

Andrea Meyer and Bénédicte Savoy (eds), *The Museum is Open. Towards a Transnational History of Museums, 1750–1940*. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2014. ISBN 978-3-11-029880-2. 266 pp., 27 b. & w. illus. €79.95.

The history of museums is making its transnational turn. Having swept across the humanities over the past decade, the methods of supranational and entangled history, as well as *histoire croisée*, came to frame a conference on the European museum at the Technische Universität in Berlin in 2012. The resulting volume, *The Museum is Open*, seeks to correct an older historiographical bias which has typically narrated the emergence of the museum through the prism of the nation-state. Widening the lens of analysis, all the essays in this stimulating volume engage in various ways with the lateral, transnational networks of personnel, technologies and ideas which underwrote the museum age, from the mid-eighteenth century (represented here in Stefanie Heraeus's discussion of how Paris lighting design was adapted in Kassel) through to the eve of the Second World War. The collection thus offers a set of snapshots of modern museological practice across the *longue durée*, selected from across the continent and thematically arranged. Many of the contributors have published fuller studies of these contacts and crossings elsewhere but it is still fruitful to have their arguments collated in a single book.

The value and necessity of a transnational approach is certainly vindicated. At the most basic level, the essays demonstrate that the architectural plans of many major museums, as well as the modalities of internal display, were indebted to foreign exemplars. Several essays underline the importance of cosmopolitan periodicals for the dissemination of ideas: this includes Andrea Meyer's study of the Wilhelmine journal *Museumskunde* under Karl Koetschau as well as Alessandra Galizzi Kroegel's analysis of *Mouseion*, the publication from which Guglielmo Pacchioni imported concepts to reform curatorial practice in twentieth-century Italy. The essays highlight how complex hybrid forms were created by processes of appropriation, with foreign models refitted for domestic contexts. These manifold borrowings could lead to a certain genesis amnesia. For instance, Thomas Adam shows that curators in Dresden in 1913 praised those museum associations

that flourished in the United States following the trailblazing example of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1870 – quite forgetting that the New Yorkers had themselves been inspired by earlier civic groupings in Leipzig.

As might be expected, the most revealing case studies of intercultural transfer are situated on the peripheries of the continent. It was here that a pan-European vision of heritage was really put to the test. Although American buyers joined the collecting scramble relatively late, numerous essays demonstrate how their arrival generated both admiration and alarm. Looking east, Bénédicte Savoy and Sabine Skott mine the exceptionally rich correspondence between the director of the Pushkin Museum, Ivan Tsvetaev, and his German colleagues. Russian eagerness to learn from foreign prototypes, including the Musée de Trocadéro and the Dresden Albertinum, led to an ambitious and rather awkward amassing of antique plaster casts and models. In his sensitive discussion of the career of Igor Grabar, head of the Tretyakov gallery, Roland Cvetkovski demonstrates that these transfers were sometimes reciprocal. Grabar was not only crucial in validating the integrity of Russian art through his exhibitions in Paris and Berlin in the 1920s, he also propagated new methods for the restoration of painting among western colleagues (ironically a specialism which Grabar acquired during his youth studying in Munich).

These wide-ranging essays prompt three reflections on transnationalism. The first is that while it is salutary to consider cross-border exchange, we should always remember that these exchanges happened on very unequal terms. Many essays here underline the hegemony of Germany in questions of museum design and classification: whether it is the clout of Gustav von Waagen in forming the National Gallery in London or the tutelage of Wilhelm von Bode in shaping the holdings of American museums; from the nervous inquiries of French curators in the Second Empire through to the ubiquitous influence of Karl von Schinkel and Leo von Klenze on museum façades erected in Moscow or Istanbul. As Christina Kott demonstrates, German scholarship continued to exert a significant role on international museology even after the rupture of 1918. While there was a traffic of ideas across borders, these interactions always occurred within the framework of an hierarchical and competitive geopolitical system. It was not always easy to serve

two masters, as attested by Xavier Pol-Tilliette's penetrating account of Wilhelm Valentiner's ambivalent loyalties to both the Metropolitan in New York and the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin.

Secondly, the essays here frequently show that transnationalism could not just enrich but also distort museum practice. Ayse Koksal's reconstruction of Ottoman and Turkish museums underlines how the desire to satisfy an internalized Western 'Other' led to a demotion of Islamic art in favour of Graeco-Roman and Byzantine antiquities, and the denigration of insufficiently European Turkish painters as 'primitives'. Most arresting is Bärbel Küster's essay on French museums in Réunion and Algeria, in which the implantation of French masterpieces, both classical and modern, was viewed as an extension of the civilizing mission. These institutions expanded at the expense of any engagement with indigenous and non-European cultures, not to mention the omitted history of slavery. Under what Küster calls the 'cloak of humanism', namely the universalist assumption that art could foster harmony between nations, imperial attitudes and relationships persisted.

Thirdly, while transnationalism adds geographical diversity, the best scholarship in this field also reformulates concepts of what a museum actually is. Dorothea Peters's intriguing study of the use of photography to document and publicize nineteenth-century collections, starting with the Raphael corpus, uncovers the crucial role of visual reproduction in forming an international canon of masterpieces, and thus transforming 'art connoisseurship into photographic connoisseurship'. Recognizing the national museums as an assemblage of heterodox materials and techniques of diverse provenance is also an opportunity to think about museums in ways that transcend the building's four walls. In this way Peters's essay directs us to consider how expectations about what visitors should look at in a museum were formed long before they crossed the threshold. This wide-ranging essay collection offers insights into the transnational museum as both monumental site and 'spatial fiction'.

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Rosie Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness. John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2013. ISBN 978-030019-668-9. 288 pp., 50 col. illus., 95 b. & w. illus. £45.

Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery might appear at first glance to be a cautionary tale of the dangers of investing in art. The gallery opened in 1789 with the grand intention of establishing an English School of Painting to rival the national schools of other European countries. Despite an initially favourable critical response, the enterprise was to prove a financial disaster. In 1805, Boydell was forced to dispose of the pictures to avoid bankruptcy and the whole gallery was offered as the prize in a lottery. Yet, as Dias's lucid and wide-ranging study shows, this well-rehearsed story of the rise and fall of the gallery should not detract from the significance of Boydell's project. Instead, Dias places the gallery in its cultural context by exploring its relationship with other artistic institutions, and by looking at the perceived success or failure of individual works in Boydell's collection. The resulting study is a *tour de force*, which illuminates questions of taste, aesthetics, national identity and artistic rivalry in the late eighteenth century.

