone de Beauvoir wrote that she had never seen him sober, and that he looked like an old *clochard*, despite his young age, surviving thanks to the charity of Sartre, Paulhan and other admirers (Beauvoir, 326). A story reported by several witnesses tells us how, after the opening of the exhibition *Véhémences confrontées* at Galerie Nina Dausset (the wife of Wols's physician Jean Dausset who, by abhumanist irony, received a Nobel Prize in 1980), Wols was unable to stand, so his fellow painters Riopelle and Mathieu literally carried him up the stairs (Van Damme 1986, [13]).

The dramatisation of his alcoholism ranked Wols in the long series of mythicised doomed artists. It also played an important role in his designation as the 'French Pollock' towards the end of his life and throughout the 1950s. Pollock was already a star in the United States in 1949, when the popular *Life* magazine published a lengthy article on him and his dripping technique. There are many examples of the Wols-Pollock comparison at the time. In a diagram drawn by Michel Tapié and published in the catalogue of the already mentioned show *Véhémence confrontées*, Wols and Pollock form the two extremities of the vertical axis (Tapié, 1952). This was the first time Pollock's paintings were shown in Paris, and Tapié arranged for the loans (Dossin, 83). A year later, art critic René de Solier stated bluntly, and without further clarification,

that Wols's influence on Pollock was self-evident (De Solier, 30). In the beginning of the 1960s, his colleague Pierre Restany wrote that a Wols myth responded to the Pollock myth on the other side of the Atlantic, the two artists having in common their great art and the speed with which they burnt their lives (Restany, 53). General art histories and vulgarisation books on abstract art perpetuated the comparison (Haftmann & al., 18; Vallier, 247).

These publications often emphasise, with more or less pathos, the tragic fate of these two painters-alcoholics. It was common to compare them on the basis of their poignant lives, downward slide, and untimely deaths, rather than on documented research on the possible mutual influence or technique. The most straightforward in that sense is an article by art critic Michel Ragon from the journal *Jardins des arts* in 1963. Ragon qualified Wols and Pollock as alcoholics who were doomed, *hors série*, objectors, ill-thinking destructors, tragically dead at the dawn of their career (Ragon, 50). Even Dora Vallier, whose words are devoid of pathos on alcohol and doom, fails to explain what exactly is the "transformation of the technique into the resort of the image", which, according to her, unites these two "great artists" (Vallier, 247).

Regarding the works, if we compare Wols's *Butterfly Wing* from 1946/47 (Fig. 2) with Pollock's drippings *Number 1* from 1949 (Fig. 3), we observe non-descriptive continuous lines in the continuity of the artist's gesture. But the similarities stop here. Wols's work is not entirely abstract nor is it figurative; the blue mass representing some kind of hybrid animal/plant is centred on the ascending diagonal; Pollock's intertwining lines cover the canvas edge to edge "all-over"; there is no focus, no identifiable masses or shapes. The Wols is more than five times smaller than the Pollock, implying a difference in the amplitude of the gestures and the process of making. It is widely known that Pollock worked standing, pouring paint on a canvas aground, a process engaging the body in a sort of performance that art critic Harold Rosenberg named "action painting" (Rose, 87-88). On the contrary, Wols affirmed in 1945 that the horizontal position is the most
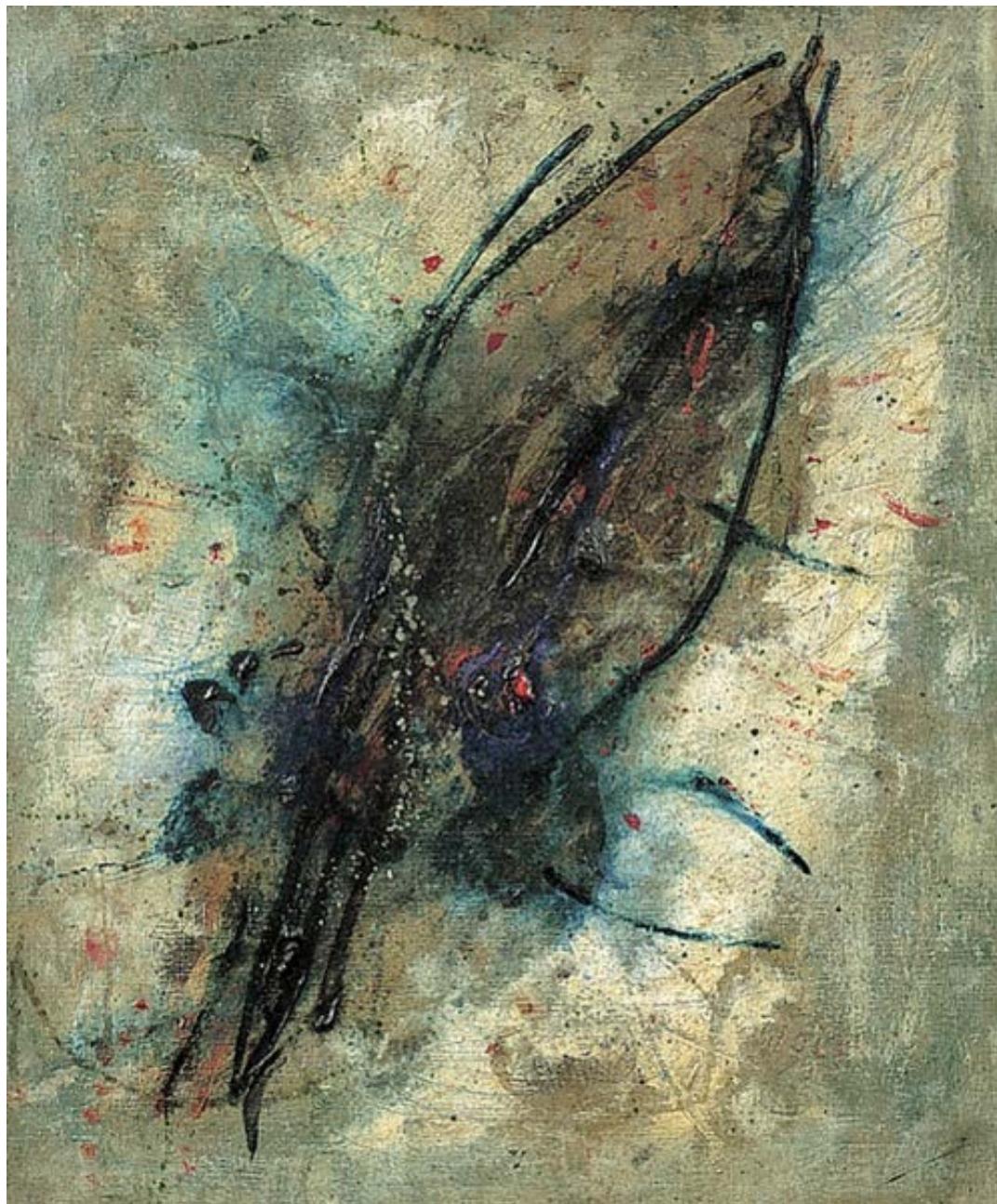
appropriate to work (Van Damme 1985, 87), and a photograph shows him playing music in his bed surrounded by artworks and books in 1950 (*Wols*, 277).

According to Michel Giroud, this was precisely the reason why Paris lost its status as the foremost artistic centre: the performance-related experiments of Action Painting in New York, incarnated by Pollock, were more revolutionary than the immobility of Parisian abstraction emblematised by Wols, Bryen and Mathieu (Giroud 2008, 65-66). Serge Guilbault has shown that the shift from Paris to New York was not only a matter of creative potential or better understanding of the

importance of experiential artistic practices, but a conscious political construction in the context of the Cold War (Guilbaut, 170-194). Catherine Dossin has since questioned the modalities of the triumph of American art (Dossin). On the other hand, Fabrice Flahutez has pointed the more or less intentional/ constructed gaps in the historiography of post-World War II art, whose exclusive focus on the clear-cut figuration/ abstraction opposition narrowed the historical perspectives (Flahutez, 23-35). As the figuration/abstraction opposition was particularly irrelevant in Paris, neither *Art Brut* nor *Informel* nor Lettrism nor post-war Surrealism nor CoBra conceived art in these terms (Flahutez, 37), a great deal of the art produced in Paris found itself in the periphery of an Art History centred on this debate.

FIG. 3. Jackson Pollock, *Number 1*, 1949. Enamel and metallic paint on canvas, 160 x 260 cm. Los Angeles, The Museum of Contemporary Art.

FIG. 2. Wols, *Butterfly wing*, 1947. Oil on canvas, 55 x 45 cm. Paris, MNAM-centre Pompidou.

If the Pollock myth survived the disgrace of abstract painting, or more generally the crisis of painting in the 1960s (Riout, 107), on the other side of the Atlantic, the Wols myth, which, according to the influential Restany, echoed Pollock's, faded away. Restany himself, previously one of Wols' champions, stopped defending abstraction to become the founder of New Realism in 1960, exploring consumerist urban culture and new media. Nonetheless, he never stopped considering Wols as a paramount artist. Shortly before his death, Restany exchanged a few letters with me where he encouraged my delving into abhumanism, which he deemed would allow a reassessment of *Informel* in its complex relation to post-war Surrealism, Situationism and Lettrism, in a context permeated by the humanism crisis[17].

Wols would have very probably never become a global star like Pollock. What is certain, however, is that the reception of his work suffered from the comparison because it maintained him in the frame of abstraction, putting aside his watercolours, gouaches, photographs and writings — book projects, poems, aphorisms. It also completely overshadowed his links to circles outside abstraction. Wols was close to the sound poet Iliazd, to whom he gave a consequent portion of his manuscripts dated from his stay at Dieulefit, today conserved at the Bibliothèque Kandinsky of the Centre Pompidou (Archives Wols). Wols and Bryen met regularly with the future New Realists Jacques Villeglé and Raymond Hains, as Villeglé himself affirmed (Giroud 2008, 124). Moreover, Wols was related to some dissident surrealist circles, to which he was introduced by his wife Gréty before the war. Gréty had been previously married to the surrealist poet Jacques Baron (who was born in Nantes, like Bryen) and who revolved around "peripheral" Surrealist circles such as those led by writers Georges Bataille and Michel Leiris around the journal *Documents*, and the group "Octobre" (Allain, 24-30; Slavkova 2010, 143). A series of Wols's portraits, for example of the poet Jacques Prévert who was a member of "Octobre" (Fig. 4), testify both to the artist's acquaintance with these circles and to the aesthetic influence of *Documents* (Bois and Krauss, 132). The strong contrasts and the cruel lighting reinforce the realistic effect of the close-up, recalling

FIG. 4. Wols, *Jacques Prévert*, 1930s. Gelatin silver print, 29 x 24 cm. Paris, MNAM/Centre Pompidou.

the images of Jacques-André Boiffard. There is work to be done to further highlight these connections.

Besides the restricting analysis in which it was maintained, illustrated by the pathetic comparison with Pollock, Wols's work was overshadowed by debates on authenticity, suspicion of fakes, and the difficult access to the archives detained by Gréty's second husband Marc Johannes. The Parisian auction of Wols's bequest in 2011, though controversial (Koldehoff)[18], allowed for some key archive pieces and works to enter important public and private collections such as MNAM/Centre

[17] Letters of Pierre Restany to the author, March 31, 2001.

[18] The archives conserved by the second husband of Wols's wife Gréty, Marc Johannes, were dispersed in June 2011 by the Parisian auction house Aponem.

Pompidou, Paris or the "Wols Archive" at the Karin und Uwe Hollweg Sammlung, Bremen. A few exhibitions initiated mainly by German institutions opened new directions for research (*Wols. Retrospective*[19], *Wols Photograph*), and suggested new approaches to the work of Wols.

None however accorded any attention to abhumanism. Bryen's definition in *L'Ouvre-boîte* of Wols as the most accomplished "abhuman" has gone completely unnoticed, not a surprising fact considering the obscure status of abhumanism itself. The text resonates with Audiberti's definition of Bryen in *Bryen poileur de pierres*:

> I had an old friend. I knew the contrivance and the rites through which he conjured his rank of human. He was, among the human beings I have known, the least recessed in the species. He possessed a lucidity which made him discover complex techniques destined to improve the rhythm of his life, and superstitions which enabled him to function rather as a vegetal machine than like a citizen. He was in the whirlwind, humanity bored him. (Audiberti and Bryen, 119)

Bryen suggests alternative ways to approach Wols's *oeuvre*, toning down the dramatic grand discourses which had contributed to label Wols the 'French Pollock'. His text emphasises his friend's non-compromising exploration of the human as flesh, as a "vegetal machine", with its inevitable dose of abjection, suffering, and more or less (un)healthy pleasures. Wols's non-recession in the species and subsequent disinterest in humans and humanism could be illustrated by the watercolour *Untitled* from 1944-1945 (Fig. 5), which shows a form resembling a heart, a female sex, a brain or a liver. Inside are clustered elements evoking body parts in disorder and deprived of hierarchy: mouth to the bottom right, eyes to the top left, intestines and anus on the left side. "Conjuring the rank of humans", these shapes are applicable to other mammals. Moreover, some lines and clusters remind us of trees, insects, and microbes. The spectator is simultaneously seduced by the tender blue-reddish halo and the alluring curvaceous contours, and repelled by this hairy torn-off organ. Whether

FIG. 5. Wols, *Untitled (Composition)*, c. 1944-1945. Ink and watercolor on paper, 17,2 x 11,3 cm. Paris, MNAM/ Centre Pompidou.

[19] See the texts by Patrycja de Bieberstein Ilgner (68-77) and Katy Siegel (78-85).

the kidney-pattern of the tablecloth, reminding how humans feed on flesh, highlighting with a pitiless flash the slippery raw matter of the vulnerable mortal flesh against the decorative motif of the cheap fabric. No dramatic expansion but a trivial resilience with the human as a "vegetal machine" feeding on the smelly guts of others animals; no moral judgement on this status quo — Wols ate meat until his last breath and it was rotten meat that contributed to his death (Van Damme 1986, [14]) — but rather the unquenchable desire to account for the formal harmonies it evokes.

Wols's writings, mainly aphorisms and short poems, reiterate his distrust in mankind and further "conjure his rank of human". Men are often called "bipeds", (Van Damme 1985, 184, 186, 187, 188, 190), a term also used by Bryen and Audiberti. The Dieulefit papers (Iliazd fund) reveal his rejection of the grand discourses conceived by humans to justify their pretentious domination. A short text scribbled on a jagged envelope (Fig. 7) expresses his conviction of the necessity to deflate the human ego: "Before informing the students at school about the incidence of the public dangers such as tuberculosis, syphilis and plague, we should draw their attention to bigger dangers such as great achievements, ambitions and politics and [unreadable]."[20] All these topics — raw flesh, human abjection and cruelty, the preconised recession of the human subject — are topics tackled by Audiberti, Jopolo and Bryen in their abhumanist writings.

Paris after all

This jagged envelope is part of the fragmented papers Wols left as artistic testament together with his tiny drawings and small-sized paintings. As if the fragility of their format was to warn us about the dangers of "great achievements" and "ambitions", thus questioning the viability, after two world wars, of notions such as great art, artistic genius or masterpiece cherished by traditional humanist Art History. Projects such as his total artwork "Circus Wols", initiated when he was prisoner in the Camp des Milles and continued during his isolation at Dieulefit, oscillates between utopia

FIG. 6. Wols, *Untitled (Pork Kidneys)*, 1938. Gelatin silver print, 21,7 x 16 cm. Paris, MNAM/Centre Pompidou.

this is the heart of a human, a pig, a cow or a dog doesn't seem to matter for Wols. There is no sentiment here but a meticulous, obsessive, even perverse depiction of evocative detail and vitalist cruelty.

Similarly, Wols's photographs often display with cruel "lucidity" dead animals and butcher pieces such as the kidneys in this "Untitled" picture (Fig. 6). Ripped out of the animal body, so close formally to those of a human and destined to human consumption, these kidneys are chillingly juxtaposed to

[20] Fonds Iliazd, Documents Wols, n° 3878.

FIG. 7. Wols, *Envelope*, Dieulefit, 1941-1944. Archives Wols, fund Iliazd 3878, Bibliothèque Kandinsky/MNAM.

and dystopia, interrogating the totalising social project of the historic avant-gardes (Slavkova 2010, 145-146). The reductive definition of 'French Pollock' and the long-lasting preference for his last abstract oils have occulted this aspect of Wols's work, which is highlighted by the philosophy of abhumanism supported by his friend Bryen.

Other contemporary Parisian movements and personalities set similar interrogations. Like Wols and Audiberti, Breton's *Prolegomena to a Third Manifesto* questioned the grand discourses as well as the inherent ambivalence of the creative act (Breton, 25). Though defending a totalising vision of the avant-garde and the notion of great art history (Flahutez, 57-60), Lettrism produced works in various mediums resorting to visual and narrative fragmentation, thus diverging from the traditional idea of a masterpiece (Sabatier, 46-47). Guy Debord and the Situationists claimed a subversive, uncompromising, ephemeral and engaged art, capable of overturning the capitalist spectacle (Danesi, 81-89). They thought that Paris itself seeking to maintain a restrictive and outdated idea of what an artistic capital should be, contributed to the cultural uniformity and creative reification imposed by capitalism. In 1960, in the explicitly entitled article "La Chute de Paris" [The Fall of Paris], they stated:

> Paris is becoming a *guarded* museum-city. […] Several aspects of the current political events precipitate the end of the role of Paris in experimental culture. But this does not mean its inevitable withering. The international concentration in Paris departs from the previous habits. The new culture, globalized on the scale of the planet, develops solely in a place where the authentically revolutionary social conditions will appear. It won't be fixed in this or that privileged place, but will expand and change everywhere, with the victories of the new forms of society. (Debord & al., 8-9).

So what was agonising according to the Situationists, was the ancient Paris, the "city of light" constructed in the nineteenth century through spectacular World Fairs encouraging consumption of goods, shows, and monuments.

But Paris could get another chance if it succeeded to break with this self-centred, profit-biased model in order to become a place, among other places, where a new revolutionary and experimental art would thrive. Michel Giroud reiterated the anti-centralist stance of the Situationists, declaring that Paris was, after World War II, a place of particular cultural, social and political importance because it fought "against the lethal centralism of a city and a system which were weakening all the peripheries" (Giroud 2008, 74). Giroud regretted, however, that this decentralisation actually weakened Paris and turned the city into an "underground, obscure centre of transformative antagonistic tendencies" (72), a "self-destructive, suicidal laboratory" struck by constant internal quarrels which made the emergence of a federative figure impossible (69).

Michel Giroud's oscillation betrays his structural attachment to the notion of artistic "centre" and testifies how difficult it is to genuinely deconstruct it. Like Foteini Vlachou, whose work this volume honours other scholars have circumscribed the pitfalls and tried to give conceptual solidity to this resourceful project which implies a global reassessment of Art History. Changing the ways we narrate the history of art (Piotrowski), defining the key terms — provincialism, margins, peripheries (Smith), collecting data to review common truths (Dossin, Joyeux-Prunel). Paris, the mythified capital of modern art, may at first glance seem foreign to such a project. Yet Wols, Bryen, Audiberti, and abhumanism could be seen as examples of the salutary implosion of the centre of a "Paris in periphery" spawning artworks whose significance and historical relevance need reevaluation.

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UNIVERSALIZING THE LOCAL? MUSEUMS, CENTRES AND PERIPHERIES*

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ABSTRACT

In the last two hundred years, museums have provided the primary framework through which we engage with art objects, be it for the purposes of visual pleasure or art historical research. This framework is not neutral or transparent: it is an artefact in itself, shaped by the ideologies of its time. As they categorise their objects into groups, museums order the world in certain ways: identifying and labelling objects means identifying and labelling people. This article discusses how collections of applied art and ethnography in nineteenth-century Hungary reflected and shaped social and cultural hierarchies. These museums set out to centre the applied arts in an art historical canon that usually positioned them on the periphery, but in doing so they formed a category of "high art" that was implicitly based on a class distinction and relegated the products of the rural peasantry to the scope of ethnography.

KEYWORDS MUSEUMS, APPLIED ART, ETHNOGRAPHY, CULTURAL HIERARCHIES, COLLECTING

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Austria-Hungary, a state that existed between 1867 and 1918, was a wonderfully complex structure. Having come into being after the Austrian Empire was transformed into a dual monarchy by the treaty known as the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, it was ruled by one Emperor but made up of two countries, Austria and Hungary (or Cisleithania and Transleithania), which were theoretically political equals. Apart from foreign and military affairs, which were still decided in Vienna, the Budapest-based Hungarian government had control over the country's affairs and could set up a new administrative system completely separate from the Austrian crownlands. A country with two capitals — one more powerful than the other —, as well as many regions and regional governments, obviously contained a plethora of centre—periphery relationships. These relationships were relative — the same city could be a centre when seen from one angle and a periphery when seen from another —, and they also overlapped.[1] They were shaped by imbalances in political, economic and cultural power: three aspects that were closely interrelated, but still not exactly the same, resulting in yet another layer of complexities.

The museums that came into being in this complicated structure — smaller or larger, national or regional, all-encompassing or specialised — reflected and shaped these relationships in numerous ways. Given the self-evident fact that larger and more prominent museums were almost always situated in larger cities with more economic and political power, the easiest way to address the question of centre and periphery in the museum world is from a geographical point of view. This is, however, not what this article will be concerned with.[2] The museums of Austria-Hungary, like museums elsewhere and at all times, promoted identities, and some of these can be mapped onto geographical spaces: regional, national and even imperial identities. But there are other types of identities too: those to do with social class, profession, gender, just to name a few. As they categorised their objects into groups, museums ordered the world in certain ways, which also reflected the order of society. Identifying and labelling objects

meant identifying and labelling people. Designating objects as important or superfluous, displaying them in brightly lit rooms or leaving them unpacked in crates, including or excluding them, also meant making judgments about the people who made or consumed them.[3]

This essay will explore how these issues were negotiated in museums of design — museums of applied art — in Austria-Hungary. Although they constituted an intriguing area of study for early art historians, the status of the applied arts as "art" was not self-evident; it had to be established and defended. The differentiation between fine and applied art relied on Kantian categories — art objects valued for "their own sake" versus objects with practical functions — and was solidified in the nineteenth century, when the collecting of paintings, sculptures and drawings as objects that were conceptually different from vessels, garments or pieces of furniture gradually gained hold.[4] In this system, the fine arts were valued higher because they were thought to possess an elevated aesthetical quality that objects with practical functions lacked. Design museums set out to qualify, if not deconstruct this hierarchy. They made it their mission to move the applied arts towards the centre of the art historical canon. However, as they did so, they pushed certain types of objects to the periphery while defining and positioning the objects that belonged to their scope. The history of the collection of the Hungarian Museum of Applied Art will provide a revelatory case study in this regard.

