

Summary

In the last five or ten years the question of art history's global reach—or lack of it—has appeared as an inescapable topic for art history. As the discipline of art history wakens to the possibility of worldwide art historical writing, it also becomes more seriously engaged with postcolonial theory, critical theory, anthropology, visual studies, cultural studies, and subaltern studies, all of which have been intermittently or continuously interested in art practices outside of Europe and North America. This lecture reports on the most recent attempts to understand the phenomenon: the book *Is Art History Global?*; the book *World Art Studies*; the 2007 Stone Summer Theory Institute; the essay “Canon and Globalization in Art History”; a current *October* questionnaire; a conference in Beijing in May; David Carrier's new book; Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann's conferences; Whitney Davis's work in progress; an exchange with Hans Belting; and an essay by Paul Wood.

Is Art History Global?

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Outline of this talk:

A. Introduction

B. Why globalism matters

C. A working definition of globalism

D. Five reasons why art history is not, or is not becoming, global

E. Four reasons why art history is, or is becoming, global

F. A partial conclusion

A.

Introduction

Art history is spreading, but it is still not well connected throughout the world, and its disconnectedness is not well studied

1. In comparison to globalization in science

2. In comparison to the models of globalism in economics:

Tom Friedman, *The World is Flat*

Jeffrey Sachs, UN Millennium Project; and Bono from U2

Richard Florida, “The World is Spiky” (*Atlantic Monthly*, fall 2005)
(*The Rise of the Creative Class; Cities and the Creative Class*)

3. In comparison to globalism studies in sociology

Bruno Latour, *Politics of Nature*
(against monoculturalism and multiculturalism...)

4. In comparison to globalism studies in anthropology

The Post-Development Reader, edited by Majid Rahnema

Points of reference (books):

Is Art History Global?, vol. 3 of *The Art Seminar* (NY: Routledge, 2007), with contributions by 40+ scholars from 30+ countries (the event was held at University College Cork in 2005; a first version of this talk was given at the launch of TRIARC at Trinity College Dublin)

World Art Studies: Exploring Concepts and Approaches, forthcoming from Wilfried van Damme and Kitty Zijlmans (Leiden)

The 2007 Stone Summer Theory Institute, Chicago, July 16-21, with Harry Harootunian, Susan Buck-Morss, Shigemi Inaga, Tom DaCosta Kaufmann, and Fredric Jameson (information: www.stonesummertheoryinstitute.org)
Book: January 2009.

“Canon and Globalization in Art History,” in a book on canons in art history, edited by Anna Brzyski (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2007)

Points of reference (events):

John Onians's conference on world art: University of East Anglia, September 2007

Conference on globalism in Budapest: "How to Write Art History: National, Regional, or Global?", 21-25 November 2007
(arthist@arthist.mta.hu)

Two panels on globalism in CIHA Melbourne, chaired by Tom DaCosta Kaufmann and Larry Silver (2007)

B.

