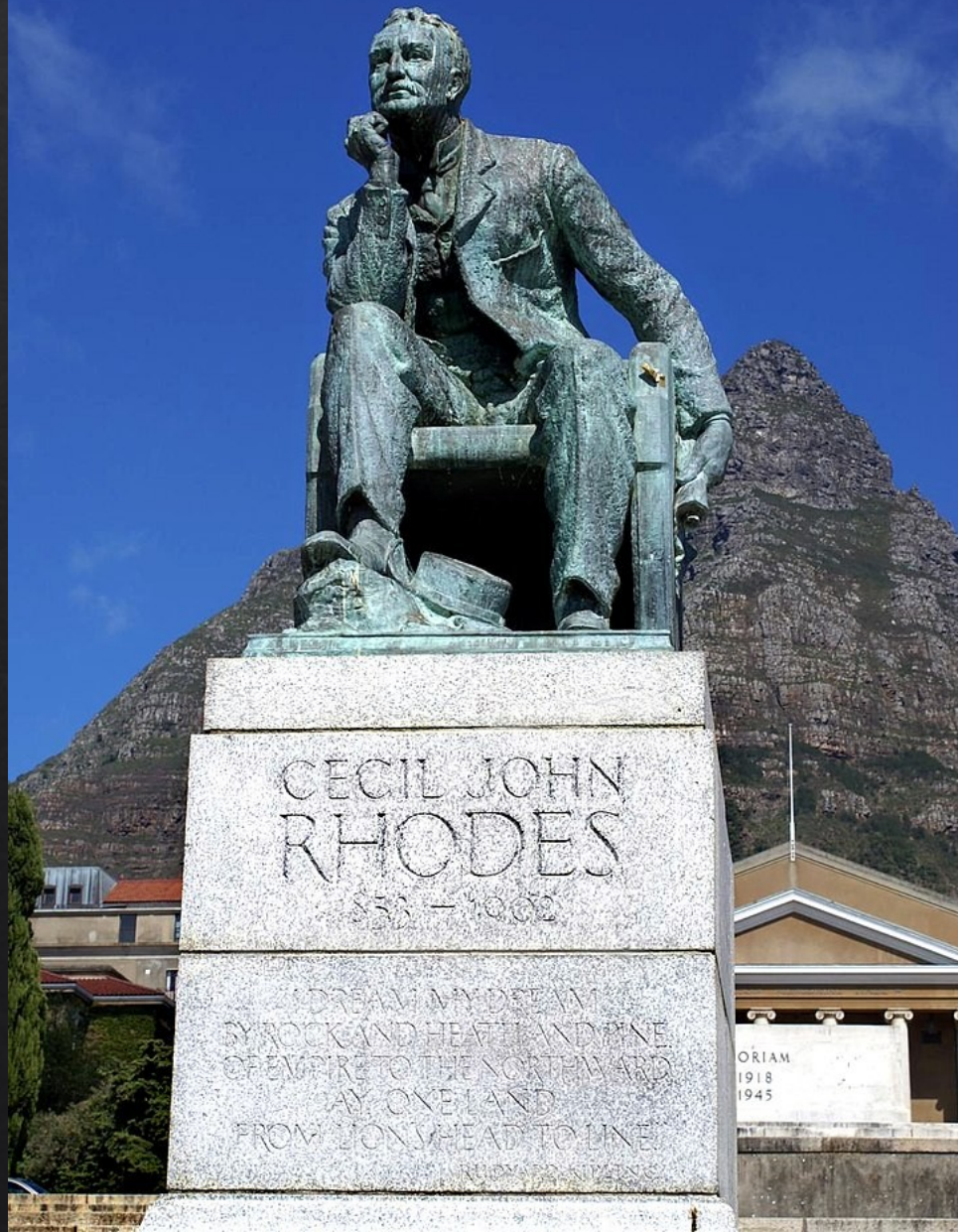


Postcolonial critique:
decolonizing the discipline

The Decolonizing Impulse



Marion Walgate

Statue of Sir Cecil Rhodes (1853-1902), University of Cape Town (1934)



Removal of the statue, 9 April 2015



Sir Cecil Rhodes (1853 – 1902)



The Rhodes Colossus in *Punch*
(1892)



L: Rhodes House, University of Oxford



R: Statue of Rhodes, Oriel College, Oxford (1911)

What does 'decolonizing' mean? Questionnaire from *Art History* 43.1 (2020)

Tim Barringer, Yale University:

While the term 'decolonize' art history has significant rhetorical power, it is founded upon a misconception. Art history can decolonize itself only to the extent that it acknowledges that Euro-colonial art and our discipline itself are themselves products of empire.

A key to moving ahead is to diversify the voices at the heart of the discipline. Art history departments in the UK still overwhelmingly focus on art in the Western tradition. While most programmes in the US attempt a more global spread of coverage, there is still a great disparity between the ways the arts of Africa, for example, are taught, usually by a single faculty member, and the arts of Europe, often broken down into many chronological and regional sub-fields, each taught by an individual scholar. The arts of the Islamic world, covering vast territories and periods, are likewise frequently deputed to a single individual.

through collaborative study with colleagues, research, and/or activism. For my teaching, this has meant addressing white supremacy and histories of violence against Indigenous peoples; teaching modernity as 'multiple'; teaching modern art through histories of colonialism and decolonization

Priyanka Basu, University of Minnesota

What does 'decolonizing' mean? Questionnaire from *Art History* 43.1 (2020)

In terms of the discipline there needs to be more emphasis on the power of images to construct ideas of nationality and race. We need to investigate the visual construction of other peoples, for it plays a decisive role in naturalizing ideas of difference that can result in social action. This will involve a broadening of experience to include the study of all forms of visual culture along with the art of the museums.

David Bindman, University College, London

A decolonized art history looks beyond diversifying canons, curricula, and practitioners. It recognizes that we now study, teach, and display art with culturally specific methods whose universal claims reflect early modern and modern European hegemony. Rather than reshuffling canons, shouldn't we reject them as inherently exclusionary? Rather than, for example, globalizing the Middle Ages, shouldn't we abandon developmental models and judgements behind periodizations?

James D'Emilio, University of South Florida

DEKO LONI ZACE

Manifest

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Akce

MANIFEST DEKOLONIZACE

Nastal čas konfrontovat dosavadní představy o našem místě ve světě s existujícími rasovými a koloniálními nerovnostmi. Svět protestuje proti všudypřítomnému rasismu. Instituce po celém světě přehodnocují svůj vztah ke koloniální minulosti. Aní my nestojíme opodál, ale ve středu celého problému. [Dekolonizace našeho myšlení může konečně začít.](#)

To, jak přemýšlíme o sobě, ovlivňuje naše představy o ostatních. Přestože toho o druhých většinou moc nevíme, často trváme na tom, že mezi nás nepatří: ohrožují náš klid, stabilitu a prosperitu. Naše současná identita se zakládá na představě o kulturní nadřazenosti nad ostatními. Zapomínáme přitom také na skutečné ekonomické nerovnosti, z nichž profitujeme. V tom spočívá koloniální myšlení, jehož se musíme zbavit.

Odmítáme představu, že dekolonizace je o tom, jaký by svět měl být. Dekolonizace znamená přiznat si, jaký svět je. Odmítáme představu, že situace se vyřeší sama, pokud budeme přispívat více peněz na rozvojovou a humanitární pomoc. Jsme bohatí díky tomu, že systém nerovností drží jiné v bídě. Je pokrytecké se nadále naivně stavět do role lidí, kteří zachrání svět a přinesou mu mír a spravedlnost. Naším cílem je přiznat si existenci vztahů vytvářejících nerovnost. Naším cílem je odmítnout právoplatnost těchto vztahů.

Odmítáme odsuzování postkoloniální teorie jako „komunistického“ nástroje. Zneužívání „solidarity s antikoloniálním bojem“ normalizačními komunisty nesmí vést k odvracení zraku od skutečného smyslu dekolonizace.

Odmítáme roli politických cenzorů. Dekolonizace nechce zúčtovat s dějinnými epochami a přepisovat je. Odmítáme však představu, že existuje jen jediný výklad dějin. Odmítáme dějiny psané vítězi. Otevíráme debatu o naší minulosti.

Odmítáme mluvit za druhé. Dekolonizace je výzvou k úvaze o vlastních představách a pozicích a jejich zasazení do širšího dějinného rámce. Lidé jsou historicky součástí

Nastal čas konfrontovat dosavadní představy o našem místě ve světě s existujícími rasovými a koloniálními nerovnostmi. Svět protestuje proti všudypřítomnému rasismu. Instituce po celém světě přehodnocují svůj vztah ke koloniální minulosti. Ani my nestojíme opodál, ale ve středu celého problému. Dekolonizace našeho myšlení může konečně začít.

