



**POLISH
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THE MUSEUM OF AFRICAN ART
THE VEDA AND DR ZDRAVKO PEČAR COLLECTION

CALL FOR PAPERS

“Visual Culture and Power in Africa – Art, Political Histories, and Transnational Exchanges”

Deadline: 31 May 2026

The Polish Institute of World Art Studies and the Museum of African Art in Belgrade, Serbia, announce a Call for Papers for the *Journal of The Artistic Traditions of Non-European Cultures*, special issue: “Visual Culture and Power in Africa – Art, Political Histories, and Transnational Exchanges.”

This special issue invites original contributions that explore African visual cultures in relation to historical processes, political frameworks, and institutional contexts. We welcome articles by scholars of African art and visual culture, art historians, anthropologists, historians, museum professionals, archivists, and researchers working across related disciplines.

We seek contributions that critically examine African visual cultures from historical, political, and archival perspectives, addressing contexts from the colonial period to the present. Submissions may examine a wide range of artistic expressions and visual media, including but not limited to fine arts, material culture, photography, film, architecture, exhibitions, archives, and curatorial practices.

Particular attention is encouraged to studies that interrogate the relationships between visual culture and power, including themes such as:

- Art and art collecting as an instrument and symbol of power; propaganda art; political pressure on art and artists; cultural and memory politics.
- Art as an instrument of political expression, opposition and resistance; its role in the anti-colonial struggles, liberation movements and postcolonial conflicts; art activism; artistic spaces of independence and criticism.
- Role of archives – official, informal, personal, or counter-archives – in shaping historical narratives and artistic production.



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- Role of museums in shaping knowledge about African art and visual culture; interactions of artistic and curatorial practices with archival materials and historical narratives.
- Political themes in visual art.

We welcome interdisciplinary approaches and comparative perspectives, including research that situates African visual cultures within broader global, transnational, and non-aligned histories, as well as studies examining connections between Africa and other regions.

Articles will be published in a special issue of *The Artistic Traditions of Non-European Cultures* (ISSN: 2450-5692, <http://artistic-tradition-of-non-european-culture.world-art.pl/>), a journal devoted to the study of non-European art and artistic culture and its relationships with arts of Europe. It is prepared and published by the Polish Institute of World Art Studies (<http://www.world-art.pl/>), which in 2025 celebrated the 25th anniversary of its foundation.

All manuscripts will be peer-reviewed.

Proposal submission (tentative title and short abstract up to 150 words): **10 March 2026**

– Article submission deadline: **31 May 2026**

– Peer review notification: within two months after submission

– Volume Publication: end of 2026

Editors of the special issue:

Dr. Joanna Wasilewska is an art historian and museologist, vice-president of the National Committee of ICOM (International Council of Museums) Poland, and founding member of the Polish Institute of World Art Studies. She also teaches at the university level. Her research interests include intercultural relations as reflected in art, fashion, and museum collections. From 2013 to 2023, she served as Director of the Asia and Pacific Museum in Warsaw, where she introduced major changes, including the museum's first permanent exhibition project and a critical shift in its approach to collections. She has been collaborating with the Polish Institute in Belgrade since 2023 and was co-organizer of the international seminar "Mining the Heart of



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Darkness. Historical Legacies, (Anti-Colonial) Imaginary and Contemporary Perspectives” held at the Museum of African Art in 2025.

Emilia Epštajn holds a BA in Ethnology and Anthropology from the Faculty of Philosophy and an MA in Culture and Gender Studies from the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade. With a career rooted in her extensive work at the Museum of African Art in Belgrade (MAU), she has developed a diverse curatorial and research practice that extends into broader international and academic networks, and has served on the Executive Board of ICOM Serbia since 2023. Her research and exhibition projects focus on the cultural heritage of the Non-Aligned Movement, decolonization in museum practice, and archival research (centered on Algeria and Ghana). She pays particular attention to feminist perspectives, the histories of African art collections, and the complexities of restitution and repatriation. Recently, she co-curated *Hope is Discipline* for the 60th October Salon (2024). In 2025, she co-organized the international seminar "*Mining the Heart of Darkness: Historical Legacies, (Anti-Colonial) Imaginary, and Contemporary Perspectives*" at the MAU in collaboration with Joanna Wasilewska.

Submissions may take the form of full research articles, shorter research essays, case studies, visual or archival essays, or edited interviews. Article length may range from approximately **3,000 to 4.500 words**, depending on format.

Submission Formats for Authors

1. Full Research Articles

Length: 4,500/~15 pages (including footnotes, excluding bibliography)

2. Case Studies / Object- or Collection-Focused Articles

Length: 3,000/~10 pages

3. Interviews / Conversations (Edited)

Length: 3,000/~10 pages

Author guidelines

(1) Please send your article and any accompanying illustrations to both addresses:



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joannawasilewska903@gmail.com; e.epstajn@mau.rs with the subject line: **SFP Visual Culture & Power**.

(2) The manuscripts should be in English with illustrations (to a maximum of 7) and also include a bibliography. Scanned illustrations should have a high resolution of 300 DPI (or JPG) or higher. In case more text or illustration space is needed, please consult with us.

(3) The publication of all photographs of art works and documentation housed in libraries, museums or private collections requires the written permission of their legal owners.

(4) *Italics* should be applied to the following:

- all quotations in foreign languages, other than English, as well as single foreign terms;
- titles of works of art and literary works, titles of books, but not titles of articles;

(5) Please use normal (Roman) style for quotations in English, in quotation marks;

(6) British spelling should be followed.

(7) Footnotes and bibliography: bibliographic references in footnotes should have a unified form, as in the following example:

(7a) for books:

Reference in the footnote:

Yatim (2006: 12-24)

corresponds to the bibliographic entry:

Yatim 2006 = Othman Mohd. Yatim, Batu Aceh. *Early Islamic Gravestones in Peninsular Malaysia*, Museum Association of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 2006 (2nd ed.): 12-24.

(7b) for articles:

Reference in the footnote:

Eaton (2006: 240-245)

corresponds to the bibliographic entry:

Eaton 2006 = Eaton, Natasha: "Nostalgia for the Exotic: Creating an Imperial Art in London", *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 39/2 (2006): 227-250.

Reference in the footnote:

Cartier (1998: 22-27)



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corresponds to the bibliographic entry:

Cartier 1998 = Michel Cartier, "Le despotisme chinois. Montesquieu et Quesnay, lecteurs de Du Halde", in : *Chine entre amour et haine. Actes du VIIIe colloque de sinologie de Chantilly*, Michel Cartier (ed.), Paris 1998: 15-32.

(7c) For an exhibition catalogue:

Reference in the footnote:

Encounters (2004: 128-133).

corresponds to the bibliographic entry:

Encounters 2004 = *Encounters. The Meeting of Asia and Europe 1500-1800*, Anna Jackson, Amin Jaffer (eds.), exhibition cat., Victoria & Albert Museum, London 2004: 128-133.

(7d) For primary sources (unpublished):

Write the name of the archives or the library (put the original name in parentheses in Roman transcription and, if necessary, its abbreviation), city, signature of archival file, the title of the source, its date and folio (or page) number, marking it "r." (recto) or "v." verso) if required.

When the name of the archives is cited more than once, write out both the full version and the abbreviation the first time that it occurs.

(7e) Please do not use such bibliographic references as *ibid.*, *op. cit.* etc. in footnotes.

Titles in foreign languages should be supplied with their English translation in brackets.

The bibliography should be placed at the end of the paper.

The bibliography should mention only those works which are explicitly quoted or referred to in the paper.