

## **JOSEPH ADANDÉ**

### **Carving as a Liminal Shape: The Bocio in "Gbe" Speaking Area**

Cultures who have practiced carving the world over give us the possibility to access their mental background. Carving as such can be analyzed as a style indicator, showing different strata of what can be ranged if not as an evolution at least as a change. This type of analysis frequent in former African art studies was possible only for museum based collections, which means a consistent corpus over centuries. Not all African cultures therefore were ready for this endeavor. At least, for "gbe" speaking people this was difficult.

Global observation of their carving, the bocio, leads to the conclusion that this idea in "gbe" cultures is linked to that of liminality, I mean the expression of what is just necessary to perceive human figure for instance and that they hold a position in between two worlds, located at fringes or frontiers. Bocio are really liminal expressions of human figures and their overwhelming presence in Fon culture would have been difficult were they to be more elaborate.

Most bocio are rather ugly and do not pretend to be pieces of art but tools for magical action as has been largely documented by Suzanne Preston Blier in his "Vodun" book.

My argument in this communication is to illustrate how bocio participate in the delimitation of the human horizon and world by their presence and positioning in specific area of the Fon habitat. Ugly, but useful, this is what a bocio is.

## **ALEXANDRA KARENTZOS**

### **Incorporations of the Other – Exotic Objects, Tropicalism, and Anthropophagy**

Hélio Oiticica's complex installation Tropicália from the year 1968, which gave the Tropicalism movement its name, combines exotic attributes such as simple wooden huts as a reminiscence of Brazilian favélas, palm trees, fine sand and parrots. I would like to discuss in my paper how Oiticica uses these objects ironically to call identities and colonialist power relations into question. At the same time the "white cube" of the museum, connected to the claim of aesthetic universality, is occupied and redefined by Oiticica's installation. Oiticica puts his art in the context of a Brazilian Avantgarde, which converts the term antropophagy. Conceptions of cannibalism were powerful instruments of colonialism, used to exemplify the barbarity and inhumane cruelty of other, so-called "primitive" cultures.

Brazilian artists appropriated this thematic, once used to legitimise colonial strategies of power, and gave the term "anthropophagy" what we might call "a metaphorical turn". Thus in his Manifesto Antropófago, published in 1928, the writer Oswald de Andrade called for European influences to be devoured as a way of transforming them into an autonomous Brazilian identity. Some sixty years later, the tropicalismo movement gave this kind of ironical "cannibalism" itself another ironical and anti-essentialist 'turn'. It is revealing to put this deontologising concept in relation to the current theory constructions in Cultural Studies and Constructivism.

## **CHARLOTTE KLONK**

### **Non-European Artefacts in Art Exhibitions of the late 1920s and 1930s**

Once again, the question of how to exhibit non-European artefacts has become the subject of heated discussion. However, the dispute, which caused a stir after the opening of the Musée Quai Branly in Paris and before the opening of the Humboldt Forum on Berlin's Schlossplatz, appears to be currently going nowhere. In this situation, it may be useful to reflect on the rich and varied reception of foreign objects at European exhibitions in the past. The various art spaces of the late 1920s and 1930s, which are the subject of this paper, constitute just a small, albeit decisive, part of the varied life led by them in the western world. In the light of their eventful history outside their countries of origin, the question as to whether or not non-European artefacts should be staged in an ethnographically appropriate or an aesthetically pleasing manner seems somewhat less pressing. Instead, it becomes clear that they represent a key to very European desires and dreams, which moreover are subject to dramatic changes over time.

Our view of the exhibition of non-European artefacts in the late 1920s and 1930s is dominated by one particular pre-World War II exhibition: *Cubism and Abstract Art*, staged by Alfred Barr in the Museum of Modern Art in New York in the year 1936. However, a look at the arrangement of non-European objects in the context of modern art at the Folkwang Museum in Essen at the beginning of the 1930s, or even the *Exposition Surréaliste d'Objets* in Paris in 1936 makes very clear that at this time many different perceptions of the significance of foreign objects existed side by side in the western world. This range of perceptions has so far not been sufficiently analysed. The beginning of the 1930s was the moment when it may have been at its broadest. Any differences that tend to be pointed out, if at all, are usually just those between the reception of artefacts in the art context and their reception in ethnological museums. It has been repeatedly stated that displays in the ethnological context were based on criteria rooted in function, cultural history and most of all evolutionary history, while, in the art space, apparently a purely formal-aesthetic approach dominated. In this paper I want to show that the latter was only one of several appropriation strategies employed in the complex art world of the late 1920s and 1930s.

