

*Photo Archives
and the Photographic Memory
of Art History*

Edited by
Costanza Caraffa



Italienische Forschungen
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Foreword

The present volume gathers together the papers given at the two-part Conference “Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History”. The first part was held at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London on 16–17 June 2009, and the second at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut, on 29–31 October 2009.¹ The connecting threads of the conference—and hence of the present volume—are the history of photography as a tool of art history and the formation of photo archives for academic research and in particular for art-historical studies. But questions tackled in this book go well beyond the confines of any one academic discipline and concern photo archives *tout court*.

The Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz decided to support the holding of the “Photo Archives” Conference, and then the publication of this volume, as part of its project to review and widen the role of its *Photothek* in the twenty-first century. The promotion of interdisciplinary research confers new scientific relevance on the resources of photo archives by opening them to studies of the most diverse kind. Reflection on the tools and practices of art history does not only have a historical dimension, but can also help us to perform our task of running a photo archive more diligently and to embrace the currently available technologies. The Conference in its two parts represented an important forum for discussion between scholars at an international level and also between the academic world and those who work in photo archives. The present publication is addressed not only to art historians, but to all those who in various disciplinary fields are interested in photo archives and documentary photography, in the hope of stimulating new research.

The case studies collected in this book permit us to study the historic processes that led to the formation and institutionalization of photo collections and photo archives. We posed such questions as: Who created photo archives and with what aims? How are photographic archives organized? How are they made accessible? And by what conservational practices are they secured? But we also touched on

¹ See <http://www.khi.fi.it/en/aktuelles/veranstaltungen/veranstaltungen/veranstaltung190/index.html>. For the programs of the two conferences see http://www.courtauld.ac.uk/researchforum/documents/PhotoArchivesconf-poster-programme_h_.pdf and <http://www.khi.fi.it/pdf/c20091029.pdf>. Steven Bann, Mark Haworth-Booth,

Venetia Harlow, Elizabeth Reissner, Stuart Whatling and Michael Remmy have not presented a written version of the papers they presented at the conference, while the contributions of Matthias Bruhn and Inge Reist, participants in the final round table in Florence, a well as that of Regine Schallert have been added.

current developments spearheaded by digital technologies. The case studies sometimes focus on certain photographs, or groups of photographs, particularly rich in implications. The intention, however, is not to showcase individual photographs, however exceptional, but rather to emphasize the dimension of the photo archive as a whole as a place in which knowledge is sedimented.

The studies are subdivided into four sections. The first, “On Photo Archives”, presents some reflections of a theoretical nature, though with an eye to the actual practice of photo archives. The second section, “Collecting Photographs, Shaping Art History”, contains studies devoted to some particular photographic collections and the use of photography mainly by individual personalities who have shaped the practices and methods of studying, teaching, publishing and exhibiting art. The third section, “We Make Our Photo Archives and Our Photo Archives Make Us”,² focuses more specifically on the dynamics and context of the formation of photographic archives, not only in the field of art history. The last section, “In A Photo Archive”,³ spotlights some eloquent examples, past and present, of work in photo archives; furthermore it emphasises the need to promote their role as places of research and to enrich their function as spaces of memory.

This book would never have seen the light of day if Patricia Rubin and I had not begun a fruitful dialogue in the spring of 2008 on the purpose of photo archives: a dialogue that has far from having been exhausted. I would like to express special thanks to her for her magnificent partnership. Nor would the realization of the book have been possible without the contribution of the whole staff of the *Photothek* of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, academic assistants, fellows, researchers and interns. The editorial work of preparing the publication for the press has been performed by the staff of the Deutscher Kunstverlag with their usual care and professionalism. Among the various colleagues and friends who have supported me—not only intellectually—I would like to mention with gratitude Elizabeth Edwards, Dorothea Peters, Joan M. Schwartz, Kelley Wilder and in particular Tiziana Serena. I am grateful to all the authors for having made their papers available and for participating with enthusiasm in this collective venture. I would like, lastly, to express my very warm thanks to the Directors of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Alessandro Nova and Gerhard Wolf, for having agreed to include the volume in the series *I Mandorli*.

Costanza Caraffa
Florence, April 2011

² The title of this section is inspired by the title of a publication by Joan M. Schwartz, “We make our tools and our tools make us’: Lessons from Photographs from the Practice, Politics and Poetics of Diplomats”, in: *Archivaria*, 40 (Fall 1995), pp. 40–74; the title is derived in turn from William J. Mitchell, *The Reconfigured Eye. Visual Truth*

in the Post-Photographic Era, Cambridge/MA 1992, where the quotation “we make our tools and our tools make us” is found on p. 59.

³ Here another title is paraphrased: that of a study by Carolyn Steedman, “The Space of Memory: in an Archive”, in: *History of the Human Sciences*, 11/4 (1998), pp. 65–83.

Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History: the Project

The idea of launching the project “Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History” was born in the spring of 2008: Patricia Rubin, as the head of Research Forum at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, had given some seminars on “Writing Art History” which had led undergraduates and post-graduate students to focus attention on the huge photographic collections of the Courtauld, the Witt Library and the Conway Collection;¹ and Costanza Caraffa, head of the *Photothek* of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut, had just organized a series of conferences on photography as a tool and medium of art history.²

This shared interest in the interrelation between photography and art history gave rise in turn to the need to create an international and interdisciplinary network in which scholars could exchange views on the photographic reproduction of works of art, on the scientific applications of photography, and on the processes of formation and institutionalization of photo archives. These archives represent the visual memory of art history, whose canon they have helped to shape. But they also represent the memory of the discipline itself and an archive for the history of photography. The archives of so-called photographic reproductions of works of art preserve historical materials which all of us – not only art historians, but historians, anthropologists, historians of science, historians of photography and others – can now consider with new eyes,³ discovering the documentary value and material dimension not only of individual photographs, but also of the archive as a whole.

The two conferences, held respectively in London at the Courtauld Institute of Art on 16–17 June 2009 and in Florence at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz on 29–31 October 2009,⁴ helped to

¹ See <http://www.courtauld.ac.uk/researchforum/projects/ResearchAssociateProjects.shtml> for these projects and reports on their outcome. The project owed much of its success to the inspirational guidance of Lindy Grant, at that time head of the Courtauld photographic libraries.

² See Costanza Caraffa (ed.), *Fotografie als Instrument und Medium der Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin / Munich 2009.

³ Joan M. Schwartz, “‘Having New Eyes’: Spaces of Archives, Landscapes of Power“, in: *Archivaria*, 61 (Spring 2006), pp. 2–25.

⁴ See <http://www.khi.fi.it/en/aktuelles/veranstaltungen/veranstaltungen/veranstaltung190/index.html>. For the programmes of the two conferences see <http://www.courtauld.ac.uk/researchforum/documents/PhotoArchivesconf->

create a network for international dialogue between academics and scholars working in photo archives. The creation of this international network led to the issuing of the Florence Declaration, a series of recommendations aimed at the preservation of analog photo archives and the integration between analog and digital formats.⁵

Following Patricia Rubin's move to New York to become the director of the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University, the international and interdisciplinary dialogue on photo archives continued at the IFA with the third conference in the series, held on 25–26 March 2011. "Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History—Part III", organized by Patricia Rubin together with Jenni Rodda, was dedicated to "Hidden Archives", i.e. little known and/or largely inaccessible photo archives.⁶ The next stage in the process will take place once again at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz with "Photo Archives IV. The Photographic Archive and the Idea of Nation" (27–29 October 2011), organized by Costanza Caraffa in collaboration with Tiziana Serena (University of Florence).⁷ Widening the perspectives beyond the confines of art history (and beyond the western viewpoint), "Photo Archives IV" is intended to study the relation between the formation of photo archives and the idea of nationhood, which was expressed throughout the 'long nineteenth century' but which still remains a phenomenon of contemporary relevance today.

We wish to thank all those on the staff of the participating institutes who, in various ways, have made possible the holding of our conferences. We are grateful to all the speakers, and also the moderators and participants at the round tables and the final discussions, for their extraordinary intellectual contribution and also for the enthusiasm with which they have supported our initiative. A particularly important collateral effect of the "Photo Archives" project has been the promotion of research projects within photo archives. Some of these, linked to Part III of the series, were generously supported by the Samuel Kress Foundation.

The "Photo Archives" series is intended to be an open project: we would be delighted if other scholars and other institutions would be willing to take over from us in the organization of future study meetings. The problems still to be tackled are potentially infinite.

Costanza Caraffa, Patricia Rubin
Florence / New York, April 2011

poster-programme_h_.pdf and <http://www.khi.fi.it/pdf/c20091029.pdf>.

⁵ <http://www.khi.fi.it/en/photothek/florencedeclaration/index.html>.

⁶ <http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/fineart/research/photoarchives.htm>.

⁷ <http://www.khi.fi.it/en/aktuelles/veranstaltungen/veranstaltungen/veranstaltung313/index.html>.

Costanza Caraffa

From ‘photo libraries’ to ‘photo archives’. On the epistemological potential of art-historical photo collections*

“Art history as we know it today is the child of photography”.¹ This statement from Donald Preziosi—one of the many we could have chosen as an epigraph—helps us to introduce the connecting thread of this book: the interrelation between history of art and photography. The origins of this interrelation can be traced back to the second half of the nineteenth century. It was then that photography developed and spread. It was also then that art history grew into an academic discipline, beginning in the German-speaking countries. One consequence of this parallel development was the creation of photographic archives of ‘reproductions’ of works of art and of architecture which would become—whether at the private or institutional level—the main laboratory of the art historian. As André Malraux pointed out in his *Musée imaginaire*, art history has ever since the nineteenth century been identifiable with an “histoire de ce qui est photographiable”.² And Heinrich Dilly took a further step forward in this critical reflection on the tools of the *métier d’historien d’art*, to paraphrase Marc Bloch, by suggesting that photographs should be considered the ‘originals’ of art history, and that it is not works of art themselves, but photographic reproductions of them, that form the object of art-historical description.³ The introduction of digital photography has not invalidated this observation; indeed it has fostered a heightened consciousness of the peculiarities of ‘traditional’ photography, with the result that our view of

* This contribution would not have been possible without the help and support of those who inspired and influenced me not only with their writings, but also with fruitful discussions and exchanges in recent years: so I would like to express my warm thanks to Elizabeth Edwards, Dorothea Peters, Kelley Wilder and in particular Joan M. Schwartz and Tiziana Serena. My intellectual debt to them is far more extensive than may appear from bibliographic notes and quotations. A special thank to Ute Dercks and Almut Goldhahn for sharing with me goals and intentions.

¹ Donald Preziosi, *Rethinking Art History. Meditations on a Coy Science*, New Haven/NC / London 1989, p. 72.

² André Malraux, *Le musée imaginaire*, Paris 1947, p. 32.

³ “Gegenstand der Kunstgeschichtsschreibung sind nicht die als Kunstwerke anerkannten Objekte, sondern deren fotografische Reproduktionen”: Heinrich Dilly, “Lichtbildprojektion – Prothese der Kunstbetrachtung”, in: Irene Below (ed.), *Kunstwissenschaft und Kunstvermittlung*, Gießen 1975, pp. 153–172, here p. 153.

documentary analog photographs has been given an historical perspective it did not have before. The historiography of art history as an academic discipline has benefited from this; so research has begun on the reception and use of photography by scholars and the consequences of this phenomenon for the methodology of art history. These studies have also shown the reciprocity of this interrelation: art-historical practice has not only been conditioned by, but has itself conditioned the development of photographic practices (e.g. Wölfflin) and to some extent photographic techniques. In other words, it has expressed *desiderata* that may very well have contributed to the creation of a demand for technological development (e.g. for isochromatic and color photography). To this field of study, not yet systematically investigated, useful contributions are made by many of the articles published here, which analyze some significant case studies. Much research still remains to be done, however, in particular regarding the debate on the presumed neutrality of ‘documentary’ photography—as re-proposed by the digital media—and the concepts themselves of ‘documentation’ and ‘reproduction’.

One of the main merits of these and other studies consists—in the era of Google images and Flickr—in having encouraged the return of scholars to photo archives as places not just of consultation but of research. In over a century and a half of the history of the discipline—and of photography—it is not only individual photographs that have been handed down, but whole collections of them—the photo archives, in short, cited in the title of this book. ‘Returning’ to the photo archives also means gaining renewed familiarity with all those aspects of research which are second nature in an analogical archive, but to which, with the progress of digital search tools and methods of consultation, many of us have become unaccustomed: library shelves, boxes, labels, pressmarks, photo mounts, inventory numbers and inscriptions, stamps of various kind, card indexes, registers and inventory books, and the taxonomic systems that order the archive. These aspects—now interconnected with those generated by digital technologies—draw our attention, in turn, to the operations conducted in the archive and the persons involved in them: from the promoter of the photographic campaign to the photographer, from the photo archivist who decides to place a particular photograph in a particular box to the scholar who annotates the photograph (or its mount), proposing, for example, a different attribution for the work of art represented in it—and hence a new collocation within the archival space. Today we can view all these factors with new eyes and discover that not only information of various kinds, but especially a sedimentation of knowledge are collected in photo archives of this type.⁴ It would therefore be reductive to consider the study of photographic collections created for art-historical research, to which the majority of the studies in this book are dedicated, as a mere epiphenomenon of the historiography of art history, aimed at the historical comprehension of the discipline as also the attainment of greater critical consciousness in handling and refining its own tools—past and present. The epistemological potential of these collections is far greater than that. And to show this we will propose a decided terminological shift in the definition of our field of study and of the place in which our work, that of archivists and scholars, takes place: the shift, in short, from ‘photo libraries’ to ‘photo archives’. The significance of the issues raised here is not only academic, but also informs the daily practice of work *in* the archive and *for* the archive and, in the last analysis, the future of photo archives themselves (fig. 1).

⁴ I am reminded here of the title of a study by Terry Cook, “From Information to Knowledge: An Intellectual Para-

digm for Archives”, in: *Archivaria*, 19 (1984–1985), pp. 28–49.



1 Team of the Gabinetto Fotografico, drying of photographic files from the Gabinetto Fotografico of the Soprintendenza in Florence after the flood of 1966, Meridiana of Palazzo Pitti, November 1966. Gabinetto Fotografico della Soprintendenza di Firenze, inv. no. 134347

Photography as tool of art history

It will not be superfluous here to recall briefly how the interaction between photography and art history originated and developed historically.⁵ The documentary aptitude of photography in the field of the visual arts was almost immediately recognized. Thus the announcement of the daguerreotype process by the French Academy of Science in 1839—conventional date for the invention of photography—was accompanied by François Arago's prophetic indications of the various possible applications of Daguerre's process, including not least the reproduction of works of art and historical monuments.

Equally well known is the series of images with which William Henry Fox Talbot reviewed, in his *Pencil of Nature*, the variety of different applications of photography applied to the documentation of works of art: “statues, busts, and other specimens of sculpture, are generally well represented by the Photographic Art”, but so too are drawings, prints, objets d’art such as porcelain or glassware, even archival documents.⁶ The first photographic campaigns in the field, such as the *Mission Héliographique* in France in 1851,⁷ were soon followed by pioneering publications such as the brochure *Photography: the Importance of its Application in Preserving Pictorial Records of the National Monuments of History and Art*, published by A.F.S. Marshall in England in 1855.⁸ The use of photography for documentary purposes was recognized by Charles Baudelaire in the “Salon de 1859”, though to the detriment, as we know, of its pretensions to be an art.⁹

The growing use of photographs by art historians is closely correlated with the technological progress of photography in the second half of the nineteenth century. Among the milestones in this progress we may mention the development of the negative/positive process, the industrialization of the production of negative plates, isochromatic photography, and the development of photomechanical reproduction techniques at the close of the nineteenth century.¹⁰ The advantages of photography for art-historical practice are effectively summed up in an often cited passage of Wilhelm Lübke, who in 1873 implicitly recognized the methodological changes made possible by the new technology:

“To no technical aid of the present time is art history so indebted as it is to photography. It was really photography that first enabled us to conduct comparative studies with a security no longer influenced

⁵ In the following I revert to some of the themes already treated in my introduction to Costanza Caraffa (ed.), *Fotografie als Instrument und Medium der Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin / Munich 2009, pp. 7–26, to which I refer for more extensive bibliographical references. Here I will limit myself to recalling some fundamental texts: Dilly 1975 (note 3); Massimo Ferretti, “La documentazione dell’arte”, in: Wladimiro Settimelli / Filippo Zevi (eds.), *Gli Alinari fotografi a Firenze 1852–1920*, Florence 1977, pp. 116–142; Trevor Fawcett, “Graphic versus Photographic in the Nineteenth-Century Reproduction”, in: *Art History*, 9.1986 (2), pp. 185–212; Helene E. Roberts (ed.), *Art History through the Camera’s Lens*, Amsterdam 1995; Anthony J. Hamber, “A higher branch of the art”: *photographing the fine arts in England 1839–1880*, Amsterdam 1996; Helmut Heß, *Der Kunstverlag Franz Hanfstaengl und die frühe fotografische Kunstproduktion. Das Kunstwerk und sein Abbild*, Munich 1999; Dorothea Peters, *Zur Metamorphose des Blicks auf die Kunst. Fotografische Kunstproduktion im 19. Jahrhundert*, Dissertation Universität Kassel 2005; Angela Matyssek, *Kunstgeschichte als fotografische Praxis. Richard Hamann und Foto Marburg*, Berlin 2009; Paola Callegari / Edith Gabrielli (eds.), *Pietro Toesca e la fotografia. Saper vedere*, Milano 2009; Dorothea Peters, “... die sorgsame Schärfung der Sinne’. Kunsthistorisches Publizieren von Kugler bis Pinder”, in: Horst Bredekamp / Adam S. Labuda (eds.), *In der Mitte Berlins. 200 Jahre Kunstgeschichte an der Humboldt-Universität*, Berlin 2010, pp. 229–255; Donata Levi, “Da Cavalcaselle a Venturi. La documentazione fotografica della pittura tra connoisseurship e tutela”, in: Anna Maria Spiazzi / Luca Majoli / Corinna Giudici

(eds.), *Gli archivi fotografici delle Soprintendenze. Tutela e storia* (conference Venice 2008), Crocetta del Montello 2010, pp. 23–33; Stephen Bann (ed.), *Art and the early photographic album* (conference Washington/DC 2007), New Haven/CT 2011.

⁶ The passage referred to mentions the photograph of a plastercast of a bust of Patroclus. William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, London 1844–1846, plate V, unnumbered pages (here cited from the facsimile edition, ed. by Beaumont Newhall, New York 1969).

⁷ Cf. Anne de Mondenard, *La Mission Héliographique. Cinq photographes parcourant la France en 1851*, Paris 2002.

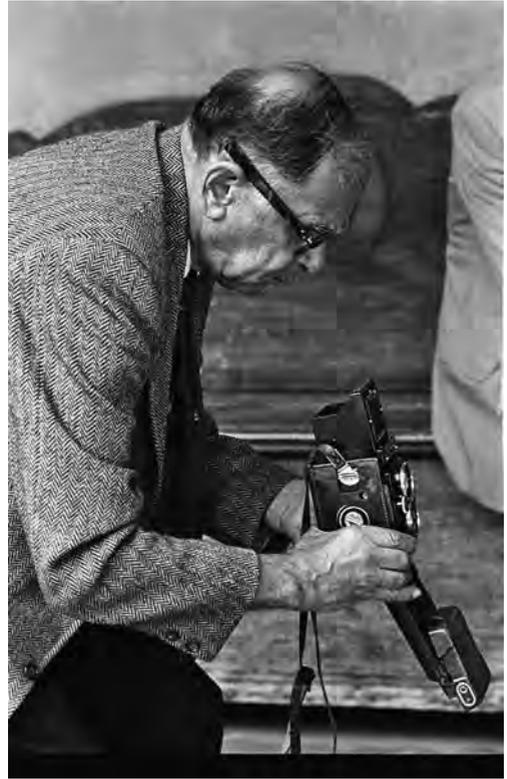
⁸ Helmut Gernsheim, *Geschichte der Photographie: die ersten hundert Jahre* (Propyläen-Kunstgeschichte, Sonderbände 3), Frankfurt/M. 1983, p. 336.

⁹ Charles Baudelaire, “Salon de 1859”, in: *Révue Française*, Paris, June 10–July 20, 1859. See the recent critical edition: Charles Baudelaire, *Salon de 1859. Texte de la Revue française établi avec un relevé de variantes, un commentaire et une étude sur Baudelaire critique de l’art contemporain par Wolfgang Drost*, Paris 2006.

¹⁰ Only then did it become possible to use photographs as illustrations in books without first having to translate them through graphic reproduction procedures such as lithography. See the special issue *Fotografie gedruckt* of *Rundbrief Fotografie*, Sonderheft 4, Stuttgart 1998; and especially Dorothea Peters, “Die Welt im Raster. Georg Meisenbach und der lange Weg zur gedruckten Fotografie”, in: Alexander Gall (ed.), *Konstruieren, kommunizieren, präsentieren. Bilder von Wissenschaft und Technik*, Göttingen 2007, pp. 179–244.

by changing subjective moods, lighting, time of day, and site of conservation.”¹¹

The chance to assemble on the art historian's desk, in photographic form, works preserved in places even far apart, and to separate their observation from such contingent factors as lighting conditions, opened new prospects in comparative methods, which hitherto had only been possible thanks to prints and engravings.¹² In contrast to these latter, photographic reproductions of works of art gained currency precisely by virtue of their promise of greater 'veracity'. But they also took to their extreme consequences the problems of decontextualization already posed by engravings. For the works of art reproduced in photographs were shorn of their real measurements, materiality, and color; they were reduced to two-dimensional reproductions in a series of standard formats. In this way they could be easily transported, ordered, classified, stored in folders and boxes, arranged in series and groups, and thus reduced to a convenient form for comparative study by the art historian.¹³ Photographs were used as *aides-mémoires*, but also as documentation of the changing condition of works of art in time or even as records of those that no longer existed, as visual aids for university teaching (both as photographic prints and as slides),¹⁴ and not least to compensate for the lack of direct knowledge of the works of art or monuments they reproduced, according to a faith in photographs that Richard Krautheimer (fig. 2) ret-



2 Marvin Trachtenberg, Richard Krautheimer photographing Brunelleschi's Ospedale degli Innocenti during a photographic survey conducted by Trachtenberg himself and Heinrich Klotz on Florentine Medieval and Renaissance architecture, about 1966

¹¹ “Keinem technischen Hilfsmittel der Gegenwart ist die Kunstwissenschaft zu solchem Dank verpflichtet, wie der Photographie. Sie eigentlich hat uns erst in die Lage versetzt, vergleichende Studien mit jener Sicherheit zu betreiben, auf welche der Wechsel der subjektiven Stimmung, der Beleuchtung, der Tageszeit, des Aufbewahrungsortes keinen Einfluß mehr übt”; Wilhelm Lübke, “Die Dresdener Galerie in Photographien”, in: *Kunstchronik*, 9 (1873), pp. 81–86, here p. 81; quoted from Dorothea Peters, “Fotografie als ‘Technisches Hilfsmittel’ der Kunstwissenschaft. Wilhelm Bode und die Photographische Kunstanstalt Adolphe Braun”, in: *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 44 (2002), pp. 167–206, here p. 167.

¹² On the relations between reproductions in prints and photography in the nineteenth century, see *inter alia*

Stephen Bann, *Parallel lines: printmakers, painters and photographers in nineteenth-century France*, New Haven/CT 2001.

¹³ Heinrich Dilly, “Das Auge der Kamera und der Kunst-historische Blick”, in: *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunst-wissenschaft*, 20 (1981), pp. 81–89. See most recently Martin Gaier / Falk Wolf / Lena Bader (eds.), *Vergleichendes Sehen* (conference Basel 2007), Munich 2010.

¹⁴ Heinrich Dilly, “‘Weder Grimm, noch Schmarsow, geschweige denn Wölfflin ...’. Zur jüngsten Diskussion über die Diaprojektion um 1900”, in: Costanza Caraffa (ed.), *Fotografie als Instrument und Medium der Kunst-geschichte*, Berlin / Munich 2009, pp. 91–116, in which the author condenses the whole debate which he himself had begun in 1975.

respectively called “the erroneous belief inherent in our discipline, that [...] old or new photos, taken by friends, could replace actual inspection”.¹⁵ Thanks to the rapid industrialization and commercialization of the sector—which also responded to the needs of another phenomenon of the nineteenth century, the emergence of mass tourism—and the codification of the stock-in-trade of photographic agencies in catalogues, photographs also became a term of reference and hence a means of communication in the art-historical debate, and scholars began to furnish their letters with references to this or that number of the Braun or Alinari catalogue.¹⁶

A heated debate had developed in art journals on the pros and cons of the new chemical and mechanical process ever since its origins in the 1850s.¹⁷ Though many voices were raised against the ever more widespread “evil [...] of the mechanical precision of the reproduction”,¹⁸ photography soon triumphed over engravings and prints, and by the end of the 1880s had finally emerged as the preferred tool for art historians and connoisseurs of various generations. Some consciousness of the methodological consequences of the use of photography was reflected *inter alia* in the program of the first international congress of art history, held in Vienna, 1–4 September 1873, in which the question of “reproductions of works of art and their dissemination” was tabled under point 5 of the discussion.¹⁹ In the introduction to his catalogue of the drawings of Michelangelo and Raphael at Oxford, John C. Robinson wrote in 1870: “The invention of photography has in our own time effected an entire revolution”.²⁰

Photographs as promise of evidence

Whence arose this confidence in photography? On what evidence was it based? It was just the chemical/mechanical character of the process, “by optical and chemical means alone, and without the aid of any one acquainted with the art of drawing”,²¹ that seemed to guarantee objectivity: to emancipate the

¹⁵ “[...] der unserem Fach inhärente Irrglaube, [...] alte wie neue Photos, von Freunden beschafft, könnten den Augenschein ersetzen”; Richard Krauthheimer, “Anstatt eines Vorworts”, in: id., *Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Europäischen Kunstgeschichte*, Cologne 1988, pp. 7–37, here p. 29.

¹⁶ Dorothea Peters is currently working on photographs as means of communication in the debate between art experts; see the same author’s study in the present book. On the rise of commercial photography and photography as a business see *inter alia* Elizabeth Anne McCauley, *Industrial Madness: Commercial Photography in Paris, 1848–71*, New Haven/CT 1994.

¹⁷ On the debate between scholars in the German-speaking area see Wiebke Ratzeburg, “Mediendiskussion im 19. Jahrhundert. Wie die Kunstgeschichte ihre wissenschaftliche Grundlage in der Fotografie fand”, in: *kritische berichte*, 1 (2002), pp. 22–39.

¹⁸ “Uebelstand [...] der mechanischen Genauigkeit der Wiedergabe”; C.L., “Die Photographie als Mittel zur Reproduction von Holzschnitten, Kupferstichen und Handzeichnungen”, in: *Archiv für die zeichnenden Künste mit besonderer Beziehung auf Kupferstecher- und Holzschneidekunst und ihre Geschichte*, 5 (1859), pp. 136–140, here p. 137.