Dias's book benefits from its balance between wide-ranging contextual analysis and close readings of individual objects. Her first chapter, for example, explores the spaces – physical and intellectual – that the Shakespeare Gallery occupied in the eighteenth-century art scene. She examines how new exhibition spaces around Pall Mall challenged the apparent dominance of the Royal Academy and encouraged a desire for a space dedicated to ambitious history painting. She concludes this broad sweep with a close study of the architecture of the gallery and Thomas Banks's *alto-relievo* sculpture of Shakespeare, flanked by the Dramatic Muse and the Genius of Painting, that was incorporated into the façade. This shifting focus between the general and the particular is one of the great strengths of Dias's analysis and the benefits of her approach are confirmed in subsequent chapters. The titles of these chapters – 'Reynolds, Boydell and Northcote: Negotiating the Ideology of an English Aesthetic', "'The Shakespeare of the Canvas'", 'Fuseli and the Construction of English Artistic Genius' and 'Painting Comedy in the Shakespeare Gallery' – clearly signal their overarching themes, but Dias

egorio Cruzada Villaamil allait à Velázquez (1885). Le par- du peintre, reconstitué grâce ombreuses archives inédites, neusement rétabli : fils d'un il s'émancipe très rapidement de auquel semble le condam- mbiance très artisanale dans e évoluent encore les métiers tre, de sculpteur ou d'orfèvre Barcelone du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. La e reconstitution, culturelle, à juste titre sur l'environne- u peintre, que l'auteur analyse s plusieurs indices : la culture e, que révèlent la possession de 'utilisation et la référence à la ; ses fréquentations ; son atti- 'égard du collège des peintres elone qu'il refuse d'intégrer en es deux procès qui lui seront s changements profonds qu'il e à l'enseignement de la pein- du dessin, ouvrant son atelier èves qui ne sont pas peintres, nt le dessin à la base de la pra- cturale ; enfin, en travaillant autres artistes peintres, mais ent sculpteurs et orfèvres, fai- aussi voler en éclat les bar- érigées par les puissantes tions de métier. La dernière titution, stylistique, est révéla- un artiste complexe par bien ects : techniquement, car il se re indifféremment à la pein- tableaux d'autels, de cheva- dessin, aux peintures murales que ; stylistiquement, car non ent Viladomat aborde tous res (peinture religieuse, por- paysages, scènes de genre, mais il est également sensible es influences témoignant non nt de l'étendue de sa culture e mais de la complexité et de sse du baroque catalan. Cet e – encore une fois bien plus atalogue – restitue l'import- e l'œuvre de Viladomat dans ure espagnole du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle elques découvertes fonda- s ; nous pensons en particulier ortrait du peintre, ou encore chives inédites, comme son re après décès. Celui en qui inard voyait le peintre à l'ori- la « renaissance » de la pein- alane au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle se révèle e majeur de son temps. Bien de la vision réductrice consis- e voir, dans les grands ateliers s d'Espagne du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle,

que les exécuteurs d'une peinture religieuse stéréotypée, répétitive, enfermée dans des modèles éprouvés, cette monographie montre l'extrême richesse des supports, des genres, des modèles, des influences, des débats. Il se découvre ainsi une histoire complexe trop longtemps considérée comme linéaire – dont témoigne notamment l'influence que Viladomat continuera d'avoir bien après sa mort sur de nombreux peintres.

Julien Lugand

**Andrea Meyer, Bénédicte Savoy (dir.) : The Museum is Open. Toward a Transnational History of Museums 1750-1940.** Berlin et Boston, Walter de Gruyter, 2014. 265 p., ill. n. et bl.

Tout au long des dernières décennies du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, le musée a été construit comme objet d'histoire à partir d'un questionnement sur la nation et ses représentations, et envisagé de l'intérieur des histoires nationales. L'institution muséale a été étudiée comme l'un des lieux centraux de la fabrication d'identités, comme le creuset d'une réflexion sur l'histoire et le patrimoine qui a déterminé le rapport à la nation et l'élaboration d'imaginaires nationaux. Depuis les années 2000, la recherche sur les musées a commencé à intégrer une nouvelle dimension : dans le sillage des travaux d'Anne-Marie Thiesse sur la création transnationale des identités nationales, des études de Michel Espagne et Michael Werner sur les transferts culturels, ou des tentatives anglo-américaines de fonder une *global history*, des chercheurs issus de disciplines différentes se sont intéressés de plus en plus fréquemment aux transferts d'objets à l'origine de la constitution des collections publiques, aux échanges entre les institutions, aux circulations d'hommes, d'idées, de modèles qui ont façonné l'histoire des musées européens. C'est une histoire des mobilités, des relations, des contacts : une histoire croisée qui s'attache aux rencontres et aux relations plus qu'à une exceptionnalité nationale revendiquée certes par les acteurs de l'époque, mais qui semble aujourd'hui souvent illusoire.

*The Museum is Open. Toward a Transnational History of Museums 1750-1940*, dirigé par Bénédicte Savoy et Andrea Meyer, s'inscrit avec autorité dans ce courant de la recherche internationale. Issu d'un programme d'études pluriannuel de la Technische Universität de Berlin, l'ouvrage réunit dix-sept contributions présentées au cours d'un colloque organisé à Berlin en 2012. Celles-ci sont regroupées sous cinq rubriques, qui recourent autant de pistes essentielles pour la recherche en histoire transnationale des musées.

La reconstitution des « carrières » des objets, de leurs déplacements, des représentations qui leur sont attachées dans des contextes culturels autres que leur contexte d'origine, est au cœur de la première section. À travers des études de cas – les collections d'art assyrien dans l'Angleterre victorienne, les musées de moulages et les premières campagnes photographiques menées dans les musées européens –, les médiations grâce auxquelles les œuvres entrent au musée font l'objet d'analyses poussées, tout comme la vie sociale et la mobilité des objets après leur muséalisation. L'étude des expositions, des saisies et d'autres formes de dispersions, de la circulation d'images photographiques et de reproductions montre à quel point ces mobilités affectent la constitution de patrimoines.

La seconde partie se concentre sur la transmission de modèles architecturaux et expographiques et analyse notamment la réception de certaines réalisations particulièrement marquantes (nouvelles techniques d'illumination, d'accrochage, de présentation historique introduites à la galerie de Kassel ou au musée Pouchkine de Moscou), ainsi que le rôle de l'un des acteurs essentiels de l'internationalisation du débat sur les musées dans les années de l'entre-deux-guerres : l'POIM et sa revue *Monseion*, qui sont étudiés ici au prisme de leur impact sur la muséologie italienne.