The rise of museums of design and applied art

In the nineteenth century art world, the difference between fine art museums and museums of applied art was fundamental: while the former aimed to draw the viewer into an autonomous aesthetic sphere far removed from everyday concerns, the latter were conceived with an essentially practical

[1] For a centre-periphery model of the Monarchy see Komlosy, Andrea, "Innere Peripherien als Ersatz für Kolonien? Zentrenbildung und Peripherisierung in der Habsburgermonarchie", in Hárs, Endre et al eds, *Zentren, Peripherien und kollektive Identitäten in Österreich-Ungarn* (Tübingen and Basel: A. Francke Verlag, 2006) 55-78.

[2] For a geographical perspective see Veszprémi, Nóra, "Displaying the Periphery: The Upper-Hungarian Museum and the politics of regional museums in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy", *Visual Resources*, 35.3-4 (2019) 266-294.

[3] For two classic studies of this function of museums see Duncan, Carol and Wallach, Alan, "The Universal Survey Museum", *Art History* 3.4 (1980) 448-469; Bennett, Tony, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995).

[4] See Matthew Rampley, "Introduction", in Rampley, Prokopovych and Veszprémi, *Liberalism, Nationalism and Design Reform in the Habsburg Empire,* 1-12.

function. As industrialisation unfolded across Europe, concerns were increasingly raised that mass production will lead to a decline in the quality of objects, especially regarding their design. One proposed solution was to present makers and industrialists with authoritative models which could inspire their own designs while also improving public taste and hence raising the expectations of consumers.[5] The South Kensington Museum was founded in London in 1852, in the wake of the 1851 Great Exhibition, with these aims. Austria was one of the first countries to follow suit.

Catalysed by the 1851, 1855 and 1862 Universal Exhibitions, which provided opportunity for comparisons, worries about the competitiveness of Austrian industrial design abounded in public discourse by the early 1860s. One of those who voiced these concerns was the art historian Rudolf Eitelberger von Edelberg (1817-1885), who played a crucial role in the 1864 foundation of the Vienna Museum of Art and Industry, of which he was appointed as director. Modelled on the South Kensington Museum, the new institution was to provide Austrian makers with examples of good taste and of different techniques, in order to improve their products and make them more desirable on the domestic and international market. Hence, the primary purpose of the museum was not cultural or political, but economical. It has to be added, of course, that the three aspects were always closely intertwined, and objects collected for practical reasons could, at the same time, also be relevant from an art historical point of view, as well as in the context of identity formation.

The establishment of the museum in Vienna was followed by the foundation of similar museums elsewhere in the Empire: Budapest (1872), Brünn (1873; today Brno, Czech Republic), Zagreb (1880), Prague (1885) and Kolozsvár, Hungary (1888; today Cluj, Romania) just to name a few. Furthermore, collections of design were not exclusive to specialised museums; many museums with a more general scope, such as the Upper-Hungarian Museum in Kassa (1872; today Košice, Slovakia), which collected a wide range of objects from natural history to fine art, also laid special stress on acquiring and displaying exemplary products of design in order to foster local industry.

Seeing that the ultimate raison d'être of these museums lay in the national economy, the idea to connect them into a network and direct them from the centre — from the largest and most authoritative institutions — seems self-evident. Eitelberger had envisioned such a network of design museums in Austria; nevertheless, although he aimed to build strong contacts between the Vienna museum and smaller institutions elsewhere in the country, the formal network never materialised.[6] This development — or the lack of it — was at least partly due to the essentially decentralised character of the Austrian administrative system. In Hungary, administration was more centralised due to a conscious effort on part of the government to reduce the autonomy of Hungary's counties. Museums were overseen by a central authority, the Chief Inspectorate of Museums and Libraries, but within this structure there was no separate network for museums of design. Hence, although the Budapest Museum of Applied Art tended to act as central arbiter of good taste, this role was not formalised. Consequently, in both parts of the Monarchy, the authority of central institutions was more informal than official; this did not mean, however, that it was not real. It was these institutions — and their international models, most prominently the South Kensington Museum — that defined and shaped the categories that determined the evolution, function and reception of collections of design and industry across the Empire.

Different museums collect different types of objects, and the objects within one museum are then further categorised into smaller groups. Museums create categories, and these categories both reflect and shape how we see the world. As Donald Preziosi put it: "museums exist in the first place to manufacture belief in what its collected and assembled contents are staged as implying or exhibiting."[7] The reality effect of the categories is enforced by the fact that they are not unique to individual museums, but recur in different institutions.

[5] The inherent contradiction within the programme was that it embraced the capitalist free market, and hence mass consumption, while aiming to stop the perceived decrease in standards which was a feature of this very economic structure, which — in order to expand markets — aimed to make production as cheap as possible. See Forty, Adrian, *Objects of Desire: Design and Society since 1750* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986). For an assessment of the successes and failures of design reform in Austria-Hungary see Rampley, Matthew, "The Programme of Design Reform: Rise and Fall of a Project", in Rampley, Prokopovych and Veszprémi, *Liberalism, Nationalism and Design Reform in the Habsburg Empire*, 151-174.

[6] On Eitelberger's efforts and the extent to which the Vienna museum still functioned as a centre see Matthew Ranpley, "Design Reform in the Habsburg Empire: Technology, Aesthetics and Ideology", *Journal of Design History* 23.3 (2010) 247-264.

[7] Preziosi, Donald, "Narrativity and the Museological Myths of Nationality", in Bettina Messias Carbonell, ed., *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012) 82.

In 1903, the collection of applied art at the Upper-Hungarian Museum in Kassa was ordered into approximately the same categories as the collection of the South Kensington Museum.[8] It goes without saying, however, that the similarity was only structural, not total. The Kassa Museum's collection of, say, "Hispano-Moresco Ware" was of course much more modest than the South Kensington Museum's, but to make up for that it had a rich collection of ceramics from Kassa and its vicinity, which formed a separate category, unlike at the South Kensington Museum. The intriguing thing about museums is that while they are based on abstract, internationally accepted models distilled from some respected prototypes, their collections are always unique and locally sourced. Museums are always about finding our own place within a greater whole. By showing the universal through the local, they centre the periphery — whether that periphery is the nation, the region, the city or any other community they represent. When they brought together internationally acknowledged objects with local products, design museums were relating the latter to the canon, acknowledging, while also reshaping its centres and peripheries.

The Hungarian Museum of Applied Art and the hierarchy of cultures

The Museum of Applied Art in Budapest exerted an informal authority all over the country. To characterise the role of this institution among the various Hungarian organisations of design reform, let us start with one small episode. On 20 September 1878 Emil Dvihally (1847-1887), a high school teacher in Besztercebánya (today Banská Bystrica, Slovakia) who led the house industry school of the local Bishopric, wrote to Károly Pulszky (1853-1899), director of the Museum of Applied Art, enquiring whether the museum would purchase a spectacular object recently made at the school: an intricately carved birdcage in the shape of a Gothic church. He described the Besztercebánya school's dire financial situation, in which the purchase would come as much awaited relief.[9] Pulszky, however, rejected the offer, calling the birdcage tasteless and

completely misguided: the lofty forms of a medieval church were not suited to the prosaic purpose of the object.[10] In line with his duty as director of the central institution, he was using this as an occasion to disseminate the principles of the design reform the museum aimed to catalyse.

To forward the above aims, the Hungarian Museum of Applied Art had been founded in 1872 by the Industrial Association, which successfully persuaded the government to provide funding for its first purchases at the 1873 Vienna Universal Exhibition. The museum subsequently passed into public ownership and was run, in practice, as a department of the Hungarian National Museum. In 1878 it was able to open its first permanent exhibition in an exhibition space put at the museum's disposal by the Hungarian National Fine Art Association in its headquarters, the Arts Hall. The Museum of Applied Art only moved into its own, separate building — a masterpiece of Hungarian Art Nouveau designed by Ödön Lechner and Gyula Pártos — in 1896.

To build an authoritative collection, design museums had to acquire certain must-haves. The objects purchased by the Hungarian Museum of Applied Art in Vienna in 1873 were in many ways similar to those acquired by the Vienna Museum of Art and Industry in its early years. For example, both institutions bought collections of historical textiles: the Vienna museum from Franz Bock (1823-1899), a canon in Aachen, and the Budapest museum from Friedrich Fischbach (1839-1908), a German textile designer. Similarly, they both favoured the products of the Salviati glass factory, which aimed to revive the grand tradition of glass manufacturing in Murano.[11] Factories such as Salviati based their designs on much admired examples from the historical past — a method encouraged by nineteenth-century design reformers.

In order to support historicist design, it was useful for museums to acquire exemplary

[8] Veszprémi, "Displaying the Periphery", 278-279.

[9] Letter from Emil Dvihally to Károly Pulszky, Besztercebánya, 20 September 1878. Archives of the Museum of Applied Art, Budapest. See Veszprémi, "The Politics of Collecting and Display in an Imperial Context".

[10] Draft of Pulszky's letter to Dvihally, n. d. [September/October 1878], Archives of the Museum of Applied Art, Budapest.

[11] On these purchases see Horváth, Hilda, "Az Iparművészeti Múzeum műgyűjteményének története — vázlat" [History of the art collection of the Museum of Applied Art — a sketch], in Pataki, Judit ed., *Az idő sodrában: Az Iparművészeti Múzeum gyűjteményeinek története* [In the currents of time: The history of the collections of the Museum of Applied Art] (Budapest: Museum of Applied Art, 2006) 28—31. On Viennese purchases of Salviati glass see Strasser, Rudolf, "Der Aufbau der Glassammlung des k. k. Österreichischen Museums für Kunst und Industrie 1864-1909", in Noever, Peter ed., *Kunst und Industrie: Die Anfänge des Museums für Angewandte Kunst in Wien* (Vienna and Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2000), 137. On purchases from Bock see Völker, Angela, "Die Sammlungspolitik der Textilsammlung des k.k. Österreichischen Museums für Kunst und Industrie in den Jahren 1864 bis 1910", in Peter Noever, ed., *Kunst und Industrie*, 115.

pieces not only from contemporary producers, but also from previous centuries. In Budapest, the first such historical objects came into the Museum of Applied Art from the archaeological collection of the Hungarian National Museum, whose director, Ferenc Pulszky (1814-1897, Károly's father) wished to support the design museum in this way.[12] In the next decades, historical objects were acquired by the museum's directors in order to be able to present a continuous art historical timeline with examples from all times and many different places. Hence, a collection originally founded to showcase models for design reform was gradually transforming into an art historical collection.

The scope of the museum was not only expanded in time, but also in space. From the very beginning, the Hungarian Museum of Applied Art collected objects from outside Europe, mostly Asia. János Xántus (1825-1894), head of the ethnographic collection of the Hungarian National Museum, had accompanied the Austro-Hungarian "East-Asia Expedition" launched in 1868 to South Asia, China and Japan. The idea of the expedition originated from the Viennese government, and its original purpose was to strike up trade deals, especially with Japan, but the collecting of objects for museums was also identified as an important goal. Making purchases on behalf of the Hungarian National Museum, Xántus sent home 165,444 objects in 53 instalments, before returning home in 1870. He had intended them for the ethnographic collection he was head of, but the artefacts were transferred to the newly founded Museum of Applied Art two years later.[13]

In the next decades, the Museum of Applied Art expanded its collection of works from outside Europe substantially. One spectacular acquisition was the so-called Damascus Room, a complete set of decorative wall panelling made in Syria in 1802-1803 and bought by the museum's future director, then chief curator, Jenő Radisics (1856-1917), at the World's Fair in Antwerp in 1885.[14] The Damascus Room was set up in the museum's temporary exhibition space in the Arts Hall, and became the first of a series of period rooms — from Europe and elsewhere — that Radisics aimed to set up in the museum once it relocated to its new building. But the Damascus Room

FIG. 1. The room of the "Malay-Papuan cultural sphere" at the Museum of Ethnography, Budapest. Reproduced from Vikár, Béla, "A M. Nemzeti Múzeum néprajzi tára" [The ethnographical collection of the Hungarian National Museum], *Ethnographia*, 9 (1898) 267.

was only one spectacular example among the museum's global acquisitions. To name one other important example, the rich collection of the traveller and collector Ferenc Hopp (1833-1919) was bequeathed to the museum in the early twentieth century.

But let us return to the beginning, when the objects collected by Xántus for the ethnographic collection were incorporated into the nascent Museum of Applied Art. The story highlights the ambivalent status of these objects between art and ethnography. The nineteenth century's notion of fine art was undoubtedly Eurocentric. Museums of design were chipping away at the notion not just by elevating functional objects to the status of art, but also by treating non-European objects as equally valuable models of good taste and excellent design. This was, however, only one side of the coin — the brighter side. In practice, not all non-European objects were equal, and this is clearly demonstrated by the fate of the objects collected by Xántus.

When Xántus returned from his collecting trip in Asia, the objects he had acquired were

[12] Horváth, Hilda, "Ferenc Pulszky and the movements in applied arts in Hungary", in Ernő Marosi et al., eds, *Ferenc Pulszky (1814-1897) Memorial Exhibition* (Budapest: Art Collection of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1997) 165-166.

[13] On Xántus and the expedition see Sándor, István, "Első néprajzi kiállításunk és Xántus János" [Our first ethnographic exhibition and János Xántus], *Ethnographia*, 62 (1951) 195—196; Bincsik, Mónika, *Japán műtárgyak gyűjtéstörténete Magyarországon a 19. század második felében, kitekintéssel a nemzetközi összefüggésekre* [A history of the collecting of Japanese artworks in Hungary in the second half of the 19th century, with attention to the international context], PhD dissertation, Eötvös Loránd University (Budapest, 2009) 69-75.

[14] Semsey, Balázs, "Fikció, rekonstrukció, imitáció: Történelmi szobák az Iparművészeti Múzeumban (I.)" [Fiction, reconstruction, imitation: Historical rooms in the Museum of Applied Art], in Gábor Gaylhoffer-Kovács and Miklós Székely, eds, *Als ich can: Tanulmányok Urbach Zsuzsa születésnapjára* (Budapest: Centrart, 2013) 185-186.

put on display at the Hungarian National Museum.[15] They were arranged according to an evolutionary sequence which awarded different levels of progress to different cultures. Japanese and Chinese objects were placed at the peak of this sequence, while objects from Borneo were positioned as the most "primitive". This hierarchical arrangement was typical of colonialist thinking: the South Kensington Museum arranged its collections in a similar way in the nineteenth century, highlighting the technical prowess of Japan and China — two lands that had not been colonised; while in the case of lands that were under the rule of the British Empire, colonialization could be justified by their supposedly uncivilised state.[16]

After the transfer of Xántus's collection, some of the most "advanced" objects were put on display in the Museum of Applied Art, but the majority were left packed in crates. The reason was partly, no doubt, simply the severe lack of space, but it cannot be denied that the decision to select certain objects was motivated by a firm belief in a hierarchical ranking of cultures. This explanation is supported by the fact that in 1896, when the museum moved into its new, spacious building, it kept the top of this hierarchy — Chinese, Japanese, Indian objects —, while deaccessioning the rest. These were then transferred to the Collection of Ethnography, which was itself just about to move into a new, separate, larger space, after being housed in the Hungarian National Museum for three decades. There, the collection was arranged according to the same evolutionary narrative that guided the 1871 arrangement.[17] The exhibition began with objects from Indonesia produced by cultures that had "hardly left the stone age", as one contemporary commentator put it, and ended with the material culture of different ethnic groups from Hungary, culminating with — of course — the Hungarians.[18] (Figs 1-2)

This arrangement was obviously based on the same racial hierarchies that were used to justify colonialism. Austria-Hungary was not a colonial empire and did not have territories overseas, but that does not mean it did not benefit from the colonialist project — the Austro-Hungarian expedition was an example of this. Furthermore, colonialism was not just a political structure, but also an ideology, and

FIG. 2. The room of Transylvanian Hungarians at the Museum of Ethnography, Budapest. Reproduced from Vikár, Béla, "A M. Nemzeti Múzeum néprajzi tára" [The ethnographical collection of the Hungarian National Museum], *Ethnographia*, 9 (1898) 273.

that ideology permeated the museum displays examined here. The positioning of certain non-Western cultures within an anthropological framework, implying that they are peoples without a history and hence belong in a liminal zone between nature and "civilisation", was central to anthropological-ethnological collections set up in colonial empires.[19] As repeatedly pointed out by theorists of museums, this arrangement tended to situate the "host nation" at the peak of the evolutionary sequence that emerged from the displays.[20] The layout of the rooms encouraged visitors to follow this route; hence, to quote Tony Bennett, they engaged in "organised walking as evolutionary practice", which in the Pitt-Rivers Museum — the paradigmatic example of colonial anthropological collections in the nineteenth century — led them towards the white man.[21]

At the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography, the evolutionary sequence led visitors towards the people of Hungary, who were presented as more advanced than the people of Indonesia.

[15] Sándor, "Első néprajzi kiállításunk és Xántus János' [Our first ethnographic exhibition and János Xántus]".

[16] Mitter, Partha and Craig Clunas, "The Empire of Things: The Engagement with the Orient", in Malcolm Baker and Brenda Richardson, eds, *A Grand Design: The Art of the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London and Baltimore: V&A Publications and Baltimore Museum of Art, 1997) 231.

[17] On the exhibition see Sinkó, Katalin, "Die Entstehung des Begriffs der Volkskunst in den Kunstgewerbemuseen des Zeitalters des Positivismus", *Acta Historiae Artium*, 46 (2005) 246.

[18] Vikár, Béla, "A M. Nemzeti Múzeum néprajzi tára" [The ethnographical collection of the Hungarian National Museum], *Ethnographia*, 9 (1898) 265.

[19] See Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, 77-81, 177-208. Further see Coombes, Annie E., "Museums and the Formation of National and Cultural Identities", in Carbonell, ed., *Museum Studies*, 260-272.

[20] See e. g. Duncan and Wallach, "The Universal Survey Museum"; Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, 166-168; MacDonald, Sharon, "Museums, national, postnational and transcultural identities", *Museum and Society* 1.1 (2003) 1-16.

[21] Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, 179.

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128—129. Bethlen Gábor fejedelem nejének, Brandenburgi   128—129. Gesticktes Samtkleid der Katharine von Branden-
Katalinnak szoknyája és válfűzője. XVII. század.   burg, Gemahlin des Fürsten Gabriel Bethlen. XVII. Jahrh.

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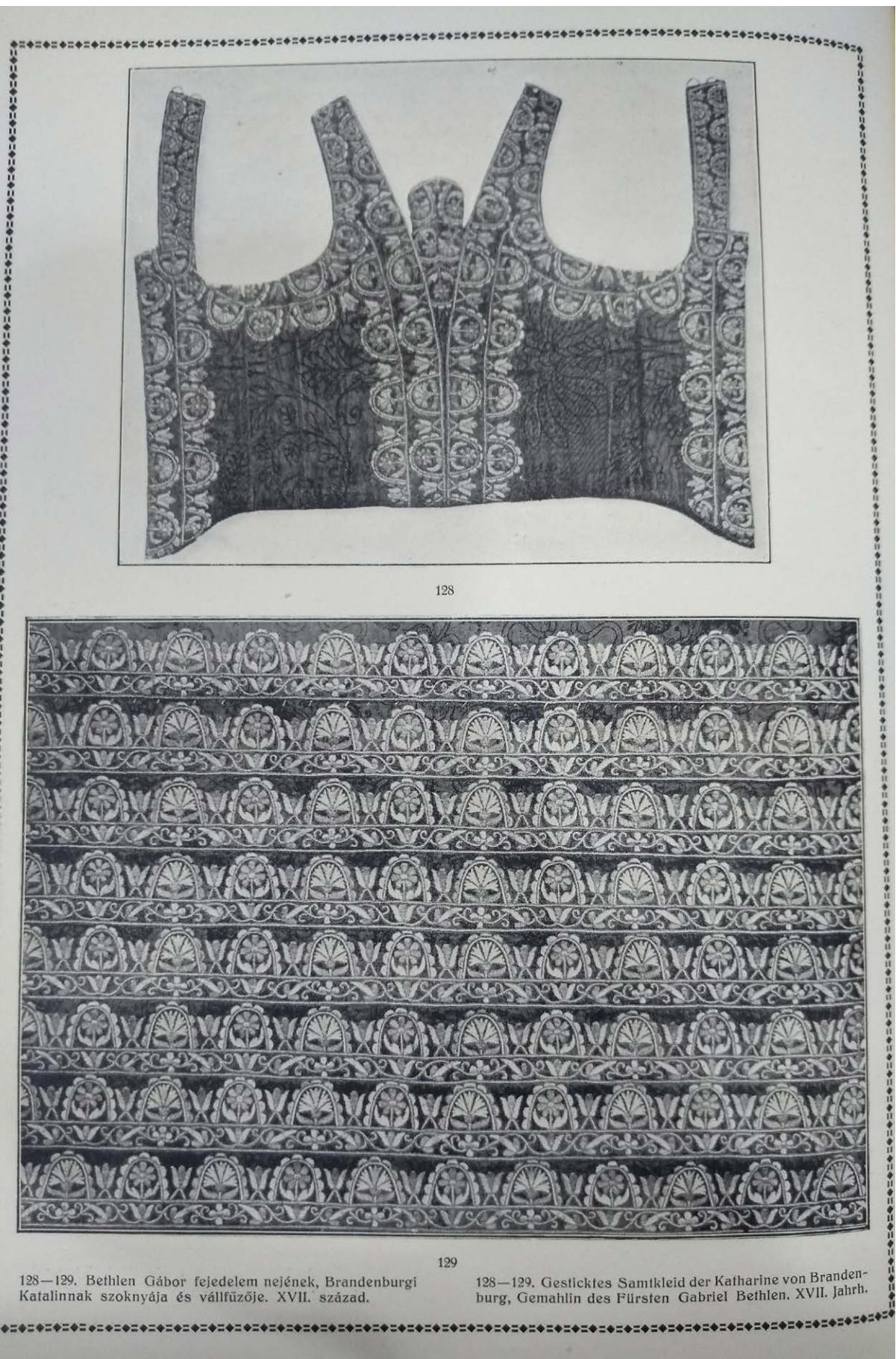
Their position was, however, relative: it was only superior in the context of the Museum of Ethnography, but lost that status when seen in the context of the entire museum landscape. In fact, many of the Hungarian objects on view at the Museum of Ethnography were exiles from the Museum of Applied Art in the exact same way as those from Malaysia or Borneo.

