

## After the End of History (Florence, 22 May 17)

Florence, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut, Palazzo Grifoni  
Budini Gattai, Via dei Servi 51, May 22, 2017

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

After the End of History: Archives, Phenomenology, Art (Post-) History

A Workshop with Boris Groys  
and Andrea Bellu & Matei Bellu

Organized by the Minerva Research Group "The Nomos of Images", Kunsthistorisches Institut in  
Florenz - Max-Planck-Institut and the Villa Romana, Florence

Alexandre Kojève, who had a major influence on French post-modern thought as a philosopher and a significant impact on the formation of the European common market later as a bureaucrat, continued in his travel photographs from around the world his reflections about the "End of History". According to Kojève living after the end of history does not imply a paralysis and uncritical acceptance of the political status quo, but the end of the search for a perfect social order. In his last work, the *Outline of a Phenomenology of Right* (Marseille, 1943) he envisions a universal and homogenous state as a perfected juridical order that regulates all social and economic relations.

In 2012 Boris Groys dedicated an exhibition to Kojève's personal photo and postcard archive. For Groys the philosophers photographic documentation of historical monuments manifests his "faithfulness to the event of history, in the midst of a post-historical reality." Abstaining from a claim to originality Kojève pursued in his philosophical works on Hegel's phenomenology, Groys discerns parallels not to other philosophers but rather to artists like Marcel Duchamp or Andy Warhol. In his photographic works, however, the idea that the direction and sense of history hides beneath events becomes palpable. The pictures of cultural monuments do not eternalize fleeting moments, but disclose historical continuity. The ability to say "no" to reality as it is remains the only criterion for humans to preserve their humanity.

In their "Collections of Trials to Describe Reality" the artists Andrea and Matei Bellu, Villa Romana Fellows in 2017, question hegemonic historical narratives by collecting material traces that are related to national identities and their imagined histories. Their documentation and unfinished archive to what we expect to describe "reality" goes beyond the culturally determined and expectable shapes of different phenomena. Rather, they focus on discontinuities and gaps in historical narratives, looking closer at the everyday. These "trials" remain unfinished attempts, a contingent assemblage of thoughts, or even possibly an accumulation of failures. Every trial figures as a fragment of its own, which remains, however, intrinsically related to the other works.

The trials do not only describe a variety of footage, questions, unspeakable conflicts and contradictions; they bear the slipperiness of the present and the absent itself – trying to reclaim forms and meaning where there seem to be none.

The joint workshop with Boris Groys and Andrea and Matei Bellu will discuss the notion of "post-historical realities" and its significance for collecting, documentation and artistic practices today.

## PROGRAM

Monday, May 22

4:00 pm

Angelika Stepken and Carolin Behrmann:

Welcome & Introduction

Andrea Bellu and Matei Bellu:

Collections of Trials to Describe Reality

Break

6:00 pm

Boris Groys:

Alexandre Kojève: the Sage as Photographer

## LOCATION

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

Max-Planck-Institut

Palazzo Grifoni Budini Gattai

Via dei Servi 51

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## CONTACT

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## FURTHER INFORMATION

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Reference:

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