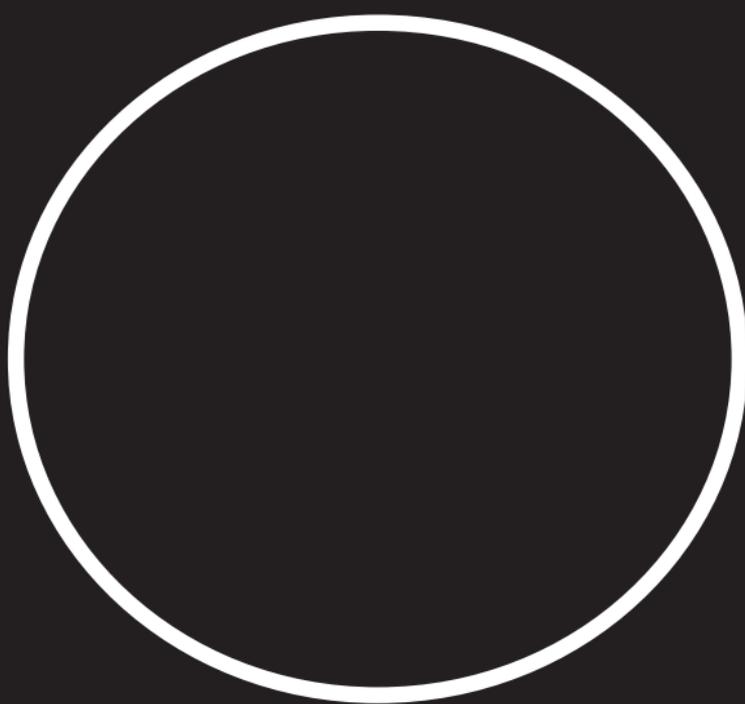


After Year Zero



Geographies of Collaboration since 1945



After Year Zero
Geographies of Collaboration since 1945
Exhibition 19.09.2013–24.11.2013

The year 1945, the “Year Zero” of Germany and Europe, brought a reordering of global relationships. This political realignment is not recounted here as a history of the Cold War ideological blocs. Rather, the project focuses on the respective developments of European history and African history over the course of decolonization, on the ways in which they intertwined, and on the attempt by actors during this period to fundamentally transform the framework conditions of the colonial modern era.

Probing deeply into specific exemplary questions, the exhibition and conference explore the politics of historiography and of the articulation of historical consciousness. The central point of reference is the first Asian-African conference, better known as the Bandung Conference, held in 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia, at which 600 delegates from 29 nations and liberation movements drafted a model for collaboration in the global South under the banner of an anti-colonial modernity – a milestone in the history of decolonization that saw the launch of the Non-Aligned Movement. The installations and films in the exhibition, including four new productions, highlight historical case studies along with their inscribed, and still competing, narratives. The talks, lectures, and films of the conference in October and November 2013 will survey “geographies of collaboration”, illuminating the gray areas in the way this term has been used over time.

Vitrine 1 & €4

Geographies of Collaboration Before and After 1945

The idea of Pan-Africanism originated in the European metropolises at the beginning of the twentieth century, through the meeting of widely traveled, politically astute intellectuals. It developed from the simple and far-reaching insight that Africa could be greater than a single continent. Although this Africa was more imagination than experience, it nevertheless served as a blueprint for the formulation of a common interest directed against European colonial powers; it formed a potential connecting element between students, dock workers, university professors, artists, activists, or soldiers, whether in Europe, the Caribbean islands, or the United States. Marxist theory and analysis, and the concept of internationalism, served as resources, but not as ideologies, and were adapted and developed in the process.

The idea of Pan-Africanism transformed and was realised from 1900 onwards as a congress movement (through the visionary initiator W. E. B. Du Bois) and briefly as a mass movement (through the businessman and journalist Marcus Garvey). As a harbinger and an organizational form, Pan-Africanism enabled Africa to take a seat at the negotiating table, at least in the forums of the United Nations. When Ghana became the first African country to gain independence in 1957, it was only possible thanks to years of preparation and collaboration. In the 1960s Pan-Africanism formed the intellectual basis for tri-continental networking (Havana, 1966), and became established on the African continent as a politically pragmatic organizational form: as the OAU (Organization of African Unity), and from 2002 as the AU (African Union), which was largely propagated and financed by Muammar Gaddafi. With his speech in the middle of the 1990s, “I am an African,” the South African President Thabo Mbeki once again evoked the old spirit, remodelling Kwame Nkrumah’s farsighted idea of the “United States of Africa” into a potential liberal economic union.

Vitrine 2

The New World Order

Between 1945 and 1989 the competing systems of the bloc confrontation and the associated models of the world order determined the historical-political consciousness in the Northern hemisphere. Berlin, the city that symbolized Nazi terror, now became symbolic of the Iron Curtain. Parallel to this ran the "Color Curtain", separating the colonial world from the imperialist centers and their domestic societies. The collapse of civilization in the center of Europe conclusively robbed European colonialism of the basis of its legitimacy: the universalist ideology of its civilizing mission, which could only be upheld through racist hierarchies and pseudo-science. During the war the Allies won the loyalty of the colonial population through the promise to accord them the right to self-determination, which had already been made during the First World War, and was subsequently broken. Even after 1945 this promise could only be redeemed through violence. The liberation movements drew on a history of ideas, at the center of which stood the possibility of the actual realization of the universalist promise of modernity. It was at the Afro-Asian Conference held in the Indonesian city of Bandung Conference in 1955 that this demand was met and the right to self-determination became a political reality.