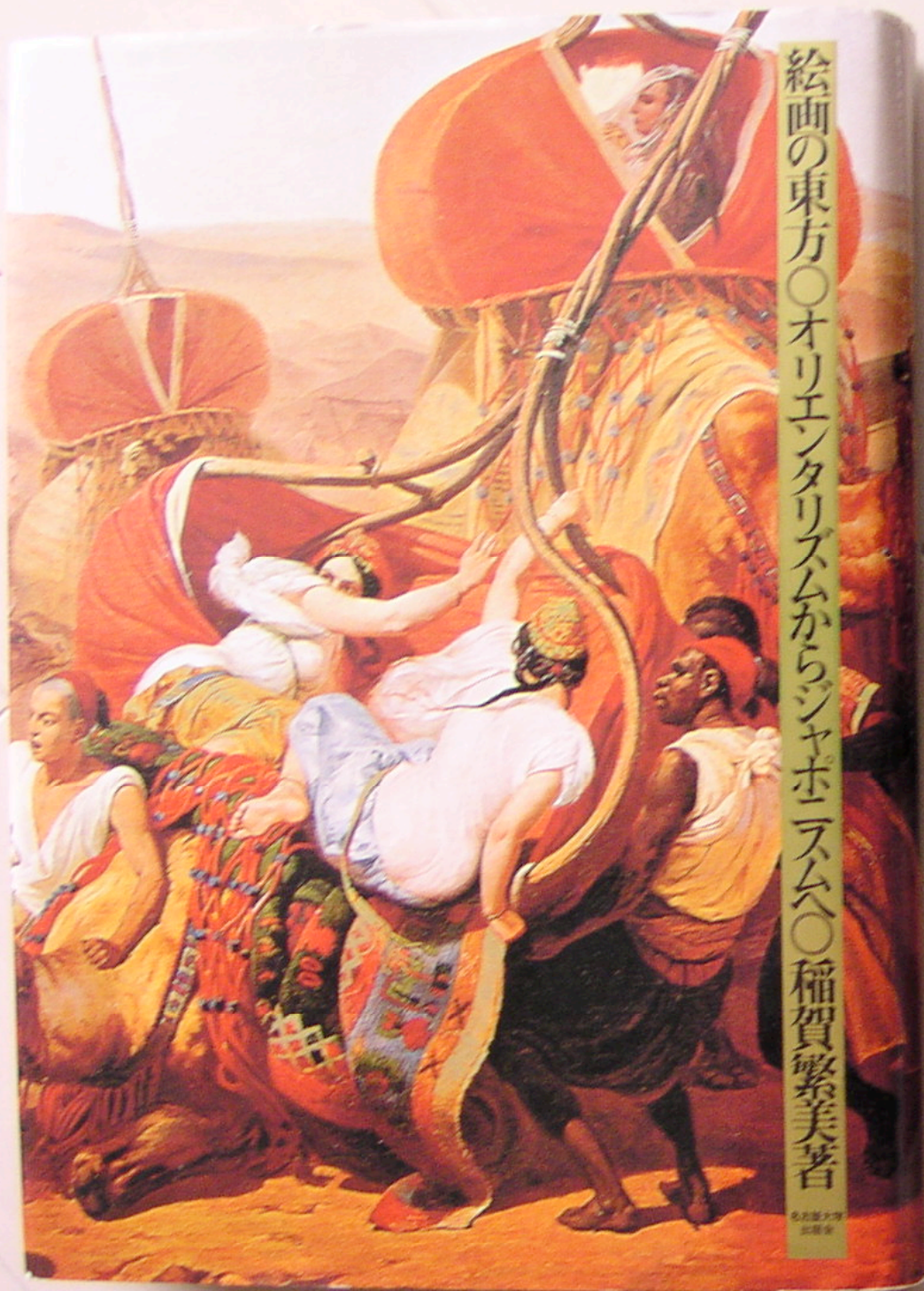
Why this matters

-- Not because the subjects of art history should be shared

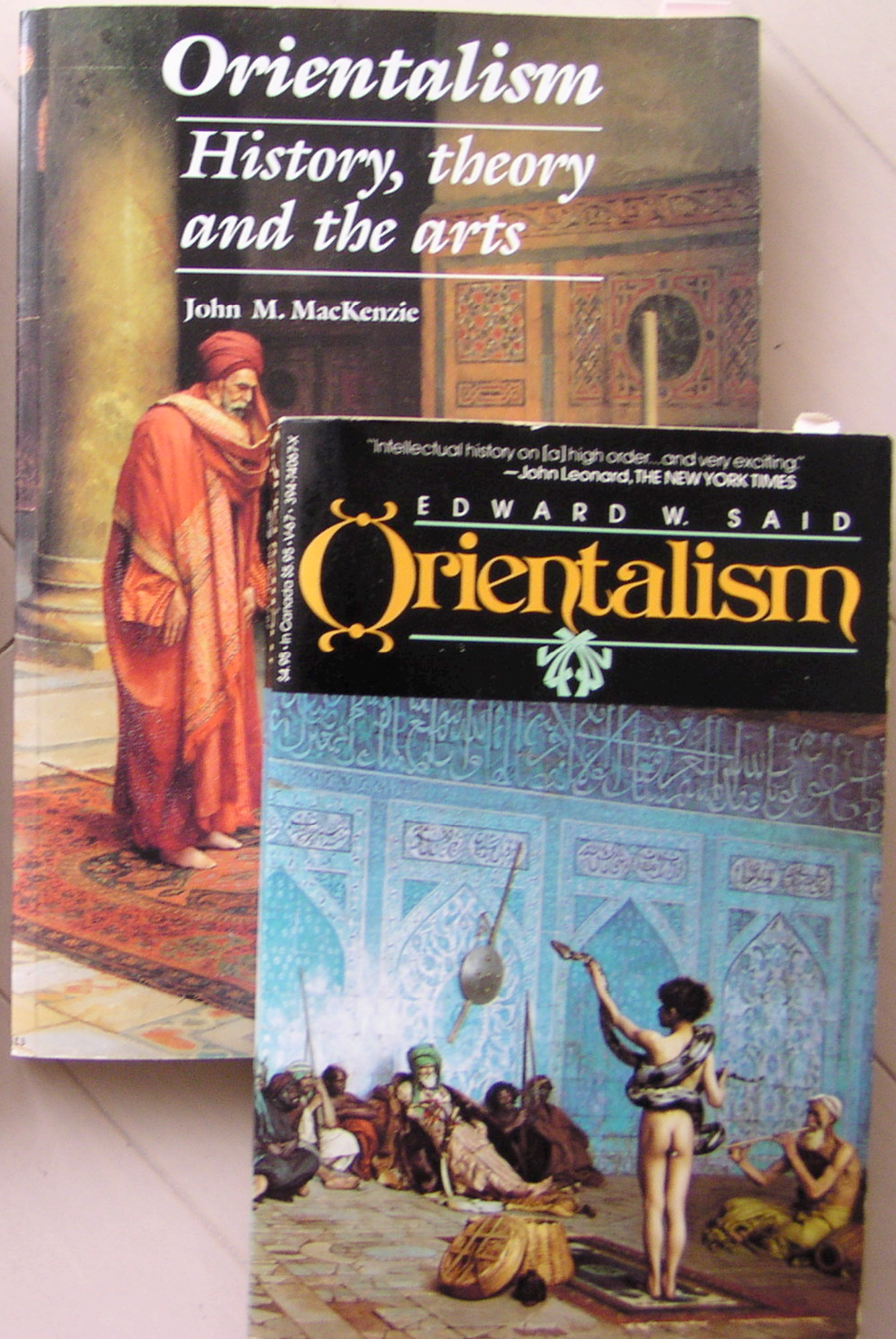
An Irish art historian may not need to know
about medieval Slovenian altars

-- But because the methods of art history can be shared

An Irish or Slovenian art historian may need to know
Cao Yiqiang's account of renaissances, or Shigemi
Inaga's account of orientalisms...



Shigemi Inaga's book on the
Japanese reception of the
Western reception of Japan



PRIMADI TABRANI

BAHASA RUPA

Primadi Tabrani's *Bahasa Rupa*
(Indonesia, 2005), a book about
Borobudur and Indonesian painting



Kel/r

So it matters:

-- Not because it would be bad if art history divided into local practices

So that Primadi Tabrani's book would not be legible as art history

-- But because it should be a matter of concern if art history does not divide into local practices

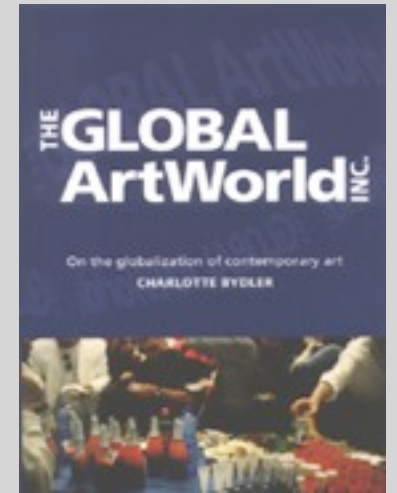
So that Tabrani's book would be too Western, applying Western semiotics and formal analysis to very different cultural phenomena

C.

