

Art: Don't Fence Me In!

The Correspondence Principle in European Art

Antje von Graevenitz

The public commotion surrounding an art monument by the Syrian-German artist Manaf Halbouni in front of the Dresden Frauenkirche in 2016–2017 can be called typical for our time: three big buses, which in an absurd way were placed vertically next to each other on the square, as if they were a barrier in a small street in a situation like war-torn Aleppo, to protect people from snipers (fig. 1). But just as significant is the fact that, in Dresden, this bus barrier stands alone in a wide space. Pedestrians are free to walk to the left and right of it. Generally speaking, it represents the freedom we have in Europe. Does this make sense at all in Dresden? Certainly it does. Firstly, because there are people, calling themselves Pegida (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West), who discriminate against foreigners, especially those coming as refugees from the East. Those who seek help and hospitality are “welcomed” by Pegida with hate. But there are enough people in Dresden who have the mentality of hosts. In fact there are not many immigrants in Dresden at all. The hosts may understand this art action as a sign for “Freedom, Peace and Humanity,” and this is its meaning. Secondly, like Aleppo, Dresden has a violent past of bombing. Born in Syria in 1985, the artist refers not only to motifs and stories of his homeland, but also of his guest land, where people arrived on buses to find shelter, but found new enemies, too. The work integrates two sides of a coin. On the one hand it works as a mirror for three sorts of viewers: immigrants, their hosts, and the members of Pegida. In this way it highlights the actual situation in Europe. On the other hand it also illustrates the long story of the dialogue between art inside and outside Europe, which is still relevant today. Typical for this Western tradition, Halbouni worked with the strategy of using everyday objects in art, introduced in 1913 by Marcel Duchamp, known as readymades. Halbouni brings a foreign image into a European city by using a classical European artistic strategy. This double-sided construct should be

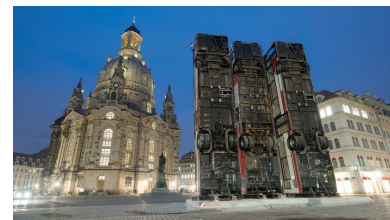


Fig. 1. Manaf Halbouni,
Monument, Dresden, 2017.
Credits: dpa.

analyzed. Why is this new image—in this focus, the foreign image—still embedded in the Western art tradition, which itself carries the signs of the past?

What is meant here is not Eurocentrism as *Leitkultur*, the leading traditional culture, but Europe as a geographical basis for artistic exchange. There is another long tradition in European art that Halbouni could have based his work on, that of European artists being by other cultures, eagerly transforming their styles, motifs, or content into their own work. Think, for example, of the appropriation of painted Chinese porcelain of the sixteenth century in Delft tiles of Dutch farmers,¹ or recall the charming Turkish dress in which Jean-Étienne Liotard painted his wife in 1756–1758. This integration of a foreign culture into the European realm and its intellectual awareness is still relevant today, in the sense of an ongoing, adventurous discovery as well as a critical movement. The forerunner in this critical sense, Edward M. Said, opened the door to a postcolonial perception on the European view on cultural representations outside Europe with his famous book, *Orientalism* (1978), which is still worthy of discussion and with which curators and authors later on helped to clarify and transform his points of view in relation to art.²

Considering this history one might remember the Biennale in Venice. When curator Harald Szeemann organized the international show in the Arsenale in 1999, he not only called it programmatically *dAPERTutto* (everywhere) and invited artists from all over the world, but he also confronted viewers with themselves by using mirrors instead of walls.³ Therein they saw themselves in the Corderie as virtual walkers in the role of refugees, next to a huge lorry standing between the mirrors which virtually carried the last belongings of absent immigrants in sacks and bags piled very high, both an *ambiente* of Kimsooja.⁴ In 1999 it worked as a prophecy for the future as we know now; we, the visitors of the show, took part in it as virtual hosts of the immigrants. Since Szeemann's *dAPERTutto*, eighteen years have passed, with many exhibitions in the Western art scene of so-called global art. Important curators and authors have been dealing with this subject, as globalization is a political and social phenomena with an unmerciful effect on people who may decide to migrate to Western countries with a rich and settled civilization. Another exhibition of 2003, *Migration* at the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein in Vaduz, made clear that the postwar generation of the 1960s and '70s in Europe had already initiated this subject into the field of art, with artists such as the late Joseph Beuys, Robert Filliou, and Mario Merz. Younger artists would build on this ground. For the earlier generation of artists the subject of "migration" meant mostly a general perspective, in the sense of nomadism or departure—perhaps a painful one—but also in the sense of hope and a growing energy and creativity with regard to our journey into an unknown future. Migration or transit migration can have a decisive effect on a growing identity through the loss of a former identity. These subjects were discussed in the catalogue of that exhibition.⁵