Dans la partie suivante est abordée la question des médiateurs de ces échanges intellectuels et matériels. Ce sont les passeurs – conservateurs de musée et professionnels du patrimoine, critiques et historiens de l'art, mais également diplomates et hommes politiques, collectionneurs

et marchands – qui assurent concrètement le transfert d'une idée, d'une technique, d'un savoir-faire précis d'un contexte culturel à un autre, et qui initient souvent le processus de resémantisation rendant possible l'adoption de l'élément étranger dans la culture d'arrivée.

Les mouvements de réforme des musées, qui connaît une véritable montée en puissance au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, et notamment dans l'entre-deux-guerres, sont au centre des articles de la quatrième section, qui approfondit la dimension internationale du projet d'ouverture des établissements muséaux à des publics plus larges et différenciés par une intensification des efforts pédagogiques. C'est notamment dans cette partie et dans la suivante que l'on voit émerger la question des concurrences et des conflits entre des acteurs – individus ou institutions – qui, s'ils participent indéniablement au processus d'internationalisation de la culture, sont néanmoins pris dans des logiques de compétition nationale particulièrement puissantes tout au long de la première moitié du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Les contributions sur la National Gallery, le rôle de Wilhelm R. Valentiner, médiateur entre les traditions muséologiques allemande et américaine, la revue *Museumskunde* et le positionnement des conservateurs allemands au sein de l'POIM, insistent opportunément sur la dimension non consensuelle de la construction transnationale d'une nouvelle muséologie, en montrant à quel point la volonté de rivaliser avec l'étranger a constitué un levier pour l'importation de savoirs pratiques et logistiques élaborés ailleurs.

La cinquième et dernière section se mesure précisément à ces problématiques, car les articles qu'elle rassemble abordent le musée comme lieu transnational de la fabrication d'identités nationales (Portugal, Turquie et anciennes colonies françaises en Afrique).

Par ses intéressantes études de cas, ce volume élargit considérablement les perspectives d'une histoire croisée des musées et montre toute la richesse de ce nouveau champ. On doit saluer l'initiative des deux directrices de publication, qui par un travail de plusieurs années ont permis de penser et de tester collectivement les outils, les méthodes, les pratiques

et les échelles d'analyse d'une histoire transnationale des institutions artistiques et patrimoniales.

Michela Passini

**Vibeke Røstorp : Le mythe du retour. Les artistes scandinaves en France de 1889 à 1908.** Stockholm, Stockholms universitets förlag, Eidos n° 26, 2013. 450 p., 142 ill.

L'ouvrage de Vibeke Røstorp constitue un important travail de révision historiographique et une contribution marquante à la connaissance d'un pan de l'histoire de l'art périphérique en France, celui de la Scandinavie.

Par Scandinavie, l'auteur entend la Suède et la Norvège, qui se trouvent ici rapprochées systématiquement de manière inédite. Dans les deux cas, l'histoire de l'art a traité selon le même schéma les évolutions du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle et du début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle : à l'influence et l'attraction de l'Allemagne aurait succédé celles de la France dans les années 1870 et 1880, période à l'issue de laquelle les artistes norvégiens puis suédois seraient massivement rentrés en Scandinavie dans le cadre des mouvements nationaux-romantiques. S'en serait suivi un regain d'intérêt pour la France à partir de 1908. L'auteur nous propose ici un regard critique sur cette « vision trop simpliste ». En s'appuyant sur un travail quantitatif minutieux, elle révèle le caractère infondé de cette séquence chronologique et géographique : « Les chiffres établis pour la présence des artistes suédois et norvégiens aux Salons parisiens entre 1889 et 1908 prouvent qu'il y avait à Paris au moins autant d'artistes qu'au cours des années 1880, si ce n'est légèrement plus ». Or, le « mythe du retour » en Scandinavie, entre 1889 et 1908, est solidement ancré dans les travaux suédois, norvégiens, mais également français et américains, d'histoire de l'art scandinave. Il prend ses racines dans les écrits théoriques de l'époque, puis dans les manuels fondateurs du milieu du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, et se trouve ensuite relayé dans les études monographiques et dans les catalogues des expositions consacrées aux artistes scandinaves.

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social and cultural conditions in which artists developed particular works at certain stages of their careers. As an eminent art historian coming from a background of early Chinese art, he is skilful in articulating the historical and philosophical links that vitally inform Chinese art up to the present with regard to its materials, forms and geographies.

Wu's book is likely to appeal to many on an aesthetic level as a volume to turn to for reference across different spheres in the art world. His discussion of the vital international influence on contemporary art in China in chapter 7, 'Contemporary Chinese Art beyond China 1990s–2000s' (pp.276–309), is important since many Chinese artists came to prominence on foreign soil during the 1990s in major exhibitions in Europe and the USA. Wu also skilfully manoeuvres across a wide range of art, including an important chapter, 'Conversation with Tradition 1990s–2000s' (pp.310–51), which discusses the use of ink painting and of traditional materials such as rice paper, silk and porcelain, which have recently experienced a huge revival in China. The passages on significant mid-career women artists such as Yin Xiuzhen (Fig.43), Lin Tianmiao and Xing Danwen, although brief, are of great value, as women's art is slowly gaining ground in research and is worth further exposure in a highly patriarchal art system.

## Publications Received

*The Magi. Legend, Art and Cult.* Edited by Manuela Beer, Iris Metje, Karen Straub, Saskia Werth and Moritz Woelk. 336 pp. incl. 230 col. ills. (Hirmer Verlag, Munich, 2014), €49.90. ISBN 978-3-7774-2267-1. According to legend, the relics of the Three Kings were found by St Helena, mother of Constantine; they were subsequently given to the Bishop of Milan, only to be captured by Frederick Barbarossa and transferred to Cologne Cathedral by Archbishop Rainald van Dassel in 1164. The publication here reviewed is the English version of the catalogue to the recent exhibition (held 2014–15 at the Museum Schnütgen, Cologne) celebrating the 850th anniversary of that event. It is another example of the growing status and monumental appearance of such catalogues, which are more affordable and have a wider sale than academic books.

The ten-page introduction provides a useful outline of the texts behind the popular image of the Magi, from the brief description in Matthew 2 to the numerous Early Christian and medieval commentaries from the apocryphal Pseudo-Matthew – the first to mention the gifts – to the thirteenth-century Golden Legend. Like the exhibition, the catalogue is arranged not chronologically but mainly according to eight thematic headings beginning with 'From Magi to Kings', outlining the basic change in their representation dating to the time of the Ottonian emperors. The introduction goes on to discuss the other sections which include 'the Virgin Mary as the throne of God', 'the History of Salvation' dealing with related Christological scenes depicted with the Magi, 'the Journey', 'the relics in Cologne' and 'the Gifts', ending with 'the Lure of the Exotic'. It is admitted that the individual exhibits, which include all media, can be covered by more than one of these headings, but they are grouped according to what is considered the main theme, with the other headings also listed to explain the complexity of the image concerned. In many cases, it must have been difficult to decide under which main heading individual items should be placed.