It is time to confront existing notions of our place in the world with existing racial and colonial inequalities. The world is protesting against pervasive racism. Institutions around the world are rethinking their relationship to the colonial past. We are not far away either, but in the middle of the whole problem. The decolonization of our thinking can finally begin .

České země jsou historicky provázané se zbytkem světa. Střední Evropa neleží mimo komplikovaný vztah Západu a jeho bývalých kolonií, mimo světové dějiny. Mnozí čeští cestovatelé, misionáři, podnikatelé i vojáci se na budování a udržování koloniálního systému navíc přímo podíleli.

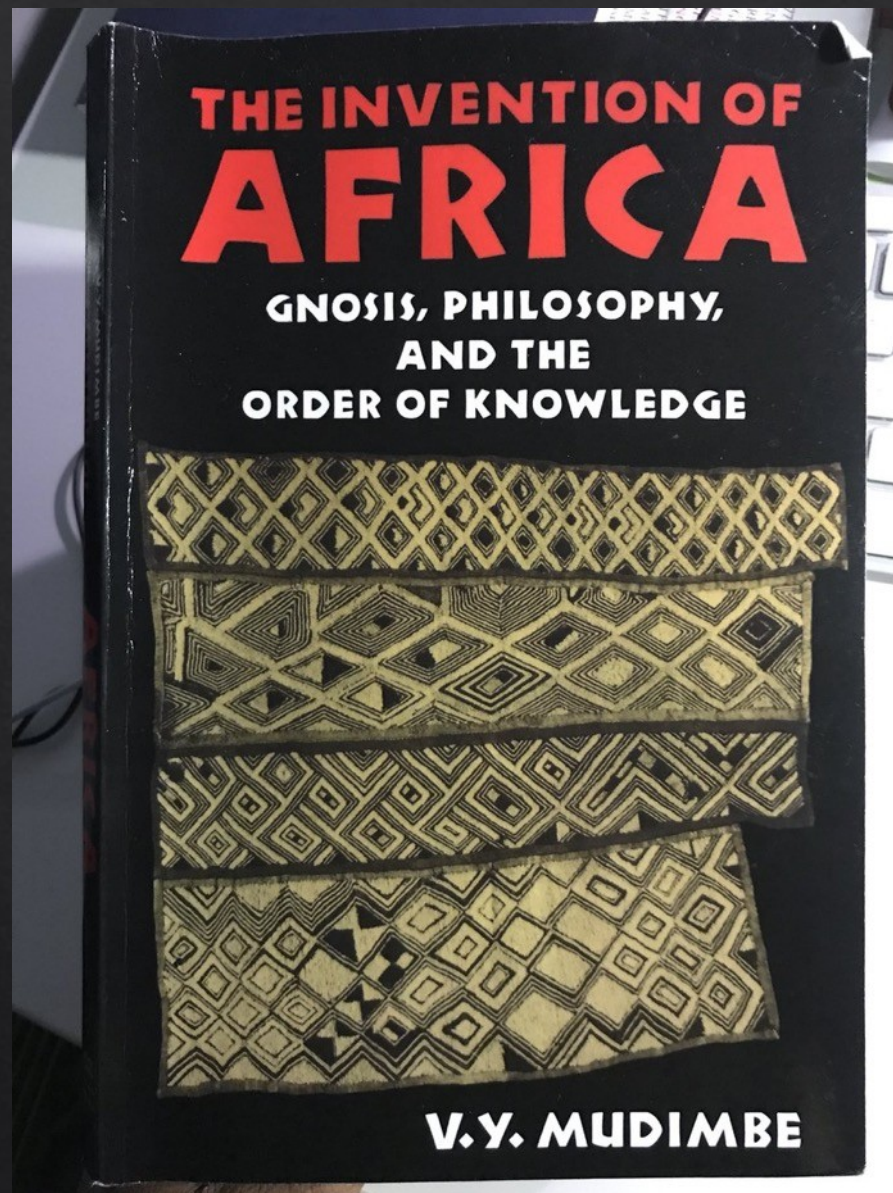
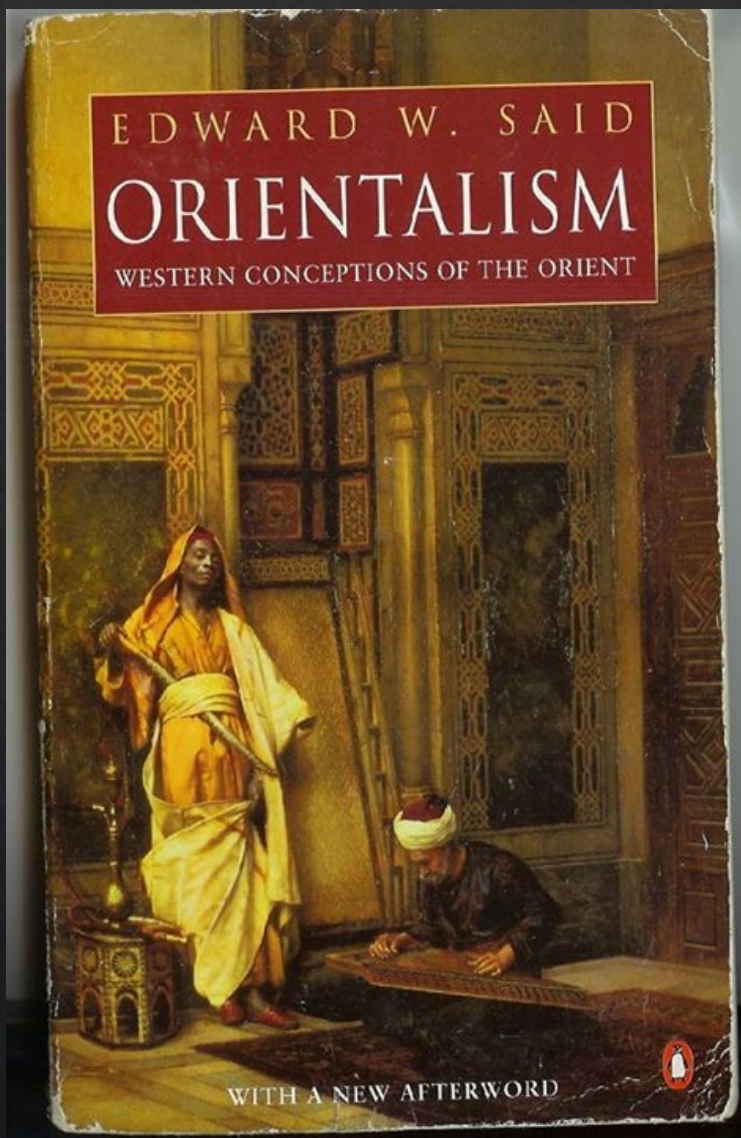
České země byly a nadále jsou součástí světových ekonomických, politických a sociálních struktur a vazeb. Odpovědnost za kolonialismus vyplývá z existujících vazeb mezi českými zeměmi a globálním jihem, z reálného profitu českých zemí ze zdrojů a práce kolonizovaných lidí.

The Czech lands are historically connected with the rest of the world. Central Europe does not lie outside the complicated relationship between the West and its former colonies, outside of world history. In addition, many Czech travelers, missionaries, businessmen, and soldiers were directly involved in building and maintaining the colonial system.

The Czech lands have been and continue to be part of the world's economic, political and social structures and ties. The responsibility for colonialism stems from the existing ties between the Czech lands and the global south, from the real profit of the Czech lands from the resources and work of the colonized people.

