Julia Allerstorfer | Karolina Majewska-Güde |
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East Central European Art Histories and Austria

Imperial Pasts – Neoliberal Presences – Decolonial Futures

Linzer Beiträge zur Kunstwissenschaft und Philosophie

[transcript]

From:

Julia Allerstorfer, Karolina Majewska-Güde, Monika Leisch-Kiesl (eds.)
East Central European Art Histories and Austria
Imperial Pasts – Neoliberal Presences – Decolonial Futures

May 2024, 418 p., pb., 41 b/w and 11 col. ill.

45,00 € (DE), 978-3-8376-7363-0
E-Book:

PDF: 45,00 € (DE), ISBN 978-3-8394-7363-4

The specific role of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the later nation of Austria within the formation of regional art histories in East Central Europe has received little attention in art historical research so far. Taking into account the era of the Dual Monarchy as well as the period after 1989, the contributions analyze and critically scrutinize the imperial legacies, transnational transfer processes and cultural hierarchies in art historiographies, artistic practices and institutional histories. Consisting of 17 texts, with new commissions and one reprint, case studies, monographic essays and interviews grouped thematically into two sections, the anthology proposes a pluriversal narrative on regional, cultural and political contexts.

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Preface

In 2020, a singular situation unexpectedly arose at my institute. Two enthusiastic researchers in the field of Global Art History met, at least virtually. Julia Allerstorfer was on parental leave at this time, and Karolina Majewska-Güde came to Linz University as her substitute. I have therefore entrusted Karolina with the conception and organization of the third lecture series on *Global Art History*—a research focus of our faculty, which is basically Julia's responsibility—with a special focus on Central Eastern Europe. Karolina, coming from Poznan and living in Berlin, defined the alignment of this event as follows: "The program is focused on Central and Eastern European contemporary art historical narratives, critical positions and methodologies written in response to the 1989 shift in the global world order and concerned with the issue of globalizing regional art and its histories." In the nine lectures and the discussions that followed, one topic continuously attracted particular attention: the narrative of the center and the periphery.

Put simply, according to this mainstream art historical narrative, the West—in this case, Austria—would be the center, and the countries of the former East would be the periphery. I, born in Linz and active in different cities all over Europe, such as Munich, Basel and Krakow, was extremely uncomfortable with this narrative. "Linz is not a center," I argued, "maybe Vienna or Munich. And a city like Krakow is much more inspiring than this town in the middle of Austria."

And suddenly, the idea to develop a book focused on the question of the role of Austria within the CEE (mental) landscape was born. Of course, then it was necessary to go back in history, to the time when "Austria" was the Austro-Hungarian Empire and not just a small country between the Danube and the Alps. This was the point when we asked Julia, whose research deals with colonialisms within Austria-Hungary, to join

our enterprise. Immediately after the first (Zoom) conversation, it was evident that the situation is very, very complex.

This specific encounter and pointed question explain the structure of the volume. Our intention was not a historiography of the consecutive stages of the twentieth century, beginning with the pre-war period, etc. Our aim was to better realize the reciprocal entanglements between the countries of Central Eastern Europe and Austria. Methodologically speaking, this means case studies—supported, on a meta level, by careful considerations and theoretical reflections. Therefore, the book has two clearly separated sections: one dealing with the period of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the other dealing with the post-1989 developments. And there is a column in between: a talk about a work of art. From March to September 2021—despite and against lockdown regulations—*Dwa/Fünf*, a highly respected exhibition by the Polish artist Monika Drożyńska, curated by Monika Leisch-Kiesl, was shown at the KU Private University Linz. The center of this conversation is *Pięć/Five/Fünf*, a 20-meter-long textile banner in red and white (the colors of the Austrian as well as the Polish flag) and yellow and blue (the colors of the Ukrainian flag).

This book had a number of bumps and hurdles to overcome, which meant it was a long process from the first conceptual ideas to the final editing and printing. Fortunately, (most of) the authors—like the editors—didn't give up. A big thank you to our authors, but also to Mary Louise Dobrian for her sensitive and careful copyediting of English texts, none of them written by native English speakers. We also want to thank Bernhard Kagerer for the design concept and typesetting, as well as the sponsors and supporters, the *Verein zur Rückgewinnung von Welt*, the *Bischöfliche Fonds zur Förderung der KU Linz*, the *Günter Rombold Privatstiftung*, the *Raiffeisen Landesbank* and the *Energie AG Oberösterreich*.

This book aims to contribute to a better understanding of the role that art plays—also societally and politically—in twentieth and twenty-first-century Europe.

Linz, Februay 2024 *Monika Leisch-Kiesl*

East Central European Art Histories and Austria: Imperial Pasts – Neoliberal Presences – Decolonial Futures: An Introduction

Julia Allerstorfer and Karolina Majewska-Güde

> "Migrationen, Globalisierung und transnationale Identitäten, kurz das Problem kultureller Differenzen, sind unhintergehbare und bestimmende Kriterien gegenwärtiger politischer, sozialer und kultureller Prozesse. Die postkoloniale Haltung – exemplifiziert am „Laboratorium Zentraleuropa" – vermag nicht nur Impulse für eine Gegenwartsgeschichte zu liefern, sondern vielleicht auch Strategien für einen künftigen Umgang mit kultureller Differenz zu modellieren."[1]
>
> – Johannes Feichtinger

> "Austria is a gravitational hub for cultural founding which set its sights on Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans in an attempt to consolidate economic hegemony comparable with German and Scandinavian economic expansion in the Baltic States (Nordic Art Scene)."[2]
>
> – Claire Bishop

Short Description and Genealogy

East Central European Art Histories and Austria: Imperial Pasts – Neoliberal Presences – Decolonial Futures is the second volume

1 Johannes Feichtinger, "Habsburg (post)-colonial. Anmerkungen zur Inneren Kolonisierung in Zentraleuropa," in *Habsburg postcolonial. Machtstrukturen und kollektives Gedächtnis*, eds. Johannes Feichtinger, Ursula Prutsch and Moritz Csáky (Innsbruck et al.: Studien-Verl., 2003), pp. 13–31, p. 26.

2 Claire Bishop, "Exhibiting the East since 1968," in *Art and Theory of Post 1989 Central and Eastern Europe: A Critical Anthology*, eds. Ana Janewski, Roxana Marcoci and Ksenia Nouril (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2018), pp. 67–71, p. 68.

focused on global art history in the publication series *Linzer Beiträge zur Kunstwissenschaft und Philosophie* at the Katholische Privat-Universität Linz / Catholic Private-University (KU Linz). Since 2015, global art history has been one of the main research topics at the department of art history and is part of the curriculum in the master's program in the study of art history. The courses held so far focused on the concepts, theoretical foundations, perspectives and methods of a global art history, whereby the concept has always been critically reviewed regarding its horizons of meaning and effectiveness. The first volume was published in 2017 and featured contributions from internationally renowned art historians who, on the one hand, discussed methodological questions, and on the other, analyzed specific regions and artistic practices in global and transcultural contexts.[3] With the current volume, we want to rethink the notion of global art history by introducing two main actors who were traditionally positioned in a center-periphery narrative: Austria and Central and Eastern Europe.