Today we have many terms for such things: cross-border, transgressive, trans-national, global imaginative, expansive. Other keywords are integrative, multicultural, or a cross-cultural dialogue, a fusion or an inclusion. All of these terms fit in the frame of "thinking wild," a reference to Claude Lévi-Strauss's important book, *The Savage Mind* (1962).

According to him, "wild" is whenever the human mind accepts an untamed thinking, applied within structures which might come from very different cultural sources, whenever this seems useful.⁶ One can easily make an analogy with the artistic mindset. Looking for new constellations, new interrelations, artists mostly do not care for the rules of beauty taught by academies. But, parallel to this consideration, they are also at home in the classical tradition in their consciousness, which they bring to the fore in their art, too, whenever they want to address the mentality of foreign culture. Describing this process in considerable depth and in an academic way, it was mainly Mieke Bal who argued in her books *Double Exposures* (1996)⁷ and *Travelling Concepts* (2002)⁸ about contemporary art dealing with what she calls "migratory aesthetics." By touching on the narrative content, she mainly analyzed the bipolarized cultural concepts of outside/inside in European and non-European art, using in 2002, for instance, a strict list of art-theoretical parameters, such as concept, image, mise-en-scène, framing, performance and performativity, tradition, intention, and critical intimacy. Deliberately not mentioning the phenomenological parameters of Edmund Husserl and the iconological ones of Erwin Panofsky, she offered keywords for the dialectical unit of an artwork. In her analysis there is always room for doubt or friction, dilemma, and "double exposure."

Nowadays it is necessary to analyze the multi-perspective art with new "instruments."⁹ This dialectical approach to migratory aesthetics is exactly my point of view here, but with quite another strategy to offer. With this perspective my essay introduces another "instrument," on the one hand the (European, more or less classical) tradition and on the other its intertwining with a new (ex-European) image. This instrument is found in another discipline, natural science, a fact which might seem odd at first sight in the eyes of art historians, but which seems nevertheless a possible approach for the subject discussed here.

In 1920 the Danish physicist Niels Bohr developed a theory that you can never make a principle statement about the world without the subjective viewer always being part of it.¹⁰ He had already concluded this in 1913, from his nuclear theory in quantum mechanics, which takes into account that you have only traditional, classical calculations to work with, when you in fact are doing research about something completely new; in his case, much larger orbits of atoms and greater energies. He had to agree with this classical calculation; there was nothing else to use in his new discovery.¹¹ He actually wanted to reject Ernest Rutherford's existing atomic model, and was therefore entirely frustrated by the fact that he had to make use of classical calculations from the past. Against his original wish he had to take into consideration that, for something to be newly discovered and proposed, you must always work with calculations which

normally fit older research. It was an astonishing discovery for him, because it included a complication with an important philosophical dilemma. The question arose whether it could be acceptable that you want to give form to emerging knowledge and that you do not have a completely adequate tool with which to construct it—only coded knowledge from the past, stored information, and already given measurements, forms, motifs, or strategies. It does not at all mean that the impact of the past is inconvenient and useless, but that it is unavoidable.¹² If we always accept this hybrid and absurd circumstance, can the new statement you want to present be called true and authentic? Bohr had this doubts about the truth of his nuclear model, which was a sensation in physics in the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1920 he introduced the theory of the correspondence principle for his discovery, which meant, in short, that subjectivity is involved in factual knowledge. You cannot say something about the world in general without taking into account the hermeneutical viewpoint. Objectivity is an illusion. Subjectivity, or human creativity, means ambivalence and possible different viewpoints after a while. Later on, Albert Einstein's theory of relativity and Werner Heisenberg's uncertainty theory confirmed Bohr's statement. Bohr's correspondence principle was accepted in science. Certainly this generally applies to other disciplines, as well as to art history. The "new" cannot be said without "something" already known. For art, the correspondence principle is easily transferred to many artistic movements.