Orient and Blackness

Two Critical Studies

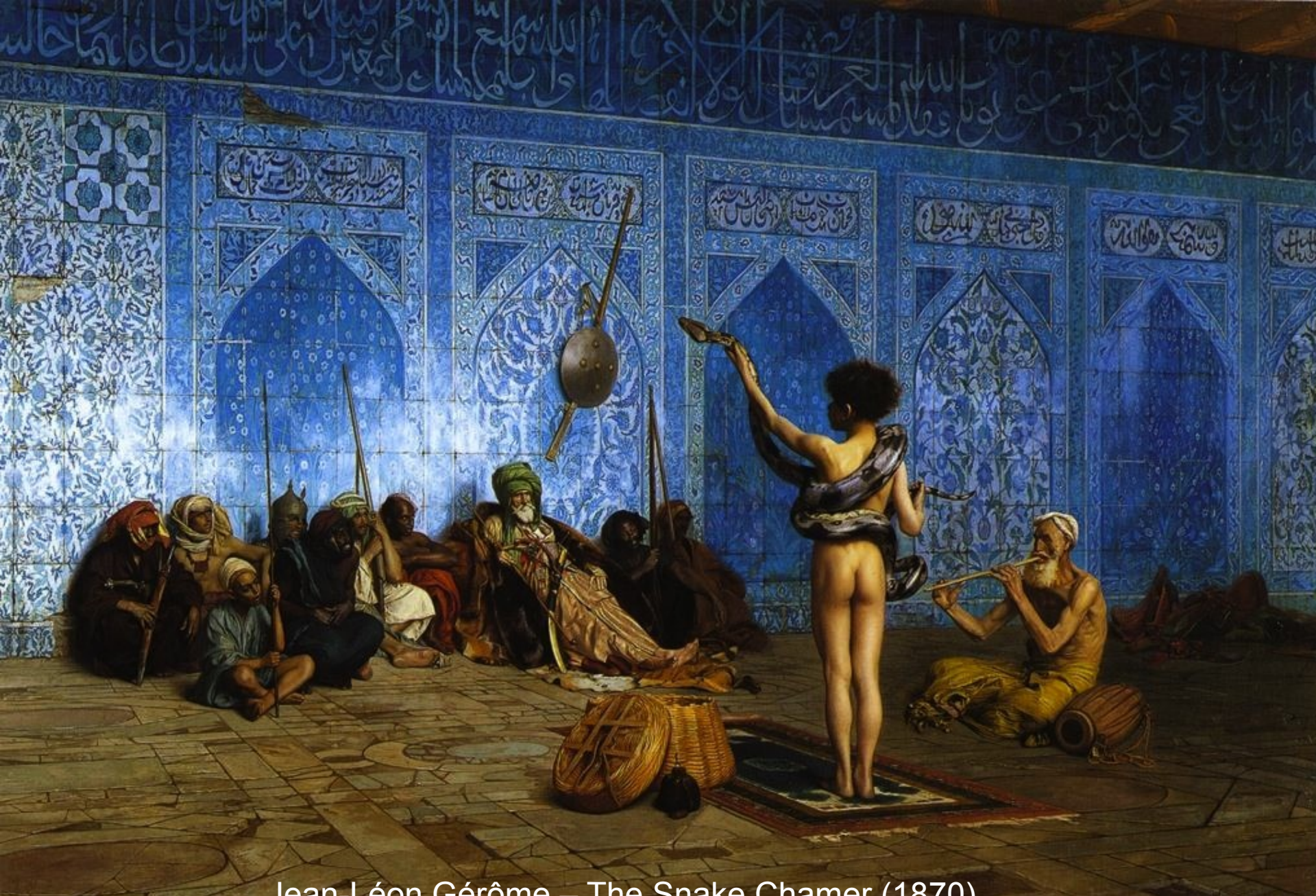




Anonymous Venetian painter – Reception of the Ambassadors in Damascus (1511)



Bronzino – Eleanor of Toledo (1544-45)



Jean-Léon Gérôme – The Snake Charmer (1870)
Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute



Jean-Léon Gérôme

The Slave Market (1867)



Ida Rubinstein in costume for
Zubeide in Sheherazade
designed by Leon Bakst (1910)

Source: Bridgeman Education

Leon Bakst

Costume Design for
Sheherazade from Sleeping
Beauty (1921)

Private Collection

Source: Bridgeman Education





Dutch exotic dancer 'Mata Hari' (1876-1917)

Image Source: Bridgeman

Anonymous postcard of harem girls smoking a hookah, Algeria
Ca. 1900

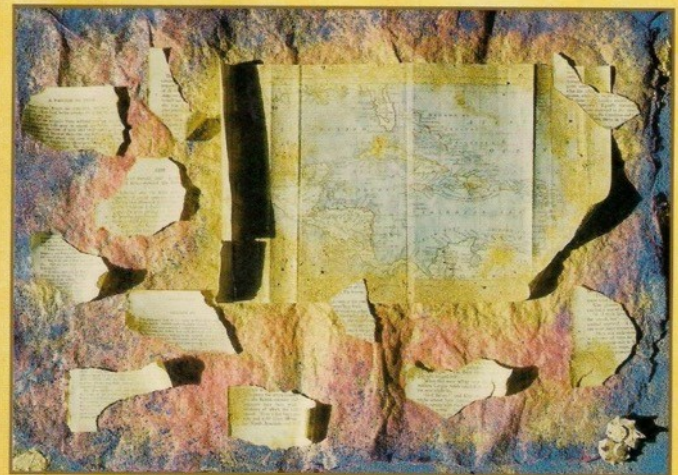
Source: Bridgeman Education



‘Both [imperialism and colonialism] are supported by and perhaps even impelled by notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination, as well as forms of knowledge affiliated with domination: the vocabulary of classic nineteenth-century imperial culture is plentiful with such words as “inferior” or “subject races”, “subordinate peoples”, “dependency”, “expansion” and “authority”.

Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*
(1993) p. 8

CULTURE & IMPERIALISM



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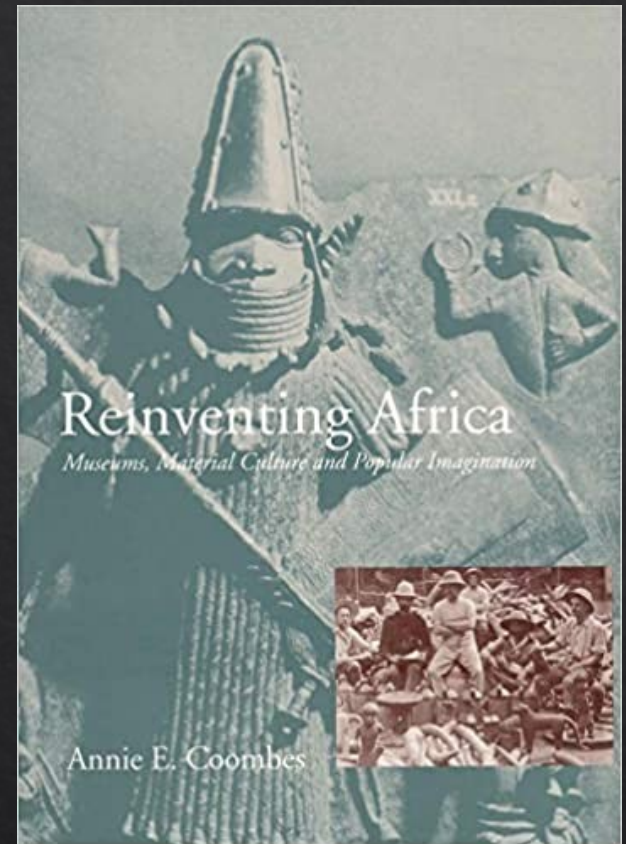
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MINISTERSTVO PRŮMYSLU A OBCHODU

'We penetrated deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness. It was very quiet there. At night sometimes the roll of drums behind the curtain of trees would run up the river and remain sustained faintly, as if hovering in the air high over our heads, till the first break of day. Whether it meant war, peace, or prayer we could not tell. The dawns were heralded by the descent of a chill stillness; the wood-cutters slept, their fires burned low; the snapping of a twig would make you start. We were wanderers on a prehistoric earth, on an earth that wore the aspect of an unknown planet. We could have fancied ourselves the first of men taking possession of an accursed inheritance...'

Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness
(1901)

'Although little authentic knowledge of the Benin people is current, the main characteristics of the surrounding tribes are thought to be theirs also in an intensified degree. Finding expression in habits of disgusting brutality and scenes of hideous cruelty and bloodshed, ordained by the superstitions of a degraded race of savages.'

Illustrated London News, 1897



The British Punitive expedition to Benin
(1897)



Royal Ivory Mask, ca. 1520, Benin



Brass Warrior Plaque, ca. late 16th century, Benin



Sam and Milli from the Zirkus Schumann in Ernst Kirchner's studio (1910)



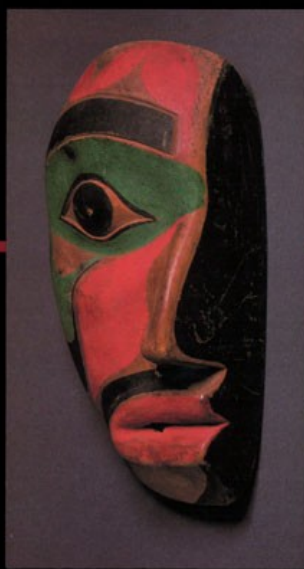
Brancusi, King of Kings (Early 1930s)

Picasso, Les Femmes d'Alger (1907)



Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, 1912

"PRIMITIVISM"