## **HANS KÖRNER**

### **Speared heads. Portraits as Things in 20th Century Sculpture**

Sculptural heads need a solid basis. The traditional form is therefore the plastic portrait bust. Inspired probably from some sculptural studies of Auguste Rodin, since the early 20th c. many sculptural portraits give up this traditional way of stabilization, abandon the form of the bust and sometimes leave out even the neck of the represented person. Sometimes such heads are supported only from a metal rod. The German art historian Beenken regarded this presentation of sculptural heads as means to condense the „spiritual expression“ and to „bring the matter to life“.

An early example is the portrait of the (sleeping) poet Alfred Momper, modelled 1904 from memory by the Swiss artist Hermann Halle. When Momper received from Haller photographs of his portrait mounted on a metal rod he remarked: „In the photos there sticks a head on a rod, as if that of a beheaded Mongolian rebel on the Chinese border“. This remark, being an association, which is not authorized by the author

Haller, should it be ignored in the analysis of art historians? The portraits made by Bernhard Heiliger in the early post-war period are generally mounted on metall rods. Provoked by Heiliger's heads. Manfred Schneckenburger felt he was reminded of the exhibition of „objects from the ethnological museum“. This is an association as well. Should it be neglected?

The lecture will discuss the question, if such associations correspond nevertheless to experiences of the beholder, which are worth noting and will show ways to concrete this experience in works of art (Giacometti).

## **CHRISTIAN KRAVAGNA**

### **Begegnung mit einer Maske: Afrikanische Kunst tot und lebendig**

Seit etwa einem Vierteljahrhundert, jedenfalls seit der vielfältigen Kritik an der Ausstellung "Primitivism in 20th Century Art" (1984 im MOMA, NY), werden westliche Praktiken der Sammlung, Präsentation und Beschreibung nicht-westlicher Kunst aus anthropologischer, kunstwissenschaftlicher und künstlerischer Perspektive hinterfragt und als institutionalisierte Manifestation des eurozentrischen kolonialen Weltbilds attackiert. Politisch ist solche Kritik weiterhin notwendig, da sie bislang nur wenig zur Veränderung musealer Gewohnheiten beitragen konnte. Gleichwohl scheint die Kritik an der Fragmentierung, Isolierung und Entkontextualisierung nicht-westlicher Artefakte bzw. ihrer formalistischen Rezeption durch die KünstlerInnen der westlichen Moderne mittlerweile fast gewohnheitsmäßig ausgeübt zu werden. Ein Problem der Dekonstruktion dominanter Praktiken ist aber, dass sie häufig an diese gebunden bleibt und damit letztlich einem "geläuterten" Eurozentrismus Vorschub leistet.

Mit diesem Vortrag soll ein Blick auf unterbelichtete Zonen der Rezeption afrikanischer Kunst in der Moderne geworfen werden. Gehen wir meist davon aus, dass afrikanische Kunst in westlichen Museen für weiße BetrachterInnen ausgestellt wurde, so fragt dieser Vortrag nach den Begegnungen Schwarzer Kunst- und KulturproduzentInnen der Moderne mit musealisierter afrikanischer Kunst. Anhand einiger Beispiele aus der afro-amerikanischen, afrikanischen und "afro-europäischen" Kunst der 1920er bis 1960er Jahre soll diskutiert werden, wie und in welcher Form solche Begegnungen die museal mortifizierte Kunst Afrikas zu neuem Leben erwecken konnten, wenn sie als Katalysatoren der künstlerischen Entwicklungen und politischen Agenden dieser Akteure fungierten.