The genealogy of the anthology relates to the guest lecture series *Global or Alter-Globalist? Contemporary Central and Eastern European Art Histories*, held during the winter semester 2019/20 at the KU Linz.[4] Curated and organized by Karolina Majewska-Güde and Monika Leisch-Kiesl, this series focused on the latest regional art histories and their position vis-à-vis and within the global art history discourse. The program comprised East Central European contemporary art historical narratives, critical positions and methodologies written in response to the 1989 shift in the global world order and concerned with the issue of globalizing regional art and its histories. At the same time, it problematized both the global perspective in art history from the regional point of view and strategies of positioning regional art history within the global context. Unlike the lecture series,

3 Cf. Julia Allerstorfer and Monika Leisch-Kiesl (eds.), *"Global Art History". Transkulturelle Verortungen von Kunst und Kunstwissenschaft*, Linzer Beiträge zur Kunstwissenschaft und Philosophie 8 (Bielefeld: transcript, 2017), see also: https://www.transcript-verlag.de/978-3-8376-4061-8/global-art-history/.

4 Cf. *Global or Alter-Globalist? Contemporary Central and Eastern European Art Histories*, organized by Karolina Majewska-Güde and Monika Leisch Kiesl in winter semester 2019/20 at the Catholic Private-University Linz, https://ku-linz.at/kunstwissenschaft/veranstaltungen/ringvorlesungen_vortraege/detail/global-art-history-3-ringvorlesung-im-wintersemester-2019-20.

the book expands the time frame of the publication beyond the post-war period to juxtapose different narrative strategies, perspectives and theoretical tools related to the critical need to overcome the dynamics of the center-periphery and provide a fruitful basis for further discussions about methods and goals of regional art history, critical art geography, and their relationship to postcolonial and decolonial studies. In this respect, the Austro-Hungarian monarchy's—and later Austria's—role as a pseudo- or neocolonial power as well as its cultural politics and dominant art policies on the one hand, and the various reactions, forms of negotiation and formation processes of local and regional art historical discourses within the national territory of the Empire on the other, take center stage in the book.

Consisting of 17 texts with new commissions and one reprint, case studies, monographic essays and interviews grouped thematically into two sections, the anthology proposes a pluriversal narrative on regional cultural and political contexts. The book's hybridity in terms of different essay formats, methods and writing styles recognizes the diverse language and research experiences of the authors—art historians at different career stages as well as curators. This publication sees itself as part of the commitment to decolonial ways of knowledge production, whereby decolonizing mastery[5] also includes strategies such as not copyediting a conversation[6] and bringing together the private reflections of the authors in the scientific texts. The time span of the research area was broadened into two separate historical periods in order to encourage different methodological encounters regarding art history in East Central Europe.[7]

5 On the concept of "decolonizing mastery," see Julietta Singh, *Unthinking Mastery: Dehumanism and Decolonial Entanglements* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2017).

6 Such as in the conversation between the art historian Monika Leisch-Keisl and the artist Monika Drożyńska, cf. pp. 251–288.

7 Beáta Hock argues that "[i]n recent years and in the course of the past couple of decades, the socialist and postsocialist periods have received increased scholarly attention, while modernism and the avant-garde were the subject of monographs and collective studies even before this more recent boom. To the best of our knowledge, hardly any English-language scholarly publications have traced these entanglements in the longue durée." Beáta Hock, "Introduction – Globalizing East European Art Histories: The Legacy of Piotr Piotrowski and a Conference," in *Globalizing East European Art Histories: Past and Present*, eds. Beáta Hock and Anu Allas (New York: Routledge, 2018), pp.1–22, p. 5.

The first part of the book revisits the subject of East Central European art history by rethinking concepts of colonialism and modernity, focusing on artistic practices and art historiographies during the period of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867–1918) as well as the interwar period, with particular attention to imperialist cultural politics and the genealogy of local art historical discourses. The second part problematizes regional art history within a spectrum of problems related to concepts of neo-colonialism, self-colonization, globalization, and alter-globalism, and focuses on regional art histories written after 1989 in the context of the global art history debate.

The book does not attempt to draw a direct parallel between the imperial legacy of the Habsburg Empire in Central and Eastern Europe and the recent post-1989 period marked by neocolonial imbalances of power. Without conflating historical circumstances, the publication seeks to question how these historical conditions influenced local historiographies. The conceptual orientation with a focus on the effects of Austria's imperial legacies and current neocolonial entanglements for the East Central European region is one of the unique features and specificities of the anthology. The large time frame—from the end of the nineteenth century until the present day—enables what is certainly only a fragmentary glimpse at the changing art historical discourses during the pre- and post-socialist eras. Yet the book provides specific local and regional narratives or case studies that give insight into the highly complex and transnationally shaped processes of writing histories of art from the *imperial pasts* to the neocolonial configurations in the post-1989 period and the *neoliberal presences*. Furthermore, the question arises of how it is possible to shape *decolonial futures*.

Some notes on terminology

East Central Europe

Designations such as "Central and Eastern Europe," "Central-Eastern Europe," "Central and Southeastern Europe" or "Eastern Europe" are discursively produced locales rather than positive entities. They are "produced in the interpretation pro-

cess"[8] and must be understood as historically determined constructs.[9] If these categories are redundant with respect to contemporary transnational cosmopolitan art, in the case of regional art history they remain relevant and operative, yet disputed.[10]

The roots of the concept of "Eastern Europe" relate to the emergence of the concept of "civilization" and the reinvention of a "civilized," superior Western Europe in the eighteenth century. As Larry Wolf demonstrated in his book, Eastern Europe was "invented" by Western European travelers and intellectuals, as a land of barbarism and backwardness.[11] The designation of "East Central Europe" appeared after the Second World War, and was also introduced from the outside, by the new authors of political geography, to refer to the countries under Soviet hegemony and to Yugoslavia. As Zdenka Badovinac put it in one of her essays, these are terms "used by an external narrator."[12] "Central Europe," on the other hand, is a concept developed internally by Central European intellectuals who, in the 1980s, referred to the idea of Central Europe as an antidote to the Soviet-dominated East. This concept of Central Europe differs from political and ethnic concepts of "*Mitteleuropa*" related to Prussian and Hamburg expansion in the nineteenth century.

In their essay on the post-national turn and post-national solidarity in Eastern European art, Maya and Reuben Fowkes reflect upon the notion of Eastern Europe from the contemporary post-transitional perspective. They argue that "[l]ike the art created under its name, Eastern Europe has itself migrated over the last two decades, losing political relevance as the original

8 Marina Gržinić in a panel discussion published in Marina Gržinić (ed.), *Mind the Map! History is Not Given: A Critical Anthology Based on the Symposium* (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver – Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, 2006), p. 72.

9 In this context, Amy Bryzgel emphasizes that binaries such as East and West "are easily exploded when we realize the dependence of the dominant of the pair for its existence." See Amy Bryzgel, *Performing the East: Performance Art in Russia, Latvia and Poland since 1980* (London: Tauris, 2013), p. 14.

10 This fragment about terminology with regard to East Central Europe was first published in Karolina Majewska-Güde, *Ewa Partum's Artistic Practice: An Atlas of Continuity in Different Locations* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2021).

11 Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994).