¹⁹ Gerhard Schmidt, “Die Internationalen Kongresse für

Kunstgeschichte”, in: *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 36 (1983), pp. 7–116, on the Wiener Kongress of 1873 see pp. 7–13 and pp. 19–22 (facsimile of the programme, the quotation here p. 19).

²⁰ John Charles Robinson, *A critical account of the drawings by Michelangelo and Raffaello in the University Galleries, Oxford*, Oxford 1870, p. X. For this reference I am indebted to Golo Maurer who is working on a historical survey of catalogues of Michelangelo drawings.

²¹ Talbot 1844–1846/1969 (note 6), “Introductory Remarks” (unnumbered pages).

²² Bernard Berenson, “Isochromatic Photography and Venetian Pictures”, in: *The Nation*, 57/1480 (November 1893), pp. 346–347, quoted from “Documents in the History of Visual Documentation. Bernard Berenson on Isochromatic Film”, in: *Visual Resources*, 3 (1986), pp. 131–138, here p. 137.

²³ “Die Photographie leistet [...] durch diejenigen Eigenthümlichkeiten, um derentwillen sie der Natur gegenüber nicht als Kunst gelten kann, in der Wiedergabe von vorhandenen Kunstwerken und ganz speciell von Handzeichnungen einzig und allein die volle Garantie der Treue”; Rudolph Weigel, *Die Werke der Maler in ihren Handzeichnungen. Beschreibendes Verzeichniss der in Kupfer gestochenen, lithographirten und photo-*

study of art from the interpretative intervention of the engraver and to place at the service of scholars and connoisseurs "accurate impersonal renderings"²² of the works of art they were studying. The same reasons why, in Baudelairean terms, photography could not be considered an art made it a perfect and faithful tool for the reproduction of reality, and one that was able to furnish a wholly 'objective' facsimile of the original:

"Photography, [...] through those same properties whereby it cannot be regarded as an art in its relation to nature, alone can provide a complete guarantee of fidelity in the reproduction of existing works of art and in particular in the reproduction of drawings".²³

The thorny question of the relation between photography and reality, between reproduction and original, and hence of the medium's presumed neutrality, is one of the great unresolved problems of those who study photography.²⁴ While the controversy on the alleged indexical character of photography still continues,²⁵ the question of photographic veracity seemed incontestable to those involved in the debate in the nineteenth century.²⁶ The *topos* of the incorruptible eye of the camera can historically be traced back to the very origins of the public debate on photography. The mimetic qualities of painting had always been linked to the hand of the painter, whereas those of photography were perceived as being mechanically and mathematically correct. So photography had appeared on the scene as a more reliable means of the reproduction of nature precisely because it was independent (at least apparently) of the hand of man: its neutrality was guaranteed by being produced by a machine. One of the authors who contributed to founding the myth of photography as an autopoietic (i.e. self-creating) process, as "the picture which makes itself",²⁷ was William Henry Fox Talbot. More figures of speech than definitions, some of Talbot's expressions such as "photogenic drawings" and "pencil of nature" exemplify a common thread of early theoretical writings on photography.²⁸ The Byzantine-Christian idea of the existence of images not produced by the hand of man (*acheiropoieta*) was thus adapted to the technological and scientific progress of photography.²⁹ In his first report to the Royal Society on "The Art

graphirten Facsimiles von Originalzeichnungen grosser Meister, Leipzig 1865, pp. XV–XVI.

²⁴ See *inter alia* Scott Walden (ed.), *Photography and Philosophy. Essays on the Pencil of Nature*, Malden / Oxford / Carlton 2008.

²⁵ A good example is the collective volume in James Elkins' *Art Seminar* series: James Elkins (ed.), *Photography theory*, New York/NY / London 2007. See the reviews: Robin E. Kelsey, "Indexomania", in: *The Art Journal*, 66/3 (2007), pp. 119–122; John Roberts, "Photography and its truth-event", in: *The Oxford Art Journal*, 31/3 (2008), pp. 463–468; Elizabeth Edwards / François Brunet, "On theory and photography—two comments", in: *History of Photography*, 32/4 (2008), pp. 378–380.

²⁶ As recalled by Joan M. Schwartz, "'Records of Simple Truth and Precision': Photography, Archives, and the Illusion of Control", in: *Archivaria*, 50 (Fall 2000), pp. 1–40, here p. 22.

²⁷ William Henry Fox Talbot / William Jerdan, "The New Art", in: *The Literary Gazette and Journal of Belles Lettres, Science, Art &c.*, 1150 (30 January 1839), p. 73, quoted from: Kelley Wilder, "William Henry Fox Talbot und 'The Picture which makes itself'", in: Friedrich Weltzien (ed.), *Von Selbst – Autopoietische Verfahren in der Ästhetik des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 2006, pp. 189–197,

p. 194. See also Peter Geimer, "Photographie und was sie nicht gewesen ist: photogenic drawings 1834–1844", in: Gabriele Dürbeck et al. (eds.), *Wahrnehmung der Natur, Natur der Wahrnehmung: Studien zur Geschichte visueller Kultur um 1800*, Dresden 2001, pp. 135–149.

²⁸ Talbot 1844–1846/1969. See also Talbot's 'autopoietic' essay published in several journals in 1839: "Some Account of the Art of Photogenic Drawing, or the Process by which Natural Objects may be made to Delineate Themselves without the Aid of the Artist' Pencil", quoted from Wilder 2006 (note 27), here p. 194, note 13. See also Larry Schaaf, *The Photographic Art of William Henry Fox Talbot*, Princeton 2000. On Talbot's correspondence see the website <http://www.foxtalbot.arts.gla.ac.uk>. A similar rhetoric and similar figures of speech characterize the origins of photography as a whole, cf. Geoffrey Batchen, *Burning with Desire. The Conception of Photography*, Cambridge/MA / London 1999.

²⁹ Cf. Peter Geimer, "'Nicht von Menschenhand': zur fotografischen Entbergung des Grabtuchs von Turin", in: Gottfried Boehm (ed.), *Homo pictor*, Munich 2001, pp. 156–172.

of Photogenic Drawing”, delivered on 31 January 1839, Talbot had presented his country house of Lacock Abbey in Wiltshire as the first building “that was ever yet known to have drawn its own picture”.³⁰ Emphasizing that the photographic images produced in the “New Art” “are impressed by Nature’s hand”,³¹ Talbot had reversed the traditional relation between art and nature and replaced the paradigm of *pictura muta poesis* with that of photography as “mute testimony” of the real world.³² Leaving aside the consequences of this conceptual reversal for the figurative arts of the nineteenth century and for the rise of photography as an autonomous genre of art, it is clear that these principles enunciated by Talbot lent themselves to being placed at the service of a rhetoric of the presumed “impartiality”³³ of documentary photography. This phenomenon, as is well known, was not limited to the question how photography could be applied to the reproduction of works of art. As shown by Lorraine Daston in an important chapter in the book on the history of scientific objectivity that she co-authored with Peter Galison, the advent of photography was hailed in the empirical sciences as the promise of a new era: the photographic process seemed to permit the production of images—i.e. data, specimens—without the intervention of the scientist or his draughtsman and thus to place a neutral, impartial and ‘objective’ reproduction of reality at the disposal of researchers—for example, the reproduction of a snowflake under the microscope.³⁴ The same ideal, imbued with the positivism and empiricism of the nineteenth century, long left its mark on the concept of a kind of documentary photography that was supposed to furnish art historians with reproductions of works of art wholly conforming to the original: in effect, objective facsimiles. The parallel with the natural sciences, explicitly underlined in some writings of the time, corresponded to contemporary efforts to endow art history with a rigorous ‘scientific’ foundation and standardized methods, an effort in which scholars in the German-speaking countries were precociously active. Thus Anton Springer wrote in 1878, with regard to the comparative study of drawings made possible by the prolific material made available for consultation by photographic reproductions:³⁵

“Only once the infinitely rich treasure of original drawings and sketches, hitherto hidden in collections and difficult to access, had been retrieved by photography, could the historic-genetic method be stressed and art history be given a deeper scientific foundation. Just as the use of the microscope transformed the description of the external phenomena of nature into an organic natural history, so the study of [photographic reproductions] of original drawings in more recent art history has first fulfilled what is promised by the name [*Kunstgeschichte* as a real history of art] and raised it into a true historical discipline”.³⁶

³⁰ Talbot 1844–1846/1969 (note 6), plate XV (unnumbered pages).

³¹ Talbot 1844–1846/1969 (note 6), “Introductory Remarks” (unnumbered pages).

³² Talbot 1844–1846/1969 (note 6), plate III (unnumbered pages). In the cited passage Talbot describes photography in the context of its possible judicial application as a reliable means of proof. See Geimer 2001 (note 27), p. 148. *Ibid.*, p. 145, on Talbot’s difficulties in the use of traditional concepts of the fine arts. On the problematic concept of nature in Talbot and in the “proto-photographers” see Batchen 1999 (note 28), pp. 57–69.

³³ Talbot 1844–1846/1969 (note 6), plate II (unnumbered pages).

³⁴ Lorraine Daston / Peter Galison, *Objectivity*, New York/NY 2007, see especially the chapter written by Lorraine Daston on “Mechanical Objectivity”, pp. 115–190.

See also Kelley Wilder, *Photography and Science*, London 2009.

³⁵ On the diffusion of photographic reproductions of drawings in the 1860s and 1870s, on their technical implications and methodological consequences, see Peters 2002 (note 11), especially pp. 172–174.

³⁶ “Erst als der unendlich reiche Schatz von Handzeichnungen und Skizzen, bis dahin in den Sammlungen vergraben und schwer zugänglich, durch die Photographie gehoben wurde, konnte die historisch-genetische Methode nachdrücklich betont und der Kunstgeschichte eine tiefere wissenschaftliche Grundlage gegeben werden. Ähnlich wie der Gebrauch des Mikroskops die äußerliche Naturbeschreibung in eine organische Naturgeschichte verwandelte, so hat das Heranziehen der Handzeichnungen zum Studium der neueren Kunstgeschichte erst erfüllt, was der Name verheißt, und die

Claims of this kind, which punctuate the publications of the period, acquire a particular resonance if we think of the concurrent diffusion of techniques for the retouching of photographs, widely used to provide the scientist with 'improved' images, and hence often adapted to his particular needs, or particular goals.³⁷ That is why it is appropriate to speak of a rhetoric of photographic objectivity: it was believed in by those who wanted to believe in it, since the possibilities of manipulating photographic images must have been well known.

Other than in its aspiration to the rank of the natural sciences, this ideological faith of art historians in the objectivity of documentary photography has its roots in the historical disciplines *tout court*, long linked to the idea of being able to reconstruct the past as it 'really' was (Ranke's *wie es eigentlich gewesen war*) and hence eager for hard ('authenticated') facts.³⁸ Also for the historical disciplines, and in particular for diplomatics, the advent of photography signified a decisive methodological shift; it permitted those aspects of paper documents not directly translatable into the textual form of a transcription to be reproduced and a comparative analysis of documents scattered between different archives to be conducted.³⁹ The creation of large photographic repertoires was not however immune—as in the case of the reproduction of works of art—from the problem of the selection and formation of a canon.⁴⁰ Another discipline particularly relevant in our context completed its professionalization towards the end of the nineteenth century: modern archival science. It too derived its origins from a foundation then common to all the historical sciences, that of positivist empiricism. This positivist approach is reflected in the thought of one of the major codifiers of archival science, Hilary Jenkinson, who at the beginning of the last century declared the credo of the archivist to be "the most selfless devotee of Truth" in his conception of "the Sanctity of Evidence".⁴¹ For all these reasons, the role of evidence could, for art history, only take the form of photographs.

If this debate is revisited from a contemporary perspective, it might be considered a thing of the past: the recognition that (analog) photographs can neither be neutral nor objective, but must always reflect the cultural and technological conditions of the time in which they were made,⁴² seems by now to be sufficiently widespread. Neutrality and objectivity are not intrinsic qualities of photography. They are, in the best of cases, no more than good intentions on the part of the documentary photographer and

letztere zu einer wahrhaft historischen Disziplin erhoben." Anton Springer, *Raffaello und Michelangelo*, Leipzig 1878, vol. 1, p. III.

³⁷ Dagmar Keultjes is working on this subject for her doctoral dissertation "Die fotografische Retusche und ihre Bedeutung in Fotografien des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts", University of Cologne.

³⁸ See in this respect Annette Tietenberg, "Die Fotografie – eine bescheidene Dienerin der Wissenschaft und Künste? Die Kunstwissenschaft und ihre mediale Abhängigkeit", in: Annette Tietenberg (ed.), *Das Kunstwerk als Geschichtsdokument* (Festschrift Hans-Ernst Mittag), Munich 1999, pp. 61–80; Hubert Lochner, *Kunstgeschichte als historische Theorie der Kunst*, Munich 2001; id., "Musée imaginaire" und historische Narration: zur Differenzierung visueller und verbaler Darstellung von Geschichte", in: Klaus Niehr / Katharina Krause (ed.), *Kunstwerk – Abbild – Buch: das illustrierte Kunstbuch von 1730 bis 1930*, Munich 2007, pp. 53–75.

³⁹ See Antonella Ghignoli, "Mit dem photographischen Apparat bin ich von Archiv zu Archiv gewandert". La fotografia e gli studi di diplomatica nel riflesso dell'impre-

sa editoriale delle Kaiserurkunden in Abbildungen (1880–1891)", in: Costanza Caraffa (ed.), *Fotografie als Instrument und Medium der Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin / Munich 2009, pp. 145–155; a study that also devoted attention to the problems linked to the digitalization of materials of this kind.

⁴⁰ See Klaus Niehr, "Kunstwerk – Abbild – Buch: Komponenten einer Beziehung und ihr Umfeld im 19. Jahrhundert", in: Klaus Niehr / Katharina Krause (ed.), *Kunstwerk – Abbild – Buch: das illustrierte Kunstbuch von 1730 bis 1930*, Munich 2007, pp. 13–32; and recently *Kanon – XXX. Deutscher Kunsthistorikertag* (conference Marburg 2009), Bonn 2009, in particular the chapter "Kunst – Bild – Reproduktion", pp. 91–104.

⁴¹ Cited in Terry Cook, "What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift", in: *Archivaria*, 43 (Spring 1997), pp. 17–63, here p. 23.

⁴² Joan M. Schwartz, "We make our tools and our tools make us": Lessons from Photographs from the Practice, Politics and Poetics of Diplomats", in: *Archivaria*, 40 (Fall 1995), pp. 40–74.

his patron. Yet, paradoxically, the question of the objectivity of photography has regained renewed significance with the advent of digital photography. The ever greater resolution of digital cameras and the claimed true-to-lifeness of digital colors apparently permit photographs to represent ever more faithfully the object represented, and thus seem to offer greater ‘objectivity’. Even the current vocabulary conditioned by the internet tends to blur the distinction between original and reproduction; it makes us think that we are really ‘placing online’ a capital or a painting, and not their digital reproductions. And who, in presenting a PowerPoint, has not proposed a comparison between a historical photo of a particular object and the ‘original’? The original may be located in a museum or a church, but not of course in our PowerPoint, which shows at most a more recent digital image of the same object.

On the other hand, although the ability of photography to be manipulated was something well known even in the analogical era,⁴³ digital technology has placed the means of intervening in photographic images within everyone’s grasp: using the same simple software we can produce from a digital photograph a reliable document of the state of conservation of a work of art—or a total falsification of it. The indexical character of photography, i.e. its relation to the object represented, has thus been further placed in doubt. The reliability of a digital image depends—even more explicitly than that of an analog photograph—on the authority of the institution that produces, controls and makes it accessible. This institution, guarantor of the documentary veracity of photography, is the photo archive.⁴⁴

The importance of being a photo archive

The creation and progressive institutionalization of photographic collections specifically dedicated to the documentation of works of art was one of the consequences of the growing interaction between photography and art history: it led from personal picture pools created for purposes of private research, teaching and collecting to public photographic collections supported by institutions for the protection of monuments, museums, schools and universities. Jacob Burckhardt must be cited in this sense as one of the founding fathers of the discipline. He was, by his own admission, a compulsive collector of photographs.⁴⁵ Burckhardt also used photographs as material for university teaching, but seems to have conceived his collection as something inherently private. He thus bequeathed the over 10,000 photographs he had collected during his lifetime not to the institute in Basel that he himself had founded, but to some friends.⁴⁶ Others, such as Herman Grimm and August Schmarsow, dedicated themselves to the creation of photo and slide collections in university institutes of art history.⁴⁷ National and regional offices for the conservation of historical monuments and museums also began to document photographically the objects and buildings that fell within their province, and also to collect photographs as material for com-

⁴³ See Barry M. Goldstein, “All photos lie. Images as data”, in: Gregory C. Stanczak (ed.), *Visual research methods: image, society, and representation*, Los Angeles 2007, pp. 61–81.

⁴⁴ On the question of authority see Kelley Wilder, “Looking Through Photographs: Art, Archiving and Photography in the Photothek”, in: Costanza Caraffa (ed.), *Fotografie als Instrument und Medium der Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin / Munich 2009, pp. 117–127.

⁴⁵ See the study by Edith Struchholz in this volume.

⁴⁶ Nikolaus Meier, “Der Mann mit der Mappe: Jacob Burckhardt und die Reproduktionsphotographie”, in:

Maurizio Ghelardi (ed.), *Jacob Burckhardt : storia della cultura, storia dell’arte*, Venice 2002, pp. 259–297, here p. 265. See also Katja Amato, “Skizze und Fotografie bei Jacob Burckhardt”, in: Matthias Bruhn (ed.), *Darstellung und Deutung. Abbilder der Kunstgeschichte*, Weimar 2000, pp. 47–59.

⁴⁷ See August Schmarsow, *Die Kunstgeschichte an unsern Hochschulen*, Berlin 1891, especially pp. 35–36, 83–84. On Grimm see Andreas Beyer, “Lichtbild und Essay. Kunstgeschichte als Versuch”, in: Wolfgang Braungart / Kai Kauffmann (eds.), *Essayismus um 1900*, Heidelberg 2006, pp. 37–48.

parative study. The date of foundation of these collections cannot, in general, be considered a *terminus post quem* for the dating of the photographs preserved in them: in Bavaria, for example, the photographic archive of what is now the Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege was officially founded in 1887, but contains photographs dating back to the 1850s.⁴⁸ Whether we are dealing with private or public photo archives, it is their historical process of formation, formalization and, sometimes, institutionalization that deserves our attention. The accumulation and sedimentation of photographs continued to characterize art-historical practices far into the twentieth century. "Photographs! Photographs! In our work one can never have enough", exclaimed Bernard Berenson,⁴⁹ and an aphorism of much the same tenor attributed to Erwin Panofsky has been handed down by Richard Krautheimer: "*wer die meisten Photos hat, gewinnt*" [he who has the most photos wins], said Panofsky.⁵⁰

In the meantime the need to overcome the particular agendas of the individual photo archives that were being created had also been expressed. Thus, in 1865 Herman Grimm published a famous article on the "*Nothwendigkeit einer photographischen Bibliothek für das gesamte kunstgeschichtliche Material*" ("need for a photographic library for art-historical material as a whole").⁵¹ Grimm's programme for a universal photo library for art history seems to echo the well-known prophecy of a total photo archive published by Oliver Wendell Holmes in 1859 with regard to stereoscopic photography. It is worth quoting the whole passage of Wendell Holmes since it touches on some of the aspects—such as classification—to which we shall return:

"The consequence of this will soon be such an enormous collection of forms [i.e. stereographs] that they will have to be classified and arranged in vast libraries, as books are now. The time will come when a man who wishes to see any object, natural or artificial, will go to the Imperial, National, or City Stereographic Library and call for its skin or form, as he would for a book at any common library. We do now distinctly propose the creation of a comprehensive and systematic stereographic library, where all men can find the special forms they particularly desire to see as artists, or as scholars, or as mechanics, or in any other capacity. [...] Again, we must have special stereographic collections, just as we have professional and other special libraries."⁵²

In spite of the fact that the total photo library predicted by Grimm was 'limited' to art history, and in spite of the fact that he had formulated some practical measures for its realization, such as the creation of international networks, his idea was not pursued. Equally utopian, though actually pursued for some decades, was the project for a universal "Denkmälerarchiv" formulated by Albrecht Meydenbauer in c. 1881 for the all-inclusive documentation of historical monuments (not only national ones) in photographs and photogrammetries.⁵³ The aspiration to comprehensiveness however remained at the basis of other more circumscribed projects, such as the establishment of the *Photothek* of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz (KHI): the creation of a

⁴⁸ I owe this information to Markus Hundemer, head of the photographic archive of the Bavarian Denkmalpflege and curator of the exhibition *Das visuelle Gedächtnis Bayerns* (Munich 2006), see http://www.blfd.bayern.de/medien/visuelles_gedaechtnis_bayerns (last consulted 4 January 2011).

⁴⁹ Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance. A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places*, Oxford 1932, p. X, quoted from Roberts 1995 (note 5), p. IX. On Berenson and photography see the studies by Giovanni Pagliarulo and Machtelt Israëls in this volume.

⁵⁰ Krautheimer 1988 (note 15), here p. 29.

⁵¹ Herman Grimm, "Nothwendigkeit einer photographischen Bibliothek für das gesamte kunstgeschichtliche Material – Vorschläge zu deren Gründung in Berlin", in: *Über Künstler und Kunstwerke*, I (1865), pp. 36–40.

⁵² Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph", in: *The Atlantic Monthly*, 3/20 (June 1859), pp. 738–748.

⁵³ Herta Wolf, "Das Denkmälerarchiv Fotografie", in: Herta Wolf (ed.), *Paradigma Fotografie. Fotokritik am Ende des fotografischen Zeitalters*, vol. 1, Frankfurt/M. 2002, pp. 349–375.

“collection, as complete as possible, of photographs and other publications of Italian paintings, buildings useful for comparative purposes, and especially facsimile reproduction of drawings and illuminated manuscripts”⁵⁴

had been declared among the programmatic objectives of the foundation of the Florentine art-historical institute, promoted by August Schmarsow, among others, in 1897.⁵⁵ With its focus on Italian art and architecture from late antiquity to the modern period, the *Photothek* corresponds in some way to the spirit of the “special stereographic collections” proposed by Wendell Holmes.

Between 1897 and the present day the *Photothek* has accumulated over 600,000 photographic prints, in addition to an archive of over 40,000 negatives.⁵⁶ This long history has been accompanied by a succession of organizational changes: the creation of inventory books, the formulation of a system of classification and storage of photographs, or rather the boxes in which they are contained, on an open shelf plan, the creation and later systemization of card catalogues in the 1920s,⁵⁷ the transition to a computerized system of cataloguing in a database according to a particular descriptive standard (1992–1993),⁵⁸ the start of the digitalization of the negative archive (2002), the switch to digital photography (2005) and the publication of all digital resources on the internet (since 2006).⁵⁹ The history of the *Photothek*'s acquisitions has followed a parallel course: from the first bequests to the purchase on the market of reproductions of works of art (from the catalogues of photographic agencies or directly from the photographers themselves), to the development of the *Photothek*'s own policy of conducting photographic campaigns, to which ever new purchases and donations have continued to be added. The history of acquisitions is in turn linked to the history of the Institute:⁶⁰ for example—at a very basic level—to the various budgetary resources available over time, and also to strategies for the expansion of the photographic collection, not only to realize the original objective of a comprehensive collection, but also to respond to current and ever-changing trends in research, down to the current expansion of the collection into so-called ‘image islands’—such as that on medieval Georgia⁶¹—reflecting the expansion of the concept of Italian art history now underway at the KHI.

⁵⁴ “[...] möglichst vollständigen Sammlung photographischer Aufnahmen und sonstiger zur Vergleichung brauchbarer Publicationen italienischer Gemälde, Bildwerke, Bauten, besonders auch Facsimile-Reproductionen von Zeichnungen und Bilderhandschriften”; the quotation comes from a memorandum of Franz Xaver Kraus, *Über die Gründung eines Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz*, 1899, see Hans W. Hubert, *Das Kunsthistorische Institut in Florenz: von der Gründung bis zum hundertjährigen Jubiläum (1897–1997)*, Florence 1997, p. 22. That the Florentine Institute should comprise not only a specialized art-historical library but also “a large collection of illustrations suitable for comparative studies”, had already been determined in the appeal for its foundation (*Aufruf zur Gründung eines kunstgeschichtlichen Institutes in Florenz*) presented at the second international Art-Historical Congress in Nürnberg in 1893 (*ibid.*, p. 16).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 10–19.

⁵⁶ On the history of the *Photothek*: Ingeborg Bähr, “Zum Aufbau eines Arbeitsapparates für die Italienforschung: der Erwerb von Büchern und Abbildungen in der Frühzeit des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz”, in: Max Seidel (ed.), *Storia dell'arte e politica culturale intorno al 1900. La fondazione dell'Istituto Germanico di*

Storia dell'Arte di Firenze, Venice 1999, pp. 359–376, on the *Photothek* pp. 365–370; Hubert 1997 (note 54), *passim*. On its current research projects see the website <http://www.khi.fi.it/en/photothek> and also Costanza Caraffa, “Cimelia Photographica”, in: *Bildwelten des Wissens. Kunsthistorisches Jahrbuch für Bildkritik*, 8/2 (2011), *Graustufen*, ed. Felix Prinz, pp. 108–111.

⁵⁷ The first mention of the card catalogue is found in the Institute's annual report for 1904–1905: *Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz. Jahresbericht 1904/05*, p. 12. The systemization is due to Fritz Gebhard, active in an honorary capacity in the *Photothek* between 1923 and 1928, cf. Anchise Tempestini, “La Fototeca del Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz: catalogazione tradizionale e schedatura informatizzata”, in: Sauro Lusini (ed.), *Fototeche e archivi fotografici: prospettive di sviluppo e indagine delle raccolte* (conference Prato 1992), Prato 1996, pp. 248–252, here p. 249; Hubert 1997 (note 54), p. 47.

⁵⁸ Tempestini 1996 (note 57); Birgit Laschke / Anchise Tempestini, “Il Kunsthistorisches Institut di Firenze e la catalogazione informatica della sua Fototeca”, in: Tiziana Serena (ed.), *Per Paolo Costantini* (Quaderni del Centro di Ricerche Informatiche per i Beni Culturali 8–9), 2 vols., Pisa 1998–1999, vol. 2, pp. 199–203.