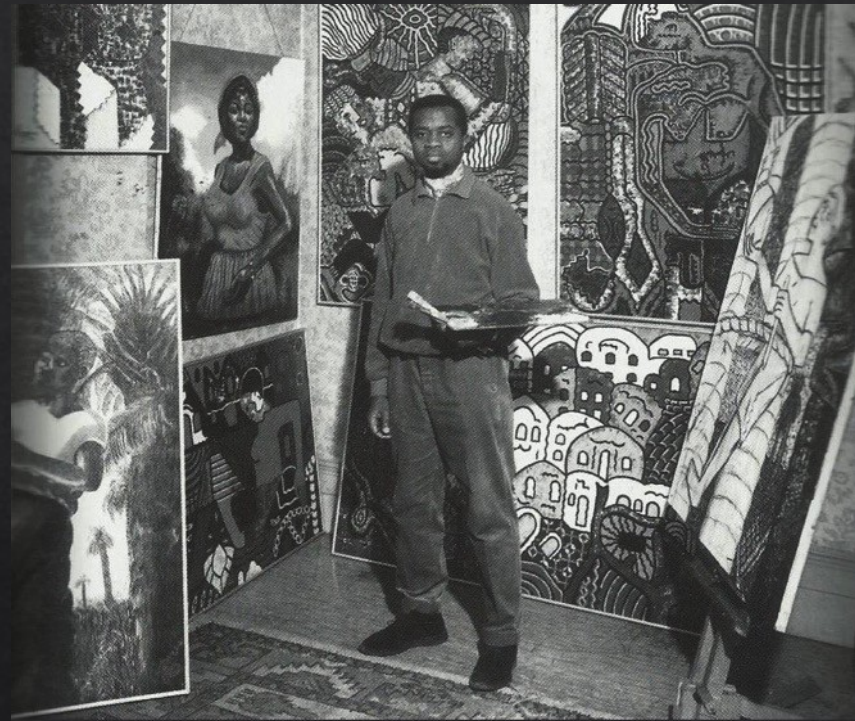
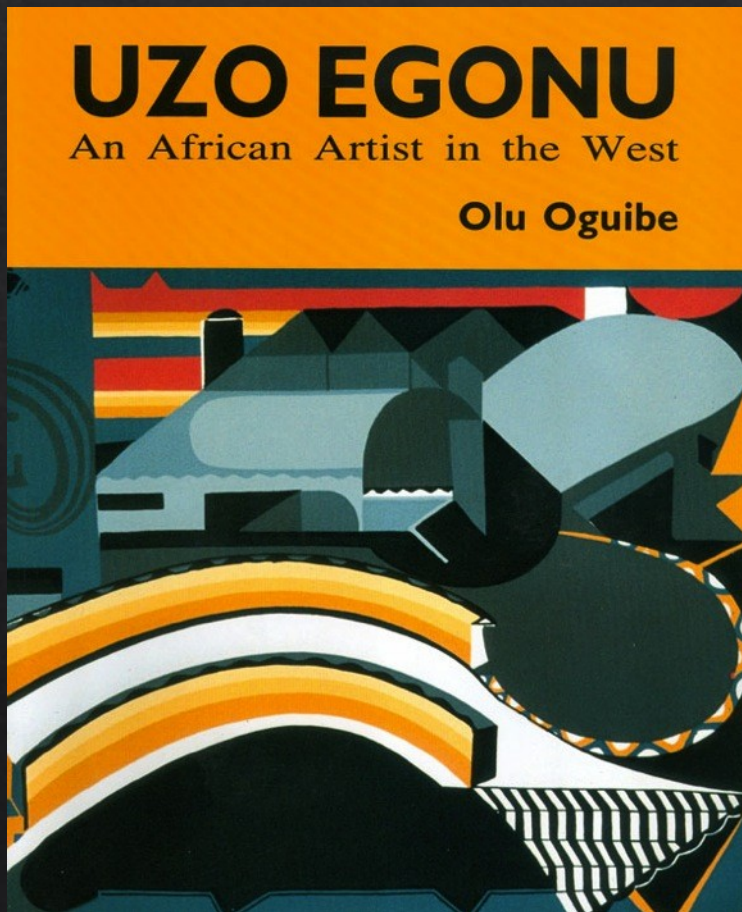


IN 20TH CENTURY ART
THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK



‘To reject the exoticisation of Africa is to destroy an entire world view, carefully and painstakingly fabricated over several centuries. This is the imperative for any meaningful appreciation of culture in Africa today, and it would be unrealistic to expect it easily from those who invented the old Africa today.’

Oguibe, ‘The Heart of Darkness’ p. 324.



L: Oguibe – Front cover of Uzo Egonu (1995)

R: Uzo Egonu (1931- 96) in London, ca



Uzo Egonu:

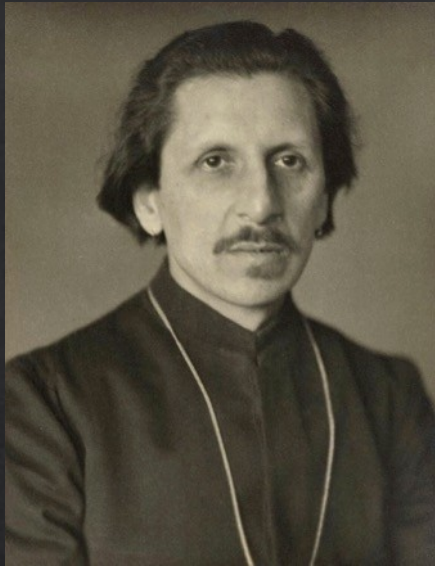
L: Nigerian Picadilly Circus (1969)
R: An Assembly (1982)



'It is evidence of the arrogance of Occidental culture that even the concept of history should be turned into a colony ...history is granted as a validating privilege, which it is the West's to grant, like United Nations recognition ...'

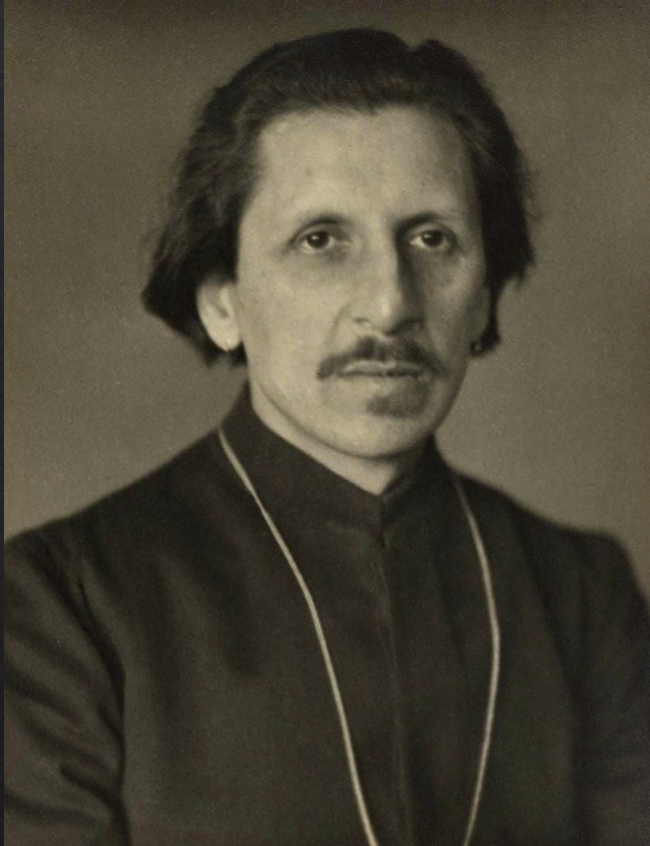
Oguibe, 'In the Heart of Darkness' in Oguibe, ed, Reading the Contemporary (London, 1999) p. 321

Olu Oguibe (1964 -)



Ananda Coomaraswamy (1877-1947)

An Early Attempt at Decolonizing



Ananda Coomaraswamy (1877-1947)

1884 – 1897: Schooled in Britain

1897-1900: Studied in University
College London

1917 – 1947: Keeper of Indian Art,
Boston Museum of Fine Arts

THE
ARTS & CRAFTS OF
INDIA & CEYLON

BY
ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY

D.SC. (LONDON), F.L.S., F.G.S., M.R.A.S.,
FELLOW OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON
AUTHOR OF MEDIAEVAL SINHALESE ART; THE
INDIAN CRAFTSMAN; ESSAYS IN NATIONAL
IDEALISM; INDIAN DRAWINGS; ETC.

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1913

Ananda K. Coomaraswamy

Mediaeval
Sinhalese
Art



BEING A MONOGRAPH ON MEDIAEVAL SINHALESE
ARTS AND CRAFTS, MAINLY AS SURVIVING IN THE
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF
THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY AND THE STATUS
OF THE CRAFTSMEN

Second Edition

Pantheon Books

Of English influence on purely Sinhalese art, the less said the better. It is been character- *English*
ised, from the English side, by almost complete indifference to indigenous culture, the result *influence*
of an ideal of purely material prosperity; the destruction of indigenous crafts by the
competition of cheap machine-made materials and luxuries; the neglect of surviving
architectural tradition and capacity for building; and by an entirely false and unnatural
system of education, the result of which is to make the 'educated,' strangers in their own
land. The immediate effect of **British** rule, was to destroy the system of State support of
the arts and crafts; the links that bound the Koṭṭalbadde and the Paṭṭal-hatara craftsmen to
the national life were snapped at a blow; by the withdrawal of support from the national
religion, it came about that funds formerly available for building and decoration of temples
were misappropriated. From the Sinhalese side, the history of the nineteenth century
has been one of continual and snobbish imitation of the external features of Western culture,
misunderstood and misapplied. . The results have been even more disastrous than is yet the
case in India; it is, indeed, almost a matter for surprise that so much of the indigenous
traditions of art and craft still survive. If it is so, if there are still devoted and skilled crafts-
men of the old school, this is thanks neither to the patronage of the Sinhalese themselves
nor to that of their **British** rulers; it is due to the vitality still latent in the old tradition,
the effectiveness of the caste system in conserving, if somewhat forlornly, some of the best
part of the old life, and lastly, and not least, to the affectionate devotion of the hereditary
craftsmen to their art and its traditions.

ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY

Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art



THE DANCE OF ŚIVA.

Cosmic Dance of Nāgarāja. Brahmanical bronze. South Indian, 12th Century, Madras Museum

THE DANCE OF ŚIVA

FOURTEEN INDIAN ESSAYS

BY

ANANDA COOMARASWAMY

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY PREFACE

BY

ROMAIN ROLLAND



THE SUNWISE TURN, INC.

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NEW YORK

1924

L: Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art (1944)

R: The Dance of Śiva (first published 1918)



Decolonizing in Central Europe

Habsburg postcolonial

Z U N G - I D E N T I T Ä T

Johannes Feichtinger
Ursula Prutsch
Moritz Csáky
(Hrsg.)

StudienVerlag

Volume 19

Tropics of Vienna

Colonial Utopias of the Habsburg Empire

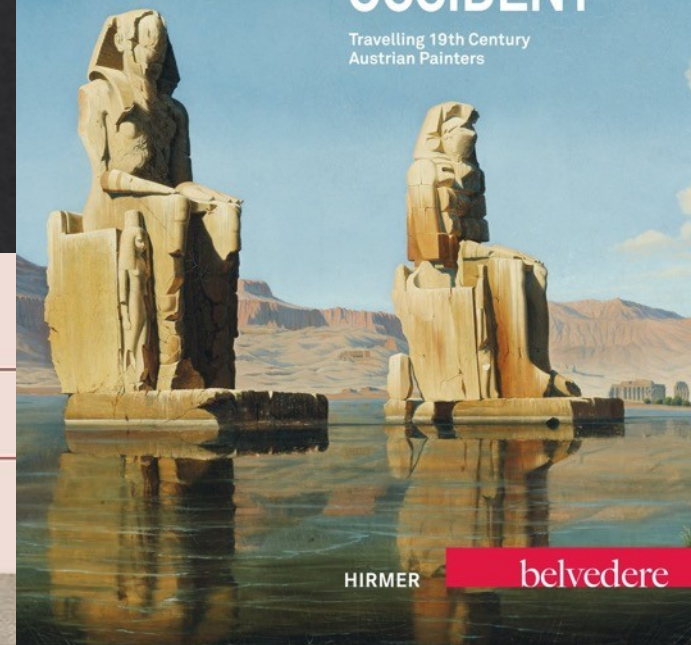
Austrian and Habsburg Studies



Ulrich E. Bach

ORIENT & OCCIDENT

Travelling 19th Century
Austrian Painters



HIRMER

belvedere



Helena Johnová

Black Boy (1912-39)