Vitrine 3

"Year Zero": Entry into History

The third vitrine exposes some of France's entangled relationships with its former colonies, and the ambivalence and contradictory attitude of its government when dealing with its colonial past. By means of "historical laws," some with revisionist flavors, the French governments of the last decade have attempted to harness the historiography of the national collective memory. Meanwhile, behind the scenes of power, dubious deals concluded between France and its former African colonies have contributed to the formation of an elaborate network of economic and diplomatic alliances known as *Françafrique*. At different times other collaborations relating to France and its colonies have taken place: the French revolutionary masses joined the fight for the abolition of slavery; the contact and exchange of ideas between black Francophone intellectuals and their Surrealist counterparts shaped the theoretical basis of anti-colonialism.

Vitrine 5

The Suez Canal

The fifth vitrine has been conceived by the Egyptian filmmaker Jihan El-Tahri. The collected material depicts the evolution of the role of the Suez Canal as a vital strategic artery in both colonial and post-colonial history. The shortcut provided by the canal between Africa and Europe facilitated access to the colonies and opened new trade routes. Gamal Abdel Nasser's decision to nationalize the canal in 1956 was a turning point in North-South relations, which plunged Egypt into the heart of the Cold War. The ensuing war became an international crisis, a battle of wills between the former colonial masters and the new leaders fighting for true independence. The Suez Crisis ended with the embarrassing resignation of Britain's Prime Minister Anthony Eden, while victory for Nasser opened an alternative chapter in the New World Order.

Vitrine 6

Egypt: The Hinge of the Universal

The sixth vitrine traces shifting and competing narratives and discourses of universality related to Africa and European ideology in the process of decolonization. The narrative of a universal history that had underwritten the ideology of colonial expansion was based on a history of civilization that incorporated ancient Egypt along racial criteria, thus dissociating it from the African continent. The bias of this hegemonic historiography was challenged in the 1960s by the Senegalese Cheikh Anta Diop, who sought to reverse fundamental colonial assumptions engrained in the historian's discipline by proving that the ancient Egyptian civilization was an integral part of Africa, which he claimed was the true cradle of civilization. Cheikh Anta Diop also successfully employed another domain of universality in the service of his thesis. As director of the radiocarbon laboratory in Dakar, Diop advanced the new radiocarbon dating method in archeology, the archeological equivalent to a "Year Zero," and representative of advancement in the natural sciences, which, epitomized by nuclear science, had served as a bastion of continuity in Western claims to objective truths and privileged access to universality. This is juxtaposed in the vitrine with the universality engrained in the rhetorics of modernization and techno-social development represented here by the project of the Aswan Dam; with the UNESCO "world heritage" program to save the monuments of the ancient Nubian civilization from flooding; and with the Afro-Futurist counter-universality of performer and musician Sun Ra, who found actual universality in the exile of the universe fused with (black) ancient Egyptian mythology.

Vitrine 7

Travelling Communiqué. Reading a Photo Archive (1948–80),
Presidential Press Service, Yugoslavia

This project speculates about a *Communiqué* (public statement) that was published in an early moment of the Non-Aligned Movement, but never arrived in public debate. It forces us to rethink the Movement's basic concepts in relation to today's paradoxical forms of the politics of exclusion perpetuated by globalization that are entangled with the politics of inclusion legitimized by a state of permanent war. The project's point of departure is a presidential photo archive of the Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito. What does this archive provide us with and how can we relate, today, to the politics of universalism beyond the dominant political and ideological concepts?

The long-term collaborative project *Travelling Communiqué. Reading a Photo Archive (1948–1980) Presidential Press Service, Yugoslavia* is conceived by Armin Linke (artist, Berlin/Milano), Doreen Mende (curator/theorist, Berlin/London) and Milica Tomić (artist, Belgrade) in discussion and with the contribution of the Museum of Yugoslav History (Radovan Cukić, Ivan Manojlović and Mirjana Slavković), Fabian Bechtle (artist, Berlin), Estelle Blaschke (photography historian, Berlin), Zoran Erić (art historian/curator, Belgrade), Theo Eshetu (filmmaker, Rome), Maja Hodoscek (artist, Ljubljana), Pramod Kumar (archive historian, New Delhi), Milica Lopičić (architect, Belgrade), The Otolith Group (artists/theorists, London), Olga Manojlović Pintar (historian, Belgrade), Dubravka Sekulić (writer and architect, Belgrade/Zurich), Ana Sladojević (theorist/curator, Belgrade), Branimir Stojanović (philosopher/psychoanalyst, Belgrade), Jelena Vesić (curator/theorist, Belgrade/Maastricht), and Stevan Vuković (philosopher/curator, Belgrade). Photo Collection Museum of Yugoslav History (MYH), Belgrade.