A working definition of
globalism

Globalism normally has these connotations:

(from Charlotte Bydler, *The Global Artworld Inc.*, Uppsala, 2005)



- An awareness of the shrinking “global village”
(Marshall McLuhan’s expression, coined 1960)
- A “policy... favoring globalization”; promoting wealth and security
(Webster’s, 1961, a “cold war” edition)
- An ethical or environmental awareness
(*Oxford Dictionary of New Words*, 1991)
- An unfortunate homogenization, a “universalization of the particular”
(Roland Robertson, *Globalization*, London, 1992)
- Various meanings, depending on disciplinary and business purposes
(Leslie Sklair, “Globalization,” *International Encyclopedia of Business Management*, 1996)

In this context, globalism in art history entails:

Western methods

- iconography
- semiotics
- structuralism
- psychoanalysis
- formal analysis
- linguistics
- gender studies
- social art history
- historiography
- style analysis (discarded)
- connoisseurship (discarded)

Western institutional forms

- departments of art history
- a “discipline” of art history
- training distinct from aesthetics
- training distinct from art practice
- training distinct from art criticism
- methodology courses
- conferences
- refereed journals
- monographs & publishers
- scholarly apparatus (notes)
- privileged place of the archive

C. A working definition of globalism

So globalism means the use of Western* forms, ideas, and institutions.

*“Western” = North America and some countries in Europe. (I will define this later.)

D.

Five reasons why art history
is not, or is not becoming,
global

First reason art history is not
global:

What counts as art history in
many parts of the world is art
criticism

D. Five reasons why art history is not global

First example: Paraguay

Ticio Escobar writes postcolonial theory

Olga Blinder writes lives of artists for the Asuncion newspaper

As of 2002, there were no art historians

Second example: the Getty Research Center translation project (2002-)

Renata Holod's objection to the panel's request:

How could they know what counts as "art history"?

Iain Boyd Whyte -- the journal *AIT*

So in this sense it's not art history that's global, it's art criticism

Second reason art history is
not global:

Art History, as a discipline, is
mainly in North America and
Western Europe

D. Five reasons why art history is not global

To measure this it is necessary to count art history departments.

There is no secure way to do that.

According to Andrés Gratán of the Pontifica Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá, Colombia:

- There are 7 universities in Bogotá that have art history courses
- 2 in Cali
- 2 in Medellín
- 1 in Santa Marta
- 1 in Cartagena
- 1 in Bucaramanga...

This kind of claim would have to be assessed on the spot.

D. Five reasons why art history is not global

At University College Cork, Ireland, we developed a database of 800 art history departments, bigger than the mailing lists used by the CAA or CIHA

