

Approaches and challenges to a global art history

Review of:

Circulations in the Global History of Art, edited by Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, Catherine Dossin, and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, Studies in Art Historiography, Surrey, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015, 247pp., 00 col. plates, 16 b. & w. illus., 4 b. & w. tables, 1 chart, 8 maps, \$109.95, ISBN 978-1-4724-5456-0 hdbk, ISBN 978-1-4724-5737-0 ebk-PDF, ISBN 978-1-4724-5738-7 ebk-ePUB

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For those interested in global art history, eager to expand their methodological approaches and to engage in a lively exchange of ideas *Circulations in the Global History of Art* is a must read. Edited by Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, Catherine Dossin, and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, the volume consists of ten chapters, a useful introduction and an afterward that is both engaged in the arguments and skeptical of the basic premise. As the editors write in their introduction, 'Our ambition is to tackle the difficult subject of "interculturalization" or "métissage" in a satisfactory, horizontal way that does not try to assign artistic superiority to any agents of the encounter, either the "center" or the "periphery"'.¹ They focus on cultural relations that both transform and integrate 'encounters and confrontations'.

They observe *Circulations* has origins more in historical methodology than in the nineteenth-century formations of Art History in geographically bounded cultures of Europe, particularly among German-speaking scholars. Two exceptions were the work of Karl Lamprecht (1856-1915) and especially his pupil Aby Warburg (1866-1929), whose impact on scholarship of the last decade is noteworthy.² Underlying much of the discussion in these essays, however are the nineteenth-century 'antinationalistic intellectual milieus' and particularly the ideas of the Annales School. These twentieth-century French historians focused on social, economic and eventually cultural history and their ideas found expression in the

¹ *Circulations*, 'Introduction: Reintroducing Circulations: Historiography and the Project of Global Art History', [1]-22, 2.

² Although the editors cite publications in note 10 regarding scholarly focus on Warburg in the last decade, it would have been useful to include Aby Warburg, *the Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, introduction by Kurt W. Forster, translation by David Britt, The Getty Research Institute Publications Programs, Texts & Documents, Las Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999. As Forster observes in the Introduction, 6, Warburg investigated the Italian Renaissance as 'a battleground of ideas and forces...an age of transition, and even of cultural upheaval'.

periodical *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* founded in 1929 by Marc Bloch (1886-1944) and Lucien Febvre (1878-1956).

The editors also note that methodology has been impacted by cultural and political changes at the end of the twentieth century including civil rights, gender issues, and postcolonial studies. More recently, 'statistical, digital, and cartographic tools to retrace precisely circulations of artworks, artists, and important mediators of artistic internationalization' have inspired scholars such as those who have created ARTL@s, and indeed, there is a close connection between this Paris-based group and both the editors and many authors represented here.³ The challenges are enormous to simultaneously use a number of different methodological approaches including 'cultural transfer, comparison, iconology, anthropology, semiotics, sociology'. The goal of the editors has been to encourage discussion and exchange of ideas in order to 'allow us to rethink the usual frames of the (art) historical narrative....not to universalize such terms as the "eye" or the "image", but rather to examine how in different times and places the same object or idea could be seen differently, and to realize the extent to which the issue of cultural differentiation and variation of the "gaze" mattered to artists, their patrons, and audiences'.⁴

Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann begins chapter one with reflections on the need for more global art history sought by scholars in the last decade and then turns to a series of theoretical objections raised by broad trends of scholarship in the humanities.⁵ He then addresses some of the central concerns raised by scholars attempting to move beyond what is often described as the Eurocentrism of art historical writing and to some of their critics.

His solution underlying much of this volume is to use a 'geohistory of art' as a tool that also 'must be aligned with economic and commodity theories that help explain the distribution and circulation of objects'.⁶ These ideas then lead to a form of 'transcultural art history' that truly means 'interchange, not exchange'. He even suggests a 'brief possible outline' that stretches from the earliest cultural contacts in Egypt and Mesopotamia, Africa, and on to the Far East. An early modern specialist himself, DaCosta Kaufmann knows the importance of global interchange in this period as well. As he observes of this pre-eighteen hundred period of 'world-wide

³ For ARTL@s see www.artlas.eng.fr. As their web site notes: 'Established in 2009, ARTL@s is a project of a Spatial (Digital) history of art. Based at École normale supérieure in Paris, the team has built a Post-GIS database of exhibition catalogues from the 18th century to the present on a global scale (BasArt), from Africa and Latin America to Europe, to North America, to Asia, and to the Middle East and Australia.' Note the ARTL@s Bulletin: <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/artlas/about.html> The group also sponsors conferences available at <http://www.artlas.ens.fr/colloques/?lang=fr>

⁴ *Circulations*, 'Introduction', 17.