Parallel to Bohr's discovery and definition of the correspondence principle, from about 1905 onwards European artists started to integrate African art into their work, accepting the objects of so-called primitivism as subjects of their art, such as masks and ritual figures of dark wood, sometimes adorned with needles, feathers, or hemp. The term primitivism, of course, shows the arrogance of the colonial period that was very much part of the Western tradition.¹³ Artists continued to use the term, although they discovered new subjects for art in the colonies. Mimesis, the illusion of realism in the tradition of art since classical Greece, however, could not be entirely ignored. Picasso, for instance, kept the Western category of nude painting for his African nudes in his painting *Les Femmes d'Alger* (1906/07), which was considered scandalous. The modern artists also maintained another European tradition, a principle which, according to the doctrine of the avant-garde, was formulated in the nineteenth century in France, one that demanded in advance a revolutionary approach of art for the future and always against the past. So the discovery of primitivism in Western Art functioned totally for the conservation of the classical avant-garde rules. Primitivism was quite revolutionary indeed, opposing the Beaux-Arts tradition with its rules of a correct anatomy of figures and the likeness of faces. It meant both keeping Western art theory and a bold act against Western art, and at the same time a banalization of African art traditions as well.

Two movements can be observed: the first are artists from Europe who are looking for confrontation with another

culture, whereas the second are artists from outside Western culture who bring parts of their culture to us. But, because we differ in the backgrounds of art, religion, rituals, mentality, and so on, the interpretation of it may completely differ in new circumstances.

Two migration movements

A typical example of the movement of artists from Europe and back again is Lothar Baumgarten, who visited a group of native people in the Amazon in the 1970s. After a while the community accepted and even adopted him as a member. He returned home to Düsseldorf with many photographs which did not seem to be typical of a tourist. The pictures were not at all staged ("Smile into the camera, please!") or taken with an anthropological point of view ("Look, how the people make their food or sell their products differently from us but in an attractive way!"), but taken spontaneously, familiarly, and with his love for poetic details. In contrast, and most astonishing indeed, were his photos of Western garden equipment in Düsseldorf, such as a water hose between dead branches that, with its yellow zigzag line on its "back," looks like a dangerous snake. All of a sudden one realizes that our normal garden objects, which one can buy, refer to the faraway jungle. Error and disillusion—the discovery of a narrative, humorous, and poetical photograph based on reality—and, of course, the bittersweet laughter about them brings the Amazon nearer to us, the colonizers, in Western society. The Amazon fairytale is ours. The reality of fiction as an existing otherness in our gardens and as a symptom for our historical memories—that is the effective subversion constructed by Baumgarten. Only the strategy he used is typical for Western culture: taking photos, which might seem to be staged, and showing them in the context of artworks. In this sense he worked with the correspondence principle.

An example of the second movement, from outside into Europe, is the work of Rirkrit Tiravanija. The complexity of his work needs a longer argumentation. Although he was born of Thai parents in Argentina and lives in New York, Berlin, and Chiang Mai, he decided to concentrate mainly on the culture of Thailand. Since the mid-'90s he has become known by making installations in alternative art spaces and museums. In 2015, on the square in front of the hall where Art Basel is held, he created a bar. At other times he has made a kitchen or even a big restaurant with typically Asian objects, drinks, or meals. He asks the European visitor to take part in these actions by helping in the kitchen or just acting as consumers, drinking or eating together in his often basic but cozy-looking art installations. It is a lovely, acceptable, and simple idea. Some classical Western elements are involved in his work. The artist—known by name—takes over the artistic strategy of the participation of the anonymous viewer to create art, something which was typical for the Fluxus movement and happenings around 1960–1965. So Tiravanija adapted these strategies in order to create a kind of authentic situation. He invited the

Western viewer to experience attitudes and manners of his homeland, which belong to the culture but are never called art there. In his art he acted as a host to Western viewers, who performed their role, virtually and in reality at the same time. The viewer acted as his real guest, and also behaved fictitiously in a performed role within art. However, there is more.

