

*Periodization in the History of Art and its Conundrums.
How to tackle them in East-Central Europe*

Second Seminar
November 25 - December 3, 2019

TALKS BY GUEST SPEAKERS AND CONSULTANTS



Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann

Frederick Marquand Professor of Art and Archaeology,
Princeton University

*Dealing with Discomfort: Reflections on the Practice of
Periodization*

On Monday, November 25, at 5:00 PM

Picking up from previous essays on problems of periodization, this lecture considers a wide range of issues presented by archaeology and art history dealing with different times and places throughout the world. After summarizing some theoretical considerations, it presents some practical issues encountered in writing a history of art starting with the earliest artifacts that humans have made and continuing until more recent times. The lecture intends to stimulate further reflection on practical as well as theoretical aspects of historiography.



Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius

Associate Lecturer in art history at Birkbeck College,
University of London

*The lure of the ethnic dress: Eastern Europe in Travellers'
Gaze*

On Tuesday, November 26, at 5:00 PM

If maps conjure up political entities, travel writing contributes to the formation of cultural identities, generated in an unequal encounter between the traveller and the 'travellee', to use the term introduced by Mary Louise Pratt. Accordingly, eastern Europe as a region owes its construction as much to mapmakers as to travellers, and both Wolff and Todorova drew their arguments about derogatory representation of eastern Europe and the Balkans from travel books. Both of the authors, and the following literature on travel around the region, focused exclusively on the written word, leaving the realm of travel images from eastern Europe virtually unexplored. This paper dives into this untrodden territory, looking at illustrations. It

examines a range of visual tropes which dominated travel reports from those ‘remote parts of Europe’, to quote one of the earliest visitors, the seventeenth-century British physician and scientist Edward Brown. Taking a long time span, it follows the formation of a repertory of iconic images which have shaped the perception of eastern Europe, some of them still in operation today. It moves from woodcuts and engravings in early modern travel literature to lithographs, steel engravings and small wood engravings in nineteenth century travelogues, ending with photographs in twentieth-century geographical magazines. It is the images rather than the texts which are the point of departure here, and their analysis rests on different approaches, leading to slightly different conclusions. The emphasis on backwardness, disapproving adjectives, or the condescending tone of the verbal narrative, not always lend themselves to translation in visual terms. When encountering the other, delight and aversion tend to be closely related, and the visual opts for the celebratory rather than the critical. Subject to their own operational mechanisms, the images under consideration did not necessarily mirror the truth regimes underscoring the narrative. They responded to other images, following the pre-existing formulas for the representation of the traveller’s body and dress, but also to the major changes in the conventions of landscape imagery. Otherness, neutralised by aestheticized visions of the ethnic dress, quaint villages and magnificent mountains, had to be expressed in different terms – by displacement and omission rather than an outward disapproval.



Carmen Popescu

Professor of Architectural History at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Bretagne (Rennes)

Space Versus Time: Flattening History. An architectural history perspective

On Thursday, November 28, at 5:00 PM

My talk will explore how the very building of historicity in the making of architectural historiography led to the flattening of History. What was the path from considering the architectural *bizarreries* (Seroux d'Agincourt) and the “non-historical styles” (Banister Fletcher) to turning peripheries into relevant territories of architectural history, as meant to do the supporters of Critical Regionalism (Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre, Kenneth Frampton) or a *Global History of Architecture* (Francis D.K. Ching, Mark Jarzombek, Vikramaditya Pakrash)?

I argue that this process was triggered by gradually emphasizing Space over Time. Moreover, the change of dynamics from a vertical construction to an increasingly horizontal perception was rendered more complex by yet a new understanding of space as being the very doctrinal matter of architecture.

I will articulate my exploration by following several threads, among which: the biological models of hierarchy borrowed by the history of architecture (Lamarckian, but not only), the fortune of the original hut (from Quatremère de Quincy and Semper to modernists and critical

regionalists), the emergence of marginal territories of art/ architectural historiography as geocultural triggers both in official discourses (CIHAs, Congrès de l'Art Populaire...) and in theoretical approaches (George Kubler, Sigfried Giedion). By doing so, I aim to analyze how the complex concept of space helped evolving architectural historiography while producing in the meantime deceptively open discourses.



Ruxandra Demetrescu

Professor of History and Theory of Art and head of the Doctoral School, National University of Art, Bucharest

Feminity/Feminism in Romanian Modern and Contemporary Art

On Monday, December 2, at 5:00 PM

To discuss about the feminine/feminist dimension in Romanian modern and contemporary art is a stringent requirement. It is a requirement because in Romania gender studies developed later and in a somehow mistrustful, even hostile context. It is equally stringent since it covers what Raluca Bibiri used to pertinently call a *terra incognita* in a political, social and cultural space which accepted belatedly and reticently the necessity of gender studies. On the other hand, these studies reconfigure and place in a different light the image of femininity in Romania's recent history. An added advantage could be the possibility to challenge certain clichés and prejudices related to women's role in the socialist period, as well as after 1990: the feminine emancipation, women's promotion in public space, the role and significance of the feminine dimension in autochthonous culture. Until recently, feminism has not benefitted from a discourse unaltered by a massive patriarchal irony.



Matthew Rampley

Professor at the Art History Department of the Masaryk University in Brno, Principal Investigator in the ERC Advanced Grant project *Continuity / Rupture: Art and Architecture in Central Europe 1918-1939*, hosted by the Masaryk University in Brno

Aby Warburg and the Transhistorical Migration of Images

On Tuesday, December 3, at 5:00 PM

Since the renewed critical engagement with Aby Warburg over the past 30 years, there has been a growing attention to his mapping of the migration of images across space and time. For some commentators his psychological theory of the image – encapsulated in the concept of 'pathos formula' – proposes a very different kind of art history that replaces the traditional scholarly concern with chronologies and temporal ordering, advancing instead a 'wild' art history that disrupts historic narratives and

problematizes the representation of art historical time, not least, the meaning of the art historical 'period.' This talk examines what is at stake in such readings. What difference would it make to follow such a 'wild' art history, what would be gained from such an image of art historical time? The talk also goes beyond such pragmatic issues to consider: is Warburg's understanding theoretically cogent? What conceptual presuppositions are necessary for it even to be considered as a possible alternative model of art history?

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