Vitrine 8

A Fable of Fatal Incorporation: The Final Scene from *Hyenas*

The eighth vitrine displays The Otolith Group's close reading of the final scene from Djibril Diop Mambéty's 1992 film *Hyenas*, adapted from Friedrich Dürrenmatt's 1958 play *Der Besuch der alten Dame*. In *Hyenas*, Linguere Ramatou, the wealthiest woman in the world, "richer than the World Bank", returns to Colobane, her impoverished hometown, in a fictional West African country. Ramatou demands the death of her former lover Dramaam Drameh in exchange for fabulous wealth. The process by which the townspeople of Colobane gradually persuade themselves to sanction and commit corporate murder is revealed. In its prophetic vision of sacrifice being incorporated into the bright future of the global market, *Hyenas* both pre-figures and casts a shadow on the forecasts for the future growth of Africa's economy hymned by two articles both titled "Africa Rising", published by *The Economist* and *Time* in 2011 and 2012 respectively.

Conference and Films

3 October 2013: Writing History

The talks and films address the fundamental role of Africa as well as inclusions and omissions in the European construction of world history, and continuities at the nexus of colonial rule and fascism.

4 October 2013: Universal Resources in the Space Age — Trajectories in Pop Culture

African music revolutionized European popular culture after 1945, although the specific lines of connection and influence are often obscure. The films and talks will take a fresh look at the imaginary, biographical and theoretical body of source material for diverse pop genres.

5 October 2013: The Bandung Moment — Alignments and Re-alignments

The 1955 Bandung Conference marked a clear break in the final phase of colonialism. How did Bandung change the ideological and power-political parameters and what has become of the vision of collaboration of the global South?

23–24 November 2013: Universal Horizons and the Categories of Art

Which institutional and museum categorizations reflect the global power structures and the colonial legacy of the modern era? From the “primitivism” of modern art to the globally operating system of contemporary art today, the conference contributions situate cultural production in the geopolitical geographies of modernity.

With Nabil Ahmed, David Barton, Garnette Cadogan, Ntone Edjabe, Bassam El-Baroni, Rangoato Hlasane, James T. Hong, Keyti, Koyo Kouoh, Kien Ket Lim, Bongani Madondo, Rastko Močnik, Fred Moten, Charles Tonderai Mudede, Erhard Schüttpelz, Shirin Rai, some authors of the project *Travelling Communiqué. Reading a Photo Archive (1948–1980) Presidential Press Service, Yugoslavia and the artists of the exhibition a.o.*

Films by Jihan El-Tahri, Yervant Gianikian & Angela Ricci Lucchi, Théo Robichet, Ousmane Sembène, Jean-Marie Straub & Danièle Huillet and John Akomfrah.

“Universal Resources in the Space Age” in collaboration with *The Space Between Us*.

Credits

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Anselm Franke
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and research curator
Heidi Ballet

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Zak Group

Executive Architecture

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Architekten (Sabine
Schneller, Kerstin
Meyer-Ebrecht)

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Project Coordination
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Koyo Kouoh, Olivier
Marboeuf, Laurie Robins,
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Ruckteschell-Katte,
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Berlin