This brief fact file should be understood not as an advertisement for the Florentine *Photothek*, but rather as a way of suggesting the complex decision-making process by which photographs are acquired, classified, stored and used in a photo archive. First there is acquisitions policy: how should photographs be chosen, how selected within a donation or bequest? Should they be selected on the basis of the significance of the works of art represented in them or on the basis of the photographic quality? And what are the criteria to establish the significance of the works represented? How or when should doubles be discarded? Then comes the question how photographs should be inserted in the logical but also spatial order of the classification system currently in force: in what section or sections should the photographs referring to the works of a particular artist be placed? Should preference be given to an alphabetical subdivision by artists' names, or by artistic genres, or by topographical areas on the basis of the places where the works are preserved? How should these sections be arranged in the material space of the *Photothek*? Then there are all the little decisions linked to photo mounts and their accompanying captions and ancillary information: Should a historical photograph also be mounted on card? What information should be annotated on a photograph's mount: its provenance from a bequest; the name of its photographer; the date when the photograph was taken, or that of its publication; an alternative attribution to the work represented; the number of the negative or the number of a digital reproduction of the photograph itself? Then there is the whole question of the application of digital technologies: what database and what cataloguing standard to use? How to combine cataloguing and digitalization? What photographs, positives or negatives, should be digitalized and why? What should be done with already digitalized photos, and those that will never be digitalized? All the above decisions are anything but neutral.⁶² They are arbitrary operations that contradict the positivistically-derived idea of the neutrality of the archive—and of the work of archivists. Particular insistence on this point has been placed by Terry Cook and (especially for photo archives) Joan M. Schwartz, whose studies represent a fundamental contribution to redirecting both the theoretical reflection and quotidian practice in photo archives.⁶³ Archives are not just temples of memory.⁶⁴ They are complex, dynamic institutions in which not just the individual document, but the context in which it was created and transmitted is preserved.

⁵⁹ At the present time (8 March 2011) 39,405 high resolution images are available in open access in the *Digitale Photothek*: <http://photothek.khi.fi.it>.

⁶⁰ Irene Hueck, "Organizzazione di una fototeca", in: Laura Corti / Simonetta Ferrandi, *Metodologie di analisi e di catalogazione dei beni culturali*, Siena 1980, pp. 185–207, here pp. 203–204.

⁶¹ http://expo.khi.fi.it/gallery/georgia/greetings/view?set_language=en.

⁶² For a first critical reflection on the work in our *Photothek* see Hueck 1980 (note 60).

⁶³ Cook 1984–1985 (note 4); Schwartz 1995 (note 42); Cook 1997 (note 41); Schwartz 2000 (note 26); Joan M. Schwartz / Terry Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory", in: *Archives, Records, and Power*, special double issue of *Archival Science: International Journal on Recorded Information*, 2/1-2 (2002), pp. 1–19; Terry Cook / Joan M. Schwartz, "Archives, Records, and Power: From (Postmodern) Theory to (Archival) Performance", in: *Archives, Records, and Power*, special double issue of *Archival Science: International Journal on Recorded Information*, 2/3-4 (2002), pp. 171–185; Joan M. Schwartz, "Coming to Terms with Photographs: Descriptive Standards, Linguistic 'Other-

ing' and the Margins of Archivy", in: *Archivaria*, 54 (Fall 2002), pp. 142–171; Joan M. Schwartz, "Having New Eyes: Spaces of Archives, Landscapes of Power", in: *Archivaria*, 61 (Spring 2006), pp. 2–25; Terry Cook, "The Archive(s) Is a Foreign Country: Historians, Archivists, and the Changing Archival Landscape", in: *The Canadian Historical Review*, 90/3 (September 2009), pp. 497–534; Joan M. Schwartz, "The Archival Garden: Photographic Plantings, Interpretive Choices, and Alternative Narratives", in: Terry Cook (ed.), *Controlling the Past: Documenting Society and Institutions*, Chicago/IL 2010, pp. 69–110.

⁶⁴ The interrelation between memory, archive and photography could be the object of a special study. Here I will limit myself to recalling some fundamental texts: Maurice Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*, Paris 1925; id., *La mémoire collective*, Paris 1950; Jacques Le Goff, *Storia e memoria*, Torino 1977; Pierre Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire*, 7 vols., Paris 1984–1992; Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, Munich 1992; Aleida Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume: Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses*, Munich 1999; Paul Ricoeur, *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli*, Paris 2000;

In photo archives we find not just information, but knowledge.⁶⁵ That is why photographic collections like the *Photothek* have an interest in defining themselves as ‘photo archives’. On the English version of my business card and on the website of our Institute, the word *Photothek* (in Italian *Fototeca*) is translated quite logically—in analogy to *bibliotheca* / library—as *photo library*.⁶⁶ It is true that, at first sight, photographic collections such as the Florentine *Photothek* seem to be lacking in the character of spontaneous or involuntary sedimentation that archival science considers the pre-condition for the definition of archive.⁶⁷ But if we take into consideration, apart from the pure photographic images themselves, the aggregate of boxes, labels, card mounts, inventory numbers, inscriptions, registers, catalogues, the internal bureaucratic practices relating to photographic campaigns, photo acquisition, cataloguing standards and digitalization processes, and last but not least the publications—digital or paper—produced by the *Photothek* itself, the idea that all this functions as an archive suddenly seems plausible to us. The terminological shift proposed here, from ‘photo library’ to ‘photo archive’,⁶⁸ is also a conceptual and programmatic shift: an invitation to conduct research in the *Photothek* (as in all other photographic collections) not only as a ‘library’ that provides access to information on the basis of *subject* (e.g. photographs that show the condition of a monument at a particular time or date), but also as an archive in which are sedimented not just the individual photographic images, but also—in a more or less casual way—a whole constellation of other data that enables us, for example, to reconstruct the provenance of a group of photographs, and the period and motivations of their acquisition, the intermediate ‘history’ of photographs, their passage from the photographer to the scholar who commissioned the campaign, and then perhaps (after his death) to his executor, before finally ending up in the photo collection, and there—perhaps having passed from one desk to the next—being transferred from one box to another, as a consequence of the reorganizations and reclassifications of which they frequently bear the traces.⁶⁹

One of the conditions—not the only one—required to realize this shift is the overcoming of the traditional reduction of photographs to their visual content. In its usual connotation, the ‘documentary photograph’ ought to provide a ‘neutral’ image of the object represented with a view to the investigation of reality—in particular the image of a monument or work of art with a view to art-historical research. But, as already noted, documentary photographs are documents not only in relation to the object they are intended to document, but also—precisely because photography is *not* neutral—in relation to a whole series of other aspects that are, whether intentionally or not, registered in them:

Aleida Assmann, *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit: Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik*, Munich 2006. Especially on the archival debate, also stimulated by Michel Foucault, *L'archéologie du savoir*, Paris 1969 and Jacques Derrida, *Mal d'archive. Une impression freudienne*, Paris 1995, see *inter alia*: Carolyn Steedman, “The Space of Memory: in an Archive”, in: *History of the Human Sciences*, 11/4 (1998), pp. 65–83; id., “Something She Called a Fever: Michelet, Derrida, and Dust”, in: *The American Historical Review*, 106/4 (October 2001), pp. 1159–1180; id., *Dust*, Manchester 2001; Wolfgang Ernst, *Das Rumoren der Archive. Ordnung aus Unordnung*, Berlin 2002; Linda Giuva / Stefano Vitali / Isabella Zanni Rosiello, *Il potere degli archivi. Usi del passato e difesa dei diritti nella società contemporanea*, Milan 2007; Terry Cook (ed.), *Controlling the Past: Documenting Society and Institutions*, Chicago/IL 2010.

⁶⁵ See *supra* note 4.

⁶⁶ <http://www.khi.fi.it>

⁶⁷ Elio Lodolini, *Archivistica. Principi e problemi*, Milan 1984.

⁶⁸ Also in studies coming from the world of library science, it has been proposed that all these collections should be considered as archives, cf. Marlene Manoff, “Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines”, in: *Libraries and the Academy*, 4/1 (2004), pp. 9–25. See also Diana Toccafondi, “Archivi, biblioteche e musei. Per un’ipotesi di valorizzazione integrata”, in: Maria Gregorio (ed.), *Le Società letterarie. Italia e Germania a confronto* (conference 2009), Verona 2010, pp. 23–27.

⁶⁹ See Tiziana Serena, “L’archivio fotografico. Possibilità derivate potere”, in: Anna Maria Spiazzi / Luca Majoli / Corinna Giudici (eds.), *Gli archivi fotografici delle Soprintendenze. Tutela e storia* (conference Venice 2008), Crocetta del Montello 2010, pp. 103–125.

they are documents, for example, of the contemporary level of the technological development of photography, of the interest of research for a particular theme in a particular period, of the attributional history of a particular work of art as annotated on the mount of its photograph. Photographs, as maintained by Elizabeth Edwards among others, are material objects that exist in space and time, endowed with a biography that is in large part—though not exclusively—transacted within the archive.⁷⁰ So the archive is not just the place in which photographs are preserved, but also that in which this biography can be restored to them. For this to happen, there needs to be a shift from the utilitarian approach based on the content of the document to a wider understanding of the functional context of its provenance, production and sedimentation⁷¹—always bearing in mind that the document is the transmitter not of a single truth, but of multiple narratives that always remain open and subject to revision.⁷² In archives, memory is not simply kept alive, but constantly shaped and reshaped, and in this process of epistemic sedimentation and formation archivists play, whether consciously or not, an active role.⁷³ This role must be performed responsibly, especially in the current historical phase characterized by the spread of digitalization projects destined to take to their extreme consequences the processes of selection that are peculiar to the archive, by privileging or marginalizing some photographs rather than others, or by altering their significance, value and intention through their decontextualization and dematerialization.

“Can't see anything”?

If we look to the *Photothek* of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz for some examples, we find in the “Painting, Renaissance” section eight boxes of photographs reproducing works of Vittore Carpaccio; one of them is entirely dedicated to the so-called Sant'Orsola cycle, now in the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice. Here we find *inter alia* a little folder containing seven photographs that merit particular attention. Let us begin by taking the photograph that bears the inventory number 59349 stamped in its upper left. As explained by the legend in its lower left, it presents a reconstruction of the sequence of paintings and of the site in which they were originally displayed: the chapel in the Scuola di Sant'Orsola in Venice, suppressed in 1806 (fig. 3). The photograph, as documented by the inscription “Nachlass Ludwig” placed in the lower right of the mount, comes from the bequest of the art historian Gustav Ludwig, which entered the KHI in 1905 and is composed not only of photographs, but of books and autographs relating to his study of Renaissance painting in Venice.⁷⁴ The art historian who flips through the photographs in the box in the search of illustrations of the cycle of painting of Carpaccio will immediately discard the photograph in question as an ‘old’ photograph, and one in which “you

⁷⁰ See Elizabeth Edwards / Janice Hart (eds.), *Photographs Objects Histories. On the Materiality of Images*, London / New York 2004 and the bibliography listed in note 118. If we consider photographs as documents and objects, we overcome implicitly the distinction between photo archives as repositories of “original” photographic material (e.g. negatives) and “fototeche” as repositories of non-original “reproductions” suggested by Hueck 1980 (note 60), pp. 188–189. On photographs as multiple originals see Schwartz 1995 (note 42), p. 46.

⁷¹ Schwartz 1995 (note 42), especially pp. 42–52; Cook 1997 (note 41), especially pp. 31–39.

⁷² Cook / Schwartz 2002 (note 63), p. 172.

⁷³ Schwartz / Cook 2002 (note 63), especially pp. 7–10; Cook / Schwartz 2002 (note 63), especially pp. 172–174, 183; Cook 2009 (note 63).

⁷⁴ *Jahresbericht 1904/05* (note 57), p. 3; see also Bähr 1999 (note 56), on the Ludwig bequest p. 369. On Gustav Ludwig (1854–1905) see Martin Gaier, “Die heilige Ursula hängt mir schon ellenlang zum Hals heraus”: Gustav Ludwig tra storia artistica e culturale 1895–1905”, in: Susanne Winter (ed.), *Presenze tedesche a Venezia*, Rome / Venice 2005, pp. 131–175.



3 Tomaso Filippi (photographer) with unknown draughtsman, reconstruction of the Sant'Orsola cycle, gelatine silver print with wash drawing, c. 1904. Mounting board: 19.5 x 30 cm, photograph: 17.5 x 23.5 cm. Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, inv. no. 59349

can't see anything" because of the small size of the scenes depicted.⁷⁵ And in any case, Ludwig's interpretation,⁷⁶ the art historian will say, has long been surpassed.

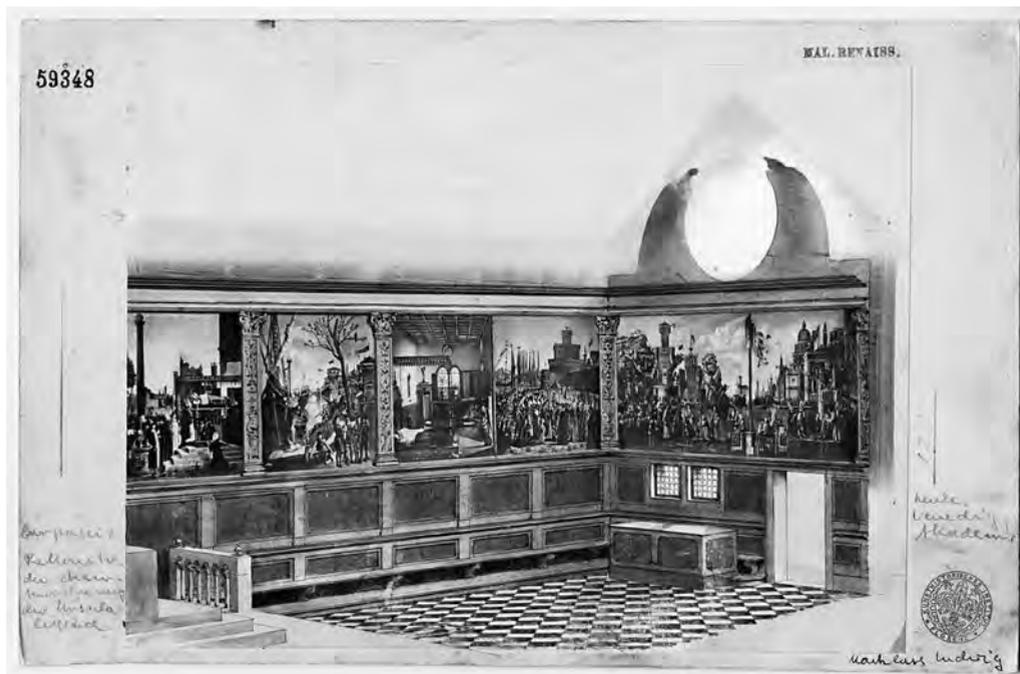
What do we see, however, if we take in hand the photograph, or rather the card on which it is mounted, and begin to examine it more closely? We will observe that it is only in part a photograph proper, since the lower part of the reconstruction and the architectural details are represented by a wash drawing. The wash drawing can also be identified in the upper part, around the oculus, of the entrance wall of the interior represented. Moving the photograph under the light we can detect the parts that are drawn: we can see the graphite glittering under the light and the white highlights that confer three-dimensionality on the drawn pilaster strips that separate the scenes of the pictorial cycle. These latter seem, on the other hand, to be a photographic reproduction. Is it a collage, perhaps? But how is it possible for photographs to be shown 'in perspective', as if arranged in space? And if we analyze the surface with a magnifying glass, we will see that, in fact, there are no traces of collage.

Similar characteristics are presented by the photographs with the inventory numbers 59348, 64279 and 64280, again from the Ludwig *Nachlass*, which show the reconstruction of the sequence of the Sant'Orsola cycle from other points of view (figs. 4, 5, 6). All these images, or rather their card mounts, are furnished not only with their inventory number in the upper left, but also with their class-mark stamp in the upper right ("Mal[erei] Renaiss[ance]"), the stamp of the KHI at the centre below or to the left,

⁷⁵ Daniel Arasse, *Can't see anything*, Princeton/NJ 2001, original edition *On n'y voit rien. Descriptions*, Paris 2000.

⁷⁶ See the posthumous volume, completed for the press by

Molmenti: Gustav Ludwig / Pompeo Molmenti, *Vittore Carpaccio: la vita e le opere*, Milan 1906.



4 Probably Tomaso Filippi (photographer) with unknown draughtsman, reconstruction of the Sant'Orsola cycle, gelatine silver print with wash drawing, c. 1904. Mounting board: 19.5 x 30 cm, photograph: 17.5 x 23.5 cm. Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, inv. no. 59348

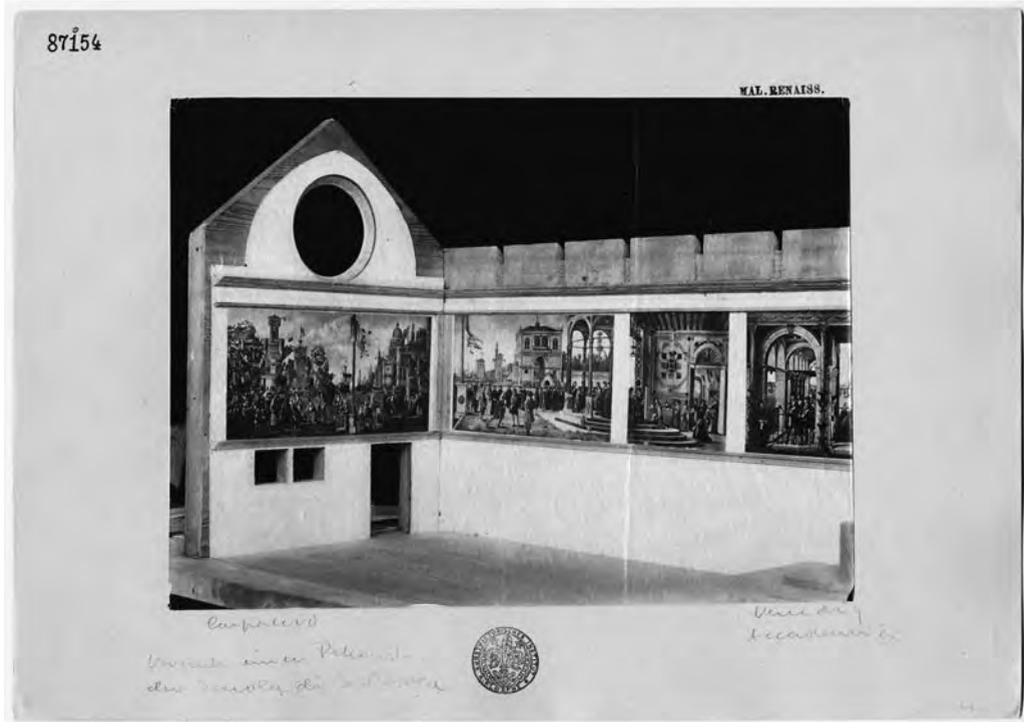
and a series of inscriptions or captions indicating the subject of the photo, i.e. the work of art and its artist if known, in the lower left, and the site in which it is preserved (here Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia), in the lower right.



5 Probably Tomaso Filippi (photographer) with unknown draughtsman, reconstruction of the Sant'Orsola cycle, gelatine silver print with wash drawing, c. 1904. Mounting board: 24 x 34 cm, photograph: 15 x 25.5 cm. Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, inv. no. 64279



6 Probably Tomaso Filippi (photographer) with unknown draughtsman, reconstruction of the Sant'Orsola cycle, gelatine silver print with wash drawing, c. 1904. Mounting board: 24 x 34 cm, photograph: 18 x 25.5 cm. Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, inv. no. 64280



7 Probably Tomaso Filippi (photographer), reconstruction of the Sant'Orsola cycle with wooden model, albumen print, c. 1904. Mounting board: 24 x 34 cm, photograph: 17 x 23 cm. Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, inv. no. 87154

To solve the problems posed by these photographs, and open a window on an exceptional example of the use of photography in art-historical practice, we must take into examination three related images, with the inventory numbers 87152, 87153, 87154.⁷⁷ These photographs are not identified as coming from the Ludwig *Nachlass*, neither on their mounts nor in the inventory book, but they are clearly connected with the previous ones. In particular, 87154 (fig. 7) is the basis, so to speak, of 59349, and takes us to the origins of the process of production of the final image: the thing “That-has-been”, in Roland Barthes’ terms.⁷⁸ Placed in front of the camera is a three-dimensional wooden model or *maquette* evidently reproducing the presumed proportions of the chapel of the Scuola di Sant’Orsola, meticulously reconstructed by Ludwig on the basis of archival data.⁷⁹ On the walls of the *maquette*,

⁷⁷ The entire group of seven photographs was identified by Raffaella Marchitello in May 2010 as part of a brief period she spent at the *Photothek* with the assignment of preparing the cataloguing of the Ludwig *Nachlass*.

⁷⁸ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography*, transl. by Richard Howard, New York 1982, p. 77.

⁷⁹ Ludwig / Molmenti 1906 (note 76), pp. 100–106. As attested by Pompeo Molmenti in his “Introduzione”, *ibid.*, pp. XI–XVI, here p. XVI, Ludwig had been able to follow, right up to the production of the proofs, chapters I–VI

of the book, comprising the part of the Scuola di Sant’Orsola, which must therefore be ascribed to him.

⁸⁰ Inv. no. 7830, Carpaccio, *Return of the English Ambassadors*, Naya photograph no. 549.

⁸¹ A fourth photograph which must have completed the sequence with a view of the right wall has been lost.

⁸² *Jahresbericht 1904/05* (note 57), p. 3.

⁸³ Molmenti 1906 (note 79), p. XVI.

⁸⁴ *Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz. Jahresbericht 1905/06*, p. 4.

showing some apertures (one door, two windows and an oculus), are glued photographs of the individual scenes of Carpaccio's cycle. In the same box we find a Naya photograph representing one of the scenes of the cycle, in a format of 26 x 20 cm:⁸⁰ if photographs of the same format had been used for the *maquette*, one could then reconstruct its approximate internal measurements as c. 80 x 30 cm. As shown by comparison with the other two images, the long walls of the wooden *maquette* could evidently be dismantled so as to permit different views to be realized either in cross-section (87153, with a view of the altar wall, fig. 8), or in perspective, showing the entrance wall combined either with the right wall (87154) or with the left wall of the chapel (87152, fig. 9).⁸¹

As already stated, the three photographs of the *maquette* present neither stamps nor inscriptions that associate them with Ludwig, but their belonging to the group of Ludwig's working photographs for the Sant'Orsola cycle cannot be in doubt as demonstrated by comparison with the others (not least the veining of the wood of the *maquette* can be observed on 87152 and 87154, and its traces are also visible on 59348 and 59349). The Ludwig bequest to the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, announced in the KHI annual report for 1904–1905 (May 1905)⁸² and noted in Pompeo Molmenti's Introduction to Ludwig's posthumous book on Carpaccio (August 1905),⁸³ entered the Institute between 1905 and 1906.⁸⁴ But it was not inventoried immediately, but in consecutive batches. The some 2500 photographs of the bequest—to which were added others donated by Gustav Ludwig to the KHI before his death—were inventoried from 1908 on, as attested by the inventory books of the *Photothek*. The largest group was registered in 1908; these photographs are distinguished by a stamp "Dr. Gustav Ludwigs / Vermächtnis 1905" on the mount (sometimes on the recto, sometimes on the verso). Some smaller groups, which were not inventoried at this time probably for reasons linked to the internal organization of the *Photothek*, were only inventoried much later, during the 1920s, as gradually old accumulations of photographs were processed and made available for consultation. Some of the photographs discussed here belonged to this group; they were inventoried respectively on 10 November 1929 (59348, 59349) and 7 May 1930 (64279, 64280); their provenance from the Ludwig bequest is marked not by a stamp but by



8 Probably Tomaso Filippi (photographer), reconstruction of the Sant'Orsola cycle with wooden model, albumen print, c. 1904. Mounting board: 24 x 34 cm, photograph: 19.5 x 25.5 cm. Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, inv. no. 87153



9 Probably Tomaso Filippi (photographer), reconstruction of the Sant'Orsola cycle with wooden model, albumen print, c. 1904. Mounting board: 24 x 34 cm, photograph: 17.5 x 23 cm. Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, inv. no. 87152

handwritten inscriptions. The handwriting of Ulrich Middeldorf, then in charge of the *Photothek* (1928–1935) and subsequently Director of the KHI (1953–1968), can be recognized in them, as in all the other inscriptions and captions placed on the mounts of the seven photographs in question.⁸⁵ The knowledge of the provenance of the residual photographs from the Ludwig bequest seems at some point to have been lost, with the result that numbers 87152, 87153 and 87154 representing the *maquette* were not inventoried until 14 January 1933 with the only indication of provenance “Alter Bestand” (“old holdings”): the term denoted the backlog of photographs that had accumulated during the first years in the life of the *Photothek* and implied that the ongoing work of inventorying and classification could only proceed bit by bit, constrained as it was by a shortage of personnel.

This would explain the absence of any reference to the Ludwig bequest on these latter photographs, though there can be no doubt that they belong to the series. The whole process can be hypothetically reconstructed as follows.

Probably, after having made the *maquette*—perhaps in the photographer’s studio, to which we shall return—and having glued the photographs to it in the sequence corresponding to his hypothetical reconstruction of the cycle, Ludwig had it photographed from several salient points of view, resulting in

⁸⁵ Tempestini 1996 (note 57), p. 249; Hubert 1997 (note 54), p. 47. Middeldorf was the first assistant explicitly designated to run the *Photothek*; hitherto the photo

archive had been staffed by volunteers, and even after his appointment the task of assisting the *fototecario* was performed on a part-time basis by fellows of the Institute.

the albumen photographic prints with the numbers 87152, 87153 and 87154 (plus at least one other that has since been lost), that must have served him as verification. The next step in the process was that of the gelatine silver prints (59348, 59349, 64279, 64280), on thicker paper, and not glossy like that of the albumen prints, and hence suitable for being completed by wash drawing. Presumably, these were produced by working on the same negative plates, masking the dark parts with paper cut-outs and retouching by hand, at least in part on the positive, some details such as the entrance door. In this way the basis was laid for the drawings reconstructing the interior of the chapel.

The process, however, did not end here: photographs 59348 and 59349, combinations of photograph and drawing, were reproduced in the photomechanical technique of half-tone print. They were used to illustrate the chapter of Ludwig's book that is dedicated to the Sant'Orsola cycle.⁸⁶ In fact, if we examine the card mounts of 59348 and 59349, we will discern in them, in Ludwig's handwriting, traces of instructions for the printer: to the left of the photograph, better visible on 59348, "Si può tagliare via qualche cm in alto" ("a few cm can be cut along the top edge"), and to the right "120". The corresponding figure published in the book of 1906 is cut exactly in the way indicated and is 120 millimetres in height (fig. 10).⁸⁷

These two photographs, in contrast to all the others, are laid on two stiffer and smaller card mounts, cream in color, which differ from those (typical of the *Photothek*) slightly larger and pale green in color, on which all the other of the series are mounted—like the majority of the photographs in our collection. The cream-colored card mounts of 59348 and 59349 must therefore have been the original mounts on which the photographs were laid at the time they were produced, as also confirmed by the above-cited inscriptions relating to the format of their publication. All the other photographs of the series must have arrived at the KHI as loose images and were only later laid on the *Photothek's* usual card mounts.



10 Plate in front of p. 118 from Gustav Ludwig / Pompeo Molmenti, *Vittore Carpaccio: la vita e le opere*, Milan 1906, half-tone print

⁸⁶ Ludwig / Molmenti 1906 (note 76), the two plates are reproduced between pp. 118 and 119. On the technique of the half-tone print see Peters 2007 (note 10).

⁸⁷ For the transcription and interpretation of these inscriptions, I am indebted to Raffaella Marchitello.