⁵ *Circulations*, Chapter 1, Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, 'Reflections on World Art History', [23]-45.

⁶ *Circulations*, 34.

connections', the Europeans 'often acted as facilitators, or mediators, rather than as dominant factors'.⁷ In other words, it was not a pattern of center versus periphery. As he concludes the chapter he touches on a different model of exchange, 'patterns based on notions of networks or even rhizomes', ideas that have echoes in other essays of this volume.

French historian and specialist in Latin American cultural history Serge Gruzinski focuses on the early modern Spanish and Portuguese explorations well beyond the Mediterranean to a circulation of the globe.⁸ He notes the initial expansion of bureaucracies to a global dimension, exemplified by the systematic communications established by the Jesuit Order. Although bankers also established such international links, the author discusses these only from fifteen hundred despite much earlier impressive networks established on the Italian peninsula. And he notes that the expansion of people, goods, and ideas was not simply a one-way exchange. Such cultural expansion was 'less a matter of "cultural exchanges" than of a balance of forces'. Some illustrations concerning these complex flows would have been useful, particularly for the relationship in 'New Spain' between the Franciscan Bernardino de Sahagún and the indigenous people who illustrated the Florentine Codex.⁹

Circulation becomes more intertwined as Gruzinski turns to what he calls a 'crossbreeding between local traditions and European models'. As he observes, indigenous artists 'never passively accepted' such an 'aesthetic conquest'. Often techniques were mastered and applied to local creations, something ignored by Europeans who collected objects from afar only when exotic enough for their cabinets of curiosities. His analysis is most intriguing when he observes that 'the colonial stage---the stage of reception and imposition---could also be the prelude to a long work of gestation, thus of recomposition and amplification capable of steady extension to vast regions'.¹⁰ In other publications he has already characterized many

⁷ *Circulations*, 38.

⁸ *Circulations*, Chapter 2, Serge Gruzinski, 'Art History and Iberian Worldwide Diffusion: Westernization/Globalization/Americanization', [47]-58.

⁹ Gruzinski remarks that the codex located in Florence from the sixteenth century was not noticed until the nineteenth century and then not for its art. In fact, in 1588 Ludovico Buti frescoed the ceiling in the Uffizi, originally housing the Medici armory, with a variety of images taken from the codex including a fascinating series of carefully observed species of birds from the Americas with fantastic grotesques, and weapons used by the indigenous peoples. While Gruzinski cites Detlef Heicamp's important *Mexico and the Medici*, Florence: Editrice Edam, 1972, another useful citation would have been *Colors between Two Worlds: the Florentine Codex of Bernardino de Sahagún*, edited by Gerhard Wolf and Joseph Connors in collaboration with Louis A. Waldman, Florence: Kunsthistorisches Institut and Villa I Tatti, 2011. Indeed, as Connors observes, Ferdinando de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, allowed Ludovico Buti to consult the Codex for his imagery in the armory's frescoed ceiling. See Forward to the essays, XI.

¹⁰ *Circulations*, Gruzinski, 55

of these developments as a “war of images” which was ‘not content to accompany economic political, and religious colonization.’¹¹

This is a stimulating essay in its emphasis on ‘the diversity of time frames and angle of vision, the incessant play of interactions and transitions that punctuate the last five centuries of world history’.¹²

Art historian Monica Juneja turns to South Asian imagery in order to open the field beyond discussions of either the export of ‘Western pictorial practices and norms’ for adoption elsewhere or the argument of other cultures standing independent as ‘discrete cultural units beyond the West’.¹³

She examines several images, but one of the most intriguing comes from Madhu Khanazad who painted in the court workshop of the Mughal Emperor Akbar in Lahore, 1595. The artist portrays ‘Aflatun Charmes the Animals’ from the *Khamasa* or five poems by the Persian Nizāmī Ganjavī (1140 or 41-1202 or 3).¹⁴ Aflatun competes with Aristotle to make the best musical instrument. As Juneja observes, an earlier interpretation indicates that the image ‘was read as an example of a cultural transfer of Orphic notions of universal harmony, grafted onto Solomonic ideas of perfect justice symbolized by the peaceful concord of animals’.¹⁵ In the image created for Emperor Akbar, she argues, one finds cultural differences intentionally stressed. For example, the musical instrument being played represents a European pipe organ, which itself is decorated with a variety other images ‘each one proclaiming its specific cultural moorings’. She believes these different visual traditions are juxtaposed ‘but without assimilating or erasing that difference’. She also observes that there is an important history of illusionism at least as early as Alexander the Great’s invasion of south Asia (327-335 BCE), which created tension ‘between theological and philosophical caution against idolatry and seductive powers of the image’.

