

Editor's Foreword

The current volume of *Art History Studies / Meno istorijos studijos*, focusing on modernism and migration, originates from the eighth conference of the European Network for Avant-Garde and Modernism Studies titled 'Globalising the Avant-Garde,' which took place from the 1st to the 3rd of September 2022 at NOVA University Lisbon. Two articles, authored by Serena de Dominicis and Jane Eckett, have evolved from presentations given at the conference's panel, 'From emigrant and war refugee to international avant-garde artist. Migration from Lithuania and neighbouring territories from the end of the long 19th century till the post-WWII period: causes, routes, ways, consequences.' The panel, initiated and moderated by Giedrė Jankevičiūtė, aimed to explore the migration phenomenon of artists from the contemporary Lithuanian territory from the late 19th century until the post-Second World War period. This era witnessed crucial political and cultural transformations, giving rise to diverse motivations, forms of migration, and distinct cultural attitudes and goals among migrating artists. Despite its significance, this migration phenomenon has been relatively under-researched due to the scarcity of factual data. In response, a deliberate choice was made to adopt a biographical approach, providing a foundation for further research into exile, migration, and cultural transfers from an art history perspective. From the seven presentations in the panel, two have been selected for inclusion in this volume, focusing on artists who are less known in Lithuania, both of whom hailed from Kaunas, the country's second-largest city. The first article, by Serena de Dominicis, explores the life and work of the Jewish sculptor and painter Antonietta Raphaël. Having left the fringes of the tsarist empire due to economic reasons, Raphaël honed her artistic skills in the art schools of her host countries – England, France, and Italy. The second selected article, written by Jane Eckett, presents the Lithuanian sculptor Teisutis Zikaras. A refugee of the Second World War, Zikaras emerged as a significant figure in post-war modernism in Australia. Lolita Jablonskienė also contributes to the volume by presenting

exhibitions of Jonas Mekas's work and their narratives. Her work connects the experiences of Second World War refugees and their acculturation in host countries with the broader issue of how their work is received and interpreted.

The central theme explored in the three aforementioned texts revolves around the predicament of migrant artists and their evolution within new cultural contexts. This subject is intricately linked to the rupture of ties with their cultural origins and a concurrent sense of yearning for that very culture, which significantly influences the content of their works. The insights gained from the conference prompted an expansion of the volume's content, with additional authors who participated in the event contributing articles based on their presentations. These authors include Deborah Ascher Barnstone, Miki Iwama, and Małgorzata Anna Jędrzejczyk, each presenting perspectives on the dissemination and reception of modernism. Their contributions delve into the spread of concrete ideas and forms, taking root in diverse regions and cultures, spanning from Central Europe to Japan and Australia. Gabrielė Radzevičiūtė further enriches the collection by examining the impact of Weimar Republic political art on Lithuanian artists with leftist political views, while Jindřich Vybíral complements this exploration by delving into the mechanism of transforming historical artefacts into symbolic goods through reflections on Czech cubist architecture.

Initially, the idea was to bifurcate the volume into two distinct parts, focusing on the migration of ideas and the migration of artists. However, upon careful consideration of the article content, it became evident that these two forms of migration are inherently intertwined. In essence, the physical relocation brings about exposure to ideas born abroad, while the mental adoption of these ideas occurs concurrently when artists move to new cultural environments. Therefore, migration invariably unfolds on two levels: the physical change of location and the intellectual assimilation of ideas.

The breadth of topics covered in this compilation of articles underscores the timeliness and robust development of the migration theme. It is evident that investigating the local art scenes of individual countries, from

miniature Lithuania to expansive Australia, necessitates an exploration of the migration of ideas, unveiling the multifaceted ways in which instances of pronounced modernisation in other countries have influenced the creativity of local artists. Simultaneously, the research brings interesting results, shedding light on the processes of idea reception, adaptation in local conditions, transformations, and the emergence of new meanings.

In the annals of art history, the discourse on the migration of images and ideas has its roots in the 1920s, particularly intertwined with Aby Warburg's concept of *Bildwanderung* – the migration of images across time, traversing geographical and chronological boundaries to establish themselves in diverse cultures and assimilate new features. Although the term 'cultural transfer' emerged quite recently, in the 1980s (Michele Espagne and others), it remains pertinent in the realm of modernist visual culture studies. Paradoxically, the transnational approach has not received exhaustive exploration from modernist art historians. A crucial aspect of this matter is the reevaluation of the relationship between the centre and the periphery, a topic that, despite seeming uncomplicated, has sparked disputes and tensions in recent years. For the contributors to this volume, Europe serves as the primary reference point – a natural choice given their focus on a period when major European cities like Paris and Berlin acted as epicentres for the development of innovative artistic concepts. However, the volume goes beyond this focal point, exploring the formation of new artistic centres and the rise of influential personalities in smaller artistic hubs (Czech Republic, Italy) and on other continents (Japan, USA, Australia).

This collection provides a historical perspective and invaluable case studies, shedding light on current geopolitical issues. Specifically, it prompts a reevaluation of forced migration, wherein artists are uprooted from their cultural origins and thrust into new environments where they must carve out a space and find a voice that resonates and is comprehensible in their host country. Additionally, the articles illustrate the local challenges posed by the global exchange of ideas, forms, fashions, and tastes – not only impacting local cultures, but also reverberating on a transnational scale.

Giedrė Jankevičiūtė