12 Zdenka Badovinac, "Histories and Their Different Narrators," in *L'Internationale: Post-War Avant-Gardes Between 1957 and 1986*, ed. Christian Höller (online publication, 2015), pp. 52–62, p. 54, https://img.macba.cat/public/uploads/20160729/postwaravantgardesbetween1957and1986_pdf_final.0.pdf.

geopolitical designation of the Eastern bloc fades into history. The transformations brought by the accession of even ex-Soviet republics into the European Union and NATO has emptied the old term "Eastern Europe" of its contested political significance, but perhaps made it a more open and productive category in other ways. […] An Eastern Europe which is no longer defined by Soviet control, but only by differentiated historical experience of socialism."[13] The authors call this a liberated concept of Eastern Europe. Yet some of the approaches and concepts developed within recent waves of regional history petrified the notion of Eastern Europe and the notion of Central Europe. This tendency among art historians is a part of a particular historical moment related to the changes initiated in 1989. It is a position that Gayatri Spivak called a "strategic essentialism"[14]—a certain necessary step on the way towards something more complex. Such a radical insistence on a Western and Eastern European divide that exceeds political, historical and economic differences and insists on the different conditions of knowledge production was proposed by Piotr Piotrowski, who argued that "the terms of the language of interpretation and institutional discourse are still Western"[15] But, "to realize this is the beginning of the questioning and critique."[16] Following Piotrowski's insights, this volume examines two periods of knowledge production about East

13 Maja and Reuben Fowkes, "The Post-National in East European Art: From Socialist Internationalism to Transnational Communities," in *Art and Theory of Post-1989 Central and Eastern Europe: A Critical Anthology*, eds. Ana Janevski, Roxana Marcoci and Ksenia Nouril (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2018), pp. 366–371, p. 371.

14 Strategic essentialism refers to a "political strategy whereby differences (within a group) are temporarily downplayed and unity assumed for the sake of achieving political goals." Elisabeth Eide, "Strategic Essentialism," in *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies, Vol. 5*, ed. Nancy Naples (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2016), pp. 1–2, p. 2. As one of the major concepts in postcolonial theory, the term was coined by the Indian literary critic and theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, who "acknowledged the usefulness of essentialist formulations in many struggles for liberation from the effects of colonial and neo-colonial oppression." Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (eds.), *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (Taylor & Francis e-library 2007), p. 74. See also Gayatri Spivak, "Criticism, Feminism and the Institution," Interview with Elizabeth Gross, in *Thesis Eleven*, 10/11 (1984–5), pp. 175–187; Spivak, "The Rani of Simur," in *History and Theory*, 24/3 (1985), pp. 247–272; Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak? Speculations on Widow Sacrifice," in *Wedge*, 7/8 (1985), pp. 120–130; Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," in *Critical Inquiry*, 18/4 (1985), pp. 756–769.

15 Piotr Piotrowski's comment during the discussion: "Remarks and Comments: Discussion after the Papers by Charles Esche and Kathrin Rhomberg," in *Momenty zwrotne w polityce i sztuce 1968-89?/Political Upheaval and Artistic Change*, eds. Claire Bishop and Marta Dziewańsk (Warsaw: Museum of Modern Art in Poland, 2009), pp. 205–208, p. 208.

16 Piotr Piotrowski's comment during "Discussion after the Papers," p. 208.

Central European art in relation to situated Western power—the Habsburg Empire and contemporary Austria, dealing with the regions' *imperial pasts* and *neoliberal presences*.

Imperial Pasts and Neoliberal Presences

In the wake of his investigation of the pluralities, heterogeneities and inconsistencies within the Habsburg Empire, the historian and cultural scholar Johannes Feichtinger relates the Austrian-Hungarian governmental politics of homogenization to motives of cultural colonialism. Relying on concepts of postcolonial theory, he advocates a decoding of the power relations that are inscribed in cultural differences in order to discover yet unknown in-between spaces and open up new perspectives for Austrian history beyond the parameters of the nation-state.[17] The British art historian Claire Bishop describes the imperial legacies of Austria in a similar way when she refers to the cultural discourses within Austria's wide range of influence in Central and Eastern European countries. She considers them to be powerful tools to strengthen colonial power structures and interdependencies that can still be felt and seen to a certain extent today.[18]

Since roughly the turn of the millennium, Austria-Hungary's status and role as a semi-colonial power have been topics for numerous academic publications in disciplines like history, philosophy, political and social science or cultural and literary studies.[19]

17 Cf. Feichtinger, "Habsburg (post)-colonial," pp. 22–26.

18 Cf. Bishop, "Exhibiting the East since 1968," p. 68.

19 One example is the working group "Habsburg revisited," who analyzed the processes for the creation of symbols within the power constellations of Austria-Hungary's peoples and nations between 1867 and 1918 in the field of literary and cultural studies. Cf. the internet platform "Kankanien Revisited" for interdisciplinary Central European and South Eastern European studies and networking that was founded in 2001 and supported by the Austrian Ministry for Science and Research (BM.W_F) and the University of Vienna: https://www.kakanien-revisited.at. Cf. also the following selection of publications in German language: Wolfgang Müller-Funk (ed.), *Kakanien revisited. Das Eigene und das Fremde (in) der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie* (Tübingen et al.: Francke, 2002); Johannes Feichtinger, Ursula Prutsch and Moritz Csáky (eds.), *Habsburg postcolonial. Machtstrukturen und kollektives Gedächtnis* (Innsbruck et al.: Studien-Verl., 2003); Walter Sauer (ed.), *K. u. k. kolonial. Habsburgermonarchie und europäische Herrschaft in Afrika* (Wien et al.: Böhlau, 2007); Walter Sauer (ed.), *Vom Paradies zum Krisenkontinent. Afrika, Österreich und Europa in der Neuzeit* (Vienna: Braumüller, 2010); Clemens Ruthner (ed.), *WechselWirkungen. Austria-Hungary, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Western Balkans, 1878–1918* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2015); Johannes Feichtinger and Heidemarie Uhl (eds.), *Habsburg neu denken: Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in Zentraleuropa. 30 kulturwissenschaftliche Stichworte* (Vienna et al.: Böhlau Verlag, 2016); Simon Loidl,

From a historical and sociological perspective, Austria-Hungary is regarded as a pseudo-colonial power that occupied territories with other languages in an imperialist manner in order to dominate and economically exploit them.[20] In contrast to maritime-oriented colonial powers, the Habsburg monarchy never possessed overseas colonies. This is the reason why it cannot be labeled as a colonial power in the proper meaning of the word. But due to the cultural, political and economic conflicts within the multi-ethnic state in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Austro-Hungarian Empire's "colonial importance has generally been interpreted in the context of a continental form of rule and power—a certain form of European 'inner colonialism.'"[21] This can be compared with Prussian and Russian imperial politics in East Central Europe. This specific type of European colonialism relates to processes of internal colonization that are accompanied by the repression and marginalization of so-called peripheral cultures with other languages and religious confessions.[22] Another expression, therefore, would be the concept of "colonialism without colonies" that describes the power relations between dominant centers and dependent peripheries within nation states or interrelated territories of empires.[23] One of the main arguments for a specific "Habsburg colonialism" refers to the "dominant position of Austrian Germans as the first center of power and the Hungarian political and economic elite as the second, whereas the position of minorities, especially

"Europa ist zu enge geworden". Kolonialpropaganda in Österreich-Ungarn 1885 bis 1918 (Vienna: Promedia, 2017); Clemens Ruthner and Tamara Scheer (eds.), *Bosnien-Herzegowina und Österreich-Ungarn, 1878–1918: Annäherungen an eine Kolonie* (Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto, 2018); Clemens Ruthner, *Habsburgs "Dark Continent": Postkoloniale Lektüren der österreichischen Literatur und Kultur im langen 19. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto, 2018); Bernhard Bachinger, Wolfram Dornik and Stephan Lehnstaedt (eds.), *Österreich-Ungarns imperiale Herausforderungen. Nationalismen und Rivalitäten im Habsburgerreich um 1900* (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2020).

20 Cf. Clemens Ruthner, "K.u.k. Kolonialismus als Befund, Befindlichkeit und Metapher: Versuch einer weiteren Klärung," in *Habsburg postcolonial. Machtstrukturen und kollektives Gedächtnis*, eds. Johannes Feichtinger, Ursula Prutsch and Moritz Csáky (Innsbruck et al.: Studien-Verl., 2003), pp. 111–128, p. 111.

