One object – Many visions – EuroVisions

Workshop 1 – Making Europe visible

Work material A3.1 to A3.5 for Task A2

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Work material A3.1: The Wrestlers

Artist: Adriaen de Vries (born in 1545 or 1556 in The Hague, died in 1626 in Prague)
Place of origin: Prague
Date: 1625
Material: Bronze
Dimensions: height 143 cm
Museum: National museum, Stockholm, Sweden

Adriaen de Vries, one of the most important European bronze sculptors of his day, produced a body of work that was shaped by his stays in various European countries. De Vries was Dutch; he was born in 1545 or 1556 in The Hague and probably trained as a goldsmith during his youth. Like many Central and North European artists of his time he was drawn to Italy for the prospect of finding affluent employers there and being able to study the art of the ancient world and the great Italian masters. It is not known exactly when de Vries arrived in Italy but from about 1581 he worked for several years in Giovanni Bologna's sculpture workshop in Florence – one of the largest and most advanced of its kind in all of Europe. There he worked as a metal sculptor; as an assistant he was entrusted with the task of casting of Bologna's sculptures, and probably he was also artistically involved in larger projects.

As a result, he was already an experienced sculptor when he went to Milan in 1586 to enter the service of Pompeo Leoni. There he collaborated as chief assistant on a major bronze sculpture project and thereby acquired the ability to create monumental works. His first stand-alone job led de Vries to Turin two years later, where as ducal court sculptor he would come to contribute to giving Turin its character of a princely residence. In a diplomatic gesture in 1589 he was 'lent', initially for a year, to Emperor Rudolf II in Prague. He stayed until 1594, however, on the art-loving emperor’s request. During that time the imperial court was one of the 'most outstanding cultural sites in Europe', employing artists and artisans including painters, sculptors, tapestry weavers and clockmakers from all over the continent.

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2 Cf. Scholten (2000), p. 23 – It is not known whether de Vries even created any works during his short stay in Turin (18 months).
3 Scholten (2000), p. 25 (translated from German to English by the editor).

Object description originates from Toolkit ‘Making Europe visible’.
Following his first stay in Prague de Vries travelled to Italy once more. There is evidence for him staying in Rome for a longer period, at least, where he studied the most significant sculptures of the ancient world – an experience that would come to shape his later body of work significantly. In Rome he finally received a calling from Augsburg, to where he travelled in 1596 in order to work on groups of figures for two monumental fountains. These fountains elevated the city’s reputation and at the same time contributed to de Vries’ fame as an artist. While still at work in Augsburg de Vries was once more called into the service of the emperor, who now appointed him as court sculptor. Around 1602 de Vries took up this ‘highly regarded position’. Until Rudolf II’s death in 1612 he remained in his service and mainly created sculptures for the imperial art chamber (‘Kunstkammer’). The succeeding emperor resided in Vienna; de Vries stayed in Prague, however, and had to rely on new commissioners. Being a leading European bronze sculptor, he was steadily working on jobs, which made the last fifteen years of his life very productive. The most important commissioners during that time were King Christian IV of Denmark, Duke Ernst of Holstein-Schaumburg and Albrecht von Wallenstein, the highest field commander of the imperial and Catholic armies in the Thirty Years’ War. The latter had had a palace built in Prague, the so-called Wallensteinpalais. De Vries, in his final years before his death, produced several bronze sculptures for the garden there, which in part were brought to completion by his assistants.

One of the sculptures is called The Wrestlers, showing two bare men in a wrestling match. Most likely the sculpture, which shows an exciting moment in the still undecided match, was inspired by an ancient wrestlers marble group that had been discovered in Rome in 1583. But not only the motive, even the style in which de Vries created the work can be attributed to influences from Italy: In Venetian painting of the day there were tendencies toward a sketchy and impasto manner of painting that probably served as a model for de Vries’ freer way of modelling in his later years. This rather loose surface design, which by way of example shows in the rough shaping of the feet, adds to the sculpture’s aliveness – and therefore contrasts with the precise and clearly defined modelling that de Vries used for his early work.

