Photo-Objects (Florence, 15-17 Feb 16)

Florence, Istituto degli Innocenti / Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut, Feb 15–17, 2017

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut

Photo-Objects. On the Materiality of Photographs and Photo-Archives in the Humanities and Sciences

A conference of the collaboration project "Photo-Objects. Photographs as Research Objects in Archaeology, Ethnology and Art History"

Photothek des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut / Kunstbibliothek, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz / Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz / Institut für Europäische Ethnologie, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, funded by the Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, www.fotobjekt.hypotheses.org.

Photographs are not only images, but also historically shaped three-dimensional objects. They hold a physical presence, bear traces of handling and use and circulate in social, political and institutional networks. Beyond their visual content they are now increasingly acknowledged as material "actors" not only indexically representing the objects they depict but also playing a crucial role in the processes of meaning-making within scientific practices. Thus, photographs lead a double existence as both pictures of objects and material objects in their own right.

Most scientific disciplines rapidly adopted photography as an important research tool to document everything from excavation sites, costumes and artworks in museums to snowflakes under a microscope – through photographs such objects of research, were detached from their original surroundings, put in standardized and transportable formats, newly contextualized and made comparable. Especially the material qualities of photographs have shaped their adoption in the various disciplines by affording certain types of uses. Inscriptions in and the handling of photographs made "photo-objects" applicable to the sciences and humanities. This way they could be classified, archived and thus satisfy the positivistic demand for "objectivity". The formation and definition of many academic disciplines is therefore not conceivable without photography. These processes were encouraged by the foundation of specialized photo-archives as interfaces of technology and science. They were and still are laboratories of scientific thought, in which objects of all kinds are part of a dynamic and material system of knowledge, interacting with and reacting to each other – from "photo-objects" in their various manifestations to storage furniture, card catalogues, inventory books, reference lists, prints and illustrated publications.

Taking photographic materiality as its premise the conference will analyze the epistemological potential of analog and digital photographs and photo archives in the humanities and sciences. Contributions from all disciplines will be discussed from a comparative point of view. The conference also aims to critically examine the conceptualization of photographic materiality and mobility through such terms as "biography", "itinerary" and "network" from a methodological and self-reflexive perspective. Taking the material aspects of photographic practices in the humanities and sciences as a starting point, the papers will deal with the circulation and distribution of photographs, the construction of methods through the handling and use of photographs in the various disciplines, arrangement, classification and working processes in photo-archives, as well as photographs in different institutions (i.e. archives, museums, research institutes and laboratories).

Part of the conference will be a workshop on the "Photo-Objects" project.

Organization:
Costanza Caraffa und Julia Bärnighausen, Photothek des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut

PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15th 2017

Venue: Istituto degli Innocenti (Sala Brunelleschi), Piazza della Santissima Annunziata 12, 50121 Florence

2.00–2.15 pm
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION
Costanza Caraffa, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut

2.15–3.15 pm
KEYNOTE LECTURE
Elizabeth Edwards, V&A Research Institute, London / Photographic History Research Centre, De Montfort University, Leicester:
Thoughts on the 'Non-Collections' of the Archival Ecosystem

3.15–3.30 pm Coffee Break

PANEL I: INTO THE ARCHIVE
Chair: Julia Bärnighausen, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut

3.30–4.15 pm
İdil Çetin, Galatasaray University, Istanbul:
Where is the Archive? The Reality of Doing Research on Ataturk Photographs

4.15–5.00 pm

Vered Maimon, Tel Aviv University:
Affective Archives: Vernacular Photography and the Life of Images

5.00–5.30 pm Coffee Break

5.30–6.15 pm
Suryanandini Narain, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi:
In the Family: Photographic Archives from India

6.15–7.00 pm
Katharina Sykora, DFG-Graduiertenkolleg 'Das fotografische Dispositiv', Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Braunschweig:
In the Archive's Eye. A Triumphant Autopoiesis of Photography

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16th 2017

Venue: Istituto degli Innocenti (Sala Brunelleschi), Piazza della Santissima Annunziata 12, 50121 Florence

PANEL II: GETTING ONE'S HANDS DIRTY
Chair: Franka Schneider , Institut für Europäische Ethnologie, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