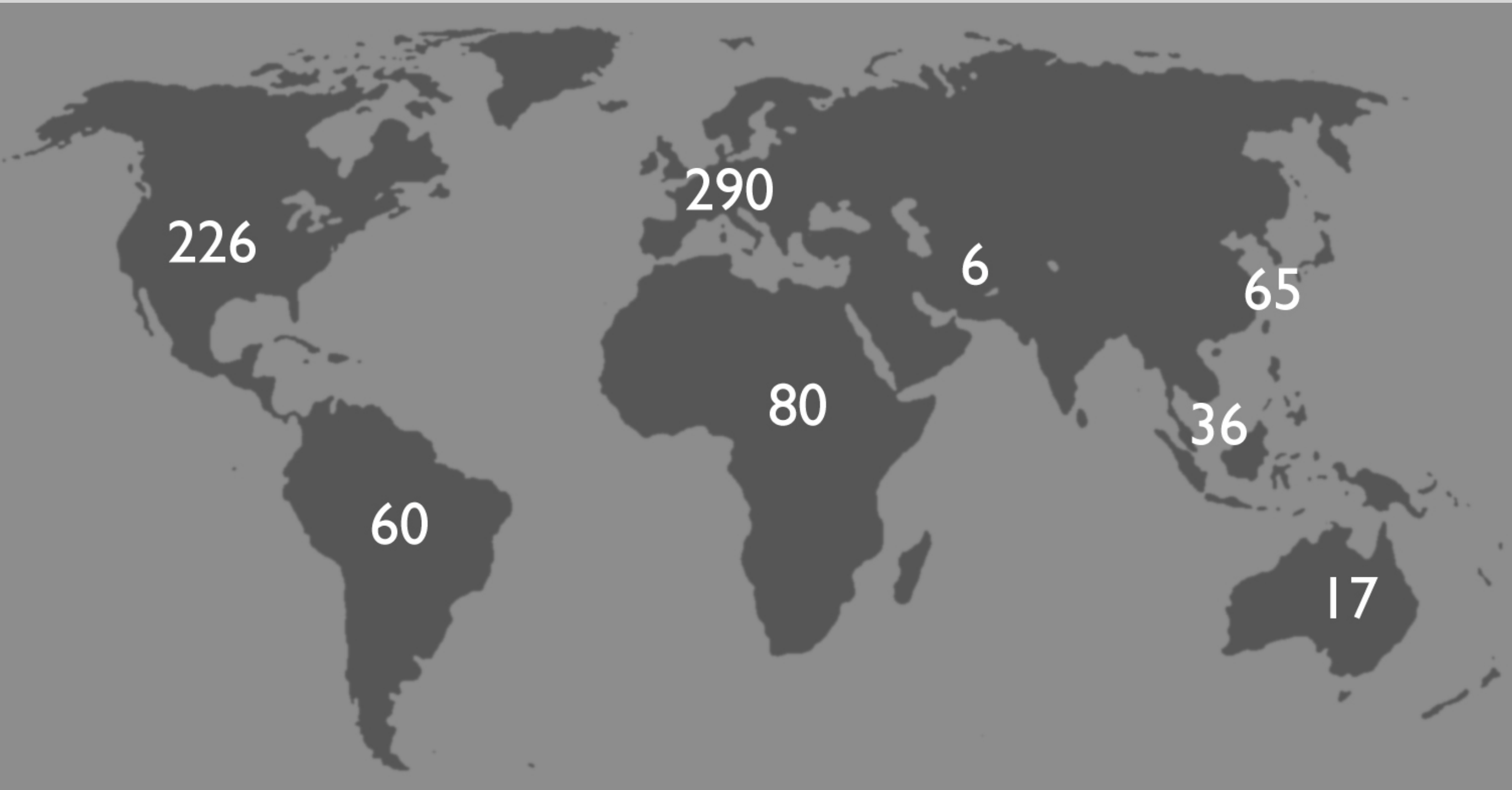
It is based on the *World of Learning* database, and augmented by web searches

Some national counts have been verified by art historians in Singapore, Jordan, Denmark, Finland and Germany

Other national counts are low: for example African countries that lack web presence, China, India... (E.g. the Ahmadu Bello University in Nigeria, which has no web site as of 2006.)