## **KERSTIN MEINCKE**

### **La madame patron ici. Tu comprends? – Germaine Krull in Africa. Propaganda and Photographic Articulation**

In September 1942, the photographer Germaine Krull arrived in Brazzaville, aspiring to assert the military potential of French Equatorial Africa through the production of visual propaganda for the Service de l'Information de la France Combattante en Afrique Française Libre. Taking this ideological agenda as a departure point, with attention to the left-wing photographer's role within a colonial discourse, Krull's

propagandistic production will be discussed through an analysis of exemplary photographs and textual documents.

Given the scarcity of factual war accounts in exploited colonies, the propagandistic efficacy of Germaine Krull's work seems to operate instead from the establishment of a mythological colonial reality removed from actual conditions. Consequently, this presentation focuses on the deconstruction and differentiation of such a myth-system in relation to the political and propagandistic use of images. In particular, three main strategies of Germaine Krull's Afri-can photographs will be outlined: the depiction of social participation, the staging of body potentials, and the systematic registration of a colonial infrastructure.

## **SYLVESTER OKWUNODU OGBECHIE**

### **Transcultural Interpretation and the Production of Alterity: Photography, Materiality and Mediation in the Making of African Art**

This paper evaluates the role of photographs as fetish objects in the transformation of African cultural objects (specifically sculptures) into "artworks" and the systems of economic and social values supported by this process. The fetishism of commodities is basic to the commodity form in which social relations are hidden or disguised, and this is in turn inseparable from the capitalist mode of production. Connoisseurship entails the fetishism of artworks, which in the specific instance of African sculptures involves the transformation of indigenous cultural objects of numinous affect into fungible artwork commodities through the mediation of photography. There is a recognizable trajectory involved in this transformation. In the Western discourse of art, the African object/sculpture's history literally begins at the point of accession, when it moves from its site of indigenous production to become part of a collector's agglomeration of "African art". The object/sculpture is individualized and formalized in the accession process and henceforth its accession identity becomes its primary identity, replacing and occluding its indigenous identity as a cultural object with a specific social life. From here, the object, now codified as a "documented" artwork in a Western art collection, accumulates a history of reception in which its value increases as a consequence of an established provenance built from the point of accession. The formalization that begins with the accessioning process uses staged studio photography to turn the sculptural object into an alluring fetish image. I propose that it is this alluring image of the photographed object, rather than the object itself, that subsequently becomes a subject of discourse, having far greater impact on determining the economic value of the artwork than any actual sculpture.

The role of photography in the conversion of African cultural objects (sculpture, in this instance) into artworks calls into question the issue of how mediation produces materiality. The professional image of the African object/sculpture produced by studio photography in essence creates the non-Western object as an object of "art". The photographic image of the African cultural object also frames these kinds of artworks in distinctive ways. It redefines its visual appearance and affects general perception of the object since the alluring image is often deemed more authentic on no basis other than that of its visual appearance. The relationship between the sculpture-as-photographic-image, and the actual sculpture held in private or museum collections is thus a site of contention since Western collection practices and museum representation frame African cultural objects as artworks in ways that are unrecognizable to their actual producers. For African cultural objects transformed into

artworks through the above process, their history of indigenous economic value is occluded by transcultural interpretation. The narrative of the object that emerges from this process is also divorced from its history of indigenous use. Finally, its history of Western reception supplants any indigenous meaning attached to the object, which serves to export the equity value of the object from its African producers to its Western collectors. We are interested in the assumptions underlying this process of transformation, and in the materiality of the transformed cultural object/artwork as a document of alterity.

**IKEM S. OKOYE**

**Quadrantanopsia: Fetishism from the Space of Bowdich's *Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee* to the Time of Erasmus Osei Owusu's Film *Obide : Time Will Tell*.**

This paper explores the resilience of the idea of the fetishism, especially as an allegation leveled at near and far others via their objects or things. Of course, for almost a century or more, the idea has been transmuted from the home of its initial invention in commentary about 'the Primitive.' We may plot this trajectory through Tylor's in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and thence to Fetishism's imbrications in modern and late modern Western forms of negative-culture-allegation from Marx's commodity fetishism to Freud's psychoanalytical thought in regard to sexuality. Although fetishism's longevity has since been explored by scholars, little has been made of its continued resonance in the worlds (Africa for instance) through which it achieved its primary designation. Nevertheless, fetishism as a negative idea is alive and well where one might not expect it -in African representation of Africa since the late twentieth century, clearly deriving its lineage from earlier European constructions. This is of course a paradox of sorts –that which was used derogatively to define a culture as different from Europe's supposed rationality, then being taken up and legitimated within those same worlds in their laying claim to modernities invented elsewhere, and in ways that are unexpected, uncanny and (for some)even troubling.