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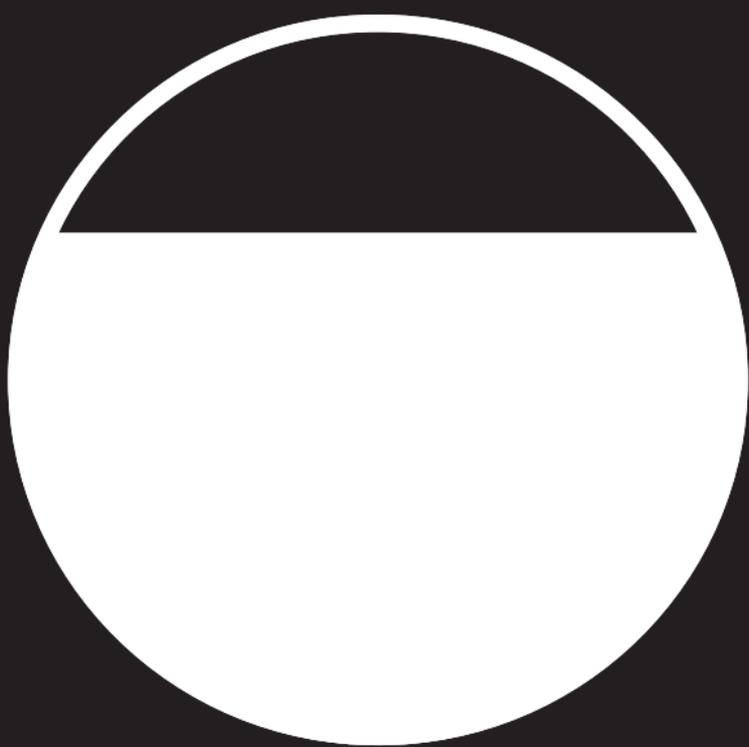
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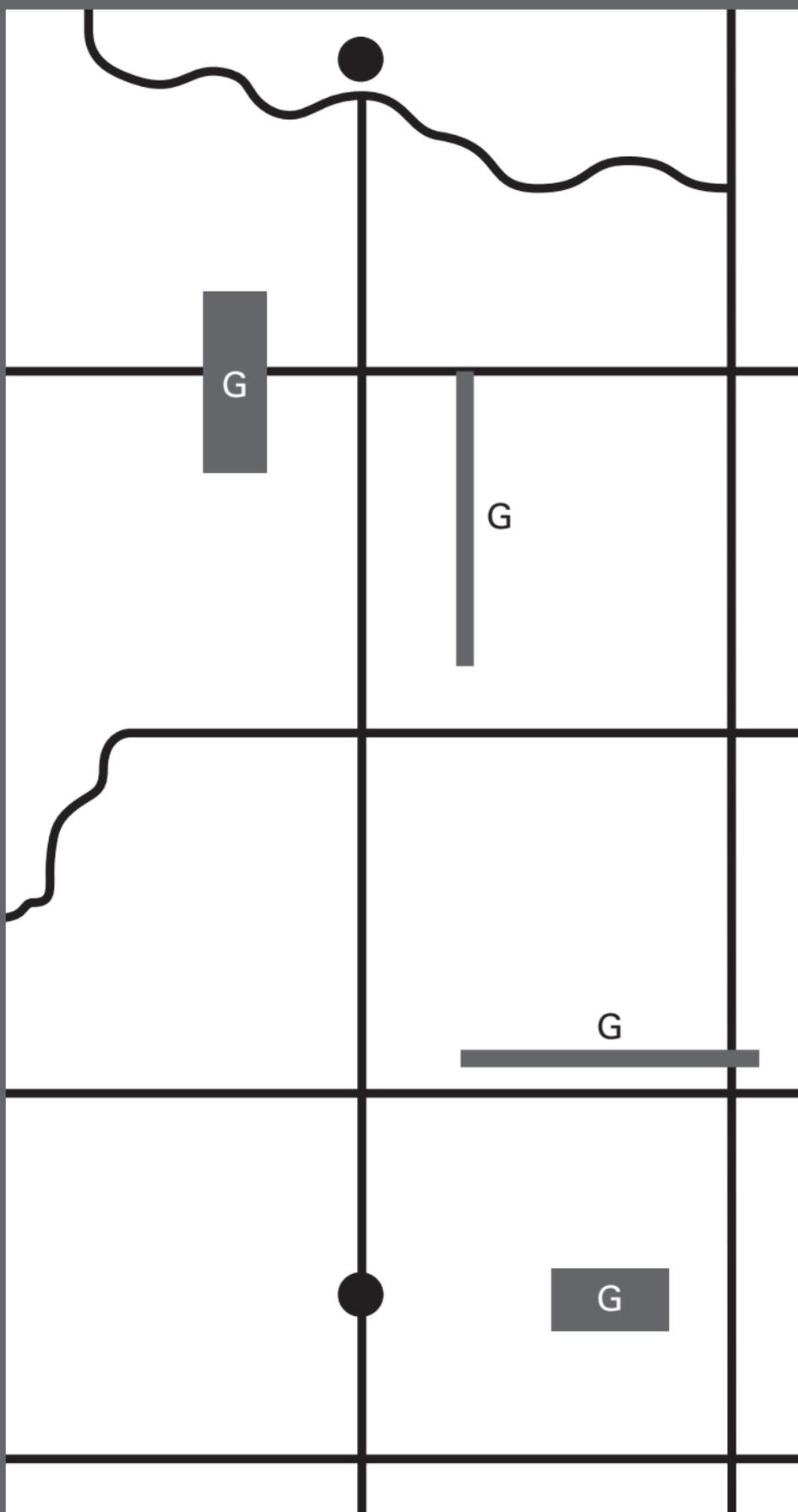
www.hkw.de/afteryearzero