A detailed look at his installation for De Appel in Amsterdam in 1996 seems necessary in the light of the correspondence principle. Its most striking aspects were some antithetical elements. Following the precise description and conclusion by the former director, Saskia Bos, one can attempt an interpretation. Tiravanija's installation is very complex, because besides his little kitchen he used references to European art.¹⁴ At the beginning, on the first floor of De Appel, by having a drink at the Esther Schipper bar, visitors could see the film *Angst essen Seele auf* from 1974, made by the late German film director Rainer Werner Fassbinder (fig. 3). While this film was presented on a monitor, Tiravanija let a radio play some Turkish and Caribbean music. In the next room the visitor would find wooden crates for an imagined transportation of artworks, with the used woks on top of them (fig. 2).

On the second floor the visitor entered an empty room where the walls were completely painted orange. In a following room, much bigger than the other ones, Tiravanija presented his little kitchen for meals, which he gave to visitors to eat. Here he reconstructed the gallery space of Gavin Brown's Enterprise in New York, where he exhibited in 1992 (another version of the exhibition was reconstructed at David Zwirner Gallery in 2007, see fig. 3).

With this sort of crate for his kitchen inside in the same exhibition (fig. 4), he also followed Marcel Broodthaers in principle, who in 1968 exposed his *salle blanche* (white room) as a simple wooden room in his studio in Brussels, which he then named *Musée d'Art Moderne, Département des Aigles*, subtitled *Section du XIX Siècle*. Broodthaers decorated the walls inside the crate-like space of the *salle blanche* (1975) with isolated words in the context of art or poetry, for instance, *blanc*, *noir*, *prix*, *oeil*, *collectionneur*, *galerie*, *musée*, and *chassis* (fig. 5). Tiravanija replaced this "decoration," as Broodthaers called it at that time, with the everyday act of cooking. At the entrance of the crate the visitor could watch a film by Broodthaers, *Speakers' Corner* (1972), in which the artist writes a single word on a chalkboard: "silence." He holds it in the air while standing at the *Speakers' Corner* in Hyde Park, London.¹⁵ But the opposite of the meaning of Broodthaers's written word happened during Tiravanija's installation in Amsterdam in 1996, because behind the monitor at the entrance and in the background of the kitchen inside, three musicians now and then played lively music with drums and a guitar. It happened to be quite noisy.

There were many meanings involved: migration, togetherness as an answer to xenophobia, art as life and life



Fig. 2. Rirkrit Tiravanija, *Pad Thai*, 1991-96, De Appel, Amsterdam. Photograph: Jodokus Driessen.



Fig. 3. Rirkrit Tiravanija, *Untitled (Free)*, 2007, David Zwirner Gallery, New York.



Fig. 4. Wooden box for the kitchen of Rirkrit Tiravanija, installation view, De Appel, Amsterdam, 1996.

as art. As Saskia Bos pointed out, “In a way Rirkrit Tiravanija has electrified the art object. Plugging in the woks seemed just as necessary and basic to his strategy as his relocation of Fassbinder, or letting local musicians play behind Broodthaers’s film.... Putting up a bar, serving the viewer by offering drinks, is a way of overhauling the discussion about the white cube. If the effect is a real exchange of views, the awe for aura evaporates in the air.”¹⁶

Some further remarks may be added here. For example, Tiravanija did not talk about the reason he let visitors step into an empty orange room, but perhaps it was in reference to the orange robes of Buddhist monks, which stand for a life freed of suffering by choosing simplicity and sobriety. Following the Buddhist notion that sound gives life—Buddha is therefore present by listening to it—this might also be the reason Tiravanija directed the musicians to play next to the presentation of Broodthaers’s film. Whether the artist wanted to make this statement is not known.

As far as I remember, receiving the meal at the opening day, or afterward just a drink, felt like a present from the artist—a present in the context of art. When we, the invited visitors, were eating his presents we could understand that the smaller boxes in that room were also related to Broodthaers’s famous exhibition in Brussels in 1968, which, surprisingly enough, just consisted of numerous wooden boxes as well; ones normally used for transporting art. In Amsterdam, instead of simply being objects for transporting art, Tiravanija added an event to the boxes—the communication of having a meal together—also as art. Tiravanija conveys a message by providing meals; communication and togetherness were his answers. Maybe togetherness is also meant here as his answer to the misunderstandings, non-communication, and hate in Fassbinder’s film about a Turkish Gastarbeiter (foreign worker) who comes into contact with an old and uneducated, warm-hearted lady and marries her, but finds her neighborhood to be very xenophobic, which leads to a tragic ending. The character in the film dies from cancer, because the doctor refuses to help a poor, non-European man. Tiravanija chose the European art tradition in a pointed and knowledgeable way for his references, and made use of his new artistic messages in a classical code taken from Fluxus and happenings in the Western tradition. According to Bos, “With a sharp understanding of late twentieth-century culture clashes, Rirkrit Tiravanija is able to energize our experience and interconnect the different wavelengths.”¹⁷ Earlier, in 1995, the artist generalized this intention as follows: “One must consider how to undermine the situation before it undermines oneself.”¹⁸