What do the objects and meanings of the new fetishism (as allegation) share with the objects and meanings of its earlier utterances and intentions since, for instance in relation to Asante specifically, Bosman's "fetish gold" and its iterations in the later scholar of Asante T.E. Bowdich? I suggest that the objects of both European and African fetishism-allegations are comparable, and that the African forms put a new twist on its earlier European meaning and direction. However, I also argue that where earlier forms of fetish-allegation focused on things in their space (i.e. on how the irrationalism of the object is as much to do with its objecthood as it is with the space and spatial relations of its insertion) the new fetishism-allegation, exploiting a recently proliferating medium (the moving image in the format of video and DVD), extends beyond the spatial into the dimension of time. To take one instance, Ghanaian film maker Owusu's Cinderella-like story, though lacking a glass shoe, comes with the subtitle "Time will tell." This implies, I will argue, that the full validation of situation and its substances as fetishistic depends on its non-productive unfolding in an otherwise regularized notion of time as sequence.

The paper is therefore also interested in how to understand the appropriation of a negativity into the same culture against whom it had been written in the first instance. I suggest that it takes a form of occultation (of not seeing) for this idea to gain its

power and traction. The medical term Quadrantanopsia is an apt image or metaphor for this particular outcome. Although the choice of this term (a partial loss of perception in the visual field) may appear to pathologize modern African society, I would argue that like all norms, and all pathologies, there is also always nevertheless something liberating within them. It is also important that quadrantanopsia is not a failure to perceive, for all views of the fetish are cognizing a truth. Rather, it is a difficulty, for a partial view, with fully grasping the nature of the (new) objects before us.

**JOHN PICTON**

### **Modernity and Modernism in African art: When was the Modern World?**

The idea of "the modern world" has been fetishised by some, turned into a thing obsessively considered, with more-or-less precise shapes and contours; and on one side if we have other things that were not modern, while on the other we have the phenomenon of the postmodern. Yet for historians of Europe, the 16<sup>th</sup> century is 'Early Modern', a designation that presumably relates to the European experience of direct contact with very far away places; but that was a long time before the Modernism in some histories of which African sculpture is entailed while Africa itself is excluded. Clearly, there are problems here: the exclusion of Africa is a problem contingent upon the triple legacy of race, slavery and colonialism, about which I probably need to say little more as there is a well-published literature (in which I have played a very small part); yet that story about Africa and European Modernism is largely mythic and in certain respects factually untrue; and there is a problem contingent upon our making more of the words we use than those words deserve. After all, the word 'modern' derives from the Latin for 'just now'; but 'just now' is where I am right now, and the conditions of that 'now' are easily described. The modern world is where we are; it is the only place we can be. Of course, I know perfectly well that that modern world has been shaped by a series of events and ideas, some related to each other some not, in politics, religion, the arts, scientific discoveries and so forth. But as a sentence that last sentence could as well apply to the conditions that obtained in 13<sup>th</sup>-century Paris, in the days when St Thomas Aquinas was a member of its faculty; or to Benin City *circa* 1500; or to the Black potters of the central Sahara by 7000BC; or to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century unravellers of European silk textiles in and around Kumasi. Again, I know well enough that there are many features of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century developments in the arts in Europe, to which we give the name Modernism, that have shaped developments in the cities and universities of sub-Saharan Africa, not least because those developments contributed to the usefulness of the arts in contesting colonial authority; and those developments and possibilities have encouraged artists to look again at the traditions of their elders, at the continuities with the past as well as the novelties of the present that define in a million different ways the local modernities that characterize this or that place. In one place the key might be provided by royal and chiefly ceremonial, in another by masquerade, in yet another by public sculpture and painting, in yet another by fashion, dress and textile design, in another by photography, graphic design and signage; and perhaps as often as not by all of these! But while local Modernisms and modernities might be, in their particular configurations, new assemblages, they will not comprise entirely new sets of things, they will not be a complete break with the past, simply the 'just now' version of a history of the human entanglement with things