HKW
Haus der Kulturen der Welt





Exhibition Hall



Vitrine 1 & 4

Geographies of Collaboration Before and After 1945

Vitrine 2

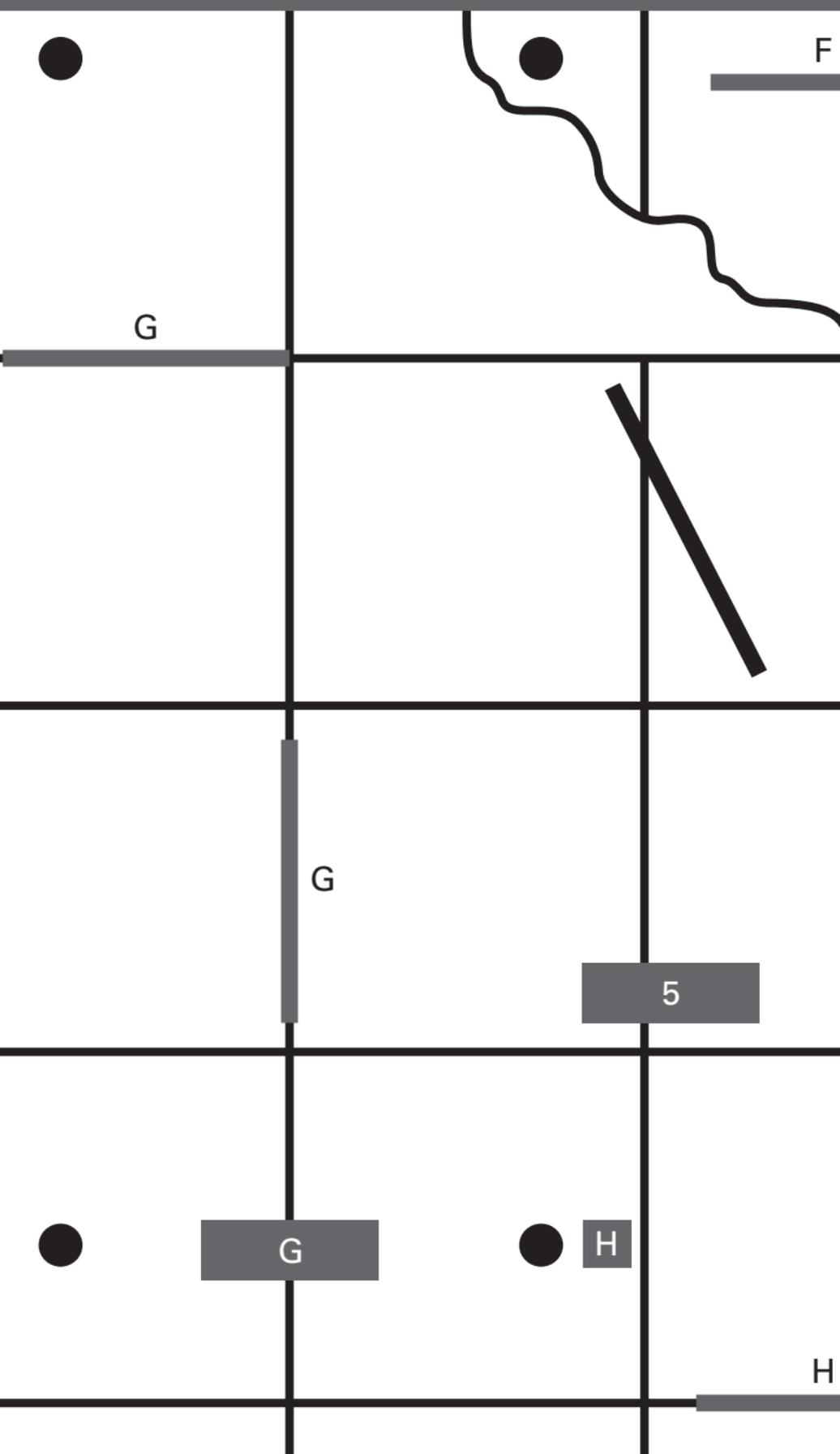
The New World Order

Vitrine 3

"Year Zero": Entry into History

Vitrine 5

