Global art history engages scholars in many places throughout the world. Conferences in Europe and Asia have considered aspects of global (or world) art history, and scholarly involvement with cross-cultural approaches to art is on the rise. In the US, issues of world or global art history have featured in many sessions of recent meetings of the College Art Association of America, including an extraordinary special centennial session devoted to globalism, and of the Renaissance Society of America as well. The session chosen to initiate the meetings of the international congress of the history of art devoted to “Converging Cultures” held in Melbourne in 2008 focused on the idea of world art history. While the international congress held in Nuremberg in 2012 responded to the “challenge of the object,” the challenge of global or world art history sparked discussion in many different sessions, and the topic is on the agenda of the 2016 international congress in Beijing. Longer-term research projects and groups have been formed in Taipei, Berlin, Zurich, Heidelberg, São Paulo, and at the German Institute in Florence to deal with global art history, and have already begun to yield results. The publication of numerous books and compendia of essays in recent years evinces continuing and growing interest.

James Elkins has claimed that world art history presents far and away the most pressing problem for the field, and its biggest challenge. Terry Smith has also asserted that accounting for the ways in which the modern became the contemporary throughout the world is the greatest challenge for historians of contemporary art. To date however the only truly comprehensive account of such art is a book by Smith. Much current debate still remains related to considerations of contemporary art, perhaps because, as Hans Belting has claimed, the idea of global art history or its precedent has been formulated...
in response to the development of the global art market.\textsuperscript{10} However, some discussion has also been devoted to consideration of earlier periods of art history.\textsuperscript{11}

But critics have contested the possibilities of global art history. They have challenged its bases and assumptions. Ironically, however, some of the very scholars who have envisioned writing world art history have also expressed some of the strongest doubts about it.\textsuperscript{12}

This chapter answers some theoretical objections. In a Lockean spirit it attempts to clear the ground for future efforts. It then turns from theoretical questions to present a brief practical proposal for a way to approach writing a global history of art before the nineteenth century, in part because so much discussion of globalization has hitherto concerned history after c. 1800, although the argument can certainly be extended.

Clearly, the project of conceptualizing a more general world art history, not just of modern or contemporary art but one that might encompass all places as well as all times, presents an enormous challenge. All kinds of questions may arise when we actually start to think about how to write such a huge history. How may we as individuals claim to control knowledge of or even passing familiarity with all the products of humankind throughout the world? How is it possible to forge a coherent narrative that would encompass all eras and areas of human production of material and visual things, actual and virtual, as well as their reception and thinking about them? How can we speak meaningfully to more than our own immediate milieu? How can we lay foundations for future studies throughout the globe?

In the light of the real, substantive, practical issues that must be tackled before we can envision writing a new world art history, it is understandable that the very possibility of conceptualizing a new world (or global) art history has sparked much debate. Practically speaking, we may begin by agreeing that writing a world art history is a huge and daunting task. To give an account of all the art and architecture found all over the world in all times and places might at first seem to be impossible.

An attempt to do so moreover runs against a strong tide of opinion, which informs some recent objections. The tide flows from a more general attack upon efforts at finding or creating coherence; such efforts now may be misprized.\textsuperscript{13} Post-modernist, post-structuralist tendencies of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries are still present in such critiques. Categories of space and time (attributed to Enlightenment epistemological models for history writing) have also increasingly come under assault. Anachronism, long considered one of the greatest mistakes a historian could make, is now revalued under the cloak of the anachronic.\textsuperscript{14}

The current also springs from a more general retreat from narrative in the Humanities that has taken place during recent decades. When in 1983 Hans Belting announced the “end of art history” as it had hitherto been known
he signaled the beginning of this withdrawal within the discipline of art history. What Belting seemed to announce was in fact already adumbrated in the 1970s, when the New Art History began to take art history in different directions than it had previously pursued. A tendency to avoid telling large stories began that accompanied an increasing avoidance of larger narratives, including an evasion of metanarrative. In any event, a large-scale retreat from all but the most particular and personal accounts, ones that eschew broader stories, has occurred along with the surrender by some scholars of narrative, coherence, the principle of anachronism, and logical categories in art history. A vogue for microhistories is related to these trends in historiography, and this is evinced in art history too.

However we may evaluate specific theoretical arguments pertaining to telling larger stories about the past or their epistemological foundations, histories (narratives of past events or stories about the past, among them some that include accounts of art) nevertheless continue to be written. Furthermore, they concern not only our own supposedly globalized moment in which the need for such stories would seem to be obvious. A large international audience eagerly responds to the appearance of books (in whatever form) that offer such broader stories of past events and people. At least some authors are ready to answer the demand. Some academics have answered the call for global or world histories, and done so very successfully. The large favorable public reception of their books demonstrates that there exists a general interest in broader histories of the world and its cultures.

Moreover, just because the task may seem huge and special problems may attend the conceptualization of large narratives, the possibility of writing a world history is not to be ruled out a priori. It is mistaken to think that we can ever offer a complete account of events in writing histories, be they small or large. To argue that historiography, the writing of history, is intended to give an account of all events of the past is not just unfeasible. This belief also appears to reflect a frequently held assumption that our knowledge of the external world holds up an accurate mirror to nature. It may be noted, however, that several philosophers have forcefully argued against this view of epistemology, averring that the exact reflection of reality is not what knowledge is.

As far as history writing is concerned, historiography contrasts with the composition of chronicles, in that the writing of history always involves a process of selection, a matter of emphases and choices, the posing of hypotheses, and the construction of theories of causality and development, all of which are involved in the construction of a narrative. This process is found as much in the writing of world or global history, or world art history, as it is in the composition of microhistories, histories of individuals or individual events or indeed biographies. The act of writing history, we may say art history, is that of composing, whatever any other kind of story, thus suggests a basic reason...
why there may be no one single story of art that may ever be told. Of course there are many such stories. We always write from a point of view that is by definition limited. This observation does not preclude writing history, nor does it assume that history lacks some objective referent. We need to remain aware that what we write does not exclude other attempts, and not regard it as the ultimate account.