21 Marijan Bobinac, "The Habsburg Legacy from a Postcolonial and Postimperial Perspective," in *Umjetnost riječi* LIX (2015), pp. 239–260, p. 240.

22 Cf. Wolfgang Müller-Funk and Birgit Wagner, "Diskurse des Postkolonialen in Europa," in *Eigene und andere Fremde. „Postkoloniale" Konflikte im europäischen Kontext* (Kultur. Wissenschaften 8.4), eds. Wolfgang Müller-Funk and Birgit Wagner (Vienna: Turia + Kant, 2005), pp. 9–27, p. 10.

23 Cf. Jürgen Osterhammel and Jan C. Jansen, *Kolonialismus. Geschichte, Formen, Folgen* (Munich: beck, 2012), p. 21.

Slavs, was often portrayed as subordinated and hence 'colonized.'"[24] The *imperial pasts* of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy's former regions become manifest in intercontinental colonization measures as well as attendant political forms of control. In this respect, annexed areas such as Galicia, Bukovina, and above all, Bosnia-Herzegovina (1908) have a semi-colonial and quasi-colonial status. Apart from these efforts at territorial expansion, the empire pursued cultural politics that aimed at the construction of alterity and difference and found their expression, inter alia, in forms of Balkanism as a variant of Orientalism due to the Islamic subspace in the Balkan region.[25] Whereas there have been many studies on different forms of imperialism in the abovementioned disciplines, surveys on the colonial entanglements of Austria-Hungary and later Austria in the field of art history are found to a lesser extent. In this regard, critical analyses from a postcolonial perspective have hitherto hardly been done.[26] This gap in research concerns art production in the imperial centers (e.g., Vienna) on the one hand, and is also true to a certain degree for modernist art forms in the so-called peripheries on the other. These last-mentioned artistic positions can be looked at from the perspective of anti-colonial tendencies, forms of resistance, concerns of cultural authenticity, transcultural encounters and entangled art histories.

24 Cf. Osterhammel and Jansen, *Kolonialismus. Geschichte, Formen, Folgen*, p. 21.

25 Cf. Müller-Funk, Wagner, "Diskurse des Postkolonialen in Europa," p. 22. As related to Balkanism, cf. Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York, et al.: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997).

26 Some of the few studies are several articles and curatorial projects by Christian Kravagna, Professor of Postcolonial Studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. Amongst others, cf. Christian Kravagna, "Adolf Loos and the Colonial Imaginary," in *Colonial Modern: Aesthetics of the Past – Rebellions for the Future* (exhibition project: *In the Desert of Modernity – Colonial Planning and After*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin 2008, Fabrique Culturelle, Anciens Abattoirs, Casablanca 2009), eds. Tom Avermaete, Serhat Karakayali and Marion von Osten (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2010), pp. 245–261; Christian Kravagna, "Exotische Fantasien in der österreichischen Malerei der Nachkriegszeit / Exotic Fantasies in Post-war Austrian Painting," in *Kunst + Politik. Aus der Sammlung der Stadt Wien / Art + Politics: From the Collection of the City of Vienna*, ed. Hedwig Saxenhuber (Vienna et al.: Springer, 2008), pp. 202–218. Other important sources for a critical postcolonial account of art historiography and museum collections during the Austro-Hungarian Empire are various books and essays by Matthew Rampley, extraordinary Professor at the Department of Art History at the Masaryk University in Brno: Cf. Matthew Rampley, *The Vienna School of Art History: Empire and the Politics of Scholarship, 1847–1918* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania Univ. Press, 2013); Matthew Rampley, Marikian Prokopovych and Nóra Veszprémi (eds.), *The Museum Age in Austria-Hungary: Art and Empire in the Long Nineteenth Century* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania Univ. Press, 2020).

Another significant research gap exists in the regional art history that emerged after the political change in 1989. The record of recent East Central European art history is a matter of several analyses and publications, and it has also been discussed within this volume.[27] It can be summarized as a heterogeneous and contradictory project of transnational re-historicization of artistic production that had previously been considered mainly within national frameworks or in relation to the Western, "universal" narrative.

Without negating actually existing power structures and political or economic hegemonies, it aims to represent regional cultural production beyond a diffusional model based on center-periphery dynamics. Hence, it seeks to transcend traditional cultural hierarchies by proposing more horizontal narratives based on the concept of circulation or "margin-to-margin" relations, decentering the notions of progress, canons and influence from a specific epistemic position. In other words, it is a project of delinking regional art history from an universalized (Western) art historical narrative without delinking regional art from the broader European context. It also attempts to place regional art history within a broader framework of global art history.

As part of the commitment to "globalizing East Central European art histories,"[28] transnational and transregional research into previous forms of dissemination, networking and communication of knowledge is being carried out.[29] While regional art history has dealt extensively with supra-national connections realized in official and alternative channels of art distribution during the socialist era, art historical analysis has rarely considered processes and conditions of this art's re-emergence via Western art infrastructures after 1989. The topic of reproducing

27 See in this volume Karolina Majewska-Güde, *Post-Socialist Art Histories and the Global Paradigm or, Rethinking Global Art History from the East Central European Semi-Periphery*, pp. 355–382.

28 See Beáta Hock and Anu Allas (eds.), *Globalizing East European Art Histories: Past and Present* (New York: Routledge, 2018).

29 See, for instance, the following publications: Jérôme Bazin, Pascal Dubourg Glatigny and Piotr Piotrowski *(eds.), Art beyond Borders: Artistic Exchange in Communist Europe (1945–1989)* (Budapest and New York: Central *European* University Press, 2016); Klara Kemp-Welch, *Networking the Block: Experimental Art in Eastern Europe 1965–1981* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2019); and "Resonances: Regional and Transregional Cultural Transfer in the Art of the 1970s," a collaborative research project running from 2021 to 2024, https://resonances.artpool.hu/.

art from the former Eastern Europe for international secondary audiences has, however, been discussed extensively within curatorial practice.[30] It has also become the subject of cultural critique by philosophers, decolonial theorists and contemporary artists concerned with the current conditions of knowledge production.

Recently, the focus of regional art history has shifted to the former East's relations with the Global South and the region's role in the process of decolonization. Transregional research advances the question of East-South entanglements and proposes alternative forms of internationalism and globalization.[31] Nevertheless, the East-West relationship remains an issue when it comes to the current conditions of art historiography—namely, the condition of neoliberalism that is formative for the production of post-socialist art histories. The neoliberal presence is examined by artists and activists—but how does it also affect narratives constructed about the past? With the present anthology, we suggest that this question can be answered through the analysis of patterns of argument and empirical material related to cultural policies, infrastructures and collecting practices.

Decolonial Futures

The concept of *decoloniality* as introduced in the title of the anthology encapsulates the ambition behind the publication: i.e., the possibility of forgetting progressivist and diffusional narratives in favor of the coexistence of plural worlds/narratives about regional art written from a multiplicity of positions. This brings us close to the concept of "pluriversality" as introduced

30 See, for instance, Zdenka Badovinac and Peter Weibel (eds.), *2000+ ArtEast Collection. The Art of Eastern Europe: A Selection of Works for the International and National Collection of Moderna Galerija* (Vienna: Folio, 2001) or a collection of essays: Mária Orišková (ed.), *Curating "EASTERN EUROPE" and Beyond: Art Histories through the Exhibition* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2014), or the section "Exhibiting the 'East' since 1989," in the publication *Art and Theory* of *Post-1989 Central and Eastern Europe: A Critical Anthology*, eds. Ana Janevski, Roxana Marcoci and Ksenia Nouril (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2018), pp. 67–134.