When Tiravanija chose to present his dualistic approach at De Appel in a deliberately provocative way, to understand what has to be done to exchange accepted artistic practice (Broodthaers) with a new and living art, I would argue that the reason why he involved the art of Broodthaers was mainly to make his own philosophy as clear as possible in



Fig. 5. Marcel Broodthaers, *La Salle Blanche*, 1975.
Photographer: Achim Hatzius. © The Estate of Marcel Broodthaers/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.

opposition. In this case, therefore, one cannot speak of Bohr's correspondence principle, because these oppositions are provocatively meant as part of the work, being the focus of the statement by Tiravanija. In conclusion, however, it should be clarified that his supportive use of the classical codes of Fluxus and happenings for his strategy for living art is still typical for the correspondence principle: Tiravanija could not work without these classical traditions.

In the light of Bohr's correspondence principle in a discourse about art, posing three questions about its structure might make sense in this context:

Are foreign elements added to traditionally Western ones?

Did the artist work together with foreign artists in a team?

Is "intrusion" (meaning a welcome or unwelcome new involvement in a given situation) the right term for the correspondence principle?

The addition

In 2009 citizens and visitors of Venice rubbed their eyes in disbelief: the names of the stops for the vaporettos on the Grand Canal were not only written in Italian, but also translated and transcribed in Arabic (fig. 6). It looked as if the situation was normal, but no, this artwork by the Palestinian artist Emily Jacir, invited by the curator of the 53rd Venice Biennale, Daniel Birnbaum, was quickly forbidden and removed.¹⁹ The work was not at all humorous, the public thought, but quite polemical. Nevertheless, it was—traditionally speaking—a typical work in situ and site-specific, common in Western art since the 1970s, and it was a politically engaged work as well, also quite common. Moreover, this work by Jacir seems to refer to a sculptural work by the late German artist Joseph Beuys, who in 1976 made a Strassenbahnhaltestelle (tram stop) for the German pavilion in the Giardini del Biennale. Ironically enough, there are no trams at all running through Venice; you need a vaporetto on its canals, or a gondola. Nevertheless, Beuys was referring to a tram station from his youth, when as a schoolboy he waited at a special monument in Cleves. In Venice, however, Beuys wanted the tram stop introduced into the frame of art, a station where the viewer could wait and rest, and get involved in the ideas of freedom and creativity which art always offers, according to Beuys's vision.

Did Jacir's work seem to demonstrate the same spiritual direction? Both artists took the artifact of a public transit stop into art, questioning with it the meaning of such an imagination. Beuys made a silent event possible for visitors to experience during their visit, to think about art at a fictitious stop on their way to another understanding of life. Jacir made her (art) events possible for people approaching the vaporetto stop, when suddenly their eyes would fall on a name written in two languages. Beuys wanted the action of



Fig. 6. Emily Jacir, *stazione - S.Toma*, 2009. Courtesy of Anthony Reynolds Gallery.