She argues such imagery exemplifies ‘moments of transculturation which are comprised of pulls in different and opposing directions’. She urges art historians to ‘address the interface between the material, visual, aural, and sensorial as palpable objects from distant shores were transposed onto the two-dimensional plane of an image’.¹⁶

¹¹ See Serge Gruzinski, *Images at War: Mexico from Christopher Columbus to Blade Runner (1492-2019)*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001.

¹² *Circulations*, 57

¹³ *Circulations*, Chapter 3. Monica Juneja, ‘Circulation and Beyond---the Trajectories of Vision in Early Modern Eurasia’, [59]-77.

¹⁴ Aflatun is the Persian name for Plato. For the manuscript see http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Or_12208

¹⁵ *Circulations*, Juneja, 65

¹⁶ *Circulations*, Juneja, 72. Her encouragement for art historians to address the importance of the senses in their research is the direction of major research being done by Henry J. Drewal, ‘Senses in Understandings of Art’, *First Word, African Arts*, 38, 2, Summer, 2005, pp.1, 4, 6, 88, 96. For is other related projects see <http://www.henrydrewal.com/>

Juneja also discusses the *muraqqa*, or album, frequently found in the Mughal courts. The technique of juxtapositions used in this album she describes as 'pastiche', which she uses in a constructive way to characterize 'literally reusing picture fragments...to compose new images' or to create 'pictorial juxtaposition of different regimes within a single painted composition to recreate the illusion of cutting, pasting fragments from other works.'¹⁷ Here, too, multiple levels of meaning are intended. The examples and the cultural traditions being cited provide a rich context for this discussion.

Carolyn C. Guile examines architecture in the central/eastern European area she identifies as the 'Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth' since it combines the circulation of ideas and forms from the Italian Renaissance with indigenous traditions that reflect a complex 'transregional' heritage.¹⁸ While the ruling nobility in the sixteenth century, the Jagiellonian dynasty, valued the classical Vitruvian canon of architectural proportions, local building practices used wood materials and natural forms for the structures used by the multicultural ethnicities and religions of this 'transregional' area to produce a vibrant culture even if not for a specific 'nation'. As she observes 'Roman Catholic, Uniate, Orthodox, and Protestant churches' stretched across 'the Tatra, Bieszczady, and Carpathian' mountain ranges.

The Italianate forms can be seen in town halls, urban layouts, and of course ecclesiastical structures. Yet the trade routes stretching east toward Russia and south east toward Persia brought goods and people with different tastes visible especially in domestic architecture. The essay examines highlights of this complex mixing of architecture illustrated with four black-and-white plates, three taken by the author.

One notable example of transregional structures is captured in a plate depicting a capital from the pattern book by Edgar Kovatš who celebrated what he called the "'Zakopane Style" of architecture and design'.¹⁹ As Guile examines such vernacular forms she poses the important issues 'of borrowing and originality in the context of defining an ethno-national style of art and architecture'. In other words, 'the development of local, vernacular architectures bears its own relationship to the problem of circulations.'²⁰ Geographical distance and local traditions challenge the definitions of period styles and offer distinctive, alternative solutions for the art and architecture found in these areas.

Michel Espagne's fascination with cultural transfers in literature, aesthetics, and art history focuses on the nineteenth-century exchanges particularly German,

¹⁷ *Circulations*, Juneja, 73

¹⁸ *Circulations*, Chapter 4. Carolyn C. Guile, 'Circulations: Early Modern Architecture in the Polish-Lithuanian Borderland', [79]-91.

¹⁹ Edgar Kovatš, *Sposób Zakopański/Manière de Zakopane/Die Art Zakopane*. Vienna: Verlag von Anton Schroll; and Lwów, Gubrynowicz & Schmidt, 1899.