The group of photographs presented here, of which the card mounts, stamps, inscriptions etc. are an integral part, represent an extraordinary case because they provide us with a rare glimpse into the mental and visual ‘laboratory’ of the art historian and an opportunity to reconstruct his daily routine, exceptionally well documented by the fortunate preservation of the many stages in the intellectual, but also manual—almost handicraft-like—process that underpinned Ludwig’s elucidation of the Sant’Orsola cycle (including the making of a three-dimensional wooden model of the chapel). It is a particularly interesting case because here the use of photography is directly linked to a precise art-historical enquiry: with the aim of reconstructing the sequence of Carpaccio’s cycle, Ludwig abstracted the canvases from the walls of the museum and restored them—virtually at least—to their original spatial and functional context. This operation occurred in a crucial moment of the museological history of the Carpaccio cycle: a few years earlier, in 1895, as part of a radical reorganization of the Gallerie dell’Accademia carried out by the director Giulio Cantalamessa under the aegis of Adolfo Venturi, the Sant’Orsola cycle had been hung in a prominent position in a specially constructed octagonal room,⁸⁸ reminiscent of the famous Tribuna in the Uffizi. Ludwig, a personal friend of Cantalamessa,⁸⁹ though he appreciated the efforts made by the latter to reunite all the scenes of the cycle, declared his disagreement with its arrangement in the new museum display.⁹⁰ His own reconstruction was based on the necessary congruence between the real sources of light in the chapel and those privileged by the artist within the painted scenes, as well as on a meticulous attempt to reproduce the “point of view”, the sequential view of the pictorial cycle by a visitor who walked around the interior of the chapel.⁹¹ We can be certain that the three-dimensional wooden model served him to represent not only the final result of his reconstruction, but also the intermediate phases of what must have been an elaborate process. It is not hard to imagine him gluing the photographs in various sequences, in various combinations, until he had achieved a reconstruction that fulfilled all his hypothetical assumptions. Ludwig, indeed, adopted this same approach, aimed at the re-contextualization of works of art, or reconstructing the sequence in which they were originally hung, in other projects, such as his research on the fresco cycle in the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi in Venice. It must have been a fairly innovative approach at the time,⁹² and may well have reflected, or complemented, the innovative museum display (aimed at re-integrating ensembles of works of art) introduced by Wilhelm Bode in the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum in Berlin (completed in 1904).⁹³ This seems all the more plausible since Bode and Ludwig frequently corresponded with each other.⁹⁴ But, more importantly, the group of photographs presented here also corresponds to a real shift in the way photography was used as a tool of art history: after the first generations of art historians had exploited the decontextualization of works of art that the introduction of photography had permitted, or even encouraged, now the same tool was used in quite the opposite sense, as a way of re-contextualizing works of art and reconstructing the context in which they had originally been displayed.⁹⁵ Not only paintings, but photographs were re-situated in space and in history.

⁸⁸ Giovanna Nepi Scirè, *Le Gallerie dell’Accademia Venezia*, Roma 1994, p. 13 and figs. 8–9. On Cantalamessa cf. the contribution of Giulio Manieri Elia in the present volume.

⁸⁹ Molmenti 1906 (note 79), p. XV.

⁹⁰ Ludwig / Molmenti 1906 (note 76), p. 118.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 118–120. See also Gaier 2005 (note 74), p. 152.

⁹² *Ibid.*, in particular p. 149.

⁹³ See Tilmann von Stockhausen, *Gemäldegalerie Berlin. Die Geschichte ihrer Erwerbungspolitik 1830–1904*, Berlin 2000, p. 196.

⁹⁴ Gaier 2005 (note 74). It cannot be excluded that this contact between the two art historians had been established by the common link of both of them with the Kunsthis-

torisches Institut in Florenz. Ludwig had been a member of the association of friends of the Institute at least since 1902 (cf. *Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz. Jahresbericht 1902/03*, p. 8) and in 1903/04 was reported among the members of the *Ortsausschuss* together with the director Heinrich Brockhaus and Aby Warburg, among others (*Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz. Jahresbericht 1903/04*, p. 3). The annual report for 1905/06 opens with the news of Ludwig’s death (*Jahresbericht 1905/06* [note 85], p. 6). On Bode’s links with the KHI see Hubert 1997 (note 54).

⁹⁵ I am indebted for this observation to Dorothea Peters whom I would like to thank warmly here.



11 Gustav Ludwig, altarpiece with the Passion of Christ now attributed to Antonio Vivarini, photo collage, probably 1895–1896. Mounting board: 43.5 x 65.5 cm, photograph altogether: 20.5 x 58.5 cm. Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, inv. no. 7439

One question regarding the Ludwig *Nachlass* still remains: that of the 'author' of the photographs, or rather of the authors, if we accept the idea that the photographer is not the only person implicated in the formation of the photographic document.⁹⁶ In our case the photographs, whose author or authors we would like to trace, exist on at least two levels: the photographs glued in the *maquette* and the photographs of the *maquette* in its various versions, i.e. those materially preserved in the *Photothek* in Florence.

Let us begin with the second group. Gustav Ludwig had mastered the technique of photography at least since his period of training in Vienna, whither he had moved in 1895, having abandoned London and the medical profession he had hitherto practiced.⁹⁷ In Vienna, apart from the art-historical courses given by Theodor Frimmel, he had also attended courses of photography at the *Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt für Photographie und Reproduktionsverfahren*,⁹⁸ where he was able not only to acquire purely technical expertise, but also to participate in an experimental climate aimed at the application of photographic processes to scientific research.⁹⁹ He also possessed a "large" camera equipped with telephoto

⁹⁶ Schwartz 1995 (note 42), pp. 47–48.

⁹⁷ For all the biographical details, Gaier 2005 (note 74).

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 140. A chapter of the research project of the Albertina in Vienna on Josef Maria Eder is dedicated to the *Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt für Photographie und Reproduktionsverfahren*, cf. Maren Gröning / Ulrike Matzer, "Josef Maria Eder (1855–1944): Eine fotografiehistorische Monografie. Ein Forschungsprojekt an der Alber-

tina, Wien", in: *Rundbrief Fotografie*, 16/3, N.F. 63 (September 2009), pp. 12–17.

⁹⁹ Cfr. Monika Faber, "Josef Maria Eder und die wissenschaftliche Fotografie 1855–1918", in: Monika Faber / Klaus Albrecht Schröder (eds.), *Das Auge und der Apparat. Eine Geschichte der Fotografie aus den Sammlungen der Albertina*, Paris 2003, pp. 142–169.

lens, which he donated to the KHI as part of the bequest he made to the Institute in his last will.¹⁰⁰ Among the photographs donated by him to the KHI there is at least one that is specified in the inventory book as taken by Ludwig himself (fig. 11):¹⁰¹ in this case too it is a collage reconstructing an altarpiece with stories of the Passion of Christ attributed by Ludwig to Michele Lambertini (Michele di Matteo da Bologna), an attribution later corrected on the mount to “Scuola dei Vivarini”. Since the painting, now in the Ca’ d’Oro in Venice, had been preserved in the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Vienna until 1919,¹⁰² it is reasonable to assume that Ludwig had photographed it *in situ* during his period of study in the Habsburg capital, and indeed the photograph in question testifies to insufficient lighting conditions, compatible with a campaign conducted with advanced but not professional apparatus.

In view of all this, one would be tempted to see in Ludwig not only the author of the reconstructed sequence of Carpaccio’s cycle of Sant’Orsola and the inventor of the three-dimensional *maquette* constructed to accommodate it, but also the photographer of the images preserved in the *Photothek*. But this temptation is immediately dismissed by the stamp on the verso of the mount of 59349, i.e. the original card on which this photograph was laid: “TOMASO FILIPPI / FOTOGRAFO / Venezia—S. Marco N. 6[1]” (fig. 12).¹⁰³ After having long directed the Naya photographic establishment, Tomaso Filippi had opened his own studio in 1895.¹⁰⁴ Up until 1907—the same period that Ludwig was present in Venice—Filippi’s studio was in Piazza San Marco, Procuratie Nuove 61, hence in the immediate vicinity of the “Cappello Nero”, the modest hotel where Ludwig was staying, often confined to bed by the illness that led to his premature death.¹⁰⁵ The Ludwig *Nachlass* in the *Photothek* contains numerous details of the Sant’Orsola cycle photographed by Filippi.¹⁰⁶ If Filippi was the photographer of 59349 (as its stamp claims), it is reasonable to assume he was also the photographer of 59348 (same subject, same technique, identical mount) and of 64279 and 64280 (same subject, same technique). It is almost automatic to extend, by comparison, his authorship to the photographs of the previous phase, 87152, 87153, and 87154.

The reference to Tomaso Filippi also provides us with a clue to identify the photographs used in the *maquette* for the collage on wood: in Ludwig’s time, a complete photographic documentation of the Sant’Orsola cycle was offered, according to the catalogues, by at least two agencies, Naya¹⁰⁷ and Brogi.¹⁰⁸ Since Filippi had long been linked to the Naya firm, we can hypothetically assume that photographs of this famous Venetian photographic agency were used in the reconstruction. The presence, in the same box of the *Photothek*, of one of Naya’s photographs, also with a provenance from the Ludwig *Nachlass*, could corroborate this hypothesis.¹⁰⁹

If Naya and Filippi may be seen respectively as the photographer of the Sant’Orsola photographs and of the collage in the wooden *maquette*, there is no doubt that the creator of the series of images and of the mixed reconstructive technique that provides their basis (*maquette*, photographs, drawing) was

¹⁰⁰ *Jahresbericht 1904/05* (note 57), p. 3. As mentioned in Bähr 1999 (note 56), p. 369 and note 83, the Ludwig *Nachlass* also included some technical publications on photography, now identified by Raffaella Marchitello, which are found in the photography section of the Library of the KHI.

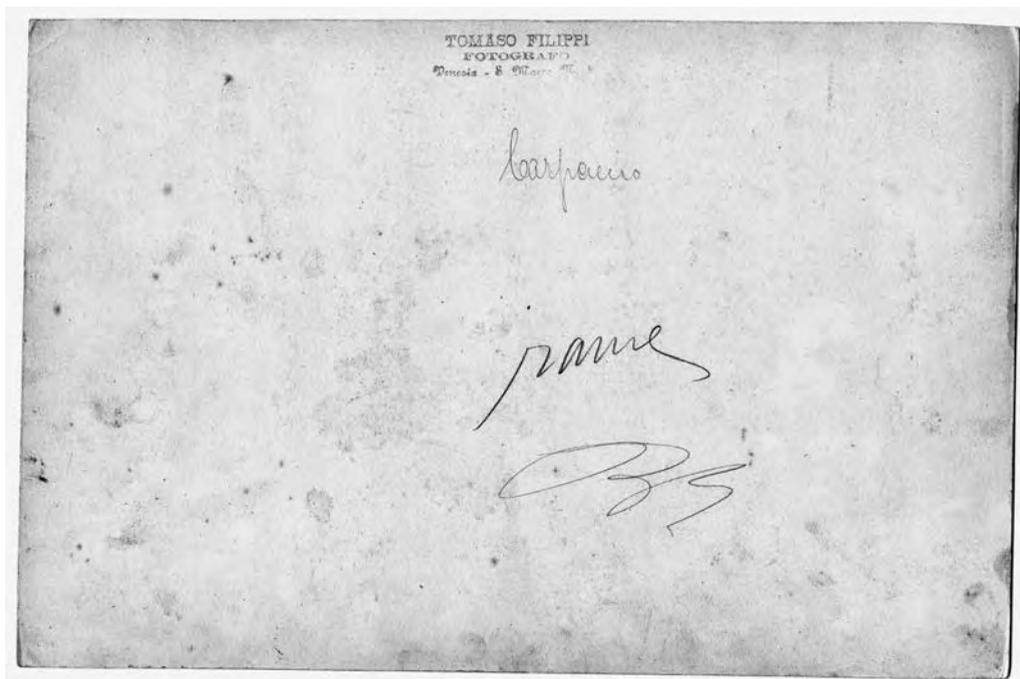
¹⁰¹ Inv. no. 7439, large format, inventoried in 1908.

¹⁰² The polyptych, transferred from Venice to Vienna in 1838 (cf. Gustav Ludwig, “Dokumente über Bildersendungen von Venedig nach Wien in den Jahren 1816 und 1838 aus dem Archivio di Stato zu Venedig”, in: *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, 22 [1901], pp. I–XL), was re-

turned in 1919: Gino Fogolari / Ugo Nebbia / Vittorio Moschini, *La R. Galleria Giorgio Franchetti alla Ca’ d’Oro: guida-catalogo*, Venice 1929, p. 88. If we follow the instruction “Wenden!”, “Please turn over”, inscribed on the mount, we will discover on the verso a bibliographic reference to Theodor von Frimmel, *Geschichte der Wiener Gemäldesammlungen*, part IV, Leipzig / Berlin 1901, for the attribution to Michele Lambertini. The current attribution is to Antonio Vivarini (Francesco Valcanover, *Ca’ d’Oro: la Galleria Giorgio Franchetti*, Milan 1986, p. 17 and fig. on p. 15).

¹⁰³ On the verso of the mount is also placed the inscription “Rame”, referring to the technique to be used to

Ludwig himself. Not least thanks to his training at the *Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt für Photographie und Reproduktionsverfahren* in Vienna, he possessed not only the necessary familiarity with photographic techniques, but also a creative approach in the use of photography for scientific purposes.¹¹⁰ Photographs, for Ludwig, seem to contain not just the objects they reproduce, but also the results of his studies: not only the images of the works of art on which he was working, but also the visual corroboration of his art-historical theories. And so, as Molmenti recounts, although on Ludwig's death only a few scattered notes remained of the chapters still to be written for his book on Carpaccio, it was possible notwithstanding to complete it precisely because the photographs had remained: these, forming part of the Ludwig *Nachlass* at the KHI, were placed at Molmenti's disposal by the Institute and permitted him to complete the missing chapters.¹¹¹



12 Verso of inv. no. 59349 (here fig. 3) with stamp

make the requisite plate. This same inscription, but not Filippi's stamp, is found on the verso of the mount of 59348. On the interpretation of the inscriptions see note 88.

¹⁰⁴ Daniele Resini (ed.), *Tomaso Filippi fotografo. Venezia fra Ottocento e Novecento* (exhibition cat. Venice 2000–2001), Venice 2000. As well as for Ludwig and Molmenti, Filippi worked on commission for other important art historians such as Berenson and Venturi.

¹⁰⁵ Gaier 2005 (note 74), pp. 132–136.

¹⁰⁶ Inv. nos. 22785, 59351–59360, 64281.

¹⁰⁷ *Catalogue général des photographies publiées par C. Naya*, Venice [prior to 1897], p. 22, cat. nos. 533, 537,

539, 542, 544, 546, 549, 554, 560. Cf. Italo Zannier, *Venezia: archivio Naya*, Venice 1981.

¹⁰⁸ *Catalogue des reproductions en photographie publiées par la maison Giacomo Brogi*, Florence 1903, p. 137, cat. nos. 11833–11840.

¹⁰⁹ Inv. no. 7830, Carpaccio, *Return of the English Ambassadors*, Naya photograph no. 549.

¹¹⁰ It has not yet been possible to establish whether the drawn parts of the reconstruction were done by Ludwig himself or are the work of a professional draughtsman.

¹¹¹ Molmenti 1906 (note 79), p. XVI; and also *Jahresbericht 1904/05* (note 57), p. 3.

Let me add, finally, a brief note on the dating of this group of photographs. Ludwig had long devoted his attention to Carpaccio, on whom he had published one of his first papers in 1897.¹¹² In 1901 he had admitted to Jean Paul Richter that “the Sant’Orsola cycle had already hung round his neck for ages”,¹¹³ but the images in which he proposed his reconstruction do not yet appear in the first book of Ludwig and Molmenti on the Sant’Orsola cycle, published in 1903.¹¹⁴ The project for the more comprehensive publication on Carpaccio, only published after his death, took shape between the end of 1903 and the beginning of 1904.¹¹⁵ When Ludwig died on 16 January 1905, the proofs for the first part of the book, comprising the chapters on the Sant’Orsola cycle, had already been corrected.¹¹⁶ So the *maquette*, photographs and drawings can, with some measure of confidence, be dated to 1904.

“Please turn over!”

“A photograph is always invisible: it is not it that we see.”¹¹⁷ Can we subscribe to this well-known assertion of Roland Barthes when faced by a photograph like 59349? I don’t think so. In the previous pages we soon abandoned the observation of the pure visual content of our photographs, in order to consider them as material objects. Conditioned of course by my art-historical background, we have explored only some of the potential lines of enquiry, but enough to suggest that all photographs can tell us more if we don’t restrict ourselves to observing them from afar, but literally take them in our hand and recognize their materiality. The *material turn* that has characterized studies on photography in recent years has promoted a consideration of photographs not just as two-dimensional images, but as three-dimensional objects that exist in a spatial and temporal dimension, in social and cultural contexts.¹¹⁸ We have primarily considered the materiality of photographs as products of a particular photographic technique, with particular chemical and physical properties, printed with a particular process on a particular type of paper, and so on. And we have considered the materiality of their form of presentation, in our case the card mounts with their stamps and inscriptions and the boxes and folders in which they are contained. We have posed questions about the processes linked to their commission, execution, diffusion, use, conservation, disposal and recycling. Above all, we have tried to reconstruct the context and aims of their production.¹¹⁹ This, however, cannot be understood as a single act of creation, which, in our case, occurred around 1904, because photographs, and in particular art historical

¹¹² Gustav Ludwig, “Vittore Carpaccio I. La Scuola degli Albanesi in Venezia”, in: *Archivio storico dell’arte*, II/3 (1897), pp. 405–431.

¹¹³ “Die heilige Ursula hängt mir schon ellenlang zum Hals heraus”, Ludwig to Jean Paul Richter, 28 December 1901, cited by Gaier 2005 (note 74), p. 153 and note 60.

¹¹⁴ Pompeo Molmenti / Gustav Ludwig, *Vittore Carpaccio et la Confrérie de Sainte Ursule à Venise*, Florence 1903.

¹¹⁵ See a letter of Ludwig to Bode of 7 January 1904, cited by Gaier 2005 (note 74), p. 152, note 58.

¹¹⁶ See *supra* note 79.

¹¹⁷ Barthes 1982 (note 78), p. 6.

¹¹⁸ On the materiality of photographs see Geoffrey Batchen, *Photography’s Objects*, Albuquerque 1997; Elizabeth Edwards, “Photographs as Objects of Memory”, in: Marius Kwint / Christopher Breward / Jeremy Aynsley (eds.), *Material Memories*, Oxford 1999, pp. 221–236;

Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology and Museums*, Oxford / New York 2001; Geoffrey Batchen, *Forget Me Not: Photography and Remembrance*, Princeton 2004; Edwards / Hart 2004 (note 70), here in particular the “Introduction. Photographs as objects”, pp. 1–15.

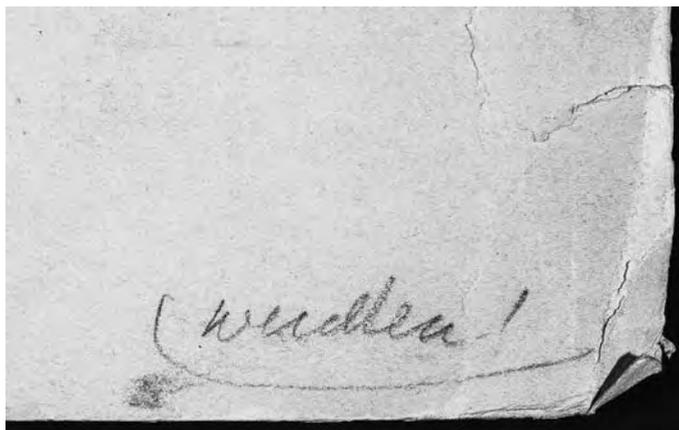
¹¹⁹ See also Schwartz 1995 (note 42), especially pp. 42–52.

¹²⁰ See also Robin E. Kelsey, *Archive style: photographs & illustrations for US surveys, 1850–1890*, Berkeley / Los Angeles / London 2007, here pp. 10–11.

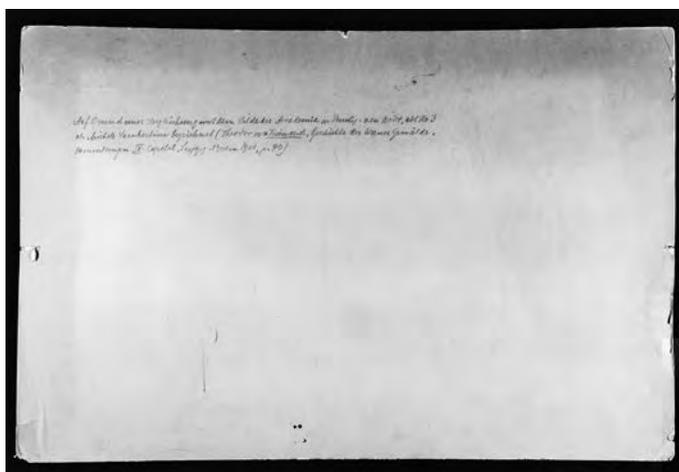
¹²¹ See especially Elizabeth Edwards / Janice Hart, “Mixed box: the cultural biography of a box of ‘ethnographic’ photographs”, in: Elizabeth Edwards / Janice Hart (eds.), *Photographs Objects Histories. On the Materiality of Images*, London / New York 2004, pp. 47–61.

¹²² Caraffa 2011 (note 56).

¹²³ Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, *Experiment, Differenz, Schrift:*



13 Detail of inv. no. 7439 (here fig. 11) with inscription



14 Verso of inv. no. 7439 with inscription

survey photographs, don't have a single, definite date of birth, but are characterized by various stages of production.¹²⁰ In other words, photographs as material objects have a biography, or rather several biographies.¹²¹ One of them was played out on Ludwig's desk and sickbed, and in the studio of the photographer Filippi. It tells us about art-historical practices in the early years of the twentieth century. But our group of photographs has also experienced other biographies: posthumously in the hands of Molmenti, intent on completing Ludwig's book on Carpaccio, and then within the *Photothek*, where they were inventoried in successive batches, catalogued, collected more or less casually in the box of the Sant'Orsola cycle, and finally 'rediscovered' and provisionally placed in a separate folder in the room dedicated to our special collections. They will also have other biographies in future, beginning with the *Photothek's* new arrangement for historical photographs still in its study phase as part of the *Cimelia Photographica* project,¹²² subject, as ever, to the need to strike the right balance between the requirements of consultation and of conservation. Photographs, "epistemic things",¹²³ have not one, but mul-

multiple meanings: for Ludwig, for the art historian who happened to come across them by chance while seeking ‘good’ and ‘reliable’ images in the box on Carpaccio and the Scuola di Sant’Orsola, for the scholars who have been able to examine them with new eyes in recent months, and for me who is using them here for other purposes, scientific, historiographical, epistemological, programmatic, even political. And I myself will give to them yet another meaning by using them occasionally to present the *Photothek* to visiting VIPs—whether fellow-scholars or representatives of the bureaucratic and political world—who, for various reasons, need to be briefed about our research potential.

Not least, even the very act of looking at a photograph is a material act, which is not performed just with the eyes, but with gestures, with movements of hands and body:¹²⁴ for example, by taking hold of the card mount and moving the photograph under the light; or, as suggested by Ludwig himself on the mount of photograph 7439, by turning it over (“wenden!”) to be able to read on the verso another inscription that explains to us whence comes the information reported on the recto (figs. 13–14).¹²⁵

Photographs, objects, documents

We have already established, for the *Photothek* and for similar photo collections, ‘the importance of being a photo archive’.¹²⁶ It is in this archive that a substantial part of the biography of our photographs as objects has been (and will be) transacted, and it is here we have been able to reconstruct the context and intentions of their production. We have also treated the photographs in the archive as documents,¹²⁷ not just of the works of art that are ‘documented’ in them, but also of the history of research on Carpaccio, of the activities of the photographer Filippi and of the methods of classification of the *Photothek*: documents that archives and archivists do not just preserve, but constantly create and recreate, adding further stamps and inscriptions to their mounts or placing them in one box rather than another, cataloguing them or not, including them or not in digitalization programmes.¹²⁸ Photographs as objects, photographs as documents: these two approaches, which lead in much the same direction, may retrospectively find a common cultural root in the theories of documentation formulated by Paul Otlet around 1930 and developed by Suzanne Briet after the Second World War.

In his *Traité de documentation* (1934) the Belgian Paul Otlet, father of the science of documentation,¹²⁹ proposed a definition of document aimed at overcoming the traditional identification—common to all the archival disciplines¹³⁰—between document and pure text: “un support d’une certaine matière et dimension, éventuellement d’un certain pliage ou enroulement sur lequel sont portés des

zur Geschichte epistemischer Dinge, Marburg/L. 1992; id., *Toward a history of epistemic things : synthesizing proteins in the test tube*, Stanford/CA 1997.

¹²⁴ Edwards / Hart 2004 (note 70), p. 5.

¹²⁵ See *supra* notes 101–102.

¹²⁶ The title of this paragraph is inspired by the title of Edwards / Hart 2004 (note 70).

¹²⁷ See in particular Schwartz 1995 (note 42), but also the essay by Tiziana Serena in the present volume.

¹²⁸ See *supra* notes 63, 118 and also Edwards / Hart 2004, “Mixed box” (note 121).

¹²⁹ On Paul Otlet (1868–1944) see W. Boyd Rayward, *The Universe of Information: the Work of Paul Otlet for Documentation and International Organization*, Moscow

1975; also Françoise Levie, *L’homme qui voulait classer le monde. Paul Otlet et le Mundaneum*, Bruxelles 2008.

¹³⁰ See especially Schwartz 2002 (note 63).

¹³¹ Paul Otlet, *Traité de documentation. Le livre sur le livre. Théorie et pratique*, Bruxelles 1934, p. 43. See also *International Organisation and Dissemination of Knowledge. Selected Essays of Paul Otlet*, transl. by W. Boyd Rayward, Amsterdam 1990.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ W. Boyd Rayward (ed.), *European Modernism and the Information Society. Informing the Present, Understanding the Past*, Aldershot / Burlington/VT 2008.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 199–200.

signes représentatifs de certaines données intellectuelles“, is a document. This definition thus comprises not just books, journals, articles, but also diagrams, patents, statistics and non-textual documents such as phonographic records, films—and photographs.¹³¹ Otlet's attention to the material aspects of the document (paper, surface, mount, measurements) was combined with his definition of documents as a whole as “Mémoire matérialisée de l'Humanité”.¹³²

Otlet, who together with Henri La Fontaine had formulated the Universal Decimal Classification System, thought in “bibliological” terms, to use his own term, and his ideas and his career must be placed in the context of the modernist ideology of the early twentieth century.¹³³ Yet the *Traité* is full of interesting ideas for our discourse on the status of photographs as objects *and* as documents, beginning with his observation that the document or “biblion” may be considered both as content and as container.¹³⁴ Otlet explicitly considered photographs as documents and underlined their peculiar “objectivité mécanique”, recurring to the time-honoured *topos* of the impartiality of photography and the superiority of the camera to the human eye.¹³⁵ He also pointed out that photography is a form of documentation since it is able not only to *reproduce* but also to *produce* documents.¹³⁶ Otlet among other things contributed to the development and diffusion of microfilm, a technique of documentation based on his own definition of photography as “le seul procédé capable de faire une copie véritable”.¹³⁷ He was also the co-founder of the Institut International de Photographie in Brussels (1905), a universal archive of documentary photography connected with the Mundaneum, his utopian project for a universal archive-library.¹³⁸ His interest in photography and his applications of the photographic technique are worth further examination.

