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BY JORDI BALTÀ PORTOLÉS
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Museums of Asian Arts outside Asia: Call for Papers



The international conference **"Art, Materiality and Representation"**, organised by the UK's Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland (RAI), the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas of the British Museum (an ASEMUS member) and the Department of Anthropology at the School of Oriental and African Studies will be held in **London on 1-3 June 2018**. This is the fourth of a series of **biennial conferences** organised by RAI and the British Museum since 2012. A panel entitled **"Museum of Asian Arts outside Asia: Questioning Artefacts, Cultures and Identities"** will be held in this context. The panel aims at defining museums of Asian arts outside Asia as cultural expressions of representations of the Other. Mapping the collections and tracing their histories and development, it will be possible to **unravel the identity of these institutions and the notions of 'Asia' emerging from them**. Convenors of the panel suggest that museums of Asian arts located outside Asia have so far attracted little scholarly attention as a specific group within the category of specialist museums. Hovering at the intersection between art museums, archaeological museums,

ethnographic museums and museums of world cultures, **their identity and that of their collections has not been clarified in museological and anthropological terms**. Hence, this panel aims at engaging participants in a discussion on issues that can finally cast light on what these institutions are precisely. Organisers have launched a **call for papers**, encouraging proposals that help to recognise common features and distinctive traits among these museums. The questions at the heart of this debate are:

- Why, how and when museums of Asian arts came into existence?
- How have their policies, practices and objectives developed?
- What are their prospects in ever-changing museal, socioeconomic, cultural and political scenarios?

As the panel looks at the history and process of musealisation of Asian arts, it will focus on the **cultural practices linked to collecting and exhibiting**. It also seeks to highlight how display and acquisition choices ultimately produce representations of the artefacts' cultural identities. Through the investigation of the typology, geography, historical and cultural context of the objects in the collections, organisers intend to **outline a conceptual map of ideas of 'Asia'**, an entity the boundaries of which often appear peculiarly blurred, far from unequivocal. Consequently, the contributions to this panel will offer, from a transnational and crosscultural perspective, the jigsaw pieces that, put together, will compose the rationale connecting museal narratives about 'Asia'. The panel "Museums of Asian Arts outside Asia: Questioning Artefacts, Cultures and Identities" is **convened by Dr. Iside Carbone (RAI)**. 250-word abstracts for papers around 15-20 minutes in length should be **sent by 8 January 2018** at the latest. For additional information about the conference "Art, Materiality and Representation", please visit <https://therai.org.uk/conferences/art-materiality-and-representation> For information on the call for papers on "Museum of Asian Arts outside Asia", please visit <https://nomadit.co.uk/rai/events/rai2018/conferencesuite.php/panels/6051>

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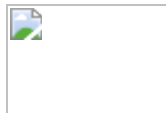


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