6 Scholten (2000), p. 29 (translated from German to English by the editor).
9 The transfer of the loose, sketchy surface modulation was possible because de Vries used wax to mould his models. By making the mould via lost-wax casting the surface structure remained intact in bronze, too, cf. Diemer (1999), p. 249.
10 Cf. Scholten (2000), p. 37 – The difference between early and late work becomes quite noticeable when comparing The Wrestlers with the sculpture “Psyche, carried by Cupids”, which was developed between 1590 and 1592 during the first stay in Prague. The sculpture can be found in the database of the national museum in Stockholm: http://emp-web-22.zetcom.ch/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=26733&viewType=detailView (8.5.2014).
The sculpture was placed in the Wallenstein Garden in Prague in 1625, one year before de Vries’ death. However, it was to stay there only until 1648 when the Swedes overran Prague and carried off a vast amount of art treasures both from the imperial Kunstkammer and the Wallensteinpalais – among them numerous bronze sculptures by de Vries. That is why today the most extensive collection of de Vries’s sculptures is located in Sweden. The Wrestlers is one of those sculptures.\textsuperscript{11}

Work material A3.2: Chinoiserie: Koppchen (drinking bowl) and saucer

Place of origin: Meissen (porcelain), Augsburg (painting); Germany  
Date: around 1730  
Painting: probably by Elisabeth Aufenwerth, after designs by Martin Engelbrecht  
Material: porcelain, color painted and gilded  
Dimensions: diameter bowl: 78 mm, saucer: 124 mm  
Museum: Maximilian Museum in Augsburg, Germany

Since the early 18th century, there was a great fascination for Chinese culture in Europe. Reports of a ‘civilised people’ at the other end of the world, on a par with Europe, were met with astonishment in the 16th and 17th centuries; Asian products imported by maritime trade were admired. Europeans especially fancied Chinese porcelain; they were fascinated by the exotic material. For a long time, Europeans tried in vain to track down the composition of porcelain to be able to produce it in Europe. Hence, the imported porcelain was in great demand, many royal houses had representative collections.1

The enthusiasm for China also had an impact on European crafts: they began to produce so-called ‘chinoiseries’ – products manufactured in Europe mimicking the Chinese style. In the production of chinoiseries, artisans relied on sample books containing drawings of models. These Asian-style patterns were created according to illustrated reports of travellers to China, whereby realistic and fantastic elements were mixed up. Especially with the beginning of the serial production of porcelain in Meißen in 1710 (for the first time porcelain was successfully produced there in 1708) as well as the chinoiserie decoration of the pieces, the Chinese style became widespread as it had now become accessible to the middle class.

Examples of such Chinese-style decorated porcelain products are two objects from the collection of the Maximilian Museum in Augsburg, a ‘Koppchen’ (a small handleless drinking bowl in Asiatic style) and a matching saucer. They were produced in Meißen and afterwards painted in Augsburg, which was then one of the artistic centres in Germany at the time, with highly

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specialised artisans who had produced for customers all over Europe. Around 1730, those two pieces were presumably painted by Elisabeth Aufenwerth who worked as a ‘Hausmaler’ in Augsburg. The decoration is based on a design by Martin Engelbrechts, who was one of the most productive engravers and a publisher of chinoiserie sample books.

The painting shows several Chinese looking people who apparently perform rituals – maybe a tea ceremony. The depicted scene is embellished by floral ornaments. Besides the frame around the picture there are also golden ornaments on the outer edges of the drinking bowl and the plate, which rather conform to the European tradition (Asian ornaments were not recorded in the travelogues and therefore were made according to the own taste). Not only the ornaments but also the colouring and the way people are depicted (missing applications on garments, shadowy faces) are influences by the European perspective.

Both the objects are therefore results of an early global cultural exchange which lead to diverse and unconventional forms of adaptation and to hybridisation. The examples of the drinking bowl and the saucer show that Europeans copied techniques of production as well as aesthetic forms of expression from Asia and finally adapted them in their own craft production. Moreover, these objects are ideal to present the different trans-regional levels from local (Augsburg crafts) to global (Europeans travelling to China bring impressions from the foreign country back to Europe where they were eagerly received) like in a zoom. The knowledge about these exchange processes can stimulate reflection upon the present day view on products ‘Made in China’. At the same time, the objects offer starting points to trace the distribution of Asian influence in Europe: Via the maritime nations, information about products from Asia reached central Europe; later, chinoiserie products were sold from the artistic centres in central Europe to interested people all over Europe.

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3 A porcelain painter who worked at his home.