Furthermore, the existence of different possible accounts does not mean that it is impossible to write a single, individual world history of art, even though it might be only one of several or many possible histories. Previous efforts, however imperfect they may have been, have in fact been made to write an art history that encompassed the globe, and they continue to be made. In the past these sorts of large stories were articulated in the formulation of what was earlier called universal history (Universalgeschichte), that is, histories that treated the art of all times and places. Universal history in this sense does not mean a history of the universe or cosmos, but cosmopolitan history. The meaning of cosmopolitan is conceived here in the sense of a history of human beings in all parts of the oikumene, the inhabited world. To mention a few familiar cases, universal history is implicit in some major trends in the historiography of art as it was written from Giorgio Vasari in sixteenth-century Florence through Franz Kugler in nineteenth-century Berlin, and beyond. Recognition of the existence of this tradition as it was emphasized in the historiography of the Enlightenment and its immediate forerunners has been noted in recent discussions of the possibilities of intercultural history.

Earlier European writings on art that claimed to be universal no doubt often circumscribed the conceptualization of oikumene, much as they frequently restricted discussion of art to a European perspective. Even within the historiography of European art discussion has often been further constricted to a limited number of periods and parts of the continent (ancient Greece, Renaissance Italy, medieval, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century France, painting in the Low Countries from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, sometimes early sixteenth-century Germany) deemed worthy of attention. The universal history adumbrated for example by Vasari, who however concentrated on Tuscan art, and of Johann Joachim Winckelmann, who glorified ancient Greece, suggest that as far as what might be called art was concerned, universal history in effect thus often collapsed into a history which elevated the art of certain selected areas in Europe at certain times, and ignored others, along with much of the rest of the world as well.

World art history must thus deal with the problem of point of view and inherent bias. Frequently this bias is characterized as Eurocentrism. Eurocentrism is indeed very much in the sights of many critics of world art histories. But it is perhaps little known that writers on the theory of history have already tackled this problem and provided answers to it.
of their counter-arguments, we must still take recent critiques seriously. The most trenchant of these is James Elkins’s response to David Summers’s *Real Spaces*. In this *magnum opus* Summers offered a monumental account of the history of the world’s art in one volume. One of the very few recent comprehensive world art histories to date, his book is also a harbinger of recent debates: it has thus become a lightning rod for critical thunder. Independent of the merits or demerits of Summers’s theses, Elkins and other critics decry the Eurocentrism they find in it and also in surveys (textbooks), which are also taken as exemplary of attitudes towards world art history. They mean by this critique the alleged privileging of Western developments and methodologies found in such surveys. The attack is directed against the way that the West stands as it were not just in opposition to but as the same in essence as the Rest.

Regardless of his critique, Elkins provides a very useful outline when he suggests some of the ways in which a world art history might be constructed. In reverse order, Elkins suggests that art history can disperse as a discipline; that it can attempt to avoid Western interpretive strategies; that it can go in search of indigenous critical concepts; that it can adjust and redefine to better fit non-Western art; and finally that it can remain essentially unchanged as it moves into world art. Elkins’s efforts to search for indigenous critical concepts have already evoked heated responses that do not need to be rehearsed. Let us instead inspect Elkins’s other claims a little more closely: they seem to break down into two categories, the second of which deals with the supposedly occidental nature of the enterprise, and hence Western art historiography.

The first of these suggestions, namely that art history may disperse as a discipline, seems entirely possible, but probably misleading in several respects, and in the end moot. Whatever the discipline or topic of analysis be called, even if the notion be granted that the discipline of art history may collapse or be absorbed into other fields, as may be happening, the scattered remains of visual or material culture or whatever they might be called would still exist, as would issues involved in comprehending them. The potential task of establishing a more comprehensive picture or history would remain, even if it ceased to be called art history. If on the other hand, Elkins be understood here to be proposing an Pyrrhonian (that is skeptical) or even ultimately nihilistic alternative, as several other scholars now seem to be doing, then we may say whatever we want to say on the one hand, and on the other it may be that there is nothing further to discuss anyway, because we can all cease talking meaningfully with each other. We also do not need to carry on a conversation with other people if we adopt an ultimately culturally relativist position (what is sometimes called culturalism) that is related to arguments about Eurocentrism. According to this point of view we are all so different — or at least the differences are so great — that Europeans or whoever are able to talk only from
their own cultural perspective, and there exist no common grounds for discussion. Although this position has also been in fact unveiled as another aspect of Eurocentrism, it is still frequently encountered.

Nevertheless, whatever some of these implications may be, basic arguments about Eurocentrism are now so widespread that they almost seem common assumptions; thus they deserve further attention. This is also because questions about Eurocentrism, and related post-colonial critiques have doubtless had the merit not only of revealing unexamined assumptions, but more positively of attracting attention to overlooked or suppressed points of view and materials. These critiques have responded to such lacunas as the inadequate treatment of most Latin American art (not to mention art elsewhere outside Europe and the US) in prominent accounts of modern and contemporary art history. Still, the application of the blanket charge of Eurocentrism to any effort to found a new world art history seems extremely problematic.

In the first place, this argument seems to repeat familiar post-modern opinions that situate knowledge according to one’s subject position. Such post-structuralist or post-modernist views do not seem to be so far different from ultimately relativist views. These are arguments that everything depends on your point of view, interests, stance, or other personal determinants, or, even more baldly (and often crudely), power. To be sure, knowledge is related to human interests. These interests may stem from or result in power. But there is another approach to these questions that can not simply be dismissed as positivist, one that sticks to what used to be called the facts, and posits that history or accounts of reality can be written.

To put it simply, although our own personal points of view may be related to race, class, gender, sexual orientation, to use some of the terms of a familiar litany, this does not mean that the arguments that they express, and the results that they have produced, do not exist independent of their proponents. Regardless of the biases of the individual scholars to whom they are due, such accomplishments may be evaluated and found to be substantial. The constructivist position, one that argues that all knowledge is constructed, can in any case be reconciled with the progressivist, one that argues that there is progress in what we know about the world—and its history. Much as the search for “facts” depends on hypotheses, the construction of theories is not possible without facts.

