

Working on Things (Berlin, 21-22 Nov 16)

Berlin, Nov 21–22, 2016

Registration deadline: Nov 13, 2016

Mareike Vennen

Working on Things. On the Social, Political, and Economic History of Collected Objects
Jacob-und-Wilhelm-Grimm-Zentrum, Geschwister-Scholl-Straße 1/3, 10117 Berlin

Various kinds of work have to be invested in objects before they become worthy of collection, before they can be researched, preserved, and exhibited. Work on the dinosaur skeleton of *Brachiosaurus brancai* in Berlin's Museum für Naturkunde, for example, extended far beyond the decades of the fossil's preparation in the Museum. This object's history also includes the colonial forced labour on cotton plantations in German East Africa at the beginning of the twentieth century that produced the packing material necessary for transporting the findings to Europe. Such figurations of work across time and space form the focus of the conference: Which materials and what kinds of immaterial labour were necessary to acquire or produce a given object, in order to transport it, examine it, exhibit it, or value it? What existing knowledge, and which social, political, and legal conditions characterized this work? What types of materials, tools, or techniques were used?

The conference is part of the research project „Dinosaurs in Berlin. *Brachiosaurus brancai* as political, scientific and popular icon“. It is conceptualised and organised in cooperation with the base project Mobile Objects, Cluster of Excellence Image Knowledge Gestaltung of the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

Programme

Monday, November 21, 2016

From 9:00 REGISTRATION

9:30–11:00 INTRODUCTION

9:30 Welcome Address

Ina Heumann, Holger Stoecker, Marco Tamborini, Mareike Vennen, Joint Research Project “Dinosaurs in Berlin”

10:00 Keynote Lecture I

Objects in Transit: Commodities and Communication

Jim Secord, University of Cambridge

11:00 Break

11:30–12:50 HIERARCHIES

Chair: Gerd Spittler, Universität Bayreuth

11:30 Hunting, Investigating, and Exhibiting Great Apes. On Working Conditions in Colonial Cameroon and the German Reich, 1890–1926

Britta Lange, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

12:10 Collecting Fossils in Colonial German East Africa. Work and Workers at the Tendaguru Excavation, 1909–1913

Holger Stoecker, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

12:50 Lunch Break

14:00–16:00 GLOBALIZATION

Chair: Anke te Heesen, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

14:00 The Journey of a Man with a Fish: The Life of a Han Dynasty Object in a South Africa Museum

Nicola Kritzinger, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

14:40 'A noble instrument for instruction': Assembling International Collections in the Cambridge Zoological Museum, 1866–1910

Boris Jardine, University of Cambridge

15:20 Excavating at Kuumbi Limestone Cave: Regional and Global Links in East African Prehistory

Felix Chami, University of Dar es Salaam

16:00 Break

16:30–18:00 COMPETITION

Chair: Bärbel Küster, Technische Universität zu Berlin

16:30 Building Dioramas as Socialist Work: Cuban Corals at the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, 1965–1975

Manuela Bauche, Museum für Naturkunde Berlin

17:10 The Epistemology of Authenticity: Plaster Cast Reproductions in 19th Century Museums

Lukas Rieppel, Brown University, Providence

17:50 Catering at the Grimm-Zentrum

19:30–22:00 FILMWELTEN DES WISSENS

Knochenarbeit. Oder: Dinosauria museologica;

Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, Sauriersaal,

Invalidenstr. 43, 10115 Berlin

Tuesday, November 22, 2016

9:00 INTRODUCTION

Irina Podgorny, Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, Barbara Göbel, Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Preußischer Kulturbesitz

9:30 Keynote Lecture II

My Sloane Museum

James Delbourgo, Rutgers University

10:30 Break

11:00–13:00 MANAGEMENT

Chair: Jochen Hennig, Scientific Collections of the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

11:00 Working on Photo-Objects: Photographs as Mobile Actors in Archeology, Ethnology, and Art History

Stefanie Klamm, Kunstbibliothek, Petra Wodke, Antikensammlung, both Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz

11:40 Reconstructing the Puzzle: Argentine Theater and Literary Periodicals of the Early 20th Century – Piece by Piece

Peter Altekrüger, Christoph Müller, Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut

12:20 Belabouring the Catalogue: Classification Work in the British Museum

Sebastian Felten, Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte Berlin, Rebecca Kahn, King's College London

13:00 Break

14:00–16:30 VALUATION

Chair: Anja Schwarz, Universität Potsdam

14:00 Transporting the Tropics: Collecting and Preserving the Victorian Botanical Empire

Elaine Ayers, Princeton University

14:40 The Rhino Horn in the 21st Century: Collecting, Storing, and (not) Displaying

Nicky Reeves, University of Glasgow

15:20 Break

15:40 Economies of Collecting, Transporting, Conserving and Exhibiting Natural History Objects in the Ottoman Natural History Museum 1835–1850

Semih Çelik, European University Institute, Florence

16:20–17:00 FINAL DISCUSSION

Comments: Irina Podgorny, Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, Barbara Göbel, Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Preußischer Kulturbesitz

REGISTRATION (closing date November 13, 2016):

ArtHist.net

<https://hu.berlin/workingonthings>

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Reference:

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