In 1872, when setting up the ethnographic collection, Xántus had gone on a collecting trip across Hungary (with his colleague Flóris Rómer [1815-1889]) to gather vernacular artefacts from different regions and ethnic groups. Along with the global collection, this collection was also transferred to the Museum of Applied Art, from where a large number of objects subsequently returned in 1896. The Museum of Applied Art did keep some of them, but those were of a specific kind. In 1897, Radisics set up a Hungarian Room that presented these together, as examples of a Hungarian style. But what made them worth keeping? The majority of objects displayed in the Hungarian Room originated from the upper classes; they were intricately made out of precious materials (Fig. 3). In an article published in 1915, Radisics explained his strategy in building the Hungarian collection, noting that the latter was originally based on the objects acquired by Xántus and Rómer, and hence "exhibited a mainly ethnographic character."[22] He did not mention that many of these objects were then transferred to the Ethnographic Museum, but he did proceeded to list the types of objects that replaced them during his leadership: ecclesiastical robes, tiles from palaces and bourgeois homes, ceramics produced by craftsmen in urban centres, luxurious embroideries made with silver and golden thread.

When dividing objects between the Museum of Applied Art and the Museum of Ethnography, museum officials were making decisions about what counts as art and what does not, and, as demonstrated above, the distinction between art and non-art — art and ethnography — was largely based on social class. This is not only obvious in retrospect; it was observed by contemporaries and even contested by some, for instance the ethnographer Vilibáld Semayer (1868-1928), who thought the distinction inhibited the understanding of the

FIG. 3. Objects from the Hungarian Room of the Museum of Applied Art: seventeenth-century skirt and shoulderpiece once owned by Catherine of Brandenburg, wife of Gábor Bethlen, Prince of Transylvania. Reproduced from Radisics, Jenő, "Az Orsz. Magy. Iparművészeti Múzeum és magyar gyűjteménye" [The National Hungarian Museum of Applied Art and its Hungarian collection], Magyar *Iparművészet*, 18 (1915) 132.

22 Radisics, Jenő, "Az Orsz. Magy. Iparművészeti Múzeum és magyar gyűjteménye" [The National Hungarian Museum of Applied Art and its Hungarian collection], *Magyar Iparművészet*, 18.3 (1915) 133.

culture of both the lower and the upper classes, and argued for an encompassing museum of material culture that would unite the restrictive categories of fine art, applied art and ethnography.[23] This, however, never happened. The categories defined by these museums shaped how the next generations understood human culture; they logically gave rise to the new construct of "folk art" — itself a problematic category —, which helped underpin the idea that the "products of the people" belong to the remit of ethnography, rather than art history.

A brief look at the state of Hungarian art historical discourse in the late nineteenth century suggests that this intellectual process did not necessarily have to unfold in this way. In the early years of Hungarian historical scholarship, romantic nationalism was a powerful force; consequently, in art history and art criticism, the question of defining the "Hungarianness" of Hungarian art and of tracing its roots in the past came up again and again. One of the authors who engaged with this issue was József Huszka (1854—1934), a controversial figure who can rightly seen as one of the founders of Hungarian ethnography, given his wide-ranging work collecting vernacular ornamental motifs, but whose interpretations of these motifs, which he saw as eternal, unchanging reflections of the "Hungarian spirit", had more to do with romantic dreams than historical facts. Consequently, they were challenged by scholars such as Károly Pulszky, who drew attention to the connections between the vernacular motifs employed by Hungarians and other ethnic groups, as well as to the influence of international stylistic currents such as the Renaissance.[24] The focus of scholarly art history was increasingly on such connections and exchanges, which meant that vernacular ornament ceased to play the paradigmatic role in the discourse that would have been awarded to it by authors such as Huszka.

An article Károly Pulszky published in 1886 laid out the reasoning behind the categories that determined the museological ordering of applied art objects.[25] Given the uncertain position of artworks with everyday functions between fine art and non-art, their defenders needed to prove that they are worthy of a place in the canon. As is often the case, they

did so by setting up a counter-concept, which — by embodying what was not art — could throw the art-like qualities of the applied arts into relief. That counter-concept came to be the material culture of peasants. Hence, Pulszky argued that the distinguishing feature of art was that it displayed the individual character of its maker; the most self-evident examples of this were, of course, the venerable works of the great Old Masters whose names had been preserved for posterity in art history. Nevertheless, it was also possible for nameless makers to create something that stood out in this way: such works, if they were functional, could be characterised as applied art. These had to be clearly distinguished from the works of the peasantry, which had no individual character and thus no style, and hence could not be regarded as art.

Behind this argument lay a mindset that regarded "the people" as an unindividualized mass, in opposition to the nobility and the educated middle class. In the early nineteenth century, romantics had developed and popularised an interest in folk culture, which they saw as pure and primitive; the product of a community, rather than individuals. Their view of peasant culture as eternal and unchanging — which also informed Huszka's approach — mirrored the orientalist view of cultures outside Europe. While peasants embodied a timeless ancient purity, history was the history of the upper classes. The objects that did make it into the Museum of Applied Art were objects that could be integrated into such a historical — and hence art historical — narrative. This is demonstrated by the three-volume publication *Hungarian Art Treasures*, edited by Radisics between 1896 and 1901.[26] The books, which contained high quality reproductions of artefacts from the Museum of Applied Art, the Hungarian National Museum, as well as ecclesiastical and aristocratic collections, aimed to present these as valuable pieces of Hungarian cultural heritage, through which the history of Hungarian art could be told just as coherently as through the fine arts. The objects selected for the books were all examples of exquisite technical skills, mostly

[23] Semayer, Vilibáld, "Néprajz a németföldi múzeumokban" [Ethnography in the museums of the German lands] I-III, *Ethnographia*, 9 (1898) 79-393 and 452-461, and 10 (1899) 47-54.

[24] On the difference between Huszka's and Pulszky's approach see Sinkó, "Die Entstehung des Begriffs der Volkskunst", 227-228.

[25] Pulszky, Károly, "Iparművészet és stíl" [Applied art and style], *Műveszi Ipar* 1.5 (1885/86) 194.

[26] Radisics, Jenő, ed., *Magyar műkincsek* [Hungarian art treasures], 3 vols (Budapest, 1896-1901).
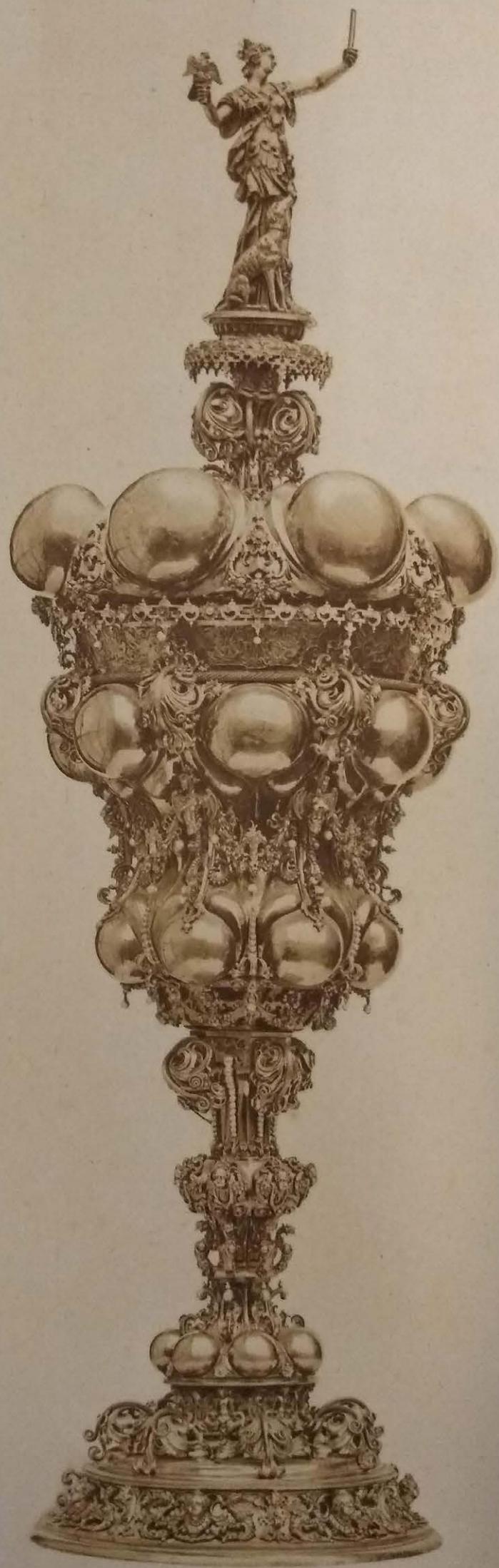
made of valuable materials; they all originated from the social elite (Fig. 4). Consequently, they could easily be integrated into the grand narrative of Hungary's political history. Some of the objects had specific historical significance — Plate 1 in the first volume depicted Hungary's royal crown —, but even those that did not could be read as "monuments" of Hungarian history: they had once been owned by families who had played leading roles on the historical stage. The Museum of Applied Art championed the notion that the applied arts are integral to the history of art, but it did so by fitting them into a category of "high art" which relied on the exclusion of popular culture.

Conclusion

By the last years of the nineteenth century, the basic outline of Budapest's museum landscape had solidified. In addition to the Museum of Applied Art and the Museum of Ethnography, a Museum of Fine Arts was to open soon (in 1906), while the Hungarian National Museum — originally an all-encompassing collection — was being redefined as a collection of archaeology and history. The system of categorisation on which these distinctions relied had not been invented in Hungary, but it was projected onto collections of objects that had, at some point in time and for one reason or another, ended up in Hungary. Whether they were paintings by Italian Renaissance masters or porcelain cups from China, they were, in that sense, local. Arranged into internationally accepted categories, they embodied what was then accepted as universal knowledge; they formed a miniature world — but they presented a uniquely Hungarian version of it, which reflected the specific characteristics and tensions of society in Hungary. The way in which they did so is problematic in several respects, and this essay has aimed to highlight how they marginalised certain cultures while centring others. Nevertheless, in collapsing the universal into the local — or the other way round —, museums at the same time create a fruitful terrain for rethinking and deconstructing the dichotomy of centre and periphery.

FIG. 4. Fifteenth-century goblet from the collection of the Princes Esterházy. Reproduced from Radisics, Jenő, ed., *Magyar műkincsek* [Hungarian art treasures], vol. III (Budapest, 1901).

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VARIA

ACERCA DO ATRASO: A CONSTRUÇÃO DA HISTÓRIA DA ARTE PORTUGUESA NOS TEMPOS MODERNOS* **

MARIANA PINTO DOS SANTOS

RESUMO

Este ensaio analisa a ideia de *atraso* inerente ao trabalho de José-Augusto França, responsável pelo desenvolvimento notável da historiografia da arte em Portugal depois da Segunda Guerra Mundial e por estabelecer um cânone historiográfico para a arte portuguesa dos séculos XIX e XX. Procura enquadrar o conceito de *atraso* no contexto da historiografia de arte portuguesa e da história política, e analisá-lo no quadro de uma genealogia de pensamento intelectual produzido num contexto imperial, revisitando alguns anteriores historiadores e autores importantes, como Antero de Quental e António Sérgio. O conceito de *atraso* associa-se à ideia de "civilização" e à ideia de "arte como civilização" e tem implicações nos constrangimentos e nas especificidades da escrita de uma narrativa hegemónica num país periférico, que procurava comparar-se a um modelo artístico e cultural parisiense. A necessidade de sublinhar o atraso foi particularmente sentida na segunda metade do século XX também para marcar uma posição política contra a ditadura que esteve no governo de 1926 a 1974. Parte da reacção ao fascismo expressava o desejo de seguir o exemplo democrático de outras nações, mas as avaliações auto-depreciativas sobre arte portuguesa estavam frequentemente associadas à identificação de motivos essencialistas — a "natureza" do povo português, a sua maneira de pensar e de viver, a sua falta de capacidades ou de competências — e a uma imagem de si próprio como sendo "primitivo" em comparação com outros países europeus, a qual tem antecedentes que remontam ao século XVIII. Abordarei a nostalgia pelo império e sua relação com a noção de *atraso* prevalecente ao longo de todo o século XX, no que diz respeito a aspectos por resolver face a essa nostalgia.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: ATRASO, HISTORIOGRAFIA, MODERNISMO, CIVILIZAÇÃO, EUROCENTRISMO, PERIFERIA

INTRODUÇÃO

A história da arte portuguesa teve a sua própria narrativa hegemónica no século XX, um simulacro da narrativa hegemónica modernista que tem sido amplamente criticada, mas não completamente posta de parte. Herdeira da obsessão do século XIX pelo levantamento e o arquivamento da história nacional, nos seus primeiros tempos a história da arte em Portugal fazia parte daquela área de conhecimento mais vasta que compreendia a arqueologia, a antropologia, a etnologia e, claro está, a história. Essa obsessão persistiu, mas foi modernizada com uma abordagem que se tornou habitual na história da arte institucional e que foi motivada pela vontade de inovar e desenvolver tanto a prática artística como a história (e a crítica) da arte, de modo a ombrear com as propostas estrangeiras, encaradas como modelos.

Este artigo traçará, sucintamente, a genealogia da escrita de história da arte em Portugal até à evolução significativa que a história da arte portuguesa sofreu depois da Segunda Guerra Mundial, especialmente com o trabalho de José-Augusto França (n. 1922), que foi responsável por estabelecer um cânone historiográfico para a arte portuguesa dos séculos XIX e XX e que foi, também, o fundador da história da arte como disciplina académica em Portugal. Proponho-me analisar o conceito de *atraso* que se encontra nos seus escritos, identificando o seu contexto, e demonstrar o modo como este foi associado ao conceito de *civilização*. Ambos desempenharam um papel estrutural na história cultural portuguesa. Contextualizar o caso português ajudará a perceber em que medida a narrativa do modernismo foi, ela própria, modernista, e o modo como se tem baseado numa mentalidade estruturalmente imperialista, que tem na rivalidade e na hierarquia as suas principais características para eleger ou negligenciar práticas artísticas.

ALGUNS EPISÓDIOS DA HISTÓRIA DA ARTE PORTUGUESA DO SÉCULO XIX E DO INÍCIO DO SÉCULO XX

Existem algumas obras que são, habitualmente, consideradas das primeiras histórias da arte produzidas em Portugal. Embora não exista consenso sobre disso, a obra escrita pelo pintor Cyrillo Volkmar Machado (em particular a sua *Colecção de Memórias* (1823))[1] é aquela que mencionarei em primeiro lugar. Este autor foi considerado o primeiro a afastar-se do modelo vasariano[2], por escrever de um modo empírico e analítico, por usar cronologias para estabelecer analogias e diferenças, ser "obcecado pelos factos"[3] e ter "uma consciência histórica"[4]. Cyrillo Volkmar Machado explicava os factos e os desenvolvimentos artísticos, não através do estabelecimento de ciclos fechados de ascensão e decadência, mas procurando factos causais fora do campo artístico. Apesar das suas limitações, a sua obra foi considerada pelo historiador da arte Paulo Varela Gomes como a primeira a propor uma periodização da arte portuguesa e, efectivamente, o seu método de encontrar relações entre factos artísticos e não-artísticos era uma abordagem que, em vez de tentar encontrar assuntos artísticos, *produzia-os*, em resultado da interligação de factos numa narrativa histórica[5]. Cyrillo tinha a arte portuguesa em pouca consideração, e partilhava a ideia de que estava instalada uma decadência generalizada em toda a arte, mas atribuía isso a factos externos e não a factos artísticos.

Houve alguns autores do Romantismo que reuniram esforços para documentar a arte e os monumentos do país, nomeadamente dois dos intelectuais mais famosos, o escritor Almeida Garrett (1799-1854) e o historiador Alexandre Herculano (1810-1877), que escreveram, respectivamente, um ensaio sobre a história da pintura e um estudo sobre os monumentos nacionais, bem como um outro acerca da arquitectura gótica[6]. Herculano escreveria também diversos romances sobre monumentos

[1] O título completo era *Colecção de memorias relativas às vidas dos pintores, e escultores, architetos, e gravadores portuguezes, e dos estrangeiros que estiverão em Portugal*. Cyrillo Volkmar Machado viveu entre 1748 e 1823 e escreveu outras obras relacionadas com a pintura e a arquitectura, combinando pedagogia, estética e história. No século XVI, existiu um interesse pela arqueologia em autores renascentistas como Damião de Góis e André de Resende. Leon Battista Alberti foi traduzido nessa altura. O importante trabalho de Francisco de Hollanda (1517-1585) só foi conhecido muito mais tarde, em finais do século XIX, e só foi publicado na íntegra na década de 1960. Entre 1580 e 1640, Portugal foi governado por Espanha e, durante esse período, foram raras as publicações que abordaram temas nacionais. Só depois foram publicadas novas obras, a maior parte seguindo o modelo vasariano. Ver A.M. Gonçalves, "Historiografia de Arte em Portugal," *Boletim da Biblioteca da Universidade de Coimbra*, 1960, 25.

[2] Isto foi referido por Paulo Varela Gomes em 1988. Cf. "Cyrillo Volkmar Machado e a História da Arte em Portugal na transição do século XVIII para o século XIX," in *A Cultura Arquitectónica e Artística em Portugal no século XVIII*, Lisboa, 1988, pp. 149-73, e, mais tarde, por Foteini Vlachou, "The absence of Vasari: The reception of the Vite in Portugal c. 1568-1823," in *Vasari als Paradigma. Rezeption, Kritik, Perspektiven / The Paradigm of Vasari. Reception, Criticism, Perspectives*, eds. F. Jonietz, A. Nova, Conference Proceedings, Marsilio, Florence, Kunsthistorisches Institut, Max-Planck-Institut, 2014, pp. 275-284 (incluído em F. Vlachou, *The Disappointed Writer. Selected Essays*, Lisboa, 2019, pp. 31-57). Ambos os autores referem também que Cyrillo cita frequentemente Winckelmann, mas que não tem qualquer problema em discordar dele várias vezes, por exemplo ao elogiar Bernini, o historiador da arte alemão desconsiderava.

[3] Gomes, "Cyrillo Volkmar Machado…," p. 155.

[4] Nos escritos de Cyrillo, Paulo Varela Gomes identifica a consciência das continuidades temporais e uma expectativa face ao futuro, ibidem, p. 150.

[5] Ibidem, p. 172.

[6] A. Garrett, *Ensaio sobre História da Pintura*, 1821, e A. Herculano, *Monumentos Pátrios*, 1838; "A Arquitectura Gótica," *Panorama,* 1837, 1. Ver Gonçalves, "Historiografia de Arte em Portugal."

e obras de arte nacionais e, em 1846, começou a publicar a sua *História de Portugal*, em vários volumes.

No entanto, José-Augusto França, o autor da narrativa hegemónica da arte portuguesa dos séculos XIX e XX, considerou que a verdadeira história da arte em Portugal só teve início mais tarde, com um estrangeiro, o Conde Atanazy Raczy'ski (1788-1874). França elogia o facto de este aristocrata polaco, diplomata junto da corte portuguesa de 1842 a 1845, ser um correspondente da Sociedade Artística e Científica de Berlim, para a qual enviava os seus estudos sobre a arte portuguesa. Acrescenta ainda que Raczy'ski, enquanto "homem de saber e de gosto", fez "a primeira obra moderna de crítica histórica" e que "caiu no meio português como uma bomba, publicando documentos negligenciados, mostrando erros, insuficiências, pretensões, de investigadores, de artistas e de coleccionadores"[7]. Resumindo, o seu maior mérito foi o de ter sido formado no estrangeiro e de ter exposto o atraso português. Este foi, afirma França, o exemplo mais evidente de alguém que tinha a formação para aplicar a metodologia mais avançada do século XIX — "um gosto clássico temperado por um elevado idealismo alemão, afim de certos movimentos românticos, mas mantendo perante eles uma gravidade afinal romana"[8], focado em identificar a autoria correcta e em rejeitar o eclectismo de "mau gosto", como o do Palácio da Pena, em Sintra[9] —, o que lhe permitia expressar paternalismo ao manifestar esperança de que Portugal progredisse nas artes, mas diagnosticando que, por enquanto, ainda faltava fazer tudo. França realça a sua educação e a "lição de qualidade" que trouxe ao país, lamentando a ignorância artística nacional que preferia sentir-se ofendida a aprender com ele. O historiador da arte elogia outro estrangeiro, o britânico Sir John Charles Robinson (1824-1913), que foi responsável pelo South Kensington Museum (actualmente o Victoria & Albert) e que publicou alguns artigos acerca da pintura portuguesa na Grã-Bretanha, "e deu ao país um novo exemplo de trabalho profissional"[10].