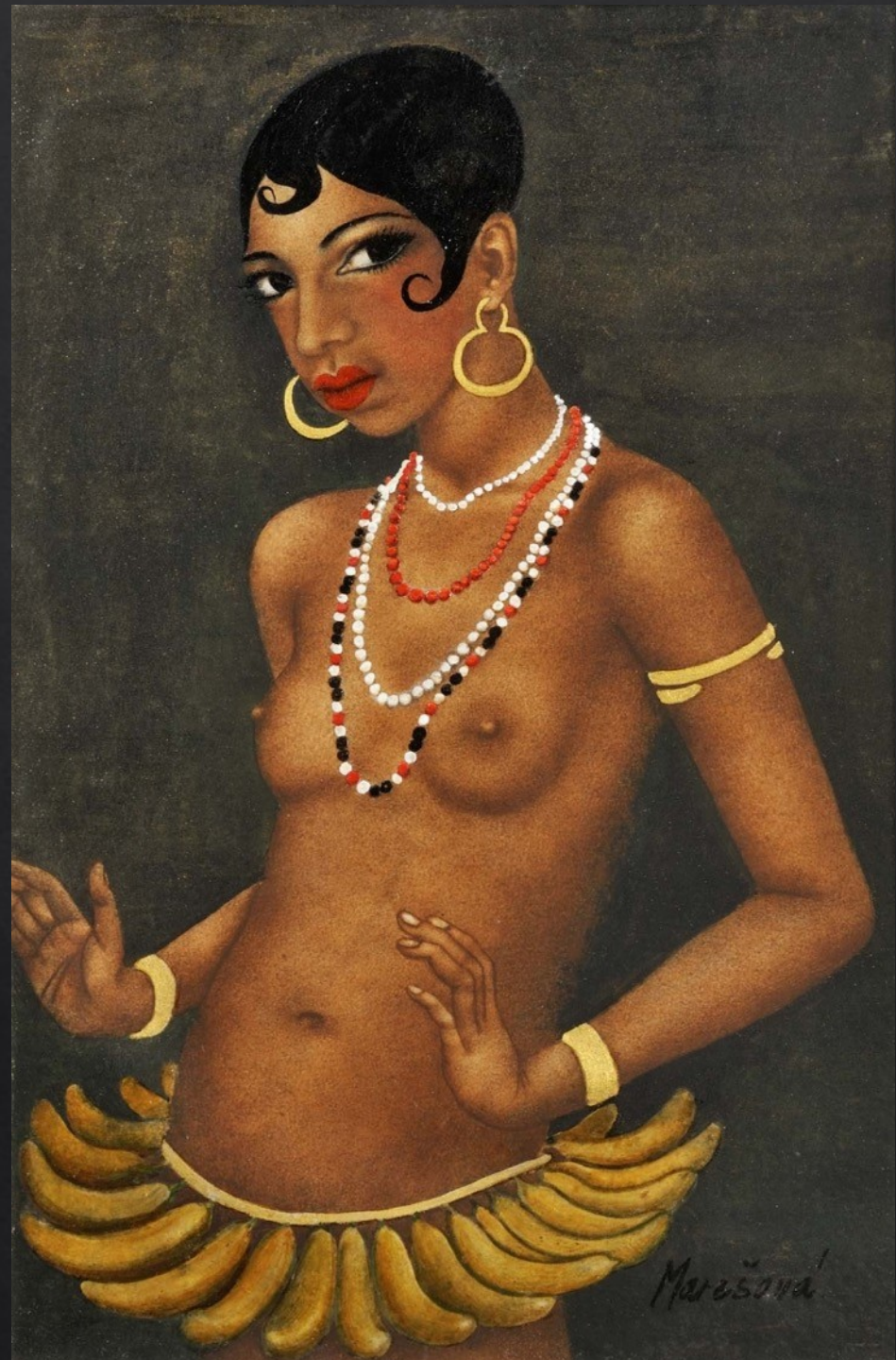


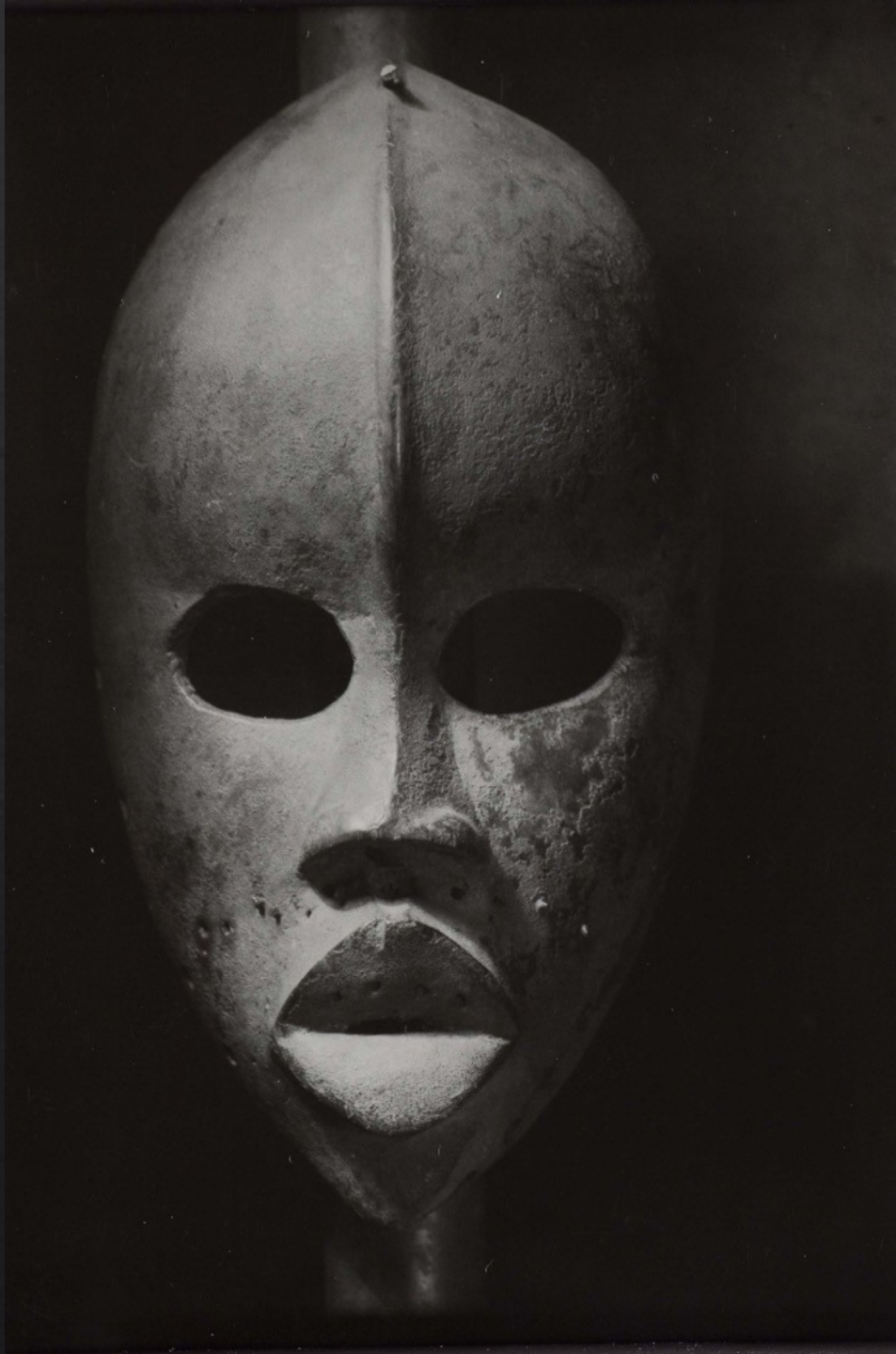
Alexander Hackenschmied,
Untitled (1942)





Milada Marešová
Josephine Baker (early 1930s)





Josef Sudek

Black Mask (1932)

Josef Čapek



UMĚNÍ
PŘÍRODNÍCH
NÁRODŮ

Fr. Borový, Praha

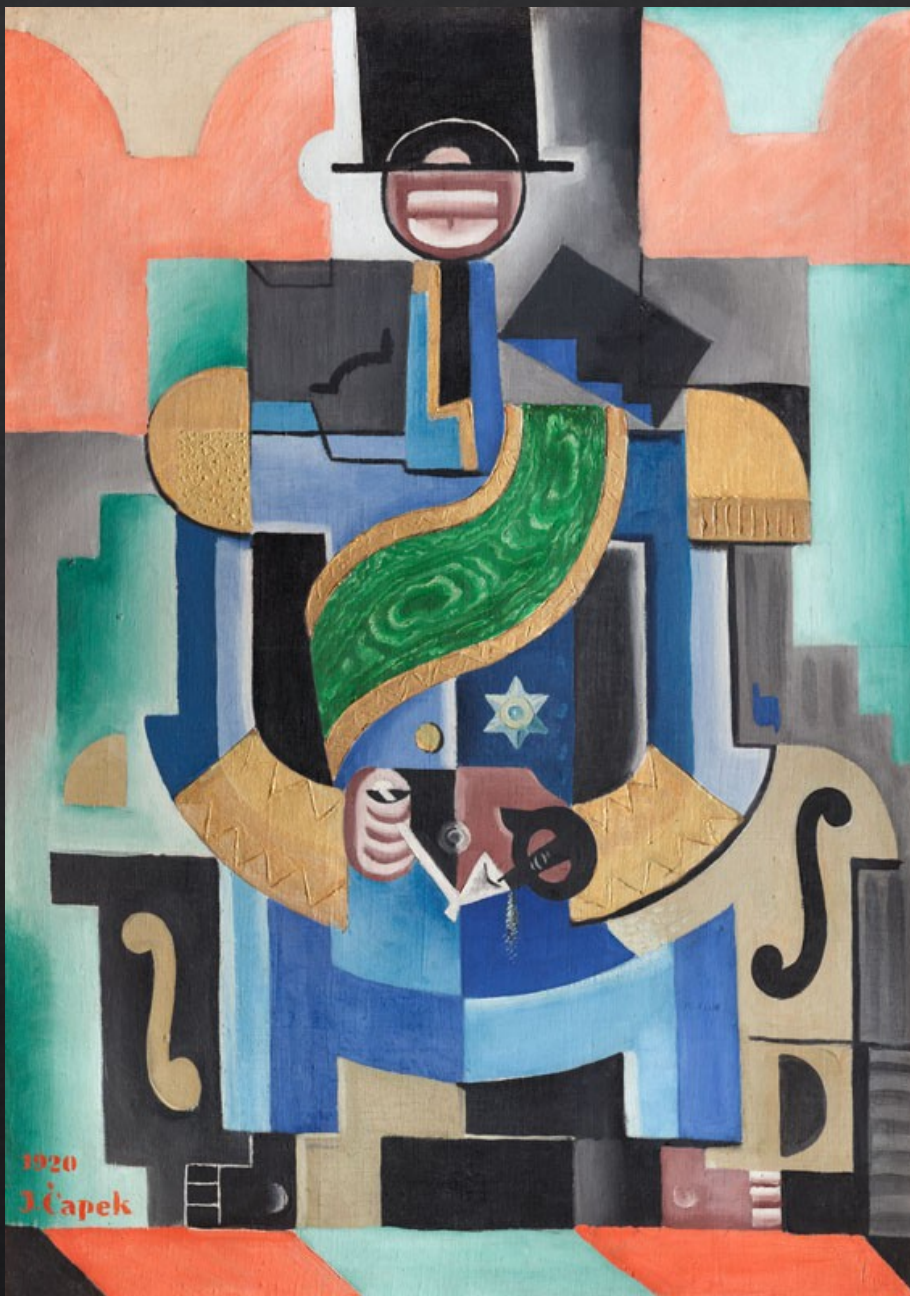


Ilhavy ze dřeva řezané. – Gabon, Kongo.



Idolové postavy. – Pobřeží slonoviny.

Josef Čapek, *The Art of Primitive Nations* (Prague, 1938)



Josef Capek
Black King (1920)

Toyen, Black Paradise (1925)



Výstava Emila Filly s africkou a oceánskou plastikou

Exhibition of Emil Filla alongside African and Oceanic Sculpture



Plátek k výstavě Emila Filly: plastika, suché jehly, lepty, dřevoryty, litografie, oleje – Černošská a tichomořská plastika: 185 soch ze sbírky Joe Hlouchy, Spolek výtvarných umělců Mánes, 1935

Poster for the exhibition Emil Filla: Sculptures, Drypoints, Etchings, Woodcuts, Lithographs, Oil Paintings – African and Oceanic Sculpture: 185 Sculptures from the Collection of Joe Hlouchy, Mánes Association of Fine Artists, 1935



Katalog k výstavě Emila Filly: plastika, suché jehly, lepty, dřevoryty, litografie, oleje – Černošská a tichomořská plastika: 185 soch ze sbírky Joe Hlouchy, Spolek výtvarných umělců Mánes, 1935

Catalogue of the exhibition Emil Filla: Sculptures, Drypoints, Etchings, Woodcuts, Lithographs, Oil Paintings – African and Oceanic Sculpture: 185 Sculptures from the Collection of Joe Hlouchy, Mánes Association of Fine Artists, 1935

První výstava Skupiny surrealistů v ČSR byla o dva týdny prodloužena, a tak došlo k zajímavému sousedství děl surrealista s přehledkou, na níž Emil Filla představil svoji tvorbu spolu s africkou a oceánskou plastikou ze sbírky Joe Hlouchy. Konala se v menších prostorách Spolku Mánes od 5. do 26. února 1935.