²⁰ *Circulations*, Guile, 92.

but also other continental traditions.²¹ As others have observed in this collection of essays with regard to the trade routes of commerce ‘we need a cartography of the routes of art forms that make artistic production a phenomenon of circulation between cultural spaces’.²²

Although he emphasizes the ‘displacement of art forms along lines in space that are often trade routes’, he argues that historiography of the German aesthetic/philosophical tradition ‘represents still more of a form of cultural transfer’. For example, he comments on the role of the aesthetics of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) ‘that brought the universal history of art into the categories of German philosophy’. He also notes the role of psychology, particularly in the work of Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945) that created an ‘intersection of optic sensations and psychological formalism’. Additionally, anthropology impacted German historiography, particularly with the excavations of ancient Assyrian architecture by Henry Layard (1817-1869). Observing that the ‘theory of applied arts’ impressed Alois Riegl (1858-1905) who, in turn, laid the foundations for the Vienna school, Espagne characterizes the latter as ‘unconfined historiography bearing on global circulations’. He discusses a number of other exchanges such as in medieval arts, but concludes it is necessary to ‘re-read the historiography of art’ in terms of exchanges not compartmentalization, even if focused on a specific object, the global context remains vital.

He then considers collections of both art and artifacts as they educated writers on the arts. For example, he cites Francesco Algarotti (1712-1764) who advised Augustus the Strong (1670-1733) on a collection of Italian art for his new Dresden museum.²³ As Espagne notes ‘All German-language theorists and historians of art from Winckelmann on based their reflections on art on regular and assiduous visits to the Dresden gallery’.²⁴ In contrast to such aristocratic taste, he observes that the Leipzig collections were built by the taste of merchants and other bourgeois who preferred northern European, especially Dutch artists. Their collections informed critics such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832).

Having reviewed the role of German-speaking writers whose work exemplifies cultural transfer, he concludes: ‘The model of artistic expansion comes

²¹ *Circulations*, Chapter 5, Michel Espagne, ‘Cultural Transfers in Art History’ [97]-112.

²² *Circulations*, Espagne, 98 He goes on to make reference to the 1989 exhibition in Berlin that ‘lists countless artistic traces of contact with the East from the high Middle Ages on’ that exemplifies the long study of cross cultural traditions among German scholars. The catalogue for the exhibition is *Europa und der Orient, 800-1900*, ed. Gereon Sievernich and Hendrik Buddle, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Verlag, 1989.

²³ *Circulations*, Espagne’s note 29 observes that the literature on the Dresden collections is well known. A useful starting point for Algarotti, however, is Francis Haskell, ‘Francesco Algarotti’, Chapter 14, in *Patrons and Painters: Art and Society in Baroque*, rev. ed., New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980, 347-360 and the bibliography of Algarotti’s own extensive writings.

²⁴ *Circulations*, Espagne, 108.

into conflict with that of *métissage*, the competing model of foreign appropriation of something that demands expansion. A place of privileged observation of cultural transfers in a transnational historiography of art is the phenomenon of the collection, and its genesis appears revelatory of an aim of universality'.²⁵

Historian Christophe Charle approaches definitions of 'modernity' through cultural transfers on a transnational scale from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century.²⁶ Unlike many critics interested in this period, he returns to the period of the French Revolution as his point of departure in order to examine 'cultural circulation'.

He begins by noting the need to 'find the correct balance between a broad and a narrow conception of temporal differences, and thus of modernity and its effects on the transfers and interrelationships between singular geographical spaces'.²⁷ As he discusses method he considers economic factors, the varied non-economic reasons for cultural transfer, and hence the complexity of reception. He observes, 'Cultures are no more in a position of equidistance or equivalence than are economies trading on a European or world scale.' Rather 'traditional hierarchies of prestige' remain and change slowly.

In order to consider such issues in any discussions of globalization, defining them at a particular time with awareness of these hierarchies is vital. He chooses as an example the Russian novel when it enters France in the last quarter of the nineteenth century through varied intermediaries.²⁸ What he calls the 'spiritualist and Christian perspective (the "Slav soul" of the stereotypes)' counters the then dominant 'realism and naturalism' in French literature. Through this example and others Charle emphasizes 'the importance of mediators as catalysts or actors able to shift perceptions at a propitious moment, the discordance between contexts of production hence making possible the success of the transfer involved.'²⁹ Yet other examples show a very different set of circumstances.