The recognition of some of the arguments for what is now called multiculturalism, among them the thesis that points of view may depend on the cultures of the authors from which they come, should in any event also not negate the possibility of searching for common threads in what used to be called reality (and humanity), even if one were to accept part of the thrust of the argument. But here some new shibboleths have arisen: heterochronicity and incommensurability. Keith Moxey has offered the most
thorough exposition of the first point.\textsuperscript{37} Like several other recent critics whom he cites, Moxey reconsiders notions of anachronism. Moxey’s argument is the farthest-ranging of such critiques, however, because he links chronological ordering with teleology and colonialism. Moxey elaborates the concept of heterochrony, the principle of heterochronicity according to which there are multiple forms of time that do not necessarily relate to one another.\textsuperscript{38} Moxey finds heterochronicity not just active within an individual work, as others have done, but claims that “the challenges posed to historicist time gain added urgency in the face of local temporalities that have been marginalized and misunderstood by Western colonialism.”\textsuperscript{39} He adds: “Efforts to construct so-called world art histories, for example, often depend on an allegedly universal time. I have argued here for an awareness of heterochrony, the sense that different cultures have distinct notions of time and that these are not easily related to one another.”\textsuperscript{40}

Space does not allow for extensive refutation of all problems with these arguments. The principle of historicism, that things pertain to one period and not another, is certainly not dependent on nor the same as historical determinism, in the Hegelian sense, as Moxey expressly asserts;\textsuperscript{41} not all writing of art history or history is necessarily teleological;\textsuperscript{42} historicism in the first sense may also be shared by “non-Western” cultures; it does not make sense to treat historiography west or east especially prior to 1800 as dominated by Western colonialism, and it is questionable to do so thereafter (for reasons adumbrated below). Most important, some of the same scholars who have acknowledged the existence of differences in conceptions of time or history in different cultures have also continued to argue convincingly for the universality of notions of time (and also of “universal time”), for the widespread existence of notions of history (and humanity), and for the need to construct a cross-cultural history.\textsuperscript{43}

At several points in his essays, Moxey, like other recent proponents of the anachronic, invokes Georg Kubler’s \textit{Shape of Time}.\textsuperscript{44} While Kubler certainly did write poetically about the reconstruction of the fragmentary nature of the past, this reading of his work is however at best partial, and only partially correct, in ways whose absences are telling. Kubler did talk about “fast and slow time” in his eloquent little book, where as elsewhere he eschewed evolutionary schemes. But this acknowledgement of “heterochrony” hardly meant that Kubler also rejected the construction of chronological frameworks. He even seems to have anticipated the construction of what Moxey may be describing as a narrative that is “contemporary but not synchronous” when he pulled together vast amounts of material from different cultures and related them together—thereby also contributing to the construction of a cross-cultural, even universal or world art history. While Kubler was writing \textit{The Shape of Time}, he was composing his large survey of pre-Columbian art, which contributes he contributed to the “universal” Pelican History of
Art Series. In this tome, which he published in the same year as the Shape of Time, he moreover explicitly stated his concern with issues of chronology. He specifically addressed problems of relative chronicity. Despite obvious differences in senses of time and history in the Americas that were already evident to pre-Columbianists fifty years ago even before so much more has been learned about such issues, Kubler assembled three pages of comparative time tables for different cultures in the Western Hemisphere. These tables make his approach clear: they obviously evince diachronic developments, different historical patterns, “heterochronic” notions. These he aligned together in tables, a method that contrasts notably with other books in the Pelican History of Art series; no other volume contains a time table even remotely resembling his (Fig. 1.1).45

Although Kubler said that he preferred what he himself termed a diachronic to a synchronic approach, he treated art history specifically as history. He too
proposed various methods of organizing time into chronological frameworks. Kubler applied traditional period labels, but also did not worry much about periodization. Instead he suggested the use of such conceptions as seriation and configuration. Kubler also continued to stress visual and stylistic particularities, interests often lacking in current critique.

The argument for incommensurability is related to Moxey’s claims about heterochrony. Raised in a variety of contexts by him, arguments for incommensurability have been elaborated by Michael Ann Holly in a way that directly applies to global art history. Echoing arguments from philosophy of science as it has been applied to anthropology, Holly has proposed that incommensurability means that different cultures are simply incommensurable in their assumptions about or views of time, space, and history. Hence it is fruitless to try to relate such different views together in the composition of a global art history that would be much more than superficial. Significantly, although not mentioned by Holly, philosophers of language, of the anthropology of history (and time), and of the ontology of history have already addressed this issue. They have effectively countered arguments about cultural incommensurability, reformulating theses pertaining to linguistic relativism, incompatibility, ontology, and translation. Some historians have, moreover, gone beyond this critique to continue to argue how diverse cultures may be compared to, indeed connected with, each other, and bridge supposed gaps. Most directly Sanjay Subrahmanyan has called upon historical evidence to argue that most claims to incommensurability “turn out to be false on closer examination.” In this light some anecdotal observations are also pertinent, because they also relate to the critique that “methods” are culture-bound: scholars of Native American Arts (or the Arts of the First Peoples in Canada), and of contemporary art in East Asia reacted spontaneously and vigorously to Holly’s assertions when she made them at a special session of the College Art Association. They contradicted her, saying that the principles used to study art history were valid anywhere, and that the fields of their studies should be included in a more all-encompassing history of art. Subsequently they have suggested that discussions of incommensurability are hardly post-colonial, but reintroduce the very patterns of exclusion that are supposedly being combatted. African, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Latin American scholars have all expressed similar disagreements with the argument for incommensurability and the supposedly “Western” limitations of methods of art history derived from European and North American discussions.