31 See, for instance, Chelsea Haines and Gemma Sharpe (eds.), *ARTMargins*, 8/2: *Art, Institutions, and Internationalism, 1945–73*, (June 2019), or Bojana Piškur's essay "Southern Constellations in Arts and Culture: Some Cases from the Non-Aligned Movement" in this volume, on Non-Aligned Movement cultural politics and contemporaneity, pp. 291–304.

by Walter Mignolo in 2002.[32] However, it is important to remember that "the pluriverse is not a world of independent units (as is the case with cultural relativism) but a world entangled through and by the colonial matrix of power."[33] It is therefore a multiplicity structured by imperial difference—in its external and internal forms.[34]

The notion of the *decolonial* combined with *future* in the plural also conveys a vision for the region's future as seen beyond the neoliberal modernity/coloniality paradigm, beyond the story of catching up that "never ends in overtaking."[35] Decolonial practices of historicization by scholars situated in the Global South aim at delinking with Western epistemologies and pluralizing the processes and forms of knowledge production. In connection with the post-socialist space, Madina Tlostanova defines the decolonial perspective as "a way to re-existence in a changing world in which many worlds would correlate and where the experience of Socialist modernity and its specific trajectory would shape one of the possible open models, intersecting but never utterly merging with others, and where the previous hierarchical relations of the state, the market, and the artists would finally give place to other forms of communication, praxis and production of meanings."[36]

In this book we follow a decolonial path in two ways: by proposing a methodological openness capable of recognizing and subverting hierarchical relations, and by focusing on situated projects of alternative globalization that emerge outside of a neoliberal/colonial modernity.

32 Walter D. Mignolo, "The Zapatistas' Theoretical Revolution: Its Historical, Political, and Epistemological Consequences," in *Review: A Journal of the Ferdinand Braudel Centre* 25/3 (2002), pp. 245–75.

33 Walter D. Mignolo, "Forward: On Pluriversality and Multipolarity," in *Constructing the Pluriverse: The Geopolitics of Knowledge*, ed. Bernd Reiter (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2018), pp. IX–XVI., p. XI.

34 The concept of an "imperial/colonial difference" was introduced by Mignolo in Walter D. Mignolo, "Coloniality at Large: Time and the Colonial Difference," in *Time in the Making and Possible Futures*, ed. Enrique Rodrigues Lazarreta (Rio de Janerio: Unesco – International Social Science Council, 2000), pp. 237–272.

35 Madina Tlostanova, *What Does It Mean to Be Post-Soviet? Decolonial Art from the Ruins of the Soviet Empire* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2018), p. 10.

36 Tlostanova, *What Does It Mean to Be Post-Soviet?*, p. 24.

Specificities and position within the field of research

The book inscribes itself in a spatial turn[37] in the history of art, concentrating on the two locations of "Austria" and "East Central Europe." If, in recent art history, the notions of geographic space have been introduced to formulate a counternarrative to established Western-centric art history by focusing on previously omitted locales and cross-boundary relationships, the idea behind this topographical juxtaposition is more specific. It does not aim at simply reversing existing hierarchies, "peripherizing" Austria, or recognizing "mutual flows" between the two locations. The main intention behind the compilation is a project of situated decentering of the colonial myth of modernism and a critique of post-1989 neocolonial practices. In this sense, the interdependencies of regional and national art historiographies in two historical periods shaped by the political or economic hegemony of Austria in the region should be investigated.

Given that East Central Europe is not a "hermetically isolated cultural landscape but a set of relations,"[38] we are interested in examining the tension between actual and represented relationships to the center within regional art historiography. "Austria" means a special regional center, one of many in Central Europe. The aim is to map or trace entangled concepts, narratives and histories that emerged between the regional art histories and "Austria-based" art histories by not simply contrasting the periphery with the center but focusing on the pluralities and interdependencies of regional artistic practices and art histories.

Revisiting the concepts of center and periphery is not currently a mainstream approach in regional art history. Horizontal art history—and more recently, entangled art histories—work against this kind of simplifying narrative and follow the tendency to think of art beyond national frameworks for both historical

37 "The term 'spatial turn' was introduced by the human geographer Edward W. Soja, who used it in the mid-nineties to call for greater attention to be given to the category of space, which he believed had been neglected." Cf. Kathrin Winkler, Kim Seifert and Heinrich Detering, "Die Literaturwissenschaften im *Spatial Turn*. Versuch einer Positionsbestimmung," (Abstract) in *Journal of Literary Theory Online* (20.02.2012), http://www.jltonline.de/index.php/articles/article/view/482/1215.

38 Hock, "Introduction – Globalizing East European Art," pp. 1–22, p. 6.

periods.[39] The current trend is not about forgetting the national context, but about comparative work on cross-border and transregional relationships.

Piotr Piotrowski's horizontal art history as a radically decentralized methodological approach proposes a strong alternative to a diffusional paradigm of "universal" art history. In the course of outlining this concept for East Central European post-war art, Piotrowski states "that while Western art history has a vertical and hierarchical form, the Eastern one, due to its plurality, takes horizontal, non-hierarchical and polycentric form."[40] He argues for "comparative studies, negotiating different meanings of local art," while taking into account the specific contexts of the "State Ideological Apparatuses or the cultural policies of a particular country."[41] What is important for the period of modernism is Piotrowski's argument that Western art historical narratives as the notion of style or artistic canon were "never simply reflected" in East Central European art, where "modernism defined in terms of style has always been translated into heterogeneous mutations, both at the beginning of the twentieth century and later."[42]

A more recent tendency within regional studies of modernism is the already-mentioned idea of entangled art histories.[43]

39 As opposed to the efforts of writing art history for each individual country in the region, as, for example, Steven Mansbach did in his book *Modern Art in Eastern Europe: From the Baltic to the Balkans, ca. 1890–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

40 Piotr Piotrowski, "How to Write a History of Central-East European Art?" in *Third Text* 3/1 (2009), pp. 5–14, p. 7.

41 Piotrowski, "How to Write a History of Central-East European Art?", pp. 8, 14. For a recent discussion of Piotrowski's "horizontal art history," cf. Matthew Rampley, "Networks, Horizons, Centres and Hierarchies: On the Challenges of Writing on Modernism in Central Europe," in *Umění* 2 Art, LXIX (2021), pp. 145–162, cf. pp. 150–154. One central point of criticism is the observation that "the view from the margin may be just as prone to ideological blindness as the centre." Rampley, "Networks, Horizons, Centres and Hierarchies," p. 154.