remaining in a place; Jacir only the act of reading. Her work “travels” on a dual level between concept art and art in situ, between the readymade (of a transit stop), memorial art, and mise-en-scène, which are together classical artistic codes.²⁰ She involved the everyday life of the vaporetto stop into her (critical) Gesamtkunstwerk. Real life and the artifact of the Arabian letters as intruders belonged together to a rebellious viewpoint and the challenge of thinking about Arabs in Venice, historical memories, and the togetherness in artistic hybrids.²¹ In this, the Arabic names functioned as symptoms of an implied submission or occupation; Jacir questioned the trauma of xenophobia,²² asking a collective process of thinking outside of the frame of the (holy) Giardini in the (hard) reality of the city. Her work has another, more ethical focus than that of Beuys’s tram stop. Jacir is a Homo politicus, but also a fundamental Realpolitiker against xenophobia. Having broken a political taboo, the work made clear that the invitation to be part of the Biennale could not be understood as a permission to invite the Arabs into Venice in reality, although Venice has functioned since the Middle Ages with Arabic influences of all kinds. Many facades of the beautiful palazzi along the Grand Canal owe their oriental appearance to these influences. In 2009, however, Jacir’s suggestion of an Eurabia as fait accompli caused a stir in Venice, even if it was just the power of an artwork. Because the rule for Western avant-garde artists implies that an artist should never obey traditional art, artists search for what they think will cause revolutionary impulses in society. That, too, is again typical for Western art. In a paradoxical way, Jacir made use of the classical tradition and implicated her vision: no enemies, no borders in Europe. Did her idea fail? The Arabic letters were quickly forbidden and removed. But the people thought about and debated it. In this respect, her work succeeded.

The teamwork

According to the Western art tradition, working teams in a studio are quite normal. Victor Vasarely, for instance, even had a team of twenty-seven assistants. But working together with assistants overseas is not as common for European artists as is normally seen in European enterprises. One of the first to do so was Alighiero Boetti, an Italian artist of the Arte Povera movement. He designed paintings as maps of the world or used colored block letters to form words and poetic sentences. From 1971 to 1979 he lived in Kabul, where he asked the impoverished women of an embroidery school to embroider each letter on his canvas with a different bright color. They could make their own creative choices about the colors, and sometimes the amount of numbers or forms within a system he gave them beforehand. Boetti also helped increase respect for manual craft in art, and gave the women more respect. When he was forced to leave Kabul, he started a similar project in Pakistan in 1980. Afterward he sold the pieces as originals, and the smaller ones as multiples. These works are highly valued as examples of artistic teamwork and for their anti-colonial method of art production, which helped the poor. However, the embroiderers in Kabul remained anonymous,

and only Boetti received credit. Does it really make any difference whether European or Afghan assistants help to produce art? Boetti's teamwork still has a faint scent of colonialism. He involved workers from other countries outside Europe, but not as artists. He designed their art beforehand, and therefore behaved as a true European artist—individuals who mostly make decisions about their art themselves. In this respect these works are not examples of a correspondence principle, since the migrated artistic aesthetics from a newly created artwork outside the Western tradition did not really mingle with previously established Western art forms. In this case teamwork did not change the viewpoints.

Inclusion

A special case is the Dutch artist Renzo Martens, who wants to help impoverished Congolese workers from former Unilever palm oil plantations in camp Kingangu by asking them to make large figures from clay. They were paid hardly anything for their work on the plantations near Lusanga (formerly Leverville), which is nowadays a ghost city due to the lack of jobs. Martens offered them the opportunity to earn money by involving them in his art project. The clay figures they made were then scanned in 3D and produced using chocolate in Belgium. Afterward he showed the figures in Western museums and galleries, in order to include them in the international art scene (fig. 8).²³ A small, modest and cube-shaped museum, which Martens asked OMA architect David Gianotten to build on a Congolese field, opened in April of 2017. It refers to the Western concept of the white cube. Although it does not yet have a roof, the plan is to show the works in this building so the workers can be respected as artists in their homeland. It is Martens's intention that the art world shifts from the West to Africa.

His artists, of course, never considered being artists before Martens encouraged them to try their creative potential and produce art in great numbers. His vision was to get these workers in camp Kingangu out of their poverty by selling artworks, sharing the profit between the artists and their community, and—a novelty—effectively making their names known: names like Djongo Bismarm, Mathieu Kilapi Kasiana, Jérémie Mabila, Thomas Leba, etc. Perhaps Martens's compassion for the Congolese workers is based on Christian mercy. He found experts to educate them; for instance, ecologist René Ngongo and three teachers from the academy in the Congolese capital of Kinshasa. Furthermore, Martens asked his artists to found a group named Circle d'art Travailleurs de Plantation Congolese (CATPC), so they would be stronger in their negotiations with art collectors and such. Moreover, Western artists such as nBruce Nauman, Carsten Höller, and others gave them financial support. Martens gives enthusiastic lectures in many European countries to promote his sculptors, who would otherwise remain unknown in the highbrow art scene, as he puts it.