The bulk of the book consists of 127 extensive catalogue entries by numerous specialists accompanied by large and splendid colour plates. General information on the Magi not covered in the introduction can be found in these entries. For example, the Magi's names, which first appear in the fifth century, are briefly mentioned in the introduction but their individual identity and appearance is not clearly discussed until catalogue nos.16 and 18. Even then the reader will have to consult other sources to confirm that Melchior is old and bearded, Caspar a beardless youth and Balthasar fully bearded. Equally, the introduction has a brief reference to the black king who appears increasingly from the mid-fifteenth century and is here described in several catalogue entries. Yet there is no discussion of the early sources of his colour – Bede, broadly following St Augustine, says that the three represent Asia, Africa and Europe – nor any mention of one of the first references to Caspar as 'a black Ethiopian' by John of Hildesheim in his *Historia Trium Regum* (c.1364–75).

In their different ways, the introduction and the catalogue entries are thorough, informative and stimulating, but the lack of such basic information underlines the difficulties of turning an exhibition catalogue into a reference book. The translation is, on the whole, good and perfectly readable, but one is bound to point out that in English an altar is a table and the image placed above it is an altarpiece, a word hardly ever to be found here. Such quibbles aside, it must be said that the strength of this imposing volume lies in the detailed descriptions of so many objects of widely differing dates and materials discussed in terms of their conceptual contexts and their purpose in providing devotional experience.

C.M. KAUFFMANN

*The Basilica of St Francis in Assisi.* Edited by Gianfranco Malafarina. Introduction by Chiara Frugoni. 324 pp. incl. 335 col. ills. (Thames & Hudson, London and New York, 2014), £60. ISBN 978-0-500-51768-0.

First published in Italian in 2011, this lavishly illustrated book provides an eye-catching guide to the Basilica of S. Francesco at Assisi, encompassing both the Lower and Upper Churches, their frescos, architecture and ornament. In many ways the volume's principal authors are the photographers: Elio Ciol and his son Stefano, and Ghigo Roli. It is through their considerable accomplishments – together with the contributions of Stefan Diller and the late Padre Gerhard Ruf – that we can still appreciate, however vicariously, the Upper Church in its pre-1997 state, before the earthquakes of that year felled the nave and crossing vaults, permanently scarring the building's mural decoration (Roli himself was present in the Upper Church that traumatic September morning, having just completed a photographic campaign of the interior, and has written movingly of his experience).

The present book is the latest spin-off from the four-volume photographic survey of the basilica published by Panini Editore in the *Mirabilia Italiae* series in 2002. With a cover price hovering around €1,000 the *Mirabilia* set remains the preserve of serious book collectors and specialist research libraries, so Thames & Hudson's new publication should bring the Panini photography to a wider audience. Some of the photographs reproduced here are indeed stunning and not easily available elsewhere. Highlights include Giotto's ascending Magdalene (pp.94 and 181), the enthroned St Francis from the 'Vele' vault (p.147), and the extraordinary kneeling friar with a skull visible in lost profile at the centre of the *Allegory of obedience* (p.108). Elsewhere, however, the quality of printing is not of the same standard and certain images appear to have been over-enlarged (for example, the detail of the *Coronation of the Virgin* from the St Stanislaw chapel on p.57). More problematic is the designer's habit of silhouetting figures against either the white of the page or, occasionally, pitch black grounds. Presumably these cut-outs are intended to enliven the book's presentation, but the practice renders these images all but worthless as photographic records.

Malafarina's text offers a compressed and largely uncontroversial synthesis of the comprehensive textual

apparatus commissioned for the *Mirabilia* volumes. James Yorke's English translation is generally clear, although the rendering of the Italian 'conventuale' as 'Observant' in the discussion of the internal divisions of the Franciscan order (p.97) is potentially misleading. For a succinct English introduction to the basilica's art and history, the reader may still prefer Thames & Hudson's 1996 translation of Elvio Lunghi's Scala guide. Chiara Frugoni's short but valuable introductory chapter is, as one would expect, rather more substantial, offering a series of thoughtful observations on the iconographic choices in the St Francis cycle and the historical debates that stood behind them. Frugoni's own research in recent years has done much to fix May 1297 as a reliable *terminus ante quem* for the painting of the St Francis cycle, but Malafarina perseveres with the later dating of 1296–1300 – a small discrepancy perhaps, but arguably a significant one given the immense historiographical weight that continues to bear down on these murals.

DONAL COOPER

*A Wider Trecento. Studies in 13th- and 14th-Century European Art Presented to Julian Gardner.* Edited by Louise Bordua and Robert Gibbs. 213 pp. incl. 1 col. + 73 b. & w. ills. (Visualising the Middle Ages 5, Brill, Leiden and Boston, 2012), €128. ISBN 978-90-04-21076-9.

This Festschrift for Julian Gardner contains twelve papers by former pupils together with a bibliography of his publications and an appreciation by Serena Romano. The individual papers offer the reader the kind of satisfaction found in tapping in a piece of a jigsaw and seeing the picture more clearly, providing new provenances, sources and other insights into the works discussed. These vary in medium, subject-matter and location, and while there are stimulating connections between contributions, the book itself is by no means the full picture; rather, its coherence comes from a sense of the authors contributing to a broader shared enterprise, and their work intersecting with Gardner's own wide-ranging scholarship – including publications on tomb sculpture, papal imagery and art associated with the mendicants, as well as the relationship between Italian and northern European art.