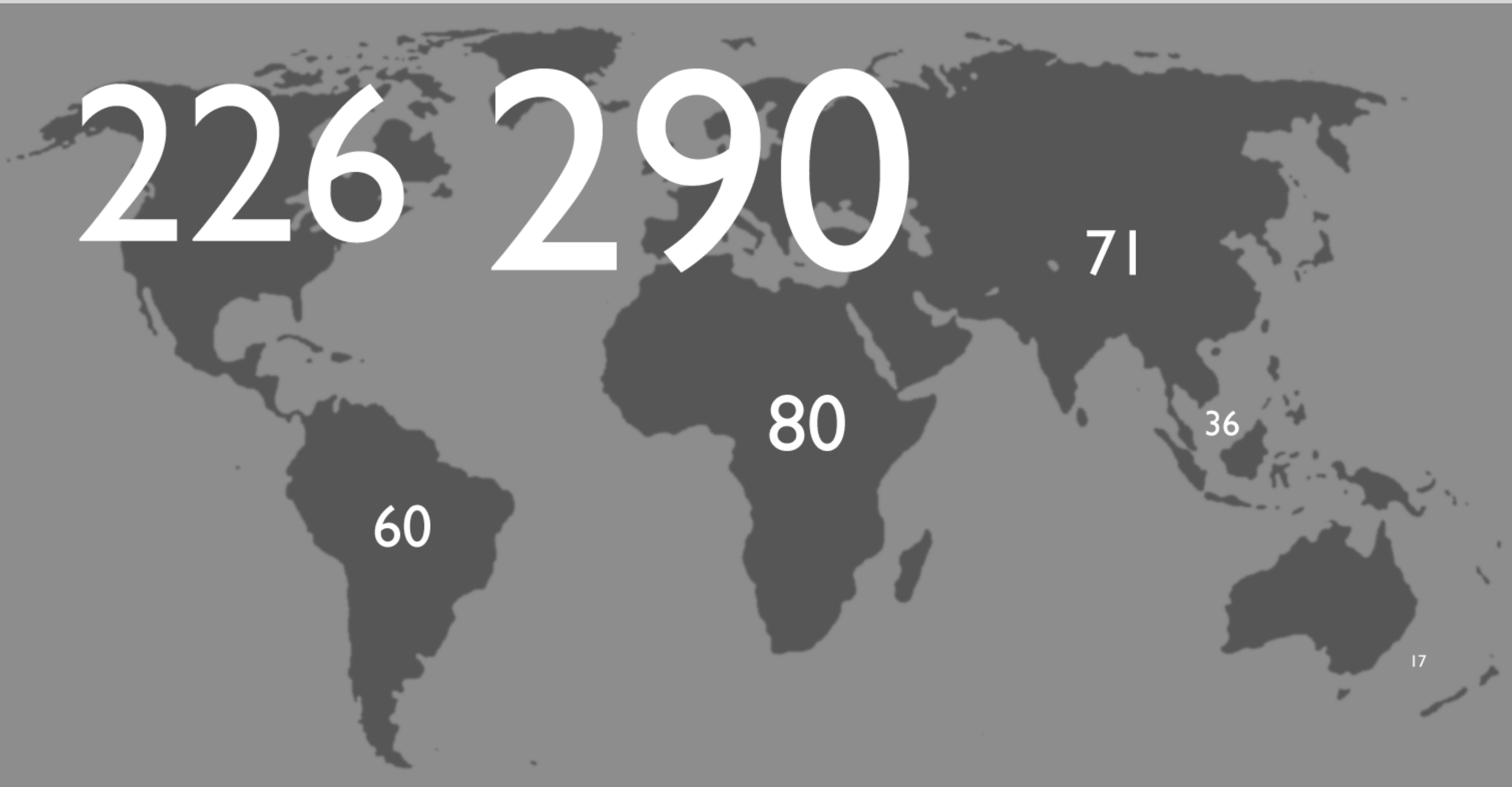
Some results:

Art history departments worldwide



U.K. + Ireland = 97. Europe including Turkey = 193. German-speaking: 50.