Cultural areas involving the pictorial, musical, and theatrical worlds, he argues, can be less tied to 'national identities' and thus more open to the circulation of ideas. This time he uses examples from 'the French theater performed abroad'.³⁰ He specifically compares French plays performed in German-language

²⁵ *Circulations*, 110.

²⁶ *Circulations*, Chapter 6. Christophe Charle, 'Spatial Translation and Temporal Discordance: Modes of Cultural Circulation and Internationalization in Europe (Second Half of the Nineteenth and First Half of the Twentieth Century)', [113]-132.

²⁷ *Circulations*, 115.

²⁸ For this example he refers the reader to a section of his earlier book, 'Champ littéraire français et importations étrangères: La naissance du nationalisme littéraire', in *Paris fin de siècle, culture et politique*, Paris: Le Seuil, 1998, 177-99.

²⁹ *Circulations*, Charle, 119.

³⁰ He has researched this also and his note 13 gives two of his primary publications: 'Circulations théâtrales entre Paris, Vienne, Berlin, Munich et Stuttgart (1815-1860), Essai de mesure et d'interprétation d'un échange inégal', to the proceedings of the Vienna conference,

capitals of Vienna and Berlin during the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century and creates two contrasting tables of data showing their greater popularity in the Austrian capitol. Despite some periods of variation, he observes that the most popular were comedies not the ‘melodrama, romantic drama, and historical plays’ particularly valued by the French. The situation seems to have remained the same during the last quarter of the nineteenth century even when the two geographic areas of France and German-speaking territories had ‘produced a convergence’. He argues that ‘Theatrical circulation thus involved...a balance of forces that was directly bound up with demographic and economic variables’.³¹

In contrast to theater, opera ‘offers a caricature example of this feedback loop’. Evidence suggests that a canon of late eighteenth and nineteenth-century-Italian composers, Richard Wagner (1813-1883), and a few French dominated international productions and excluded newer work. In other words, ‘the extraordinary stability of an international genre stuck on a few works and cult authors’. Two tables listing performances for late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Europe and for later twentieth-century Germany, the United States and Canada show a persistence of limited composers. By contrast, he notes, “the plastic arts, where borders are more porous and exports particularly speculative, emerging nations may beat a path more quickly’.³²

His conclusions show that research gathering specific empirical data provides evidence that outweighs broader conceptual ideas. And, he argues that such ideas as ‘cultural transfers or crossings obey very varied modalities in time or social and geographical space’. Yet it remains necessary to consider all cultural circulations or else ‘it will never be possible to establish more than a partial and distorted inventory of the transformations of modernity in “Europe”’.³³

Art Historian Michele Greet endeavors ‘to correct the Eurocentrism of current scholarship on the Parisian art scene’ for Latin American artists living in the French capitol between World War I and II.³⁴ She uses new digital technology and mapping to track the interchanges among these artists in Paris including their residences, the galleries, and salons that showed their work. As she observes, this approach ‘foregrounds circulation of people and ideas to complicate traditional modernist narratives’. Besides examining the artists’ styles and subjects as ways to strategically reveal their ‘identity [or] to serve their individual or collective needs’

eds. N. Bachleitner (Ger) and Murray G. Hall (Eng), *“Die Bienen fremder Literaturen.” Der literarische Transfer zwischen Großbritannien, Frankreich und dem deutschsprachigen Raum im Zeitalter der Weltliteratur (1770-1850)*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2012, 229-60; and also in chapter 8 of Christophe Charle, *Théâtres en capitales. Naissance de la société du spectacle à Paris, Berlin, Londres et Vienne (1860-1914)*, Paris: Albin Michel, 2008.

³¹ *Circulations*, Charle, 125.

³² *Circulations*, 129.

³³ *Circulations*, 130.

³⁴ *Circulations*, Chapter 7. Michele Greet, ‘Mapping Cultural Exchange: Latin American Artists in Paris between the Wars’, [133]-147.

she also explores the interaction of artists from the seventeen countries she has identified as they created 'a broader notion of "Latin American art"' to develop.³⁵

She has identified more than seventy-five galleries that held at least one exhibition displaying art from Latin American artists. For this and other extensive data gathered, she provides an interactive data base that can be explored on line.³⁶ As with several authors in this collection, her work has drawn considerable global response enabling her to conclude that, 'the process has become a global collaboration'.

