

Masaryk University
Faculty of Arts

Department of Art History
Spring Semester 2021

Image, Object, Text: Theories and Methods in Art History and Visual Studies

Code: DU1905 **Credits:** 8

COURSE OUTLINE

SYNOPSIS

This course looks at the methods and theoretical underpinning of contemporary practices of art historical and visual cultural analysis. Based on examination of ideas and the close reading of key scholarly texts, the course will engage both with traditional art historical methods as well as more recent approaches to the study of art and visual culture.

The course will consider how conceptual frameworks inform the analysis of specific works of art and architecture. It also considers how they determine the kinds of questions that are asked of them. You will be asked to consider the relevance and application of these methods to a range of examples, including the potential topics your final thesis.

Practical Information

The course co-ordinator is Prof. Matthew Rampley.

All queries concerning the organization of the course are to be directed to me. I can be contacted either by email: rampley@muni.cz or directly at my office in L62 the Faculty of Arts Building (on Veverí 28).

The course will be taught in **English**.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this module, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical knowledge and understanding of historiographic methods relevant to the study of art history and visual culture
- Demonstrate a critical knowledge and understanding of the ideas of key historians and theorists of art, architecture and visual culture
- Identify, analysis and evaluate methods used in selected texts on the history of art and visual culture
- Apply a variety of relevant analytical methods to the interpretation of works of art and visual culture
- Exhibit advanced writing and oral skills

HOW THE COURSE WILL BE TAUGHT

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation the course will be taught online from **11.00 – 13.00** on **Thursdays**. I shall also schedule a 1-to-1 tutorial with each of you to discuss your ideas for the essay.

Each session will consist of an informal lecture / discussion. In addition, all students will be required to give a short (15-minute) oral presentation on a topic.

You will receive informal written feedback on your presentation. This will **not** contribute towards the overall mark for this course. It is merely meant to help you to identify strengths and weaknesses you may need to address in preparation for the formal assessment.

ASSESSMENT AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The course will be assessed on the basis of an essay of between 15 and 20 A4 pages (1800 characters per page). The essay should be accompanied with a bibliography of sources consulted.

The deadline for submission will be **Friday 11 June**. Assessment of the essay will be based on the following criteria:

1. Research: is the essay well researched and are its claims based on appropriate use of sources?
2. Understanding: does the essay display a good level of understanding of the materials / ideas it discusses?
3. Analysis: does the essay undertake an appropriate critical appraisal of the written primary and secondary source material?
4. Argument: does the essay present a clearly constructed argument, with a conclusion?
5. Relevance: are the material selected and the arguments used relevant to the topic of the essay question and to the course as a whole?
6. Language: is the essay written in clear and correct English?

MODULE SCHEDULE

4 th March	Art history as a "science": observation and the role of theory
18 th March	Canon wars: the objects and values of art history
1 st April	The meanings of 'style': formalism and the social history of art
15 th April	Concepts of iconology: from visual lexicon to social memory
29 th April	Horizontal art history and the politics of the periphery
13 th May	Queering art history
27 th May	Art history in a global context: decolonizing the discipline?

GENERAL READING

The following reading list includes books and articles that will be discussed in the individual sessions as well as general, background, reading. The reading for each session includes **key reading** that you will be expected to have prepared *before* the session. You are *not* expected to have read all the items listed for each session. Equally, it is expected that for your assessed essay, you will undertake your own research and reading beyond what is listed in this bibliography.

Please note: as far as is practical, all items will be available on the Learning Materials folder of the Faculty intranet.

You can find the link here: <https://is.muni.cz/auth/el/phil/jaro2021/DU1905/um/?lang=en>

GENERAL READING

You should find the following general books useful as an introduction to the topic. There are copies in the library.

- James Elkins, *Stories of art* (New York, 2002)
- Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk, *Art history: a critical introduction to its methods* (Manchester, 2006)
- Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, eds., *Critical terms for art history* (Chicago, 2003).
- Griselda Pollock, *Differencing the canon: feminist desire and the writing of art's histories* (London, 1999)
- Matthew Rampley, ed., *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks* (Leiden, 2012)
- Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of looking: an introduction to visual culture* (Oxford, 2001).

READING FOR INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS

ART HISTORY AS A 'SCIENCE': OBSERVATION AND THE ROLE OF THEORY

Key Reading

- Paul Barolsky, 'Art History as Fiction,' *Artibus et Historiae* 17.34 (1996) pp. 9-17.
- Moriz Thausing, 'The Status of Art History as an Academic Discipline' in *Journal of Art Historiography* 1 (2009). You should also read the introduction by Karl Johns.