made that defines our humanity from the very moment our first ancestors (in Africa) learned to learn from the possibilities of taking flakes from a stone core. If it were not so, that early Palaeolithic would still be our modern world! Meanwhile the *bricolage* (to borrow a word from Levi-Strauss) that animates many aspects of ritual systems, in Africa and across the world, has not gone away.

## THOMAS REINHARDT

### Fixing Shadows: Photography Beyond the Indexical

Pioneers of photography were very well aware of the amazing fact that the photographic image seemed to "come to light" without active assistance of man. Other than the drawn or painted images created by artists, photographs appeared to owe their formation solely the interplay of light, a pinhole aperture, and a light sensitive substance on a carrier plate. Nature itself was assumed to direct the scene. Only consequently, Fox Talbot was referring to the technology he had developed in the 1830s as 'Pencil of Nature'. Unaffected by human interventions, photographs were held to be true, authentic, unmediated, reliable copies of the real world.

Today, we usually profess a certain skepticism regarding the idea of photography as *true* representation of the world. However, there still seems to be a deeply inscribed belief in the *indexicality* of the photographic image. The real world might not *exactly* look like its reproduction on photo paper – yet, when we see the photo of a lion, we usually do not doubt that at one point in time camera and animal shared the same space. Photography, no matter how much photoshopped, is still considered as (as Barthes once had it) an "authentication of presence". The lion might (in "reality") have been caged and tame but it still was a lion, not a cow or a squirrel or a tree.

This conception of the photographic act as characterized by the co-presence of object and camera emphasizes the agency of the photographer. The photographic object, by contrast, is thought of as passive, inert, and objectified. It provides the raw material for the imaging process but has no influence whatsoever on its outcome.

This idea does not hold true for local conceptions of the only existing photograph of Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba, founder of the Mouride brotherhood in Senegal. Taken sometime between 1914 and 1917 (details of the shooting situation have been lost, as has the negative) the photograph is believed to owe its existence a strange mixture of divine intervention and the depicted Saint's wish to communicate a promise of salvation to his followers. The power relations of the photographic act, in other words, are believed to have been inversed. *Agency* is thought of as belonging exclusively to the holy man depicted. And instead of just being an (iconic) *index* of its motif, the photo is held to be equipped with beneficial power, or *baraka*.

Not surprisingly, the picture has become a veritable icon for the Cheikh's followers. "Replicas" are almost ubiquitous in parts of Senegal. The underlying image theory, however, differs in one crucial point from Western ideas about the nature of copies: The "duplicates" are clearly distinguishable from the original. They more or less vaguely resemble it and are easily identifiable as realizations of the original image, but they hardly ever look like it. And they don't usually try to. This is partly due to the fact that they are transferred to other media. A woodcarving, or a sand painting, or a plaster statue, or a tapestry simply *cannot* look exactly like a b/w-photo. Still all these

medializations are spoken of as "copies", equipped with the same blessing power as the original photograph. Some of them are even believed to be "more genuine than the original".

My talk will discuss some implications of the underlying image theory with reference to questions of agency and the implicit power relations of imaging processes.

## **ANGELA STERCKEN**

### **[Arte]FACT, Object, Image. Jean-Michel Basquiat's Archives**

With the term facts Jean-Michel Basquiat signified material – facts as 'circumstances' and 'reality' as well as 'things' or 'objects' – of different character and origin, quoted, copied or transferred by the artist. This repertory of images, forms and things is the resource for Basquiat's systematically managed archive-like collection of objects ('Gegenständen') and media in his works. At the same moment it is the starting point of the artist's fundamental questions of the relation of image and reality, of signifier and signified and pictorial reference, which becomes evident in his works. Based on that critically absorbing approach Basquiat's work a extension becomes apparent .