Fig. 7. Alighiero Boetti with one of his maps in Kabul. Date unknown.



Fig. 8. Renzo Martens and The Institute for Human Activities, *A New Settlement*, exhibition view, Galerie Fons Welters, 2015. Photographer: Ernst van Deursen.

It is a touching project that has already had success and earned some profit, but I listened to Martens's lectures twice and never heard the actual Congolese artists mentioned by name, and there was no discussion about the qualities or meanings of their art pieces.²⁴ The reason might be that Martens is an artist himself, being based in Brussels and Amsterdam besides Kinshasa, and he definitely regards this concept as his own art, too. His conceptual approach differs a lot from the art of producing sculptures. In opposition to using artistic media made out of linen, stone, bronze, or wood, a conceptual artwork mostly involves language for plans and projects, and perhaps also sketches, photos, diagrams, or only spoken texts. However, Martens's lectures are full of all these media from his own conceptual art. That, in fact, is the European, traditional Duchampian side of this coin, and the situation could eventually endanger real inclusion. Furthermore, it was in fact Martens's own idea to find factories in Belgium where the African statues could be produced using chocolate, and not the idea of the Congolese artists. The transformation in material was a completely European idea. There are chocolate plantations in the Congo, but "his" artists worked on palm oil plantations. So Martens works in a conceptualist tradition: he invented the project and is also its curator, developer, and businessman. How should one read this? Is it the Congolese success story of artisan workers becoming sculptors within the material for Martens's conceptual art? Or Congolese sculptors with Martens in the background, a successful art manager who is helping, pushing, and advertising them?

Let us in the end remember what the correspondence principle means: on the one hand are the new images, a new strategy, and the adventure of new meanings in art coming from the foreign, outside of Western art. On the other hand are the traditional Western art categories in situ at a given location, which takes part in the meaning of the work, installation, sculpture, painting, conceptual art, or happening—all of them used in order to give this "outsider art" a classical context to be proven as art. Bohr said classical subjective measurements will always be at hand to compute the given other, the unseen. Bal stated that "traveling concepts" are an invitation for an intricate exploration of their combination with regard to what is innovative and what is traditional.²⁵ Bohr saw something inadequate in this combination, something nearly fictive and inauthentic. But art is always fictitious, even if it is implanted in reality and vice versa, as in Jacir's and Tiravanija's work. By implanting the codes of the past it becomes doubly fictitious, conceptually speaking. Art gets its authenticity—theoretically seen—from another source than that of natural science, on behalf of the credibility of the creation. By accepting these circumstances as given for art in the light of the correspondence principle, one will enrich and positively expand culture on both sides. For now, however, nothing is taken for granted in this cultural field, as the three buses in Dresden have again demonstrated.

Antje von Graevenitz (Hamburg, 1940) is an art historian based in Amsterdam. Specialized in the history of twentieth- and twenty-first-century art, she was a lecturer at the University of Amsterdam (1977–1989) and professor at the University of Cologne (1989–2005). She obtained a PhD in art history at the University of Munich in 1973, with a dissertation on the Dutch ornament in the lobate style (*kwabstijl*). In 1971 she began writing art reviews for the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, and since 1975 she joined various editorial boards (*Museumjournaal*, *Wonen + TABK*, *Kunstschrift OKB*, *Vrij Nederland*, *Archis* and *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch*) and published widely in books, museum catalogues, and art journals. In her research she is mainly focused on ephemeral art and interdisciplinary and anthropological art topics, in relation to rites of passage, philosophy, music, and theater. A variety of her publications is dedicated to Marcel Duchamp, Joseph Beuys, and Nam June Paik.