The Suez Canal



Vitrine 6

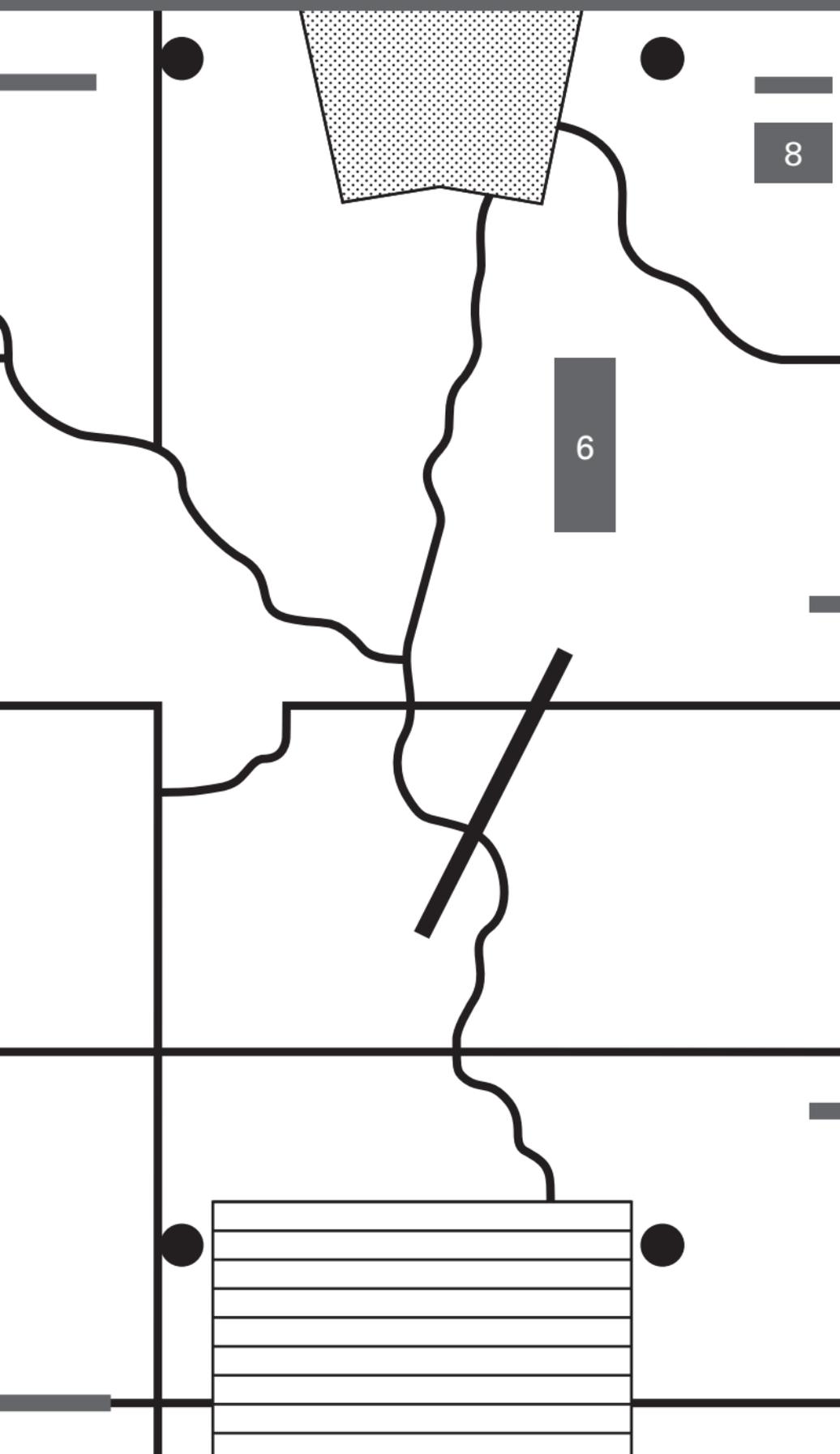
Egypt: The Hinge of the Universal

Vitrine 7

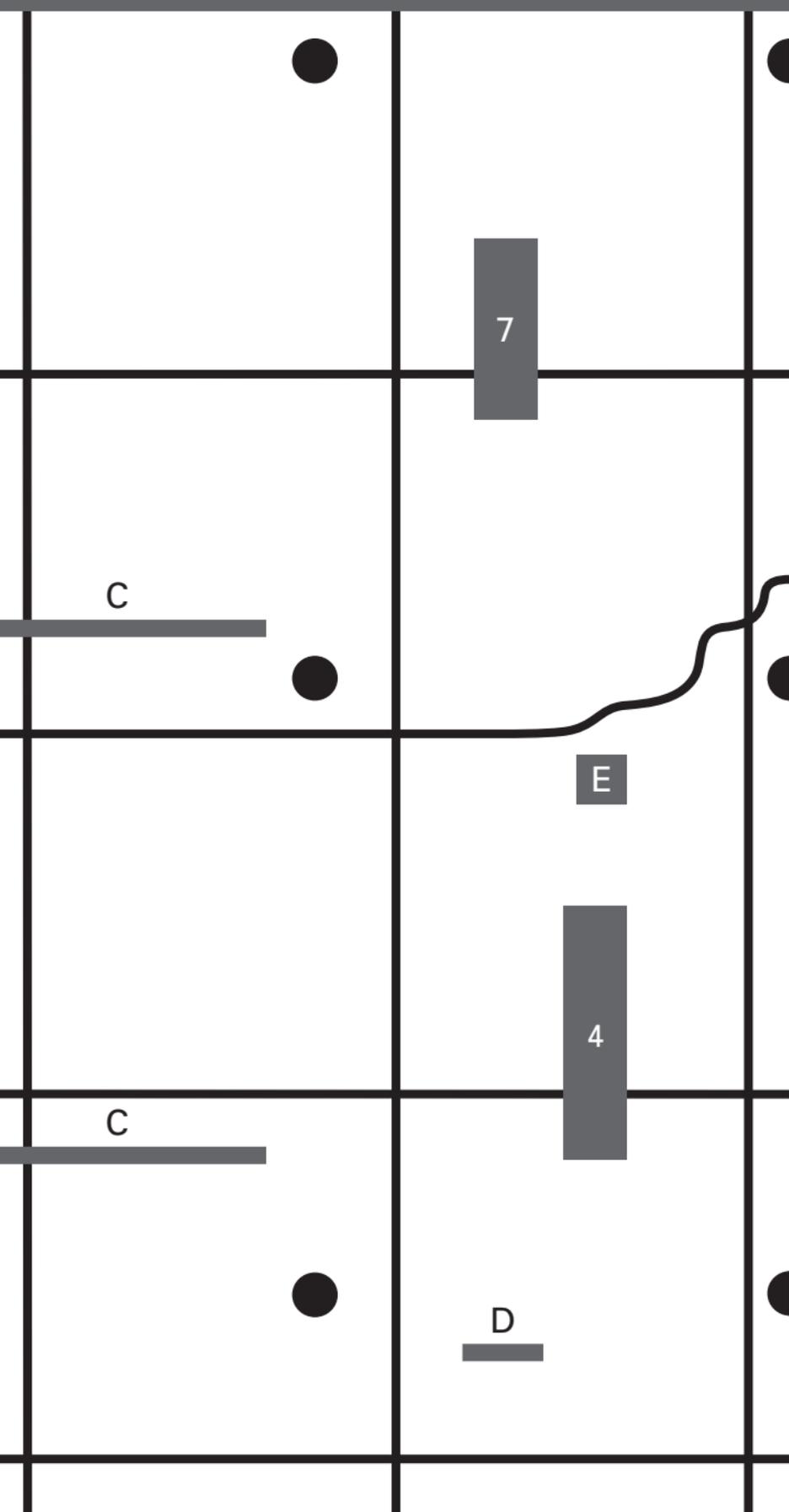
Travelling Communiqué. Reading a Photo Archive (1948–80),
Presidential Press Service, Yugoslavia