Apesar de França reconhecer o privilégio que estes homens tiveram na sua educação e nas instituições de onde vinham, tende porém a menosprezar as capacidades artísticas

e intelectuais portuguesas, classificando muitas vezes como ignorância, falta de inteligência ou "mentalidade portuguesa" a putativa incapacidade para fazer o mesmo que os estudiosos e os artistas da Europa central conseguiam fazer. França sublinha constantemente o estatuto subalterno de Portugal, nunca equacionando a possível inadequação da abordagem dos estrangeiros à realidade portuguesa. Para ele, a história teria de ter sido diferente, para corresponder às suas metodologias e aos assuntos e narrativas que eles procuravam. Não teriam sido razões sociais, culturais, económicas ou políticas a determinar o contexto português, mas sim uma inerente falta de vontade de fazer as coisas da maneira "certa".

O historiador da arte Nuno Rosmaninho traçou uma genealogia da história da arte portuguesa, identificando uma metodologia com um "influxo científico" que tem início na primeira metade do século XIX[11]. Concorda que Raczy'ski foi o primeiro historiador da arte portuguesa em que se viu, pela primeira vez, um método rigorosamente formado. A matriz positivista permaneceu ao longo de todo o século XX e coexistiu com a biografia à maneira vasariana (muito praticada nos Dicionários de Artistas — uma das formas mais duradouras de escrever história da arte), muitas vezes com uma compilação exaustiva de factos biográficos sem qualquer atenção ao contexto social. Outra prática foi a "Memória Histórica e Descritiva", que aplicava a mesma exaustividade à descrição de edifícios, e aos acontecimentos históricos com eles relacionados, tendo sobretudo uma abordagem formalista, e exclusivamente em relação à arquitectura[12]. Rosmaninho refere-se

[7] J.-A. França, *A Arte em Portugal no Século XIX*, vol. I, Lisboa, 1990 [1967]], pp. 392-393.

[8] Ibidem, p. 395.

[9] O Palácio da Pena, em Sintra, foi construído entre 1842 e 1854 sobre as ruínas de um mosteiro e foi um projecto pessoal do Príncipe Consorte D. Fernando II, marido da Rainha D. Maria II, no qual se combinam vários revivalismos.

[10] França, *A Arte em Portugal no Século XIX*, p. 396.

[11] Nuno Rosmaninho prefere chamar a esta abordagem "metódica" ou com um "influxo científico" e não "positivista" devido à falta de referências directas a Auguste Comte. O positivismo de Comte não considerava a recolha de factos como condição para a prática da ciência. N. Rosmaninho, "Estratégia e Metodologia na Historiografia Artística Portuguesa (1846-1935)," *Revista da Universidade de Aveiro. Letras*, 1997, 14, p. 86. No entanto, uso o termo "positivismo" para me referir à história da arte portuguesa, dado que a matriz da sua prática é o positivismo do século XIX, num sentido mais lato, que inclui o empirismo de Leopold von Ranke. Embora Ranke afirmasse a necessidade de compreender e explicar os factos, ainda assim, foi considerado positivista, devido às suas posições relativamente à autonomia e à independência da história face à filosofia, e em virtude de encarar a história como um trabalho científico. Defendia que a história deveria focar-se no individual e deveria seguir uma metodologia indutiva e não dedutiva, o que, em última análise, significa rejeitar a filosofia da história ou, dito de outro modo, rejeitar a teoria. Ver F. Beiser, *The German Historicist Tradition*, Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 254-261. (F. Beiser distingue Ranke do positivismo de Comte mas não os opõe, vendo pontos em comum entre ambos, apesar de diferenças como a ideia de Ranke de que a história poderia ser, simultaneamente, científica e artística, não partilhada por Comte). Isto faz também parte daquilo a que se chamou *historicismo*, um termo complexo que tem sido relacionado com práticas diferentes e até contraditórias, mas que foi, sobretudo, associado à Escola Histórica Alemã, caracterizada pela crença no conhecimento histórico "objectivo" e na ideia da história como progresso. Ver P. Osborne, "Historicism as bad modernity," in: *The Politics of Time: Modernity and the Avant-Garde*, London 1995, p. 138.

[12] Rosmaninho, "Estratégia e Metodologia...," pp. 71–92. No início do século XX, as publicações de história da arte deste género eram enriquecidas por fotografias que, na realidade, se tornavam mais relevantes do que o texto. A fotografia foi reivindicada como um instrumento importante para a história (da arte) por Ramalho Ortigão, Sousa Viterbo e Joaquim de Vasconcelos, todos eles autores que eram, simultaneamente, historiadores da arte, escritores, etnógrafos ou arqueólogos, etc., sem que houvesse, necessariamente, distinção entre essas práticas. Ibidem, p. 81.

também àquilo a que chama uma forma problematizadora de praticar a história da arte, ou seja, a identificação de problemas e temas e a argumentação e o posicionamento face a esses problemas e temas. Existiam, essencialmente, duas correntes no seio desta prática; uma era nacionalista: tentava estabelecer uma especificidade artística nacional[13] e abordava os estilos nacionais, como o *manuelino*[14]. A outra distanciava-se de pontos de vista patrióticos, rejeitava a ideia da superioridade portuguesa e identificava uma dependência constante face a modelos estrangeiros na arte portuguesa. Esta era partilhada, por exemplo, por Joaquim de Vasconcelos (1849-1936) e Virgílio Correia (1888-1944), dois estudiosos com uma metodologia forte e consistente. Segundo Rosmaninho, Vasconcelos foi o primeiro e o único a colocar a arte no seio de uma perspectiva económica, e Correia o primeiro a estabelecer uma dicotomia centro/periferia[15]. Estas duas correntes prevaleceram ao longo de todo o século XX e, embora aparentemente em desacordo, partilham o mesmo tipo de abordagem. Em geral, do início do século XX em diante, a história da arte em Portugal procurou uma legitimação científica com o intuito da objectividade, através da descrição intensa e da acumulação de factos, e ao mesmo tempo com poucas dúvidas (excepção feita a Joaquim de Vasconcelos, que, cautelosamente, apelava à verificação e ao sentido crítico). Isto coexistia com uma concepção idealista da arte e a acumulação de factos acabava por justificar opções e posições historiográficas baseadas no gosto e na avaliação pessoais.

O EFEITO *ESTRANGEIRADO*

A posição de França remonta à dos *estrangeirados*, um termo cunhado para referir aqueles que, desde o século XVIII, tinham tido uma educação estrangeira ou interesse por aquilo que era estrangeiro[16].

O termo ora tinha uma conotação negativa, levantando suspeitas de falta de patriotismo, ora uma leitura positiva, querendo dizer que aqueles que eram *estrangeirados* tinham abertura de espírito e encaravam os modelos estrangeiros como meios de promoção do desenvolvimento do seu próprio

país. A revolução científica do século XVIII chegou a Portugal graças ao papel da rede de *estrangeirados*[17]. A sua tarefa teve, muitas vezes, uma componente de crítica feroz ao modo como as coisas eram administradas, cultivadas e organizadas em Portugal. No século XX, o termo foi usado pelo ensaísta António Sérgio (1883-1969)[18], que recordou o papel dos *estrangeirados* em Portugal para reforçar uma profunda autocrítica nacional. José-Augusto França conheceu António Sérgio, de quem recordaria mais tarde: "ele ensinou-me a pensar"[19].

Em 1926, o ano do golpe militar que instalou a ditadura[20], e mesmo antes de deixar o país viajando para Paris, onde permaneceu até 1933, Sérgio escreveu um ensaio intitulado "O Reino cadaveroso ou o problema da cultura em Portugal".

Aqueles que faziam a crítica ao atraso do país, isto é, António Sérgio e os autores de que se considerava herdeiro, faziam-no a partir de um ponto de vista superior, iluminado, uma vez que acreditavam ter o conhecimento necessário para propor, criar e implementar as reformas necessárias à suplantação desse atraso, mas, em geral e persistentemente, sentiam-se em inferioridade numérica face às forças reaccionárias.

No seu ensaio, Sérgio faz remontar ao século XVI o momento em que Portugal teria estado perfeitamente alinhado com o "melhor espírito europeu", isto é, com a "mentalidade das pessoas cultas"[21]. Esse foi o tempo dos chamados "descobrimentos", a conquista de territórios desconhecidos pela Europa ou que tinham permanecido inexplorados, em África, na América do Sul (Brasil) e na Índia, bem como de actividades económicas na China e

[13] Era esta a posição de, por exemplo, Ramalho Ortigão, 1836-1915, ou de José de Figueiredo, 1872-1937. Ver Rosmaninho, "Estratégia e Metodologia…," p. 82.

[14] O termo *manuelino* foi cunhado por Francisco Adolfo Varnhagen, um brasileiro com pai alemão, em 1842, num estudo sobre a Torre de Belém, em Lisboa, *Notícia Histórica e Descriptiva do Mosteiro de Belém*, para designar o programa arquitectónico e escultórico do gótico tardio, promovido durante o reinado de D. Manuel I (1495-1521), e relacionado com a sua política de afirmação expansionista.

[15] Rosmaninho, "Estratégia e Metodologia…"

[16] Em 1971, o filósofo Eduardo Lourenço (1923-2020) referiu exactamente isto: "Será a abordagem crítica de José-Augusto França a última metamorfose do famoso criticismo *estrangeirado*, mais capaz de detectar aquilo que falta (seguindo um modelo imaginário, situado noutro lugar) do que aquilo que somos?" E. Lourenço, "Os Círculos dos Delaunay ou o Estatuto da nossa Pintura," in: idem, *O Espelho Imaginário. Pintura, Anti-Pintura, Não-Pintura*, Lisboa 1996 [1971], pp. 115-116.

[17] Ver A. Carneiro, A. Simões and M. P. Diogo, "Enlightenment Science in Portugal: The *Estrangeirados* and Their Communication Networks," *Social Studies of Science*, 2000, 30(4), pp. 591-619.

[18] António Sérgio foi um filósofo, historiador, educador, político e ensaísta. Foi ministro da Educação durante um breve período, em 1923, criando bolsas para estudar no estrangeiro e financiando a investigação e a modernização das escolas. Foi um dos directores de uma importante revista, *Seara Nova*, que desempenhou um papel crucial na oposição ao regime fascista português.

[19] J.-A. França, entrevistado por J. C. Saraiva, *Sol*, Lisboa, Maio de 2016.

[20] Depois de 1933 e da ascensão de António de Oliveira Salazar ao poder, esta ditadura adoptou características fascistas como, por exemplo, a saudação levantando a mão direita, ou o estabelecimento de uma "educação cívica" obrigatória para rapazes e raparigas (separadamente) no tocante aos valores nacionais e para lhes ensinar os seus papéis enquanto cidadãos do regime (Mocidade Portuguesa). A censura, o controlo das artes e da cultura, as prisões políticas e a tortura foram também instituídos, tal como uma rede de informadores de potenciais comportamentos subversivos. O historiador Fernando Rosas analisou recentemente os aspectos em comum da ditadura portuguesa com outras ditaduras europeias, enfatizando as suas características fascistas. F. Rosas, *Salazar e os fascismos*, Lisboa, 2019.

[21] A. Sérgio, "O reino cadaveroso ou o problema da cultura em Portugal," in: idem, *Ensaios II*, Lisboa 1972 (2ª edição); o ensaio foi escrito em 1926 e lido, nesse mesmo ano, numa conferência em Coimbra.

no Japão. Foi a construção de um império, com conquistas territoriais e com uma rede económica organizada, que controlaria as principais rotas comerciais, e que duraria vários séculos, embora viesse a ser suplantado, em extensão e poder, por outros impérios europeus bem conhecidos, de finais do século XVI em diante. Para Sérgio, Portugal era a vanguarda europeia de Quinhentos, mas, desde então, perdera o seu estatuto e tornara-se uma nação permanentemente atrasada.

Um dos *estrangeirados* do século XVIII tinha já chamado a Portugal o "Reino Cadaveroso" ou "o Reino da Estupidez"[22], e Sérgio recupera essa terminologia, aplicando-a à sua própria época[23]. A nostalgia face ao Portugal do século XVI que António Sérgio expressa está directamente ligada aos "descobrimentos": o desenvolvimento da matemática e da geografia e o questionamento das autoridades medievais; em suma, o renascimento português, devia-se, segundo ele, às necessidades e consequências das viagens marítimas. Sérgio elogia as viagens por proporcionarem experiência, abertura de espírito e uma atitude crítica, negligenciando todas as outras consequências da política de conquista, da ocupação de terras e da subjugação de povos. Para ele, a "descoberta" representava um espírito indagador e investigador.

Então, o que é que aconteceu no século XVII? Para Sérgio, o país regrediu com as "fogueiras da inquisição" e com a perseguição de estrangeiros. Nesse momento, os portugueses começaram a ser vistos, e correctamente, segundo Sérgio, como os "Índios da Europa" ou "*cafres*"[24]. Vale a pena notar que os termos usados para a auto-depreciação se referem a povos das terras "descobertas" — índios do Brasil ou povos africanos, aqui mencionados com um nome extremamente pejorativo. Por conseguinte, estar atrasado era como ser um outro tipo de estrangeiro, um índio ou um africano. Para António Sérgio, os únicos estrangeiros que devíamos admirar achavam-se no seio da Europa, e Portugal, um país europeu, deveria estar à altura do prestígio continental.

Aqueles que se tornavam *estrangeirados* eram os que fugiam à inquisição, intelectuais judeus, e também aqueles que estudavam no estrangeiro ou que se estabeleciam noutros países por razões políticas e, finalmente, mais tarde, alguns

dos jesuítas perseguidos pelo Marquês de Pombal (ele próprio inspirado por Inglaterra, onde fora embaixador), no século XVIII. Estes criticariam severamente a cultura portuguesa e a falta de desenvolvimento, uma crítica que continuou no século XIX, sobretudo em dois momentos. Primeiramente, isto foi feito pela chamada geração romântica de Almeida Garrett e Alexandre Herculano, que tinham ambos passado algum tempo no exílio, em Inglaterra, por participarem na revolta contra a monarquia absolutista (1831) (os absolutistas seriam, posteriormente, derrotados, em 1834, aquando da vitória dos liberais na Guerra Civil Portuguesa). O segundo grupo de críticos foi a chamada Geração de 1870, composta por escritores e poetas que advogavam o realismo e o naturalismo e que tinham convicções políticas fortes, conquanto não necessariamente coincidentes. As suas famosas conferências do "Casino" acabaram por ser proibidas pelo Governo. É sobretudo a um destes autores, Antero de Quental (1842-1891), que António Sérgio vai buscar o seu próprio diagnóstico nacional[25].

DECADÊNCIA OU ATRASO

Em 1871, Quental, que defendia ideias socialistas e anarquistas, deu uma das mais famosas conferências do Casino, intitulada "Causas da decadência dos povos peninsulares", onde referia que Espanha e Portugal convergiam nos seus anos de glória e nos seus anos de decadência, embora sem advogar uma nação peninsular conjunta[26]. De facto, Quental considerava que o declínio tinha começado depois de uma crise provocada pela morte do único herdeiro masculino ao trono, D. Sebastião, em 1580, da qual resultou a governação de Portugal pelos monarcas espanhóis até 1640. Quanto a isto, bem como quanto ao resto da conferência, podemos verificar que Sérgio repete, quase exactamente, as palavras de Quental: Portugal foi, outrora, grande e a "raça

[22] Ribeiro Sanches (1699-1783), um médico e filósofo português, que estudou em Londres e se tornou médico da corte russa, mas que, mais tarde, se exilou em Paris por ser judeu. *Apud*, ibidem, p. 28.

[23] O poeta, escritor, crítico e professor Jorge de Sena (1919-1978), que adquiriu a cidadania brasileira em 1963 e foi professor de Literatura Portuguesa na Universidade do Wisconsin, nos E.U.A. ele próprio um estrangeirado, também viria a a dar a um conjunto de ensaios em dois volumes o título *O Reino da Estupidez*.

[24] "No século de Descartes e Espinosa éramos uns índios tupinambás", Sérgio, "O reino cadaveroso ou o problema...," p. 42. No início deste ensaio, Sérgio cita António Vieira numa das epígrafes: "O nome, que não sem razão nos chamam, de *cafres* da Europa...", p. 26.

[25] Joaquim Pedro de Oliveira Martins (1845-1894), historiador e político, foi também uma referência para António Sérgio, tal como os escritores Eça de Queiroz (1845-1900) e Ramalho Ortigão (1836-1915), todos eles figuras da Geração de 1870.

[26] A. de Quental, *Causas da Decadência dos Povos Peninsulares* [1871], Lisboa [s/d].

peninsular" era naturalmente "inteligente", com um "génio" "independente", "original" e "inventivo"[27]. Os portugueses e os espanhóis eram "naturalmente democráticos" e um "povo nobre", no qual a nobreza e as pessoas comuns tinham vivido em harmonia. Esta essência nacional mítica é encarada como a razão para o surgimento de um "mundo brilhante, criado pelo génio peninsular na sua expansão livre"[28] e corresponde, cronologicamente, à expansão e à conquista dos "descobrimentos", nos séculos XV e XVI (Quental dá início à era de glória numa data ligeiramente anterior à que dá Sérgio), e à influência da filosofia Neoplatónica, com as suas consequências no desenvolvimento de universidades, da ciência, da literatura e das artes. As causas da decadência, após essa era dourada, residem, segundo ele, na perda de três factores civilizacionais: a liberdade moral, a ascensão da classe média e o desenvolvimento da indústria. A principal razão para essa perda de civilização foi, diz Quental, o Catolicismo depois de Trento, com o governo da Inquisição e o domínio Jesuíta nas colónias. Segundo Quental, aquilo que uniu Espanha e Portugal na sua desgraça, durante três séculos, foi a sua subjugação à Igreja Católica[29].

Existem dois pontos da conferência de Quental que gostaria de sublinhar. Um é o facto de a decadência estar associada à ascensão do absolutismo (igreja absolutista e monarquia absolutista), ou, em geral, ao autoritarismo e à restrição da liberdade. O segundo é o facto de a decadência estar associada à falta de civilização. Estes estão, efectivamente, associados, dado que, para ele, a civilização é equivalente ao caminho progressista rumo a uma sociedade socialista, com uma indústria forte, para dar trabalho a uma classe proletária forte[30]. É também aqui que vemos a civilização aliada a ideais republicanos e anti-clericais.

Para recuperar o seu lugar legítimo na civilização, o país deveria abandonar os valores aristocráticos, adoptar a indústria moderna e a democracia e libertar-se da dependência estrangeira. No entanto, isto não significa uma rejeição *per se* do que era estrangeiro. Quental critica a expulsão de estrangeiros e judeus pela Inquisição[31] e considera a colonização e a indústria britânicas exemplares. O assunto em questão era a

autonomia económica nacional — uma autonomia tão boa e tão civilizada como as que se via na Grã-Bretanha e noutros países estrangeiros. Quanto às colónias, Quental lamenta o facto de a colonização portuguesa não ser melhor executada, e não a colonização em si mesma. Condena vigorosamente as missões religiosas, a escravatura e os massacres por este falhanço e lamenta a oportunidade perdida de civilizar as nações atrasadas. Escreve: "As conquistas sobre as nações atrasadas, por via de regra, não são justas nem injustas. Justificam-nas ou condenam-nas os resultados [...]. As conquistas romanas são hoje justificadas [...] porque criaram uma civilização superior àquela de que viviam os povos conquistados. A conquista da Índia pelos Ingleses é justa, porque é civilizadora. A conquista da Índia pelos Portugueses, da América pelos Espanhóis, foi injusta porque não civilizou."[32] E pergunta: "Como era possível, com as mãos cheias de sangue, e os corações cheios de orgulho, iniciar na civilização aqueles povos atrasados?"[33]

José-Augusto França refere-se ao diagnóstico de decadência de Antero de Quental como sendo correcto[34] e evoca a Geração de 1870 e as suas conferências considerando-as "superiores" e os tempos em que foram proibidas como "ignominiosos"[35], o que constitui uma referência velada ao regime ditatorial que ele próprio experienciou, bem como ao seu nacionalismo, que promovia o isolacionismo na cena internacional.

Claramente, França inscreve-se a si próprio entre os herdeiros dessa geração de lucidez, ao escrever na sua obra sobre o Romantismo em Portugal: "[...] os *estrangeirados* do Iluminismo eram os únicos portugueses que podiam garantir a viabilidade das estruturas socioculturais do romantismo português, com

[27] Ibidem, p. 14 e ss.

[28] Ibidem, p. 20.

[29] Como salientou Onésimo Teotónio de Almeida, um diagnóstico semelhante foi realizado por autores espanhóis como Adolfo de Castro, em *Examen Filosofico sobre las principales causas de la decadencia de España* (1852). Ver O. T. Almeida, "Antero de Quental on the Causes of the Decline of the Iberian Peoples: A Revisitation," *Mediterranean Studies*, 1989, 1, pp. 134–136. Este ensaio analisa a conferência de Quental, examinando as causas que ele determina para o declínio ibérico, discordando parcialmente delas. No entanto, não questiona o diagnóstico de atraso nem questiona a hierarquia europeia em que esse diagnóstico se baseia.

[30] "[...] à inércia industrial, oponhamos a iniciativa do trabalho livre, a indústria do povo, pelo povo e para o povo [...] organizada de uma maneira solidária e equitativa". In de Quental, *Causas da Decadência dos Povos...*, p. 68. Quental tinha viajado aos Estados Unidos alguns anos antes, uma viagem da qual não se sabe muito, mas consegue-se perceber claramente que nestas linhas faz eco do Discurso de Gettysburg de Lincoln, pronunciado em 1863.

[31] Isto contraria aquilo que Onésimo T. Almeida escreve no seu ensaio de 1989, onde afirma que Quental não cita a expulsão dos judeus, o que é um óbvio erro de leitura (ver p. 140, nota de rodapé 16). Ver Quental, *Causas da Decadência dos Povos...*, p. 45: "[...] a expulsão dos judeus e dos mouros empobrece ambas as nações [Portugal e Espanha], paralisa o comércio e a indústria, e dá um golpe mortal na agricultura [...]; a perseguição dos cristãos-novos permite que os capitais desapareçam [...]"