## **BOUBACAR TRAORÉ**

### **Some Reflection about African Sculpture in Buenos Aires. Contribution to a Critic of the Discourse about Argentinean Culture**

In my paper I approach the Argentinean artistic field in the present time. In recent years, various expressions have appeared in the Argentinean socio cultural field. Afro culture appeared among them, and its emergence weakens the discourse that defends the supremacy of white, European civilization to a certain extent. This discourse contributed to the construction and the signification of modern Argentina and to the occultation of the mechanisms which act within the core of the civil society; it also allowed the artistic currents that emerged during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century identify with it.

Ever since the sixties, this situation has been through several transformations. Nowadays, diverse sensibilities interpolate the multiples expressions of the National State. Since the beginning of democracy, Argentina has been going through a process o cultural mutation, which more interesting elements are:

-on the one hand, the "Latin – American hinterland" as the support of any project that pretended to include the amalgamation of diverse social and cultural groups;

- on the other hand, the presence of a variety of sensibilities invading the artistic field. These spaces find themselves in a process of constant regeneration and deteriorate the cultural discourse of the modernity.

This paper wants to examine the role of African sculpture in this process and also it wants to demonstrate the urgency of an intellectual, scientific and cultural discussion about national project. This leads me to leave apart some subjects such as "civilization and barbarism" and "visibility and non visibility" of Afro culture, and dedicate my work to the matter of cultural meanings and the exigencies of



contemporary societies, calling into question the "objectivity" of the idea of nation and its background: it is the main promoter of cultural speech related to the couple "visibility / non visibility" of Afro culture.

## **EVA-MARIA TROELENBERG**

### **In the Contact Zone: The Rise of Modernity and Western Strategies of Defining "Islamic Art"**

The "Contact Zone" is a key term in postcolonial theory. It was coined by Mary Louise Pratt to describe processes of transcultural reception in linguistics and literature. James Clifford was the first to connect the concept of the "Contact Zone" to the institution of the museum. Following on this path, I want to adopt the key term and link it even closer to the object. Whenever objects of non-European origin are stored and put on display in Western collections or museums, are reproduced in Western media or even just regarded, described, analyzed or categorized from a Western perspective, those objects are situated in a contact zone. Such contact zones create specific conditions of reception which are determined both by the aura, provenance and biography of the objects themselves and by the recipient's predispositions or intentions. When connected to discourses about artefacts, the "Contact Zone" is thus not only to be understood in institutional or historical terms – it is a shifting and procedural concept, tied to different definitions of "art".

As a case study for this model in modernity, my paper will focus on a rather short time span around the fin de siècle which was crucial to 20th century-notions of "Islamic Art" in Europe, particularly in German-speaking museology and scholarship: Between the 1890s and the First World War, a number of exhibitions and publications started to explore artefacts of Islamic countries under completely new premises, leaving behind the bazaar atmosphere of the age of the World's Fairs, where objects had mainly been regarded picturesque props or commodities in erotic, romantic and historicising environments.

The new approach was to establish a canon of works which could and should be regarded as aesthetic entities on their own right, on an equal footing with the incunables of Western art. This process of properly defining a corpus of "Islamic art" in merely formalistic terms was profoundly affected by the dawn of phenomenological thinking around 1910, aiming at objectification and decontextualisation – to the point where even the very notion of "alterity" was almost neglected. However, this was an important contemporary prerequisite to introduce objects such as jars, ivory boxes or candlesticks into the discourse on "high art" which traditionally used to follow quite different criteria. At the same time, particular key terms were adopted from established discourses on Western art – most significantly the notion of the "masterpiece", eponymous for the "Exhibition of Masterpieces of muhammadan Art" held in Munich in 1910. This label was an important means to distinguish "Islamic art" from ethnographica, thus claiming a particular elitist position for this branch of artefacts. The definition of "art" in this context was a highly janiform phenomenon: based on a very modern Zeitgeist, and yet with a conservative agenda. It thus comes as no surprise that avantgardist artists' reactions to such artefacts were rather ambivalent, particularly when compared to the artistic "primitivism" which marks their approach to other groups of objects of non-European provenance.

