

# *For Your Eyes Only*\*: How Museum Walltexts Communicate East and West

The Case of the Peggy Guggenheim Foundation

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## ABSTRACT

The artworks normally preserved in museums, both in permanent collections or in temporary exhibitions, can be accompanied by a particular type of scripts which specialists call *extended labels or walltexts*, i.e. brief descriptive and interpretative texts, meant to provide a context for the work of art, displayed for the visitors' benefit. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the extent to which, if any, walltexts communicate different cultures to museum visitors, who are all tourists in a museum route. In particular, the aim of this contribution is to describe the way in which (1) the West is communicated to a Western audience and (2) the East is mediated to a Western audience. From the quantitative perspective the results of this study seem to indicate that there is a different way in which walltexts are elaborated when Western art and Asian art are presented to a Western audience: what is unknown to the Western audience has to be recreated in the short text of the extended label to allow the museum visitors to appreciate and understand the value of the artwork they are observing and at the same time to virtually touring Asian Art.

*Keywords:* corpus linguistics, keywords, quantitative analysis, semantic domain, tourism discourse.

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\* *For Your Eyes Only* is the Dreyfus-Best temporary exhibition held at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection Venice from May 23, 2014 to August 31, 2014.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to UNESCO, mass tourism can be a huge obstacle in the matter of international development, if it does not “take account of other people’s cultures”. Considering the fact that the tourism industry has a higher profit than the automobile or chemical industry, careful attention has to be paid to its phenomenon and its global impact on countries, at an international, national and regional level. Indeed, the risk the tourism industry is running in this era of globalisation is that of homologation. UNESCO, therefore, tries to help its Member States in “reconsidering the relationship between tourism and cultural diversity, tourism and intercultural dialogue, and tourism and development”<sup>1</sup> in order “to fight against poverty”, on the one hand, and to protect the environment, on the other, while appreciating cultural diversity. One of the ways to achieve this is through cultural tourism. As Perera (2012) claims, the diversity of culture tourists can consume ranges from museums, art galleries, or cathedrals, to experiencing the ‘atmosphere’ of the city nightlife. In such diversity, finding a proper definition of ‘cultural tourism’ is difficult. As defined by ICOMOS (1976, art. 3), “Cultural Tourism is that form of tourism whose object is, among other aims, the discovery of monuments and sites. It exerts on these last a very positive effect insofar as it contributes – to satisfy its own ends – to their maintenance and protection”<sup>2</sup>. The most typical and popular form of cultural tourism seems to be heritage (Chen and Chen 2010) in its “movable heritage collections”, as described by Perera (2012, 3; cf. also Jun, Nicholls, and Vogt 2004), i.e., museums. The main purpose of most museums is to preserve the history, cultural and national heritage of a region or a country, or of chosen subject of a special, valuable and relevant interest to be shared with the public and future generations.

The artworks normally preserved in museums, both in permanent collections and in temporary exhibitions, can be accompanied by a particular type of scripts which specialists call *extended labels* or *walltexts*, i.e. brief descriptive and interpretative texts, meant to provide a context for the work of art, displayed for the visitors’ benefit. They are a museological phenomenon, not inserted in the exhibition catalogue<sup>3</sup> but available to the

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<sup>1</sup> Text available on the UNESCO website at: [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=36700&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=36700&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) [13/11/2014].

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.international.icomos.org/publications/93touris15.pdf> [13/11/2014].

<sup>3</sup> These texts, however, are normally copyrighted and belong to the press house publishing the exhibition catalogue, as claimed by our informant, Sara Crimi, free-lance translator ([http://www.saracrimi.com/?page\\_id=8](http://www.saracrimi.com/?page_id=8)).

visitors in various formats: displayed as label signposts or scripts next to the artwork, projected onto screens or museum walls, printed on posters, or glued on installations. Usually long from 135 to 563 words, with an average of 230 words, walltexts create a privileged discursive relation with the visitor: their narration captures the visitor to the extent that they delay the visitor’s trip through the museum route, which in some cases may even not start before the reading of the walltexts is over<sup>4</sup>. In doing so, they become themselves a cultural artefact, as can be seen from the excerpt of a walltext in (1), below:

(1) Whose Utopia

Whose Utopia (2006) centers on the lives of workers at the Osram lighting factory in China’s Pearl River Delta region, an area outside Hong Kong that is a site of nationwide migration by people seeking expanded work opportunities in the country’s blossoming economy. Over the course of six months, [...] In costumes or street clothes, these anonymous figures dance and play music while other employees, unnoticing, continue to work around them. The poetic, dreamlike vision of individualism within the constraints of industrialization illuminates the otherwise invisible emotions, desires, and dreams that permeate the lives of an entire populace in contemporary Chinese society. (<http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/collection-online/artwork/22047>)

Indeed, as claimed by Margarito (2005), the main cultural purpose of walltexts is that of satisfying three needs:

- intellectual needs, in order to widen one’s background culture;
- emotional needs, in order to live a pleasant experience;
- societal needs, in order to meet people with the same artistic interests.