[32] Quental, *Causas da Decadência dos Povos...*, p. 63. Quental defende a ideia de que a civilização nas colónias implica misturar as raças e unir os conquistadores e os conquistados nos mesmos interesses pela superioridade moral e pelo progresso.

[33] idem, p. 62.

[34] J.-A. França, *O Romantismo em Portugal*, vol. 6, Lisboa, 1974 [1969], p. 1357.

[35] J.-A. França, *As Conferências do Casino no Parlamento*, Lisboa, 1973, pp. 9-10.

o seu nacionalismo dinâmico, de esquemas abertos, que era também o de Garrett, [...] Antero e Oliveira Martins [...]"[36]. Para França, eles eram a excepção, tal como ele próprio era uma excepção, aqueles que conseguiam ver a luz no meio da escuridão, defendendo a ideia de "civilização" da Revolução Francesa, enquanto triunfava uma mediocridade generalizada[37].

O IMPERIALISMO COMO CIVILIZAÇÃO

Um dos "pontos baixos" que Antero de Quental refere na sua conferência é a dependência portuguesa face à Grã-Bretanha, entendida como o desfecho terrível de um declínio permanente. Afirma que Portugal se tinha tornado uma colónia britânica, ao passo que as suas próprias colónias estavam a ser perdidas para outros países e que a influência portuguesa na China e no Japão tinha desaparecido[38].

Existe um contexto mais amplo para este lamento, no qual é importante focar o apoio britânico a Portugal na guerra contra as invasões francesas de 1807-1810 e, mais tarde, o apoio na guerra civil, tomando o partido dos liberais, bem como a "perda" do Brasil como colónia.

O processo que conduziu à independência do Brasil é uma consequência directa das invasões francesas e das relações institucionais e comerciais com a Grã-Bretanha: com a iminente invasão pelos franceses, a corte foi transferida, em 1807, para o Brasil, graças à ajuda dos britânicos, e o Rio de Janeiro foi estabelecido como capital do império[39]. Esta fuga foi tornada possível após negociações tensas, que continuariam nos anos seguintes, com vários ajustamentos, garantindo que os britânicos nunca reconheceriam um monarca não-português, em troca de benefícios comerciais na América, da promessa da futura abolição do comércio de escravos e de apoio político, comercial e militar à Inglaterra, em caso de conflito[40]. No momento da partida da corte, o reino era considerado perdido e, pouco depois da sua chegada ao Brasil, a estrutura estatal foi reproduzida na colónia, em conformidade com a que anteriormente tinha existido na metrópole, resultando que, daí em diante, o império podia ser governado a partir

do Brasil. Além disso, os portos brasileiros foram abertos ao comércio, o que significou uma independência económica total relativamente à metrópole, a qual, até então, tinha tido direitos comerciais exclusivos. As políticas portuguesas basearam-se, pois, na convicção de que manter o império era mais importante do que manter a metrópole, e foi concebido um novo mapa comercial, com o Brasil no seu centro. Tal como conclui o historiador Valentim Alexandre, "Dar um novo centro ao império era relegar a metrópole para a periferia"[41].

Mesmo depois da derrota francesa (com ajuda britânica), em 1814, o reino continuaria a ser governado a partir do Brasil até 1821, quando o Rei D. João VI foi forçado a regressar a Portugal para lidar com uma revolta liberal e nacionalista, deixando o seu filho, e futuro rei do Brasil independente, no comando[42]. As condições institucionais e económicas para um reino autónomo no Brasil já estavam criadas e a independência foi declarada em 1822, com duas monarquias encabeçadas por pai e filho. É interessante verificar que, segundo alguns pontos de vista, tornar-se uma colónia de uma colónia[43] era considerado pior do que enfrentar a independência de uma colónia: perspectiva que era uma ameaça real, dado que o imperador do Brasil independente era herdeiro directo da coroa portuguesa. Ainda por cima quando, como afirmou um jornal, o Brasil tinha sido um país de "selvagens" até à colonização portuguesa, que fora responsável por "civilizar" o território[44]. Resumindo, o trauma consistia, primeiramente, na mudança de papéis: durante a governação portuguesa, a metrópole tornou-se subalterna face à colónia, dado que o rei português governava a partir do Brasil; e, em segundo lugar, havia o risco de se inverterem, total e permanentemente, as relações de poder após a independência: o rei do Brasil poderia tornar-se, por herança, rei de Portugal, o que significaria este ser governado por um país "incivilizado".

A nostalgia de um império que Portugal não fora capaz de conservar prosperou ao

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[36] França, *O Romantismo em Portugal*, vol. 6, p. 1360.

[37] Ibidem, pp. 1354-1355.

[38] Quental, *Causas da Decadência dos Povos...*, pp. 22-23.

[39] Sobre a fluidez da concepção do império português, visto como cobrindo os quatro cantos do mundo e onde todos eram súbditos do rei português, uma concepção que facilita este abandono da metrópole, ver F. Vlachou, "The empire in transition and history painting in Portugal" in *The Disappointed Writer. Selected Essays*, Lisboa, 2019, pp. 97-125.

[40] Ver V. Alexandre, "O processo de independência do Brasil," in: *História da Expansão Portuguesa*, eds. F. Bethencourt e K. Chauduri, vol. 4: *Do Brasil para África*, Lisboa, 1998, pp. 13-17.

[41] Ibidem, p. 17.

[42] Ibidem, p. 26.

[43] M. da Fronteira, *Memórias*, *apud* Alexandre, "O processo de independência do Brasil", p. 26. Também p. 36.

[44] *Campeão Lisbonense*, nº 60, 21 de Maio de 1822, *apud* Alexandre, "O processo de independência do Brasil," p. 35.

longo de todo o século XIX, por vezes associada aos ideais republicanos e ao nacionalismo imperialista que rejeitava a dependência face aos britânicos, pois a responsabilidade dessa dependência era atribuída à monarquia. O mito da missão civilizadora Europeia associava-se aos ideais republicanos da Revolução Francesa, e por isso prosperava entre anti-monárquicos. Era nada mais do que a versão laicizada da missão evangelizadora que servira de justificação à expansão marítima durante séculos.

Recorde-se que a *mission civilisatrice* fez também parte da justificação para a colonização francesa desde a revolução de 1789 e serviu de mote às invasões francesas e sua política de conquista — a República civilizava. A história da França republicana é inseparável da história da França colonial, escreve Dino Constantini, e a *mission civilisatrice* foi "o principal vector de justificação das políticas racializadas que [a França] impôs nas suas colónias"[45].

Com o trauma da perda da América, a atenção virou-se para África, novamente justificada pela "missão civilizadora" e pelo "progresso", fazendo com que as dramáticas necessidades económicas da metrópole parecessem um motivo menor[46]. Uma série de medidas para ir ao encontro das ambições expansionistas promovia a abolição do comércio de escravos e do trabalho forçado e, em última análise, cedia à pressão que os britânicos exerciam havia muito. Baseadas em valores humanistas, temperados com a crença nas capacidades míticas dos portugueses para civilizar, estas medidas transmitiam a expectativa de que o desinvestimento no comércio de escravos reforçasse outras áreas de investimento, e de que melhores resultados económicos seriam alcançados por uma sociedade de trabalhadores livres. Por outro lado, foi promovida a colonização branca, com o objectivo de propagar os "valores europeus"[47], embora o povoamento efectivo só viesse a ser alcançado depois da Primeira Guerra Mundial. Quanto ao trabalho forçado e à servidão, estes seriam mantidos, quer abertamente quer mais ou menos secretamente, até ao deflagrar da guerra colonial, em 1961, com o pretexto da sua suposta "função civilizadora"[48]. Ao longo de toda a segunda

metade do século XIX, tanto as (raras) vozes humanistas contra a discriminação, como as que eram marcadas pelo preconceito, invocariam a demanda da civilização nos territórios coloniais, quer pensassem que esta deveria ser suave e pacífica ou violenta e imposta.

Com a partilha de África a envolver outros países europeus, incluindo a Grã-Bretanha, nas décadas de 1870 e 1880, surgiu um novo argumento, adequado às ideias expansionistas: o argumento do conhecimento científico, promovido pela recém-criada Sociedade de Geografia portuguesa (1875), que organizaria expedições científicas entre Angola e Moçambique, uma vez mais "no interesse da ciência e da civilização"[49]. Em breve, esse argumento seria acrescentado às ideias mitificadas de raça e nação, que também eram comuns noutros nacionalismos europeus, baseadas no evolucionismo e no darwinismo social, que reforçariam a crença na "missão histórica" do povo português, a sua vocação "natural" para gestas marítimas e para levar a cultura, a religião e o conhecimento a outros povos (naturalmente inferiores)[50]. Estas ideias foram propagadas em jornais pelas elites intelectuais, quer fazendo eco quer desencadeando manobras políticas, mudanças governamentais e legislações. A Conferência de Berlim, em 1884-1885, que determinou a exigência de uma "ocupação efectiva" do território para reclamar direitos coloniais[51], e a Conferência de Bruxelas, em 1889, estavam cheias de "retórica humanitária", para justificar a soberania ou a influência dos países europeus em África como um "imperativo ético e civilizacional"[52]. De facto, a necessidade da abolição definitiva da escravatura e do comércio de escravos (um sinal de civilização com o qual toda a gente concordava, embora não praticasse essa abolição) foi um argumento

[45] Constantini, *Mission civilisatrice. Le rôle de l'histoire coloniale dans la construction de l'identité politique française*, Paris, 2008, p. 14.

[46] A primeira versão desse projecto foi apresentada à corte em 1836, pelo Marquês Sá da Bandeira, mas só décadas mais tarde seria posta em prática. Ibidem, p. 68.

[47] Valentim Alexandre afirma que existiam ideias "etnocêntricas" e "integracionistas", semelhantes às de Tocqueville e defendidas por poucas pessoas, como Sá da Bandeira ou Andrade Corvo: igualdade entre as raças, defesa do fim da escravatura e do trabalho forçado e a integração do trabalho indígena na economia, através de salários (conquanto protegendo os privilégios dos colonos), bem como a manutenção do domínio europeu, com o objectivo de civilizar povos que, de outro modo, seriam selvagens. Ver V. Alexandre, "Nação e Império," in: *História da Expansão Portuguesa*, eds. F. Bethencourt e K. Chauduri, vol. 4: *Do Brasil para África*, Lisboa 1998, pp. 94-95, 99-100 e 106-107.

[48] Ver M. B. Jerónimo, "The 'Civilisation Guild': Race and Labour in the Third Portuguese Empire, c. 1870–1930," in: *Racism and ethnic relations in the Portuguese-speaking world*, eds. F. Bethencourt e A. J. Pearce, New York, 2012, pp. 173-199.

[49] Decreto de 11 de Março de 1877, citado em Alexandre, "Nação e Império," p. 115.

[50] Ibidem, pp. 132-137.

[51] A obrigação de ocupação territorial referia-se à costa e não às partes interiores do território africano, ao contrário do que é normalmente defendido. Ibidem, p. 127.

[52] M. B. Jerónimo, *Livros Brancos, Almas Negras. A «missão civilizadora» do colonialismo português 1870-1930*, Lisboa, 2009, p. 56. Também, Jerónimo, "The 'Civilisation Guild'...," p. 177: "Os planos desenvolvimentistas que tinham como objectivo transformar o papel e a função da empresa imperial portuguesa em África — na qual a formulação de políticas de trabalho nativo, efectivas e eficientes, tinham um lugar crucial, especialmente depois da abolição, formal e legal, do comércio de escravos e da escravatura — foram sempre condicionadas por uma doutrina racializada da missão civilizadora".

usado a favor da efectiva ocupação territorial[53]. Na sequência das conferências internacionais, teve início uma campanha europeia que punha em causa os direitos de Portugal aos territórios coloniais — Portugal não era suficientemente civilizado (não era suficientemente europeu) para estar a civilizar os outros[54]. As manobras portuguesas para a ocupação territorial, unindo as costas ocidental e oriental de África, entre Angola e Moçambique, desencadeariam o Ultimato Britânico (1890), que exigia a retirada imediata das forças portuguesas dos territórios na esfera dos interesses britânicos[55]. Tratou-se de um momento traumático, que incrementaria as duas principais correntes intelectuais, já referidas: a nacionalista, empenhada em preservar o orgulho nacional, e a autocrítica, que concordava com o desdém internacional.

A vigilância internacional tornar-se-ia uma fonte de preocupações, e ainda mais depois da Primeira Guerra Mundial com o papel assumido pela Liga das Nações no controlo da cena internacional do pós-guerra. No entanto, apesar de relatórios e incidentes[56], "a tradição de legalização do trabalho forçado nativo continuou"[57], e o terceiro império português, tal como os impérios europeus dos séculos XIX e XX[58], era defendido pela retórica e pela ideologia da *missão civilizadora*[59], ao passo que o empreendimento económico por detrás dele era escondido com o beneplácito de organizações internacionais[60].

A narrativa da civilização prendia-se com complexos de inferioridade que determinavam posicionamentos políticos e que acabaram por conduzir ao fim da monarquia em Portugal, em 1910. O lamento de Quental relativamente à dependência portuguesa face à Grã-Bretanha era uma expressão de sentimentos mais profundos: o luto pela perda do Brasil e a tristeza por o país não ser tão civilizado quanto os britânicos. Quental e Sérgio, e outros como eles, sofreram o efeito "estrangeirado": também eles consideravam Portugal insuficientemente civilizado para ser capaz de civilizar os outros.

O que está aqui em jogo é aquilo a que Fredrick Jameson se refere no seu ensaio de 1988, "Modernism and Imperialism": "durante este período, a palavra 'imperialismo' designa, não a

relação entre a metrópole e a colónia, mas sim a rivalidade de vários estados-nação, imperiais e metropolitanos, entre si"[61]. Isso significava "reprimir o eixo da alteridade", levantando "problemas só acessoriamente relativos à realidade colonial" e tornando o outro colonial invisível[62]. Por conseguinte, a *barbárie* e a *civilização* eram termos destinados a julgar as nações no seio da retórica imperialista da rivalidade entre impérios, uma rivalidade constitutiva da modernidade. Essa retórica estabeleceu-se no seio dos impérios europeus, e também nos Estados Unidos — em 1899, a propósito da guerra entre os EUA e as Filipinas, Rudyard Kipling escrevia o poema *The White Man's Burden*, um hino à colonização, apresentada como vocação altruísta do homem branco para espalhar civilização[63].

Em Portugal, tanto os *estrangeirados* como os nacionalistas queriam estar à altura das nações mais poderosas. Dado que Portugal sofria de dependência económica e de subordinação face a uma delas, ao que acresciam os recentes acontecimentos no Brasil, a sua posição era ambígua para os referidos intelectuais portugueses, que queriam que o país fosse um império e, ao mesmo tempo, temiam ser tratados como uma colónia. A tese de Jameson é a de que o imperialismo ocidental, desde a Partilha de África na década de 1880 pelas potências ocidentais (o que significa imperialismo associado a capitalismo, progresso, crescimento económico e revolução tecnológica), é constitutivo do modernismo e pode ser encontrado na literatura modernista, não de um modo explícito, mas estruturalmente, sob a forma de "sintomas formais"[64], e que, por conseguinte, o

[53] Jerónimo, "The 'Civilisation Guild'...," p. 180: "Portugal precisava de se expandir territorialmente por modo a civilizar o comércio (para transformar o comércio num empreendimento legítimo tributável) e tendo em vista a criação das condições institucionais necessárias para civilizar as populações africanas".

[54] "[Portugal] via ser-lhe negada a qualidade de nação europeia de pleno direito, capaz de 'civilizar' os povos 'atrasados' — o que atingia o próprio cerne de uma identidade construída em torno das Descobertas como momento fundador da missão de Portugal no mundo", Alexandre, "Nação e Império," p. 126.

[55] Ibidem, p. 129. Uma revolta republicana ocorreu, pouco depois, em Janeiro de 1891, como reacção ao ultimato, associando a monarquia às políticas que a ele conduziram.

[56] Como seja o caso Cadbury, relatando as condições dos trabalhadores do cacau em São Tomé (1909), ou o *Relatório Ross*, em 1925, entre outros. Ver D. R. Curto, "Prefácio," in: Jerónimo, *Livros Brancos, Almas Negras...*, pp. 18-20 e o Capítulo 5 do mesmo livro, "Novos métodos, velhas conclusões: o *Relatório Ross*," pp. 211-250.

[57] Jerónimo, "The 'Civilisation Guild'...," p. 199.

[58] Quanto à retórica imperial europeia, ver F. Cooper, "States, Empires, and Political Imagination," in: *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*, Berkeley, 2005, pp. 153-203.

[59] Sigo aqui a análise de Miguel B. Jerónimo, que enfatiza as motivações económicas do império, discordando de Valentim Alexandre, que conclui que o projecto colonial português, no século XIX, era primeiramente estratégico (em relação ao poder de Madrid) e ideológico (a auto-estima do país, construída pelas elites que estabelecem a mítica missão histórica civilizadora de Portugal, desde o século XV), e que as motivações económicas eram secundárias, embora acabassem por prevalecer no início do século XX. V. Alexandre, "O império português (1825-1890): ideologia e economia," *Análise Social*, 2004, 39(169), pp. 959-979.

[60] Curto, "Prefácio," p. 40.

[61] Em T. Eagleton, F. Jameson, E. Said, *Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature*, Minneapolis, London, 1990, p. 47.

[62] Ibidem, p. 51. A citação na íntegra é: "De 1884 à Primeira Guerra Mundial, a relação de dominação entre o Primeiro e o Terceiro Mundos foi mascarada e deslocada por uma consciência prioritária (e talvez ideológica) do imperialismo como sendo, essencialmente, uma relação entre as potências do Primeiro Mundo ou detentoras de Impérios, e esta consciência tendia a reprimir o mais elementar eixo da alteridade, e a levantar problemas só acessoriamente relativos à realidade colonial".

modernismo-enquanto-formalismo nunca é, verdadeiramente, apolítico.

Posso acrescentar que, se a escrita de história da arte se desenvolveu no seio do contexto modernista, então o imperialismo é também estruturalmente constitutivo dela.

A HISTÓRIA DA ARTE DE JOSÉ-AUGUSTO FRANÇA — A ARTE COMO CIVILIZAÇÃO

Trabalhando como crítico de arte, editor, curador e historiador da arte, José-Augusto França desenvolveu uma narrativa baseada na sociologia da arte aprendida com Pierre Francastel (1900-1970), com quem estudou em Paris. Essa narrativa elegia Paris como modelo artístico e cultural e o atraso permanente da arte portuguesa era diagnosticado através de comparações com esse modelo. França escrevia com uma metodologia empírica, compilando factos e defendendo vigorosamente uma posição anti-teoria[65], que era celebrada como "evidência"[66], tanto por ele próprio como por historiadores da arte posteriores. Isto estava em linha com a abordagem positivista dos historiadores da arte do início do século XX, na qual a acumulação de factos dava credibilidade científica e a ilusão de neutralidade à produção de história. Estava também em linha com o efeito *estrangeirado* ao eleger modelos estrangeiros com os quais comparar a arte portuguesa, achando-a sempre abaixo das expectativas internacionais. Também existem relações mais complexas a ser estabelecidas com a entranhada narrativa da civilização, anteriormente comentada, o que será feito mais adiante.

França começou por escrever romances, mas em breve se tornou crítico de arte e de cinema, e depois galerista, tendo chegado também a experimentar a pintura. O seu primeiro romance passa-se em Angola, onde viveu após a morte do seu pai, de 1941 a 1945, tentando tomar conta do negócio da família, relacionado com o comércio de café. Regressou porque, contou sessenta anos mais tarde, não se conseguia adaptar a ver a miséria provocada por um "colonialismo torpe"[67]. Até 1962, quando apresentou a sua tese em história na Sorbonne, em Paris (onde começou a estudar em 1959), sobre a reconstrução de Lisboa a seguir ao terramoto de 1755, foi, sobretudo, crítico e curador de arte. Promoveu as primeiras exposições surrealistas em Lisboa, em 1949, nelas participando também como artista[68], e, depois, em 1952, assumindo nessa altura o papel de curador. Nesse mesmo ano, abriu a sua própria galeria, a Galeria de Março, e, embora só viesse a estar activa durante dois anos, nela foram organizadas mais de trinta exposições, que mostravam artistas modernistas, o surrealismo e, pouco depois, a arte abstracta[69].

Quando França apresentou a sua tese de especialização em sociologia da arte, escrita sob supervisão de Pierre Francastel, em 1963, na École des Hautes Études, em Paris, intitulada *A Arte e a Sociedade Portuguesa do Século XX*, propôs um gráfico imaginário para explicar a arte portuguesa do século XX. O gráfico se, desenhado, teria dois pontos altos: a vanguarda e o futurismo, em 1915-1917, a que se seguiria uma acentuada depressão até subir de novo com o surrealismo e o abstraccionismo, em 1945-1947 e daí em diante[70]. A depressão correspondia ao atraso, que França explicava como consequência de uma não-transmissão de conhecimento entre diferentes gerações de artistas. O gráfico, feito enquanto historiador da arte, confirmava as suas próprias escolhas como crítico de arte nos anos anteriores, traçando uma evolução do surrealismo ao abstraccionismo que, na verdade, não tinha qualquer base na realidade. De facto, as primeiras pinturas abstraccionistas foram produzidas antes das primeiras experiências surrealistas, mas França só as incluiu na narrativa depois de serem exibidas na sua própria galeria, em 1953, mantendo assim a história linear progressiva da arte portuguesa[71].