Examining the shaping of "Islamic art" in the early 20th century thus demonstrates how much the notion of alterity can be affected by the conditions and criteria of a particular contact zone – and how the passage through such a contact zone becomes part of an object's multilayered biography.

**LILIAN LAN-YING TSENG**

**Monumentality and Transnationality: The Cult of the *Ding* Bronze Vessels in Modern China**

This paper investigates the trend of casting gigantic bronze vessels—in particular, the type called *ding*—and displaying them as public sculpture in modern China. It focus on three prominent cases: the *Simiwu* vessel commissioned in the second millennium BCE, the *Shiji* vessel created in 1995, and the *Shenghe* vessel made in 1997. The paper first analyzes how a *ding* vessel served as a symbol of legitimacy in the convention of imperial China. It then examines how a *ding* vessel became a national and transnational icon in Republican and Communist China. It further explores how the format of public sculpture—accessible, visible, and monumental—reshaped the political discourse of the *ding* vessels.

**MELANIE ULZ**

**Why Have There Been No Great Forgeries? Collectors, Artefacts, and the Question of Originality**

By the example of the German politician and collector Reinhard Klimmt, whose collections of African and non-European sculptures and artefacts were exhibited in Petersburg and Osnabrück last year, this paper explores the identity-giving function that collecting 'original' African sculptures still appears to have for European collectors. Surrounding the Osnabrück exposition were rumours circulating in the media about a supposedly huge number of forgeries in the collection. This accusation was – of course – vehemently denied by both Klimmt and the Osnabrück museum.

My paper does not so much aim at clarifying whether part of the displayed sculptures and artefacts were forged or not, but rather focuses on the constitutiveness of originality or authenticity in this context. Apart from its interrelatedness with market interests, which most certainly do exist, the concept of originality seems to be particularly important in the process of decontextualising African artefacts from their historico-cultural contexts and overwriting them with Western meanings and projections of 'Africanness'.

**BARBARA VINKEN**

**Der Rosenkranz. Glanz und Elend des Katholizismus**

An wenig anderen Dingen läßt sich die Stigmatisierung des Katholischen als eines fetischistischen Glaubens so schön zeigen wie am Rosenkranz. Seit Reformation und Aufklärung ist es das dem Katholischen unterstellte Dingverständnis, daß die

Kirche zum Hort des Perversen, des Wilden, des Unaufgeklärten mitten in Europa werden läßt.

## **KITTY ZIJLMANS**

### **The Unwanted Land Revisited. Towards a Transcultural Art history: The Input from Contemporary Art**

The interconnectedness of people and cultures all over the globe is not just a contemporary issue, in fact it goes back to times when homo sapiens started to roam the earth. Encounter and exchange are basic to the human condition, although not always with mutual approval. When around 1500 AD the West-European seagoing nations explored and subsequently colonized the world, modern globalization set in, accelerated in contemporary times through mass communication media and transportation. With people travelling (or being transported), objects and ideas travel along. Whatever the reasons for migration, it is a radical event. The things one is familiar with no longer apply. Does your new country want you? And do you want it? In our post-postcolonial era, the concern with transcultural and transnational exchanges and migratory flows is gaining ground. Within this framework, hybrid identity and transculturalism is the rule rather than the exception. These are the main issues of the exhibition and artistic research project *The Unwanted Land*, which takes place in museum *Beelden aan Zee* in Scheveningen, the Netherlands, from October 2010 – February 2011. Unlike the conventional form of group exhibition over recent decades, in which the curator usually has a decisive authorial role and the works are selected on the basis of a particular theme, geographical location or generation of artists, the 'project exhibition' (Simon Sheikh) views the exhibition itself as the medium for broaching a particular issue and takes on an essay-like form. This means that, like an essay, the exhibition attempts to present a convincing view of contemporary phenomena or developments. In *The Unwanted Land* it is the experience of migration and the way objects and their stories negotiate the handling of place and situations, positions of power and who are privileged. In a large, joint installation-environment six artists reflect through (interactive) artworks, video, objects, texts and sound on the migratory exchange of people, objects and ideas. In this paper I will discuss and frame the exhibition and artistic research project *The Unwanted Land* from the perspective how such a project can help to develop a transcultural history of art.