While most of the volume focuses on central and northern Italy, two contributions consider connections with regions and courts north of the Alps: links between the Westminster Retable and the abbey's Cosmati pavement (Dillian Gordon); and the French royal gift to Assisi of a Parisian reliquary with Clarissan imagery (Virginia Glenn). A number of papers engage with Franciscan topics, namely the influence of the Franciscan Spirituals on devotional panels from the Rimini area (Jill Farquhar); the probable commissioning of Bartolomeo and Jacopino da Reggion's Brera triptych for S. Francesco in Correggio (Roberto Cobiainchi); and the importance of pilgrimage to the frescos in the chapel of St James in the Santo in Padua (Louise Bordua). Attention is also paid to the commemoration of prominent individuals and families: Bolognese depictions of Pope Urban V (Robert Gibbs); the tomb of Abbot Thomas Gallus in the Victorine church of S. Andrea, Vercelli (Martina Schilling); and the possible *stemma* of the Colonna on the *schola cantorum* of S. Prassede, Rome (John Osborne). Two papers address modes of representation in sacred and secular wall painting: the juxtaposition of monochrome and polychrome imagery to distinguish temporal or spatial realms (Jill Bain); and the treatment of interior and exterior space in the Chamber of Love at Sabbionara d'Avio, which tricks the eye as Love itself was thought to do (Anne Dunlop). Two other authors contextualise works with distinctive iconographies: a detached fresco with an anthropomorphic depiction of the Trinity is traced to the exterior of a church in the Suburra district of Rome (Claudia Bolgia); and Duccio's panel showing friars venerating the Virgin's foot is related to performed and imagined devotional practices (Joanna Cannon). For the most part, the volume is well illustrated, making the arguments accessible to readers less familiar with the material.

LUCY DONKIN

Konrad Witz. *Le Maître-Autel de la Cathédrale de Genève. Histoire, Conservation et Restauration*. By Frédéric Elsig, Cäsar Menz et al. 214 pp. incl. 184 col. ills. (Editions Slatkine, Geneva, 2013), CHF59. ISBN 978-2-8321-0573-3.

The earliest critical appraisal of the painted wings surviving from the high altarpiece of St Peter at Geneva Cathedral, whose central corpus was destroyed during the Reformation, is that of the English grand tourist William Bromley (1663–1732), who visited Geneva in 1689: 'In the Arsenal they shew, for the absurdity of them, two pictures that were Altar pieces in this City before the Reformation; one represents Christ (a Child) in his Mother's Arms, and S. Peter presenting his successor to him'. Bromley was only able to view the gilded inner faces of these double-sided wings, each c.150 by 170 cm., depicting *The Adoration of the Magi* and *The presentation of Cardinal François de Metz to the Virgin and Child*. He would doubtless have been more impressed had he been able to see their exterior faces, with representations of *The miraculous draught of fishes* and *The liberation of St Peter*. The former is one of the most remarkable northern landscapes of the fifteenth century, and is celebrated for its realistic representation of Lake Geneva with Mont Blanc in the distance. As is related in a Latin inscription on the bottom of its frame, the wings were painted by Konrad Witz in 1444: 'hoc opus pinxit magister conradus sapientis de basilea m. ccc. xliiii'.

Witz was a major figure from the first generation of German artists acquainted with the new realist style of the Netherlands. Probably from Rottweil in Baden-Württemberg, he is documented at Basel from 1434 and died between 1445 and 1447. The wings from the high altarpiece of St Peter are his last documented works, and since 1910 have been displayed in the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire in Geneva.

This book is a collaborative work by eleven authors, the product of a long-term programme of conservation and research. It meticulously records the documented history and critical reception of the wings, damage they suffered during the Reformation, evidence of earlier restorations in 1835 and 1915–17, the recent programme of conservation in 2011–12, and materials and techniques including under-drawing, pigments, the binding medium, gilding and methods of depicting brocade. This is followed by an art-historical assessment of the place of the wings in Witz's *œuvre*, his relationship to Early Netherlandish 'ars nova', artistic originality and workshop, the iconography of the altarpiece, its commission, likely location in the cathedral, topographical references in *The miraculous draught of fishes* and the broader art-historical context. Especially welcome are the numerous colour photographs, X-radiograph images and other details, which reveal the extent of damage and restorations and indicate how Witz depicted such remarkable pictorial effects as cast shadows, the reflective surfaces of pearls and transparent bubbles on the surface of Lake Geneva.

MARK EVANS

*The Museum is Open: Towards a Transnational History of Museums 1750–1940*. Edited by Andrea Meyer and Bénédicte Savoy. 266 pp. incl. 27 ills. (De Gruyter, Berlin, 2013), €79.95. ISBN 978-3-11-029880-1.

Largely the proceedings of a conference held at the Technische Universität Berlin in 2012, this instructive volume addresses the transnational nature of art museums (of all descriptions, including collections of casts and industrial art), primarily in Europe but also in the United States and North Africa, between the emergence of any institution that could be recognised as an art museum and the outbreak of the Second World War. Taking the line that scholarship on the theme has tended to assess museums primarily as national and self-glorifying institutions, the editors argue that the study of transnational relations between museums is equally instructive and, with the exception of recent works such as Carole Paul's *The First Modern Museums of Art* (2012), has received little attention. The essays are divided into various themes, notably collections, the design of museum

buildings and display, the protagonists, and the international reform movement of 1900 and later.

A volume such as this risks unevenness and even randomness, and some of the papers, while arguably interesting to a local audience, have a limited significance. But overall the case is well made. Germany constantly emerges as a leader, influencing Britain in the earlier, and the United States in the later, nineteenth century and into the twentieth (through such figures as William Valentiner, pupil of Bode turned American museum director), enjoying a rewarding but fraught professional relationship with France during the Second Empire, and even during the early years of the Third Reich cautiously participating in international discussions. Among the most rewarding essays are Stefanie Heraus's account of top lighting in eighteenth-century Kassel; Lieske Tibbe's account of Marius Vachon, an authority on the industrial museum in France in the 1890s and later; and Thomas Adams's analysis of the efforts of the New York plutocracy to establish European-inspired museums. This is not only a narrative of friendship and collaboration: a thread that runs through the book is competition and mutual suspicion.

One of the most important aspects of international culture has been the temporary exhibition, whether in the form of the great world fairs of the late nineteenth century or as twentieth-century academic and blockbuster events. For museums, such exhibitions have been of huge, and often fundamental, importance. Although the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the 1881 Spanish and Portuguese Ornamental Art Exhibition at South Kensington are mentioned, this is a field that regrettably the present volume hardly addresses.

Austerly produced, with few illustrations but copious and valuable footnotes, this is a publication for the scholar, the first in a series to be named 'Contact Zones'.

GILES WATERFIELD

*Eyes of the Ancestors: The Arts of Island Southeast Asia at the Dallas Museum of Art*. Edited by Reimar Schefold. 334 pp. incl. 220 col. + 64 b. & w. ills. (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2013), £45. ISBN 978-0-3001-8495-2.

Western interest in the artefacts of traditional societies in Africa, Oceania, North America and island Southeast Asia began with early voyages of discovery and continued with collections made by traders, colonial officers and missionaries. By the nineteenth century the attraction of foreign lands associated with Romanticism led artists and connoisseurs to admire what they saw as simpler, purer forms, especially in sculpted artefacts. Those who rejected the type of Western art which strove to imitate the superficial appearance of reality, especially those in the 'Primitivism' movement, drew inspiration from such works. Galleries and individuals made collections of this 'tribal art'; and the market for such objects continues to thrive.