They are of vital importance because they interpret the artwork and recreate the context in which the work of art was elaborated. This applies not only to works produced in the past times, but also to those coming from different places/areas of the world, therefore different cultures to which the visitor may not be accustomed. Without walltexts, no enjoyment of the artwork would be possible.

Although there are extensive studies about the language of tourism (see Gotti 2006; Maci 2010, 2012b and 2013) for tourism discourses, ranging

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<sup>4</sup> There are studies arguing that visitors spend little time reading museum labels. Amongst them, we can quote McManus (1989) and Falk and Dierking (2012). While developing a previous study first published in 1992, the latter propose an interactive museum experience rather than the traditional classroom experience. We believe, however, that the context they refer to has nowadays developed when considering museums, in terms of management and organization. See, for instance, Margarito (2005 and 2006).

from professional to promotional and digital discourses; Cappelli (2013b) and Manca (2012 and 2013) for the language of tourism across cultures; Maci (2012a and 2012b) and Denti (2012a and 2012b) for the promotional language of tourism; Francesconi (2014) and Cappelli (2013a) for multimodality in tourism discourse, to the best of our knowledge there is no investigation on the language of walltext from the applied linguistic perspective, except for the analysis carried out by Margarito (2005), which is, however, an examination of French walltexts from a cultural and multimodal angle.

It is the purpose of this paper to analyse the extent to which, if any, walltexts communicate different cultures to museum visitors, who are all tourists in a museum route. In particular, the aim of this contribution is to describe the way in which (1) the West is communicated to a Western audience and (2) the East is mediated to a Western audience. In order to pursue this aim, we will carry out a contrastive analysis of walltexts or extended labels elaborated by the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, for case (1) and by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Collection in New York, for case (2).

The results will show that in the recreation of the socio-historical context there is more attention in how East is communicated to the Western audience.

## 2. CORPUS COLLECTION AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

In order to carry out such an investigation, we collected 63 walltexts<sup>5</sup> from the Peggy Guggenheim Collections – Venice and New York – both from permanent and temporary exhibitions, forming a small corpus of 14,534 words, the details of which are indicated in *Table 1*.

*Table 1. – Corpus description.*

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	# OF TEXTS	# OF WORDS
Peggy Guggenheim Collection Venice	37	6,022
Solomon R. Guggenheim Collection New York	26	8,512
TOTAL	63	14,534

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<sup>5</sup> See the Appendix for the full list of the walltexts collected.

Walltexts were either photographed<sup>6</sup> and manually copied on Word, or downloaded from the Peggy Guggenheim Foundation websites<sup>7</sup>. The main criteria for walltext selection were as follows:

- (i) *Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice* (henceforth WEST\_ART)
  - a. walltexts written in English<sup>8</sup>;
  - b. walltexts related to European artists;
- (ii) *Solomon R. Guggenheim Collection in New York* (henceforth EAST\_ART)
  - a. walltexts written in English;
  - b. walltexts related to Asian artists;
  - c. walltexts written by American art reviewers<sup>9</sup> rather than by Asian reviewers and then translated into English – in this way we can see how the ‘East’ can be communicated by Western critics to a Western audience;
  - d. Asian artists who were not of English or American origin and their (artistic) education had not been carried out either the UK or in the US. For this purpose, the artists’ biography was carefully studied.

Both the WEST\_ART and the EAST\_ART corpora consist of walltexts created by Western authors for a Western audience; the main difference lies in the type of art they describe: Western art in the WEST\_ART corpus; Asian art in the EAST\_ART corpus. The main purpose for creating two subcorpora is, as said above, to see how East is communicated to West in cultural tourism.

All texts thus collected were digitized and converted in .txt format to allow a data-driven quantitative analysis based on Corpus Linguistics to which a qualitative interpretation will follow.

The quantitative analysis has been carried out with WMatrix (Rayson 2003, 2005 and 2008), which has allowed computation for: word frequency; keyword lists; concordances; annotation in terms of key part-of-speech (POS), thanks to the CLAWS (the Constituent Likelihood Automatic

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<sup>6</sup> We thank Dr Sandra Divari, Registrar at the Peggy Guggenheim Foundation - Venice, for her help. We also thank Philip Rylands, Director of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection and Foundation Director for Italy, for his authorization to use the Peggy Guggenheim Foundation - Venice walltexts.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.guggenheim-venice.it/>; <http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york>.