Object description originates from Toolkit ‘Making Europe visible’.
Work material A3.3: Button ‘Nuclear Power? – No Thanks’

Designers: Anne Lund and Søren Lisberg
The design’s place of origin: Denmark (Original language: Danish)
Date: Design 1975, production 1991
Material: cardboard, plastic, tinplate
Dimensions: diameter 3.8 cm
Museum: German Historical Museum, Berlin, Germany

Since the 1970s, citizen movements for various topics have developed, where committed people expressed resentment against their countries’ governmental policies. One of these grassroots movements was the anti-nuclear movement.1 After Great Britain, France, Germany and other countries had launched nuclear programmes in the 1950s and 1960s, protests started to rise in the 1970s when people became aware of the potential danger of this kind of energy generation. In the beginning, there were local initiatives protesting against planned construction projects of nuclear power plants. However, people realised soon that local protests could impede local constructions in some cases but that the potential danger would persist when the power plant was instead built in another region nearby. Therefore, loosely organised groups formed national networks; in some cases even international associations were formed, especially in border regions. Besides the aim to impede the civil use of nuclear power or to abolish it, in the following centuries the movement also turned against the military use of nuclear power – overlapping with the peace movement.

There were also protests in Denmark. In 1974 the ‘Organisationen til Oplysning om Atomkraft’ (OOA; English: organisation for the information about nuclear power) was founded. In the following year, activist Anne Lund in collaboration with Søren Lisberg designed a logo for the movement which shows a smiling sun and the words ‘ATOMKRAFT? NEJ TAK’ (Nuclear Power? No Thanks). The intention was to design a friendly and open-minded icon that – with the question and the polite yet firm response – promotes dialogue.2 Moreover, the sun refers to alternative ways of power generation. The logo made its first appearance as buttons at a May Day rally in Aarhus, Denmark’s second city – and immediately had enthusiastic buyers.

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The ‘smiling sun’ became popular exceptionally quickly; soon anti-nuclear groups in other countries asked to use the logo. It became widespread, translations into 40 national and also regional languages are evidence for that. In recent times, the nuclear disaster of Fukushima (Japan 2011) gave a new impetus for the global anti-nuclear movement; as a result, the logo is now translated into 50 languages.

Already in 1977, the Danish activists have had the logo trademark protected so it cannot be misused for commercial or opposing political purposes. Since 2004, it has become a protected trademark in the EU as well as in the U.S. and Switzerland. Organisations which want to sell products with the ‘smiling sun’ have to pay licence fees to the OOA foundation – the returns go to the international anti-nuclear movement.

The badge has had a great importance in several European countries in contemporary history; this is proven by the fact that many big museums have added the logo to their collections as buttons or posters, such as the British Museum in London3 (English version) in 1984, the German Historical Museum in Berlin4 (German, Russian and Japanese versions) from 1990 on, and the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen in 2003, which shows the original drawing by Anne Lund.5 Looking at it from a trans-regional context, it becomes clear the symbol was initially designed for local and national purposes and spread – translated in other languages – all over Europe and finally even over the globe to become an internationally recognisable symbol for the protest. Until today, the ‘smiling sun’ is the best-known symbol for the anti-nuclear movement. The fact that local initiatives could feel like being part of a big international movement by using the symbol certainly helped to increase the popularity of the logo, besides its positive image and the high level of recognition.

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4 Cf. http://dhm.de/datenbank/dhm.php?seite=5&fld_0=AK300241 (German version)
http://dhm.de/datenbank/dhm.php?seite=5&fld_0=XX002617 (Japanese version),
http://dhm.de/datenbank/dhm.php?seite=5&fld_0=95000218 (Russian version), (22/04/2014).
Work material A3.4: The Namban screen

Place of origin: Japan
Date: Edo period (between 1615 and 1857)
Material: wood (frame), paper, pigments and gold leaf
Dimensions: height 176 cm, length 381 cm
Museum: Museu do Oriente, Lissabon, Portugal

The Namban screen is a good example for an object that illustrates an encounter between representatives of different civilisations. It was manufactured in Japan during the Edo period, between 1615 und 1857. Already in the 16th century, the Portuguese were present in Asia, where they traded but also tried to missionate the native population.

Namban art mirrors the study of an exotic different culture from the Japanese view. The ‘Namban-jin’ (‘barbarians of the South’) soon became a very popular subject for the main schools of Japanese painting, which mainly worked for the rich and powerful. The screens were made of wood covered with painted paper.

The painting on the screen of the Lisbon Orient Museum’s collection shows an encounter between the Portuguese and the Japanese, motivated by trade interests. On the golden ground coat two parallel scenes are depicted: In the background there is a big black ship – the merchant ship well known to the Japanese – from Macao, a city in China, which had been used as a trading post by the Portuguese. The ship is being prepared to anchor. Finally, the goods are brought to the coast and the delegation of Portuguese and there supposedly African servants and slaves bring gifts to the local rulers. (This was to secure influence as the Dutch threatened Portugal’s trade contact at that time). However, the delegation is not only welcomed by the natives but also by Jesuit priests who were already based there back then. The building in the background is a Jesuit church which had been constructed in adaption to the Japanese style. Thus, global trade contacts as well as Christian mission and with that the partial cultural assimilation of Europeans are an issue here.

