



THE GEOPOLITICS OF THE WESTERN ART WORLDS: REFLECTION AND METHODOLOGY

A GEOPOLÍTICA
DOS MUNDOS DA
ARTE OCIDENTAL:
REFLEXÃO E
METODOLOGIA

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CATHERINE DOSSIN

ABSTRACT

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Catherine Dossin**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6660-315X>

** Purdue University, USA

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Reflecting on the origins and methodology of her book, *The Rise and Fall of American Art, 19840s-1980s: A Geopolitics of the Western Art Worlds* (2015), the author replaces her work in the context of a growing awareness to the multiple stories of art and a need to face this methodological challenge. She then discusses geopolitics as a useful model to think through the complicated historiography of postwar art, tackle the polyphony of art discourses during that period, and study the power dynamics and historiographical mechanisms that give some stories the status of *history*.

KEYWORDS Postwar Art; Triumph of American Art; Stories of Art; Historiography; Geopolitics

RESUMO


Em uma reflexão sobre as origens e a metodologia do seu livro *The Rise and Fall of American Art, 19840s-1980s: A Geopolitics of the Western Art Worlds* (2015), Catherine Dossin reposiciona seu trabalho em um contexto de crescente atenção às múltiplas histórias da arte, no qual se faz necessário confrontar tal desafio metodológico. A autora então discute a geopolítica como um modelo útil para se pensar a complexa historiografia da arte do pós-guerra, abordar a polifonia de discursos desse período e analisar as dinâmicas de poder e os mecanismos históricos que garantem a alguns de seus capítulos o estatuto de *história*.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE Arte do pós-guerra; Triunfo da arte norte-americana; Histórias da arte; Historiografia; Geopolítica

RESUMEN

En una reflexión de los orígenes y de la metodología de su libro *The Rise and Fall of American Art, 19840s-1980s: A Geopolitics of the Western Art Worlds* (2015), Catherine Dossin reposiciona su trabajo en un contexto de creciente atención a las múltiples historias del arte en lo cual se hace necesario confrontar ese desafío metodológico. La autora, entonces, discute la geopolítica como un modelo provechoso para se pensar la compleja historiografía del arte de la postguerra, abordar la polifonía de discursos de ese período y analizar las dinámicas de poder y los mecanismos históricos que garanten a algunos de sus capítulos el estatuto de *historia*.

PALABRAS CLAVE Arte de la postguerra; Triunfo del arte norteamericano; Historias del arte; Historiografía; Geopolítica



Reflecting on the methodology of *The Rise and Fall of American Art, 19840s-1980s: A Geopolitics of the Western Art Worlds* (DOSSIN, 2015), and thinking back on the origins of the book, I must admit that it is rooted in a personal experience rather than a theoretical stance. It is the result of my being a French graduate student in the United States, with a special tie with Germany. After my Master's degree, which I completed in Paris, I went to the University of Austin in Texas to do a Ph.D. with the vague idea to work on the 1980s' appropriation and return to classicism. As I took classes, participated in seminars, and attended lectures by guest speakers, I encountered a history of art that was slightly different from the one I had learned at the Sorbonne.

My first semester in Austin, I had the opportunity to take a seminar with Prof. Shatishikh, who was visiting from Russia, on Kazimir Malevich, whom I had studied quite well in France in a class I had taken with Eric de Chassey. Listening to Prof. Shatishikh talk and sometimes even argue, with Linda Henderson

was fascinating to me, as I could see in their conversations the US and the Russian visions of Russian modernism diverge and oppose, while interiorly comparing their stories to the one I had learned in France—a story that at times overlapped, but also differed. Most importantly, I could not fail noticing a slight annoyance on the side of the Russian scholar at the weight of the US story, which was so heavily published, read, and exhibited that it was regarded as *the* story.

This resonated with me particularly, because in my research on the 1980s, I was encountering a similar exasperation among Western Europeans whose stories and experiences were being dismissed and overshadowed by a US narrative. They resented being relegated to the margins of “The American Century” heralded by the Whitney Museum. This is when I read James Elkins’s *Stories of Art*, which helped me formulate a response to these experiences and turn them into a dissertation project.

THE STORIES OF THE WESTERN ART WORLDS

In *Stories of Art*, Elkins (2002) draws attention to the differences between the Western narrative of art history, exemplified

by Helen Gardner's *Art Through the Ages* and Marilyn Stokstad's *Art History*, and its non-Western counterparts. I loved the book, but I could not help being disturbed by the way he lumped together all the West in one story, exemplified by two books of which I had never heard before moving to the US. I realized that the purpose of the book was to acknowledge non-Western stories, still it bothered me that it seemed to ignore that, within the Western world, there are divergent narratives, as well. The Western story against which Elkins contrasted the non-Western stories was not my story – it was really a US story.