<sup>8</sup> Information about the walltext genesis was given by Dr Divari: in the case of the *For Your Eyes Only* temporary exhibition, as in any other temporary exhibitions, the English walltexts were written by the exhibition curator, and revised in English by Dr Rylands; in the case of the permanent exhibition, walltexts were written by Dr Rylands.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Americanicity’ was checked on the basis of the reviewer’s surname and web-search of the reviewer’s profile and CV.

Word-tagging System)<sup>10</sup> tagset (Piao et al. 2006); and key semantic domains, thanks to USAS (the UCREL Semantic Analysis System)<sup>11</sup> category system (Archer et al. 2002). For the purposes of this contribution, we will concentrate on keywords and key semantic domains. USAS annotates key semantic domains using 232 category labels grouped into 21 major semantic fields, sub-grouped in semantic areas whose meaning reflects relationships of synonym/antonym, general/specific or meronymy/holonymy<sup>12</sup>.

WMatrix is used here in order to see how West and East are communicated or mediated to the Western society and whether this may be quantitatively revealed through different semantic areas. The main purpose is to investigate whether the keyness in words and semantic domain tagging can be used to better identify specific expressions used to represent and connote different cultures. In this sense, such resources are meant to allow the museum visitor to enter the contextual culture of the artist, through the eyes (or better the culture) of the walltext author.

### 3. DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. *Keyword analysis*

An initial and interesting difference concerning how West and East are communicated and/or mediated to the Western audience can be perceived from the investigation of the keywords. *Table 2*, below, offers a comparative analysis of the keyword lists in the walltexts of the WEST\_ART and the EAST\_ART, respectively.

*Table 2* presents the first 10 keywords found in the two sub-corpora. The WEST\_ART sub-corpus deals with the European and Italian artists, mainly operating during the 1910s-1940s, and offers keywords which reflect the artistic culture of the period they refer to. Indeed, we can immediately perceive it from four out of ten items: they are proper names, referring either to the names of the artists (*Morandi* and *Boccioni*), or to an art gallery refurbished by world-renown architect Carlo Scarpa (*Galleria del Cavallino*, which collocates with *del*, the item found at line nr. 9), or to an artistic movement (*Cubism*).

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/claws/> [30/11/2014].

<sup>11</sup> See <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/usas/> [30/11/2014].

<sup>12</sup> The USAS guide, containing a detailed description of all categories, is available at <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/usas/usas%20guide.pdf> [30/11/2014].

Table 2. – Keyword list sample.

WEST_ART				EAST_ART			
	KEYWORD	HITS	KEYNESS		KEYWORD	HITS	KEYNESS
1	X	26	0.45	1	Artist	58	0.71
2	Futurist	22	0.38	2	Installation	22	0.27
3	Canvas	23	0.40	3	Japan	18	0.22
4	Morandi	14	0.24	4	Okamoto	14	0.17
5	Cm	11	0.19	5	political	13	0.16
6	Boccioni	11	0.19	6	performance	12	0.15
7	Cavallino	11	0.17	7	museum	11	0.14
8	Del	10	0.17	8	history	11	0.14
9	Horse	9	0.16	9	Photograph	10	0.12
10	Cubism	9	0.16	10	Gengis Khan	10	0.12

The reference to an artistic movement is also found with the adjective *Futurist* (22 hits, 0.38 keyness). Even the substantive *horse* (9 hits, 0.16 keyness) is in line with *Futurism*, the artistic cultural influence of the period covered by most walltexts, in that the horse is one of the animals depicted by various artists, as, for instance, in Sironi’s *White Horse* and in Boccioni’s *Dynamism of a Speeding Horse + Houses*, meant as an emblem of speed, time and space.

The top keyword is the letter *x* (26 hits, 0.45 keyness), which stands for the sign ‘times’ in the measurement of the painting dimension being described in the walltext, as the concordance list of ‘*x*’ in *Table 3*, below, indicates.

The concordance list of ‘*x*’ in *Table 3* also shows that the item collocates with *canvas* (23 hits, 0.40 keyness) and *cm* (11 hits, 0.16 keyness).

It seems, therefore, that keywords in the WEST\_ART corpus are based in technicalities and proper nouns, as if no context were necessary in order to understand the work of art described by the walltexts.

The EAST\_ART sub-corpus comprises walltexts of artworks by artists operating between 1937 and 2012. Here things appear to be quite different from the case considered above. The list of the top ten keywords shows the presence of four proper nouns: *Japan* (line 3), *Okamoto* (line 4, the name of a Japanese artist), *Photograph* (line 9, the title of an installa-

tion named *Photograph of a Photograph*) and *Gengis Khan* (line 10, which occurs 10 times, 5 of which in the title of the installation *The Ark of Gengis Khan*, and 5 times in the explanation of the very same installation). All the other keywords seem to be used with an explanatory contextual function.

Table 3. – Concordance list of ‘x’.