42 Rampley, "Networks, Horizons, Centres and Hierarchies," pp. 5 and 6.

43 Entangled art histories date back to the concept of entangled history that was formulated in the 1980s within various currents of postcolonial theory, such as, for example, the spatial turn. Processes of interaction and global circulation are analyzed with a focus on a transcultural perspective and the assumption of an interconnectedness of societies. Cf. Sönke Bauck and Thomas Maier, "Entangled History," in *InterAmerican Wiki: Terms – Concepts – Critical Perspectives* (2015), https://uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/cias/wiki/e/entangled-history.xml. Within the discipline of art history, there are several terms for a similar or a more or less the same basic idea of transcultural encounters, entanglements and dynamic exchange processes between the different regions of the world. Cf. for example, Monica Juneja, "Global Art History and the 'Burden of Representation,'" in *Global Studies: Mapping Contemporary Art and Culture*, eds. Hans Belting et al. (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2011), pp. 274–97; Model House Research Group (ed.), *Transcultural Mod-*

Launched in 2019, *Continuity/Rupture: Art and Architecture in Central Europe 1918–1939* is a research project led by Matthew Rampley at Masaryk University in Brno that examines art and architecture within the context of the political discontinuities in Austria-Hungary's three successor states—Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia—after the collapse of the empire in 1918.[44] Between 2018 and 2021, the ERC research project entitled *Art Historiographies in Central and Eastern Europe: An Inquiry from the Perspective of Entangled Histories* explored the relationships between the art histories produced in Central and Eastern Europe and those in Western Europe with a focus on Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Russia in the period from 1850 until 1950.[45]

However, as Mathew Rampley has argued, considering the literature on modernism and the avant-garde movements in East Central Europe, the promise of transnational or entangled art historical studies has mostly failed, and "the result often amounts to parallel national histories."[46] Instead of an analysis of the transcultural processes of reciprocal definition and transformation, "research continues to be shaped by national frameworks and canons."[47] The reasons are rooted in linguistic challenges, the lack of funding for inter- and transnational research groups and projects, the choice of the object and, last but not least, the hegemonic self-conception of the discipline with its national boundaries.[48]

Hence, within the two prevailing transnational approaches—i.e., horizontal and entangled art history—the question of center and periphery was replaced by other concerns and questions, mainly to counteract the revival of national narratives. However, as Beáta Hock argues, "the existence [of center-periphery] can-

ernisms, publication series of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, vol. 12 (Vienna: Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien; Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2013); Thomas Da Costa Kaufmann, Catherine Dossin and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel (eds.), *Circulations in the Global History of Art* (Farnham et.al.: Ashgate; London: Taylor & Francis, 2015); Christian Kravagna, *Transmoderne. Eine Kunstgeschichte des Kontakts* (Berlin: b_books, 2017).

44 Cf. https://craace.com.

45 Cf. https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/802700/de and https://arthist.ro/project-description/.

46 Rampley, p. 154.

47 Rampley, p. 154.

48 Rampley, pp. 154–155.

not be simply thought away by the force of mental magic." Nonetheless, as she suggests, "the existence of unjust geopolitical givens need not be reproduced in historical scholarship."[49]

Without merely reproducing unjust hierarchies, it is still necessary to critically approach power relations in the region with respect to art historiography, as undoing hierarchies within the spatial regime of art history also means deconstructing prevailing narrative patterns.

In the capitalist world-system theory of Immanuel Wallerstein, East Central Europe is defined as a semi-periphery of the West.[50] How does this play out in regional nineteenth- and twentieth-century as well as post-1989 art histories, and how can it be critically approached from a current perspective on these art histories? On the one hand, in both the periods studied, we are dealing with a violent colonial spatialisation of time, where there are places of the past ("Balkans"), places of the present, and places of the future in the region. On the other hand, we are also dealing with a problem of nationalism as an anti-imperialist strategy and contemporary populism in East Central Europe directed against the neo-colonialism of the West.

In this publication, we aim to zoom in on a set of relations between the differentiated narrators and audiences of art histories in East Central Europe. It is not a revisionist art history that aims at revising art hierarchies and decentering the centers in a symbolic way. Rather, it is an art history that acknowledges the reality of socioeconomic hierarchies and aims at a situated problematization of "art historiographical mechanisms"[51] through analyses of specific local empirical and discursive material.

Instead of theorizing the mainstream perspective on the region (close other, epistemic marginality), the anthology proposes its reconfiguration via several case studies which, in different ways, develop vocabularies that capture regional hegemonies and power structures with respect to the construction of entangled art historiographical narratives. It goes beyond posi-

49 Beáta Hock, "Is There Life After Canonical Certainties?" in *Umění* 2 Art, LXIX (2021), pp. 163–167, p. 163.

50 See, for instance, Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: Theory and Methodology* (Beverly Hills, et al.: Sage Publications, 1982).

51 Hock, "Is There Life After Canonical Certainties?" p. 165.

tive framing of the marginal, making the periphery great again[52] or the discussion about "asymmetrical power relations," which "are not an obstacle to two-way cultural interchange, as long as one acknowledges the existence of a two-way traffic of influence and avoids the pitfall of the assumption that the periphery can only produce imitations of the center's original output."[53] Instead, the book aims to examine the historical conditions in which national art historiographies emerged and look at the current conditions in which art histories of the socialist period are being written. It also argues for the need for a certain methodological openness—i.e., for different theoretical approaches due to the large time frame, the large geographical space and the radically changing political, social and cultural framework between the end of the nineteenth century and the present day. It avoids the question of which theory or rhetoric is right or wrong and proposes a more productive route, focusing on the region's specific spatiotemporal and political contexts and attempting to evaluate which concepts are worth operating with.

Structure and contents of the book

The two parts of the book are linked by several questions and considerations of historical and methodological nature. The broadest historical question is: how have the cultural politics of the Austro-Hungarian Empire influenced modes of writing the art histories of East Central Europe, and how does contemporary Austria continue to do so? In the most general sense, one could claim that the impact of the Viennese School of Art History is an accepted fact that applies not only to East Central Europe. Is it possible to argue that the impact of the former imperial forces had formative effects, but shaped different forms of cultural agency and local narratives at the same time? Is the situation the other way around today? Do the former "centers" look to the former "peripheries" in order to unlearn hierarchal patterns and learn from regional cultural practices? At the same

52 See *Kajet Journal (on Periphery)* 04 (Fall 2020).

53 Hock, "Is There Life After Canonical Certainties?" p. 165.

time, neocolonial power imbalances and strategies of Othering persist in both former "centers" and former "peripheries."

Another set of issues relates to the question of how East Central European art histories address the former colonizer or imperial power—namely, the Austro-Hungarian Empire—within a postcolonial project to reclaim regional and national art histories. This question also relates to a methodological problem: if a postcolonial analysis is used with fruitful results for the period of the imperial past, the question arises as to whether it fulfills this function for the post-1989 period. Contemporary relations between the former East and the former West, understood in terms of economic subordination and cultural self-colonization, have often been studied within the framework of postcolonial methodology. However, as Boris Groys reminds us with respect to the period after 1989, "[t]he core of the standard postcolonial discourse is the struggle against Eurocentrism. The core of the dominating postcomunist discourse is the affirmation of Eurocentrism. Eastern European nations want to become European again, after several decades of separation from Western Europe."[54] In this context, the publication also tries to look into what ways Austria-based institutions such as museums, collections, exhibitions, art fairs, and academic institutions shape regional East Central European art histories and vice versa: how does art from Central and Eastern European countries exhibited in Austria—in art fairs, galleries, museums, etc.—(re)shape the perception of those countries that are traditionally associated with the former Iron Curtain?

Finally, these questions arise: What are possible critical art geographies that reconsider power relations between Austria and Central and Eastern Europe? How did ideas of the artistic center and periphery develop in regional art histories with the changing political and historical context in a timeline from the late nineteenth century until the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the interwar period as well as the period post-1989?

54 Boris Groys, "In a Global World: Introduction," in *Art and Theory of Post-1989 Central and Eastern Europe: A Critical Anthology*, eds. Ana Janevski, Roxana Marcoci and Ksenia Nouril (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2018), pp. 339–341, p. 340.

