

EINLADUNG ZUM ABENDVORTRAG

im Rahmen der vom Wiener Conze-Projekt veranstalteten Tagung
„Netzwerke der Altertumswissenschaften im 19. Jahrhundert“ (30.–31. Mai 2014)

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The Dialectics of the Antiquities Rush

This paper coins the phrase ‘antiquities rush’ to describe the unprecedented series of subcolonial trawls which transferred objects chiefly from Asia and Africa to European museums and private collections during the period between about 1800 and 1914. It shows how the extraction of artifacts – especially when state-sponsored, and known to the public – sparked the advent of nationalist attempts to insist on the *immobility* of objects. The paper describes several cases in which this dialectic operated, driving European collectors ever further eastward in search of new finds, and then details some of the intellectual consequences of the antiquities rushes, offering just a few examples of those whose experience led them to elaborate new, and increasingly non-Eurocentric, understandings of the history of art. A final section will briefly describe the lag-time between the articulation of these post-classical worldviews, and the exhibition of non-western artifacts, and then suggest just a few of the costs and benefits of the antiquities rush.

Freitag, 30. Mai 2014, 17 Uhr

im Festsaal des Archivs der Universität Wien

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