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tempera on paper laid on canvas, 49 x 68 cm. This study led to one of Giacomo Balla  
 pera on paper lined with canvas, 120 x 100 cm. This large painting represents the  
 e City Rises 1910 Oil on cardboard, 33 x 47 cm. This is the definitive preparatory study  
 12, reworked 1913 Oil on canvas, 226 x 150 cm. This painting is the most ambitious  
 sm of a Cyclist 1913 Oil on canvas, 70 x 95 cm. This beautiful painting, with its  
 leria in Milan 1912 Oil on canvas, 91 x 51,5 cm. This has long been considered one of  
 912 Pencil and charcoal on paper, 370 x 210 mm. Signed and dated 1912, this is  
 er, paper glued on cardboard, 38,5 x 30 cm. Gianni Mattioli Collection Painted  
 harcoal and collage on cardboard, 39 x 68 cm. With the outbreak of the Great War  
 r s Mistress, 1921 Oil on canvas, 55 x 40 cm. This powerful and strange small painting  
 lbert Clavel, 1917 Oil on canvas, 70 x 75 cm. Fortunato Depero joined the Futurism  
 Haviland, 1914 Oil on cardboard, 73 x 60 cm. This vivid portrait painted in Paris  
 ad. Flowers, 1913 Oil on canvas, 68 x 55 cm. Painted in the year that Giorgio

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The top keyword *artist* (58 hits, 0.71 keyness) is found in descriptions related to the artist’s biographical and artistic background, to better contextualize his/her works and establish credentials:

- (2) The self-taught *artist* has embraced diverse aesthetic practices [...]. (Aung Myint)
- (3) The *artist* has won numerous awards and honors. (Yayoi Kusama)

A similar function, that of establishing credentials, is found for the keyword *museum* (11 hits, 0.14): since the Asian art as described in our corpus is not so popular to the Western eyes, it seems fundamental to offer qualifications to it:

- (4) She has been the subject of international touring exhibitions organized by institutions such as the Los Angeles County *Museum of Art* and the *Museum of Modern Art*. (Yayoi Kusama)



- (5) [...] he had a solo exhibition at the university’s Andrew Dickson White Museum of Art. (Ohashi)

While the items *installation* (22 hits, 0.27 keyness) and *performance* (12 hits, 0.15 keyness) deictically refer to the artistic work or piece realized by the artist and described in the walltext, the items *political* (13 hits, 0.16 keyness) and *history* (11 hits, 0.14 keyness) are used to actually portray the political and historical reality the artist lived in at the time s/he was creating the work of art described in the extended label:

- (6) On returning he was faced with the challenge of relating the contemporary artistic methodologies with which he had become acquainted to local cultural conditions, and to the demands of post-Khmer Rouge *political* and economic recovery. (Sopheap Pich)
- (7) Ritualized displays of military bravado are performed daily at this site of standoff, and made more poignant by the onerous physical labor of transferring goods from Indian to Pakistani hands across the same divide. Kanwar recalls the *history* of this unstable relationship in *To Remember* (2003) [...]. (Amar Kanwar)

The EAST\_ART corpus, therefore, seems to offer texts that are more attentive to the realization of linguistic signposts helping the audience to understand the political and historical context (hardly familiar to the Western audience) where to position Asian artists and their artistic installations and performances, and for whom sound credentials are offered.

### 3.2. *Semantic-domain analysis*

The analysis of the semantic domain tagging of the two sub-corpora confirms what already described for the keywords in paragraph 3.1.

WMatrix has computed 160 key semantic domains in the WEST\_ART sub-corpus and 167 for the EAST\_ART sub-corpus. Of these, only the semantic domains with a log-likelihood (LL) > 6.63 ( $p < 0.01$ ), i.e. those which are statistically significant, are shown in *Table 4*.

As regards the WEST\_ART sub-corpus, apart from the *Existing* (line 5) semantic domain, which groups the items related to the verb ‘to be’, the *Polite* (line 10) semantic domain which lists the ‘thanks to’ items indicating a cause-effect relationship, the *Degree: Maximizers* (line 8) one, where the superlative ‘most’ is found, and the *Time: future* (line 3) semantic domain, which explicitly refers to the artistic movement of Futurism, all the other semantic domains have to do more with the technicalities of the art pieces described by the walltexts than with artistic context.

Table 4. – WEST\_ART vs. EAST\_ART Semantic Field Breakdown.