This volume is concerned with one such collection, which consists of material from parts of island Southeast Asia in the collections of the Dallas Museum of Art. It does not include works by Southeast Asian artists working in more modern styles, nor does it include examples from Bali, Java or the Philippines. Most pieces date from the nineteenth century, and most are the types of artefact which are no longer used within contemporary Southeast Asian society. It is a book aimed at those whose interest in Southeast Asian art is retrospective, and confined to work from those outer islands which were relatively remote from external influence.

Reimar Schefold's introduction makes this focus clear: as he admits, 'the majority of Indonesia's artistic traditions described here are features of the past'. The works are now 'appreciated as "art" by audiences that are far removed from their time, place and original cultural context'. The perspective is a sometimes uneasy mix of anthropology and art history, but most of the contributors are experts in their field, elucidating the significance the works would have had in their original environment. Most also discuss the considerable social and material changes in the societies whose heritage is presented here.

Each of the nine chapters is concerned with artefacts from a different group or island and starts with a general essay on the material culture of the group, followed by descriptive accounts of the hundred or so works of art, each illustrated with a fine full-page colour photograph. These present the artefacts as they might be seen in a gallery; several skirt cloths are presented sideways. Images showing similar objects in context add another dimension. The chapters on Mentawai, Nias, Southeast Maluku, Sulawesi, Sumba and Flores, and the Batak of Sumatra include a variety of object types; the chapter on Lampung deals exclusively with 'ship cloths'. A section by Vernon Kedit in the chapter on Borneo devoted to Iban textiles is especially informative, the only part of the book written by an author from the culture he is describing.

For readers who are not already familiar with the region and its artistic traditions it is quite a hefty tome. Many of the traditions mentioned in the essays are not represented in the collection, which may make them hard to follow. But for those who are already enthusiasts for this type of art, the book introduces a substantial collection of new and striking examples, with expert anthropological commentary.

FIONA KERLOGUE

*Contemporary Iranian Art: From the Street to the Studio*. By Talinn Grigor. 293 pp. incl. 164 col. + 10 b. & w. ills. (Reaktion Books, London, 2014), £25. ISBN 978-1-78023-270-6.

This book is a social history of Iranian art since the 1979 revolution, which provides incisive insight into the socio-political conditions that have shaped works of art made by Iranians inside and outside the country during that period. As well as critically examining the relationship between artists and the repressive Iranian state, it also brilliantly undermines many incorrect assumptions that plague their reception in the West. The book's thirty-five-year time span might arguably undermine its claim to focus on 'contemporary' art, but this longer view provides a useful context for current practice. Unfortunately, the author often fails to successfully mesh her highly astute contextual comments with an analysis of Iranian works themselves. This is partly a symptom of the book's broad overview format, which makes it very difficult to strike an effective balance between the general and the specific. Nonetheless, the actual discussion of Iranian art is often frustrating, often devolving into strings of names and thin, disconnected commentaries on works.

Grigor convincingly argues that recent Iranian art can broadly be divided into three categories; the street (largely meaning state-funded mural projects and architecture), the studio, and 'exile' (the work of the Iranian diaspora). The first of these is covered most effectively, through an engaging explanation of mural painting's role in the formation and consolidation of the official image of the Islamic Republic of Iran and a clear chronology of its evolution alongside changing cultural policies. The chapter on the studio gives an illuminating argument about the link between the making of private art and the consolidation of property rights in 1990s Iran, and helpfully outlines institutional factors in the contemporary scene. However, it fails to link these ideas meaningfully with the works themselves. The final chapter discusses Iranians' varying responses to diasporic identity in a highly nuanced manner. It also helpfully criticises the way that Western markets encourage artists to produce stereotyped self-representations, including images of veiled women and Persian calligraphy, rather than reflecting the everyday concerns that engage people within the country. Although the author provides some more detailed analyses of works in this chapter, towards the end it again becomes a jumbled collection of references. Overall, especially given the paucity of literature in the field, this book should be recommended as a significant contribution, but the author's inability to link her shrewd social observations with the aesthetics of Iranian art means that her task remains unfinished.

DAVID HODGE

Meyer, Andrea; Savoy, Bénédicte (Hrsg.): *The Museum is Open. Towards a Transnational History of Museums 1750–1940*. Berlin: de Gruyter 2014. ISBN: 978-3-11-029880-2; VI, 266 S.; 27 Abb.

**Rezensiert von:** Elsa van Wezel, Institut für Museumsforschung, Berlin

Das Museum war, wie die Herausgeberinnen dieses Bandes in ihrem mit Ausführungen zur Methodik umfassenden Vorwort zu Recht bemerken, schon immer eine Institution grenzübergreifender Verbindungen. War doch die Kunst selbst, ihre Produktion, aber eben auch ihre Präsentation stets ein transnationales Geschäft. So konnten in ihrer Beschreibung die inter- (offiziell zwischenstaatlichen) oder transnationalen Querverbindungen oft gar nicht ignoriert werden. Hier ließ man sich doch immer gern transnational inspirieren. Es wurde nie mit Scheuklappen gearbeitet. Nicht einmal dann, als es im 19. Jahrhundert darum ging, besonders „national“ zu scheinen. Da bekam zum Beispiel die National Gallery in London (1833–38) einen griechischen Tempelgiebel, sah die Nationalgalerie in Berlin (1866–76) wie ein römisch-klassizistischer Tempelbau aus und das National Museum in Stockholm (1848–66) wie ein italienischer Renaissancepalast.<sup>1</sup> Künstler, Architekten, Sammler und andere Kunstliebende sind auf Reisen gegangen oder haben sich informiert, um sich von anderen belehren zu lassen oder um sich von den anderen abzusetzen, aber stets um dadurch selbst „besser“ zu werden. Die Begrifflichkeiten, mit denen diese Geschichten bislang beschrieben wurden, waren jedoch andere wie „Nachahmung“, „Inspiration“, „Einfluss“ und es wurde nicht, wie in diesem Sammelband, von einer explizit transnationalen Perspektive ausgegangen. Im Vergleich zu den 17 Vorträgen auf der internationalen Tagung „Transnationale Museumsgeschichte 1750–1940“ vom 17.–18. Februar 2012, deren sehr lesenswerte Ergebnisse hiermit publiziert werden, sind aus zeitlichen Gründen drei Beiträge entfallen. Es konnten dafür jedoch drei neue gewonnen werden.