Even within the West, different countries have different stories of art. The differences are particularly striking when it comes to the second part of the twentieth-century art¹. To better understand this disparity, I started comparing three standard textbooks devoted to that period: Harvard Arnason's *History of Modern Art* (1998), Karl Ruhrberg's *Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts* (2000), and Daniel Soutif's *L'Art du XXème siècle: de l'art moderne à l'art contemporain* (2005).

Starting with the US-based narrative, encapsulated in the following excerpt from its table of contents. This story opens with American (in fact, mostly New York) Abstract Expressionism

as the major artistic development of the postwar era. The next chapter covers parallel developments in France, Spain, Italy, Benelux, and England in the aftermath of the War. The chapter devoted to “Pop art and Europe’s New Realism” begins with British Pop, moves to American Pop art, and ends with *Nouveau Réalisme*, despite that movement having chronologically preceded American Pop art. The next two chapters, “Sixties Abstraction” and “The Pluralist Seventies”, present a succession of movements that are either specifically American (Color Field Abstraction and Pattern and Decoration) or that developed internationally but still are rooted in the United States (Conceptual art)². There is no single chapter devoted to specifically European movements such as Zero (Germany), Arte Povera (Italy) or Supports/Surfaces (France). Arnason’s chapter on the 1980s opens, curiously, with paintings by Georg Baselitz and Gerhard Richter dating from the 1960s³.

Karl Ruhrberg’s *Malerei des 20. Jahrhunderts* starts on a very different course. Instead of opening with US art, this story published in Germany begins with the situation in Paris at the end of the War, focusing on geometric and lyrical abstraction. The title of this first subchapter, however, refers to German painter Willi Baumeister’s book, *Das Unbekannte in der Kunst* (1947; The Unknown in Art)

(BAUMEISTER, 1988), thus placing the artistic development of the postwar era under German patronage. The second subchapter, “*Abstrakte Kunst in Deutschland*” is devoted exclusively to abstraction in Germany, while the third subchapter considers non-representational painting in “*anderen Ländern*” (Other Countries). Whereas Arnason does not mention postwar German art, Ruhrberg gives preponderance to their work, granting an extra subchapter to German painter Wols (who was based in France).

Another difference between these two nationally-oriented narratives lies in the importance they confer to the Italian Lucio Fontana, the French Yves Klein, and the German *Zero-Gruppe*. The US story associates Fontana with postwar Italian abstraction, Klein with *Nouveau Réalisme*, and the *Zero-Gruppe* artists with 1960s American abstraction. The German story, in contrast, groups their works together as a European response to American art, thereby offering a vision of a continent united.

The main characteristic of Ruhrberg’s story is its thematic approach, which emphasizes continuity in the history of art over ruptures—projects rather than national voices. Thus the subchapter on “*Pop Art und Nouveau Réalisme*” is subtitled “Fascination with Triviality”, and examines this tendency from Jean Hélion to

Christo. Likewise, the subchapter on “*Aspekte des Neorealismus*” (Aspects of Neo-realism) presents figurative tendencies from Bernard Buffet and Francis Gruber to Gerhard Richter and Chuck Close, while “*Malerei an der Jahrtausendwende*” (Painting of the Twentieth Century) considers the meaning and function of painting from Baselitz (clearly identified as a 1960s artist) to the present. Overall, the author portrays postwar art as being comprised of international movements in which German artists produced art of equal relevance to that of their American and other European counterparts.

Not surprisingly, Daniel Soutif’s *L’Art du XXème siècle* differs from both the German and the American accounts. Soutif’s story opens by discussing neither American Abstract Expressionism nor European abstraction. It begins instead with the end of militant Surrealism, the redefinition of abstraction, the late works of Picasso and Matisse, the realism of André Fougeron and Renato Guttuso, and finishes with Marcel Duchamp. Soutif therefore stresses the continuity between pre- and postwar developments, and asserts figuration and realism as distinctively postwar trends, unlike Arnason and Rurhberg, who present abstraction as the postwar style. This focus on continuity and figuration is also present in his

second chapter, “*L’Expressionisme abstrait et ses suites*” (Abstract Expressionism and its Afterlives), which starts with American Regionalism and ends with the return to figuration of Larry Rivers and Robert Rauschenberg, thereby relativizing Abstract Expressionism’s exceptionalism—a cliché in US literature.