Vitrine 8

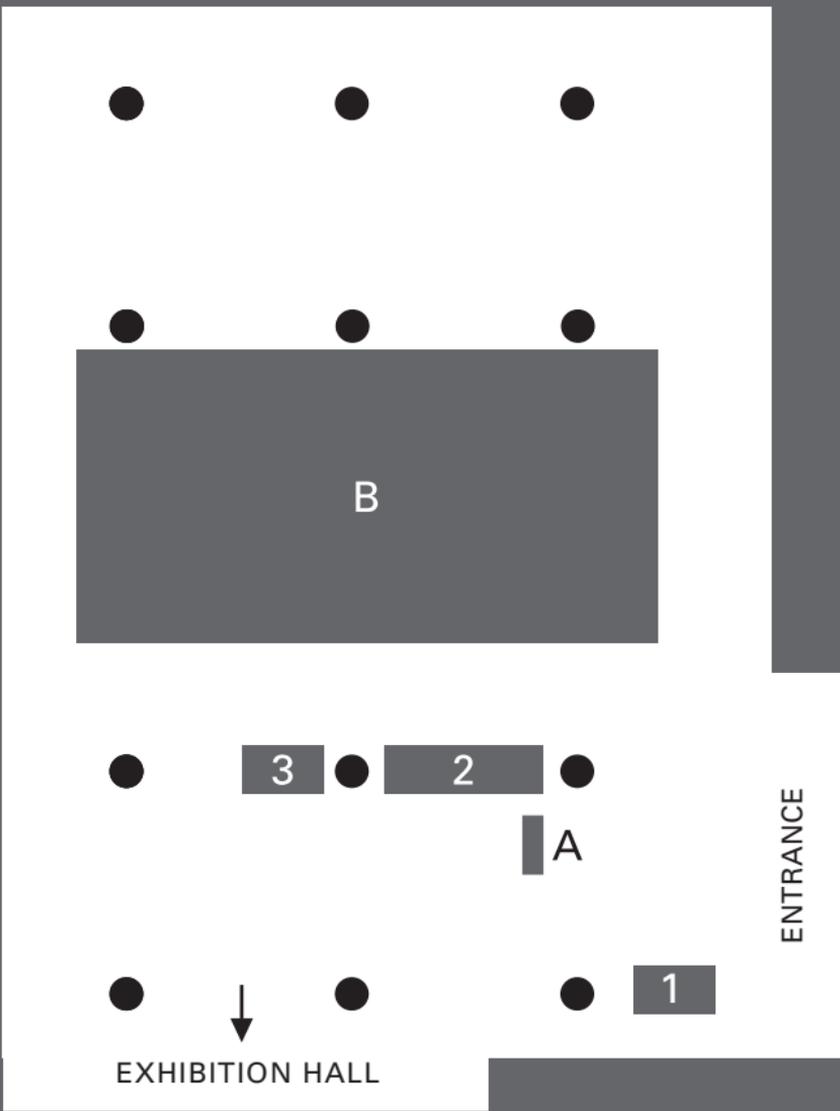
A Fable of Fatal Incorporation: The Final Scene from *Hyenas*



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FOYER



Foyer



The Otolith Group

- F *In the Year of the Quiet Sun*, 2013
Single channel HD video installation, color, sound, 25 min
Courtesy the artists

The name of The Otolith Group, founded by Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun in 2002, is derived from the microcrystals in the inner ear that provide balance and orientation. The group's essay-films explore forms of critical futurity and the psychic simultaneity of historical experience. In their new film *In the Year of the Quiet Sun*, postage stamps produced in Ghana between 1957 and 1966 are assembled into a political calendar of Pan-Africanist imagery. In 1957, the same year that the Congress Hall in Berlin was inaugurated, Ghana, under the leadership of the revolutionary Kwame Nkrumah, became the first colony in Africa to gain its independence from the British Empire. The CIA-backed military coup that deposed Nkrumah in 1966 systematically destroyed the visual culture of Nkrumahism; the only images to survive this purge are postage stamps. *In the Year of the Quiet Sun* is a re-arrangement of these philatelic documents into a *kinomuseum* of Pan-Africanist Pop Art. The film is simultaneously informed by a close reading of "Nkrumah: The Leninist Czar," the controversial essay on the personality cult of Nkrumahism, dictatorship, and scientific socialism by the influential political theorist Ali A. Mazrui, first published in *Transition Magazine* in Kampala, Uganda, in 1966.