[63] Houve várias reacções anti-imperialstas a este poema, a mais famosa das quais de Mark Twain, no texto "To the Person sitting in the darkness", em 1901. A estrutura imperialista no pensamento da modernidade é, no entanto, duradoura: Abordando o filósofo e historiador holandês Luuk van Middelaar, uma das figuras mais influentes nos bastidores da União Europeia, Perry Anderson conta que, num livro de 1993, Middlelaar recupera o poema de Kipling para reclamar o papel modernizador da colonização, que se sobrepôs, segundo ele, a todos os crimes coloniais; Middlelaar fazia a analogia com a guerra dos EUA contra o Afeganistão, cujo objectivo, escreveu, seria trazer aquele país para a modernidade. Segundo ele, "estamos pacientemente à espera por um Kipling dos dias de hoje que se aperceba que são os modernos, não os brancos, que têm hoje uma missão histórica mundial: alguém que cante orgulhosamente e sem vergonha em louvor do Fardo do Homem Moderno". Ver P. Anderson, "The European Coup" in *London Review of Books*, 17 Dezembro 2020.

[64] Ibidem, p. 64. Jameson analisa o modo como a literatura modernista é escrita, do ponto de vista da metrópole, e mesmo que as colónias ou os colonizados façam parte da narrativa, situam-se fora da vida quotidiana dos países do Primeiro Mundo, que são a "matéria-prima" da literatura: o império é representado pelo desconhecido e prevalece "a incapacidade para captar o modo como o sistema [potência colonial e colónias] funciona como um todo" (p. 51); por conseguinte, uma infinidade indeterminada e exterior acha-se muitas vezes presente na narrativa modernista. Esta não é uma questão a discutir aqui, mas Jameson tenta marcar uma posição relativamente à especificidade do modernismo irlandês (James Joyce, em particular), um modernismo que ele acha ter "virado maliciosamente a relação imperial às avessas" (p. 64), devido à sua condição descentrada e subjugada, mas suficientemente próxima da metrópole para partilhar com ela a demanda modernista.

[65] J.-A. França, "Sobre História (Sociológica) da Arte," in: (In)definições de Cultura, Lisboa, 1997 [1979/81], p. 109.

[66] França argumentava também que ninguém deveria ser citado, para além dos autores da época em estudo, de forma a garantir a objectividade. J.-A. França, *O Romantismo em Portugal*, Lisboa, 1974 [1969], vol. 1, pp. 17-18. A intromissão da teoria era um defeito, dado que pertencia ao domínio das "ideias" e da "abstracção" e não ao domínio dos factos. França, "Sobre História (Sociológica) da Arte," p. 109.

[67] França, entrevista por Saraiva, jornal *Sol*, 31 Maio 2016.

[68] Os surrealistas dividiram-se, de imediato, em dois grupos, um chamado *Grupo Surrealista de Lisboa* e o outro chamado, simplesmente, *Os Surrealistas*. França fazia parte do primeiro grupo e elegeu o artista mais velho António Pedro como figura tutelar.

O seu trabalho sobre o Romantismo em Portugal, uma investigação minuciosa sem qualquer paralelo na historiografia de arte portuguesa, foi apresentado como tese de doutoramento na Sorbonne, em 1969, e, uma vez mais, usaria a imagem de um gráfico (não desenhado) para concluir que, embora surgissem alguns pontos positivos, o balanço geral era muito negativo para a arte portuguesa do século XIX[72]. O atraso é também um problema-chave quando considera que o século XIX português só terminou em 1910, noutra importante edição em dois volumes, *A Arte em Portugal no Século XIX*[73]. *Romantismo* é um termo usado como um conceito adquirido, que não precisa de definição salvo a de ser uma dada arte com determinadas características formais, de uma dada época[74]: foi a arte da Europa no século XIX e Portugal, um país europeu, em geral, não conseguiu realizá-la, segundo o seu diagnóstico.

Tanto *O Romantismo em Portugal* como outro livro, *Os Anos Vinte em Portugal*, publicado em 1992, ou ainda nos mais recentes *O ano X. Lisboa 1936* (2010) e *O ano XX. Lisboa 1946* (2012), têm o mesmo subtítulo, "Estudo de Factos Socioculturais". Quase todas as introduções que fez aos seus livros se referem ao seu trabalho de história da arte enquanto tal, ou enquanto estudo dos "factos da civilização"[75]. Esta designação é tirada directamente da Sociologie des Objets de Civilisation de Pierre Francastel, que é a base de um bem conhecido livro do autor francês, *Arte e Técnica nos Séculos XIX e XX*, no qual afirma que a arte é tanto um objecto de civilização quanto a tecnologia, e que ambas estão interligadas[76]. França escreve, seguindo Francastel, que "um facto cultural *reflecte* valores sociais e, ao mesmo tempo, *propõe* valores à sociedade"[77]. Em textos posteriores, faculta uma designação adicional, "facto artístico", referindo-se sempre à sua dupla função: reflectir e propor[78]. Para França, a função proponente é aquilo que torna a arte um factor civilizador. Embora a abordagem de França estivesse inscrita no campo da sociologia da arte, o autor mantinha que o "facto artístico" é uma totalidade, com autonomia plena. Cabe ao especialista, o historiador/sociólogo (e o crítico) da arte, trazer esse facto artístico intacto na sua unidade, e identificar o modo como ele funciona e como age na sociedade: "Um objecto de

civilização vive as suas conjunturas: a sociologia dos objectos de civilização revela-as"[79].

A educação de França com Francastel confirmou e alimentou a narrativa do atraso, baseada no contraste entre a civilização e o "primitivo", ou "subdesenvolvido", que estava bem estabelecida na tradição intelectual portuguesa. Conforme vimos em Antero de Quental, os intelectuais preocupavam-se tanto a incapacidade de ser civilizado, como com os regimes autoritários que tinham contribuído para a decadência e para a progressiva perda de qualidades civilizadoras (europeias). Adoptar esta posição significava que França estava a lutar e a assumir uma posição opositora ao regime fascista português do qual era testemunha e vítima, partilhando-a aliás com António Sérgio, seu contemporâneo, apesar de uma geração mais velha, e tal como Quental estivera contra o absolutismo. No entanto, França, como tantos outros, manteve a *ordem do discurso*[80] que prevalecia e que assumia uma posição histórica privilegiada para a Europa, sinónimo de civilização. Além disso, a *arte europeia* era vista como sinónimo de civilização, uma ideia comum, vastamente partilhada tanto na opinião popular como na prática da história da arte — podemos recordar, a título de exemplo, o programa de Kenneth Clark na BBC, exibido em 1969, precisamente com o título '*Civilização*'.

O que é que significava ser civilizado? Significava ser europeu, significava não ser deixado na periferia[81]. E, se a arte tinha uma autonomia plena e, ao mesmo tempo, uma função civilizadora, não tinha conseguido incluir Portugal entre os civilizados. O conceito de arte como factor civilizador e como uma totalidade autónoma permite atribuir a culpa

[69] J.-A. França, *A Arte em Portugal no Século XX*, Lisboa, 1991 [1974], pp. 480-481.

[70] J.-A. França, *A Arte e a Sociedade Portuguesa no Século XX*, Lisboa, 1972 [1963].

[71] As primeiras exposições de abstracções foram realizadas por Fernando Lanhas, Nadir Afonso e outros, no Porto, em 1943-44. A. Portela, *Salazarismo e Artes Plásticas*, Biblioteca Breve, 1982. Ver também o livro escrito no duplo papel de crítico e historiador da arte, J.-A. França, *Pintura Abstracta Portuguesa em 1960*, Lisboa, 1960.

[72] França, *O Romantismo em Portugal*, vol. 6, pp. 1355-1359.

[73] E que começara antes, em 1780 (o que corresponde à reconstrução de Lisboa depois do terramoto). Ver J.-A. França, *A Arte em Portugal no Século XIX*, Lisboa, 1990 [1967], p. 14.

[74] O mesmo ocorre noutras obras com conceitos como *modernidade* e *iluminismo*. O *iluminismo* é identificado, em Portugal, como tendo lugar durante a governação do Marquês de Pombal e correspondendo a uma absorção empírica de ideias que tinham estado "no ar durante muito tempo". J.-A. França, *Lisboa Pombalina e o Iluminismo*, Lisboa, 1966 [1965], p. 305.

[75] Nomeadamente nos livros referidos e, por exemplo, em França, *A Arte em Portugal no Século XX*, p. 8.

[76] P. Francastel, *Art and Technology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, MIT Press, 2000 [1956], p. 151. O livro foi traduzido em português em 1983, publicado pela Livros do Brasil.

[77] França, *O Romantismo em Portugal*, p. 13.

[78] J.-A. França, "Verdade Prática e Verdades Práticas" (1963) e "Sobre História (Sociológica) da Arte" (1979/81), in: idem, *(In)definições de Cultura*, p. 144 e 116.

[79] J.-A. França, "O 'facto artístico' na sociologia da arte" (1987), ibidem, p. 105.

[80] Uso o termo de Michel Foucault para o conjunto de regras invisíveis que determinam as palavras, os pensamentos e as acções de uma pessoa e das quais raramente se tem consciência. M. Foucault, *As Palavras e as Coisas*, Edições 70, 1998 [1966].

[81] Foteini Vlachou analisou extensamente o conceito de periferia, enquanto unidade temporal e não apenas espacial, e o modo como ele implica a avaliação de atraso relativamente àqueles países que não são considerados o centro, em "Why Spatial? Time and the periphery", *Visual Resources*, 2016, 32(1–2), pp. 9-24 (DOI: 10.1080/01973762.2016.1132500), incluído em *The Disappointed Writer. Selected Essays*, Lisboa, 2019.

à arte, independentemente de factos externos, por não civilizar, ou seja, a arte portuguesa seria responsável pelo seu próprio atraso (e pelo atraso da sociedade) — teria uma incapacidade inerente para se afirmar dentro dos parâmetros europeus. Isto significa que esta história da arte que se apresenta "sociológica" entende essa "sociologia" como sendo a averiguação do impacto que a arte tem na sociedade e não a consideração dos contextos políticos, económicos e sociais na produção, circulação e recepção das obras de arte.

É segundo esta concepção da história da arte que França defende a abstracção, juntando a sua voz à narrativa dominante, como tantos outros, quer artistas quer historiadores da arte. Em França, depois da Segunda Guerra Mundial, e em rivalidade com os EUA, foi também a arte abstracta a ser elevada à posição de arte moderna absoluta. Em 1973, uma edição em três volumes defendia a propriedade francesa da arte abstracta, argumentando que o peso da capital francesa na arte ocidental lhe conferia um estatuto especial e afirmando que a abstracção era dominante em Paris desde 1945[82]. É este partido francês que França toma, adoptando a designação de "abstracção lírica"[83] para promover os artistas abstractos portugueses. Esse termo foi cunhado para concorrer com o norte-americano "expressionismo abstracto", e para reclamar a precedência de Paris na abstracção. Ao promover o abstraccionismo em Portugal, França alinhou, finalmente, Portugal com a civilização europeia. Por outras palavras, o habitual diagnóstico de atraso relativamente a um país europeu periférico está alinhado com a narrativa hegemónica que hierarquiza continentes e países em relações de poder, que são, simultaneamente, produtoras e produtos dessa narrativa hegemónica.

Esta ideia sedimentada prevaleceu depois da Revolução dos Cravos, em 1974; de facto, José-Augusto França produz uma grande quantidade de trabalho depois da revolução e tornara-se entretanto director da mais importante revista de arte, publicada pela Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, *Colóquio Artes* (1971-1996). É também depois da revolução que a sua história da arte se institucionaliza, com a criação do Departamento de História da Arte da Universidade Nova

de Lisboa, em 1974. Em geral, os livros de história da arte escritos por historiadores da arte mais novos, dedicados aos séculos XIX e XX (e até a antes), dividiram, tal como França, a cronologia em décadas e os artistas em gerações[84] sucedendo-se umas às outras numa progressão linear e sempre com um atraso fatal e inevitável, excepto em celebrados e pontuais casos de sucesso[85]. Embora surgissem alguns trabalhos novos, a metodologia de França, ainda assim, permaneceu uma referência vital para os historiadores da arte, e as suas cronologias, os seus conceitos históricos, gráficos imaginários e extensos inventários de factos nunca foram plenamente questionados, sendo usados como fontes para a escrita de história da arte posterior. Como escreveu Paulo Varela Gomes em 2009: "[...] quarenta anos depois de 1967, evoluímos muito pouco em matéria de conhecimento e da problematização dos temas [...] aos quais J.-A. França dedicou o primeiro volume da sua *A Arte em Portugal do século XIX*. Tudo o que foi escrito desde então não é muito mais do que a substituição de algumas peças do puzzle que J.-A- França desenhou e a criação de uma ou outra peça nova"[86].

Não obstante, foram testadas outras maneiras de escrever a história da arte portuguesa, como o trabalho de Paulo Varela Gomes, que tentou não usar categorias e conceitos oriundos da narrativa hegemónica que considerava inadequada aos assuntos portugueses, ou o de Foteini Vlachou, que prestou uma atenção meticulosa às condições sociais, económicas e políticas para a produção de arte em Portugal nos séculos XVIII e XIX, observando, por exemplo, que o investimento em artes e ofícios decorativos era muito mais significativo do que na educação académica, e compreendendo, pois, as razões institucionais e políticas para não investir numa melhor educação artística em pintura e escultura[87]. Posso acrescentar que esta situação fez com que vários artistas vanguardistas e modernistas

[82] M. Seuphor, M. Ragon, *L'Art abstrait*, 1939–1970, Paris 1973.

[83] "Abstracção lírica" foi usado em 1947 por Jean Marchand e Georges Mathieu para a exposição *L'Imaginaire* na Galerie du Luxembourg, em Paris. Ver D. Vallier, *A Arte Abstracta*, Lisboa, 1980, p. 279.

[84] Quanto ao conceito de geração em *A Arte em Portugal no Século XX (1911-1961)*, de França, ver A. R. Salgueiro, *"A Arte em Portugal no século XX (1911–1961)." José-Augusto França e a perspectiva Sociológica*, Lisboa, 2012, p. 62-63 e 82 e ss.

[85] Ver R. M. Gonçalves, *História da Arte em Portugal*, vol. 13: *Pioneiros da Modernidade*, Lisboa, 1988; B.P. de Almeida, *Pintura Portuguesa do Século XX*, Porto, 1994 (este livro teve uma edição aumentada em 2017: *Arte Portuguesa no Século XX*, Porto); P. Pereira (ed.), *História da Arte Portuguesa*, vol. 3, Lisboa, 1995; D. Rodrigues (ed.), *Arte Portuguesa. Da Pré-História ao Século XX*, vol. 18: *O modernismo I* (J. Pinharanda) e vol. 19: *O modernismo II* (B. P. de Almeida), Vila Nova de Gaia, 2009.

[86] P. V. Gomes, *Arte Portuguesa*, ed. D. Rodrigues, vol. 14: *Expressões do Neo-Clássico*, Vila Nova de Gaia 2009, pp. 18-19.

[87] Gomes, *Expressões do Neo-Clássico*; F. Vlachou, *The Disappointed Writer. Selected Essays*, Lisboa, 2019.

do início do século XX fossem autodidactas. Existem também vários trabalhos académicos, artigos e teses que contribuem para outra maneira de fazer história da arte, mas a história da arte dominante continua a ser eurocêntrica.

CIVILIZAÇÃO E BARBÁRIE

É significativo que descubramos Francastel a escrever sobre a superioridade da raça europeia (branca): "Sou levado a crer que o progresso ininterrupto do homem branco — e só dele — ao longo de milhares de anos explica o seu predomínio *de facto* sobre o planeta, um privilégio que obteve em virtude não de uma predestinação racial mas de conquistas históricas e sociais. Só as sociedades ocidentais provaram ser adaptáveis [...] Toda a história do homem ensina que as únicas sociedades grandiosas são aquelas nas quais a adaptação ocorre não através da acomodação empírica a condições externas, mas através de um bem pensado domínio dos materiais. A grandiosidade da raça Europeia reside no facto de, uma vez mais, ter assumido o poder, nos últimos dois séculos, [...] sobre todos os valores colectivos, de que a arte é, indubitavelmente, uma forma de expressão [...]"[88]

Francastel justifica o seu ponto de vista eurocêntrico argumentando que a Europa é o lar de extraordinárias capacidades tecnológicas e artísticas que tornaram o continente mais *adaptável*, associando, portanto, essas capacidades à aptidão para construir uma civilização superior ou, para usar termos evolucionistas, uma civilização que conquista o seu lugar ofuscando as outras. Como escreveu Samir Amin, o eurocentrismo baseia-se no preconceito e na ideia da Europa como modelo universal superior, que se crê ter sido imposto pela "força das circunstâncias" e pela evolução natural. Isso baseia-se na atribuição de "características mais ou menos permanentes a um povo ou grupo de povos", a qual "decorre de tirar conclusões a partir de pormenores isolados", considerando-as válidas para "justificar a sua condição e a sua evolução"[89]. Esta tem sido a plataforma de entendimento para a construção moderna da identidade europeia — especialmente depois do Iluminismo — e para a construção de identidades no seio da Europa, elegendo modelos de que os outros países se podem aproximar ou não conseguir imitar, sendo "menos europeus" do que outros. Esta construção é ideológica e tem sustentado o poder económico e político, no que a arte e a cultura têm desempenhado o seu papel.

A história da arte tem contribuído para esta ideologia eurocêntrica: como se sabe, ela nasceu, enquanto disciplina científica, de uma posição eurocêntrica que mitificava a Antiguidade (Grécia) como berço da cultura. No século seguinte, *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860), de Jacob Burckhardt, com o seu minucioso exame de todos os aspectos da cultura, incorporando a arte no seu contexto cultural, político, económico e religioso, ajudou a estabelecer a equivalência entre arte e civilização, considerando-as mutuamente interdependentes[90]. O supremo exemplo de civilização e, por conseguinte, de arte, era a Itália renascentista. Para Francastel e para o seu aluno José-Augusto França, seria a França moderna (ou, mais precisamente, Paris). Resumindo, a historiografia da arte toma a superioridade europeia como certa, da Renascença em diante.

No seu famoso livro *Provincializing Europe. Post-colonial thought and historical difference*, Dipesh Chakrabarty menciona o modo como a narrativa imperial, produzida quer pelo governo colonial ou sob as suas ordens, quer pelos nacionalistas indianos, tinha "tendência para interpretar a história indiana em termos de uma carência, de uma ausência, ou de uma incompletude que se traduzia em 'inadequação'" e o modo como essa narrativa era a "pedra angular da ideologia imperial"[91]. Isto significa que os indianos, enquanto sujeitos históricos, tinham sempre uma posição subalterna e eram sempre (auto-)vistos como atrasados face à civilização (europeia). Ser moderno era, diz Chakrabarty, ser europeu, por certo de uma Europa ficcionada, uma miragem que, ainda assim, sustentava as relações de poder entre os países e determinava o padrão a almejar, mas que, na verdade, nunca podia

[88] Francastel, *Art and Technology*..., pp. 134-135. Numa introdução bastante severa à edição da MIT Press de *Arte e Técnica* de Francastel, Yve-Alain Boris escreve: "a seriedade do livro de Francastel fica gravemente manchada pelo seu chauvinismo inveterado", p. 9; acrescentado que ele diz que "resumidamente, a Europa inventou tudo", p. 10.

[89] S. Amin, "The construction of eurocentric culture," in: *Eurocentrism. Modernity, Religion, and Democracy. A Critique of Eurocentrism and Culturalism*, New York, 2009 [1988] (edição em ebook).

[90] O entendimento da arte como sendo sempre interdependente dos factos sociais, políticos, económicos, religiosos e culturais foi uma abordagem crítica e inovadora que conduziu à emergência do campo da história cultural.

[91] D. Chakrabarty, "Historicism as a transition narrative" in: *Provincializing Europe. Postcolonial thought and historical difference*, Princeton University Press, 2008 [2000], p. 32.

ser alcançado[92]. A história indiana tornou-se uma variante da narrativa hegemónica europeia, na qual a Europa era, portanto, soberana e modelo de modernidade[93].

Quando Francastel escreve acerca da superioridade ocidental, está a expressar a maneira de pensar imperialista, que tinha sido um importante factor de consolidação da disciplina de história da arte. A história da arte de J.-A. França, pretendendo ser uma narrativa hegemónica e parte da narrativa hegemónica ocidental, adoptou uma posição subalterna que, quando ultrapassada, poderia ser celebrada, dado que isso significaria que a Europa marginal estava a recuperar o atraso face ao centro, a Europa civilizada. O *atraso* de J.-A. França tem também um papel na identificação do antigo, necessário ao processo de escrever história moderna (modernista). Ele precisa de algo antigo para contrastar com a inovação (e o progresso), sendo a novidade medida de acordo com o modelo parisiense. Trata-se também de uma tarefa intelectual que o inclui na tradição nacional da autocrítica promovida pelos *estrangeirados* (e que faz com que ele olhe para os historiadores do passado de acordo com a sua própria postura historiográfica), dado que, ao reconhecê-lo, pensava estar a contribuir para a superação do atraso.

Não obstante, a posição subalterna que ele assume para a arte portuguesa (tal como muitos depois dele) e o desejo de suplantá-la só reforçam o eurocentrismo e a narrativa hegemónica eurocêntrica. Isto contribui para a maneira de pensar prevalecente, imperial e europeia, que se baseia na rivalidade e em hierarquias entre vencedores e derrotados. Embora a análise de Chakrabarty seja útil para compreendermos as hierarquias estabelecidas, que determinavam quem conseguia ser moderno e quem não conseguia e que estabeleciam os requisitos para alcançar a modernidade, ela não pode, simplesmente, ser encarada como um paralelo para a situação da história da arte portuguesa. Na verdade, a posição portuguesa dos autores, historiadores, escritores e filósofos citados até agora baseava-se na fé nas raízes europeias de Portugal e no imperativo de evitar ser tratado ou percepcionado como um Império trata e percepciona as suas colónias. A ambição era a de Portugal

ser percepcionado como uma nação europeia, com os seus privilégios na narrativa da modernidade.

