

## Cinergie, 17: Unstable Images and Shifting Histories

Deadline: Dec 31, 2019

Dr. Hanin Hannouch, IMT Lucca, Institute for Advanced Studies

Cinergie - Il Cinema e le altre Arti, Nr. 17

Unstable Images and Shifting Histories: Photography, Anthropology, Cinema

If the scholarship on photography has often lodged its cultural and philosophical significance within the epistemological framework of evidence, it has also increasingly taken into account how photography was the medium of choice for bringing the foreign and the exotic to the salons of the European bourgeoisie thirsting for images and texts from newly-colonized territories (Sekula 1981, Shohat 2008, Götsche 2013). By maintaining close ties with anthropology (Pinney 2001), as well as with colonial administrators and military personal, photography perpetuated long-held identity constructions within asymmetrical power relations and transmitted them as supposed “truths” to various European and American ethnological museums, thus accounting for their extraordinarily large archives (Geary 1988). Beyond its function as anthropological record, photography’s use as source for shaping historical narratives runs in parallel to its ability to provide a “reckoning with history” (Tucker, Camp 2009), by bringing (visual, textual etc.) sources to their limits and by unmasking the constructed dimension to the narratives they are meant to articulate. Moreover, though the archive bestows upon photography and cinema – its preeminent materials – the authoritative status of document (Ellenbogen 2012), differing epistemologies continue to underpin its various stakeholders (Hamminga 2016) exceeding their initial framework of reference. And although (moving) images suture the subject into a supposedly scientific, anthropological, or historical project, buried within the very process which representation eclipses is a greater uncertainty as to the kind of history that is being inscribed, and most importantly, whose history is being told.

Consequently, the special section of the issue number 17 of Cinergie analyzes how images “disturb the core nodes of historical relations and practices of history” (Edwards 2016) rather than how they constitute it through nation-building. By investigating how artists re-appropriate (anthropological, scientific, or historical etc.) photography and film, and how they re-read them against their own original trace, as in against the very object whose presence they inscribe, this volume examines how images are deployed against the history they are thought to depict. Cinergie seeks to historicize this failure of evidentiary and documentary claims to visual media as disturbances causing epistemic shifts. Furthermore, it focuses on how their narratives remain ever-shifting despite theorists’ use of “context” (understood here as the fruit of a process of framing and of interpretation attempts to give meaning and coherence) as a reliable backdrop to comprehending them and pinning them down. By asking how certain archival practices and the system of knowledge they bespeak inadvertently undermine institutional power, this section considers how insta-

bility has always been integral rather than contingent to the image and how fractures are part of the archive, irrelevant of the framework made to fix its internal contradictions.

Contributions will be considered that include but are not limited to:

- How do artists employ colonial, scientific, or historical photography and film in order to shift their initial significance and what kind of new epistemologies do they create in the process?
- How do scientists, photographers, officials etc. attempt to palliate contradictions between the visual materials they generate and the theories they formulate?
- How do various artistic operations question the constitution of indexicality, and have the image emerge as a site of contested encounters resisting collection and interpretation even (or especially) within the archive?

#### Submission details

Please send an abstract and a short biographical note to Dr. Hanin Hannouch, Post- Doctoral researcher at the Kunsthistorisches Insitut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut at: hanin.hannouch@khi.fi.it by December 31, 2019 – [subject: Unstable Images and Shifting Histories: Photography, Anthropology, Cinema + name surname author(s)].

Abstracts should be from 300 to 500 words of length (English).

If the proposal is accepted, the author(s) will be asked to submit the full article by February 15, 2020.

The articles must not exceed 5,000/6,000 words.

Contributions will be submitted to double-blind peer-review.

The issue number 17 of Cinergie will be published in July 2020

Cinergie is an open-access, peer-reviewed, class-A journal. Its first on-line issue appeared in 2012, but the journal has been published in hard copy since 1999. Cinergie is a wide-ranging film journal, that aims to publish original articles about national and international cinema, building a bridge to related fields.

For further information: <https://cinergie.unibo.it/>

#### Reference:

CFP: Cinergie, 17: Unstable Images and Shifting Histories. In: ArtHist.net, Nov 9, 2019 (accessed Jul 2, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/22047>>.