We can go beyond these assertions to turn to what more may be at stake. It again seems ironic that while many critics in the Humanities may take such ideas as multiculturalism, incommensurability, or heterochronicity as pointing to a necessarily fragmented picture of knowledge or reality that seems irreversible, scholars of Native American Arts (or the Arts of the First Peoples in Canada), and of contemporary art in East Asia reacted spontaneously and vigorously to Holly’s assertions when she made them at a special session of the College Art Association. They contradicted her, saying that the principles used to study art history were valid anywhere, and that the fields of their studies should be included in a more all-encompassing history of art. Subsequently they have suggested that discussions of incommensurability are hardly post-colonial, but reintroduce the very patterns of exclusion that are supposedly being combatted. African, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Latin American scholars have all expressed similar disagreements with the argument for incommensurability and the supposedly “Western” limitations of methods of art history derived from European and North American discussions.
conundrums, scholars in other intellectual fields of inquiry are actively searching for solutions in a common ground and in common theoretical bases. Physicists (and mathematicians) for the last half-century have been dreaming of a final theory. This is a theory that would reconcile theories of the constitution of and laws that govern the physical universe, as they have been generated by the theoretical discoveries of the last century, that would result in some sort of unified field theory. 55 Scholars in the life sciences as they are conducted at present also aim at a larger, coherent picture that is relevant to present concerns. The genome project has been trying to trace the genetic structure and ramifications of our species, while neuroscience has been trying to find its neurological origins. Closer to historiography, Luigi Cavalli-Sforza and his followers have been trying to map and to trace the movements of human genetic groups. Recent publications by this group have related cultural evolution, the origins of cultural history, to genetic developments within the species.56 Edward O. Wilson has also recently articulated a biologically based thesis for the evolution of human culture.57

Why then should the Humanities, and more specifically art history, which is supposedly also concerned with the material world, with products of human beings, with cultural manifestations and productions, not also make similar efforts at an attaining an all-encompassing view, that would take in the world as a whole? Some scholars interested in the visual arts have indeed made the attempt. For example, compelling arguments have been made for a more universal approach to aesthetics and the anthropology of art. 58 Neurology has also recently entered into the discourse of art history, but whether it can provide convincing insights to such problems, or provides valid bases for interpretations of history, remain open questions.59

In any event, we may now return the focus to some more specific issues raised by Eurocentrism. Some post-colonial arguments about the inevitability of “othering,” meaning the binary treatment into an “us” and a “them,” the “them” being others, no doubt have some force. These arguments stem from and relate to reactions to the legacy of European imperialism and colonialism, and take Neo-colonialism and Neo-imperialism into account. Whatever we may say about political realities and attitudes, this critique may nevertheless be reexamined in as much as it pertains to the history of scholarship in the Humanities.

In particular, the established critique of what is called “orientalism” may be challenged. This is a critique of “Western” approaches that supposedly denigrated the East, meaning Asia and especially what used to be called the Near East related to imperialist purposes. 60 This critique largely deals with the period from the end of the eighteenth century. However, evidence from the period before the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries does not necessarily support this thesis. Before c. 1800, many opinions were not merely neutral, but appreciated, even vaunted the
primacy or quality of the non-European, including its art and architecture. More significantly, it has been demonstrated that much of the main current of critique of “orientalism” has ignored or misrepresented what is in fact the most important manifestation of European scholarly engagement with the Eastern “other,” namely the tradition of German scholarship during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The German enterprise of scholarship on “the East” as it was carried out between 1830 and 1930 was much more variegated and nuanced than a blanket critique of “orientalism” allows. When this scholarship is studied in detail, the critique of “imperialism” seems applicable only in a limited number of cases, even if some of the old critique holds for some scholarship that was directly in the service of the German state, as mutatis mutandis it may have been in the service of French or British imperialism, too.

To speak more specifically about the historiography of art, while some earlier writings in German on world art history may have been Eurocentric, or imperialist, not all of them were, by any means. This is certainly true for periods before 1800, but it is true for the established university discipline thereafter too. One telling example from the earlier twentieth century: it makes no sense to speak of one of the most important early proponents of world art history, the noted Austrian scholar Josef Strzygowski as an imperialistic orientalist, however distasteful his beliefs and character are. Strzygowski occupied a chair at the University of Vienna which he dedicated to studies of extra-European art. Through his writings he opened up many fields of non-European scholarship to art history. More important, he did this not from a Eurocentric point of view, but in fact frequently ranted against Rome, the West, humanism, and the Enlightenment, and especially what he decried as ignorance or undervaluation of what he called the Orient, which he thought had been unfairly, even ignorantly, treated in favor of privileging of the West. Instead, most familiar in his book Orient oder Rom, he emphasized the origins, sources, and importance of various non-European centers and sources for artistic invention and creation, including Armenia, Persia, and India, and art farther East.

It is not necessary to refer to Strzygowski (who was not only racist and anti-Semitic but saw Aryans lurking beyond all the positive forces in art) to demonstrate that a non-Eurocentric world art history can be written. World art histories in fact have recently been published outside of Europe or North America. These latter have been shaped evidently without the Eurocentric (or even culturally centric) biases that Elkins claims must be inherent even in Chinese historiography. However, Chinese world art histories do not focus on European art history, but include volumes devoted to East and South Asian countries, as well as African and Latin American countries. In addition, they give broader coverage to Europe (in their attention to Central Europe, including Russia) than most European or American
books do. These books apparently also consider China as a multicultural country composed of many ethnicities, with a greatly diverse art, resulting from the exchanges and mutual influences between regions and groups—not at all the uniform model of Chinese art, nor one recapitulating “Western” historiographic biases.\textsuperscript{66} Certainly the Chinese, from their supposedly vastly different cultural perspective, do not regard art history as incommensurable in different “cultures.”\textsuperscript{67} Recent initiatives to establish world art history in Taiwan and Beijing, and by Chinese scholars with institutes in and around Florence, suggest rather the opposite.\textsuperscript{68}

Where does this leave us with world art history? Even if we can envision or defend the possibility of writing a world art history, it is still much more difficult either to find examples to be proposed, or say how specifically we might do it. This is particularly the case if we wish to construct a history that is not to be conceived as determinist or historicist, the latter meaning one that posits that periods determine what has been created or done, but nevertheless one that continues to be based on the principle of anachronism. This is the principle that holds that not everything is possible in all times and all places, and that certain things are more likely to have been done, thought, or made—indeed were done, thought, and made, in one time and place, and not in another. Regardless of the supposed possible multiple temporalities of objects that have long been noticed by scholars of ancient and medieval art but have now become fashionable for (early) modernists to emphasize, a primary task remains to determine and interpret in the first instance their initial time—and place. This effort must be conjoined with larger interpretations or narratives, and is not simply to be dismissed or forgotten, because such information provides the armature for further constructions. Such specific considerations also suggest why some transhistorical thematic approaches such as those offered by notions of visuality, spirituality, genetics, neurohistory or whatever may not do justice to temporal specificities.