WEST_ART			EAST_ART		
	LL	SEMANTIC FIELD		LL	SEMANTIC FIELD
1	38.93	Flying and aircraft	1	52.24	Geographical names
2	34.53	Substances and material: solid	2	43.06	General actions/ making
3	31.17	Time: future	3	27.29	Government
4	28.96	Colour and colour patterns	4	16.81	The Media: TV, Radio and Cinema
5	20.51	Existing	5	15.90	Politics
6	15.61	Parts of building	6	15.41	Kin
7	12.39	Sensory	7	13.62	People
8	12.12	Degree: Maximizers	8	13.46	Time: Past
9	10.09	Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.	9	13.20	Not part of a group
10	8.85	Polite	10	13.12	Belonging to a group
11	8.05	Interested/excited/energetic	11	12.85	Social Actions, States And Processes
12	7.62	Science and Technology in general	12	12.78	Information technology and computing
13	7.50	Light	13	11.11	Work and employment: Generally
14	7.50	The Media	14	10.48	Important
15	7.42	Drinks and alcohol	15	9.33	Sad
16	7.19	Shape	16	9.27	Places
17	7.08	Time: Late	17	9.22	Inclusion
			18	8.18	Time: Beginning
			19	8.07	The universe
			20	8.02	Substances and materials generally
			21	8.01	Violent/Angry
			22	7.45	Measurement: General
			23	6.73	Time: Present; simultaneous
			24	6.69	Open; Finding; Showing

Probably, the only contextualization is given by the *Science and Technology in general* (line 12) semantic tagging, which deals with ‘technological and scientific accomplishments’, ‘experiments’, ‘technology’, ‘pneumatic tires’, and, therefore, seems to be in line with Futurism and with the artists’ appreciation of progress. Yet a manual reading of the walltext does not give any help in the reconstruction of the context: the audience is assumed to be familiar with the fact that Futurist artists have an unconditional passion for progress and by reading the text they have a confirmation of what they should already know:

- (8) Although the bicycle was first invented in 1818, it was not until the 1890s that the modern bicycle, with its diamond-patterned frame, roller-chain drive and *pneumatic tires*, had become established. The racing cyclist can be taken as a characteristic Futurist symbol of dynamic modern life – man moving swiftly through time and space by the propulsion of his legs enhanced by modern *technology*. (Boccioni)

In this sub-corpus it is also possible to find some reference to the sensations the artwork may convey to visitors, as the *Sensory* (line 7) semantic field indicates:

- (9) [...] it is difficult to escape the *sensation* that this relatively raw still life, with its harsher colors and broken forms, emanates from the artist’s personal difficulties. (Mattioli)

The item ‘sensation’, which is the only one to characterize the *Sensory* semantic domain, occurs seven times only. This is indicative of the fact that references to senses and to the emotive response to works is not a top priority in the walltexts under investigation.

The top semantic domain of the WEST\_ART sub-corpus is related to *Flight and aircraft* (line 1). A manual checking of the concordance list reveals that in this semantic domain the word *plane* (22 hits) includes both the sense of *aircraft* (7 hits out of 22), one of the subjects of the artistic representations (confirming the love of Futurist artists for technology and progress), and that of ‘surface’ (15 hits out of 22):

- (10) Its overlapping colors and transparent *planes* are arranged so that the eye moves constantly across the picture surface [...]. (Kupka)
- (11) [...] expressed in a choppy pointillist manner, to a language of lines, shading and transparent *planes* to convey the general sensation of movement. (Balla)

The attention to the themes dealt with by artists is present in the *Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.* (line 9) semantic domain, where we find the

concordance lists of elements such as ‘wings’ (as for instance, in the following excerpt: “The “paths of movement” in the title probably refer to the flight paths of swifts, while the beating of their *wings* are referred to as “dynamic sequences” – Balla) and ‘horses’, all of them being among the main topics of the paintings or sculptures described in the walltexts. The same attention is paid to the *Parts of building* (line 6) semantic domain, which contains items describing rooms, windows, of buildings painted in the artistic work. On the other hand, the semantic domain of *The Media* (line 14) refers to the word ‘title’:

- (12) [...] it later acquired the *title* Manifestazione Interventista (Interventionist Demonstration) by which it is generally known today. (Mattioli)

The semantic tagging creating the *Interested/excited/energetic* (line 11) and *Drinks and alcohol* (line 15) domains are interestingly linked to the title itself of the work of art being explained by the extended label. In particular, the *Interested/excited/energetic* semantic tagging refers to the words ‘dynamic’ or ‘Dynamism’ included in the title, and the *Drinks and alcohol* one to the lexeme ‘bar’, as examples (13) and (14), below, respectively show:

- (13) Paths of Movement + *Dynamic Sequences*. (Balla)

- (14) Dynamism *Bar* San Marco. (Rosai)

In walltexts, attention is also normally paid to the artists’ ‘canvas’, belonging to the *Substances and material: solid* (line 2) domain, as in, for example “Carrà’s composition and many of the forms were already decided prior to beginning work on the *canvas*” (Carrà). Furthermore, the focus can also be found on the pictorial techniques the artists use in their artistic pieces – thus, on the semantic fields of *Colour and colour patterns* (line 4) and *Light* (line 13) – where the emphasis is on the combination of colour used and chiaroscuro created, while the semantic domain of *Shape* (line 16) refers to the type of curves, lines and ‘geometry’ the paintings have, as revealed in its concordance list in *Table 5*.