Se se considerar que "o conhecimento é produzido sob circunstâncias políticas obscuramente organizadas"[94], então, ter-se-á de concluir que o cânone da história da arte portuguesa foi moldado pela cena internacional europeia e pela ambição portuguesa de fazer parte da sua imagem fabricada de modernidade. Será preciso ter em consideração o modo como o cânone foi moldado à imagem dessa modernidade, que restringe a sua definição a uma experiência que só é valorizada se for semelhante à dos "centros da civilização". Ser capaz de determinar essa similitude ou o falhanço em alcançá-la, e o consequente diagnóstico de, em última análise, não se ser suficientemente "civilizado", era o papel que conferia estatuto europeu ao historiador da arte. A avaliação de civilização ou barbárie pelo historiador da arte colocá-lo-ia, ainda que não o seu país, no centro.

É possível haver uma história da arte europeia não eurocêntrica? Chakrabarty observou que todos fazemos história europeia, mesmo com arquivos não-europeus — parece não haver meio de fugir a isso. Todavia, assume o projecto de "provincializar a 'Europa', a Europa que o imperialismo moderno e o nacionalismo (do terceiro mundo) têm, através da sua empresa colaborativa e da violência, tornado universal"[95]. Esse projecto implicava tanto reconhecer o pensamento europeu como indispensável quanto a sua inadequação, virando o bico ao prego, isto é, não é a Índia que está em falta e é inadequada, é o modelo europeu que não é adequado à Índia: "sim, o pensamento europeu faz parte da vida de todos depois do domínio colonial e por isso é indispensável, mas também é inadequado, porque os colonizados chegaram a estas ideias a partir de outras vivências, outras maneiras

[92] *Orientalismo* de Edward Said foi, claro, uma obra fulcral que analisou o modo como a produção de conhecimento sobre do oriente no ocidente era, simultaneamente, um reflexo e um instrumento para a manutenção de uma relação de poder soberano/subalterno entre ambos. "O orientalismo é um estilo ocidental para dominar, reestruturar e exercer autoridade sobre o Oriente. […] [É um discurso através do] qual a cultura europeia foi capaz de administrar — e até de produzir — o Oriente, de um ponto de vista político, sociológico, militar, ideolóligo, científico e imaginário durante o período pós-iluminista". E. W. Said, "Introdução, I" in: idem, *Orientalismo*, Lisboa, 2004 [1978], p. 3. Acrescenta que criar o "Oriente" foi uma maneira de o ocidente (europeu) se definir a si próprio e à sua posição soberana em relação a um atraso oriental, de tal modo que "a ideia europeia do oriente" era a única ideia legítima do oriente: "[…] o imperialismo político domina todo um campo de estudo, imaginação e instituições académicas, de tal modo que é intelectual e historicamente impossível evitá-lo". Em "Introdução, III" ibidem, p. 15.

[93] Ver D. Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History" in: idem, *Provincializing Europe*… Dipesh Chakrabarty autocritica o projecto pós-colonial de Estudos Subalternos, de que foi um dos fundadores, que também assumiu essa narrativa, e propõe que interpretemos a ideia de "carência" de uma maneira diferente, substituindo-a na narrativa hegemónica por "plenitude" e "criatividade", o que permitiria múltiplas narrativas de múltiplas experiências de modernidade. Ver "To read 'lack' otherwise," ibidem, p. 34 e ss.

[94] E. W. Said, "Introduction, III" in: idem, p. 11.

[95] Chakrabarty, "History and difference in Indian modernity" in: *Provincializing Europe*…, p. 42.

de compreender a vida, outros modos de ser e estar que não se extinguiram (na Índia) e por isso havia sempre problemas de tradução"[96]. Verificar a inadequação do que se apresenta como universal é expor a sua dimensão não-universal. Se se verifica a inadequação dos modelos e conceitos ocidentais tidos como universais, e por isso definidores do cânone, para a periferia, ou para a ex-colónia, como fez Chakrabarty, então, acrescento, pode também interrogar-se a sua adequação ao próprio "centro" de onde emergem e que colocam em posição soberana, a partir da qual se determina o que é subalterno. Os "problemas de tradução" são inerentes ao processo historiográfico.

Boaventura de Sousa Santos propôs o exercício do pensamento abissal para alcançar as realidades fora da produção de conhecimento eurocêntrica: "Aquilo que não pode ser dito, ou dito de maneira profunda, numa língua ou numa cultura pode ser dito, e dito de maneira profunda, noutra língua ou cultura. Reconhecer outros tipos de conhecimento e outros parceiros de conversa, para outros tipos de conversas, abre o campo para infinitas trocas discursivas e não-discursivas com codificações e horizontalidades incomensuráveis"[97] – por outra palavras, este exercício assume a intraduzibilidade como campo de trabalho.

Uma ressonância desta reflexão pode ser encontrada na história da arte horizontal de Piotr Piotrowski. Piotrowski sublinha a importância do local a partir do qual o historiador escreve: "Devido à ideologia do universalismo da arte moderna, o historiador do centro, muitas vezes de maneira bastante inconsciente, tende a ignorar a relevância do lugar, tornando-se, assim, um instrumento de colonização"[98] e, acrescentarei, o historiador da periferia que coloca os objectos da sua investigação numa relação de atraso face ao centro também se torna nesse tipo de instrumento.

Walter Benjamin escreveu famosamente que "não há documento de cultura que não seja também um documento de barbárie"[99]. *Civilização* e *barbárie* são termos que têm sido historicamente opostos, e têm desempenhado um papel fundamental na narração modernista da modernidade. O

desafio é o de não os encararmos como opostos, dado que são conceitos fabricados, interrelacionados e intermutáveis. Reconhecer isto é, porventura, uma tarefa para a história da arte da periferia hoje, que traz consigo a necessidade de lidar com o arquétipo do atraso e com as suas implicações eurocêntricas, incluindo o seu rasto imperialista.

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RECENSÕES
BOOK REVIEWS

ITALIAN FUTURISM AND THE BAUHAUS THROUGH THE LENS OF HUMANISM.
IVETA SLAVKOVA'S *RÉPARER L'HOMME. LA CRISE DE L'HUMANISME ET L'HOMME NOUVEAU DES AVANT-GARDES AUTOR DE LA GRANDE GUERRE (1909-1929)*, LES PRESSES DU RÉEL, PARIS, 2020

One might think that there is not much more to add to the study of the now canonical vanguards of Italian Futurism and the Bauhaus. This is a book that will prove one wrong. Revisiting the European avant-gardes with new approaches can offer us the possibility of finding new ways of thinking about what might be thought of as exhausted and crystalised within the master narrative. Iveta Slavkova's book proposes looking differently at Italian Futurism and the Bauhaus, reconsidering and counteracting established considerations that associate these two artistic movements with dehumanisation through thorough research that focuses on the Great War as having a pivotal role in the definition and construction of both avant-gardes. This art-historical investigation takes advantage of the extensive literature that has been produced in the last decade about the First World War that brought new research to light and which thus requires a reconfiguration of art historiography about the canonical avant-gardes. It does so by resorting to a transdisciplinary approach, which

analyses visual art and literature, considering historical research as well as anthropology, philosophy, psychoanalysis and politics, and, of course, art history.

This book's chronological interval – 1909-1929 – goes, nevertheless, behind and beyond the years of the First World War, taking into account the structural narratives that were forged to justify the war before and after it happened and how the avant-gardes took part in that narrative. Furthermore, it looks at how their artistic visions and proposals were part and parcel of the arguments that made the war.

Slavkova's point of departure is, however, a more recent date. In 1952, Camille Bryen and Jacques Audiberti introduced the concept of *abhumanism*, which they took from the Italian Beniamino Joppolo's book *L'Abumanesimo*, published in 1951. This neologism was created to break with humanism, the prefix ab- meaning 'to separate', 'to move away'. The term was the outcome of criticism towards rationality, scientific and technological

IVETA SLAVKOVA

Réparer l'homme

La crise de l'humanisme et l'Homme nouveau des avant-gardes autour de la Grande Guerre (1909-1929)
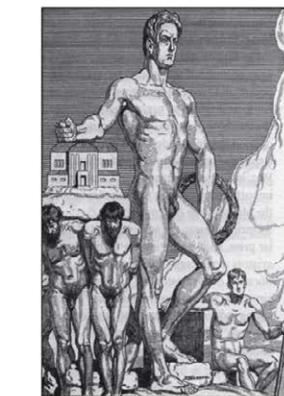
les presses du réel

progress and, in general, towards human centrality in all activities, which had resulted in violence and disaster. The author also mentions Heidegger's *Letter on Humanism*, published shortly before in 1947, and very much aimed at Jean-Paul Sartre's existentialism, which criticised Man's centrality and appealed to an overcoming of humanism, pushing aside all the ideas of predetermined conceptions on human essence, nature, world, history, and relying on nothing else but human subjectivity. The main question for abhumanism and anti-humanism was to understand that the human place in the universe had to be decentred because of the catastrophes that had taken place in the first half of the twentieth century, which had been made in the name of humanism. That is, man (and in this discourse, women do not represent humanity) had been seen as the cause and consequence of all destructive action. As Slavkova writes: "It is precisely that fanatical attachment to humanism which will cause, after the second massacre perpetrated at the heart of civilisation, the anti-humanist reaction of Audiberti, Bryen and Heidegger" (p. 38).

This critique came after five hundred years of Western anthropocentrism, and it is far from resolved today, though, in the last decade, it has been developed into a larger debate with further consequences to both science and the humanities. Slavkova's book does not make such a journey to present-day debate on the Anthropocene, but it does assume as a starting point the unease with humanism-as-anthropocentrism that spread after two world wars. That signifies reframing Futurism and the Bauhaus in the humanist light and analysing their enterprise as a response to a crisis of humanism that actually reinforced it.

Their project to improve humankind through art – and to create a new man – was inscribed in the Western industrial ideology of progress and desire of totalising, civilising and mastering the world, which in turn was a modern version of the "[Western] man as the centre of the universe" cultivated since Renaissance. This was renewed with the French Revolution and intensified by the industrial revolution, with the idea of a superior man by means of technology (we can recall that this was the topic of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* in 1818). Moreover, with the loss of influence from the Church, man could take God's place in modelling humans into an improved version of themselves, and the avant-garde artist was to produce the suitable model to look up to.

As Slavkova writes, these avant-gardes saw the Great World War as an opportunity to put into practice their project, and they participated actively in the "culture of war" (a term coined by historians Annette Becker and Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau), even by openly promoting it, as did the futurists, or by seeing it as necessary to overcome decadence and install a more spiritualised existence, as some of the Bauhaus protagonists defended.

In the first chapter, Iveta Slavkova analyses the mechanisms that produced the general consensus about the civilising, and therefore humanist, mission of war. There was a huge propaganda machine before and after the war that contributed to the mass adhesion to the First World War, very much based on the production of images, by way of photographed postcards, posters, illustrated magazines and cinema, and all the techniques of manipulation, staging and montage that came with them. On

both sides of the war, what was at stake was a conflict of civilisation against barbarism. If the French and British saw themselves as the heirs of European civilisation against German barbarism, the German side felt like the true guardian of European civilisation brought into decadence by France (and the USA used a salvation rhetoric as if the war were a modern crusade). The enemy was seen as culturally inferior and dehumanised, while the opposite side saw itself as representing the superior modern man. After 1918, the sentiment was that the war, despite the terrible loss of lives, had contributed to the purification of nations and was an opportunity to rebuild Western civilisation. The image propaganda was also crucial to organise national mourning by unifying personal loss in a national loss with patriotic purpose. The author speaks of the acceptance of the "mass death" in the name of a "war myth" for which the "cult of the unknown soldier" as a sanctified, perfected, virile model symbolised the unity of the nation, and was an example of the national race, sacrificed in the name of the country. Slavkova observes how cultural and intellectual spheres worked before, during and after the war to construct such a sentiment, such as writers and artists (Fernand Léger and Thomas Mann are two of the examples mentioned, as well as Goncourt Prize-winners whose books glorified war). She pays particular attention to Ernst Jünger, whose writings are considered by some authors as anti-humanist, for opposing the Enlightenment values and parliamentary democracy. Following on from experts Julien Hervier, John King and others, Slavkova considers his ideas a "humanism made of steel" (p. 77), which played a major role throughout the several books he published based

on the notes he took at the front, in the building of the "myth of war". In fact, his maximum "war is the mother of all things" shares the view that the conflict has a purifying effect that allows a new superior man to emerge from it. Jünger justifies cruelty and destruction as part of a hidden order that governs war, necessary for accomplishing a transcendent intent of revitalising the human being.

The aestheticisation of the war (in which Jünger took part) and its connection with the emergence of nationalism and Nazism would be criticised by Walter Benjamin, whom Slavkova mentions further in the book (p. 284), without, however, going deep into the work of the German philosopher. It must be said that Benjamin does work against the grain of the dominant thesis of this book, so even at the risk of resorting to an over-cited author, it would be interesting to confront his views on modernity and the Great War with the humanist quest on which Slavkova focuses. Nevertheless, Slavkova is sufficiently careful to present intellectual and artistic examples on both sides of the trenches (for instance, for Ernst Jünger, she examines the French counterpart Charles Maurras, or Henri Massis and Oswald Spengler), underlining the differences, but also identifying the project of a new repaired man as common ground. Another common ground is an idealised Classic Antiquity as a model to return to, with antecedents in French classicism (David's *Marat*, for instance, was a construct of an revolutionary ideal of classical beauty) or in Joachim Winckelmann's praise of Greek sculptured bodies which he saw both as beautiful and as a symbol of moral superiority. It was based on this neo-classical ideal that the unknown soldier's body was reconstructed in

the collective imaginary. As the author shows us, Futurism and the Bauhaus proclaimed an amplified version of the same classical model. This leads to the connection between these ideals reconfigured in the twentieth century regarding the male body, enhanced by technology and the evolution of the discipline of art history, which developed grounded on Winckelmann presupposing the ancient, male, white, idealised body as a model. Although it is not this book's focus, reading it does make it clear that there is a history of the discipline of art history to be made from the non-humanist perspective.

One of the aspects more deeply analysed is the paradox between cosmopolitanism/universalism and nationalism, which fuelled the First World War. Each nation's own narrative of superiority justified their quest as universalist — they were leaders commanding humankind to a more perfect society. This is the same kind of perception that an artist such as Marinetti had of himself and the Italian Futurists' role. As Slavkova points out, Futurism was a vitalist ideology, which first appeared as an artistic movement but which later, in 1918, constituted a political party, soon absorbed by the fascist party of Mussolini. The context of Italy's late-nineteenth-century unification is key to understanding Marinetti's association of the avant-garde with rebirth, a Renaissance or *Risorgimento*. Although the author mentions how the 1909 Futurist manifesto enacts this rebirth and industrial baptism (later signalled in Boccioni's famous sculpture *Unique forms of continuity in space*) by describing the emergence of the narrator from an accident in a pit filled with detritus from a nearby factory, she omits the well-known essay by Rosalind Krauss, "The Originality of the Avant-Garde". Written and

first published in 1982, it precedes the works by Giovanni Lista or Fanette Roche-Pézard, or even Hal Foster, quoted by Slavkova. Even though the *October* authors have since overwhelmed art-historical writing of the twentieth century, the Krauss essay played a pivotal role in reconfiguring the concept of the originality of the avant-garde. No longer should *original* be associated with the idea of "never done before", but rather with the will to be born again, to go to the source and restart humanity. Therefore, it is an essay that confirms the author's argument, and we cannot but notice its absence in this book.

In chapters 2 and 3, Iveta Slavkova thoroughly examines how Italian Futurism and the Bauhaus were part of the humanist discourse that laid behind and beyond the First World War, revisiting and discussing, and sometimes contradicting, aspects of the master narrative about them. Furthermore, she pays attention to characters and works previously overshadowed and, even more important, she places them in relation to the larger context of these avant-gardes, analysing differences and similarities between them. Therefore, Slavkova examines deeply some of Marinetti's literary production (especially his first novel, *Mafarka the Futurist*, 1910), and the role he played in the war propaganda (including on the front, where he performed for the soldiers reading his warlike phonetic "words in liberty" poems), along with its association with eroticism and male virility, which served as argument to dismiss the need for women. She analyses the paintings of Luigi Russolo, Gino Severini and Umberto Boccioni, and the sculptures of the latter, paying attention to details such as the baptismal cross in the well-known *Unique forms of continuity in space* (1913), which stands for

the total (unique), dynamic, active, new man embarking on a futuristic crusade.

Regarding the Bauhaus, Slavkova analyses its leaders, from Gropius's first ideas on collective labour for improving society, marrying a collective artisanal methodology heir to William Morris's Arts & Crafts, to industrial technology with the goal of standardised and low-cost production to make modernity available for all. With the idea of designing the modern house and furniture came the idea of designing the modern man. The de-hierarchisation of the arts proclaimed by the Bauhaus meant, more than the equality between the arts, the quest for a total work of art that could impregnate life and be an inseparable part of it. Iveta Slavkova's book discusses the changes in the Bauhaus logo and the internal changes that came with it, as well as other artists and leaders of the institution, along with works such as Hannes Meyer's *Co-Op* projects, of such severe austerity that one might think of it as dehumanised spaces, but in fact conceived as a prototype capsule or house-machine to enhance humans. Despite political differences (and the author recurs to Fredric Jameson's "illusion of Marxism" definition to explain Bauhaus's cause of cutting off alienation factors from life), we can find the analogy with the modernity baptism claimed by Futurists: the Bauhaus was creating the environment for the rebirth to take place. As Slavkova writes: "Both can be interpreted as a form of absolute humanism, a triumphal rational anthropocentrism that radically changes the environment" (p. 273). Other authors subjected to Slavkova's analysis include the less known Johannes Itten, a follower of occultism and mysticism, particularly the religion of Mazdaznan, which defended the purity

of race and authoritarian tendencies. Itten, who ended up clashing with Gropius, had a significant impact on the Bauhaus teaching methodology, bringing modern pedagogy theories. He conceived the *House for the White Man* in 1921, which takes the Bauhaus glass paradigm to a new level, combining it with ascendent geometry to accommodate a supreme being – the "white" artist, the colour "white" being a symbol of purity which bears with it blatant racism. In the Bauhaus, opposite political tendencies flourished.

Slavkova refers to how it has been easy to associate Futurism with fascism (something she discusses as a more complex relation than usually presented) and, in contrast, the proximity of the Bauhaus utopia and that of Nazism being harder to admit (p. 340 and ff). Of course, the fact that the school was closed by the Nazis allows us to see it as a symbol of freedom for art practice that could not be tolerated by totalitarianism. However, their totalising universalist views and their quest for a new aestheticised man were part of the context in which Nazism rose. As the author mentions further in the book, Oskar Schlemmer's works from the 1920s and early 1930s often depict the Nazi salutation.

Other points of contact between Futurism and the Bauhaus that this book explores are their views on the role of the artist — as a leader, with a more or less demiurge impetus, that has the mission to conduct society as a modern Prometheus into a rebirth of civilisation — and how this was in fact a response to mass culture. The avant-garde emerged when it was felt necessary that art had to speak to larger audiences and engage them in modernity, and the artist could play the clairvoyant role of the prophet.

Another point worth noting, addressed by Slavkova, is the way Futurism and the Bauhaus saw women. Although both movements defend women rights (and in Futurism, we also see the proclamation of sexual liberation and the manifests of Valentine de Saint-Point speaking on behalf of the Futurist woman), in reality, their focus on the renewing of humankind focuses on man, only he able to be a leader. They see the emancipation of women as a masculinisation path to become more similar to men. Futurists are also paradoxically misogynistic, since they feel war can replace women in providing an erotic experience, as mentioned before. In Marinetti's novel, Mafarka gives birth to a child he has generated only by will, in an analogy of the self-sufficient creative force that drives the futurist artist.

Before making some final comments on the epilogue, I would like to highlight two more topics of research addressed in this book. One can be found in the pages dedicated to the "aviator" as the epitome of both the new man and the avant-garde artist, and emulated by artists from Robert Delaunay to Giacomo Balla, and also later on in the Italian Futurist-derivative *aeropittura.*

The other moment can be found in the Bauhaus puppets of Oskar Schlemmer, an artist who also fought in the war and to whom Iveta Slavkova dedicates several pages of her book. She explores his depictions of human male/androgynous figures standardised by elemental geometrical features that connect the depiction of man to an architectural plan. He works in dance and theatre projects, such as *Raumtanz* (1926), where dancers (himself and two assistants) are dressed in uniforms and masks that do precisely what they are named after: uniformise the

bodies as equal. Schlemmer actually designs a course called "The Man", in which he expresses his studies and ideas that ultimately present a vanguard interpretation of the Vitruvian man made famous by Leonardo da Vinci. It all sums up to his *Kunstfigur*, "art figure", an idea of art that presents itself in the shape of a new man. This *Kunstfigur* could be freely manipulated like a puppet on the theatre stage and scenery, which became central to rehearse the Bauhaus utopia (Slavkova relates the importance of the Bauhaus theatre to the difficulty of opening the architecture studios until 1927). Based on elementary geometric figures in primary colours and black and white, *The Triadic Ballet* dancers-as-puppets presented a progressively abstracted sexless human figure, a prototype of the purified human.

Slavkova resumes: "The Oskar Schlemmer's puppets, but also Marinetti's Gazourmah or other aviators are supposed to have a power multiplied by the machine. However, these new Men do not oppose the humanist paradigm, as much as the terms 'machine' and 'abstraction' do not automatically mean 'dehumanisation' or 'anti-humanism'. On the contrary, they are the modern idols that master the standardisation and rationalisation procedures that govern the world. Their freedom lies in the presumed absolute control they exercise over their bodies, their consciences and their environment. [...] they affirm the demiurgic superior centrality of man and the possibility of reinventing humanism after the modern apocalypse of World War I" (p. 354).