Instead geographical considerations may help frame some answers, even if they do not provide them \textit{in toto}. Geography of art deals with the locational parameters of historical study. World art history would obviously engage the largest such parameters. A sensitivity to geographical considerations, namely how to relate various cultures and their locations, may be necessary for considerations of world art history.\textsuperscript{69} But geography also does not provide final answers. If a geohistory of art is to lead to world art history, it must be aligned with economic and commodity theories that help explain the distribution and circulation of objects, especially ones of intense and multiple interest, and especially luxury items.\textsuperscript{70} These are concerned with questions of economic, material, and cultural exchange. Hence the choice is made here to speak of global rather than world art history. Global art history is broader, not transhistorical, in the sense that it too involves a consideration...
of contacts between various parts of the globe, and global markets. Global art history may be understood in terms of relations to recent notions of globalization, which in many instances have to do with economic, material, and cultural exchange.

These issues lead us to considerations of cultural exchange, transfer, and assimilation. The discussion of key monuments, styles, and their cultures may thereby be situated in a framework that calls attention to connections and parallels. Objects, their creators, and ideas can be mapped onto a scheme of patterns of diffusion and circulation brought about by various forms of contact in the past and continuing into the present. They can be related to trade, market, conquest, and to the related and resultant transmissions of materials, techniques, and knowledge, as well as of artists and artisans. This obviously includes the transfer or exchange of spiritual or symbolic values as well, and is not limited to commodities, or a market model, but may involve objects with aesthetic interests and symbolic content as well. It is also not necessary to speak of one-sided influences, of transfers, but of transcultural art history, one that deals with interchange, not exchange.

Now for a brief possible outline: from the beginnings of humankind, stone crafted objects were spread throughout areas of human habitation, over and across continents, as were the materials used for them. Some anthropologists specifically define what may be called civilization on the basis of the exchange or dissemination of objects over distances. It has been demonstrated how objects made with refined skills and sophistication in flint not only helped define what might be called cultures.

From the origins of recorded history in Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, and China, materials like lapis lazuli and carnelian were also distributed over widespread distances. These were valued, and made into finely crafted objects whose value exceeded their function. With them, both visual forms and symbolic devices seen in the forms of such objects as cylinder seals and stamp seals were also distributed. Seals presented not only stylistic elements, but different, often zoomorphic forms of symbolic representation, and often the earliest rudiments of writing in several cultures.

The long history of the silk routes and their impact may be briefly mentioned. From before the Common Era commodities were carried back and forth from one end of Eurasia to another, with an effect on material culture, on art, at both ends. An Indian Lakshmi has been found in Pompeii, or Aretine ware is regularly found in Southern India, or Roman glass has been uncovered in Korea and Japan. Silk clothes, often dyed with pigments from the West Asia Near East, were used to clothe emperors and patricians in Rome at one end, while tombs were constructed using fluted columns and pediments in Han China at the other of Eurasia. A good medieval example is the mantle later used for the Holy Roman Emperor which was made by Byzantine embroiderers from Dalmatia for the Norman king of Sicily that has...
an Arabic tiraz (inscription) and shows lions attacking camels on either side of a palm tree, symbolic and formal elements ultimately derived from Africa and the Near East (Fig. 1.2).

As we know from the arts of Gandhara and their diffusion, all sorts of combinations may be encountered in between on the routes of Eurasia. Since materials and objects made in gold and ivory were also widely transported, (and since most carved ivory seems to originate in African elephants) Africa was clearly involved with this commerce and the manufacture of objects already in antiquity. Thus the three continents known to antiquity were already interconnected.

However, as distinct from these older Euro-Afro-Asian interchanges, if we wish to speak about the whole of the globe being united in some sense together, including the Americas, the first real globalization in this sense already was introduced only from c. 1500. It occurred when Europeans journeyed simultaneously to the Americas and to Asia. Others (including the Moslem Chinese admiral Zheng He, Arab, Persian, and Indian sailors, not to mention peoples of the Pacific) had of course also sailed over wide stretches of ocean. Nevertheless, the Eastern and Western and for that matter the Northern and Southern hemispheres were not knit together until the Spanish and Portuguese maritime ventures of the late fifteenth century and following.

The term globalization may also be applied to this period from c. 1500 because, like the globalization of business, trade, and communication in the 21st century, it may also be regarded as connected with
commerce. Europeans sought and obtained direct access to the wealth and products (spices, silks, gold) of Asia. Accelerated forms of communication, and the result for expansion of knowledge, are also frequently taken as signs of globalization: these may also be seen as instrumental in the processes of the globalization that occurred from c. 1500. The origins of European print culture helped rapidly to disseminate knowledge about contacts Europeans made and their implications.