The second generation of theoreticians of documentation is epitomized by Suzanne Briet, who summed up decades of practical and theoretical activity conducted in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris in her classic study *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?* (1951).¹³⁹ According to Briet, any object that transports information is a document. A star or an animal are not documents; but photographs and catalogues of stars, and animals catalogued in a zoo, are documents.¹⁴⁰ Arguing that “the same book will have different uses in different contexts, e.g. in different research environments”,¹⁴¹ Briet showed a new sensibility for the multiplicity of meanings of the document. On the basis of her own definition, we could read ‘document’ and ultimately ‘photograph’ in place of ‘book’. To the new professional figure of the ‘documentalist’ she assigned a new task: “to prospect and divulge the very diverse means of access to multiform documents, with the means specific to each discipline” and underlining the “power of selection”.¹⁴² Briet thus emphasized the active role of documentalists and explicitly placed their work in the social and cultural context—with words that recall the remarks of Cook and Schwartz on the necessary awareness of the agency of archivists.

¹³⁶ “La photographie élargit le domaine de la documentation non seulement parce qu'elle reproduit des documents, mais parce qu'elle en produit”. Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid. On Otlet's theoretical publications on microfilm see Robert Goldschmidt / Paul Otlet, “Sur une Forme Nouvelle du Livre: le livre microphotographique”, in: *IIB Bulletin*, 12 (1907), pp. 61–69; Paul Otlet, “Livre microphotographique: le Bibliophôte ou Livre à projection”, in: *Bulletin Officiel de l'Union de la Presse Périodique Belge* 20 (September–October 1911), pp. 197–205.

¹³⁸ See Annelies Cousserier, “Archive to Educate. The Musée de Photographie Documentaire and the Institut International de Photographie in Brussels, 1901–1913”, in: *Photography & Culture* (2011) (forthcoming).

¹³⁹ Suzanne Briet, *What Is Documentation? English Translation of the Classic French Text*, ed. and transl. by Ronald E. Day / Laurent Martinet, Lanham / Toronto / Oxford 2006. On Suzanne Briet (1894–1989) see Ronald E. Day, “‘A Necessity of Our Time’: Documentation as ‘Cultural Technique’ in *What Is Documentation?*”, *ibid.*, pp. 47–63.

¹⁴⁰ Briet 2006 (note 139), pp. 10–11, where the process of production of documents from the primary document at various secondary levels is explained by the famous example of the antelope.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁴² Ibid., respectively p. 29 and p. 32. Briet and Otlet are also important because of their emphasis on the technological implications of documentation.

Classification

“From the first step, that of classification, Photography evades us.”¹⁴³ Apart from the selection and appraisal of documents, classification and cataloguing are particularly important among the activities in which the active role of archivists is expressed.¹⁴⁴ Each operation of classification must come to terms with inevitable simplifications. It therefore continues to be to some extent arbitrary, even if performed in the most conscientious and reliable of institutions. I would like to draw another example from the historical reality of the *Photothek* in Florence. The classification scheme used in the *Photothek* has been in operation at least since c. 1910,¹⁴⁵ if not since the foundation of the KHI in 1897. And that scheme is still respected even in the physical arrangement of the boxes, subdivided by sections in the rooms of the *Photothek*. The first criterion that defines the taxonomic units is the genre of art (e.g. painting, sculpture), within which the photographs are arranged by major periods of art (e.g. Gothic, Renaissance) and then in alphabetical order by artist. As far as architecture is concerned, the photographs are arranged according to topographical criteria within the subdivision by periods. The photographs of Michelangelo’s works, for example, are thus distributed between the different genres of art. Today, however, the placement of an artist in one period rather than another often causes problems. A taxonomic order of this kind evidently responded to objectives (e.g. a conception of art history divided into discrete epochs in which artists and works of art are arranged in strict chronological order) that are now obsolete and have themselves become a topic for research in the historiography of art history.

Like every classification system, ours too is based on conventions, and conventions are always reductive. In the *Photothek*, for example, the convention that defines the Renaissance takes into consideration artists born between 1400 and 1599. In an institute with a traditional focus on Renaissance studies and Tuscan art, such a convention must soon have appeared too rigid. So Masolino da Panicale, for instance, has been placed in the Renaissance, in spite of his birth in 1383. The Baroque period is delimited by dates of birth comprised between 1600 and 1775, with the result that in the *Photothek* Antonio Canova (born in 1757) is found in the section of Baroque sculpture: in this case, since this is a field of study long considered marginal in the KHI, no one has felt the need to establish an exception to the rule, and this rather absurd classification has by now become part of the tradition and history of our photo archive. It has even been preserved following the recent transfer of the *Photothek* to its new seat in the Palazzo Grifoni, as an integral part of the open shelf system of access and consultation.¹⁴⁶

We have explained where Masolino and Canova are situated in the *Photothek*, but of course we ought to have said that it is the *photographs* representing the works of Masolino and Canova that are situated there. Where, on the other hand, are the photographs coming from the Ludwig *Nachlass* placed? As

¹⁴³ The complete sentence is: “From the first step, that of classification (we must surely classify, verify by samples, if we want to constitute a corpus), Photography evades us.” Barthes 1982 (note 78), p. 4, also commented in Tim Schlak, “Framing photographs, denying archives: the difficulty of focusing on archival photographs”, in: *Archival Science: International Journal on Recorded Information*, 8 (2008), pp. 85–101, here p. 85.

¹⁴⁴ See especially Cook 2009 (note 63).

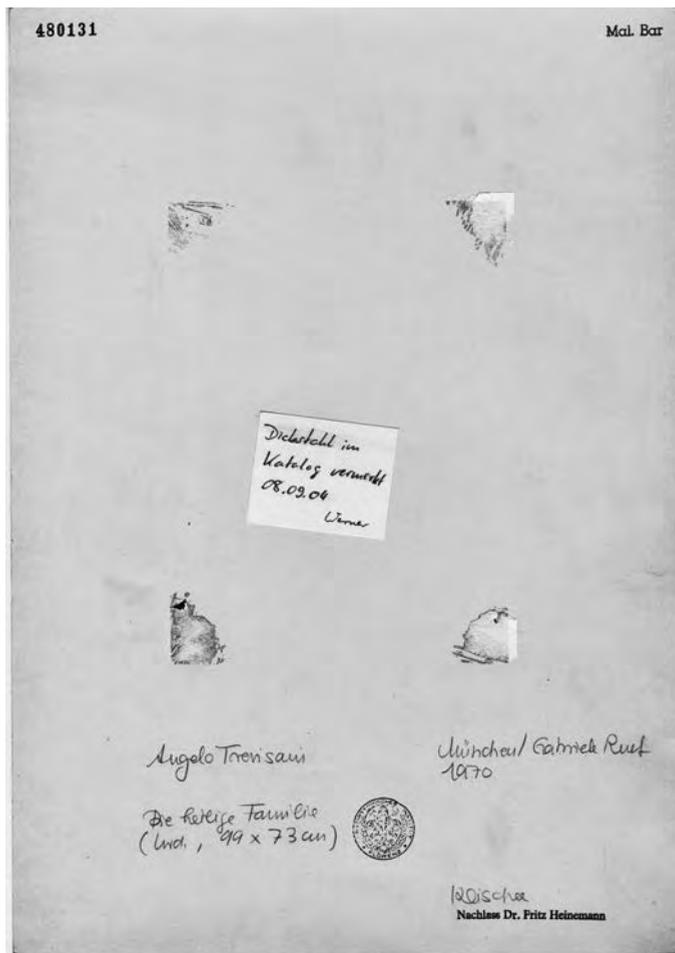
¹⁴⁵ “Führer durch die Bibliothek und die Abbildungs-Sammlung des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz”, in: *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 5 (1910), pp. 187–209.

¹⁴⁶ See <http://www.khi.fi.it/en/photothek/grifoni/index.html> (20 March 2011).

¹⁴⁷ The reconstruction of the sequence of the stories of St Ursula in their original location as proposed by Ludwig was revived by the next Director of the Gallerie dell’Accademia, Gino Fogolari, on the occasion of the rearrangement of the museum in 1921–1923, cf. Nepi Scirè 1994 (note 88), p. 16.

¹⁴⁸ On this problem see especially Schwartz 2002 (note 63).

¹⁴⁹ See *supra* note 142.



15 Mounting board of a stolen photograph from the box "Fehlende Fotos" ("missing photographs"). Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, inv. no. 480131

may be deduced from what we have said above, they are dispersed throughout the entire archive according to their 'subject', i.e. the work of art reproduced in them. So the seven photographs of the *maquette* for the reconstruction of the Scuola di Sant'Orsola are conserved in one of the boxes dedicated to Carpaccio, despite the fact that they document far less Carpaccio's pictorial oeuvre than they do other very interesting aspects, such as the history of the museum display of the Sant'Orsola cycle.¹⁴⁷

And that brings us to one of the fundamental problems of the classification and cataloguing of photographs: the tendency to reduce them to their visual content and therefore to identify them with the 'subject' illustrated—presupposing that it is always possible to say 'what is to be seen' in a photograph (fig. 15). This problem is connected to the current verbal cataloguing standards, which lead to an inevitable loss of meanings in the attempt to reduce the description of the photograph to pre-established thesauri of terms.¹⁴⁸ Above all, if like Briet we feel it is our duty to ensure "the very diverse means of access to multiform documents, with the means specific to each discipline",¹⁴⁹ we ought to take into

consideration not just what is seen ‘at first sight’ in the photograph—whether it be Michelangelo’s *David* or the fragment of a sculpture impossible to identify—but also the stratification of signs, traces and meanings well exemplified by our case study, which by their very nature are likely to escape a verbal catalogographic description.

Such problems concern not only the destiny of photographs in universal archives, like those examined by Schwartz, but also what happens in specialized photo archives like the *Photothek* in Florence. The system of electronic classification and cataloguing introduced here in 1992–1993 emphasizes the characteristics of the taxonomic scheme on which the analog *Photothek* was based, establishing the dependence of each photograph on the work of art that the photograph reproduces. The MIDAS (*Marburger Informations-, Dokumentations- und Administrations-System*) description standard, developed by the Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte, Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, since the 1980s, with special application to documentary photographs of art-historical subjects, prescribes as the documentary unit the work of art or monument, to which the individual photographs that reproduce it are, so to speak, coupled.¹⁵⁰ It is true that for each photograph the database makes available a number of fields in which to indicate the name of photographer, the date when the photograph was taken, the possible donor and so forth; but it is equally true that until recently these fields were seldom compiled, and only in conformity with the need to register the provenance and numbers of the negative with a view to the management of reproductions and other matters relating to copyright. MIDAS is the cataloguing standard most widely used in photo archives in the German-speaking world—so the decision to adopt this standard also involves a linguistic choice and a consequent limitation on the ability of the public to use the information furnished. On the other hand, an ‘international’, i.e. English language, standard would have as its consequence a reduction of linguistic nuances in the descriptive terminology, if placed in the hands of non English-speaking cataloguing staff members. And there is still a long way to go before we achieve a multilingual system, if we observe for example the developments of the *Art & Architecture Thesaurus* (AAT) and other vocabularies developed under the aegis of the Getty Research Institute.¹⁵¹ The files of our card catalogue also present some difficulties of linguistic interpretation, since they were compiled in an idiosyncratic patois of German mixed with technical expressions in Italian. For these and many other questions users of the *Photothek* can draw on the expertise of the assistants in the archive who will help them to search and to decipher; the user of the online database on the other hand, while not obliged to move from home, is otherwise left to his own devices: one of the several reasons why digitalization is not, in itself, a guarantee of access.

In light of these considerations, if we return to the photographs from the Ludwig *Nachlass* relating to Carpaccio’s Sant’Orsola cycle, we must evaluate their insertion or not in the cataloguing machine of the *Photothek* as a result of some very precise, even if not necessarily tendentious decisions. The photographs in our group, in contrast to others in the *Photothek*, do not have a red dot next to the stamp of the inventory number; this indicates that they have not yet been catalogued in the database of the *Photothek*, but only in the already mentioned card catalogue. Our electronic cataloguing is primarily focused on new acquisitions, due to the need to conserve our resources. To these are added only those

¹⁵⁰ Jens Bove / Lutz Heusinger / Angela Kailus, *Marburger Informations-, Dokumentations- und Administrations-System (MIDAS)*, Munich 2001⁴. MIDAS can be used in combination with different forms of software, such as HiDA, MuseumPlus, APS.

¹⁵¹ <http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/aat/about.html> (20 March 2011).

¹⁵² <http://photothek.khi.fi.it>. The entire database, includ-

ing the records without images, can be consulted online through a combined search in the *Bildindex der Kunst und Architektur* (<http://www.bildindex.de>). This separation between illustrated database and cataloguing database also has historical reasons, i.e. the relatively early date when our electronic cataloguing began, at a time when the available software made provision neither for connection with digital images nor publication

of the 'old' photographs that have the same subject as the new accessions: a kind of retrospective cataloguing of old holdings geared to new acquisitions. So, if the photographs of the Scuola di Sant'Orsola from the Ludwig bequest are not electronically catalogued, one may deduce from this fact that after 1993 the *Photothek* has acquired no photograph having as its subject the Sant'Orsola cycle—another interesting piece of information on the history of our acquisitions policy. But an inclusion in the cataloguing database would not *per se* have been enough to give major visibility to the Ludwig photos: our *Digitale Photothek* offers free access online only to records accompanied by a digital image—and the digitalization campaign, for reasons of copyright, is limited to our negatives archive.¹⁵²

Only at the end of 2008, as part of the *Cimelia Photographica* project, did we also begin the high resolution digitalization of those historical photographs in the archive that could, on the basis of the date when they were taken, be considered in the public domain. We developed a digitalization protocol for this project, which provides for the scanning not just of the photographic positive, but of the entire mount, including its verso, if it contains important information.¹⁵³ This practice derives from the recognition of the material nature of photographs, which cannot be reduced to their visual content and hence to their digital image.¹⁵⁴ As regards cataloguing, the new awareness of the epistemological value of documentary photographs immediately came into conflict with the above-mentioned features of the MIDAS standard. Together with our partners of the Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte, Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, and the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome, Max-Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte, we are therefore working on the creation of a new descriptive standard specially geared to documentary photographs. The new model—though it too will not guarantee a solution to all the problems—considers photographs as autonomous objects and not just as the reproductions of something else. It thus places them on the same footing as the works of art they reproduce and permits a more nuanced cataloguing that takes due account of the characteristics of each individual photographic object. On the other hand, for documentary photographs the link with the works of art reproduced will always remain fundamental; while we wish to acquire new users, we certainly do not want to lose the old ones. Soon these new standards will be applied to the photographs from the Ludwig bequest.

Photo archives as places of research

Even if it is not always intended to privilege some collections, or marginalize others, a cataloguing and digitalization policy is never neutral. Acknowledging this confers importance and dignity on the work performed on a daily basis in photo archives. But it also emphasizes the need to gain awareness of the consequences of this work—for the archives themselves and for the scholars that use them. I do not intend to suggest either a cautious immobility or a complete revolution of our practices, subject as they are in any case to budgetary constraints which have to be tackled with the necessary pragmatism. A new awareness of the decisions we take every day is however needed. These decisions should be gen-

online. The *Photothek* of the KHI has since then been working on its project for the electronic retro-conversion of the whole card catalogue, the realization of which should, we hope, begin in 2012.

¹⁵³ See Caraffa 2011 (note 56), the special collection "Cimelia Photographica" in <http://photothek.khi.fi.it> and, for some examples, the online exhibition (<http://expo.khi.fi.it/gallery/cimelia-photographica>).

¹⁵⁴ See *inter alia* Joanna Sassoon, "Photographic Materiality in the Age of Digital Reproduction", in: Elizabeth Edwards / Janice Hart (eds.), *Photographs Objects Histories. On the Materiality of Images*, London / New York 2004, pp. 186–202. See also Marlene Manoff, "The Materiality of Digital Collections: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives", in: *Libraries and the Academy*, 6/3 (2006), pp. 311–325.

erated not automatically (e.g. in launching digitalization campaigns as unavoidable panaceas), but by ideas and projects matured in the best of cases in a fruitful integration between the requirements of archival management and those of research—current and future. That is also the essence of the *Florence Declaration*, a series of recommendations for the preservation of analog photo archives published during the conference held in Florence in October 2009. Starting out from the recognition of the materiality of photographs and photographic archives, it promotes the necessary integration between digital and analog formats.¹⁵⁵ It also proposes some methodological reflections for the ‘good government’ of photo archives in the twenty-first century, so that future generations of scholars may not be confronted with limitations on their research tools and materials, ones which could have been avoided.

This Introduction could have been titled “The Archivist on the Couch”. Yet its aim is not just an exercise in self-analysis. The examples I have taken from the daily life of the *Photothek* in Florence—a case study like many others—have served, rather, to demonstrate the rich epistemological potential of photo archives of reproductions of works of art, in which research can be conducted not only *with* photographs but *on* photographs, as well as on the archive itself. To permit such a potential to be fulfilled, a common sensibility needs to be developed in meetings between scholars and archivists. Such interactions ought not to take place just in privileged circumstances alone (for example seminars and conferences), but must inform all our activities within photo archives. It is on this basis that the necessary reappraisal of the tasks and functions of photo archives should proceed. And it is on this basis that the future of photo archives depends.

¹⁵⁵ <http://www.khi.fi.it/en/photothek/florencedeclaration>.

On Photo Archives

Elizabeth Edwards

Photographs: Material Form and the Dynamic Archive*

The photographic archive—the site of a thousand stereotypes, gathering the dust of a century, a source of fever, a site of taxonomic and self-evident meaning, an ideological performance, an embarrassing legacy of past interpretative and methodological follies.¹ An archive—of photographs—something separate from the dynamic of a discipline, something to be mined when useful, ignored at whim; a mere passive resource, tangential to the main business, a mere supporting role whose significance is defined not through its own identity but through asymmetrical relations with other objects which it serves to confirm in some way or other.² Even language—archive instead of collection—speaks to this. Photographs simply are a passive ‘resource’ activated not through their own force, but through that of the historian and their consequent juxtaposition with other classes of objects.

In this paper, which is very much in the unashamed character of a polemic on the material archive and its potentials, I want to take a broad theoretical and methodological sweep which asks what happens if, as an heuristic position, we stop thinking of photographs and their archives simply as passive ‘resources’ with no identity of their own, but as actively ‘resourceful’—a space of creative intensity, of ingenuity, of latent energy, of rich historical force. How do photograph collections and their archival preservation elicit readings, impose themselves on the embodied experience of the user, shaping their content for the user? What, within this, is the role of the very materiality of the archive, and what are the consequences of its digital translation? Having outlined this position, I shall briefly consider three bodies of work which demonstrate the importance of ‘thinking materially’ within the photographic archive. The first, from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, shows how material concerns

* I should like to thank Costanza Caraffa for inviting me to take part in the original symposium, and thank her and Gillian Grant, Liz Hallam, Clare Harris and Joan Schwartz for their comments and conversations on this topic. They have been immensely helpful.

¹ See for example, Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever*, transl. by Eric Prenowitz, Chicago/IL 1996; Allan Sekula, “The

Body and the Archive”, in: Richard Bolton (ed.), *The Contest of Meaning*, Cambridge 1992, pp. 343–389.

² See Gaby Porter, “Economy of Truth: photography in museums”, in: *Ten.8*, 34 (1989), pp. 20–33; Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Anthropology, Photographs and Museums*, Oxford 2001, pp. 183–207.

were central to the building of an archive. The second is a consideration of Gillian Rose's argument on the affective space of the archive and the production of 'the researcher'. Finally, I shall discuss briefly a digital project which attempted to translate the material saliency of the archive into the digital environment.

My argument draws in particular on theories of material culture from within anthropology, which over recent years have explored the ways in which the material environment, notably things—here photographs, archives—mediate social relations. For, I shall argue, it is in the social relations between people and things, that photographs and archives, as resonant objects, become 'resourceful'. Similar concerns have also emerged in a broader cultural analysis. Notably, in refiguring a vitalist model, W.J.T. Mitchell has famously asked "what do pictures want?" as a means of accounting for "the agency, motivation, autonomy, aura, fecundity or other symptoms that make pictures into 'vital signs'".³ How do such characteristics shape our engagement? What do they desire of us? How do they imprint themselves on our disciplinary actions? This is not a collapse into crude animism on one hand or fetishism on the other, a subjectivising of the photograph or the archive, but to recognise the dynamic relations between persons and things and the social saliency of objects, as Mitchell puts it: "to refine and complicate our estimate of their power and the way it works".⁴ Mieke Bal, too, has called, in a similar way, for the reinvigoration of the object within cultural analysis, in which "objects from the cultural world are opened up to close scrutiny" and in which "an important consequence of the empowerment of objects is that it pleads for a qualified return to the practice of 'close reading' that has gone out of style".⁵ That is, how might one account for the material saliency of an object—such as an archive or a photograph—is returned to analytical prominence.

These questions and positions, and the challenge they pose, are especially pertinent in the consideration of the dynamic material qualities of photographic archives. For it is perhaps significant that our awareness of the material power of the archive emerges at precisely the moment it is under threat, perhaps that flash of memory and history, of awakening consciousness in the moment of danger that Benjamin described.⁶ For the move to a too-often ill-considered or unconsidered digitisation threatens to obliterate historical materialities and formative affect, and install others, because it is important to note here that digital environments are, of course, themselves socio-technical assemblages, with agency, affective and material qualities.⁷ But too often these processes amount to an unconsidered re-scripting of the nature of the archive and the histories which might emerge from it, yet it is these latter, not the analogue archive, which are increasingly presented to scholars as 'the archive'.⁸

What is at stake here is vitally important to the way the tools of a discipline and its practitioners are perceived—whether in art history, history or anthropology—for the historical archive is structured through a series of highly significant material practices. These material practices have been imagined to create a resource, a body of information, without loss of that information, presented in a way to create maximum visibility, and the transmission of information. This is what a resource actually does. But at the same time, the archive, and the individual photographs in it, stand for both the social practices and the processes of a discipline, their shifting assumptions and desire are embedded in it. They con-

³ W.J.T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want? The Loves and Lives of Images*, Chicago 2005, p. 6.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁵ Mieke Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*, Toronto 2002, pp. 8–10.

⁶ Walter Benjamin, "A Thesis on the Philosophy of History", in: Hannah Arendt (ed.), *Illuminations*, London 1992, p. 247.

⁷ For a discussion of these broader issues see, for instance, José van Dijck, *Mediated Memories in the Digital Age*, Stanford 2007.

⁸ See Joanna Sassoon, "Photographic Materiality in the Age of Digital Reproduction", in: Elizabeth Edwards / Janice Hart (eds.), *Photographs Objects Histories: on the Materiality of the Image*, London 2004, pp. 186–202.

stitute the archaeology of the discipline and thus constitute its ‘ecosystem’,⁹ and, as we are all aware, ecosystems are delicate structures, the destruction or unbalancing of which can have catastrophic consequences. I would argue that the danger to the analogue archive and all that it can tell us, is its very construction as a mere ‘resource’. If the photograph and the archive are reconceptualised instead as not merely passive ‘resources’, but ‘resourceful’ as I suggest, it is necessary to ask the crucial question: what is the significance of those material forms, how is the technological assemblage rendered ‘social’ and therefore active?

Photographs and archives might be described, following Alfred Gell, as ‘distributed objects’ in that they are, at one level, bound together as objects, yet comprising “many spatially separated parts with different micro-histories”, that is, material parts and their unfolding social relations which are entangled in different and significant ways.¹⁰ Such sets of social relations are manifested archaeologically through the marks, traces, material accretions, and disturbed surfaces of the archival objects, and through multiple material configurations and multiple formats of the distributed object. They reveal traces of, for instance, systems of truth production at any given historical moment in the ways in which photographs were acquired, owned, stored, displayed, exchanged, and collected. In this the archive becomes a material manifestation of social relations in which images are active. This raises further questions such as how did people assess, acquire and use photographs? What were the truth values associated with different kinds of photography and which thus shaped collecting practices? How is this traced in the material archive? In what ways were they disseminated? What were networks of exchange? What were the resonances for viewers of different material forms? How was information about photographic sources disseminated through social relationships of the discipline for instance? How do photographs shape the practices of institutions? What are the patterns of absence in collections? The material and dynamic archive is saturated with these questions, and more importantly, in part with their answers. These questions, which obviously I cannot pursue in detail, are fundamental to the work that photographs are asked to do, not only in terms of images but in terms of ‘things’ that people expected to behave or perform in certain ways. For material choices are affective decisions which construct and respond to the significances and consequences of ‘things’ and the human relations to which they are integral.

These ideas about the sociability of objects, which can only be outlined here, suggest that objects (here archives and photographs) are not merely stage settings for human actions and meanings, but integral to them. They have, as I have suggested, been developed largely in anthropology in the work of Bruno Latour and Daniel Miller, for instance, and in theoretical and phenomenological archaeology in the work of Chris Tilley and Chris Gosden. Of particular influence again has been the work of Gell, as I have already suggested, who has argued for the diverse ways in which “social agency can be invested in things or emanate from things”.¹¹ Through this idea of the social agency of objects, Gell argues for a more “action centred” approach to things and the way in which they play a “practical mediating role [...] in the social processes”.¹² Latour develops similar ideas in a version of “actor-network theory,” the guiding principle of which is that things, here again archives and photographs, must themselves be regarded as actors in any socio-technological assemblage. Akrich adds to this theorisation, in a way which in some ways anticipates Gell’s agency argument, arguing that the idea, that objects im-

⁹ I am grateful to Costanza Caraffa who used the word ‘ecosystem’ in an e-mail exchange and set me thinking in this direction.

¹⁰ Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency*, Oxford 1998, p. 221. For an example of this concept applied to collections see Frances Larson, “Anthropology as Comparative Anatomy: re-

flecting on the Study of Material Culture during the late 1800s and late 1900s”, in: *Journal of Material Culture*, 12/1 (2007), pp. 89–112.