Soutif’s story also diverges in its presentation of *Nouveau Réalisme*, which appears in the American and German books after American Pop art, despite its chronological anteriority. The French book, conversely, examines the movement in a chapter titled “*Fin de la peinture?*” (The End of Painting) along with monochrome painting, Yves Klein, and the *Affichistes*⁴. American Pop art is discussed at length in a subsequent chapter that also considers American Minimalism and Conceptual art. Just as Ruhrberg challenges the belief that nothing happened in Germany in the 1950s, Soutif and his collaborators dispute the common prejudice against French art in the 1960s with a chapter-long presentation of the artistic creation in France during that period, from *Figuration narrative* to B.M.P.T. and Supports/Surfaces. Finally, unlike the US book which presents the developments of the 1970s internationally (or is it rather US based?), Soutif’s story stresses the national roots of the movements of that decade, as exemplified in the chapter

titled “*De Fluxus à Arte povera en passant par la Belgique*”.

The differences in the stories told and the illustrations used cannot simply be dismissed as mere patriotism or historical opportunism. Beyond the expected preferential coverage given to their respective national artists, there are major discrepancies in the chronologic, geographic, and thematic ways in which movements and ideas are presented. In the US-American story, *Nouveau Réalisme* follows Pop art, the 1960s and 1970s are dominated by US-American art, and Baselitz is a 1980s artist. According to Rurhberg’s story, Abstraction dominates Western artistic production until the 1960s, Wols and Bacon are major figures (if not the “major” figures) of postwar art, and Baselitz is a 1960s artist. From the French point of view, abstraction is just one of the postwar movements, the United States just one center of artistic production, and art movements are firmly rooted in their historical and geographical contexts.

While I chose these books because the United States, France, and West-Germany were major players in the story I wanted to tell, I could have used books from other countries. I actually looked at Italian and Belgian books but did not feel it was necessary for me to repeat the exercise with additional countries—it was becoming repetitive and confusing.

Such discrepancies are not surprising, since those events must have looked different seen from Paris, New York, Berlin, and Helsinki or even between Berlin, Düsseldorf, and Munich, Strasbourg, Paris, Grenoble, and Nice, or New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago, etc. so much so that it is difficult to talk of an “American”, or a “French”, or a “German” perspective. The stories that developed in each of these cities differ from one another not only because of their authors’ ideological positions, but also because of the point of view their location gives them on the international art scene. While the European members of *Nouveau Réalisme* started developing their specific practices in the mid-1950s, their works were not seen in the United States before the early 1960s. Likewise, Baselitz, whose first German solo-show took place in West-Berlin in 1963, only began exhibiting in New York in 1981. The French, German, and US-American stories may diverge, but they might all be valid to the extent that they reflect multiple possible perspectives on the events that took place in the corresponding art worlds during the second half of the twentieth century. There is no one “true” story because there is not *a* correct way to perceive reality.

THE DOMINATION OF THE NEW YORK PERSPECTIVE

Yet, we have to admit that the New York perspective that sees New York based artists leading the trail of artistic innovation from Abstract Expressionism to Conceptual Art has come to dominate the others. It has become the overarching story of postwar Western art—the one we all supposedly know and against which we mentally compare and contrast “other” stories (even our own) as we encounter them. These “other” stories are regarded as local narratives more or less solidly affixed onto the main story, and “local” artistic developments are perceived in relation to those of New York. We thus used New York based Pop art as point of reference to discuss and make sense to works created in other local scenes in the 1960s. As we can see in the recent wave of events devoted to international Pop⁵.

This prompts us to reflect on where and when this story became prevalent. And to be precise, I should not refer to it as the American story, not only because the US is not America, but also because it is the New York story, not the American one, since it dismisses the experiences and practices of artists in Chicago, Houston, or Los Angeles as much, if not more, as it overlooks those in Paris

or Berlin. So, as I tried to establish in the *Rise and Fall of American Art* and other publications, it was in the 1960s that art coming from the US, especially Pop art, became regarded as the most interesting artistic contribution of the time and that people in the West started to look up toward New York as they had looked at Paris before. But what interests me from an historiographic perspective is when the New York story, especially the image of the 1950s triumph of Abstract Expressionism came to dominate our collective imaginary.