In this chapter Art Historian Piotr Piotrowski (1952-2015) compares two groups of artists engaged in rebellious ideas against power structures, especially dominating cultural ones, as they impacted the visual arts.³⁷ He focuses on two geographical areas, which he characterizes as located 'at the margins of Western culture, but at the same time in its orbit', Eastern Europe particularly Poland and Latin America, specifically Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Peru. He also demonstrates the power of technology to facilitate these global communications.

The vehicle for the transmission of these ideas through the arts was the global system called NET founded in 1971 by Polish artist Jarosław Kozłowski and art critic Andrezej Kostołowski. It shared information, ideas and imagery in multiple media and helped facilitate a growing global communication. Many of the artists involved participated as well in the Gallery Akumulatory 2 in Poznań, Poland, founded also by Jarosław Kozłowski. The question Piotrowski poses is whether the system promoted a 'merely informative...or a formative function'?

The essential background he provides indicates both the differences and yet shared ideas despite their respective contexts. From the 1960s, Eastern European artists and critics created work under dictatorships in which Social Realist art from Russia inspired political messages that had to be indirect, under the radar. By contrast much of South American art reflected a political tradition more Marxist and hence more open. As he remarks, 'Despite these different local contexts, what was similar in all parts of the world was the rebellious atmosphere against the system of power, including art institutions and the cultural mainstream. This was the global context in which the NET was founded'.³⁸ It involved the exchange of 'thoughts, artworks, letters, articles, books, catalogues, postcards, journals, pictures, photographs, photocopies, etc.'

Piotrowski reviews both institutions and artists involved in the NET. He focuses particularly on an exhibition titled *Through Myself* held at Gallery

³⁵ *Circulations*, 135

³⁶ For her interactive data base that is part of her book manuscript in progress, 'Transatlantic Encounters: Latin American Artists in Paris between the Wars' see at <http://chnm.gmu.edu/transatlanticencounters/>

³⁷ *Circulations*, Chapter 8. Piotr Piotrowski, 'The Global NETwork: An Approach to Comparative Art History', [149]-165.

³⁸ *Circulations*, 152.

Akumulatory 2 in 1973 of the Brazilian artist, Angelo de Aquino. In turn, the Brazilian invited Jarosław Kozłowski to do an exhibition, also in 1973, in Rio de Janeiro called *Realidade* that included the artist's book, "Reality". Piotrowski is particularly intrigued by contrasting the essence of these two artists: the Brazilian emphasized a period in 1968 when the military dictatorship established 'a harsh political system'. By contrast Kozłowski's artist book 'was based on Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, but...only reproduced from Kant's treatise the punctuation...thereby showing the pure and neutral "reality" of the text, somehow beyond its meaning'.³⁹ In other words, these two artists contrasted in terms of the contextual emphasis of the Brazilian and its total omission by the Polish artist. Yet, since both were conceptual artists, Piotrowski uses them as a point of departure to discuss the broader issues of 'the global view of conceptual art'. As with several others in this collection of essays, he too cites the exhibition *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origins* (1999), but as a model for 'a comparative art historical approach'.⁴⁰ In an effort to push further the 'rejection of the dogmatic dominance of the Western art model' he reviews in greater detail the initial issue of difference in the two geographical areas because 'East European conceptual art did not have any common regional or political identity to foster a common, ideological framework for subversive art, as was the case in Latin America'.⁴¹ The role of politics in the arts, then, differed enormously depending on the 'different political systems with different strategies' and he offers a number of specific examples for the respective areas being compared.

All of the above is intended to follow the different contexts which 'provide a framework for art practices and artists' strategies'. He believes the evidence demonstrates 'that the circulation of ideas, artworks, manifestos, etc., was more informative than formative in the context where they were received'.⁴² He concludes that the 'problem, therefore, is located in the deeper, historical, contextual meaning of both cultures, and this is why networks such as the NET are very good platforms for comparative art historical studies, in which political context seems to be crucial and shows the limits of reception of circulating ideas'.⁴³

As with Piotrowski, Sophie Cras cites the 1999 exhibition *Global Conceptualism*, but for her as the kind of center-periphery argument to avoid in discussions of circulations in the global history of art.⁴⁴ She argues that such

³⁹ *Circulations*, 155.

⁴⁰ *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin 1950s-1980s*, forward by Luis Camnitzer, Jane Farver, and Rachel Weiss, introduction by Stephen Bawn, New York: Queens Museum of Art, 1999. The exhibition traveled to MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge MA, the Miami Art Museum, Miami FL, and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis MN.

⁴¹ *Circulations*, Piotrowski, 160.