¹¹ Gell 1998 (note 11), p. 18.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

pose back onto humans through a process of ‘prescription’ by which objects carry a ‘role expectation,’ predicts certain experiential and embodied responses through the qualities of its material being.¹³

Material forms are, of course, not primary agents, they have no consciousness and no direct intention, but as Dant has pointed out, systems of intentionality are themselves articulated through the material forms of objects and through the systems of values that enmesh objects.¹⁴ However, significantly, it is notable how often archives and documents are endowed with a metaphorical quality of personhood and action. For instance, the philosopher of history Paul Ricoeur describes documents as “sleeping” while photographs themselves are often assigned “voices” which “speak” in tones from “shouting” to “whispering”.¹⁵ Material objects are rather, however, what Gell has described as secondary agents, in that they are objective embodiments and materialisations of the power and capacity to demand or will a use in certain ways, for certain ends, permitting particular cognitive operations.¹⁶

Following broadly from this position, Miller has attended to the precise material qualities of objects. He has argued for a kind of banal materiality such as one might encounter in photographic archives—lantern slides, 35 mm slides, labels, boxes or filing cabinets: “[B]y dwelling upon the more mundane sensual and material qualities of the object we are able to unpick the more subtle connections with cultural lives and values that are objectified through these forms, in part, because of the particular qualities they possess”.¹⁷ Importantly here, Miller, rather than thinking only about how things signify, which he maintains privileges an intellectualised response to objects, suggests that it is necessary to think about “how things matter”, as a way of allowing a space for the subjective.¹⁸ Thus, especially relevant for any consideration of photographs’ materiality, much is to be gained analytically in understanding the specific ways in which different material forms become meaningful—a point to which I shall return in my three examples.

Significantly, there are resonances of this approach in recent writing in historiographical theory, sometimes drawing on the same body of literature, notably Latour.¹⁹ Echoing Miller’s argument on ‘mattering’ as opposed to ‘signifying’, Ewa Domanska has recently pointed to the idea of historiographical ‘significance’ not in terms of representation or a signifying discourse, but through “the materiality and thingness” of the material trace rather than on its “textuality and content”.²⁰ From this, Domanska argues a position of ‘material hermeneutics’ which, like Bal’s reinvigorated object marked earlier, brings the consideration of the material back into the centre of historical understanding and interpretation. Key to my argument here is her contention that “instruments”, here the photographic archive, printing papers, mounts, boxes and so forth, mediate experiences and articulate desires to the extent that they “co-constitute the reality studied by scholars.”²¹ Even the most mundane of material existences and practices point to both the complex producing and indeed productive practices which enable a statement to exist in certain ways.²²

¹³ Madeleine Akrich, ‘The De-Description of Technical Objects’, in: Wiebe E. Bijker / John Law (eds.), *Shaping Technology, Building Society*, Cambridge 1992, pp. 205–224.

¹⁴ Tim Dant, *Material Culture in the Social World*, Buckingham 1999, p. 121. For a related argument of social saliency and instrumentality see Joan M. Schwartz, “We make our tools and our tools make us’: Lessons from Photographs from the Practice, Politics and Poetics of Diplomats”, in: *Archivaria*, 40 (1995), pp. 40–74.

¹⁵ Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, Chicago 2004, p. 169.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 20–21; Elizabeth Edwards, “Thinking Photo-

graphy beyond the Visual?”, in: Jonathan J. Long / Andrea Noble / Edward Welch (eds.), *Photography: Theoretical Snapshots*, London 2009, pp. 40–43.

¹⁷ Daniel Miller (ed.), *Material Cultures: Why Some Things Matter*, London 1998, p. 9.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 11.

¹⁹ For an extended consideration of this point, see Elizabeth Edwards, “Photography and the Material Performance of the Past”, in: *History and Theory*, 48/4 (2009), pp. 130–150.

²⁰ Ewa Domanska, “Material Presence of the Past”, in: *History and Theory*, 45/3 (2006), pp. 337–348, here p. 337.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 341.

In such a reading, and this can be only a very basic summary of the debate, photographs and the archive are dynamic forces within networks of non-humans and humans which themselves constitute social processes. They exercise a form of agency as powerful and active players in that it is not the meanings of things *per se* (here what a photograph is 'of') which are important, but their social effects as they construct and influence the field of social action. Thus, the choices that constitute objects cannot be reduced to a single purposeful expression, they are latent with incidental meanings. This 'active materiality' is no better demonstrated than in the discourse of the archive as a site of resourcefulness, where the accuracy, truthfulness, and authority of the socially active historical statement is technically and materially performed through the attention given to the exact nature of image-objects that comprise the archive and their 'affect' on users.²³

Some 'Resourceful' Archives

In order to put some flesh on these theoretical bones, I want to look at three bodies of archival objects, and engagements with them, to consider their 'resourcefulness'—their creative direction of meaning, because all three were made to perform specific roles and intended to elicit certain forms of response.

The first example is the extensive and dispersed archive of the photographic survey movement in England, comprising amateur photographs of objects of historical interest (parish church architecture, old cottages and customs) made in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²⁴ Not only does this archive constitute a dispersed object—created through different micro-historical trajectories, yet discursively united as a single object. The material qualities of the archive were central to the active performance of that discourse. In the collections of photographs gathered for these archives, enormous intellectual, and indeed physical energy, was expended by their makers over the precise material forms the archive and the presentation of the photographs within it should take.²⁵ In this material form the dynamic materiality was seen from the inception of the archive as central to the expectations, understanding, and archival performance through which these photographs could come to have meaning.

These material debates revolved around key archival values of accuracy and longevity, materially expressed. What size of negative? Could it be retouched? Did enlargements obscure or illuminate? Should platinum, a very stable process, be the only desirable printing process? Or should silver prints be allowed if this were the only way of preserving the desired historical object? The relations of mounts and labels are especially revealing. What kind of visibility should be afforded to the photograph? Should there be cut mounts which protect the physical chemical deposits from abrasion and thus disappearance of both the photograph and the referent for whose preservation the photograph stood? Should labels be placed on the back, or apprehended in one visual act? What did this mean for the viewer? These choices were material performances of moral, scientific and subjective desires, without which this archiving project cannot be understood. For instance, as John Tagg, commenting on these archives and the way labels were deployed on mounts, has noted, there was an "extraordinary expenditure of commentary and moral fervour [...] [devolved] onto this little slip: how much it should say; to whom it

²² Bruno Latour, *Science in Action*, Milton Keynes 1987, p. 69.

²³ See Elizabeth Edwards / Janice Hart, "Mixed Box", in: Elizabeth Edwards / Janice Hart (eds.), *Photographs Objects Histories: on the Materiality of the Image*, London 2004, pp. 47–61.

²⁴ Elizabeth Edwards, *The Camera As Historian: Photography and the Historical Imagination 1885–1918*, Durham/NC, forthcoming 2011.

²⁵ See Edwards 2009 (note 20).

should speak; to what code it should summon both object and viewer.”²⁶ Labels are thus not merely a descriptive or a discursive framing, rather their spatial relations with mounts marked out the contained space of useful disciplinary knowledge, aligning and cohering disparate approaches. They also embody the potential for expanding or contested knowledge, expressed by layers of surface markings, from the laying down of photographic chemical to additions and crossings out in captions as users add comments, reattribute in a material palimpsest of disciplinary knowledge held, literally, in the hands of the user.

Then there are boxes, the building blocks of archives. Ordinary boxes in archives are arguably invisible players in historiographical analysis. However they are not neutral spaces. The form and character of boxes are part of the very nature of the institutional existence of the archive and part of its constitution and meaning. They are not merely pragmatic tools of taxonomic performances, but entangled in shifting sets of values from institutional to affective engagements with users as things are placed in certain ways, mediated as sites of successive, layered and overlapping agencies.²⁷ This might be seen to question historian Steedman’s contention that the archive is just ‘stuff’ until the historian engages with it.²⁸ As innumerable commentators in archival theory have noted, the archive has been mediated at every stage of its existence, constituting the process of archiving as a form of narrativising in itself. Groupings of photographs and the marking of boxes, for instance, have been selected and made to perform images in certain ways and thus mediate in social relations—the interpretations of the art historical for example. Here one can sense the potential of thinking about photographs in a Gellian sense, in that they elicit responses, stimulate affects, which would not have existed in that form if the photograph, its card, its box had not existed in that way. That is, the material forms of print, presented on mounts, contained by labels, ordered in boxes and in files, and engaged with in archival research spaces or print study rooms, rendered historical time not only an objective space, but an affective space in which objects play that “practical and mediating role in social processes”—a space of what I am terming ‘resourcefulness’. What we see here is both subjective and objective registers of historical concern cohered at the surface of the mounted print in a box or file.

Not only are boxes tactile, the embodied experience of the archive is often defined in terms of heavy boxes, the sense of excavation, hands dry from the dust emitted from deteriorating wood pulp and buckram, even the smell of it. When the young French historian Jules Michelet first encountered the archive in 1833, he commented on the experience of breathing the dust of papers and parchments. As Steedman has noted “this was not simply a figure of speech” but “a literal description of a physiological process” of engagement with the archive.²⁹

This position has perhaps been best articulated by my second example, Gillian Rose’s critical contemplation of her experiences of using the archive of Lady Hawarden’s photographs at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.³⁰ In this essay, she attempts to account for the dynamic material and embodied experience of looking at the collection of Lady Hawarden’s photographs, as the material takes on an agentic quality. She explores the ways in which the visual qualities of photographs and their un-

²⁶ John Tagg, “Pencil of History”, in: Patrice Petro (ed.), *Fugitive Images: from Photography to Video*, Bloomington/IN 1995, p. 293.

²⁷ Edwards / Hart 2004 (note 24).

²⁸ Carolyn Steedman, “The Space of Memory: in an Archive”, in: *History of the Human Sciences*, 11/4 (1998), p. 6.

²⁹ Carolyn Steedman, *Dust*, Manchester 2001, pp. 26–27.

³⁰ Gillian Rose, “Practicing Photography: an archive, a

study, some photographs and a researcher”, in: *Journal of Historical Geography*, 26/4 (2000), pp. 555–571.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 561.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 562.

³³ Sassoon 2004 (note 9), p. 199.

³⁴ See <http://tibet.prm.ox.ac.uk/>. The Tibet Album Project was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council of the United Kingdom and led by Elizabeth Edwards and Clare Harris, with Richard Blurton from the British

derstanding are inflected through spaces and practices of archival and photographic presentation. It is a dialogic relationship between researcher and the material archive, in which material practices both produce images in certain ways and complicate the effects of the photographs. Importantly, she argues the way in which the researcher is 'produced' by the agency of the photographs and of the archive. The material qualities and the practices of the archive mediate both the photograph and the body of the researcher which animates the space of the archive in potentially disruptive ways. This is more than simply photographs meaning different things to different people at different places and times according to the knowledge brought to them, but an engagement with the spatial and material practices of the archive as actants in human/non-human relations in the production of embodied cultural knowledge.

For instance, just as boxes set up narratives, the visual equivalence of the photographs is performed through modes of matting and mounting, setting up a suggestion of possible comparability perhaps. Further the body of the researcher is regulated in certain ways, reflecting the social values which cluster around photographs: "hold the mounts like this", "don't touch the surface of the print", "only use pencils or laptops", "leave your bag and your wet coat outside in the lockers", "No food and drink". The regulations, and thus the way in which the photographs are apprehended, construct and materialise the body of the researcher in specific ways.³¹ They become resourceful, getting the user or viewer to do certain things because the material form of the photograph is constituted in specific ways that elicit behaviours. It constructs here, as Rose argues, the researcher as a grotesquely intrusive body which must be rendered unobtrusive.³² It heightens the effect of the archive, a consciousness of materiality and the consciousness of what transgression might mean. The prohibitive practices of the archive and the materiality of the photographs actually create in the researcher the desire to touch, to stroke, away from the rational discourses of vision and discipline. Thus, the effects were revealed as undisciplined, in both senses of the word as unregulatable and multi-valent—but instead powerfully suggest the creativity and ingenuity of resourcefulness of the material archive.

Digital Materialities

Such a consideration of the haptics of the photograph in the archive must bring us to my third example which addresses the digital environment. The digital is often perceived as a site of material and haptic disruption, and thus of the archive's 'resourcefulness.' Consequently there has been considerable discussion of the nature of the digital environment and the dematerialisation of the historical object. For instance, Joanna Sassoon argues that the way in which digital projects have been approached has too often failed to engage with an understanding of photographic materiality as being active in the making of the historical rather than as being a passive object of information; that is, there has been a failure to recognise the 'resourcefulness' of photographs and archives, reducing photographs to digital shadows of their former being, both materially and intellectually.³³

While there are many examples of digitisation—good, bad and indifferent—I want to focus briefly on a project in which I was involved, because it specifically attempted to address the tensions between the material or analogue archive and the digital archive. It aimed to maintain a sense, for the user, of the kind of thinking about the dynamic and resourceful nature of the archive and its material character, but which embraced the potential of the digital as well. Between 2003 and 2006, Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford, where I was at the time Curator of Photographs, and the British Museum, London, undertook a collaborative project to make available on-line a collection of approximately 6,000 photographs of Tibet taken between 1920 and 1950 in connection with British diplomatic missions.³⁴

While at one level it was acknowledged that the outcome would be a straight-forward on-line picture library and archival resource, a clear objective from the outset was that it was essential to explore ways in which the material and relational qualities of the photographs—their dynamic and resourcefulness—could remain interpretatively active within a digital environment. Thus, theoretical questions on the relationship between historical apprehension and photographs became integral to the project,³⁵ informed by a recognition of the need to address the perceived space between what is understood theoretically and what is actually done in terms of archival practices.³⁶

The photographs of Tibet existed in the archive in a variety of formats and as multiple originals, distributed objects which flowed through the social relations to which the photographs and the archive were central. Keen attention was paid to the material and multiple forms of the images as indicative of their meanings, in that the material archive was “something that has been intrinsic to the research methodology and the continuing historical representation of these photographs”.³⁷ The project saw the whole archive as a cultural object in its own right within which “the digital potential of the project to full effect was developed to deal with the many thousands of often very similar images, to explore their creation and relationships and thus how the visual representation of Tibet was affected and constructed by these diplomatic photographic encounters”.³⁸ Of course, like the meaning of photographic images themselves, different material affordances and properties move in and out of significance “in conjunction with what is being done with that photography” or series of images, a flow integral to the social biography of the object.³⁹ For instance, photographs were circulated around the group, put into personal albums, sent to government offices, given to friends. Some were turned into lantern-slides, indicating their function to disseminate ideas of Tibet, British diplomacy, and Empire for instance. Others were published in books. In the website, this information was not simply recorded in the metadata of an image but presented materially. Users can navigate through the collection following multiple originals, from raw scans of the negative through to the printed book, allowing the user to understand the material transformations of cropping, reversing and juxtapositioning, as an image moves through different spaces. For instance, lantern-slide lectures were reconstituted with their texts (which would of course have been spoken), album presences of images can be placed in their narrative sequences, relations between Tibet elites and the British mission can be traced as visual narratives within the website, through the spatial and temporal dynamics of photographic production.

In this, the aim was to address those spatially separated parts and different micro-histories of the material flow of images which were made up of multiple patterns of intention, which as I suggested earlier, are characteristic of the distributed object. The archive here is revealed not merely as a resource but as a dynamic social object that emerged from sets of cross-cultural relations in which photography itself played a dynamic part.⁴⁰ Further, the design of the website itself was geared to distributed and contested ways of constructing historical narrative. For instance, it is possible to search and order the collections according to either a Western (British) calendar or a Tibetan one. The whole structure of the web presence positions the collection of Tibetan photographs as not merely a resource, but dynamically resourceful, in that the physical act of the careful consideration and digital remediation of

Museum. Mandy Sadan, as research officer, was key to the practical development of the project’s theoretical perspectives within the on-line environment.

³⁵ http://tibet.prm.ox.ac.uk/tibet_methodology_aims.html (most recent access 5 July 2010).

³⁶ Tim Schlak, “Framing Photographs, denying archives: the difficulty of focusing on archival photographs”, in: *Archival Science*, 8 (2008), pp. 85–101, here p. 94.

³⁷ Mandy Sadan, http://tibet.prm.ox.ac.uk/tibet_methodology_corpus_approach.html (most recent access 5 July 2010).

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Gillian Rose, *Doing Family Photography*, Farnham 2010, p. 19. The concept of social biography is drawn from Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things*, Cambridge 1986, which has become a standard and classic model

the photographs themselves became part of the interpretative potential of the collection. Crucially, such work can only be achieved digitally where the multiple layers of the dispersed analogue archive can be reconstituted. But it works in particular, I would argue, because the ‘resourcefulness’ of the analogue archive was perceived as central to the creation of digital environments.

Some Closing thoughts

I have argued here that, in order to understand photograph collections, it is not simply a matter of understanding the subject matter more accurately, but understanding all material manifestations of the literal and metaphorical cross-referencing, rewritings, citations—both visual and relational, that make up photographs. These provide the road maps of meanings and ambiguities in which collections are embedded but which evade more direct and articulated forms. The most important part of thinking materially perhaps is to use it to demonstrate the enormous potential and riches of photographs—that they are not merely picture libraries which can be simply digitized, but rich social objects which carry the material traces of people’s hopes and desires, of their being in the world—the stuff of history, to return to Michelet’s affective response to the archive, material “so long deserted, desired no better than to be restored to the light of day”.⁴¹ Likewise, photographs coming out of storage for encounter with the user have been described as an “energy” released.⁴²

Brothman has argued, in archival theory, that records are cognitive artefacts in both their production and reception, not merely evidential artefacts.⁴³ The object of study is therefore not the photograph, the resource per se, but the various moments and spaces that both often lay claim to and that its materiality demands. That is, the ways in which it becomes ‘resourceful’ is integral to a release of energy which shapes the perception of the archive. Such an approach demands a very much more robust attention to the social and material workings of photography in the archival space. It is one which allows the looking at and the using of images as socially salient objects to be active and reciprocal, in that it does not imply merely authority, control and passive consumption. Archives may be those things too, of course, but they cannot be reduced to it. The material dynamic and restoration of material agency to the archive forestall such a reduction. Such an approach therefore places the photographic archive within multiple perspectives on the past, which cannot be contained simply in terms of its content (the resource) but the way in which their material practices demand creative interactions of humans and non-humans.

But it is also necessary to articulate this at a practical level. It remains the case that very few senior managers, who are controlling the money-making decisions about what happens and what does not, have direct knowledge of photograph collections, or any understanding of the historical riches they embrace, and their potential resourcefulness. Photographs are seen, for instance, merely as unit costs to be digitized and sold in a global image environment. It is up to photograph curators to make those

within material culture studies. It argues that an object can only be understood through the sum of the social transactions in which it is entangled over time and space.

⁴⁰ See Clare Harris / Tsering Shakya (eds.), *Seeing Lhasa: British Depictions of the Tibetan Capital 1936–1947*, Chicago 2003, and essay therein.

⁴¹ Steedman 2001 (note 30), p. 27.

⁴² Patricia Hayes / Jeremy Silvester / Wolfram Hartmann,

“Photograph, history, and memory”, in: Wolfram Hartmann / Jeremy Silvester / Patricia Hayes (eds.), *The colonising camera: photographs in the making of Namibian history*, Capetown 1999, pp. 2–10, quoted in Schlak 2008 (note 37), p. 97.

⁴³ Brien Brothman, “Memory, History and the Preservation of Archival Records”, in: *Archivaria*, 51 (2001), pp. 48–80, here p. 79.

who are making the decisions take notice of what is possible with photograph collections. ‘Good’ digitization costs relatively little more than ‘bad’ digitization, especially when the richness and longevity of value is factored in. And given that digitization projects on specific materials tend only to be undertaken once, it is important to maximize the resourcefulness of photographs at this point, for once ticked off the list of ‘done’ collections they are seldom redone.

I do not claim it is the only way, but thinking materially through the social biography of photographs as active objects in a matrix of exchanges—personal, commercial, moral, political—can generate ideas which will enable us to see photographs differently. The choice is not between analogue and digital, for one cannot substitute for the other, but rather the digital as another moment in the on-going social biography of the material archive, creating a space, as was attempted with the Tibet Album project, in which the digital becomes an exegesis on the analogue archive to the enhancement of historical understanding.

As I marked at the start, the object has become empowered within cultural analysis, and indeed as Taussig has argued, objects are never as lively as in the moment when someone threatens to kill them.⁴⁴ We are at just such a moment. Therefore, rather than occupying a fixed point of the taxonomically contained ‘resource’, resourcefulness constitutes part of a continuum of meaning which is an “active constituent of present being”⁴⁵ and in which the irreplaceable core remains the analogue, material archive and its tangible historiographical layers.

⁴⁴ Quoted in Asbjørn Grønstad and Øyvind Vågnes, “What do pictures want: An interview with W.J.T. Mitchell”, in: *Images and Narrative*, November 2006 ([http://www.](http://www.imageandnarrative.be/inarchive/iconoclasm/gronstad_vagnes.htm)

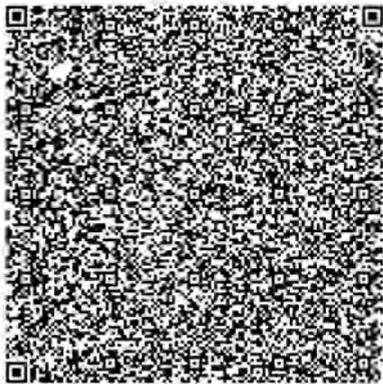
[imageandnarrative.be/inarchive/iconoclasm/gronstad_vagnes.htm](http://www.imageandnarrative.be/inarchive/iconoclasm/gronstad_vagnes.htm), most recent access 21 July 2010).

⁴⁵ Brothman 2001 (note 44), p. 65.

Tiziana Serena

The Words of the Photo Archive

Abstract*



This paper explores the possibility of applying the theory of Documentality to the photograph, examining it in the context of the photo archive. To this end, I maintain that a photograph's document value is not determined by its nature, but by its relationship to inscription practices. And I regard the space of the archive as a paradigmatic device that produces cognitive strategies on the word pairing "photograph/photographs" inextricably linked to the inscriptions connected with it, in the form of "arche-writing" and registrations, in essence: with the words of the archive itself.

The Photograph as a Document

It seems that the photograph cannot free itself from an etymological double loop that keeps it tied to some current prejudices in the social system.

On the one hand, the etymology of 'image' refers to the verb *to imitate/copy* and leads to the photograph being considered as a "perfect *analogon*"¹ of reality; on the other hand, its capacity to repre-

* This image contains the abstract of the paper in English and Italian, including the author's address. In order to

have it as a file we must photograph the image with a mobile phone equipped with software capable of decoding



1 Guido Guidi, Maurizio P., Venezia 1972 (from Guido Guidi, *Varianti*, Udine 1995). The following is written: “The superimposed photograph reproduces the current appearance of the holder of this passport”

This leads us to a question: to what can we ascribe the documentary value of a photograph? Certainly not to characteristics that are universally recognized, but instead to purely historical and cultural interpretations. Each time, these conditions as a whole determine whether the photograph should be placed in one of the two poles it has traditionally been assigned to: namely, that of art or of the doc-

umentary value, so that it is—literally—considered to be a copy of the real referent, leads us to consider the photograph as a *natural document*, which reduces the reference to the etymology of ‘document’ (*documentum* from *doceo* means to represent, indicate, show), to the sole capacity to *show* an event.

This paper analyses the photograph as a documentary object and subjects it to the Theory of Document² test. For this purpose the photograph is deemed to be a pre-eminently *social object*, which—in its importance as a *natural document*—permeates our everydayness. What we perceive in a photograph is predominantly its informative or historical content, as a source for the reconstruction of the past, and this fact normally makes it—according to Documentality—a *weak document*, while it is only sporadically a *strong document*, with a legal status comparable to that of the document as traditionally understood.³

For example, a photograph in a passport (fig. 1) represents only one of the passport’s constituent parts⁴ and, even if the stamps and watermarks raise its documentary value, it is still a *weak document* as it maintains its primary informative function, while the biographical information inscribed has more value: my son, whose data is recorded in my passport, can expatriate himself with this information alone and without his photograph, but the opposite would not be possible.

the Quick Response Code and turning it into writing. The artist Franco Vaccari worked (Exhibition in Real Time: *Bar Code 2*, 2009) on the language game of this code in relation to the photograph (finally able to decode the reality that it portrays).

¹ Roland Barthes, “Le message photographique”, in: *Communications*, 1 (1961), now available as “The photographic message”, in: Vicki Goldberg (ed.), *Photography in Print*, Albuquerque 1988, pp. 521–533, here p. 523.

² Maurizio Ferraris, *La documentalità. Perché è necessario lasciare tracce*, Rome / Bari 2009. Ferraris has presented his theory in previous essays, some of them published in English. See id., “Where are you? Mobile Ontology”, in:

Kristóf Nyíri (ed.), *Mobile Understanding. The Epistemology of Ubiquitous Communication*, Vienna 2006, pp. 41–52; id., “Documentality—Or Why Nothing Social Exists Beyond the Text”, in: Christianian Kanzian / Edmund Runggaldier (eds.), *Cultures. Conflict—Analysis—Dialogue* (conference Kirchberg 2006), s.l. 2007, pp. 385–401; id., “Science of Recording”, in: Herbert Hrachovec / Alois Pichler (eds.), *Philosophy of the Information Society* (conference Kirchberg 2007), Frankfurt/M. 2008, pp. 110–123.

³ Ferraris 2009 (note 2), pp. 299–304.

⁴ The example is due to Maurizio Ferraris, *Sans Papier. Ontologia dell’attualità*, Rome 2007, p. 24.

ument, or in intermediate areas such as photographic documentary art.⁵ Clearly, if we cannot precisely define the intrinsic characteristics that determine whether or not it is a document, it might instead be possible to understand some of the extrinsic conditions that help to determine the moment the photograph, by participating in “social acts”,⁶ transforms into a document or “social object”⁷ to which certain values and meanings are attributed.

An Experimental Use of the Theory of Document

I maintain that the *analogon* nature of the photograph, together with its capacity to *show* an event, is a necessary condition but not sufficient for its transformation into a document; and that, instead, the so-called “practices of inscription”⁸—as defined by Documentality—are determinants for establishing the meanings of the photograph.⁹ They support (and physically support) and influence the life of a photographic object in all phases of its existence, even when the context changes, it is torn from the links that determine its origin and provenance, it changes form and functions transforming into an erratic object, whose polysemy can be equated with its degree of freedom and mobility.

The best context in which to examine this theory is the Archive, intended as the institutional place par excellence invested with the highest authority in awarding document value to objects that cross its threshold. The archive represents a paradigm for the performance of practices profoundly linked to what we know of the photograph and inextricably linked to those of inscription.¹⁰ In the unique place of the archive, inscriptions come in numerous forms and variables—from Derridian “arche-writing”¹¹ to writing itself—which operate both at the level of the individual photograph and at the higher levels of a series.

There are two premises for testing the theory of Documentality on the photograph.¹² The first considers the photo archive as a particular device, which contains and is structured by an order (*dispositus*) and, performing certain functions, always determines certain cognitive strategies and policies.¹³ The second theorizes that the space of the photo archive is not limited to its own physical boundaries

⁵ Olivier Lugon, *Le style documentaire. D'August Sander à Walker Evans, 1920–1945*, Paris 2001, pp. 14–17, 112–115.

⁶ Social Acts are defined by John Langshaw Austin, *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955*, ed. by J.O. Urmson / Marina Sbisa, Oxford 1975; and John R. Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality*, New York 1995.

⁷ Ferraris 2009 (note 2). The social nature of a physical object is in the fact that at least two people recognize it has meaning.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 250–274.

⁹ See also the word pairing “image / text” of W.J. Thomas Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, Chicago / London 1994.