Paris provides to my mind the best angle to observe this shift. Since it was their story that was being relegated to the historical dustbin, they were particularly sensitive to the shifting situation. Jean-Luc Chalumeau (1991, p. 123), for instance, noted:

Visitors to major New York museums could not fail to be struck, since the early 1970s, by the insistent presence, in thick stacks, in the bookstores of the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan, the Guggenheim, and the Whitney, of Irving Sandler's book titled, without any subtlety: *The Triumph of American Painting*. The book, and especially the care taken in its distribution, represented characteristic examples of the strategy by which, systematically, certain American circles imposed throughout the world the mythical image of a superiority of American art since the war.

And, as the myth became part of the historiography of postwar Western art, its flip-side—the creative exhaustion of Paris—became likewise a “fact” in the history of postwar art. Reflecting on this reverse of fortune, Pierre Descargues (2006, p. 24) recalled:

Then art historians came and they pulled the carpet under our feet. No, they wrote, what you lived is worth nothing. The real adventure took place in the United States. Not in Paris. [...] nothing happened in Paris. The School of Paris is irrelevant. They are serious people, the historians. And as they copy each other, at the end, the number impresses. Should we believe it? That what we had lived made no sense? Our life did not look like what the historians had decided.

But for New York to be great, Paris had to collapse. The founding myth of the American story is indeed the end of Paris.

Ignoring prewar artistic creation in the United States as much as dismissing any postwar developments in France, this story of the rise of New York tells how, after the Second World War, the center of the art world shifted from Paris to New York. France, materially and morally ruined, had lost her creative power, while the United States gave birth to a radical new movement, Abstract Expressionism, which took over the regeneration of the avant-garde spirit from the School of Paris. As the story goes, modernist

innovation became henceforth identified as an exclusively American project. This persuasive story was written and promoted, as Chalumeau noted, using a series of books and articles starting with Sandler's *Triumph of American Painting* in 1970 and Dore Ashton's *The New York School* in 1973, but also Max Kozloff's "American Painting During the Cold War" (*Artforum*, 1973), and even Serge Guilbaut's *Comment New York vola l'idée d'Art Moderne* (1983; *When New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art*), since their analyses of the methods used to support the international success of American art further promoted the myth of its triumph⁶.

As such, there is no problem in the New York story becoming *the* story of Western contemporary art. It is expected that one story is going to take over, because it is not possible to have an all-encompassing story that does justice to all stories. The Parisian story had dominated the story of Modern art, it was maybe time to turn the table. The problem is not that one story dominates; the problem is that this story becomes naturalized and is used as the looking glass through which we look at the *other* stories.

The problem is that looking at these *other* stories through the New York glass makes them appear as not-so-interesting copy-cat of the American model. To do them justice would require not

only to look beyond the US-based prism but also to use a different template for interpreting it, in French I would say a different *grille de lecture*. Simply affixing references to events that took place in France, Germany, or Sweden within the official story of postwar art can only lead to awkward results, because the contexts in which they took places are different and what makes perfectly sense in a French context becomes nonsensical in a US one. Writing France, Germany, or any other country, in the story of postwar art require first to understand how the historical, political, and esthetic contexts differ.

This is actually an exercise I tackled in the introduction of *France and the Visual Arts*, a collection of essays I edited in 2018 (DOSSIN, 2019). There I attempted not only to sketch out a reading grid that would be specific to the visual arts produced in France after 1945, but also to highlight the points where the American and French reading grids differed. I started by considering the country specific experience during the War—something I had already done in *The Rise and Fall of American Art*, because I really think that the different ways the war was experienced help explain the postwar artworld. I also try to make the point that Decolonization, in particular the Algerian War, was far more influential than the

Cold War, which in any case played very differently there than it did in the US.

Not only does French art require to be read through a different historical and geopolitical lens than American art; it also needs a different aesthetic reading grid. When considering art produced in France one needs to think in terms of Engagement, Ideology, and Structure. I could expand on these, but let's simply say that, while many artworks created in France in the second part of the 20th century could only fit oddly in a history of art written from a New York perspective because the artists' interests in the underlying ideology, structures, and conventions of painting were at odds with the conversations formulated in the United States at the same time, placed in the larger French intellectual context of the *Nouvelle Vague*, the *Nouveau Roman*, and the *Nouvelle Critique* these works make perfectly sense.

My ambition with that introduction or with my book is not to write the *true* story of Western contemporary art. Rather it is to uncover different stories, interpret their differences, and explain how one particular perspective came to prevail over the others and gained the endorsement of the art community as *the* story. I believe that this will ultimately allow us to recover the

reality of Western contemporary art—not as a stable truth, but rather as a complicated web of perspectives, ambitions, practices, and misunderstandings.