⁴² *Circulations*, 162.

⁴³ *Circulations*, 164.

⁴⁴ *Circulations*, Chapter 9. Sophie Cras, 'Global Conceptualism? Cartographies of Conceptual Art in Pursuit of Decentering', [167]-182.

circulations were uneven and precluded “spontaneous emergence” advocated by the 1999 exhibition. Her objective, then, is to identify what would be a viable position on international circulations of conceptual art. One must ‘consider not only practices that were geographically disseminated, each having its own history, but circulations between these spaces, considered dynamically and dialectically, to understand processes of emulation, domination and exclusion’.⁴⁵ She notes that historically Alain Reynaud, Fernand Braudel and others approached ‘centers and peripheries’ not as absolute opposites but as tools ‘to develop a critical analysis of the geopolitical, geohistorical, and geo-economic dynamics which make, at one specific moment, one socio-space a periphery or a center in relation to another socio-space.’⁴⁶ Her goal is ‘to oppose the discursive construction of a “global conceptual art” in the 1960s, with the analysis of identifiable international circulations—of artists, artworks, exhibitions, and exhibition catalogues’.⁴⁷

In order to support her position, she focuses on art critic Lucy Lippard’s *Six Years* (1972) that covered exhibitions between 1966 and 1971 and then turns to *Documenta V* held in Kassel, 1972.⁴⁸ She maps the locations of the one hundred-forty-seven exhibitions and then the residences of the participants examined by Lippard. She also shows the geographical distribution of the one-hundred-eighty-two participants in *Documenta V*. Cras ends her evaluation by observing that this so-called ‘discourse of internationalism was actually very localized’: the majority of participants were ‘none other than the New York art scene’ able to travel.⁴⁹

She concludes her essay with an ironic twist as she discusses the maps made by the conceptual artist On Kawara (1933-1914) who created the conceptual piece, *I Went*, between 1968 and 1979. He recorded his daily walking whether in New York or around the world. As she notes it has been reedited into twelve volumes with maps, dates and trails taken.⁵⁰ This project, she believes, ‘demonstrates that artists were not simply the naïve victims nor the passive agents of geographic domination, but instead proposed a critical rethinking of the logics of spatial power at play in the art world’. As she concludes, ‘Maybe this is why, as if to preemptively undermine future art historians seeking to freeze artistic geography in maps, some artists decided to play tricks on them’.⁵¹

⁴⁵ *Circulations*, 168.

⁴⁶ *Circulations*, 168. Here she specifically quotes from Reynaud’s *Société, espace et justice: Inégalités régionales et justice socio-spatiale*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1981.

⁴⁷ *Circulations*, Cras, 169.

⁴⁸ Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972*, New York: Praeger, 1973, and *Documenta 5 Befragung der Realität Bildwelten heute*, Kassel: Verlag documenta GmbH, 1972.

⁴⁹ *Circulations*, Cras, 169.

⁵⁰ See her note 34, On Kawara, *I Went*, Brussels: MCF-Michèle Didier, 2007. As Cras observes, there are a total of ‘4,700 pages, each of them a Xeroxed map onto which the artist has stamped the date, and inscribed his path’. 179.

⁵¹ *Circulations*, Cras, 180 for both concluding quotations.

Catherine Dossin and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, joint editors with Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann of this volume, focus the final essay on the 'geopolitical approach' to a discussion of global circulations related to Modernism.⁵² As they clarify, they use it as a two part method: macrostorial and microstorial. Or as they elaborate, 'studying long periods using quantitative methods and continuously shifting the scale of the analysis, while reconstituting the links between the different artistic fields and the trajectories and strategies of its actors and objects' and as a development from 'post-structuralist approaches, including the methods of Cultural Transfers'.⁵³

While they have followed Fernand Braudel's 'three levels...history and geography, the cycle of socio-economical fluxes and transnational circulations, and the finer scale of events, crisis, and artworks', their specific methodological approach has included cartography, 'collective biography' [also called 'prosopography'], and specific analysis of 'texts and artifacts'.⁵⁴ As with other essays in this collection, they advance their arguments with maps, in this instance, marking the location of avant-garde journals from specified two and three year periods between nineteen fourteen and nineteen thirty in 'Europe, the Americas, and Japan'. Communication also included many 'modernist magazines' which they trace to a number of three hundred fifty in the same geographical spread. As a result of their data they believe they have evidence for 'very different viewpoints that question the idea of any fixed hierarchy and dominations in modern art'.