Art history departments worldwide, shown proportionately



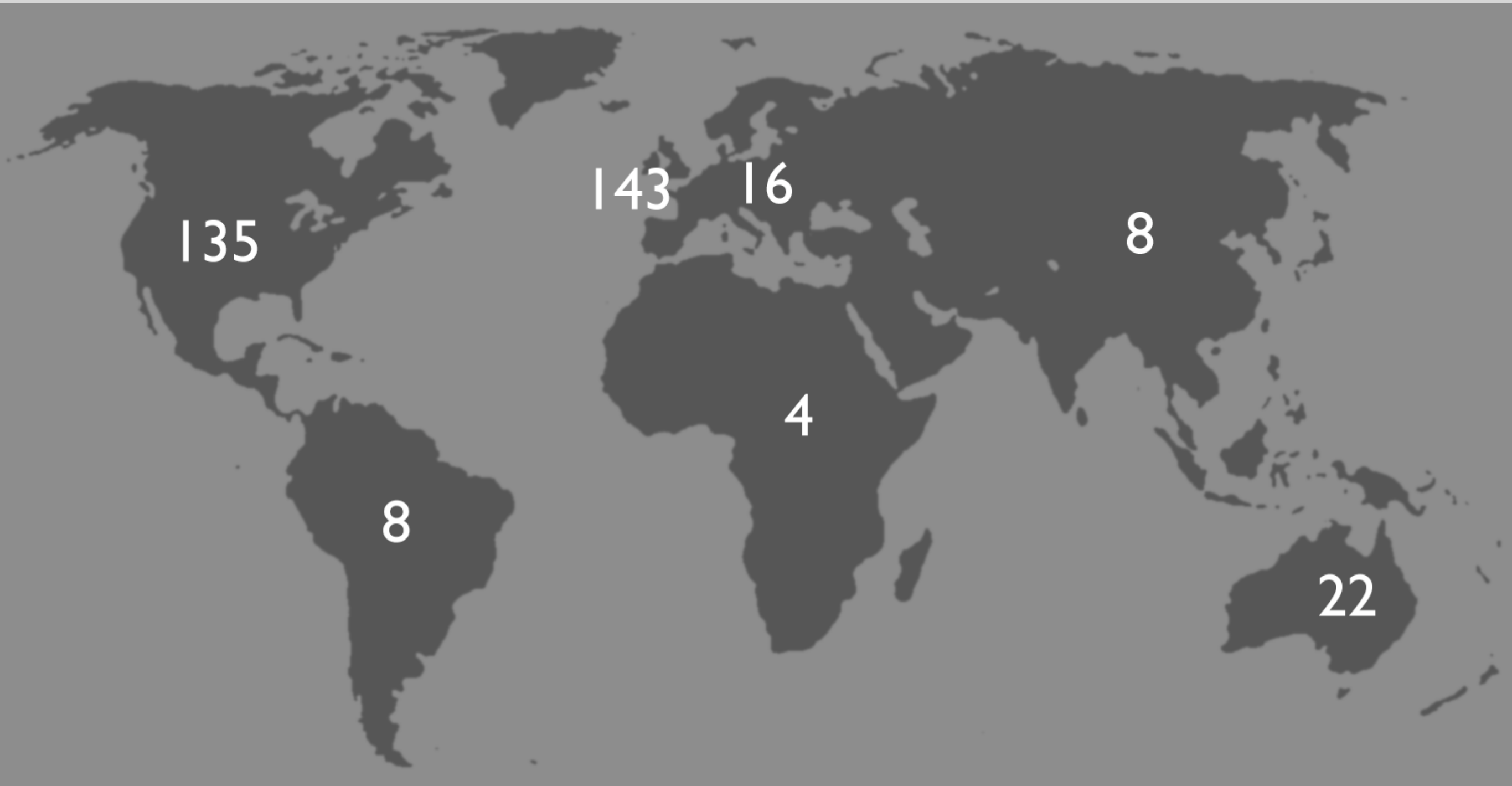
Another important criterion is refereed art journals

I.e. journals in which essays are sent out to anonymous readers before they are published

This is not customary in some parts of the world (and so is another partly unfair criterion)