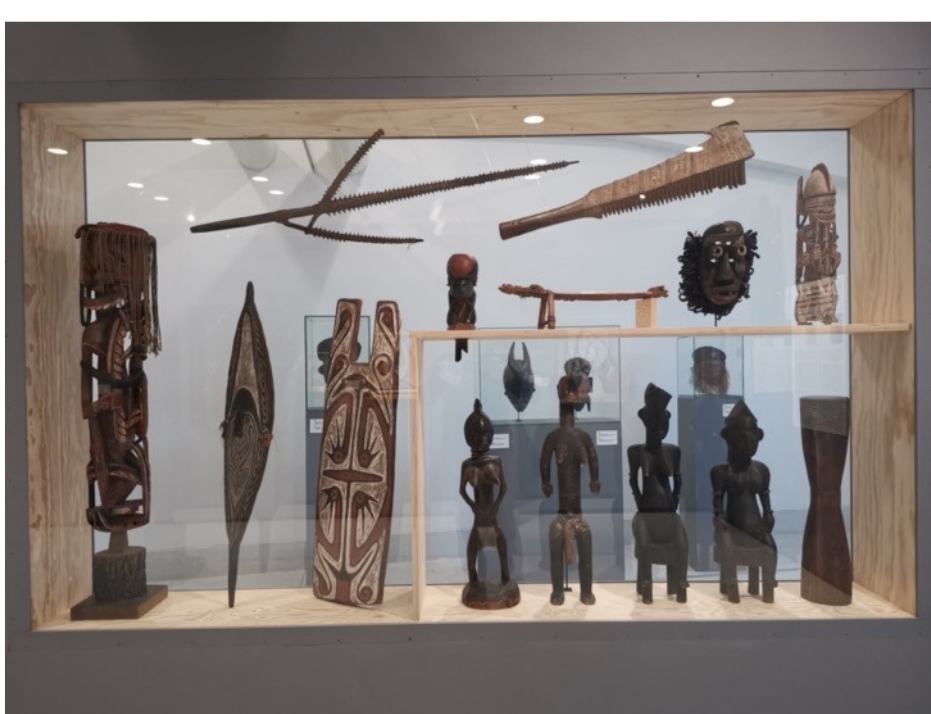
Toto víceméně náhodné sousedství jsme se rozhodli připomenout z několika důvodů. Filla patřil k neaktivnějším členům Mánesa a zasloužil se jak o konání *Poesie 1932*, tak o další podporu spolku surrealistickému hnutí, na které reagoval i ve své tvorbě. Byl také jedním z prvních umělců, kteří se v Československu zajímali o mimoevropské umění, sbírali je a reprodukovali ve výtvarných časopisech. Tento zájem měl Filla společný s francouzskými surrealisty, z nichž mnozí sbírali oceánské umění a tvorbu původních obyvatel severoamerického kontinentu. Svě práce s nimi na výstavách rádi konfrontovali, protože v nich spatřovali autentický projev lidské tvořivosti, neposkrvněný akademickou výukou a konvencemi.

S cestovatelem Joe Hlouchou se Filla seznámil v roce 1930. O pár let později mu nabídl, aby svou sbírku mimoevropské tvorby ukázal v Mánesu. Nakonec k její prezentaci připojil i svá díla, a tak vznikla výstava s názvem *Emil Filla: plastika, suché jehly, lepty, dřevoryty, litografie, oleje – Černošská a tichomořská plastika: 185 soch ze sbírky Joe Hlouchy*. Skládala se ze dvou oddělených částí. Filla vystavil na osmdesát grafických listů, sedm obrazů a dvacet jedna plastik. Ty vznikly většinou v posledních měsících a podle Vincence Kramáře, autora úvodu v katalogu, byly objeveny výstavou. Druhá část prezentovala sochy z Afriky a Oceánie, shromážděné Joe Hlouchou. Takové propojení opravňovaly podle Vincence Kramáře „iracionálnost“ a „živočišná smyslnost“ Fillových soch, v nichž spatřoval vyjádření touhy člověka po „vysvobození z tisíciletých konvencí předsudků, touhy po dokonalé obnově a návratu k přírodě“.

The First Exhibition of the Surrealist Group in Czechoslovakia was extended by two weeks, creating an interesting overlap with a show in which Emil Filla introduced his work alongside African and Oceanic sculpture from the collection of Joe Hlouchy. It took place in the Mánes building from February 5 to 26, 1935.

We decided to commemorate this chance meeting for several reasons. Filla was among the most active members of Mánes. He helped organize the exhibition *Poesie 1932* and, through the Association, he further supported the surrealist movement. Surrealist tendencies were also present in his own work. Filla was one of the first artists in Czechoslovakia who showed interest in non-European art, collecting and reproducing it in art magazines. He shared this interest with French surrealists, many of whom collected Oceanic art and works of North-American first nations. Surrealist artists liked to display their works along with these artefacts because they saw in them the authentic expressions of human creativity unblemished by academic education and conventions.

Filla met the traveller and collector Joe Hlouchy in 1930 and, a few years later, he suggested that Hlouchy show his large collection of non-European art in Mánes. Filla eventually decided to add his own works to the presentation, resulting in the exhibition *Emil Filla: Sculptures, Drypoints, Etchings, Woodcuts, Lithographs, Oil Paintings – African and Oceanic Sculpture: 185 Sculptures from the Collection of Joe Hlouchy*. The exhibition consisted of two separate parts. Filla displayed 80 prints, seven paintings and 21 sculptures. He made many of them just a few months before the exhibition and according to Vincenc Kramář, who wrote the catalogue introduction, they were the big surprise of the exhibition. The second part showed Hlouchy's sculptures from Africa and Oceania. Such a connection, says Kramář, justified the "irrationality" and "animalistic sensuousness" of Filla's sculptures which expressed the human desire for "liberation from thousand-year-long conventions and prejudices, the desire for perfect renewal and return to nature."





Emil Filla, Heracles and the Lion (1936)



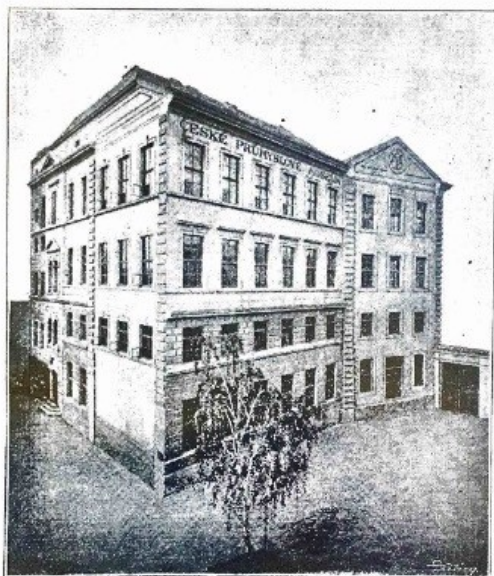
Vojtěch Náprstek (1826-1894)

PRŮVODCE SBÍRKAMI *II. 332.*

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A. Přizemí.

Síň I.

Sklo, výrobky hliněné a porcelánové.

Síň II.

Stroje, vařidla a předměty pro domácnost a kuchařství zvláště potřebné.

B. Mezipatro.

Předměty kovové, lidový průmysl rusínský, nástroje řemeslné a hudební, zbraně, mince a grafické umění.

Zde umístěna též pracovna kustoda a odborná knihovna.

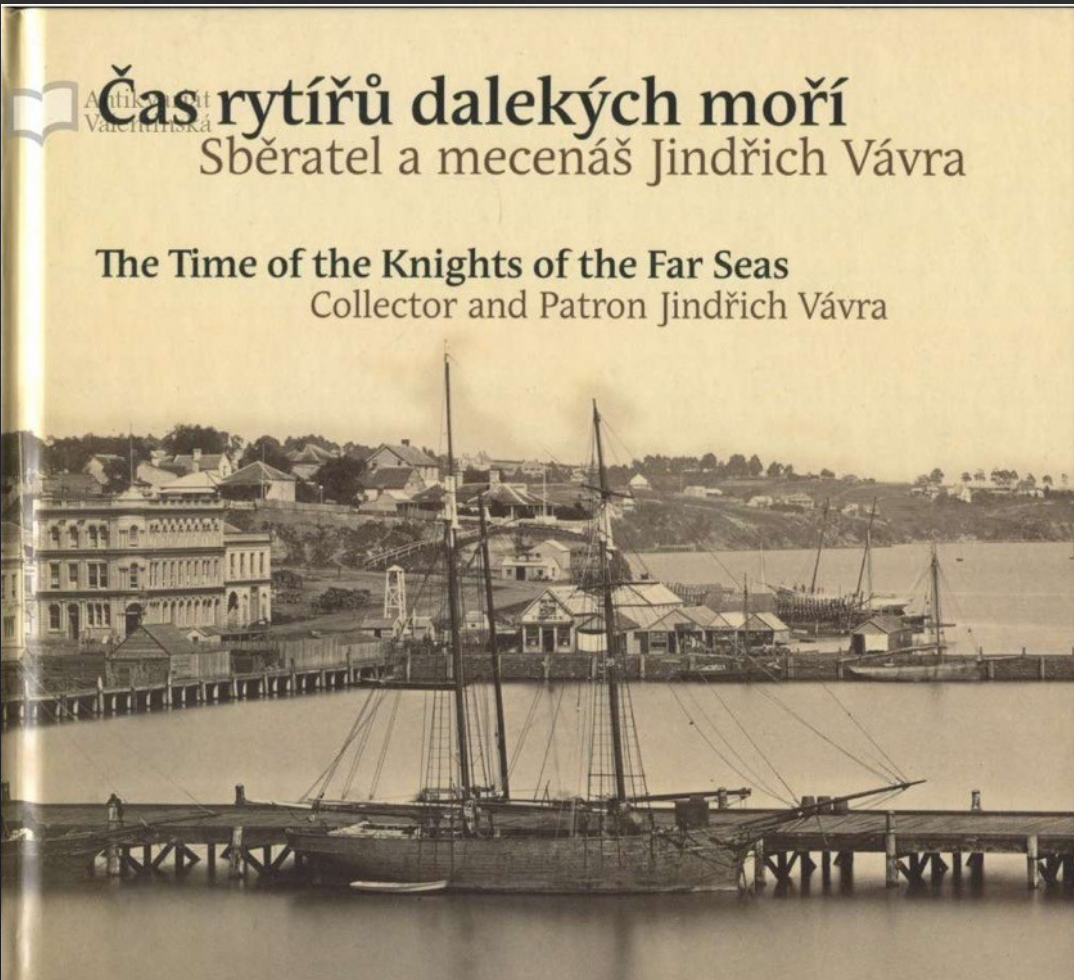
C. I. patro.