9.30–10.15 am
Zeynep Çelik, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Rutgers University:
Late Ottoman Practices: Modernity, Photography, Medical Research, and Anthropological Documentation

10.15–11.00 am
Omar Nasim, Universität Regensburg:
Handling the Heavens: The Photo-Objects of Astronomy

11.00–11.30 am Coffee Break

11.30 am–12.15 pm
Haidy Geismar, University College London, and Pip Laurenson, Tate London / Maastricht University:
Finding Photography, Opening up the Photo-Object: A Dialogue between Anthropology and Conservation

12.15–2.00 pm Lunch Break

2.00–5.30 pm
WORKSHOP 'PHOTO-OBJECTS': ASKING UNCOMFORTABLE QUESTIONS
Chair: Joan M. Schwartz, Queen's University, Kingston

Change of venue: Photothek in Palazzo Grifoni Budini Gattai (Sala Conferenze), Via dei Servi 51,

50122 Florence. Seating is limited. Please sign up at the reception desk on the first day of the conference.

With a short introduction by Costanza Caraffa and presentations by Julia Bärnighausen, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut; Stefanie Klamm, Kunstbibliothek, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz; Franka Schneider, Institut für Europäische Ethnologie, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Petra Wodtke, Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz

5.30–6.00 pm Coffee Break

6.00–7.00 pm
HANDLING PHOTO-OBJECTS IN THE PHOTOTHEK (for speakers only)
With: Costanza Caraffa, Ute Dercks, Almut Goldhahn and Julia Bärnighausen, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17th 2017

Venue: Istituto degli Innocenti (Sala Brunelleschi), Piazza della Santissima Annunziata 12, 50121 Florence

9.00–10.00 am
KEYNOTE LECTURE
Lorraine Daston, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin:
The Accidental Trace and the Science of the Future: Tales from the 19th-Century Archives

PANEL III: SPACES OF HYBRIDIZATION
Chair: Petra Wodtke, Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz

10.00–10.45 am
Anaïs Mauuarin, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne:
The Two-Faced Photothèque of the Museum of Man: Between Scientific and Commercial Uses

10.45–11.15 am Coffee Break
11.15–12.00 am
Christopher Pinney, University College London:
Digital Cows: Flesh and Code

12.00–12.45 pm
Lena Holbein, DFG-Graduiertenkolleg 'Das fotografische Dispositiv', Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Braunschweig:
Reflections on the Archive: Reconsidering the 'Evidence'-Project (1977–2017)

12.45–2.00 pm Lunch Break

PANEL IV: CANON FORMATION AND TRANSFORMATION
Chair: Stefanie Klamm, Kunstbibliothek, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz

2.00–2.45 pm
Kelley Wilder, Photographic History Research Centre, De Montfort University, Leicester:
The Two Cultures of Word and Image. On Materiality and the Photographic Catalogue

2.45–3.30 pm
Maria Männig, Karlsruhe:
The Memory of Art History: Analyzing Slide Collections

3.30–4.00 pm Coffee Break

4.00–4.45 pm
Petra Trnková, Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague:
The Unbearable (and Irresistible) Charm of 'Duplicates'

4.45–5.30 pm
Christina Riggs, University of East Anglia, Norwich:
Photographing Tutankhamun: Photo-Objects and the Archival Afterlives of Colonial Archaeology

5.30–6.00 pm Coffee Break

6.00–7.00 pm
CLOSING REMARKS & FINAL DISCUSSION
Joan M. Schwartz, Queen's University, Kingston

END OF CONFERENCE

A registration will not be necessary

Venues:
Istituto degli Innocenti
Sala Brunelleschi
Piazza della Santissima Annunziata
50121 Florence

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz
Max-Planck-Institut
Palazzo Grifoni Budini Gattai
Via dei Servi 51
50122 Florence

Contact:
Julia Bärnighausen
Email: julia.baernighausen@khi.fi.it

Costanza Caraffa

Email: caraffa@khi.fi.it

Further information:
Internet: www.khi.fi.it
Newsletter: www.khi.fi.it/newsletter
Facebook: www.facebook.com/khi.fi.it/

Reference:
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