John Akomfrah

B *The Unfinished Conversation*, 2012

3 channel HD video installation, color, sound, 46 min

C *Transfigured Night*, 2013

Double channel HD video installation, color, sound, 30 min

Both works courtesy the artist, Gallery Carroll Fletcher

John Akomfrah is the director of numerous award-winning films dedicated to the experience of colonialism, diaspora and resistance. He is one of the founders of the Black Audio Film Collective, which was active between 1982 and 1998 and was groundbreaking in placing racism and black identity in Britain on the public agenda.

The Unfinished Conversation is a three-screen "narrative construction" of the multiple realities of Stuart Hall, one of the world's most eminent thinkers. As a theorist of cultural identity and difference, Hall exerted great influence on Akomfrah and the collective movement in which he was involved. Hall arrived in the UK from Jamaica (then still a British colony) in the 1950s, graduated from Oxford, and became a decisive voice of the New Left along with intellectuals such as E. P. Thompson and Raymond Williams. *The Unfinished Conversation* focuses on Hall's "formative years" in the 1950s and 1960s.

With *Transfigured Night* John Akomfrah contributes a new production, in the form of a two-screen installation. "Verklärte Nacht" (transfigured night), a poem by Richard Dehmel, is taken by Akomfrah as a moment of departure to compose a dramaturgy of a confession of infidelity on the eve of new times. Akomfrah finds a symmetry in the poem, a mirror of the "promise", the post-colonial subject made to the newly independent now narcoleptic entity: the post-colonial state.

Yervant Gianikian & Angela Ricci Lucchi

G *Imperium*, 2013

Mixed media installation with 4 channel video, color, sound, 3 min 10 sec

Courtesy the artists

Imperium is an installation, made of montages of altered archival materials, in which the images that remain of Mussolini's imperial campaign in Africa are contemplated. *Imperium* has been conceived as an archeological investigation of the rise and the anthropology of the "fascist man", and as a contribution to the debate on the continuities between colonialism and fascism; it focuses on questioning fascism's iconographic legacy and the complicity of the viewer.

In an attempt to create a New Roman Empire, the forces of fascist Italy first "pacified" Libya and then attacked Ethiopia, which would be incorporated in Italian East Africa in May 1936, forty years after the historical defeat of Italian forces in the battle of Adwa that had secured Ethiopian sovereignty. The Italian campaign was notorious for its brutality, including the use of mustard gas, admitted to by Italy only in the 1990s. The materials Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi use are sourced mainly from the private archives of soldiers, workers, and bankers

who traveled along with the colonial mission and worked closely with the general Rodolfo Graziani and Count Galeazzo Ciano, Mussolini's son-in-law. Interspersed with these images is footage from Lake Nemi, a mythical place in Italy where the sanctuary

of the antique goddess Diana is situated. Caligula built two large ships on Lake Nemi, floating palaces that later sank in the lake. In 1926, Mussolini's Napoleonic year, the "Duce" traveled to Libya and decided to find the ships of Caligula. Mussolini then initiated the work of destroying the Diana forest and draining the lake in order to recover Caligula's ships in 1928.

Kader Attia

H *Dispossession*, 2013

Installation with double slide projection, (2x 80 colour slides) and video, color, sound, 13 min

Courtesy the artist, Galerie Nagel Draxler, Galerie Krinzinger, and Galeria Continua

In his newly produced installation *Dispossession*, Kader Attia confronts the imagery of ethnographic objects kept in the collection of the Vatican with interviews on the practice of collecting African art and artifacts. The interviews accompanying the photographic images discuss aspects of the trade of ethnographic artifacts and artworks. As in some of his previous works, Attia approaches the question of the shifts in meaning of art and artifacts as part of a colonial and counter-colonial geography of appropriation. These geographies, manifest as contradictory tension in the respective objects, shed light on the historical production of the divide between the Christian and the pagan idolater, a division that turned into the colonial separation and the ideology of scientific objectivity versus primitive fetishism, and of art that was embedded in cult and ritual versus that which was secular: modern art.

Jihan El-Tahri

A *Flag Moments*, 2013

Single channel video, b/w and color, sound, 6 min 39 sec

D Interviews with Mokhtar Hallouda, Victor Moche, Prince Amr Al-Faisal, 2013

Single channel video, color, sound, 17 min 51 sec / 30 min / 18 min 46 sec

E *The Price of Aid*, 2009

Single channel video, color, sound, 11 min

All works courtesy the artist

Jihan El-Tahri is a documentary filmmaker whose work is devoted to the post-independence history of Africa, as well as the Arab world. She exemplarily seeks to understand the geographies produced by movements and individuals and their ideological resources, the often implicit framework conditions of global dimension, and the anatomy of power as it has played out in late capitalism and modernity. Her contribution to the exhibition consists of newly produced filmic and documentary montages, excerpts from previous films and her archives, and expert advice. For her contribution on Egypt she concentrates on the critical role Egypt has played since the early days of colonialism both as physical and mythico-narrative geography, and its changing collaborative affiliations and functions. Other inserts into the exhibition allude to the sources of the disastrous effects of the aid-economy in the post-Second World War structures of the Marshall Plan, and to the slow momentum of independence from the 1950s to the end of apartheid in 1994.