The connection of all parts of the globe c. 1500 created possibilities for cultural, hence artistic interchange, for better and worse, as is well known. Images and objects testify to, resulted from, and played important roles in these processes, and symbolic values were also exchanged across cultures. Circulation of new styles, subjects, and ideas about art inside Europe from c. 1500 took place within an even larger system of exchange. Thus there exists no “pure” tradition uninfluenced by the artistic forms of other cultures. The so-called European Renaissance needs to be placed in a broader context, and cannot be studied in isolation from what else was happening to Europe at the same time. Examples of cultural encounter and exchange may be found even in the most prominent sites of what is usually called Renaissance art within Europe itself, as in Nuremberg, Augsburg, and Florence, or conversely in Mughal India or Ming and Ching China. From the first direct encounters through sea travel, creatures (and denizens) of non-European lands were made known in Europe. Far from being Eurocentric or depredatory, some of the first European images of peoples from Cochin (India) did not treat them as conquered slaves or animals; probably on the basis of drawings made by someone who had been to India, Hans Burgkmair seems scrupulously to have represented the ceremonial procession of a ruler, with elephants, traditional Indian symbols of kingship, a parasol over the head of the ruler to designate his status, and seemingly to have depicted physiognomies and breechcloths with a plausible degree of accuracy. It is well known that Albrecht Dürer similarly praised as wonderful works of art and the subtle work of genius the Mexica (Aztec) objects he saw in Antwerp. He also responded to India, or at least to the famed rhinoceros shipped as a gift to the king of Portugal, that he knew through descriptions, and that he drew and replicated in an anatomically inaccurate image that nevertheless served for several centuries as the image of the beast. Dürer’s Indian rhinoceros also enjoyed wide geographical circulation; already by the end of the sixteenth century the rhinoceros had appeared on the ceiling of rooms in several houses in Tunja in Colombia, through which it had been communicated by several books. This tells a truly global story of art. Conversely Germanic designs circulated back to India: through them the baluster column seen in images by Lukas Cranach (the Elder) and Dürer, for instance in the triumphal arch of Maximilian I served as the basis for the symbolism of power in India, as seen on certain halls of the Mughal Rulers in Delhi and Agra, which
by the way replicate earlier rooms for porcelain display (the chini khana). This subsequently became the most prevalent form of column in northern and central India.\textsuperscript{78}

It is important to note, lest this account seem to be Eurocentric, that while Europeans established the first world-wide connections, in the period before 1800 they often acted as facilitators, or mediators, rather than as dominant factors, especially in relation to Africa or Asia. Recent research on the Dutch East India Company indicates that in important cases like China Europeans were merely scratching the surface of the cultures with which they dealt. The impact of Asian porcelain and other products on European cultures was in any instance much greater than that of any European object (or language) certainly in China, but in general in Asia. Much more pertinent is the way in which materials and objects circulated as Europeans facilitated the exchange of goods within the region, of Japanese lacquer to India, for example. The lacquer seen being carried as a gift to Shah Jahan in Agra (Fig. 1.3) may well have been made using raw material from Southeast Asia imported by Dutch or Chinese to Japan.\textsuperscript{79}

In this light the classic colonial pattern whereby finished, luxury goods flow from the center and raw materials to it, seems reversed prior to 1800. Silk and porcelain went to Europe, and silver from the Americas went to India, China, and Japan.\textsuperscript{80} In general Europeans often seem at first primarily to have played the role of mediators.\textsuperscript{81}

By at least 1800 conditions had begun to change, and more familiar patterns associated with European and American imperialism emerge that have affected cultural and other exchanges to the present. But these too are passing, if not now past. Our own time suggests that other patterns based on notions of networks or even rhizomes might provide better models rather than centers, anyway. And who is to say, as many may do, if the days of Euro-American domination are not at an end anyway?

Let us conclude by quoting some more of Suzanne Marchand’s comments. Marchand says that

Unlike many of the recent commentators on Europe’s culture of imperialism, I do not think that all knowledge, orientalist or otherwise, inevitably contributed to the building of empires, or even to the upholding of Eurocentric points of view. In general, I find presumptuous and rather condescending the conception, so common to these readings of cultural history, that all knowledge is power, especially since the prevailing way of understanding this formulation suggests that power is something sinister and oppressive, something exerted against or over others. Of course, knowledge can be used this way, but knowledge as understanding can also lead to appreciation, dialogue, self-critique, perspectival reorientation, and personal and cultural enrichment.\textsuperscript{82}

Let us keep this in mind as we try to envisage—even to write—a new global, Circulations in the Global History of Art.

1.3 “Europeans Bringing Gifts to Shah Jahan,” 1640s or 1650s, from the *Windsor Shaname*. Royal Collection, Windsor Castle
Notes

1 This chapter represents a revised version of the lecture delivered as a keynote address at the conference at Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, that forms the basis for this volume. The lecture has been presented in slightly differing forms in Princeton, Florence, Berlin, Olomouc, Hamburg, Dresden, Bogotá, Poznań, New York, Cracow, and Rio de Janeiro; a Portuguese translation will appear in a collection edited by Roberto Condurru and Maria Berbara, Rio de Janeiro.


3 “Global Commodity: The Material Culture of Early Modern Connections, 1400–1800,” Global History and Culture Centre, University of Warwick 12–14 December 2012; “Global Art History and its Peripheries,” École Normale Supérieure, Paris, 31 May 2013. At the Academia Sinica in Taipei a research group has been formed that addresses and has held meetings related to the theme “Artistic and Cultural Exchanges between Europe and East Asia, 1600–1800.” In Italy various meetings on such topics have been held, e.g. recently at the Archivio di Stato in Florence on 7 June 2013 on “I Medici e il Levante.”

4 The section “The Idea of World Art History” was arranged as the first in the congress, although the papers delivered in this section appeared together with two papers from a separate session added for Chinese colleagues and chaired by the same organizing co-chair of the session as the fourth section in the publication of the congress. Jaynie Anderson, ed., Crossing Cultures, Conflict, Migration, and Convergence. The Proceedings of the 32nd International Congress in the History of Art (Comité International d’Histoire de l’Art, CIHA), The University of Melbourne, 13–18 January 2008 (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2009): 72–132.

5 For Taipei see note 3. The Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz has the following ongoing projects: “Globalisierung von Bildern und Dingen in der Frühen Neuzeit”; and “Künstliche Paradiese der Universalität. Artefakte aus Afrika, Syrien, Peru, Mexiko und China in den Sammlungen der Medici.” At the Freie Universität Berlin a project is devoted to “Transkulturelle Verhältnissräume von Kunst.” The University of Zurich in collaboration with the University of São Paulo has introduced a research group on “Founding Ideas: Historiographies and Methods for a Global Art History.” At the University of Heidelberg world art history questions are discussed in the newly formed Cluster “Asia and Europe.” An example of one result is the conference held on 23 and 24 May 2013 by the Berlin project group on “The Itineraries of Art. Topographies of Artistic Mobility in Europe and Asia 1500–1900,” papers from which are now being prepared for publication.