¹⁰ Nancy Bartlett (“Diplomatics for photographic Images: Academic Exoticism?”, in: *American Archivist*, 59 [Fall 1996], pp. 486–494, here p. 490) wrote about what “substantiates or disqualifies an image as authentic in an archival sense is identification through elements such as text, an institutional or commercial stamp and other visual marks. These have been forms of additive identifi-

cation of an image, which, if supplied according to authorized procedures, may reinforce an image’s authenticity”: inscriptions could be considered that which substantiates or disqualifies an image.

¹¹ Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, Baltimore 1997 (first ed. 1967), p. 60: “The arche-writing would be at work not only in the form and substance of graphic expression but also in those of nongraphic expression”.

¹² I specify that the theory of the Documentality test for a *photographic document* should nevertheless be included in a broader and deeper analysis capable of assessing both institutional systems where photographs are managed, and how they become subject to certain practices, which have consequences for its founding values of original and copy, but also of true and false.

¹³ On the hypothesis of the photo archive as an institutional device: Tiziana Serena, “L’archivio fotografico: possibilità derive potere”, in: Anna Maria Spiazzi / Luca Majoli / Corinna Giudici (eds.), *Gli archivi fotografici delle Soprintendenze. Storia e tutela* (proceedings Venice 2008), Crocetta del Montello 2010, pp. 103–125.

and that its existence necessarily implies a dimension outside of itself, which it may not disregard, as it is here that its words find a particular echo, in agreement with Derrida: “*No archive without outside* [...] there is no archive without consignment in an *external place* which assures the possibility of memorization, of repetition, of reproduction, or of reimpression”.¹⁴

Using these assumptions as a starting point, I will argue that a photograph only becomes a document in the presence (and not necessarily in the *com*-presence) of inscription practices, which are performed to the highest degree in the context of the archive. Let us try to imagine an exclusively photographic archive, run by artificial intelligence systems applied for the recognition of image content and from which words are excluded: in truth, the constituent parts of the archive would always be dependent on inscriptions, as it would be impossible to avoid the software programming language (which at most can be reduced to binary code) that implements the algorithms for image analysis.

The photo archive represents the key to understanding the photograph, even in its materiality,¹⁵ and equally needs to be understood in its materiality and social implications, about which I believe the theory of Documentality can provide some insights.

Registration, Inscription and the Photograph

The key concept of inscription, put forward by Ferraris¹⁶ as the basis for his theory, is developed by drawing on Derrida’s *Of Grammatology* lesson, where he claims that the inscription can be considered as “the condition of possibility” of the experience in general: in the absence of arche-writing, the subject cannot have an experience or knowledge of the objects.¹⁷ Ferraris intends the *inscription* as a representation whose legibility is aimed at others; furthermore, he regards it as a necessary condition, but not sufficient, to ascertain document *status*. It can occur in varying degrees, such as: 1) “*trace*”, usually external; 2) “*registration*”, if the trace is perceived for its meaning and can be understood as the fixing of the object in a subject; 3) “*inscription*”, when it involves a registration whose legibility is aimed at the public.¹⁸

The *registration* is intended as the condition of possibility of the existence of the singular *social object*, which is determined by *social acts*,¹⁹ and also represents the condition of existence of the society, determined by its capacities to conceive and transmit memory. On the one hand, memory is recorded in many forms and technologies, from mnemonic practices to information systems. On the other hand, the social nature of the registration is effected through its communication in multiple narrative forms, without which the society could not even be defined as such.

Furthermore, *registration* is also set as a necessary condition for the existence of a document and an object of art: both are the result of inscriptions that record social acts, and presuppose an institution that ensures their functioning.²⁰ Thus, if a passport document requires a Police Headquarters institution that issues and validates it, objects of art presuppose the arts system as an institution which sets

¹⁴ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, Chicago 1996 (first ed. 1995), p. 11 (emphasis in the original).

¹⁵ Elisabeth Edwards / Janice Hart (eds.), *On the Materiality of Images*, London / New York 2004; in here especially Joanna Sassoon, “Photographic Materiality in the Age of Digital Reproduction”, pp. 186–202; Geoffrey Batchen, *Forget me not: Photography & Remembrance* (exhibition

cat. Amsterdam 2004), New York 2004; Marlene Manoff, “The Materiality of Digital Collections: Theoretical and Historical Perspective”, in: *Library and the Academy*, 6/3 (July 2006), pp. 311–325.

¹⁶ Ferraris does not speak directly about photography, but he published a book on the relationship between objects of art and documents: Maurizio Ferraris, *La fidanzata automatica*, Milan 2007.



2 Stefano Francelli, *The Photo Archive at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in via Giusti, Florence, before its relocation to Palazzo Grifoni, September 2009*

out the values within which to establish what is an object of art and what is not; and the photograph as a document requires the institution of the society and its system of current prejudices, based on its *status* and *natural document* paradox.²¹

So far I have referred to physical registrations, but a fundamental postulate in the theory of Documentality is that the *registration* can simply exist in our minds in the form of a mental registration.²²

I could send Costanza Caraffa an email with a digital image of the Photo Archive of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz before it moved to Palazzo Grifoni without adding any words (fig. 2), but I cannot bypass the inscriptions related to it and capable of conveying meanings: it would be accompanied by the name of the file, the heading of the email, and the like. And, supposing that all the inscriptions can be avoided, I would not be able to limit the mental *registrations*: “Ah—Caraffa would think—here’s a picture of the Photo Archive in the building on Via Giusti”²³ and this verbalization, not

¹⁷ Derrida 1997 (note 11). For Geoffrey Batchen (*Burning with Desire: The Conception of Photography*, Cambridge / London 1997, p. 201) the arche-writing “must include the photographic”.

¹⁸ Ferraris 2009 (note 2), pp. 182–193, 250–274.

¹⁹ The act is always social (it assumes the involvement of at least two people) and can be referred to Ferraris’ formula “Object = Written Act”.

²⁰ Ferraris 2007 (note 4).

²¹ The definition of photographic paradox is, of course, due to Barthes 1961 (note 1).

²² Ferraris 2009 (note 2), pp. 230–239, 315–316.

²³ The vision of a photographic image does not, obviously, provide instant access to the content, which depends on the culture. See the “Introduzione”, in: Gianfranco Marone, *Corpi sociali*, Turin 2001.

addressed to the communication, would be enough to define it as a form of *inscription*, understood as the mental fixation on internal entities that philosophy defines as *intentions*.²⁴

On the Trace of...

Documentality is interested in the phenomenology of inscription (ichnology), or the ways in which a trace (*ichnos*) can transform according to a progression, on the one hand: *trace* > *registration* > *inscription* and, finally, > *document*; on the other hand: *trace* > *impression* > *expression* and, finally, > *object of art*.

The document, object of art, and photography are based on the registration of traces, where *trace* means the “alteration of a surface that is valid as a sign or reminder for a mind capable of comprehending it as such”.²⁵

The *trace*—it has been postulated²⁶—is only valid for a mind capable of contemplating it as such. It goes without saying that the physical imprint made by a bear in the woods is recognized as such by human beings, but not by lemmings, who would perhaps benefit from recognizing it in order to avoid becoming prey; likewise, that objects of art and documents are recognized as such by human beings and not by lemmings.

The minimum conditions for the existence of the trace as put forward by Ferraris²⁷ and that for comparison can affect photography are the following: 1) traces are recognized by minds and do not exist in and of themselves; 2) the trace is smaller than the medium, from which we infer that the image is smaller than the picture in its material thingness, while for digital images we can postulate—in agreement with the author—that the relationship of scale is given by how the photographic image *phenomenizes*, for example on the screen of my computer.

As for the question of whether the photography is a Ferrarisian trace, we can answer that, inasmuch as it is a registration of the photonic flow, it is certainly a trace even if of a particular type, as it is deemed to be an impression of the referent taken from a distance: or rather there is no contact between the body and the sign of the imprint.²⁸

Nevertheless, the question of the photograph as a trace is not always linear: in its appearance as a perfect *analogon* of reality, the photographic image is recognized by chimpanzees. Adult primates can recognize monkeys they know in photographic portraits that show partial views of the snout and buttocks, which are considered primary distinctive cues, and match them—as if they were two parts of the same puzzle—when they belong to the same chimpanzee.²⁹ From this experiment we can infer that primates’ memories contain a registration of the entire body of their own kind, but this does not mean that chimpanzees distinguish the photographic image from the reality it represents or that the photograph can be a *document* for them (therefore an *inscription*, in its value as a social object): in fact, as far as I know, they are not capable of deciding whether to conserve photographs in archives designed to perpetuate the social memory or to exchange them in order to communicate information.

²⁴ Ferraris 2009 (note 2), p. 85. Here “intention” is understood in the context of philosophy, but let us not forget the suggestions with the history of art as in works by Michael Baxandall (in particular *The Patterns of Intention*, New Haven/CT 1985) linked to the analysis of language.

²⁵ Ferraris 2009 (note 2), p. 250.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Jean-Marie Schaeffer, *L’image preciaire: Du dispositif photographique*, Paris 1987, chapter 1 on the theme of the Index (and of course his debt to the triad by Charles Sanders Peirce in distinguishing signs: symbol / icon / index).

²⁹ Frans B.M. De Waal / Jennifer J. Pokorny, “Monkeys recognize the faces of group mates in photographs”, in:

In order to describe the photograph in its value as a social object, I believe Ferraris' categorisation should include a kind of degree zero of the trace, or sub-trace, given that the photographic image can be a trace from a chemical point of view, but remains latent from a visual point of view. As such, there would be a contemplable trace (this time in a human mind), but only potentially.

Let us take the famous case of approximately 2,500 rolls of undeveloped photographic film left as latent images by Garry Winogrand when he died, and which the curator John Szarkowski developed and exhibited at the MoMA in 1988.³⁰ We will consider two aspects: that of mental inscriptions and that of inscriptions connected with photographs and photographic inscriptions.

In the study period to organize the exhibition Szarkowski will have grasped the meanings (connected to *impressions* and mental *traces*, and this is the point on which mental *registration* is legitimized as a form of *inscription*) deriving from the labels on the rolls of film, or from other *registrations* and *inscriptions* not physically connected to the rolls of film, but in relation to them. His mental impressions were traces endowed with meaning (it is of little importance whether they are true, false or biased) and they would have been represented as a *registration* when the film was developed and the images appeared (they might not even have been clear!).

As regards the photographs, on the other hand, before chemical development the individual image contained on the roll of film was potentially a degree zero trace (or sub-trace), physically latent, and the ensemble of latent images on a roll of film was presumably connected to a mental *impression* influenced by pre-existing inscriptions.

When the chemical development took place the latent images became *registrations* endowed with meaning: the transition between levels was ensured by the presence of *inscriptions* that occurred on a double level: first in direct relation, or not, to the photographic object (i.e. the label), then they increased their effectiveness in relation to the progressive institutionalization of photographic objects and the creation of new forms of inscription, such as simple, new transcriptions (i.e. the records in the database).

The ensemble of *inscriptions* relating to the photographic *registrations* determined their transformation, as when the rolls were developed and printed, into photographic *inscriptions* which, in connection with their inflated institutionalization at the MoMA, were—finally—raised to the status of Objects of Art.

What we should bear in mind is that each transition (*trace* > *registration* > *inscription* > *document* or *object of art*) is related to the degree of inscriptions, and this is why, in order to understand the photographic object, I believe it is useful to make a distinction regarding the constitutive moment that it becomes a social object, a document or an object of art or it is demoted from these statuses.

Through the example of Winogrand, we have also mentioned the theme of the institutionalization of the photograph in the museum system in relation to inscription practices, but the core of the matter is the relationship between the role of the archive institution, understood as a paradigm, and the role of the inscription, where the inscription represents the condition of possibility of recognizing the photograph as a document, even if weak, and its communication.

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America (PNAS), 106/51 (2009), pp. 21539–21543.

³⁰ John Szarkowski, *Winogrand. Figments from the Real World*, New York 1988. From 2001 to 2002 the Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona, Tucson, organized a series of events titled *Garry Winogrand's Game of photography*: 5 visiting curators were

asked to choose 30 unexhibited photographs from Winogrand's archive, but the choice excluded the latent images developed by Szarkowski (again: the problem of the original and its copy, the true and the false, and also the copyright issues, too).

What Do We Do with Photographs/Documents?

If Barry Smith, in his *Document Acts*, focused on the central issue: “What humans do with documents”,³¹ in order to find answers to what we do *with* documents, *on* documents and *by means of* documents (we need them, we create them, we sign them, we use them to certify identity and to demonstrate the truth),³² we can equally ask ourselves: what do we do *with* photographs, *on* photographs, and *by means of* pho-

tographs when they have the value of a document? We use them to convey information and represent facts that are not necessarily true (in this sense the photograph of Iwo Jima by Joe Rosenthal is undoubtedly an icon); we sign them and add watermarks and stamps to emphasize their originality or to increase their power to support other documents (such as in passports); we conserve them in private archives and file them in public archives for future memory; we use them to affirm our identity and show irrefutable (false) truths, which we are the first to believe.

If we assume the hypothesis that a photograph is an object whose social nature can be ascribed to Ferraris’ formula (Object = Written Act)³³ we infer that not all photographs are documents, but all photographs could become documents if involved in a social act, in which the inscription is obviously implicated and communication is a possibility.

Nevertheless, the photograph is a social object even when the inscriptions are reduced almost to degree zero, when it exists without the traditional caption, about which not enough has been written to date (fig. 3). An aunt who had the best memory in the family was able to recognize all the relatives pictured in the family album, even those whose tiny faces could barely be made out in the background. But now that the aunt is no longer



3 Studio C. Pozzi, Como, Portrait of three children, Carte de visite album. Above the arrow are the words “My mother Rosita”. Fund Carte de visite, Archivio fotografico Soprintendenza BSAE – Bologna

³¹ Barry Smith, *Document Acts* (paper available at: http://ontology.buffalo.edu/document_ontology/Document_Act.doc [accessed 13 August 2010]; the theory of Document Acts is proposed to provide a better understanding of the role of documents as physical objects in human actions, as De Soto provided in his studies on social relations in the context of law and commerce (Hernando De Soto, *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumph in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*, New York 2000).

³² Barry Smith, “How to do Things with Documents”, Lecture for the “Prize Paolo Bozzi on Ontology”, University of Turin, 15 April 2010, available at: <http://www.unito.it/media/?section=OnDemand&action=Read&content=2036> (accessed 13 August 2010; forthcoming in: *Rivista di Estetica*).

³³ Ferraris 2006 (note 2), pp. 11–13.

around and no one has made a note of their names, the photograph of a person (uncle Jacopo) becomes an image of a certain type of person (a man in Venice in the Fifties). They are photographs without registrations and inscriptions and for this reason they have become weak social objects and even weaker photographic documents that await relocation and tend to be reduced to mere objects and are treated as such: they change form and function, are extracted from a context capable of conveying their meaning and re-placed in a circuit of different signification, where they can be bought for a few euros at countryside markets.

The dispersion of nameless images is a condition that affects the photograph as a physical object when the meanings between the *image* and the context capable of conveying meaning are diluted. The value of the photograph as a document or as an object of art may fluctuate between its dematerialization and its full thingness. But the status of thingness is never completely reduced to the minimum until as long as the *image* in the photograph remains legible in any cultural and visual way: a daguerreotype could have a disappeared image (i.e. a portrait), but it could maintain its value and weight as historical photographic object; I can undoubtedly change the function of a photographic portrait of the director by using it as a wedge under the leg of the office desk, but as long as the image remains legible the secretary would presumably get impressions from this object that do not derive exclusively from its material nature.

The Words of the Photograph

Photography and writing (as the most usual form of inscription) have a deeply intertwined history, as from the very beginning they collaborated to determine the forms of communication of a photograph and make it a social object.

The photograph arrived on the bourgeois scene immediately claiming its intelligibility on the basis of its document value, a quality that made the bourgeois society dream of scientific empiricism and inspired taxonomic yearnings, and seemed to offer the possibility of progressing to an exact catalogue of the world through its photographic reproduction.³⁴ Nevertheless, that which allowed photography to be used in scientific and documentation practices was the inscription, which, as a necessity intrinsic to the same purposes of the

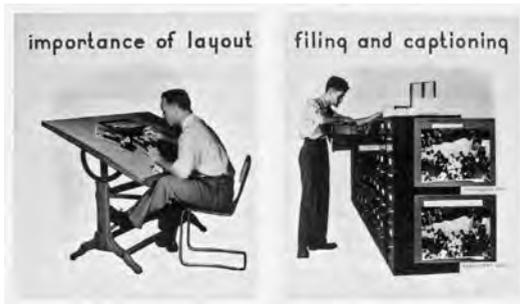


4 Glassine paper envelope which contains the silver gelatin glass negative realized by Achille Villani (1934): Giunta Pisano, Crucifix, c. 1250, Church of San Domenico in Bologna. The annotations refer (but are not in his handwriting) to the instructions for printing the negative provided by Cesare Gnudi who supervised the restoration in the '30s. Fund GFS, Archivio fotografico Soprintendenza BSAE – Bologna

³⁴ On the relations between catalogue, archive and photography in the nineteenth century, see Joan M. Schwartz, "Records of Simple Truth and Precision": Photography, Archives, and the Illusion of Control", in: *Archivaria*, 50 (Fall 2000), pp. 1–40.

photograph, validated its value as a document and scientific proof, without which the photograph would have remained a silent image.³⁵

The relationship between words and the photograph took a decisive turn in the documentary photography period of the Twenties and Thirties (fig. 4). Both the narrative intent of photographs by pictorialists and their objects' explanatory captions, were surpassed by the adoption of the scientific photography's style. This style was accompanied and corroborated by the use of simple captions, reduced to toponyms and the listing of details that could be measured and verified. So even the caption was called upon to convey the values of the archive along with the photograph: in the work of Walker Evans the dry heading such as that of classification, the plan for a catalogue of the world, and the small trifles of life became the horizon of a *modus operandi* based on the archive (as in Berenice Abbott).



5 Information panels “Importance of layout” and “Filing and captioning” for an exhibition on the use of the photograph prepared by the FSA for the government assistance service (from Olivier Lugon, *Le style documentaire. D’August Sander à Walker Evans, 1920–1945, Paris 2001*, p. 261)



6 Detail from the “Filing and captioning” panel: the same photograph is accompanied by a caption on white paper: above is considered “inadequate data” and below (the area is double the size) “sufficient data”

The use made of the metaphor of the archive in subsequent decades and in contemporary practices is very different in terms of purposes and poetics; these use the archive as a kind of container to legitimize acts of removal and contextualisations, which as a whole we can define as “re-writing” (fig. 5–6).³⁶

The archive, as I said at the beginning, implies a dimension external to itself: I mean the possibility of a longitudinal archive, like that of the internet, which poses as a space of alterity with respect to the photographic object, in which the presence of inscriptions can play a different role, with different rules.

A photograph of Omar al-Mukhtar, a Libyan hero who led the anticolonial revolt and was hanged by the Italians, was affixed to Gaddafi’s uniform jacket and shown off by him on a visit to Italy (June

³⁵ Lorraine Daston / Peter Galison, *Objectivity*, London 2007, in particular ch. III on *Mechanical Objectivity*, pp. 115–190; Kelley Wilder, *Photography and Science*, London 2009.

³⁶ Sven Spiecke, *The Big Archive: Art from Bureaucracy*, Cambridge/MA / London 2008; Okwui Enwezor (ed.), *Archive Fever. Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art* (exhibition cat. New York 2008), Gottingen 2008.



7 Muammar Gaddafi with Silvio Berlusconi at Ciampino airport (Rome) in June 2009 (from the Newspaper “Corriere della Sera” online: http://www.corriere.it/politica/09_giugno_10/gheddafi_foto_provocazione_ccc2daa4-55b6-11de-8b38-00144f02aabc.shtml)

2009) (fig. 7). Gaddafi’s action underlined the symbolic value (the national hero) of a photograph through its document value (the thing seen “has been”). There was no caption, but there was no need for one because the goal was to have a deferred and displaced inscription so that it was amplified in the newspapers and online news, where the loss of the connection with the medium by no means involved a loss of meaning.

The Words of the Photo Archive

The definition of the photographic object as an inscription (legibility aimed at others) leads us to the threshold of the archive: there, the photograph, from the time of its admission, subjected to inscription practices, will take on the full appearance of a document.

In the science fiction film by François Truffaut, *Fahrenheit 451*, firemen are called upon to burn all the words written in a society that only permits figurative texts without any words, as seen in comic strips with completely white clouds. Files on all the citizens are kept in the firemen’s archive (fig. 8): obviously they only contain photographs and are taken in authentic police style,³⁷ and offenders can only be identified by the graphic symbol of a triangle drawn inside a circle and placed on their portrait pictures.

But can a police archive be an archive without words and order? Obviously not: the authority controls the archive, the order of the archive ensures the functionality of control in the political system and the order of the archive can only be guaranteed by language. In fact, in the firemen’s archive, all the files are identified with a code formed of digits:³⁸ it is therefore a language, even if numeric, that es-

³⁷ Allan Sekula, “The Body and the Archive”, in: *October*, 39 (1986), now in: Richard Bolton (ed.), *The contest of*

meaning: critical histories of photography, London 1992, pp. 342–388.



8 Captain Beatty, the chief fireman, in his office/archive in the firehouse (frame from the movie *Fahrenheit 451* by François Truffaut, 1966)

the photograph into a social object are written: it acquires an identity merely by being part of the archive (it will acquire at least one reference code); its author or the names of the people pictured are recognized; it assumes a historical dimension even by just the recognition of physical and technical characteristics; the information collected on it as a whole is spoken and written and affects its legibility and communication. I can look up any such photographic image on the internet or by going to the archive in person⁴³ as I have access to it through finding aids made up of *inscriptions* (indexations, algorithms, etc.) and not through images.

The Archive, the Photograph and the Inscription: Conclusions (Transitory)

We have seen that inscription practices cannot be undone, not even in the photo archive at the highest level, such as that of *Fahrenheit 451*. Order in the archive is governed by linguistic grids that, structuring its physicality, affect its functioning and communication⁴⁴ and tend to remain essentially trans-

establishes order (*dispositio*) in the archive and determines its functionality and efficiency: they are—literally—*words of order* (fig. 9).³⁹

The archive is a social space, invested with political meanings,⁴⁰ but it is also a “regime of practices”,⁴¹ where rules apply and customs are shared ranging from the recognition of values (i.e. historical) and the use of protocols (i.e. standard of description and archive management).⁴² All these activities are achieved through inscription practices: words that transform



9 The photographic files of Guy Montag held in Captain Beatty’s office/archive (frame from the movie *Fahrenheit 451* by François Truffaut, 1966)

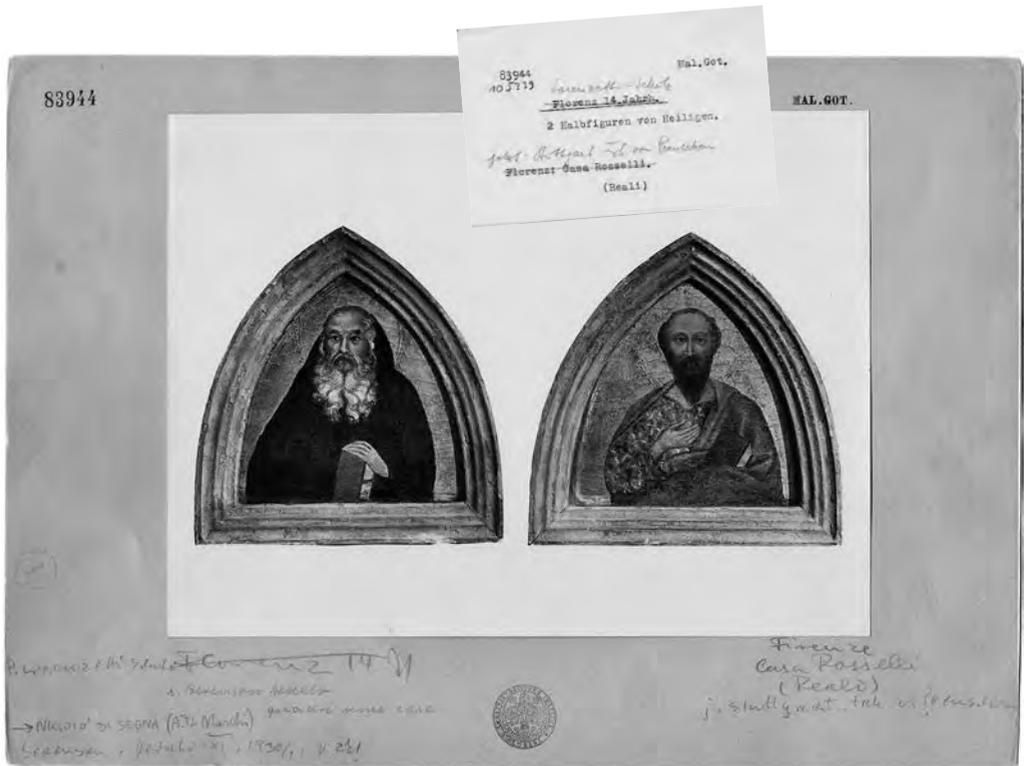
³⁸ It is arranged into two groups of three digits separated by a hyphen: this allows a population of only 999,999 people to be recorded.

³⁹ “This order can be physical in which place must be found for computer tapes, film, maps, photograph and textual files. [...] Order means that things are in their proper place. The notion of proper place for the distribution of artefacts in space is a mental construct” (emphasis in the original) in Brien Brothman, “Orders of Value: probing the Theoretical Terms of Archive Practice”, in: *Archivaria*, 32 (1991), pp. 78–100, p. 80.

⁴⁰ Of course: Derrida 1996 (note 14); Linda Giuva / Stefano Vitali / Isabella Zanni Rosiello, *Il potere degli archivi. Usi del passato e difesa dei diritti nella società contemporanea*, Milan 2007. About photography see John Tagg, *The Disciplinary Frame*, Minneapolis 2009, chapter “The Pencil of History: Photography, History, Archive”.

⁴¹ Eric Ketelaar, “Tacit Narratives: The Meanings of Archives”, in: *Archival Science*, 1 (2001), pp. 131–141, here p. 136.

⁴² See Joan M. Schwartz, “Coming to Terms with Pho-



10 The record and the related photographic file at the Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

parent to the historical discourse on photograph (according to the word pairing “photograph/photographs”).⁴⁵

Forms of inscription are never innocent raw material, not even in the application of archive management protocols: reference codes, titles and inclusion in superior groups such as series. The archival scholar Brien Brothman claimed that these practices do not only transfigure documents, but even transform them in terms of their appearance and meaning.⁴⁶ Brothman, in an appeal for archival studies, also hoped that these would address the understanding of the nature of archival practices. His invitation can be seized upon and put to the test by analyzing inscription practices meant to be that particular meeting place—of which he spoke—between archival language, theories and practices (fig. 10).

topographs: Descriptive Standards, Linguistic ‘Othering’, and the Margins of Archivy”, in: *Archivaria*, 54 (Fall 2002), pp. 142–171.

⁴³ Kelley Wilder, “Looking Through Photographs: Art, Archiving and Photography in the Photothek”, in: Costanza Caraffa (ed.), *Fotografie als Instrument und Medium der Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin / Munich 2009, pp. 117–127, here pp. 118, 126–127.