The semantic domains of the EAST\_ART sub-corpus reveal a completely different approach in walltext content, which can be roughly grouped in three macro categories: socio-historical and political context, artist’s context, and artwork context.

The socio-historical and political context is well represented by the following semantic domains: *Geographical names* (line 1); *Government* (line 2); *Politics* (line 5); *Time: past* (line 8); *Not part of a group* (line 9); *Social actions, States and Processes* (line 11); *Places* (line 16); and *Violent/Angry* (line 21).

Table 5. – Shape semantic field sample in the WEST\_ART sub-corpus.

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as opposites on the color	<i>Circle</i> ,	red and green optically vib
ns are supplied by the black	<i>lines</i>	and the apples , indicating t
the sprint to the finishing	<i>line</i> .	He is almost transparent -
r , visible through his dome	<i>shaped</i>	helmet . Kupka took as a star
pe and optimism . The base -	<i>angular</i> ,	grey , dully material - is
of the bird . Its saw-tooth	<i>silhouette</i>	derives from Romanian rustic
st manner , to a language of	<i>lines</i> ,	shading and transparent pla
he Sun . The dazzle of white	<i>triangles</i>	nearby can be explained as th

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Indeed, each of these semantic groups represents the geographical nation, country, region, or urban site where the work of art – and its artist – stems from, with the brief indication of its history and, if it is the case, the reporting of possible political concerns or clashes and country independence, and an explanation of the social traditions, as the examples (one for each semantic domain) below indicate:

- (15) Aung Myint is one of the pioneers of modern art in Myanmar (previously known as Burma). (Myint)
- (16) [...] an area outside Hong Kong that is a site of nationwide migration by people seeking expanded work opportunities in the country's blossoming economy. (Fei)
- (17) [...] having lived through the changes associated with post-independence socialism and military governance, [...]. (Nu and Aung)
- (18) [...] ruptured not only the land and the lives of its people, but also the history and representation of the nation. (Begum Lipi)
- (19) [...] Amar Kanwar's trilogy of films focuses on the relationship between India and Pakistan, nations that were established through postcolonial independence and their separation from each other [...]. (Kanwar)
- (20) [...] signals a refusal of social, cultural, and sexual limits by stepping out of physical ones, [...]. (Tan)
- (21) [...] marking the border between the two nations at the Punjabi village of Wagah [...]. (Kanwar)
- (22) [...] this twinning of opposite but related moments is emblemized as the visual intersection of two different worlds, the fictional realm of

television drama and the reality of political clashes in 21st-century Thailand. (Rasdjarmrearnsook)

Once the socio-historical context has been created, the artist's personality is described by inserting within the walltext a brief bio of the artist him/herself, to help contextualize the artistic works described by the extended labels. These pieces of information can be found in the semantic domains related to the *Geographical names* (line 1), *Kin* (line 6) and *Time: beginning* (line 18). Indeed, visitors are offered the possibility to learn about the author's origin, family and types of study s/he carried out. The latter information establishes the credentials of the artists, as we can see in the excerpts, below:

- (23) Takamatsu *formed* the former group in Tokyo. (Takamatsu)
- (24) The following year, he *established* the Yoru-no-kai (Night Society) with critic Kiyoteru Hanada as a means to integrate avant-garde art and literature. (Okamoto)

The establishing of credentials is also found in the semantic domains related to the artwork context, precisely in: *Geographical names* (line 1), where world-wide famous cities in which the work of arts have been exhibited are named; *Not part of a group* (line 9), where we have the indication of the 'solo' exhibitions, as in, for instance "Okamoto's work was installed in *solo* exhibitions at the Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Art (1981) and Kawasaki City Museum (1991), both in Japan" (Okamoto); *Inclusion* (line 17), where we have the inclusion of other famous installations, artworks and, eventually, other famous artists the work of art being described has to be collocated with; and *Open; Finding; Showing* (line 24), where we have the indication of the exhibition and its importance in the artistic world:

- (25) When it was included in the inaugural Hugo Boss Prize *exhibition* in 1996, "Cry Dragon / Cry Wolf: The Ark of Genghis Khan" was the first major introduction of Cai Guo-Qiang's work to New York, [...]. (Cai)

Apart from the 'establishing of the credentials' described above, the artwork context includes other four sub-groups. The first and most general one, which is used to insert the artistic piece in contemporary art, or in contemporary artistic methodology, is given by the semantic domain called *Time: present; simultaneous* (line 23):

- (26) On returning he was faced with the challenge of relating the *contemporary* artistic methodologies with which he had become acquainted to local cultural conditions, [...]. (Pich)

Table 6. – Important semantic field sample in the EAST\_ART sub-corpus.