Das Buch startet mit einem leider etwas missverständlichen Aufsatz von Mirjam

Brusius. Es scheint, dass hier kurz in Vergessenheit geraten ist, worum es überhaupt im universellen Sammelwesen wie in der Wissenschaft des 19. Jahrhundert im Wesentlichen ging. War man doch vor allem darauf aus, die Welt unter neuen wissenschaftlichen Standards zu vermessen, in der Hoffnung so auch das Rätsel des Ursprungs der Menschheit zu lösen. Dazu sammelte man Hinweise aus aller Welt, aber natürlich besonders gerne auch aus dem „Heiligen Land“. Man wusste ganz genau – auch wenn man vielleicht Objekte oder Schriftzüge nicht sofort zu deuten wusste –, dass alles aus dieser Region letztendlich von größter Bedeutung für die Lösung des Haupträtsels sein konnte. Wenn es also in den zeitgenössischen Berichten, die Brusius anführt, heißt, die Briten sind in Ninive dabei „to dug up their own past“, dann ist damit nicht gemeint, dass sie Mesopotamien markieren wollten als ein Ort „where the British had at one time been“ (S. 28), sondern, dass sie dabei waren ihre eigene biblische Geschichte auszugraben. Es wurde sozusagen nach dem historischen Beweis (oder Gegenbeweis) des Göttlichen gesucht. Dabei standen sie in ständiger Konkurrenz zu Frankreich. Wurden die spektakulären Fundstücke, die der französische Konsul in Mosul, Paul-Emile Botta 1842–1844 in Khorsabad ausgegraben hatte, schon ab 1847 im Louvre gezeigt.<sup>2</sup> So kamen die Funde von Henry Layard aus Nimrud und Ninive direkt ins British Museum. Es wird sicher so gewesen sein, dass die riesigen assyrischen Skulpturen den Menschen, auch die Ausgräber selbst in Erstaunen versetzten und ihnen anfangs rätselhaft vorkamen, das stellte jedoch gleichzeitig ein Teil des Reizes dieser Objekte dar.

<sup>1</sup>Vergleiche auch den evaluierenden Bericht: Debora J. Meijers / Ellinoor Bergvelt / Lieske Tibbe / Elsa van Wezel, National Museums and National Identity, seen from an International and Comparative Perspective, c. 1760–1918, 23. Januar 2012, <<http://www.huizingainstituut.nl/beheer/wp-content/uploads/National-Museums-and-National-Identity.pdf>> (23.07.2014).

<sup>2</sup>Annie Caubet, From Mexico to Assyria: the Development of specialized Galleries of Antiquities in the Louvre Museum (1826–1881), in: Ellinoor Bergvelt u.a. (Hrsg.), Museale Spezialisierung und Nationalisierung ab 1830. Das Neue Museum im internationalen Kontext (Berliner Schriften zur Museumsforschung 29), Berlin 2011, S. 83–90.

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Was uns die Autorin am Anfang ihrer Geschichte mit der Anekdote über den Mann aus dem Iran sagen will, der 2009 in der British Library Seiten aus wertvollen, alten persischen Büchern herausgeschnitten hatte und deshalb wegen Vandalismus bestraft wurde, bleibt, sowohl für sich genommen wie im Zusammenhang mit dem weiteren Text, schleierhaft. Sie gibt zwar an, diese Tat nicht gut zu heißen, jedoch will sie zu bedenken geben, ob nicht der Iraner die Seiten bloß zu rückholen wollte – „repatriating“ – in den eigenen kulturellen Kontext? Dies trifft jedoch meines Erachtens nicht zu, steckte er sie doch nur in „less valuable copies of the same books in his private collection“ (S. 19); somit holte er sie lediglich zu sich nach Hause. Statt darauf hinzuweisen, dass kein Museumsobjekt, Archiv- oder Bibliotheksdokument, auch nicht mit den „besten Absichten“ und/oder Argumenten mutwillig zerstört werden darf, meint Brusius, dass hiermit vor allen Dingen die Mehrdeutigkeit eines Objektes angedeutet werde (S. 20).

Hiernach nimmt das Buch Fahrt auf mit zwei interessanten Beiträgen zu den beiden wichtigsten Reproduktionsverfahren des 19. Jahrhunderts: dem Gipsabguss und der Fotografie. Die neue technische Erfindung der Fotografie entwickelte sich, wie sich herausstellte, zusätzlich schon bald zu einem idealen Instrument der Museumsdokumentation sowie der Popularisierung der Museumsbestände.

Im Beitrag von Stefanie Heraeus wird zwar plausibel dargestellt, dass die Beleuchtung in der Kasseler Gemäldegalerie von 1750 auf die der Galerie vom Palais Royal in Paris zurückzuführen ist. Nicht glaubhaft dagegen wirkt die Behauptung, dass diese sich zu einem neuen Galerietypus entwickelte und bestimmend werden sollte für die Museumsarchitektur des 19. Jahrhunderts. Dabei erwähnt sie selbst die in dieser Hinsicht entscheidende Differenz zwischen dieser Galerie des 18. Jahrhunderts, mit ihren hoch in der Seitenwand platzierten „Mezzanine“-Fenstern, bei denen das Licht eben noch nicht direkt von der Decke kam (S. 68) und den danach im 19. Jahrhundert üblichen großen Museumssälen mit Oberlicht. Es war wohl Leo von Klenze mit seinem Entwurf für die Alte Pinakothek in München, der für diesen Museumstyp dann

neue Maßstäbe setzen sollte.

Die Beiträge von Bénédicte Savoy, Sabine Skott und Alessandra Galizzi Kroegel zeigen sehr schön, wie transnationale Inspiration einerseits dazu führen kann, so nahe wie möglich an seinem Vorbild dranzubleiben, so dass in Moskau um 1900 Iwan Zwetajew darauf aus war, das Puschkin Museum ähnlich wie das Albertinum in Dresden zu gestalten. Andererseits leitete Guglielmo Pacchioni in den 1930er-Jahren in Italien daraus eine ganz eigene Interpretation vom „Modernen Museum“ ab. Ohne großartig international vernetzt zu sein, seine Kenntnisse vor allem aus der relativ jungen Zeitschrift des Internationalen Museums Office (IMO; Vorläufer von ICOM) „Museum“ beziehend, schaffte es der Kunsthistoriker Pacchioni, eine Museumsreform in Italien anzuregen, die wiederum inspirierend sein sollte für Nachkriegsmuseumsgestalter wie die Architekten Franco Albini und Carlo Scarpa. Wenn man sich die Abbildung von Pacchionis Einrichtung des Musei Civici in Pesaro von 1936 anschaut (S. 97, Abb. 12), hat man tatsächlich den Eindruck, schon in den 1960er-Jahren zu sein.