TOWARDS A GENEALOGY AND ARCHELOGY OF THE *STORIES*

This goal falls partly within the framework of the genealogical method of inquiry defined by Nietzsche in his *Genealogy of Morals* (1956). Without going into too many details (I am not the philosopher in this family but his ideas have definitely shaped the way we can think and write history), the genealogy was Nietzsche’s response to Plato’s idealism, which he saw as the worst error of humanity, for it transformed ideas into real substances. Instead of asking “what is the truth?” Nietzsche asked “why should we prefer the true to the false?”. His genealogy studies the cultural construction of the content of *a priori* cognitive categories, as they are used to understand, symbolize, and control the facts of experience. If “history” is a cognitive tool to process and organize the data given by our perception, the historical question is not “what happened?” but “how did the people engaged in this event understand it?”.

Subsequent reception of Nietzsche's work, up to French Post-structuralism of which I am a product, shows that it constitutes a methodological shift from the event to its reception. Consequently, the historian's task since Nietzsche has been to identify the different ways in which an event was or could have been understood, and to what end that understanding was framed. The supposed objects of history are thus revealed not as facts but as points of view. History becomes stories of experiences and discourses on these events. There is, after all, no such thing as the center of the artworld, be it Paris or New York, beyond people's understanding of it and the discourses they create around that signifier. In other words, the center of the artworld exists only in the discursive field of contemporary art.

My work can thus be rephrased as my attempt to sketch the genealogy of the stories of the contemporary Western art worlds: an investigation into the ways different participants understood the events that took place within the art worlds during this period through an analysis of their discourses.

Or of what we today call an archeology of the discursive field, a methodology defined by Michel Foucault in *Les Mots et les choses* (1966) and *Archéologie du Savoir* (1969). Following Foucault's

method of inquiry for each discourse, we can ask: What are the historical conditions that lead a discourse to become regarded a fact? Or, conversely, what are the historical conditions that erase a discourse from memory? We should also look for breaks in the discursive fabric, i.e. moments when the official discourse changed, like when New York replaced Paris, thereby revealing paradigmatic shifts, moments when the values and ideas of the artworld shifted.

In this, we can also think of what Pierre Bourdieu (1979) described as instances of symbolic violence, when one idea is imposed over others to the point that it seems natural and legitimate, and thus a highly constructed narrative becomes naturalized as a proper understanding of facts. I found it a very helpful model to understand the process through which some agents in the artworld are able to impose their arbitrary understanding of events onto others as *the* legitimate view.

THE GEOPOLITICAL MODEL

However indebted I am to Foucault's ideas, and I am, my work is not an archeology of the Western art worlds, and its objects are not discursive formations. I decided to subtitle the book

“Geopolitics of the Western Art Worlds,” thereby positioning it in the field of modern Geopolitics, because it best reflects the aim of my research in regard to its objects, scope, and methods.

Geopolitics, as Yves Lacoste redefined it, starting with *La géographie ça sert d’abord à faire la guerre* in 1976, provides a model for studying power relations from a broad historical and geographical perspective⁷. One reason I was attracted to geopolitics is that the event itself is not the primary object of the analyses but rather what Lacoste calls the “the geopolitical representations of the event”, that is, the way each protagonist perceived, discussed, and ultimately remembered it. In this we can see how Geopolitics is indebted to Foucault, and from Foucault to Nietzsche⁸. Geopolitics thus provided me a model to understand the shifts in the power structure of the art worlds by analyzing the way in which the various protagonists—whether countries, institutions or individuals—constructed their own interpretations of the events, and how their own views, ambitions, and strategies wound up creating and shaping those events.

Because the goal of Geopolitical analysis has less to do with explaining events than to understanding the origins of the crises that provoked them and the motivations of the protagonists who

participated in them, Geopolitics always replaces events in the *longue durée* of history and the broad spatial expanses of geography⁹. In this we see how Geopolitics is influenced by the Annals School and Fernand Braudel's work. Having been trained in French high school and universities, the approach proposed by the Annals is actually my way of thinking art history. As I said, when I first arrived in the US, I encountered a very different way to do and think history, and it is only there that I realized how much my views were shaped by Braudel in particular and that's why geopolitics made so much sense to me.