The style of Namban art was also used for the decoration of other items such as chests, cases and boxes. These were partially produced specifically for export to the European market. The objects were often manufactured in adaptation of the European form language (e.g. small boxes and cases), which were then painted in typical Japanese style. The painting depicted single persons or small groups of people or they were inspired by the flora and fauna.

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Object description originates from Toolkit ‘Making Europe visible’.
Work material A3.5: Portraits of the four ‘Indian Kings’

Artist: John Verelst (ca. 1648-1734)
Place of origin: London, Great Britain
Date: 1710
Material: oil on canvas
Dimensions: approx. 92 x 64 cm
Institution: Library and Archives Canada

Titles:
(1) Tee Yee Neen Ho Ga Row, Emperor of the Six Nations
(2) Etow Oh Koam, King of the River Nation (Mahican);
(3) Sa Ga Yeath Qua Pieth Tow, King of the Maquas (Mohawk)
(4) Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row, King of the Generethgarich (Canajoharie)

In the year 1710, four Native American leaders of the Haudenosaunee (= self-designation of the so-called Iroquois) travelled to London on a diplomatic mission.¹ The reason for the trip was Great Britain’s unsuccessful attempt to occupy French Canada the year before. British commanders led by Peter Schuyler now planned to occupy the territory again. Seeking strategic alliances, they brought the four Native American leaders, whose territories bordered on the French colonies, to London. During the audience, the so-called ‘Indian Kings’ offered their support to Queen Anne in the struggle for French Canada. In return, they hoped that more English missionaries would be sent to their own populated territories in order to spread Protestantism and thereby reducing the strong influence of Jesuit priests. On the occasion of the visit,


Object description originates from Toolkit ‘Making Europe visible’.
Queen Anne commissioned the Dutch painter John Verelst\(^2\) to make portraits of the delegation. As the four ‘Indian Kings’ soon became popular among the British society, Jean Simon created mezzotints after these paintings which also displayed the names of the patriarchs. This enables the identification of the portrayed men today.

All four portraits have in common to show the patriarchs in full-length. The depicted persons wear red cloaks with golden braids which they supposedly received from Queen Anne – as well as some European garments they were equipped with. Each of the men is shown with an animal which symbolises their affiliation to a clan.

Interestingly, the ‘Emperor of the Six Nations’, apparently higher in the hierarchy, wears more European garments than the other patriarchs. Besides the red cloak, he wears a black frock coat, knickerbockers, silk stockings and buckled shoes. While the other ‘kings’ present their weapons, he holds a Wampum belt in his right hand. In the culture of the Haudenosaunee, these beadwork belts were used in order to commemorate important events such as peace treaties. In this case the belt was probably used as a memory of the audience and as a symbol for the alliance with Great Britain.

The other three portraits show the patriarchs wearing European shirts, which are held together by belts with Native American patterns. Their legs are naked and they wear moccasins; moreover, all of them are depicted with elaborate tattoos, the most striking is the portrait of Sa Ga Yeath Qua Pieth Tow, which shows his naked upper body with a tattooed chest. Additionally, their hairstyles and earrings clearly indicate the patriarchs’ Native American descent.

The four ‘Indian Kings’ are portrayed in the traditional style of European royal portraits. Their posture as well as the accessory of the red cloak plus the presentation of the weapons or the Wampum belt – as if they were typical European insignia of authority – show parallels to royal portraits of that time. Supposedly this depiction was meant to show the appreciation of the patriarchs, which were treated as ‘kings’. In comparison to portraits of European rulers of that time it is however notable that the backgrounds are not richly decorated interiors but instead the wild nature, which probably is intended to show that the Indians descent from ‘indigenous people’. Thereby the portraits show an unusual contrast between a typical European pose and a natural setting. However, the portraits also explicitly show elements of their Native American culture – for instance hairstyles, earrings, tattoos, etc. Thus, the paintings oscillate between the (supposed) intention to depict the ‘Indian Kings’ as powerful men by European imagery but at the same time to illustrate the exoticism that appears remarkable for the European viewer.