Der museale Kulturtransfer verlief oft auch zirkulär, wie Thomas Adams Beitrag zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York und der Aufsatz von Roland Cvetkovski zum russischen Maler, Kunstkritiker, Museumsdirektor und Restaurator Igor Grabar wunderbar darlegen. Das bei längerem Aufenthalt von der westeuropäischen Museumswelt Gelernte wurde der Situation zu Hause angepasst, wodurch umgekehrt neue Ideen an Europa zurückgeliefert werden konnten. Adams weist dabei auf den interessanten Unterschied hin, dass für die Amerikaner Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts der Kunst- beziehungsweise Museumsverein als Instrument der sozialen Auszeichnung galt, während ihre deutschen Vorbilder auf bürgerliche Emanzipation abzielten, umgekehrt die amerikanischen Museen später jedoch beispielhaft in ihrem Umgang mit Kindern und mit ihren pädagogischen Programmen wirkten. Igor Grabar, dessen Bewunderung für die westeuropäische Kunst seinen Einsatz für die Anerkennung der eigenen russischen Kunst nicht schmälerte, konnte sich in den 1920er-Jahren mit seiner Ex-



pertise zur sowjetischen Restaurierungsproblematik in Westeuropa Gehör verschaffen.

Sowohl der Aufsatz von Arnaud Bertinet als auch der von Lieske Tibbe stellen dar, dass französische Museen (der Louvre, das Luxembourg, das Versailles Museum, Musée de Cluny) lange Zeit in vielerlei Hinsicht als beispielhaft angesehen und deshalb gern aus dem Ausland um Rat gebeten wurden. Sie wurden jedoch spätestens ab 1870 wegen mangelnder Reformen von Museen in London, Berlin und Wien aus dieser Rolle verdrängt.

Anhand der beratenden Rolle von Gustav Waagen 1853 für die Reorganisation der National Gallery in London und der praktischen Tätigkeit von Wilhelm Valentiner plus der Beratung von Wilhelm Bode 1908–1914 im Metropolitan Museum in New York zeigen Susanna Avery-Quash und Alan Crookham beziehungsweise Xavier-Pol Tilliette konkret auf, wie damalige Berliner Museumskonzeptionen ihren Weg ins Ausland fanden. Dabei bleibt die Darstellung der Position der vehementen Gegner von Charles Eastlake recht vage. Abgesehen davon, dass es heißt, der Künstler John Morris Moore und der Sammler William Coningham verteidigten den „Status Quo“, kann man nicht genau herauslesen, wie dieser denn damals ausgesehen hat. Auf jeden Fall hatten es Valentiner und Bode in New York leichter, da sie dort als Kunst- und Museumsexperten angesehen und respektiert wurden. Beide gerieten dabei in die etwas doppeldeutige Situation einerseits die Amerikaner in ihrer Sammeltätigkeit zu unterstützen und in ihrer „hinterherhinkenden“ ästhetischen Bildung zu unterrichten, andererseits sie als Konkurrenten auf dem Kunstmarkt als Bedrohung zu empfinden und vor ihnen zu warnen.

Über die deutsche Zeitschrift *Museumskunde* (1905–1924) und die hier oben schon erwähnte Zeitschrift *Mouseion* (1927–1946) des International Museums Office gelang es am Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts, die Museen auf praktischer wie theoretischer Ebene stärker transnational miteinander zu vernetzen. So schaffte es der (seit 1931) Leiter der IMO, Euripide Foundoukidis, sogar in der Zeit, in der eine direkte internationale Zusammenarbeit von offizieller deutscher Seite aus po-

litischen Gründen schon unerwünscht war, den Kontakt zu den deutschen Museumskollegen nicht abreißen zu lassen. Stellt sich die Frage, inwiefern die indirekte Teilnahme im Vorfeld der internationalen Konferenz in Madrid (1934) zum Thema ‚Muséographie‘ „apolitisch“ genannt werden kann (S. 215). War sie nicht gerade ein stiller Protest gegen das offizielle Teilnahmeverbot?

Gerade mit den drei letzten Aufsätzen ist man als Leser froh, dass überhaupt Informationen über Museen aus solchen Gegenden wie Portugal, Türkei und Afrika zu uns dringen. Die zwei Museumsprojekte in Afrika, die Bärbel Küster vorstellt, illustrieren, wie wenig beide eigentlich mit den früheren Kolonien zu tun hatten. Das Museum auf La Réunion war eher ein Protestmuseum gegen die damalige offizielle französische Museumspolitik. Es wurden dort ab 1913 hauptsächlich zeitgenössische französische Künstler ausgestellt, unter anderem von Post-Impressionisten und Fauvisten, die in Frankreich selber zu der Zeit wenig Möglichkeiten bekamen an die Öffentlichkeit zu gelangen. Hauptziel war es, den Einwohnern der Insel westliche(!) Kultur beizubringen. Das nationale Museum der schönen Künste in Algier wurde 1908 sogar direkt als französisches Museum in der Provinz nach dem Vorbild des Musée du Luxembourg in Paris behandelt, was man heutzutage eine Dependance nennen würde. Um Afrika oder afrikanische Kunst und Kultur ging es in keinem dieser beiden Fälle.

Zum Schluss noch ein Wort zu den Abbildungen in diesem Band. Bedauerlicherweise haben sie etwas zu wenig Aufmerksamkeit bekommen und/oder hat dafür das Budget nicht gereicht. Sehr schade ist es, wenn sogar drei Autoren bei ihrem Thema ganz auf Abbildungen verzichteten. An der Stelle, wo zum Beispiel Ayse Koksals zum archäologischen Museum in Istanbul erklärt, dass das Gebäude „reminiscent of Karl Friedrich Schinkel’s Altes Museum“ (S. 238–239) ist, wäre dazu eine Abbildung sehr willkommen gewesen, hätte sie uns doch das Transnationale auf einen Blick verständlich machen können. Alles in allem liegt die besondere Qualität dieses abwechslungsreichen Bandes voller unterschiedlichster Informationen darin, dass er als Ansporn gelten kann, weiterhin

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aus dieser besonders fruchtbaren, transnationalen Perspektive heraus bislang wenig oder noch gar nicht beleuchtete Stellen der Museumslandschaft ins Licht zu rücken.

HistLit 2014-3-104 / Elsa van Wezel über Meyer, Andrea; Savoy, Bénédicte (Hrsg.): *The Museum is Open. Towards a Transnational History of Museums 1750–1940*. Berlin 2014, in: H-Soz-Kult 12.08.2014.