We follow the argumentation that there have always been solely local and regional artistic practices and art histories that were shaped by diverse processes of globalization over the course of centuries. In this respect, it is useful to operate with Roland Robertson's term "glocalization," with which he described the paradoxical simultaneity of the universalization of the particular and the particularization of the universal, as well as different forms of appropriation and the development of globalization processes in local contexts.[55] Furthermore, it is important to address the close entanglement between globalization and colonial history, which is why "the global" needs to be critically examined:

"Global culture is a continuation of an imperial dynamic of influence, control, dissemination and hegemony that operates according to an already initiated structure of power that emerged in the sixteenth century in the great confluence of imperialism, capitalism and modernity. This explains why the forces of globalization are still, in some senses, centred in the West (in terms of power and institutional organization), despite their global dissemination."[56]

Global art history is a theoretical construct with several fundamental flaws and discrepancies. Following a postcolonial perspective, "the global" and "globalization" are synonyms or a sort of camouflage tactic for the cultural imperialism and superiority of the European colonialism of the modern period. As we still live with and in these postcolonial conditions, it is still hard to decenter the "centers" or to "provincialize" Europe. There have been and still are a lot of different forms of dealing with (former) imperial centers, such as, for example, resistance, aversion, acceptance, tolerance, etc.—and of course hybrid negotiations in many cases. As far as this volume is concerned, we can only draw on some results of our case studies without falling into the trap of generalizations and homogenizing conclusions.

55 Cf. Robert Robertson, "Glokalisierung – Homogenität und Heterogenität in Raum und Zeit," in *Perspektiven der Weltgesellschaft*, ed. Ulrich Beck (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1998), pp. 192–220.

56 Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (eds.), *Post-Colonial Studies*, 103.

Regarding the thematic layer, the overall focus of the first chapter lies, in particular, on the complex and interwoven histories of art historiography in different countries and regions under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Within a timeframe from the late nineteenth century until the interwar period, the contributions take a close look at the various forms of adoption and interaction with art historical methodologies coined by the Vienna School of Art History as well as at their reformulations within local contexts. Taking into consideration the imperial cultural politics and the pan-European colonial *Zeitgeist*, the formation processes of regional art histories and national art associations—as well as nationalist tendencies in art historical writings as a supposed form of anti-colonial resistance and opposition to the imperial power—are of significant interest. At the same time, some articles also concentrate on the imperial politics of representation and visual strategies of representing territories occupied by the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Something that almost all contributions share is a specific interest in the notion of transnational phenomena in art historical theories and artistic practices. By highlighting the wide range of individual and autonomous developments of art historical trends, writings and institutions as well as artistic practices in the different regions of East Central Europe, they show that the traditional center-periphery model and structural relationship between an allegedly advanced or metropolitan "center" and a less developed "periphery" need to be deconstructed and redefined. It is nevertheless crucial to keep in mind the imperial power imbalances within the Empire that affected not only politics, education, economy and demographics, but also the domains of culture and art. As demonstrated by the authors, the last-mentioned sectors are at the same time fruitful places for articulating resistance. This chapter does not cover all former territories under Austro-Hungarian rule. In this sense, contributions on regional manifestations of art historical writing in Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia and several border regions or areas of Italy, Montenegro and Ukraine are missing. This is principally due to one of the book's fundamental concerns: that it cannot represent

a comprehensive survey on art historiographies in the whole empire. This chapter focuses instead on case studies and micro-narratives that give insight into local and regional art historiographical and artistic practices, transcultural encounters and exchange, as well as formation processes of distinct and national art histories. The first part assembles articles on both—the centers of power (the Empire of Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary) and some of the provinces as parts of present-day Romania, the Czech Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Poland. The reflection of the Austro-Hungarian Empire as a regional imperial power with a striking impact on cultural and identity policies within its vast dimensions as a multinational and therefore difficult-to-govern state is to be found in each contribution. This is especially true for the articles dealing with Bosnia and Herzegovina, which fell under Austro-Hungarian rule in 1878 and was formally annexed in 1908.

The seven chronologically arranged articles of the first part should be introduced briefly. In his text entitled "Habsburg Scholars and Writings about Romanian Historical Monuments in the Late Nineteenth Century," Cosmin Minea compares art historical records of architectural monuments in the region of Bukovina and the neighboring nation-state of Romania written by Habsburg scholars with those by scholars of the region. Considering moments of mutual exchange and the importance of local contexts, the article throws a new light on ideas about colonialism and cultural imperialism in the late nineteenth-century Habsburg Empire in a way that will go beyond the paradigm of colonialism. At center stage of Christian Drobe's contribution, "The Quest for Totality: Holistic Concepts in Art Theory in Central Europe after 1900," are ideas of unity adopted by Georg Lukács and the members of the Budapest Sunday Circle in order to revitalize Hungarian philosophy and art. Drobe argues that "modern concepts of wholeness, with their remnants of idealist or classicist art theory, featured a universal adaptability suitable for many contexts" and have been useful for Hungary as well as other European countries. Furthermore, the category of form continues to be an important factor in art history as well as in "the still unsolved legacy of classicism in modernism." In her article "Imagining Czech National Art: The *Mánes Association of*

Fine Artists and Their Path to Success (1898–1907)," Anna-Marie Kroupová focuses on one of the leading Czech modernist associations and its difficult relationship to the imperial and colonialist-like rhetoric of Habsburg Vienna. In her analysis of Mánes's essential role and identity-forming efforts in the wake of the formation of the category of Czech national art, she refers to processes of "anti-German and anti-imperial Othering" that became visible through the distinct segregation of the idea of Viennese Modernism and the strong orientation to France. Beyond that, Kroupová also takes into account the cultural transfer and communication between different nationalities that were enabled by Mánes. Maximilian Hartmuth's contribution is entitled "Painters of the Empire? The Challenging Representation of Habsburg Bosnia in the *Kronprinzenwerk*" and concentrates on the little-studied visual component in the volume of the *Kronprinzenwerk* (*Die österreichisch-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild, 1886–1902*) focused on Bosnia-Herzegovina (1901), as an illustrated panorama of the imperial domains of the late Habsburg Empire. Hartmuth deals with the challenges of portraying a territory (occupied in 1878) with "an unfamiliar Muslim cultural tradition" and the competition between the different interest groups of the Austrian and Hungarian halves of the Empire. Despite the "failure to include a single contributor of local origins or of Muslim or Orthodox Christian background," he concludes that the Bosnian volume "exhibits a carefully premeditated iconography" and a noteworthy "absence of triumphalist supremacism." In her contribution "The Expressive Theory of Art: Hans Tietze and the Polish Promoters of National Art," Irena Kossowska investigates the impact and dissemination of theories coined by the Vienna School of Art History among Polish advocates of the national paradigm in art in the 1920s and 1930s. Focusing on concepts of national art by such prominent figures as Mieczysław Treter (1883–1943) and Tadeusz Pruszkowski (1888–1942) in the cultural milieu in the Second Polish Republic, Kossowska makes us aware that these comprehensions can be evaluated as "amalgam[s] of arguments delivered by some exponents of the Wiener Schule," such as Alois Riegl or Hans Tietze. The author concludes that the appreciation of the affect within the expressive theory of art can be regarded as a