6 In addition to Is Art History Global? these include Julian Bell, Mirror of the World: A New History of Art (New York and London: Thames & Hudson, 2007); Kitty Zijlmans and Wilfried van Damme, eds., World Art Studies (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2008); James Elkins, Zhivka Valiavicharska, and Alice Kim, eds., Art and Globalization (The Stone Art Story Institutes I) (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010); Mary D. Sheriff, ed., Cultural Contact and the Making of European Art since the Age of Exploration (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); and the essays collected in kritische berichte (sic) 40, no. 2 (2012); Jill H. Casid and Aruna D’Souza, eds., Art History in the Wake of the Global Turn (Williamstown, MA: Sterling and Frances Clark Art Institute, and New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014). See further the papers cited elsewhere in this chapter. The references in this and the following notes are intended to give an idea of the scope of interest, but do not and could not claim to be complete.


10 This claim was made in a lecture delivered at the International Congress of the History of Art at Princeton University, January 2013. A version of this lecture was also offered in a panel at the 2013 conference at the Freie Universität Berlin, “The Itineraries of Art,” which has been prepared for publication. The papers delivered in this section appeared together with two papers from a separate session added for Chinese colleagues and chaired by the same organizing co-chair of the session as the fourth section in the publication of the congress. Jaynie Anderson, ed., Crossing Cultures, Conflict, Migration, and Convergence. The Proceedings of the 32nd International Congress in the History of Art (Comité International d’Histoire de l’Art, CIHA), The University of Melbourne, 13–18 January 2008 (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2009): 72–132. See also Elkins’s comments, echoing those here, in Jonathan Harris, ed., “Why Art History is Global,” in Globalization and Contemporary Art (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011): 375–86.


12 For example, Elkins, in Is Art History Global?, and in various other works, including Stories of Art; David Carrier, A World Art History and its Objects (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008).


14 See Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, “The Authors Reply,” in The Art Bulletin 87 no. 3 (2005): 432, where “the challenge to Enlightenment historical models” is made explicit. Issues of chronology (and anachronism, implicitly) were however also important in earlier historical methods, for which evidence is abundantly provided by the scholarship of Anthony Grafton, for example in his What was History? The Art of History in Early Modern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Nagel and Wood’s argument is most fully stated in The Anachronic Renaissance (New York: The MIT Press, 2010). To be sure (see “Notes from the Field: Tradition,” The Art Bulletin, 95 no. 4 (2013): 528), “notions of multiple temporalities and the combination of cultural traditions in the same work are however hardly new discoveries,” but it is significant that Nagel and Wood (The Anachronic Renaissance, p. 370, n. 18) acknowledge that their use of the “anachronic” is drawn from Jacques Rancière, “Le concept d’anachronisme et la vérité de l’historien,” L’inactuel: Psychanalyse et culture 6 (1996): 53–68, which specifically attacks Lucien Febvre’s Le problème de l’incohérence au XVIIe siècle, la religion de Rabelais (Paris: A. Michel, 1947), part of Rancière’s extended critique of the Annales school (for which see the introduction to the present volume) presented more fully in Les noms de l’histoire: Essai de poétique du savoir (Paris: Seuil, 1992).

15 Hans Belting, Das Ende der Kunstgeschichte (rev. ed., Munich: C.H. Beck Verlag, 1995). Belting’s observation may or may not be true—there have long been discussions of world art history, as is discussed below.


20 For this distinction see Denys Hay, Annalists and Historians: Western Historiography from the Eighth to the Eighteenth Centuries (London and New York: Methuen, 1977).

21 Kwame Anthony Appiah, Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers (New York: Norton, 2006), has eloquently reiterated these points. To avoid some confusion (like the impression of auditors of this chapter in lecture form), this analysis, while in sympathy with some of Appiah’s arguments, is not inspired by them, nor does it provide an exposition of his point of view.

22 The issues discussed in this paragraph were the topic of a debate that already was lively in the 1950s and 1960s, and now seems to be returning. For the retention of an ideal of objective knowledge and facts in relation to historical interpretation, changing points of view, and the place of the historian, see for example Edward Hallett Carr, What is History? (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961). Like much else in this debate, the issue of world art history opens up wider questions of historiography.

23 Despite the abundant historiography and much recent literature on Vasari, little attention has been paid to this particular point of view. However, an increasing amount of attention has been given to Kugler, his predecessors and contemporaries. A useful introduction is provided by Gabriele Bickendorf, “Die ‘Berliner Schule’: Carl Friedrich von Rumohr (1785–1843), Gustav Pfisterer, ed., Von Winckelmann bis Warburg, 46–61 (Munich: 2005).
Beck, 2007). In an as-yet unpublished lecture delivered at a seminar held on global art history held in the Schloss, Dresden, on 16 May 2013 Hendrick Karge spoke about Kugler, Schnaase, and the nineteenth-century origins of world art history. This point is also raised in passing in Ulrich Pfisterer, “Origins and Principles of World Art History: 1900 (and 2000),” in Zijlmans and van Damme, World Art Studies, 69–89.


25 Along with universal history the notion of universal geography has also been criticized (especially in France) as very occidental in character and revealing culturally centered biases. For a far-reaching critique see Serge Latouche, L’occidentalisation du monde (Paris: La découverte, 1992).

26 Specifically, Jörn Rüsen has treated this subject in numerous books. See note 43 below.

27 Elkins, “David Summers’s Real Spaces.”


29 See Elkins, “David Summers’s Real Spaces,” 56, 62. However, Elkins, Stories of Art, characterizes the culturally specific nature of textbooks in a variety of lands. He also does not seem consistent in his writing about survey books, because in Stories of Art, 138–50, he suggests other possibilities whereby these supposed biases might be avoided. In any case, as remarked in Kaufmann, “Is Art History Global?” 359, it is erroneous to consider E.H. Gombrich’s The Story of Art as a paradigmatic textbook, just as it is to assume that a Eurocentric textbook is the only sort of textbook possible.

Recently Paul Wood, Western Art and the Wider World (Malden, MA and Oxford, 2014) has also attempted to imbricate Western art in a wider global history, but the question again may be raised if by its very nature (the assumption of Western art as a starting point) this approach nevertheless remains enmeshed in Eurocentrism.