The geopolitical enables them to not only examine circulations but also provide a series of fascinating discussions about individual art works, artists, and new ideas. For example, they observe Paul Signac changed the titles of his paintings 'depending on where he showed them' or Duchamp's *Fountain* signature could be interpreted in multiple ways according to the audience viewing it. Additionally because they follow dealers, curators and others who facilitated the international careers of artists, the authors argue that these patterns also should be followed in the pursuit of understanding modernist art. They clearly argue that their 'geopolitical, circulatory approach also deconstructs the notions of progress and innovation that are at the core of the modernist narrative'.⁵⁵

They conclude with a call for making the study of a 'global, total history of modernism' to become a 'collective project' or, as they put it in their final sentence, 'a global way of working'. To that end they have created ARTL@s, 'a project that

⁵² *Circulations*, Chapter 10. Catherine Dossin and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, 'The German Century? How a Geopolitical Approach Could Transform the History of Modernism', [183]-201.

⁵³ *Circulations*, 183/184.

⁵⁴ *Circulations*, 184.

⁵⁵ *Circulations*, 196.

gives scholars the means to apply a geopolitical approach through distant reading of serial data and cartographic techniques, and to study circulations collectively'.⁵⁶

James Elkins completes *Circulations in the Global History of Art* with twenty-seven pages of commentary.⁵⁷ Among other topics he reviews the book's themes, considers whether or not global histories are possible, the particular difficulties in the study of modernism, and limits to the concepts and terms used including Circulations, Global, Western/non-Western, Center and Periphery. And he makes his own position clear.

He values the book's focus on 'new strategies of art historical writing' and a devaluation of mega themes as have been used so often for art history. Those strategies include 'conversations on the worldwide spread of art history, on global art histories, on cultural circulation and exchange, and on the possibility of using quantitative information, like mapping, to move art history forward. It is not often that a book like this appears: it is full of information, historical *matter*, but it is also rich in theories and methods. In that sense it is an ideal model for the future of the discipline.'⁵⁸ His positive evaluation of the book seems undisturbed by its lack of a comprehensive bibliography or the minimal use of visual support within the essays. His own position, however, is that he believes most theorizing about global issues remains 'culturally contextualized---"Western"---in certain crucial ways'. In fact, he prefers to identify the approach as 'North Atlantic art history' which he believes no one can avoid since 'the vehicle of any universal art history will itself be Western'. His own current project exemplifies both this idea as well as his appreciation of the larger conversation that the ARTL@s project has helped develop. He published some of his ideas earlier after a seminar in Cork, Ireland, and in what he notes was a 'poorly received paper' at the 2013 ARTL@s conference in Paris. Currently he is experimenting by writing on-line his next book project.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ See note 3 above.

⁵⁷ *Circulations*, James Elkins, 'Afterword', [203]-229.

⁵⁸ *Circulations*, 229.

⁵⁹ In 2005, Elkins conducted the third Art Seminar held at University College Cork Ireland and published: *Is Art History Global?* New York & London: Routledge, 2006. John Onians' 15 July 2008 review in the CAA Reviews is useful <http://www.caareviews.org/reviews/1136#.V079I-T3jaI> Currently Elkins continues work on the problem in his online book project, *North Atlantic Art History and Worldwide Art*, and is at <http://www.jameselkins.com/index.php/experimental-writing/251-north-atlantic-art-history> The ARTL@s conference in Paris is available at <http://www.artlas.ens.fr/colloques/global-art-history-and-the/>

Gail Geiger's research has been focused on early modern art and patronage on the Italian peninsula, while her teaching has emphasized the impact of emerging science and technology on the aesthetics of painting, sculpture and architecture; the role of global exploration and trade on the material culture of the period; racial and gender stereotypes promoted and thwarted; and the politics of power on visual culture. Her publications include: *Filippino Lippi's Carafa Chapel in Renaissance Rome*, vol. V of *Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies* (1986); 'Fra Angelico, Motherhood and the Dominican Collective Memory', in *Art History on the Move: Hommage an Kurt W. Forster*, ed. Nanni Baltzer, et al Zurich: Diaphanes, 2010; Andrea Brustolon and Cross Cultural Issues in the *Fornimento Venier* [c.1690s Venice]. Three major papers connected with this latter project have been given at the V&A, London and the RSA [Renaissance Society of America], New York; the work is a book manuscript in process.

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