In *The Mediterranean* (1949) Braudel organized his study in three levels of analysis, ranging from event, cycle, and *longue durée* (BRAUDEL, 1972). In the first, "*La part du milieu*", Braudel examined the geographical milieus in which history took place, from the Mediterranean mountains to its seas and its deserts. In the second part he considered the economic, political, social, and military structures in which the men of the sixteenth century were living. Only in the third part did he study events, the men involved, and their politics. Furthermore, Braudel did not offer an overview of the national history of each Mediterranean country, but rather paid attention to their encounters and interactions, thereby

providing a history of connections and combinations¹⁰.

What I can say is that, in *the Rise and Fall of American Art*, I tried to adapt a similar approach, less rigorously obviously, attempting not merely to analyze shifts of power in the art worlds—the “Fall of Paris” or the “Invasion of New York”—in the moment they happened but in the *longue durée* by tracing out the long successions of rivalries and alliances that led to those relocations.

With Braudel’s work and the geopolitical model in mind, I also try to adopt a broad geography and multilateral approach, because the shifts that occurred within it were never simply about Paris and New York, or about New York and Cologne. Far from being passive onlookers, surrounding countries such as Italy and Belgium were active participants—even more influential due to the attention they themselves brought to the “centers”. A full appreciation of the global situation of the art worlds requires detailed assessments of the position, situation, and motivations of each of the protagonists involved at different moments.

And this is where things become more complicated, because it is easier to position a king or a merchant within the 16th century Mediterranean world, than an artist or a critic within the 1960s art worlds that is existing both within the world and at a different

level, and has a geography that does not necessarily match national borders. Because the object of the art historian is not the world, but the art worlds, the analysis cannot stay at the States level, but conversely it cannot remain at the local or individual level. It constantly needs to move back and forth between the world and the art worlds, the transnational and the national, the global and the local. By exposing the polyphony of discourses on the events that took place on the Western Art worlds in the second part of the 20th century, confronting their national, regional, and individual interpretations with one another, revealing the gaps and differences, and finally identifying the instances of symbolic violence that these events helped to enact, I tried to recapture the complexity the Western Art worlds and to argue for a history of stories, because knowing just one story is so problematic. Of course, it is impossible to know all the stories involved, but we can seek out a variety of them and, to do this, work collaboratively¹¹.

NOTES

- 1.** A point made by many art historians. See for instance PIOTROWSKI (2009).
- 2.** On Conceptual art's internationalism, see CRAS (2015, pp. 167-182).
- 3.** For a discussion of the US reception of these German artists, see DOSSIN (2017, pp. 229-275).
- 4.** On the *Affichistes*, see SCHLICHT *et. al.* (2015).
- 5.** Such as "The World Goes Pop" (Tate Gallery, 2015) or "International Pop" (Walker Art Center, 2015).
- 6.** On the promotion of this story in the 1970s, see CHALUMEAU (1991).
- 7.** See LACOSTE (1988, 2003, 2006).
- 8.** On Foucault's influence on Geopolitics, see his 1976 interview in the fourth issue of *Hérodote*, the journal created and edited by Lacoste (FOUCAULT, 1980, pp. 63-77).
- 9.** For more information on the Geopolitical method, see CHAUPRADE; THUAL (1998).
- 10.** On the importance of Braudel, see the introduction I wrote with Beatrice Joyeux-Prunel and Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann for *Circulations in the Global History of Art* (KAUFMANN; DOSSIN; JOYEUX-PRUNEL, 2015, pp. 1-22)
- 11.** My engagement with Artl@s (<https://artlas.huma-num.fr/fr/>) is actually rooted in this very desire to work collectively on a more global history of the arts. Although the database and mapping interfaces are the core of Artl@s, they are only tools. The real goal for us is to decenter sources, perspectives, and narratives, by providing scholars with a greater number of sources coming from all over the world. It is also the main ambition of the *Artl@s*

Bulletin (<https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/artlas/>) that we have been publishing since 2011. Taken as a whole, all the articles contribute to decentering, expanding, and rethinking common knowledge and understanding of the visual arts—in brief doing what we alone, from our limited perspectives, cannot do.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Catherine Dossin is Associate Professor of Art History at Purdue University, US and serves as Editor of the *Artl@s Bulletin*. She is the author of *The Rise and Fall of American Art, 1940s-1980s: A Geopolitics of Western Art Worlds* (Routledge, 2015), the co-editor with Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel of *Circulations in the Global History of Art* (Routledge, 2015), and the editor of *France and the Visual Arts since 1945: Remapping European Postwar and Contemporary Art* (Bloomsbury, 2018).

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