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ion projects , drawings are a	<i>vital</i>	component of Cai Guo-Qiang ‘s ar
wder as studies for a number of	<i>major</i>	projects , including Project to
is pointedly , and humorously ,	<i>emphasized</i>	through symbolically loaded mate
successful auto industry . The	<i>importance</i>	of the material can be seen in t
k of Genghis Khan was the first	<i>major</i>	introduction of Cai Guo-Qiang ‘s
is pointedly , and humorously ,	<i>emphasized</i>	through the artist ‘s choice of
osion projects , drawings are a	<i>vital</i>	component of Cai Guo-Qiang ‘s ar
wder as studies for a number of	<i>major</i>	projects , including Project to
performances that comprise the	<i>central</i>	section of the video . In costum
een wholeness and separation is	<i>integral</i>	to the work ‘s meaning , since 1
ferred to as Infinity Nets , an	<i>important</i>	body of work that encompasses pa
tterdam ( 2008 ) ; as well as a	<i>major</i>	retrospective shown at the Museo

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It is generally used to show how the artist had to cope with the clashes created by his/her artistic approach and the conditions of the society s/he was living in – therefore, it is also inextricably linked to the artist’s context. Because of this strong clash, the artistic work is largely described as *Important* (line 14), as shown in the concordance list offered by *Table 6*.

It is in this macro-group that we have a description of the artwork, normally represented by the *People* (line 7) and *The universe* (line 19) semantic domains: here we have the representations of people and the world as viewed by the Asian artists, as can be seen in examples (27) and (28), respectively:

- (27) From these multiple images of the maternal figure clasping a *child* – rendered in an unmistakable yet still ambiguous line – a variety of meanings emerge. (Myint)
- (28) Her series *Dreaming of Babylon* (1998-2000) is part of that meditation and also of her larger narrative concerning human existence in the physical world. (Noguchi)

The second macro-group includes all those semantic domains that generally refer to the installation or the work of art. They are: the *General actions / making* semantic domain (line 2), which deals with the project, the installation or the creation of the artwork; *The Media: TV, Radio*

and *Cinema* (line 4) semantic tagging, which includes only the lexemes ‘video’, which refers to those video-installations shot by the Asian artists; the *Information technology and computing* (line 12) semantic domain, literally referring to the words ‘installation’ and ‘screens’; and the *Work and employment: Generally* (line 13), which actually indicates to the artistic ‘work’ (in the proper sense of the term).

The third macro-semantic tagging is more technical and relates to a semantic domain that overlaps with the social context: it is the *Social Actions, States And Processes* one (line 11), which, in this case, regards the traditional painting techniques, as excerpt (28) below shows:

- (29) [...] the artist wrapped Japanese paper around board, then applied thin washes of titanium-white acrylic paint mixed with water, a technique used in traditional nihonga painting. (Kuwayama)

Alongside this semantic domain, there are also the *Substances and materials generally* (line 20), which refers to material or acrylic colours used in the painting/installation, and the *Measurement: General* (line 23) semantic domains, the latter referring to the actual measures of the piece of art.

The last macro-group of semantic domains of the artwork context has to do with the titles of the works of art and comprises the following: *Sad* (line 15), which includes the title of “Cry Dragon / Cry Wolf” by Guo-Qiang, for instance; *The universe* (line 19), comprising “Moon Jars” by Kang and “Treachery of the Moon” by Rasdjarmrearnsook, and *Measurement* (line 22), as in the title “Project to Extend the Great Wall of China by 10,000 Meters: Project for Extraterrestrials No. 10” by Guo-Qiang.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Extended labels are important texts in museum communication as they are interpretative texts supporting an over-arching artistic idea and concept in an iconographic way, while offering the cultural and historical context. The artwork is thus contextualized and, therefore can be better appreciated by the visitor. At the same time, artistic techniques and processes are explained and the work of art is evaluated for its aesthetic qualities. In its entirety, the walltext describes the reasons why the work can enter the realm of Arts.

The analysis of the WEST\_ART and the EAST\_ART sub-corpora from the quantitative perspective has indicated that there is a different way in which walltexts are elaborated when Western art and Asian art are presented to the Western audience. The analysis of the keywords has revealed



that in the WEST\_ART sub-corpus, attention is paid more to artists and artistic movements and technicalities than to artistic contextualization, which is in some way taken for granted, as if the visitors already knew about the artistic and socio-historical period in which the artist created the work of art. On the contrary, in the EAST\_ART sub-corpus, what emerges from the analysis of the keywords is a focus on a geographical, as well as socio-historical and political contextualization of the artist and his/her artworks, as if, in order to be better appreciated, they needed to be fully understood in the environment in which they were created. In addition, credentials are established.