In the epilogue, Iveta Slavkova names Dadaism and Surrealism (especially that of George Bataille's *Documents*, 1928-29) as alternatives to humanism, which did not commit

the "epistemological mistake" regarding the Great War and the cult of the new man that Futurism and the Bauhaus did. Even though we can relate to her arguments, one cannot but think that Slavkova turns into exceptions the avant-gardes that the North American *October* authors also praised as an alternative to the master narrative of modernism (we could add Georges-Didi Huberman's work on Georges Bataille and *l'informe*). Those authors, who are almost entirely absent from this book, forged a new narrative on modernism that elected avant-gardes previously dismissed by Clement Greenberg as the significant artistic forces of modernity. Rosalind Krauss, Hal Foster, Yve Alain-Bois and others, constructed a new narrative, which dethroned the previous one and soon became the new master narrative on the twentieth-century. In this epilogue, Slavkova ends up reinforcing this master narrative, even though she does it through the prism of humanism and its chagrins.

Furthermore, did Dada and Surrealism really decentre man? I am not so sure, taking into account all the variants of Surrealism and Dada and their peripheral developments. It is perhaps a too complex issue to be introduced in an epilogue.

This book does not analyse other European Futurist movements or the repercussions of the Bauhaus, and it is not its aim to do so. However, it does become imperative to consult this work when studying the ramifications of these avant-gardes. For instance, often and inevitably, Marinetti's Futurism was reinterpreted and recreated in other places. Such was the case in Portugal, where the Italian avant-garde had a huge impact, but the approach to it was tainted with parody (and Fernando Pessoa's "intersectionism" and

"sensationism" were approaches to Futurism and cubism that changed them profoundly, resulting in a small, local avant-garde which practised new ways of art and poetry-making).

Iveta Slavkova's book patiently and thoroughly reconfigures the art historical narrative of canonical art from a non-canonical approach. Frequently, art historians find that, by looking more closely at a consecrated artist or artistic movement, they are forced to change perspectives and question their and others' views on the chosen subject. Slavkova has taken that matter seriously and has done paramount work in retelling Italian Futurism and the Bauhaus history through the lens of humanism, which has allowed her to both reframe those avant-gardes but also to pursue a critique of humanism itself. From now on, her work should be taken into account in any study of Futurism and the Bauhaus and their proliferation throughout the world.

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ULRIKE MEYER STUMP, 2021, KARL BLOSSFELDT: VARIATIONS, ZURICH, LARS MÜLLER PUBLISHERS.

Since the publication in the late 1920s of Urformen der Kunst, the work of Karl Blossfeldt has become one of the most widespread photographic research works of the twentieth century, influencing the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher, and Joan Fontcuberta, but also present in a vast number of non-artistic publications and fields. Together with Renger-Patzsch, Moholy-Nagy and August Sander in Germany, and Edward Weston, Edward Steichen and the FSA (Farm Security Administration) in the United States (we pointed out Weston and Steichen because they organised the American section of the Film und Foto exhibition in 1929), Blossfeldt images have become one of the examples of the potential of photography, due in part to its technical dimension, in discovering new objects, in finding new "image-worlds", a "wholly different realm of forms", as Walter Benjamin said in his review of Urformen der Kunst (Benjamin, 1999, 155).

After having analysed Blossfeldt's collage of contact prints (in the introduction to *Karl Blossfeldt: Working Collages*, edited by Ann and Jürgen Wilde), claiming that the collages were an archive "not for negatives but for motifs" (Wilde & Wilde, 2001 p. 13), Ulrike Meyer Stump widens the scope of his analysis in his *Karl Bossfeldt: Variations*. By highlighting the background of Blossfeldt's work - both the scientific use of

photography and Blossfeldt's debt to Moritz Meurer – and the widespread dissemination of his images in various fields, from art to advertising,
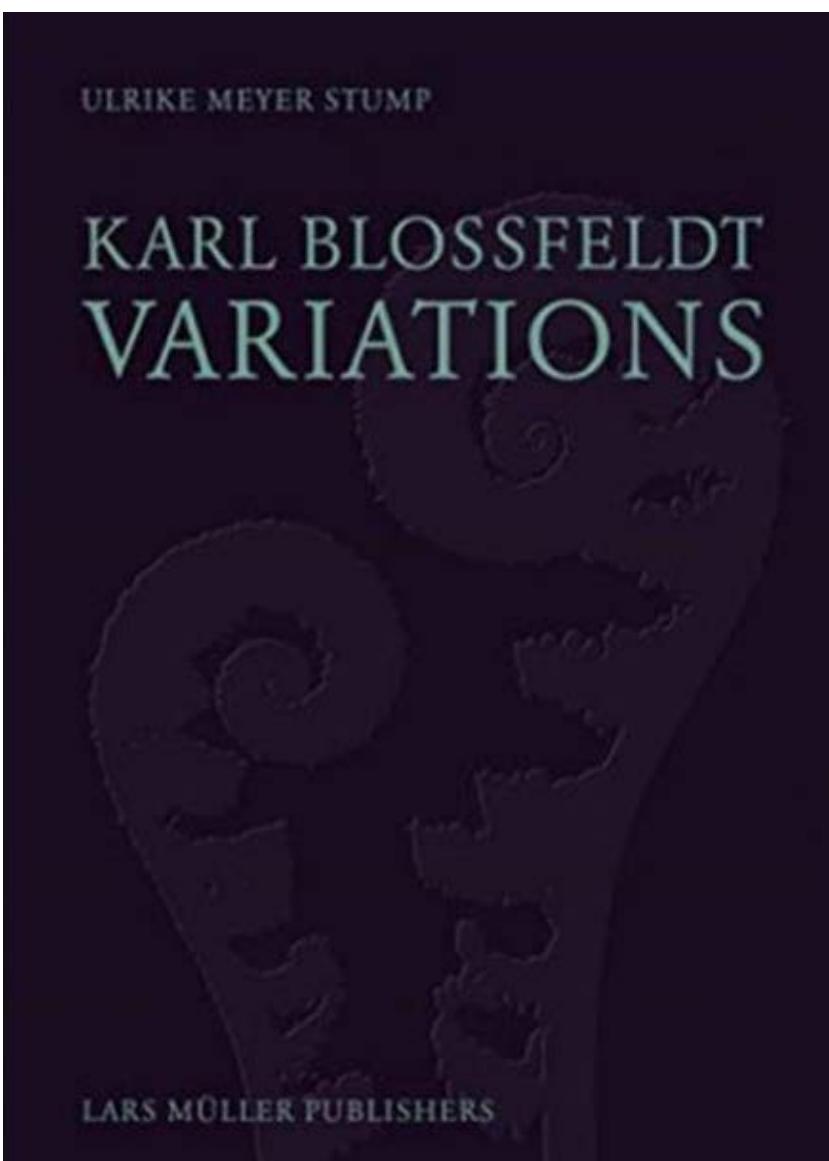
Stump allows us to gain an overview of the different meanings that Blossfeldt's images have had since their publication.

One of the most interesting elements in Blossfeldt's work is a clear anachronistic dimension. Ulrike Meyer Stump documents with great precision this anachronistic element in Blossfeldt images, through a discussion of Blossfeldt's "intentions" – *Urformen der Kunst*, Meyer Stump stresses, "was neither a photography book, nor even an art book, but a pattern book for the decorative arts" (9) –, of the background of his work and the difference between these and the "modernist" reception of his images. Stressing the contradiction between Blossfeldt's debt to Meurer and the inclusion of his images in an "ornamental question", on the one hand, and the way in which the images he produced were comprehended by his contemporaries (but not only), on the other, Ulrike Meyer Stump's book allows us to comprehend the gap between one and the other, along with the transformations that allowed for a "pattern book for the decorative arts" to become one of the best-known photography books in the twentieth century.

We see this in the multiple uses served by the plant images once they had been discovered and

diverted from their original goal. Blossfeldt's motifs turned up in a vast range of contexts: in shows from the Bauhaus in Dessau to small private art galleries in London, in printed sources from Paul Westheim's Das Kunstblatt to Eugene Jolas's transatlantic magazine Transition, and as design patterns after all, from Tiffany tableware to the architecture of Herzog & de Meuron. Reproduced countless times in daily newspapers and popular magazines in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Blossfeldt's plant photographs also conquered the illustrated pages of the mass media.

Ulrike Meyer Stump starts by showing that Blossfeldt's images cannot be included in sciences's use of visuality (Anna Atkins, Wilson Bentley or Haeckel). On the contrary, they pretend to play a part in the historical art quarrel around ornament that started almost forty years before *Urformen der Kunst*. Keeping in mind this connection between Blossfeldt and the question surrounding ornament, Ulrike Meyer Stump shows that the mystery around Blossfeldt's out-of-season success revolves around what could be called an aporetic movement: on the one hand, it is his insertion in the quarrel around ornament that places a gap between Blossfeldt's idea that his images prove ornaments are shaped on living patterns, and the way through which they were received in the 1920s, that produces a dissent about what is actually seen (ornaments or a visual research close to *Neue Sachlichkeit*); on the

3. PATTERN: SERVING THE DECORATIVE ARTS

6. Römische Rosette. Endblüte eines Schaftes mit alter-
nierenden Quirlen von Laubblättern und eingesetztem Frucht-
stande.

3.12 Karl Blossfeldt, Photograph of student's work (rosette in relief), signed H. Rosin, ca. 1912, gelatin silver print, 50 × 39.9 cm, Karl Blossfeldt Archive/Ann and Jürgen Wilde Foundation, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich
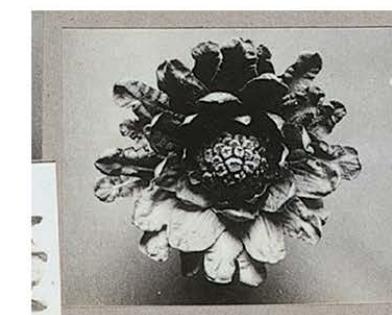
3.13 Moritz Meurer, *Vergleichende Formenlehre des Ornamentes und der Pflanze, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Entwicklungsgeschichte der architektonischen Kunstformen* (Dresden: Kühtmann, 1909), section VIII, plate 6.

3.14 Karl Blossfeldt, Contact print sheet ("working collage") 41, detail, gelatin silver print on cardboard, Karl Blossfeldt Archive/Ann and Jürgen Wilde Foundation, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich

other hand, however, it is exactly this insertion, the "pattern book" dimension of *Urformen der Kunst*, that explains Blossfeldt's success in the '20s.

By quoting the words of Kal Otten after a personal meeting with Karl Blossfeldt, Meyer Stump illustrates the radical difference that exists between what Blossfeldt thought he was doing with his images and the "multiple meanings" they had acquired:

> [Blossfeldt] is enormously gratified to have proved that the Greeks shaped their ornaments and architectural decorations, as it were, on a living pattern, enlarging and extricating it from its surroundings with artistic finesse, and so shaping it to live on as an organ of an entirely different world for all eternity, namely in architecture. We were unaware of this until now… But Blossfeldt's monumental enlargements show unequivocally that the sculptors of antiquity adhered unerringly to a vegetal pattern. (97)

Evidently, as Ulrike Meyer Stump proves, if the pictures Blossfeldt took throughout his entire career as a professor who "adhered unswervingly to [Meuritz] Meurer's teachings" merely proved that the "Greeks shaped their ornaments and architectural decorations (…) on a living pattern" – contrary to Gottfried Semper's thesis –, the success and the importance of *Urformen der Kunst* would not have been possible. However, it was Blossfeldt's research into the ornament's causes (natural or abstract) that led him to the production of images able to fulfil a modernist agenda. By explaining the simplification imposed on the specimen, Ulrike

Meyer Stump crosses Blossfeldt's interest in the questions surrounding ornament – the simplification is one way of trying to prove the natural origin of the ornament – with notions of objectivity (in the preface to *Urformen der Kunst*, Karl Nierendorf wrongly claims that the photographs "have not been retouched or artificially manipulated but solely enlarged").

> Rather he collected and reproduced, over and over, forms of a species that were as typical as possible. He removed them from their natural habitat and — when he did not preserve or model and finally cast them — photographed them on a neutral ground, often several on one plate. He simplified their forms by eliminating distracting leaves or twigs, mostly direct from the specimen, but sometimes not until later when retouching the photographic print. The enlargement then normally features just one specimen or a detail thereof, often displayed at the center of the image, symmetrically, and frontally, as in a botanical atlas. (42)

This simplification, which in the end is a becoming abstract of the parts of plants Blossfeldt photographed, is clearly indebted to Meurer's point of view and has nothing to do with *Neue Sachlichkeit*'s views on photography; nor with Goethe's *Urpflanze*. Meyer Stump proved that Goethe and Blossfeldt's research are far removed from one another, contrary to Walter Benjamin's point of view, for example.

However, it is exactly this abstract dimension of Blossfeldt's images that, according to Meyer Stump, functions as key to understanding his critical fortune. Ironically, then, one needs to recall one of the few Blossfeldt critics, the Polish artist

Stanislaw Kubicki, who "skeptically remarked: «Plants still have their roots in nature»" (88).

> Blossfeldt's photographs evinced a "chance, very entertaining yet meaningless parallelism" between architecture and nature, and, as the journal's editor Franz Wilhelm Seiwert writes in his own review printed on the same page, were the result of a "superficial, aestheticizing view" of nature. Kubicki and Seiwert unmasked the analogization of the monkshood plant and dancer as the photographer's personal contribution. Like Bataille, they focused on the material properties of the individual plant and its manual preparation by the photographer: to perceive the formal kinship "one must tear the shoot out of the ground, cut off its roots, and see it six times enlarged." Moreover, this "superficial similarity between a seedling and a nude female dancer" is also indebted to camera angle.

Just as Blossfeldt's collages are not a quest for "«archetypical plant» (*urpflanze*), but for «archetypical art»" (Wilde & Wilde, 2001, p. 15), his photographs owe their critical fortune to their transformation into images. Meyer Stump recalls the distinction W.J.T. Mitchell makes between images and pictures in order to say that Blossfeldt's photographs are both.

In his classification, Mitchell discriminates between different concepts of image and uses a taxonomic hierarchy: he distinguishes between the image — the general idea of an image, which he posits as analogous to species — and picture, which, as an individual pictorial object or visual occurrence, he connects with the concept of specimen. (53)

The "ability to reproduce" follows from the fact that Blossfeldt's photographs are "not just the product of the instruction sets «rough horsetail», «potato flower», or «acanthus»", but that they are at the same time a particular sample "of the superordinate species «image»" (54). Thus, if the photographs are *pictures* of something, they are also *images,* able to reproduce different and even contradictory meanings. But in order for them to become *images,* it seems that they must lose their "roots", that is, they must not be (only) an "acanthus picture". Therefore, it could be said that these photographs' high "ability to reproduce" is due to its lack of resemblance, even while maintaining a reference to nature and that Kubucki's criticism helps explaining these images' critical fortune. But one could also say, following this "becoming image", that the "wholly different realm of forms", the "geyser of new image-worlds" that Benjamin saw in *Urformen der Kunst*, is the counterpart of the extraction, stripping of roots, "distracting leaves with a scalpel, reducing them to regular forms, enlarging, and finally retouching it" – that is, a cold and dead world.

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NOTÍCIAS/NEWS

ETNOGRÁFICA BOOKS – NOVA COLECÇÃO DO CRIA, COORDENADA POR JEAN-YVES DURAND, MIGUEL VALE DE ALMEIDA E ELIZABETH CHALLINOR

Acolecção Etnográfica Books (publicada pela Etnográfica Press, editora do CRIA-Centro em Rede de Investigação em Antropologia, NOVA FCSH), publica trabalho (em português, inglês, francês ou espanhol), sem restrições disciplinares ou geográficas mas com alguma dimensão etnográfica. A colecção privilegia a qualidade da pesquisa empírica, a diversidade de perspetivas analíticas e a inovação teórica. Os primeiros 4 títulos são reedições de obras importantes da antropologia portuguesa contemporânea, consultáveis aqui: https://books.openedition.org/etnograficapress/93

Neste link também podem ser encontradas todas as informações acerca da apresentação de propostas de publicação. Trata-se de edições digitais em linha (na plataforma OpenEditions), com possibilidade de print-on-demand. O conselho científico é internacional e as propostas são submetidas a um processo de peer-review anónimo.

O INSTITUTO DE HISTÓRIA DA ARTE INTEGRA O IN2PAST

O IHA integra o Laboratório Associado para a Investigação e Inovação em Património, Artes, Sustentabilidade e Território — IN2PAST, aprovado no concurso FCT cujos resultados foram conhecidos a 24 de Fevereiro 2021. O novo Laboratório resulta de um consórcio formado por sete unidades de investigação (CESEM, CHAIA, CRIA, HERCULES, IHA, IHC e LAB2PT) sediadas na NOVA FCSH, na Universidade de Évora, na Universidade do Minho, no ISCTE-IUL e na Universidade de Coimbra.

A atribuição deste estatuto pela FCT constitui um reconhecimento pleno, não apenas da qualidade do programa candidatado, mas também da investigação fundamental e aplicada realizada ao longo dos anos por cada uma das unidades de investigação envolvidas.

No caso do IHA, este reconhecimento reitera a classificação de "excelente" obtida no concurso de avaliação das UIs. Importa sublinhar a afinidade existente entre as linhas de investigação do IN2PAST e um importante conjunto de orientações constantes do projecto estratégico do IHA, já que o IN2PAST está vocacionado para o estudo e a intervenção nas áreas do património cultural, dos museus, das artes e das políticas de memória. Mais ainda, o IN2PAST é

suportado pelo desenvolvimento de carreiras de investigação nestas áreas (compromisso já firmado pela Universidade de Évora e pela Universidade NOVA de Lisboa) e por uma política de parcerias com organismos, serviços e equipamentos públicos, associativos e privados dedicados ao património cultural, material e imaterial. Concretamente, o novo Laboratório estrutura-se em cinco linhas de investigação: L1. Ciência e Tecnologia para o Património Cultural; L2. Paisagens, Territórios e Património Cultural; L3. Museus, Monumentos e suas Colecções (linha esta que é inicialmente coordenada pelo IHA); L4. Arquivos - da Preservação Preventiva à Digitalização; L5. Trânsitos Culturais e Políticas Públicas de Memória para uma Cidadania Inclusiva.

Para além de cimentar o trabalho desenvolvido no seio do IHA com a criação de carreiras de investigação, o IN2PAST traz igualmente um novo quadro de possibilidades à orientação colaborativa e multidisciplinar que vem distinguindo a nossa investigação, dimensão que não é estranha ao facto do IHA ser a primeira UI na área disciplinar da História da Arte a integrar um Laboratório Associado.

Com a criação do IN2PAST, e através do IHC, do CRIA, do CESEM e do IHA, a NOVA FCSH vê uma vez mais reconhecida a excelência das suas UIs.

PRÁTICAS DA HISTÓRIA Nº 11, 2020

Vinte anos após a publicação de *Provincializing Europe*, José Neves e Marcos Cardão propuseram à revista *Práticas da História – Journal on Theory, Historiography and Uses of the Past* a organização de um número especialmente dedicado ao historiador Dipesh Chakrabarty e, em particular, a este seu livro. As motivações para a organização deste número radicam no impacto das leituras de Chakrabarty, mas também ganharam alento pelo facto de lutas anti-racistas recentes terem vindo a instigar uma série de debates em torno da descolonização do conhecimento histórico, da memória colectiva e dos resquícios do passado colonial no presente. O ano em que se derrubaram tantas estátuas que celebram os heróis do colonialismo europeu coincidiu com o vigésimo aniversário de *Provincializing Europe*, texto que continua a desafiar os limites do moderno pensamento europeu, animando debates sobre o historicismo, a escrita da história e as políticas do tempo, bem como a problematização de categorias centrais à teoria social e política, tais como modernidade, universalismo, capitalismo ou diferença.

A *Práticas de História — Journal on Theory, Historiography and Uses of the Past* é uma revista académica digital em acesso aberto publicada na Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade NOVA de Lisboa (NOVA FCSH), com o apoio do Instituto de História Contemporânea e do CHAM – Centro de Humanidades. O principal objetivo da revista é promover a discussão em torno da teoria da História, Historiografia e dos Usos do Passado, publicando textos em português, inglês, espanhol ou francês. Na *Práticas da História* os investigadores podem

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ler – e submeter a publicação – artigos, ensaios bibliográficos e recensões críticas avaliados em regime de *peer review*. A revista concede igual relevo à investigação que relaciona a prática historiográfica com o domínio das humanidades e aos trabalhos que debatem a história no quadro das ciências sociais. Sem pretender delimitar rigidamente as suas áreas de interesse, a revista estimula a apresentação de trabalhos que: discutam questões metodológicas, estéticas e epistemológicas relativas à prática historiográfica; contribuam para a teoria e história da historiografia; analisem as relações entre a prática historiográfica e outros usos do passado. A revista situa-se no domínio disciplinar da História, mas pretende submeter a um questionamento permanente as fronteiras que delimitam esse mesmo domínio – isto é, a revista não promove apenas a interdisciplinaridade e a multidisciplinaridade, como está também disponível para submeter a *peer review* investigações que extravasem as convenções estabelecidas por toda e qualquer tradição disciplinar. Pode ser consultada aqui: http://www.praticasdahistoria.pt/pt/

IMPRENSA DE HISTÓRIA CONTEMPORÂNEA – IHC

A Imprensa de História Contemporânea é uma nova editora universitária especializada na divulgação de trabalhos de investigação originais nas áreas da História e das Ciências Sociais que incidam sobre o período contemporâneo. Criada pelo Instituto de História Contemporânea da NOVA FCSH em 2017, a IHC pretende publicar estudos inovadores sobre a realidade portuguesa e os seus antigos espaços coloniais, encontrando-se também aberta à edição de ensaios sobre outras realidades geográficas, privilegiando as abordagens de carácter transdisciplinar. Pretendemos desta forma contribuir para a renovação continuada do conhecimento nas áreas em que editamos os nossos livros. Os livros da Imprensa de História Contemporânea são publicados privilegiadamente em regime de acesso aberto em formato digital, sendo também objecto de edição em formato impresso.

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