transnational affinity. Furthermore, the emphatic notion of "the national and cultural identity that swept throughout Europe in the 1920s and 1930s" is another common feature of Viennese and Polish art historians. The last article of the anthology's first part is "'Land und Leute' in the Transnational Space: Recontextualizing *Heimatphotographie* in Central Europe" by Julia Secklehner. She carries out a recontextualization and re-evaluation of the genre of homeland photography, which is associated with the Austro-German cultural space but "represents a marginal topic within the history of Central European art." Focusing on the work of the amateur photographer Grete Popper (1896–1976) in Czechoslovakia and "moving beyond established, nationalizing definitions of the genre," Secklehner challenges the notion of *Heimatphotographie* as a product of Austrian and German fascist culture. She concludes that homeland photography is "a diverse practice with a strong presence across Central Europe" and therefore a sort of transnational genre with different facets. Bosnia and Herzegovina also takes center stage in Gabriela Seith's article "Shots for Thought: Art (and) History in Bosnia and Herzegovina from a Postcolonial View." Proceeding from the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914, she discusses the genealogy of stereotypes and pejorative perceptions of Bosnia, the question of approach to its (art) history and the relevance of postcolonial theory for the region. In the course of this, Seith analyzes artworks such as the performance *Sarajevo Shot* (1993) by Ante Jurić and the installation *FN M1910* (2014) by Lana Čmajčanin as well as the exhibitions *Blood and Honey – Future's in the Balkans* in Klosterneuburg (2003) and *MONUMENTUM//MOMENTUM//MEMENTO* at the National Gallery of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2014) that deal with the Habsburg occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and offer alternative, decolonial visions of the Empire's past or repeat and consolidate problematic stereotypes and (neo)colonial discourses.

Interlude

The Interlude is situated in between the anthology's two parts and connects them in several ways. "We Both Love This *Pięć*

So Much: Walking through the Stairwell at KU Private University Linz" is a talk between the Austrian curator and professor Monika Leisch-Kiesl and the Polish artist Monika Drożyńska that sheds light on a site-specific art piece in form of a large-size embroidery entitled *Pięć / Five / Fünf* that was developed between 2020 and 2021 for an exhibition at the university. The conversation can be seen as a dialogic—and often also humorous—form of knowledge production insofar as certain ideas and insights emerge during the mutual exchange. The authors deliberately opted for minimal editorial intervention in order to preserve the original character of their dialogue.

Part II

The second part of the book is dedicated to the problems of art historiography after 1989 in a global and regional context. After 1989, the countries of East Central Europe developed their new art institutions and new set of narratives about the recent past. Initially, the period of socialism was viewed by regional and local historians as an interruption in historical progress. In the decades that followed, socialist modernity and its cultural project of internationalization were reconsidered as an alternative to contemporary economic globalization, which "is the direct opposite of the modern ideal of internationality, or universality."[57] If "the world of globalization is not a world of international solidarity or shared values" but rather "it is the world of global competition,"[58] then alternative projects of globalization from the former East—such as socialist internationalism or the Non-Alignment Movement—can be reconsidered and used as sources for working towards a more just global future.

The histories of the region's past have also been told by external narrators[59] who had at their disposal resources, institutions and capital to prefabricate historical Others. The Western canons and vocabularies of modern art were not revolutionized after 1989, but merely enriched by a new set of names and

57 Groys, "In a Global World: Introduction," p. 341.
58 Groys, "In a Global World: Introduction," p. 341.
59 Zdenka Badovinac, "Histories and Their Different Narrators," pp. 52–62.

practices from the former East. These hierarchical views were summarized by Matthew Rampley as follows: "Even when the Modernisms of, for example, Bucharest, Belgrade or Kaunas, are explored, they are often treated as objects of exotic interest operating within a framework shaped by Western Europe and North America. If discussed at all, the modernist art practices of East Central Europe are usually described in terms of the reception of ideas and practices flowing from elsewhere."[60] However, this kind of well-intentioned criticism, exemplified by Rampley's texts, that has been pursued in recent decades posits that there is a need for the East to be recognized by Western scholars.[61]

The second part of the book rejects this kind of situated optics and consists of narratives from the region about a possible global perspective on the art and culture produced during socialism beyond the Cold War binary. It deals with the question of horizontal art history and decolonization and proposes transnational art histories from the region on a macro scale, defining patterns of globalization alternative to the dominant neoliberal model. This part of the book includes essays in which authors de-link from the current models of globalization—through reconstructing historical decolonial narratives or by exploring contemporary alter-globalist views on post-Cold War art history. The texts are accompanied by a critical examination of the art historical narratives that emerged "from Austria" about the socialist art of Central and Eastern Europe.

In her text "Southern Constellations in Arts and Culture: Some Cases from the Non-Aligned Movement," Bojana Piškur introduces the political ideas, cultural program and principles behind the Non-Aligned Movement, focusing on the cultural manifestations of non-alignment, problematizing the relationship between socialist Europe (Yugoslavia) and the Global South. This essay concentrates on the NAM's attempt to claim a different history, constructing a political and cultural narrative beyond the bipolar disorder of the Cold War. Piotr Piotrowski's essay "Peripheries of the World, Unite!" pursues similar aims by different means—i.e., by proposing an alter-globalist art history

60 Matthew Rampley, "Networks, Horizons, Centres and Hierarchies," pp. 145–162, p. 146.
61 Rampley, pp. 145–162, p. 146.

that can be summarized as an approach that not only resists the dominant canons and master narratives of mainstream or universal art history, but is also highly critical of economic, civilizational and cultural processes of globalization. In his posthumously published book *A Global View of Eastern European Art*,[62] he proposes alternatives to a postcolonial approach: a horizontal comparative study focused on differences between the geo-historically marginalized cultures of Central and Eastern Europe, the Global South and the Far North, written from the perspective of alter-globalist resistance. The text is a translation of the introduction to this book.

Karolina Majewska-Güde's overview "Post-Socialist Art Histories and the Global Paradigm or, Rethinking Global Art History from the East Central European Semi-Periphery" focuses on the latest East Central European art histories. It explores how recent regional art historiography—and in particular, narratives that take into account the neo-avant-garde art in socialist states that developed during the global Cold War—are shaping the discourse on global art history. The text reverses a question that has been asked more frequently in the context of recent regional art history: namely, what a transnational and global perspective on Eastern European art (history) can be.

In her case study "ERSTE Stiftung – An Ambassador for Central and South Eastern European Culture," Beáta Hock revisits practices of *private cultural sponsorship in post-socialist Eastern Europe, concentrating on the policies of the Austria-based* ERSTE Stiftung. In this context, she proposes that the recent art history of East Central Europe "supplies extraordinary empirical material to challenge, pluralize, and relativize a Western-centric cultural canon of the late twentieth century." Hock's article deals with the question of how the ERSTE Stiftung performed this self-assigned role of narrator of the socialist past and to what end, and in what ways cultural actors in Eastern Europe took advantage of the initiatives launched by ERSTE. Hock examines grand-scale enterprises such as exhibitions, research projects and educational initiatives that the ERSTE Foundation established and supported.

62 Piotr Piotrowski, *Globalne ujęcie sztuki Europy Wschodniej* (Poznań: Dom Wydawniczy Rebis, 2018).

The final part, "Art-History-in-the-Making: Re-Distribution of Central and Eastern European Artistic Practices in Austria after 1989: Exhibitions, Discourses, Networks," consists of a series of conversations with cultural producers who initiated, coordinated and participated in research and curatorial projects in Austria devoted to post-socialist art histories and post-socialist cultural space. We are grateful that Hemma Schmutz, Sabine Breitwieser, Walter Seidl and Georg Schöllhammer accepted our invitation and participated in the interviews. Their practices were often focused on retrieving the emancipatory potential of neo-avant-garde art projects from former socialist Europe. In the discussions, the focus is placed on the re-evaluation of recent practices of rewriting art histories of East Central Europe through collections and exhibitions—especially those made in Austria—and specific contradictions and ambiguities issuing from the contemporary system of knowledge production and distribution of art.

Vienna and Warsaw, September 2022