30 Elkins, “Summers’s Real Spaces.”


34 As articulated by Jürgen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971).

35 As demonstrated by the debate between adherents of Foucault and Habermas, and its revival, for which see Michael Kelly, ed., Critique and Power: Recasting the Foucault/Habermas Debate (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1994). It is neither the intention of nor within the purview of this analysis to engage in discussion of the validity or limits of critical reflection on the relation of power to thought.

36 To argue otherwise is, I believe, a basic misunderstanding of what is sometimes described as the “rationalist” side in the discussion that was (mis-)labeled “the positivism debate,” some of whose seminal papers were collected in Der Positivismusstreit in der deutschen Soziologie (Darmstadt: Luchterhand-Literaturverlag, 1969). The arguments remain surprisingly current, as seen for example when critics (including some of this talk when delivered in Berlin) continue to stress the relation of (and even dependence upon) one’s point of view to power (except of course that of the critic herself).

37 Moxey, Visual Time, represents his fullest, and latest, statement.
This reproduces the words that Moxey used in a lecture he delivered at the International Congress of the History of Art in Nuremberg, forthcoming in the publications of that congress.

Ibid., 173.

Ibid., 2, 38, 44, and passim. E.H. Gombrich, in In Search of Cultural History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), presents the most obvious critique of this point of view, and repeatedly offered alternatives to historical determinism, while retaining a view of historicism, namely that things are related to a point in a history which encompasses and is developed from them. The basis for his anti-determinist argument is Karl A. Popper, The Poverty of Historicism (London: Routledge, 1957); however, by conflating historicism with historical determinism Popper seems to have abetted confusion about terminology that later scholars have followed.

As indicated in some of the texts by a variety of authors in Jörn Rüsen, ed., Western Historical Thinking: An Intercultural Debate (New York: Berghahn, 2002).

This is clearly stated in many books by or edited by Rüsen, including more recently Time and History: The Variety of Cultures (New York: Berghahn, 2007); Mihai Spariosu and Jörn Rüsen, eds., Exploring Humanity: Intercultural Perspectives on Humanism (Gottingen and Taipei: V & R unipress, 2012); Oliver Kozlarek, Jörn Rüsen, and Ernst Wolff, eds., Shaping a Humane World: Civilisations, Axial Times, Modernities, Humanism (Bielefeld: Transcript-Verlag, 2012). In Visual Time, p. 34, n. 7, Moxey cites Western Historical Thinking, ed. Rüsen, but draws upon only some of its arguments.


George Kubler, The Art and Architecture of Ancient America. The Mexican, Maya, and Andean Peoples (Baltimore: Penguin, 1962), 6ff, 13ff, with charts on pages xxxiii–xxxv. Based on Kubler’s notes, Thomas Reese will have demonstrated in a forthcoming book that Kubler’s Shape of Time in fact developed from his reflections on such considerations.

This contrasts with newer proponents of the “anachronic” who invoke Kubler, such as Moxey (Visual Time) who, despite criticizing the concept of periodization, states it is naturalized (23) and continues to employ notions such as the Renaissance; and Nagel and Wood, who (“The Authors Reply,” 432), while disparaging concerns with periodization in earlier scholarship, argue for epochal divisions in history and still present the Renaissance as a distinctive historical period even as they treat it as an Anachronic Renaissance.

Holly has presented similar arguments at several venues, most notably at the Centennial Session on Globalism at the Annual Meeting of the College Art Association of New York, 12 February 2011, where the responses to her arguments recorded here were also provoked.


See Rüsen, Time and History.


Subramaniam, Courtly Encounters, 29.

Ming Tampo and Ruth B. Phillips in New York, and subsequently in Nuremberg, 2012 (orally).

Orally, to the author. See further the previous notes.


59 See various essays by John Onians, whose most extensive argument to date is presented in *Neurohistory: From Aristotle and Pliny to Baxandall and Zeki* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007).


63 These arguments are encapsulated in *Orient oder Rom? Beiträge zur Geschichte der Spätantiken und frühchristlichen Kunst* (Leipzig, 1901). An increasing bibliography has grown up around Strzygowski; most recently a conference on his work and legacy was held in Lublin in 2012; its papers are to be published. Strzygowski’s contributions to ‘orientalist’ scholarship are discussed in several essays by Marchand and recapitulated in the latter’s *German Orientalism*, 403–10.

64 Strzygowski’s arguments become particularly striking when they propose Aryan presence in the art of the Far East: *Die bildende Kunst des Ostens; ein Überblick über die für Europa bedeutsam vollen Hauptschränkungen* (Leipzig: Klinkhart, 1916).

65 James Elkins, *Chinese Landscape Painting as Western Art History* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010).


67 Anecdotally, a regular stream of Chinese professors of art history has in recent years been coming to Princeton to spend a term or two to read “Western” art history, study the Italian Renaissance, and discuss theoretical issues of art history, including global art history.

68 Villa I Tatti and the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence have begun initiatives that involve the inclusion of Chinese scholars, in the former instance in the study of Italian Renaissance and in the latter in world art history. The University of Beijing has been attempting to establish a Department for World Art History. As mentioned in note 3, in Taiwan a research seminar has been established around the topic of intercultural exchange.

69 This comment obviously reflects the title of a well-known book by Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994).

70 This may apply not only to older, Marxist views, but also to ones such as those in Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

71 As this chapter may itself suggest, part of the theoretical problem involved is that while globalization is a current shibboleth, theories of globalization, in as much as they apply to art, remain to be well formulated. While there has been much theorization about the meaning and dimensions of globalism and globalization, especially in regard to politics, economics, and sociology, little of it has, however, hitherto been brought to bear effectively on theories of art. See, for example, *Art and Globalization* (ed. Elkins) and *Globalization and Contemporary Art* (ed. Harris).


81 See Kaufmann and North, “Introduction: Mediating Cultures,” in their Mediating Cultures.

82 Marchand, German Orientalism, xxv. Marchand adds: “Oriental studies did partake of and contribute to the exploitation and ‘othering’ of non-westerners to be sure; but it also has led to positive outcomes of the type just listed, and I cannot subscribe to a philosophical stance that suggests that such things do not motivate or characterize the pursuit of knowledge” (xxv–xxvi).