



International Conference

ART AND POLITICS IN EUROPE IN THE MODERN PERIOD

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb

Zagreb, 29 June – 2 July 2016

- Call for Papers -

The position and status of art and artist changed considerably in Europe in the modern period, primarily with the formulation of the concept of artistic genius and the new division of labour that separated artists from artisans. Those dealing with art were looked upon as individuals possessing an extraordinary talent that transcended mere skill. Regardless of this new individuality, artistic genius cannot be equated with complete autonomy. Although no longer dependent upon brotherhoods and guilds, artistic practice was nevertheless tied to a wider social context.

Political circumstances have always influenced artistic production to a greater or lesser extent. However, in the modern period, an increased significance was given to political bodies and legislative frameworks which introduced changes to social structures bringing thereby the need for artists to adapt to new situations. In addition to newly formed bourgeoisie, aristocracy and the church(es) which remained influential in the course of the 19th century, various political elites, and political bodies on both national and local levels, gradually assumed an important role as investors of architectural projects or patrons of artists and artworks in general.

By stimulating or influencing cultural transfers political structures greatly influenced the shaping of cultural circles in European countries. Changes of political borders, social systems wars and economic instability are still continuously mirrored in the production of art, both formally and conceptually.

Social organization of artistic life has also been determined by different spheres of political, cultural or economic interests. Professional associations, organisation and artist collectives, whose activities can range from utopian programmes to practical implementation of artistic ideas, either affirm or oppose political parties and/or systems. The same is the case with individual artists whose work can speak more or less openly about their personal position in relation to wider socio-political circumstances. Although rarely, they still manage to oppose regimes and enforced visual models in more or less subtle ways. Their personal criticism can be interpreted as at least an effort to undermine the power of oppressive ideologies.

What of all these mere efforts or accomplishments stays recorded and conveyed to other generations is largely determined by museums. As institutions which either specialize in art or collect art as part of more diverse collections, museums often help determine, reinforce or disregard the value of individual art works, artists or certain aspects of art production. Collection and communication of art in these institutions, understood in the widest possible sense of the word, establish a dialogue between art production and the notion of quality, value, tradition and identity. By collecting art, which can be seen as an act of collective remembering, museums designate collected works as representatives of the material world that are worth keeping and protecting. By exhibiting, they transmit messages which are fraught with ideological meanings developed in specific political, economic and socio-cultural contexts. Through their basic functions, museums therefore indicate or

clearly point out to specific relationships between art and ideology with what is present in their collections and shown in exhibitions as well as with what is absent.

The goal of the conference is to stress the social contexts of artistic production and to question and interpret social and historical circumstances that conditioned the creation, meaning and perception of works of art.

The contributions to the scientific conference *Art and Politics in Europe in the Modern Period* should deal with different aspects of complex relationships between visual art and political and economic, cultural, gender and other politics in Europe in the period from the late 15th century to the present day. This can be addressed through one of the topics in the three following topic areas:

Art in the Service of Politics

- Politics of art patronage (by different social classes and political structures: aristocracy, bourgeoisie, state and local governments)
- Influence of political bodies on art, architecture and urban planning
- Role of art, architecture and urban planning in representing regimes – totalitarian, democratic and other
- Shaping national styles and visual identities
- Role of art and art exhibitions in cultural policies and national representation
- Promoting dominant ideologies through different media (painting, sculpture, architecture, graphic art and design, photography, drawings, caricature etc)
- Influence of economic and social policies on art, architecture and urban planning
- Religious communities, politics and art
- *Damnatio memoriae* – removal and destruction of artistic heritage
- Artistic heritage and military conflicts
- Politically motivated restoration of monuments
- Public sculpture and the creation of monument cult in the 19th and 20th century
- Traditionalism in art and political elites
- Art and revolution

Art and Artist in Opposition

- Caricature and politics
- Artistic production as reflection of opposition to dominant political structures
- Avant-garde art as a catalyst of change
- Socially engaged art
- Subversion in art and photography
- Gender and art (production and representation)

Works of Art in Museums

- Museum functions and representation (collection, preservation, communication of art works and discursive practices)
- Museum displays and the production and reception of power narratives
- Influence of market-oriented logic of production on collecting and displaying in art museums
- Wider social perception and reception of power narratives (in art museums/ museums exhibitions showing art works)

Paper proposals should contain author(s)'s name(s), title and the body of text, written in English, which should not exceed 500 words and a short author's biography not longer than 250 words. Proposals should be sent to art-politics@ffzg.hr.

Deadline for the submission of proposals has been extended to **5 February 2016**. Contributors will receive notification of acceptance by the end of February 2016. The official language of the conference is English.

More about the conference and submission process: <http://art-politics.ffzg.unizg.hr>.