Recommended Reading

- Arthur Danto, 'Deep Interpretation,' *The Journal of Philosophy* 78.11 (1981) pp. 691-706.
- Clifford Geertz, 'Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture' in Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, 1973) pp. 3-32.
- Carlo Ginzburg, 'Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method,' *History Workshop* 9 (1980) pp. 9-36.

- Andre Malraux, 'The Museum without Walls' in *The Voices of Silence* (New York, 1974) Especially §§ I – III (pp. 1-69)
- Giovanni Morelli, 'Principles and Method' in Morelli, *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of their Works* (London, 1892) pp. 1-63.

CANON WARS: THE OBJECTS AND VALUES OF ART HISTORY

Key Reading

- Hubert Locher, 'The Idea of the Canon and Canon Formation in Art History' in M. Rampley, eds, *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe* (Leiden, 2012) pp. 29-40
- Linda Nochlin, 'Why have there been no great women artists?' in *ArtNews* May 30 2015. Available online at: <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/retrospective/why-have-there-been-no-great-women-artists-4201/>

Recommended Reading

- Victor Ginsburgh and Sheila Weyers, 'On the Formation of Canons: The Dynamics of Narratives in Art History,' *Empirical Studies of the Arts* 28.1 (2010) pp. 37-72.
- Gregor Langfield, 'The Canon in Art History: Concepts and Approaches,' *Journal of Art Historiography* 19 (2018) n. p.
- Griselda Pollock, 'About Canons and Culture Wars,' in Pollock, *Differencing the Canon* (London, 1999) pp. 2-38.

THE MEANINGS OF 'STYLE': FORMALISM AND THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF ART

Key Reading

- Thomas Crow, 'Modernism and Mass Culture in the Visual Arts' in Crow, *Modern Art in the Common Culture* (London, 1996) pp. 3-38.
- Clement Greenberg, 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch' in Greenberg, *Art and Culture* (New York, 1961) pp. 3-21

Recommended Reading

- Robert Bagley, 'Style' in *Max Loehr and the Study of Chinese Bronzes: Style and Classification in the History of Art* (Ithaca, 2008) pp. 121-29
- T J Clark, 'On the Social History of Art,' in *Image of the People: Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution* (London, 1974) pp. 9-20.
- Ernst Gombrich, 'Style' in Donald Preziosi, ed., *The Art of Art History* (Oxford, 2009) pp. 129-40
- Andrea Pinotti – 'Formalism and the History of Style' in Rampley et al, eds., *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe*, pp. 75-90
- Meyer Schapiro, 'Style' in Alfred Kroeber, ed., *Anthropology Today* (Chicago, 1953) pp. 287-311.
- Robert Witkin, 'Van Eyck through the Looking Glass,' in Jeremy Tanner, ed., *The Sociology of Art: A Reader* (London, 2003) pp. 221-32.
- Heinrich Wölfflin, 'Introduction' and 'The Linear and the Painterly' in *Principles of Art History*, trans. J. Blower (Los Angeles, 2015) pp. 83-155.

CONCEPTS OF ICONOLOGY: FROM VISUAL LEXICON TO SOCIAL MEMORY

Key Reading

- Emile Mâle, 'Introduction' to Mâle, *The Gothic Image: Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century* (New York, 1972) pp. 1-26.
- Erwin Panofsky, 'Iconography and Iconology: An Introduction to the Study of Renaissance Art,' in Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Harmondsworth, 1955) pp. 51-81.

Recommended Reading

- Svetlana Alpers, 'Interpretation without Representation, or The Viewing of Las Meñinas' in *Representations* 1 (1983) pp. 30-42.
- Georges Didi-Huberman, 'Artistic Survival: Panofsky vs. Warburg and the Exorcism of Impure Time,' *Common Knowledge* 9.2 (2003) pp. 273-85
- Clifford Geertz, 'Art as a Cultural System' in Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York, 1983) pp. 94-120.
- Creighton Gilbert, 'On Subject and Not-Subject in Italian Renaissance Pictures,' *Art Bulletin* 34.3 (1952) pp.
- Keith Moxey, 'Panofsky's Concept of Iconology and the Problem of Interpretation in the History of Art,' *New Literary History* 17.2 (1986) pp. 265-74.
- Matthew Rampley, 'Iconology of the Interval: Aby Warburg's Legacy,' *Word and Image* 17.4 (2001) pp. 303-324.