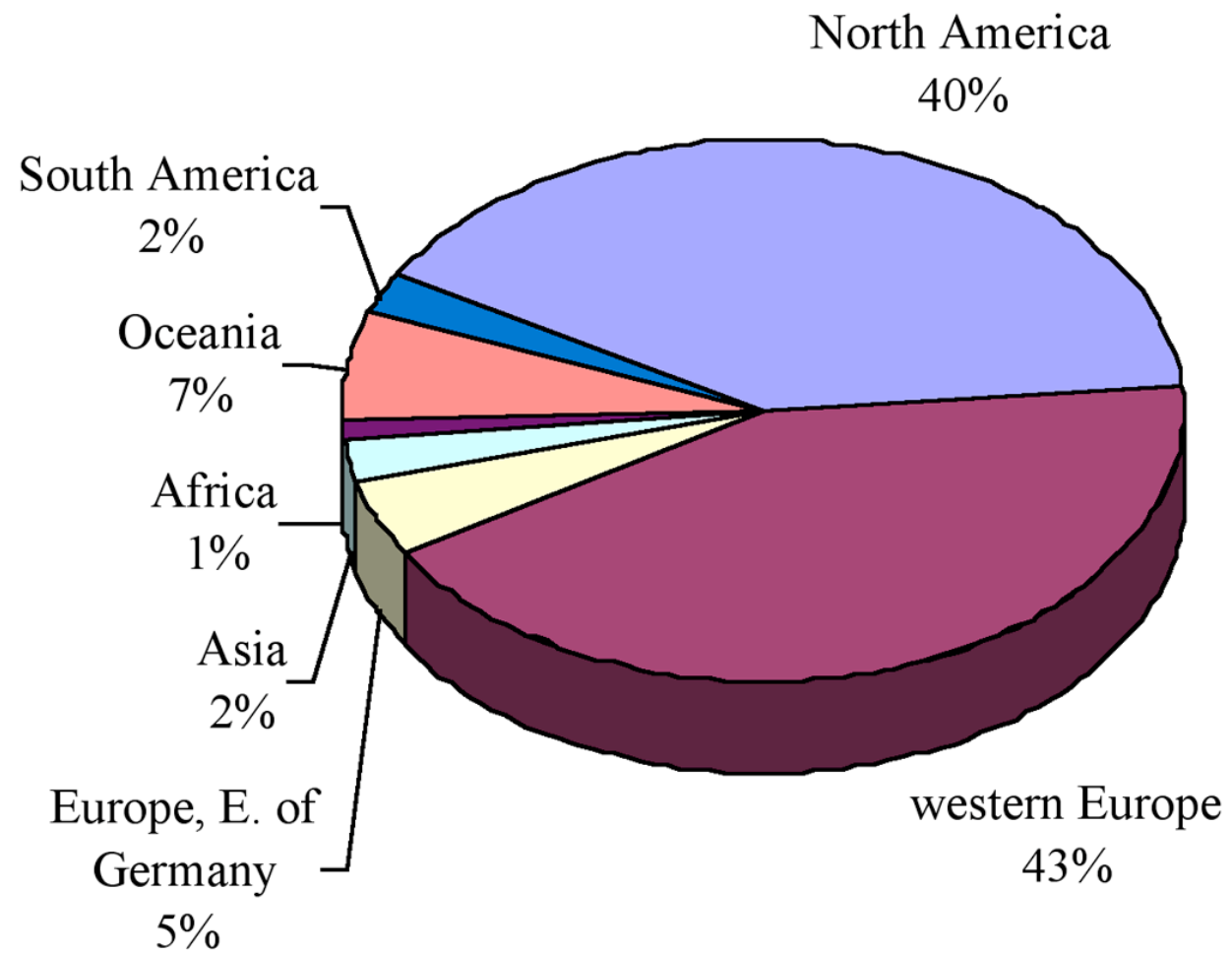
But it matters because it conforms to a sense of disciplinary community that is shared by the social sciences and humanities

Refereed art journals worldwide



The dividing line in Europe is east of Germany, west of the Czech Republic.

The data as a pie chart:



Refereed art journals, by region

Refereed art journals by country

Country, number of journals

Population, in millions

Number of journals per 100,000 people

Algeria	0	32	0
Argentina	0	37	0
Australia	17	19	90
Austria	3	8	38
Belgium	10	10	100
Bolivia	0	8	0
Brazil	3	176	2
Bulgaria	0	8	0
Canada	12	31	39
Chile	1	15	7
China	3	1289	.2
Colombia	1	42	2
Costa Rica	0	4	0
Cyprus	0	0.7	0
Czech Republic	0	10	0
Denmark	6	5	120
Ecuador	0	12	0
Egypt	0	72	0
Estonia	0	1	0
Finland	0	5	0
France	7	60	12

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Czech Republic	0	10	0
Denmark	6	5	120
Ecuador	0	12	0
Egypt	0	72	0
Estonia	0	1	0
Finland	0	5	0
France	7	60	12

Germany	16	83	19
Greece	1	11	9
Guatemala	0	11	0
Hungary	3	10	30
India	1	1069	.1
Ireland	3	4	75
Israel	2	6	33
Italy	8	57	14
Japan	2	128	2
Jordan	0	7	0
Kenya	0	31	0
Latvia	0	2	0
Lithuania	0	4	0
Mexico	2	105	2
Netherlands	35	16	218
New Zealand	5	4	125
Nicaragua	0	5	0
Nigeria	0	134	0
Norway	1	4	20
Pakistan	0	149	0
Paraguay	0	5	

Peru	0	26	0
Poland	7	39	17
Portugal	0	10	0
Romania	2	22	9
Russia	0	146	0
Slovakia	0	5	0
South Africa	4	44	9
South Korea	0	47	0
Spain	5	40	12
Sweden	4	9	11
Switzerland	3	7	42
Taiwan	1	22	5
Tunisia			
Uganda			
Ukraine	1	50	2
U.K.	45	59	75
United States	123	292	40
Uruguay	1	3	30

This may be wrong (what are the three journals)?

The country with the most art history per
Netherlands

China: 0.2 per 100,000 people