Such trend is confirmed in the analysis of the key semantic domains. Again, in the WEST\_ART sub-corpus, the analysis suggests that the text connotatively directs the readers toward the interpretation of the artwork following technical details, whereas the contextual elements tend to be implicit or inferred: for instance, the sensation the Futurist artists feel about progress and technology is not explained but merely mentioned. The audience is seldom guided through the exhibition, but rather brought deeper into the essence of the artwork, as the artistic idea behind it seems to be regarded as commonly shared knowledge. When, on the contrary, we analyse the texts in the EAST\_ART sub-corpus, the semantic domains reveal that there is more attention to a sort of virtual voyage in a geographical, historical, and socio-political dimension, without which the artwork cannot be fully comprehended. There seems to be more need for creating credentials for both the artwork and the artist, a sort of justification which gives the reason why such artist and such artwork are worth being included in the Peggy Guggenheim Collection. What is unknown to the Western audience has to be recreated in the short text of the extended label to allow the museum visitors to appreciate and understand the value of the artwork they are observing and at the same time to virtually tour Asian Art.

Despite these interesting results, this investigation has clearly some limitations. Firstly, it is based on a limited number of walltexts. It is however extremely difficult to collect such type of texts, which are subject to copyright. Secondly, it is based on walltexts written by Western curators for Western visitors. The analysis of walltexts elaborated by Asian curators for a Western audience would be interesting, but it seems quite difficult to find such texts. Similarly, a cross-analysis of walltexts related to Western artists for an Asian audience elaborated by Asian curators would clearly be of relevance here, but this would seem equally difficult to realize. Nevertheless, we believe this preliminary analysis has provided valuable insights into the different ways in which cultural tourism discourse represents art from the East and the West to a Western audience.

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## APPENDIX

### *Peggy Guggenheim Venice*

Peggy Guggenheim Foundation collection online at: [http://www.guggenheim-venice.it/inglese/collections/collection2.php?id\\_cat=14](http://www.guggenheim-venice.it/inglese/collections/collection2.php?id_cat=14) [31/08/2014].

Giacomo Balla, *Paths of Movement + Dynamic Sequences*, 1913.

Giacomo Balla, *Mercury Passing Before the Sun*, 1914.

Umberto Boccioni, *Study for The City Rises*, 1910.

Umberto Boccioni, *Materia*, 1912.

Umberto Boccioni, *Dynamism of a Cyclist*, 1913.

Carlo Carrà, *Study for The Galleria in Milan*, 1912.

Carlo Carrà, *The Galleria in Milan*, 1912.

Carlo Carrà, *Interventionist Demonstration*, 1914.

Carlo Carrà, *Pursuit*, 1915.

Carlo Carrà, *The Engineer's Mistress*, 1921.

Fortunato Depero, *Portrait of Gilbert Clavel*, 1917.

Dreyfus, *For Your Eyes Only*, 2014.

Amedeo Modigliani, *Portrait of the Painter Frank Haviland*, 1914.

Giorgio Morandi, *Flowers*, 1913.

Giorgio Morandi, *Fragment*, 1914.

Giorgio Morandi, *Landscape*, 1914.

Giorgio Morandi, *Still Life with Clockcase*, 1915.

Giorgio Morandi, *Bottles and Fruit Bowl*, 1916.

Giorgio Morandi, *Roses*, 1917.

Ottone Rosai, *Dynamism Bar San Marco*, 1913.

Ottone Rosai, *Fragmentation of a Street*, 1914.

Luigi Russolo, *Solidity of Fog*, 1912.

Gino Severini, *Blue Dancer*, 1912.

Mario Sironi, *Composition with Propeller*, 1919.  
Mario Sironi, *The White Horse*, 1919.  
Ardengo Soffici, *Small Trophy*, 1914-15.  
Ardengo Soffici, *Fruit and Liqueurs*, 1915.

*Peggy Guggenheim Foundation Collection* – Courtesy of Dr Sandra Divari (Registrar)  
Boccioni, *Dynamism of a Speeding Horse + Houses*, 1914-15.  
Brancusi, *Maiatra*, 1912.  
Delauny, *Windows*, 1913.  
Kupka, *Pastel on Paper*, 1910-11.  
Metzinger, *Au Velodrome*, 1912.  
Picasso, *The Studio*, 1929.  
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Scarpa, *Galleria del Cavallino, Frezzeria, San Marco*, 1949.  
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*Peggy Guggenheim New York*

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Ik-Joong Kang, *1392 Moon Jars (Wind)*, 2008-10.  
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Kumi Sugai, *Shiro*, 1957.  
Navin Rawanchaikul, *Places of Rebirth*, 2009.  
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Rika Noguchi, *A Prime #14*, 1999-2000.  
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Tayeba Begum Lipi, *Love Bed*, 2012.  
Tran Luong, *Lap Løe*, 2012.  
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