HORIZONTAL ART HISTORY AND THE POLITICS OF THE PERIPHERY

Key Reading

- Piotr Piotrowski, 'Towards a Horizontal Art History of the European Avant-Garde' in Sascha Bru et al, eds, *Europa Europa: The Avant-Garde, Modernism and the Fate of a Continent* (Berlin, 2009) pp. 49-58.

Recommended Reading

- Jan Białostocki, 'Some Values of Artistic Periphery,' in *Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie: Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie* 35 (1991) pp. 129-36
- Enrico Castelnuovo, Carlo Ginzburg, 'Symbolic Domination and Artistic Geography in Italian Art History,' in *Art in Translation* 1.1 (2015) pp. 5-48.
- Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, 'Peripheral Circulations, Transient Centralities: The International Geography of the Avant-Gardes in the Interwar Period (1918-1940)' *Visual Resources* 35 (2019) pp. 295-322.
- Thomas Dacosta Kaufmann, 'The Challenge of Central Europe to the Historiography of Art' in *Maske u. Kothurn* 48.1-4 (2002) pp. 19-28.
- Robert Nelson, 'The Map of Art History,' *Art Bulletin* 79.1 (1997) pp. 28-40
- Photeini Vlachou, 'Why Spatial? Time and the Periphery,' *Visual Resources* 32 (2016) pp. 9-24

QUEERING ART HISTORY

Key Reading

- Whitney Davis, ' "Homosexualism", Gay and Lesbian Studies, and Queer Theory in Art History,' in Mark Cheetham, Michael Ann Holly, Keith Moxey, eds, *The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspectives* (Cambridge, 1998) pp. 115-42

- Paul B. Franklin, 'Object Choice: Marcel Duchamp's Fountain and the Art of Queer Art History,' *Oxford Art Journal* 23.1 (2000) pp. 23-50.

Recommended Reading

- Whitney Davis, 'Founding the Closet: Sexuality and the Creation of Art History' in *Art Documentation: Journal of the Art Libraries Society of North America* 11.4 (Winter 1992) pp. 171-175
- Tom Folland, 'Robert Rauschenberg's Queer Modernism: The Early Combines and Decoration,' *Art Bulletin* 92.4 (2010) pp. 348-65.
- Nicholas Hudson, 'The Hottentot Venus: Sexuality and the Changing Aesthetics of Race 1650-1850,' *Mosaic* 41.1 (2008) pp. 19-41.
- Leo Steinberg, 'The Sexuality of Christ in the Renaissance and Modern Oblivion,' *October* 25 (1983) pp. 1-198 + 204-22.
- Peter Weller, 'A Reassessment in Historiography and Gender: Donatello's Bronze David in the Twenty-First Century,' *Artibus et Historiae* 33.65 (2012) pp.43-77.
- Karl Whittington, 'Queer,' *Studies in Iconography* 33 (2012) pp. 156-68.

ART HISTORY IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT: DECOLONIZING THE DISCIPLINE?

Key Reading

- Thomas da Costa Kaufmann, 'Historiography and the Project of Global Art History' and 'Reflections on World Art History' in da Costa Kaufmann et al, eds, *Circulations in the Global History of Art* (Farnham, 2015) pp. 1-22 and 23-46.
- James Elkins, 'Non-European Stories,' in Elkins, *Stories of Art* (London, 2002) pp. 89-115.

Recommended Reading

- Hans Belting, 'Contemporary Art as Global Art' in Hans Belting, Andrea Buddensieg and Peter Weibel, eds, *The Global Contemporary and the Rise of New Art Worlds* (Cambridge, MA, 2013) pp. 38-73.
- Zeynep Çelik, 'Le Corbusier, Orientalism, Colonialism,' *Assemblage* 17 (1992) pp. 58-77.
- Francis D. K. Ching and Mark Jarzombek, 'Globalization Today' in *A Global History of Architecture* (London, 2017) pp. 787-800.
- Annie Coombes, 'Ethnography, Popular Culture, and Institutional Power: Narratives of Benin Culture in the British Museum, 1897-1992,' *Studies in the History of Art* 47 (1996) pp. 142-57.
- Tomasz Grusiecki, 'Uprooting Origins: Polish-Lithuanian Art and the Challenge of Pluralism' in Beáta Hock and Anu Allas, eds, *Globalizing East European Art Histories* (London, 2018) pp. 25-38.
- Linda Nochlin, 'The Imaginary Orient,' in Nochlin, *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Art and Society* (London, 1989) pp. 33-59.
- Łukasz Stanek, 'Introduction: Worldmaking of Architecture' in Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa and the Middle East in the Cold War* (Princeton, 2020) pp. 1-34.