1. Contemporary Chinese artists accepted the Dutch adaption of Chinese porcelain in a sort of tower, the *Tulpenpiramide*, made by Jing He in a team with Rongkai He, Cheng Guo, Welyi Li, and Dangdan Xin. All the bowls with here and there the typical spouts for tulips are piled on top of one another, looking like a Chinese pagoda or Constantin Brancusi's *Endless Column* in the Romanian city Târgu Jiu—a famous European artwork. From the exhibition *Barbaren & Wijsgeren* at the Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem (2017); illustration in *De Groene Amsterdammer*, April 20, 2017, 53.
2. Edward M. Said, *Orientalism* (London: 1978).
3. Amine Haase, "Versöhnung der Gegensätze. Harald Szeemann vereint in Venedig das scheinbar Unvereinbare," in *Kunstforum International* (Szeemanns Apertutto) 147 (September–November 1999): 150–160.
4. Ibid., 160. Compare a cover photograph of a real truck transporting numerous sacks belonging to migrants in Sudan (photo by Stefan Kröpelin) in *Kölner Universitäts Journal* 35, (2005).
5. *Migration*, exh. cat. Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein (Cologne: 2003).
6. Claude Lévi-Strauss, *La pensée sauvage* (Paris: 1962).
7. Mieke Bal, *Double Exposures: The Subject of Cultural Analysis* (New York: 1996).
8. Mieke Bal, *Traveling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: 2002).
9. For instance, Marga van Mechelen used Bal's proposals fruitfully for her research about mainly young Chinese performers who worked in a contemporary, new way, but nevertheless make use of the old Chinese tradition as well, because they want to be understood by their public. See Marga van Mechelen, "Migratory Signifiers, Encrypted Symbols," *Chinese Semiotic Studies* 11, no. 3: 371–385.
10. L. Rosenfeld and J. Rud Nielsen, eds., *Niels Bohr: Collected Works Vol. 3 The Correspondence Principle (1918–1923)* (Amsterdam: 1976).
11. At first sight the correspondence principle might resemble *Pfadabhängigkeit* (path dependency), which is a term economists use for a strategy to harmonize and homogenize the new project within a classical way of process, in order to bring the project in a consistent bedding. The aim differs with that of Bohr's terminology; where the economists search for caution and certainty, the natural scientist felt a certain obstruction in his proceedings by the jump of innovation, by

- being bound to the tradition which he found subjective, asymmetric, and untrue.
12. Cf. Wolf Singer, *Verständliche Forschung: Gehirn und Kognition* (Heidelberg, Berlin, New York: 1992), 50–65; Nina Zschokke, “Die Rolle vorausgegangener Erfahrung,” in *Der irritierte Blick. Kunstrezeption und Aufmerksamkeit* (Munich: 2006), 48/49. Both authors do not mention Bohr but refer to neurological research.
 13. William Rubin, ed., *Primitivism in 20th Century Art* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1984).
 14. Saskia Bos, “Plugging in the Woks/Woks einstecken,” in *Supermarket*, exh. cat. Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zürich; Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio State University, Columbus; De Appel, Amsterdam; le consortium, Centre d’Art Contemporain, Dijon (Zürich: 1998), 26–29; Bos told me more details about this work in De Appel in her correspondence on June 19, 2017.
 15. This piece was part of Broodthaers’s film *Neuf pictures, série anglaise*, produced by the Jack Wendler Gallery, New York, 1972.
 16. Bos, “Plugging in the Woks/Woks einstecken,” 27.
 17. Ibid.
 18. The quotation from 1995 is used for the title of an article by Sherri Geldin in *Supermarket* (see note 14).
 19. Emily Jacir and Omar Kholeif, eds., *Emily Jacir: Europa*, exh. cat. Whitechapel Gallery (Munich, London, New York: 2016), 49–55.
 20. Cf. Mieke Bal, *Traveling Concepts*, 40 (the travel between concept and object); 60 (the call for history).
 21. Cf. Mieke Bal, “Erinnerungsakte. Performance der Subjektivität,” in *Kulturanalyse*. (Frankfurt: 2002), chapter 9, 263–277.
 22. About xenophobia in Los Angeles and the transformation of this subject in art, see René Boomkens, “Zoeken naar een verloren erotiek van de plek,” in *Welcome Strangers*, eds. Marjolein Schaap and Ken Zeph (Amsterdam: 1992), 141–154.
 23. Sacha Bronwasser, “Black Box: Reportage Renzo Martens White Cube in Congo,” *De Volkskrant*, (May 5, 2017): V4–V7; “White Cube in de jungle,” *NRC* (April 27, 2017); Roos van der Lint, “Een witte cubus in Congo. Renzo Martens over het ongemak van zijn werk,” *De Groene Amsterdammer* (November 9, 2017): 100–102.
 24. In the articles in the Dutch newspapers from April/May 2017 the Congolese artworks were not described or discussed in their quality, either.
 25. Bal, *Traveling Concepts*, 329.