Národopisné sbírky z Afriky, Asie, Ameriky a Austrálie, různé skupiny výroby řemeslné, šperky, obuv a j. v.

D. II. patro.

Vyšívky, národní kroje (práce našich matek), na chodbě obrazy, nábytek a modely.





- (1857-1858) Ship surgeon on the Carolin, escort to SMS Novara
- (1859-60) Ship surgeon on Elisabeth accompanying Maximilian to Brazil
- (1864-65) Ship surgeon escorting Emperor Maximilian of Mexico
- (1868-71) Ship surgeon on Friedrich on diplomatic tour around the world



Alois Musil (1868-1944)

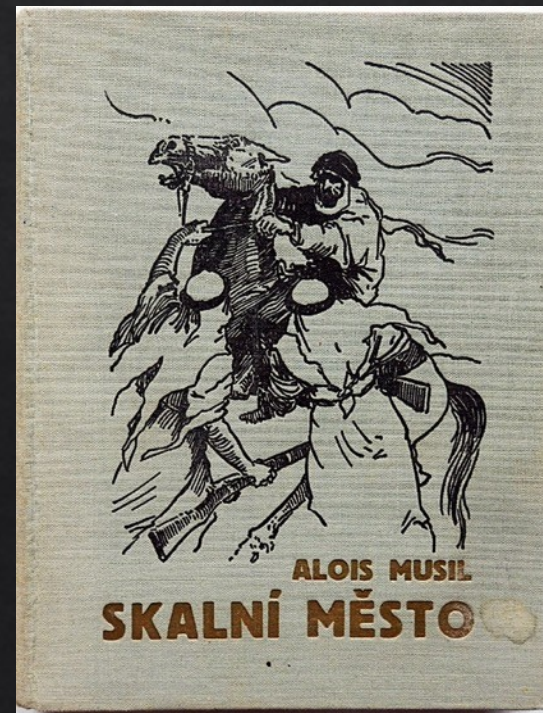
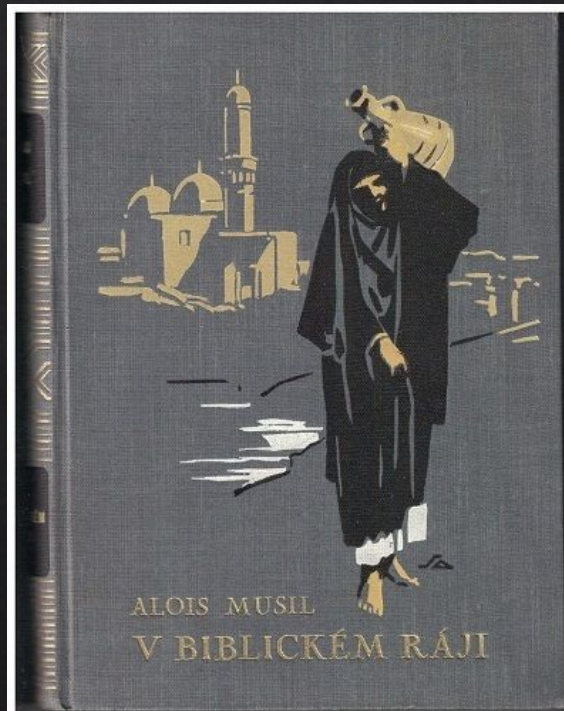
Qusayr Amra, Jordan (8th cent
CE)

1902: professor of theology, University of Olomouc

1909: professor of biblical studies and Arabic, University of Vienna

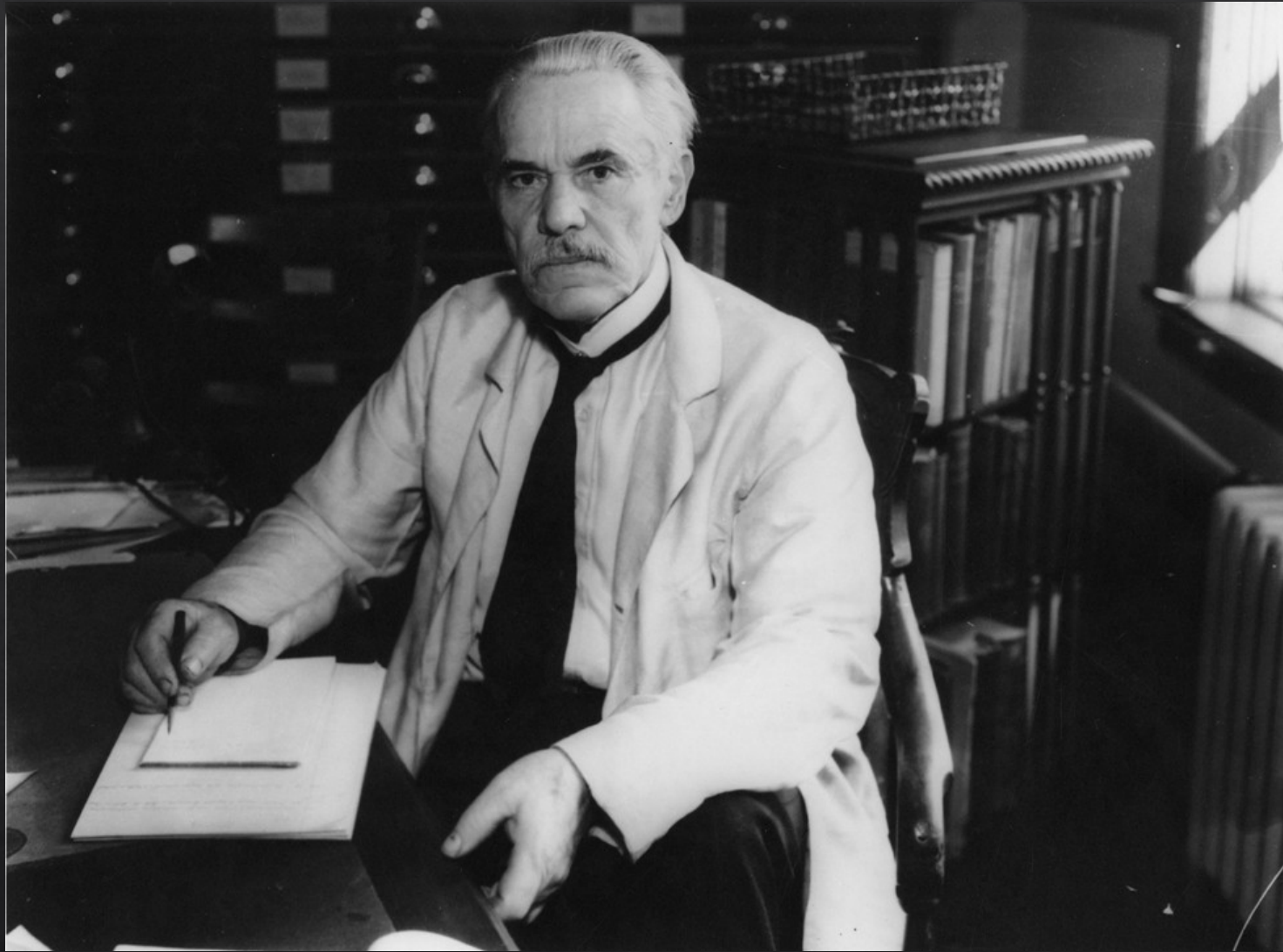
1914 – 1918: military service for the Habsburg Empire countering British influence in the Middle East

1920: professor of Arabic / Head of Institute of Oriental Studies, University of Prague





Museum of Aleš Hrdlička, Humpolec



Aleš Hrdlička (1869 – 1943). Photo from around 1930. Founder of the Anthropology Department of the Smithsonian Museum, Washington

