

**CAN ART
HISTORY
BE MADE
GLOBAL?**

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**HEINRICH
WÖLFFLIN
LECTURES**

CAN ART HISTORY BE MADE GLOBAL? A DISCIPLINE IN TRANSITION

How has art history responded to the challenges of the “global turn”? In what ways has the discipline grown beyond its “ordinary” anchors in Western Europe? This series of six lectures examines specific themes from a perspective not centred in the West, while exploring artistic entanglements across continents. The studies draw upon the speaker’s research in South Asian Art which is used as a lens to rethink disciplinary questions beyond the poles of universality and radical cultural relativism, and towards an approach that historicizes difference and locates it in a common field of forces.

Monica Juneja holds the Chair of Global Art History at the University of Heidelberg. She completed her doctorate at the EHESS Paris, has taught at the Universities of Delhi, Vienna, Hannover and Emory University, Atlanta. Her research and writing focus on transculturality and visual representation, disciplinary practices in the art history of Western Europe and South Asia, studies of visibility in early modern South Asia, and the politics of architectural heritage. She edits the Series *Visual and Media Histories*, is theme editor of the *Encyclopedia of Asian Design*, on the advisory board of *Visual Histories of Islamic Cultures* and co-editor of *Transcultural Studies*.

25.2. THE WORLD IN A GRAIN OF SAND – A GENEALOGY OF WORLD ART STUDIES

The lecture introduces the efforts to bring the world into the purview of art history, beginning in the 19th century. What are the implications of those intellectual moves for approaches today which seek to “globalize” the discipline? Can we explain why the promise of an earlier potentially cosmopolitan moment was not realized?

11.3. TRACKING THE ROUTES OF VISION IN EARLY MODERN EURASIA

Does seeing constitute a universal attribute that holds humans together across time and space (J. Onians)? Or does each culture possess distinct and unique concepts of visibility which we can distil from canonical texts (J. Elkins)? The lecture argues for making vision a subject of historical investigation by fleshing out the dynamics of cultural mobility and reflexive artistic practices in a post-Mongolian Eurasian zone.

25.3. MOBILE OBJECTS – HOW MATERIALITY SHAPES ART HISTORY

Framing units of art historical investigation following the logic of mobile objects challenges us to rethink the tangled relationship between art history and materiality. This lecture fleshes out questions which come up when we follow the trajectories of a selection of objects between Europe and Asia in multiple directions.

8.4. MODERNISM FROM THE PERIPHERIES

The critical moves to displace Euro-America as a centre from where artistic modernism is said to have spread to the peripheries, have brought forth a flurry of epithets with the intent of telling a non-teleological story: we read about multiple, alternative, local, vernacular, de-centred or alter-modernisms, and most recently even an absent modernism (H. Belting). The lecture takes modernist art in South Asia as a starting point and looks at connected and constitutive processes of translation, reconfiguration and localization of the migrant languages as well as the myths of modernism. What are the implications of these processes for recasting the geographies, chronologies and the rhetoric of an avant-garde committed to privileging the “new”?

6.5. BEYOND BACKWATER ARCADIAS – GLOBALISED LOCALITY AND CONTEMPORARY ART PRACTICE

The availability of new sites of cultural action beyond the West crucial to contemporary art has not only challenged the premises of the avant-garde as it becomes global; new localities have the potential of stimulating alternative ways of reimagining art. The lecture examines the quest for artistic selfhood in the post-colonial context of India and Pakistan through a transformation of codes and media initiatives in which globalised locality can become a space to rethink tradition beyond the predicament of being always “somebody’s other” (R. Bharucha). It further addresses the proliferation of global exhibition circuits and what they mean for our conceptions of spectatorship.

20.5. INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES, CANONS AND SITES OF ART HISTORY

The lecture looks at the changing contours of museums and exhibition strategies as formed by a global consciousness. It plots the rapidly expanding and diversifying museum landscape in South Asia in relation to new cosmopolitan initiatives in the West – such as “universal museums” or museums of “world cultures” – which seek to free the museum space from the oppressive weight of colonial taxonomies, such as the distinction between a work of “art” and an “ethnological object” or an “artifact” or “fetish”. It points to the challenges of curating – on sites both in the West and in younger nation states – and displaying in a transcultural light migrant objects, the stories they are made to tell and the cultures they traverse.

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