In her article *Iroquois Portrayed: Images of The Haudenosaunee from Three Centuries*\(^3\), Stephanie Pratt stresses that every portrait made by Europeans inevitably shows a European view of Native American culture which is prone to manipulation and makes it impossible to concentrate on the individual identity of the person depicted. For the present-day viewer, the

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\(^2\) John Verels was born in 1648 as son to the painter Pieter Hermansz Verelst, he was a Dutch painter of the Golden Age who worked in England. He died in 1734.

\(^3\) Cf. Pratt (2013).
paintings offer the possibility to understand the European view on Native American culture at the time – a view which was not neutral but directed by colonial interests. At the same time they offer the possibility to reflect upon European image culture because they show the specific characteristics of the depiction of rulers in European portraits.
It is neither necessary nor possible to answer every single question with every work material as not every text provides information to every question. Just skip those questions not fitting to your work material.

Also consider these questions as a guideline for identifying objects with trans-regional/ cross-cultural references in your own museum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions that will help you identifying the categories the object belongs in</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category 1: The object as ‘migrant’</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Does the ‘biography’ of the object feature a history of migration? Was the owner or the location changed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Under which circumstances did the object ‘migrate’ from its original place of use to the museum?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Why can the object be found in this particular museum?</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) Was the object presented in travelling exhibitions and possibly exhibited in varying contexts? Did it experience new interpretations?</td>
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<tr>
<td>(5) If the object is currently exhibited: what is the current situation of presentation? Is the (possible) history of migration considered in the exhibition?</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Category 2: The background circumstances of the making of the object</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Even if the object was manufactured at the same place where it can still be found today its circumstances of production can nevertheless exhibit trans-regional aspects. For instance, the producer may have come from a different region or have gained new impressions by travelling. Can trans-regional references be found in the producer’s biography?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(2) The collaboration of different producers in the production of one object may contain trans-regional connections – who was involved in the production and which stage of production was carried out in which location? Where did the raw material come from?

### Category 3: Cultural transfer by means of trans-regional networks

(1) Was the object shaped by cultural exchange and cultural adaptation in being locally produced, but in its production process supplemented by passed on, foreign patterns or crafting techniques? Does the object appear to be a cultural hybrid?

(2) Was the object sold via specific trade routes and was it shaped thereby or was knowledge distributed in this way?

(3) Did the region the museum is situated in play a particular part in trans-regional networks? Can this knowledge be used for the interpretation of the object?

(3) Is the object influenced by a diachronic cultural transfer (e.g. recourse to stylistic devices in the Renaissance)?

### Category 4: Culture spanning contexts

(1) Can the object be assigned to a general, trans-regional European style of art, a specific cultural practice, or an epoch of the history of ideas or mentality? If this is the case, what part does the object play in the context of this connection? Which references can be established between the local and the European level?

(2) Optional task: Search different data bases like e.g. Europeana or museum data bases for reference objects that for instance show a regional version of the culture spanning context your object belongs to.
**Category 5: Cultural encounters as theme of the object**

1. Do the iconic or verbal (i.e. written) statements of the object address trans-regional aspects in form of cultural encounters?

2. How can the form of presentation be interpreted and what is its purpose? How is the cultural encounter depicted?

3. How is the encounter presented? What might be the intention of the depiction?

**Category 6: Aspects of the perception of the self and the other**

1. What kind of image of the own or the foreign civilisation does the object portray? Does it fit in the time the object origins from? What has changed until now?

2. Does the object enable a ‘foreign perspective’ on the own civilisation so as to expand the limited own perspective by means of an exterior view?

3. In how far do self and foreign image differ from each other? Can e.g. assumed hierarchies be seen? Are there secondary objects that come to your mind that could show the relationship between the cultures from another point of view?

4. Did the object function as an illustration of faraway, possibly ‘exotic’ civilisations?

**Category 7: The object as icon**

1. Can the object be attributed to an important European wide/ global development, e.g. the spread of precise time measurement? Was the object so significant for this development that it can stand as its symbol?

Object description originates from Toolkit ‘Making Europe visible’.
(2) Can the object really function as icon for developments in the whole of Europe or does a closer look reveal that the trend or the object was irrelevant for certain regions or countries?

**Category 8: ‘Object-narration’**

(1) Did the object ‘witness’ a cultural encounter?

(2) Which stories – based on the evidenced facts – can be told about the historical event and the object?
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Lord Mayor’s State Coach
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Namban Screen
http://masterpieces.asemus.museum/masterpiece/detail.nhn?objectId=11906, (24.03.14)

Object description originates from Toolkit ‘Making Europe visible’. 
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