⁴⁴ Tiziana Serena, “Il posto della fotografia (e dei calzini) nel villaggio della memoria iconica totale”, in: *Archivi fotografici italiani on-line* (proceedings Cinisello Balsamo

2007), available at: <http://www.museofotografiacontemporanea.org> (accessed 13 August 2010).

⁴⁵ I have proposed the word pairing “photograph/photographs”, together with the word pairing “archive/archives” (Serena 2010 [note 13], pp. 107–110, 114–115).

⁴⁶ Brothman 1991 (note 39), p. 86.

In an important and intriguing article, “*We Make our Tools and Our Tools Make Us*”, Joan Schwartz identified a so-called “functional context” in which photographic images, “created by a will, for a purpose, to convey a message to an audience”, become particular archival records that should be understood as “the product of actions and transactions, either bureaucratic or socio-cultural”.⁴⁷

I shall focus attention, as did Schwartz, on “the action in which they participated”, as I believe that the manifold actions capable of changing the meaning of the photograph can all be traced to inscription practices, in their broadest sense. The hypothesis would also be confirmed by other authors. Gillian Rose⁴⁸ underlined how the meaning of the photograph is established through its uses and has analysed the way in which it interacts and changes in relation to research conducted in the archive on institutionalized objects. As regards institutionalized objects, Eric Ketelaar⁴⁹ spoke of the need, in order to reach a greater understanding of the document, to follow its history within the institution where it is continually subjected to recontextualisation practices as a result of which it acquires or loses value. Michael Ames⁵⁰ related the recontextualisation of the record to Krzysztof Pomian’s concept of the semiophore,⁵¹ according to which an institutionalized object loses its original function to acquire symbolic meanings, and I have extended this concept to the photo archive as a semiophore.⁵² All these suggestions can be traced back to the analysis of the photograph as a *document* (Ferrarisian) in the *device of the photo archive* (Serenian), up to its *interpretation* (Derridian)⁵³ inextricably connected with the policies and practices of memory.⁵⁴

The archive as a *regime of practices*, which transform, recontextualise and add meanings to the photographic document, thereby semiophorising it, would become an integral part of the object we wish to understand in its materiality and, necessarily, in relation to the materiality of the photo archive, and I believe Ketelaar’s suggestions to reflect on what he calls the “tacit narratives” of the archive,⁵⁵ which in turn can be traced back to inscription practices, could be useful to help us understand it. I believe this suggestion to be particularly important if applied to photo archives, where the image’s overbearing self-evidence renders the context of belonging opaque to the reading. This tendency occurs, in particular, when the photo archive is web-conditioned. Here, the depth of the pictures is reduced to the

⁴⁷ Joan M. Schwartz, “We Make Our Tools and Our Tools Make Us’: Lessons from Photographs for the Practice, Politics, and Poetics of Diplomats”, in: *Archivaria*, 40 (Fall 1995), pp. 40–74, here p. 42.

⁴⁸ Gillian Rose, “Practising Photography: an Archive, a Study, some Photographs and a researcher”, in: *Journal of Historical Geography*, 26/4 (2000), pp. 555–571.

⁴⁹ Ketelaar 2001 (note 41), in the paragraph on “Semantic genealogy”, pp. 137–139.

⁵⁰ Michael Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes. The Anthropology of Museums*, Vancouver 1992, pp. 46, 141–143.

⁵¹ Krzysztof Pomian, *Collectors and Curiosities. Paris and Venice, 1500–1800*, Cambridge 1990.

⁵² Serena 2010 (note 13), pp. 120–121.

⁵³ “There is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion [...] the access to the archive, its constitution, and its interpretation”: Derrida 1996 (note 14), p. 4, note 1.

⁵⁴ For some general aspects, see Brien Brothman, “The Past that Archives Keep: Memory, History, and the Preservation of Archival Records”, in: *Archivaria*, 51 (2001), pp. 48–80, and Francis X. Blouin jr. / William G. Rosen-

berg (eds.), *Archive, Documentation and Institutions of Social Memory. Essays from the Sawyer Seminar*, Ann Arbor/MI 2006.

⁵⁵ “Numerous tacit narratives are hidden in categorization, codification and labeling”, in Ketelaar 2001 (note 41), p. 135.

⁵⁶ In this sense we should consider the *Florence Declaration: Recommendations for the Preservation of Analogue Photo Archives*, issued by the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut, available at: <http://www.khi.fi.it/en/photothek/florencedeclaration/index.html> (accessed 13 August 2010).

⁵⁷ Wendy M. Duff / Verne Harris, “Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings”, in: *Archival Science*, 2 (2002), pp. 263–285.

⁵⁸ For example: Elisabeth Edwards, “Telling photographs: image, voice and word”, speech given at the conference *Photography Next*, 4–5 February 2010, Moderna museet and Nordiska museet, Stockholm.

⁵⁹ An Italian abridged version of this paper is published in *Rivista di Estetica* n. 48: *Documentalità* (Forthcoming 2011).

bi-dimensionality of the images which, if freed from all contextual data—become pure dematerialized surfaces capable of overshadowing other possible narrations.⁵⁶

As a conclusion to what has been stated so far, I add the need to broaden the category of inscription practices capable of overseeing all those transformations that have been mentioned (transfiguration, contextualisations, semiophoration, etc.) including not only the use of written language,⁵⁷ but also spoken language and memory. This broader category could be understood through an analysis of *trace* and *registration* (Ferrarian), in a diachronic and synchronic sense, in order to outline the trajectories of knowledge and experience and, in other words, to understand how words *in the* archive⁵⁸ that speak of the photograph are determinants for understanding the photograph's function as a document: social objects so familiar that they permeate our everydayness.⁵⁹

Griselda Pollock

Aby Warburg and Mnemosyne: Photography as *aide-mémoire*, Optical Unconscious and Philosophy

“The conscious creation of distance between self and the external world may be called the fundamental act of civilization. Where this gap conditions artistic creativity, this awareness of distance can achieve a lasting social function.”

Aby Warburg, *Mnemosyne*: Introduction,¹

“Images from history as records of cultural predicaments speak to one another, and the eyes and voice of the historian represent points of contact. Distance in time and space still separate epochs, but the images placed in dialogue overcome that distance just enough to posit associations that burst the myth of the grand linear historical narrative with pre-measured increments of cultural and temporal distance. Thus Warburg begins with ethnography and ends with observations on the culture of Uncle Sam and the telephone.”

Michael P. Steinberg, 1995²

Preface: The Heat of Research

In a speech given at the Palazzo Guadagni on 15 October 1927 on the occasion of the post-war opening of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, which he hailed as the hospitable space for the “Florentine German”, Aby Warburg declared his wish for this renewed institute to provide “central heating for the psyches of all seek the truth” and for its supporters to provide the external means for “combustion and the inner flame of enthusiasm”.³

¹ As transl. in: Ernst Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, Oxford 1970, p. 228.

² Michael Steinberg, “Aby Warburg’s Kreuzlingen Lecture: A Ritual”, in: Aby Warburg, *Images from the Region of the*

Pueblo Indians of North America, translated with an interpretative essay by Michael Steinberg, Ithaca 1995, pp. 59–114, here p. 98.

³ Aby Warburg, “Speech on the Opening of the Kunsthis-

Warburg's phrasing provides unexpectedly fiery metaphors at odds with our more typical idea of scholars as cool-headed, objective and personally restrained, digging in neatly catalogued archives and well-classified libraries which try to minimize the galvanizing currents that might charge through photographic collections and bookshelves that assemble and conserve cold relics rather than ignitable embers of the past. How odd is it to be invited to think of well-heated psyches as a condition for pursuit of truth, or inflammation, combustion and enthusiasm as the condition of research. At first sight, Warburg's invocation of heat and fire appears to have nothing to do with photo-archives and the photographic memory of art history. But if Warburg must be considered one of the significant and yet atypical art historians who developed a system and a thesis about the history of art through the photographic image, we must follow his heated thought and combustible connections to the dangerous end he himself witnessed in emergent fascism in Italy and Germany in the 1920s. I differ from many other scholars in their representation of Warburg's intellectual universe in schizoid tension between demonic possession and calm rationality with a search for redemption through culture's achievement of the latter despite the endless 'regressive possibility' of the former; instead I understand his evocation of electrical metaphors to suggest polarity rather than polarization: oppositions that are generative and reversible as opposed to representing fixed alternatives that can only be dialectically overcome. I also do not think his thought should be reduced to his own psychological propensities, which has also been another tendency amongst his interpreters. What is missed in such psychobiographical readings is the fundamental search for the interval, the mediating space between the vital and immediate and the distanced and reflected, an idea which refuses precisely the hierarchical oppositions typical of Christian and subsequent European-bourgeois thought with its sense of a primary battle between low and high, animal and human, past and progressive present. If Warburg is a theorist of culture, like Freud, he understood culture to contain but also constantly to modify the ever-present components which oscillate between intensity and distance—in other, Freudian, terms we might think of the infantile, the crucible of the drives and the sublimation of the drives without their abolition. As Giorgio Agamben glosses this:

“For Warburg, the symbol belongs to an intermediary domain between consciousness and primitive reactions, and it bears within itself the possibilities of both regression and higher knowledge. It is a *Zwischenraum*, and “interval”, a kind of no-man's land at the center of the human. And just as creation and enjoyment of art require the fusion of two psychic attitudes that exclude each other (“a passionate surrender of the self leading to a complete identification with the present—and a cool detached serenity which belongs to the categorizing contemplation of things”) so the “nameless science” sought by Warburg, is as one reads a note of 1929, an “iconology of the interval” or a “psychology of the oscillation between the positing of causes as images and as signs.”⁴

The following paper will firstly consider several theories of photography in order to return to three studies of Warburg's use of the photographically mediated archive as a modern and technological site for the disclosure of *mneme* as the condition for a politically relevant cultural, rather than art, history. I shall argue that Warburg's use of photography can be considered a philosophy.

torisches Institut at the Palazzo Guadagni, Florence 15 October 1927”, in: id., *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, introduction by Kurt Forster, transl. by David Britt, Los Angeles 1999, pp. 723–724.

⁴ Giorgio Agamben, “Warburg and the Nameless Science”, in: id., *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*, transl. by Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford 1999, pp. 94–95.

⁵ Charles Baudelaire, “The Salon of 1859: II. The Modern Public and Photography”, in: Jonathan Mayne (ed./ transl.), *Art in Paris 1845–1862*, Oxford 1965, p. 154.

⁶ Walter Benjamin, “A Small History of Photography”, in: *One Way Street*, transl. by Edmund Jephcott / Kingsley Shorter, London 1979, p. 243.

Photography: *aide-mémoire* or Optical Unconscious

In a Salon review of 1859, penned twenty years after the patented invention of photography in 1839, the French poet and art critic Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867) attacked photography. Actually, he critiqued a misunderstanding prevalent amongst his simple-minded contemporaries that the newly invented technology of photo-mechanical reproduction now could, through mimetic depiction, replace the imaginative work of art. So movingly portrayed in his human fragility by Nadar in several portrait photographs, Baudelaire, none the less, declared that the proper function of photography is purely *secrétarial*: exactitude, amplification, tele-vision, that is, bringing the distant closer, and above all memorization: it preserves and it reminds.

“It is time for it to return to its true duty, which is to be the servant of the sciences and arts [...] Let it rescue from oblivion those tumbling ruins, those books, print and manuscripts that time is devouring, precious things whose forms are dissolving and which demand a place in the archives of our memory—it will be thanked and applauded. But if it be allowed to encroach upon the domain of the impalpable and the imaginary, upon anything whose value depends solely upon the addition of something of a man’s soul, then it will be so much the worse for us!”⁵

Baudelaire’s argument makes a simplified opposition: the human soul and the soulless machine.

Writing in 1931, when already *A Small History of Photography* could be written of the century of a technology that had become a practice, Walter Benjamin suggested a more interesting and more psychic life for the soulless secretary. More than being merely instrumental, photography, argued Benjamin, *discloses* something to the world that would otherwise remain invisible or at least imperceptible to humanity’s pre-programmed and often selective and over-subjective, always imaginatively transformative vision.

“For it is another nature that speaks to the camera than to the eye; other in the sense that a space informed by human consciousness gives way to a space informed by the unconscious. Whereas it is commonplace that, for example, we have some idea of what is involved in walking, if only in general terms, we have no idea at all what happens during the fraction of a second when a person *steps out*. Photography with its devices of slow motion and enlargement, reveals the secret. It is through photography that we first discover the existence of an optical unconscious, just as we discover an instinctual unconscious through psychoanalysis.”⁶

Brilliant and memorable, the phrase *optical unconscious* suggests a supplementary dimension of visual reality that only the dispassionate technological registration offered by photography’s manipulations of vision, magnification, instantaneity and distance vision can disclose. Another world becomes visible through its peculiarities not merely in reproduction of seeing, but in creating another kind of image: what is found through this gaze. In then referencing, however, rather surprisingly the photographic image of the mundane physiology of human locomotion—Benjamin has in mind the extraordinary revelations through chronophotography of Marey and Muybridge—he seems to betray his initial innovation, that makes us think more of Surrealist photography’s discovery of the uncanny in the everyday of the urban landscape than of scientific documentation. What might be the relevance of the photographic disclosure of motion to art history whose images are still and represent movement by means of still images? Is there an image-unconscious to which photography might also give us access? What would be the *stepping out-ness* to be revealed in the art image? Of course, this is one of the cores of Warburg’s theory: that the image of external *motion* signifies intensified internal *emotion* represented by the fluttering drapery of the running Nympha, and the origin of art in the dance of ritual.

I may be being purely fanciful or psychoanalytical in sensing a serendipitous connection here with the *stepping out* that defines Warburg's key figure of the nimble *Nympha*—and furthermore with Freud's version of the *Nympha*, the *Bertgang* or spritely tread of the literary celebration of the *Nympha* Freud found in *Gradiva*, the 1906 novella by Wilhelm Jensen commented upon by Sigmund Freud in his first foray into psycho-analytical aesthetics.⁷ In the novella, disowned arousal of sexual desire is turned to stone, into a fixation on a *sculpture* of a walking woman, by an archaeologist, himself buried in the petrified past, who is released once again into life by the insights of an actual lively woman named *Zoë Bertgang*: a name that combines the Greek *Zoe* and the German *Bertgang* to convey woman as the lively stepping out of Life itself.

Baudelaire's aestheticising notion that we need to protect the imaginative and the spiritual in art as the opposite of mechanical photography, and Benjamin's endorsement of an almost inhuman seeing captured by the machine's other eye are leading in very different directions from Warburgian theories of the image. Or are they? Is it not as a dream of disclosing the imaginative through the image that photography became a tool for Warburg's research into the historical psychology of human expression that could only become visible to us by being traced through its often displaced threads of connection, reversal and polarity appearing across the assemblage of images made possible by photography?

By invoking the unconscious of psychoanalysis, neither is Benjamin thinking merely about the content of an image, nor is he suggesting an unconscious for iconography. If we truly take on board the psychoanalytical model, any reference to the unconscious concerns its peculiar *processes*, which Freud identified as condensation and displacement; these Lacan subsequently identified with the rhetorical figures of metaphor and metonymy. The unconscious *does*. Warburg, I suggest, equally understood culture as *doing*, as a process always *working* its already freighted materials. Thus, he tracked pacifying, secularizing, disenchanting transformations, as in his study of Manet's *Déjeuner sur l'Herbe* in 1928, or troubling re-emergence of the violent, as in his last plate in the *Mnemosyne Bilderatlas*. The difference is not psychological, but historical and political.

What is the optical unconscious then? A simple mechanical aid to the vagaries of human perception, or a rhetorical field of substitution, translation and transposition equally marked by repressions that are themselves shaped in historical processes of change and recurrence: the resilient refusal of troublesome thoughts to be forgotten or obliterated? If taken in the latter sense, whatever photography discloses to us would always be resisting the pressures of censorship and repression while exerting the counter pressure of the repressed seeking to tip itself into the visible, where it could only be registered by symptomatic inscriptions of repetition and displacement. If we are dealing with such processes, we need to be focussing on photography itself rather than a photograph.

⁷ Wilhelm Jensen, *Gradiva: A Pompeian Fancy*, transl. by Helen M. Downey, New York 1918; Sigmund Freud, "Delusions and Dreams in Jensen's *Gradiva* (1907)", in: James Strachey (ed.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 9, London 1959, pp. 1–95.

⁸ Heinrich Wölfflin, "Wie man Skulpturen aufnehmen

soll", Teil I in: *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*, VII (1896), pp. 224–228; Teil II in: *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*, VIII (1897), pp. 294–297.

⁹ Bernard Berenson, "Notebook Entry 14 October 1893", in: Hanna Kiel (ed.), *The Berenson Treasury: A Selection of Works, Unpublished Writings, Letters, Diaries, Journals 1887–1958*, London 1964, p. 18.

Art Historians, Photography and the Construction of the Artist as Ideal Mirror-Image

Warburg's use of photography is, I suggest, distinctive. Not a technical difference, his usage creates a different concept of the disciplinary project.

Many early art historians resisted what was initially deemed as the helpfully secretarial assistance of photographs because they offered only poor replications of a vital material object. Such scholars remained faithful to the primacy of the phenomenological encounter between human eye and art work so as to know through their own body and its affected presence the specificities of scale, materiality, traces of the making hand and mind, and in the case of Wölfflin on sculpture, its singular privileged or proposed point of viewing.⁸ For analysis, Heinrich Wölfflin, for instance, always preferred drawing, itself the product of both a formal training of observation that tries to overcome too immediate an assimilation of what we see by our pre-programming brains, and of a training of the hand to become a means of dispassionate sight and observational translation. The art connoisseur Bernard Berenson, however, liked photographs because they sustained the memory of works he had seen, but also because photography became the collective of signs through which he was able to establish the close comparisons between works that were in reality distant from one another whose visitation had been, however, facilitated by modern technology of a different sort: steam and road transport. Berenson wrote:

“Of the writer on art today we all expect not only the intimate acquaintance with his subject which modern means of conveyance have made possible, but also that patient comparison of a given work with all others by the same master which photography has rendered easy. It is not at all difficult to see at any rate nine tenths of a great master's works in such rapid succession that the memory of them will be fresh enough to enable the critic to determine the place and value of any picture. And when this continuous study of originals is supplemented by isochromatic photographs, such comparison attains almost the accuracy of physical science.”⁹

Berenson marks the advent of isochromatic photography—in which colours are rendered in a grey scale according to their true visual brightness—but also reduces it to the mechanical assemblage of memories of actually dispersed works which enabled the real project: the (re)construction of the oeuvre and its master.

I hardly need to underscore what we all already know about connoisseurship's important, but often currently disavowed function in establishing coherent *bodies* of work that share the 'hand of the master', constituting thereby the signs and traces by which an artistic personality could be reconstructed from the fragmented limbs of a scattered corpus that the assembling of photographic documentation could effect. Art works will always remain geo-spatially dispersed in public and private collections impossible to visit in their entirety. Technological reproduction and documentation has not only made art history into the history of the photographed. The reassembled body that supported the rediscovered mind or personality of the 'master' form the basis for the chief instrument of art-historical scholarly production: the monograph. Its scholarly ground is the *catalogue raisonné*, the book that supplements assembled photographic substitutes with documentation about the now missing object in order to produce their subject: the artist/author.

Art history, furthermore, projects onto historical artefacts the coherence of being the grouped emanations of one individual's imaginative, intellectual and practical vision corroborated by the illustrated compendium that assembles all the work within the cover of the catalogue or monograph, or the assemblage in the photo-archive to which one source the researcher comes to assimilate the totality of an

artist's production. The invention of the artist-master and his oeuvre, facilitated by photographic documentation, has serious repercussions. I suggest that it makes the history of art into a self-consolidating mirror for the privileged subject of art history: the art historian.¹⁰ Artist-defined art history holds up an idealizing mirror for a selectively narcissistic reflection that has so often turned out to be modern, bourgeois, white, Euro-American and masculine.¹¹

Here I would like to suggest that technologically-assisted and reproductive memory has been the ground across which the construction of art as the product of this highly selective image of artistic personality has become possible and normalized. Hence Art History (the discipline) may be understood as itself a technology for the production of a selective and constructed cultural memory that creates, by means of photography, its series of singularities: the artists, asserted by details in art works and stylistic procedures that are separated from the commonality of the imagery or the cultural ensemble in which a work might have functioned semiotically and symbolically.

None of us will argue against the proposition that photography is intimately bound up with the inventions and practices of art history from research tool to pedagogical practice. Could it, however, also have been used as a means of imagining other ways of doing art history, of exploring another, non-artist-based project for art history that was not, on the other hand, Wölfflin's formalist idea of an art history without names? Could photography be used in a way that required both the secretarial and the unconscious disclosing potentials of this humanly created but mechanically agnostic mode of seeing and making images of image-objects? Could it have been used to create, in a specifically photographic mode, a much more political and deeply discomfiting mirror, held up to the modern European, who, in her/his guise as art historian, initiated these practices in the heart of Euro-American nationalisms and colonial imperialisms and hence had to face the his/her own violence? In 1908, Warburg stated:

"It still remains true that any conscientious comparative study of the influence of classical antiquity is also a contribution towards the self-education of the spirit of Europe. We do not yet possess such a history but for this very reason any contribution may have its own importance."¹²

Like Freud and psychoanalysis in general, although without any theoretical engagement with it, Warburg's practice shares a sense of the need for a reflexive, self-critical understanding of the European bourgeois subject in opposition to that latter's own delusional concept of higher purposes and complacent superiority.

¹⁰ This is also Freud's argument for the centrality of biography in the study of art and literature. See Sarah Kofman, *The Childhood of Art: An Interpretation of Freud's Aesthetics*, transl. by Winifred Woodhull, New York 1988.

¹¹ For fuller elaboration of this argument see Griselda Pollock, "Artists, Mythologies and Media...", in: *Screen*, 21, 3 (1980), pp. 57–96; and id., *Differencing the canon; feminist desire and the writing of Art's Histories*, London 1999.

¹² Cited in Gombrich 1970 (note 1), p. 191.

¹³ Kenneth Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form*, Harmondsworth 1956. Dedicated to Bernard Berenson, the book, notably the chapter on Pathos, was according to Clark's autobiography inspired by Warburg. See Kenneth Clark, *Another Part of the Wood: A Self-Portrait*, London 1974, pp. 189–190.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

¹⁵ Aby Warburg, "Bayonne Notebook", pp. 81–82, cited in Gombrich 1970 (note 1), p. 267.

Warburg and the Photographic Optical Unconscious

The answer to the question is yes. I am proposing that the work of Aby Warburg might be the case through which to explore such an argument. I want, therefore, to examine his curious uses of photography as ultimately the only plane on which his method itself becomes visible.

According to Kenneth Clark, who attended the mesmerising lecture by the diminutive art historian at the Hertziana in Rome on 19 January, 1929, Warburg should not have been an art historian. He should have been a poet or an actor; his spoken manner in the presence of his boards of photographs or slides was utterly compelling even while his writing was often tedious and unfulfilled. It was Warburg's delivery in Rome in 1929 that put an end to Clark's pure connoisseurship and eventually led him to write a very Warburgian book: *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Art* in which he acknowledged art as a series of formal symbols.¹³ But, Clark adds in his memoirs: "Symbols are a dangerous branch of study as they easily lead to magic; and magic leads to the loss of reason".¹⁴

Warburg's answer would have been, all the more reason to take seriously what art and human culture in general tells us about the polarities within which human subjects and their cultures always oscillate; all the more reason not to trust the progressivist stories art historians are telling themselves that require blindness to what is before their eyes—once we can track the persistence and the recurrence of the traces of the repressed/unconscious across the field of images that disclose the figurative memory of emotion and the space for reflective understanding. Photography is thus not art history's memory assistant plotting out the developmental model; what matters is how we use this technological extension of memory as an aid to vision to disclose and confront what artistic forms remember for us, and what we need to come to know about ourselves through such mirroring of the entwined paths of magic and reason.

The rational person uses photography rationally, to classify, codify, document, prove, to synthesise. The person interested equally in unreason as reason's inescapable partner uses what photography makes possible *analytically*, to disclose the symptomatic processes at work in the image, condensed, displaced, transformed, recurring. Instead of classifying the art work by means of comforting and containing categories such as authorship, style, medium, movement, period, nation, Warburg took the image-culture of art as the analysand on the couch of a cultural memory that the bourgeois consciousness in its art-historical form was afraid to acknowledge and projected elsewhere onto its social, racial, and gendered others.

Warburg conceptualised images as symbols: not symbols of something in either Piercean or Saussurian terms, but as reservoirs of energy and affects that the image-symbol preserves and may be able to transmit, but only when a subsequent cultural moment needs its rejuvenation or heating up and re-makes contact, allowing its stored reserves to reanimate or disturb moribund cultural tendencies. Tradition is not a passively received influence; it is lively and enlivening only when the culture reconnecting with it is re-animated by it. For instance, lecturing at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz in 1927, Warburg analysed Valois tapestries and a British postage stamp in relation to sixteenth-century pageants in order to show how the Baroque—an "empty flourish"—severed the dynamic link between life in movement and the art that maintained the link:

"The task of social memory shows itself here clearly as the mnemonic function preserving, by means of ever renewed contact with the monuments of the past, the rising sap from the subsoil of the past into the classicizing forms, and thus preventing a form instinct with dynamism from becoming an empty flourish [...]"¹⁵

As in the scene in the film *Back to the Future* (1985, Robert Zemeckis), when Doc has to bring together the disconnected parts of an electrical cable so that the lightening can be conducted down from the clock tower into the car to energise the time-travelling jump of Marty back to the future, Warburg's theory of the image, borrowed from Richard Semon's concept of *engram*, focused on its stored up energy or dynamic potential that required reconnection.¹⁶ Tradition, with its passive connotations or influence with its one-way movement were far too simplistic explanations for Warburg's sense of *Nachleben*, which is not so much afterlife as the *living* on of a different kind that is not unrelated to Freud's psychoanalytical theory of *Nachträglichkeit* in which the archaic and formational events of the subject's formation are perpetually reactivated, and effectively only come into their own through retrospective repetition. Giorgio Agamben explains: "This is why Warburg speaks of symbols as dynamograms that are transmitted to artists in a state of great tension, that are not polarized in their active or passive, positive or negative energetic charge; their polarization, which occurs through an encounter with a new epoch and its vital needs, can then bring about a complete transformation of meaning".¹⁷ Thus, the confrontation with the energy stored up is not a matter of "aesthetic choice or neutral reception"; it is a confrontation that might be turn out to be as lethal as it is vitalizing.

This unpredictability is crucial. We might as easily regress as move towards enlightenment and knowledge. Agamben uses as his example Warburg's reading of Dürer's transformation of the superstitious fear of Saturn into the humanized emblem of "intellectual contemplation".¹⁸ In order to read these dynamic and dangerous confrontations sustained by, and performatively enacted in art, art historians must also become sensitised seismographs, heated rather than cool, to the memory tracks of intensity and the reflective space of thought the image may sustain. So how does photography foster the sensitisation, not of the celluloid or paper, but of the thinking historian?

Warburg and Photography

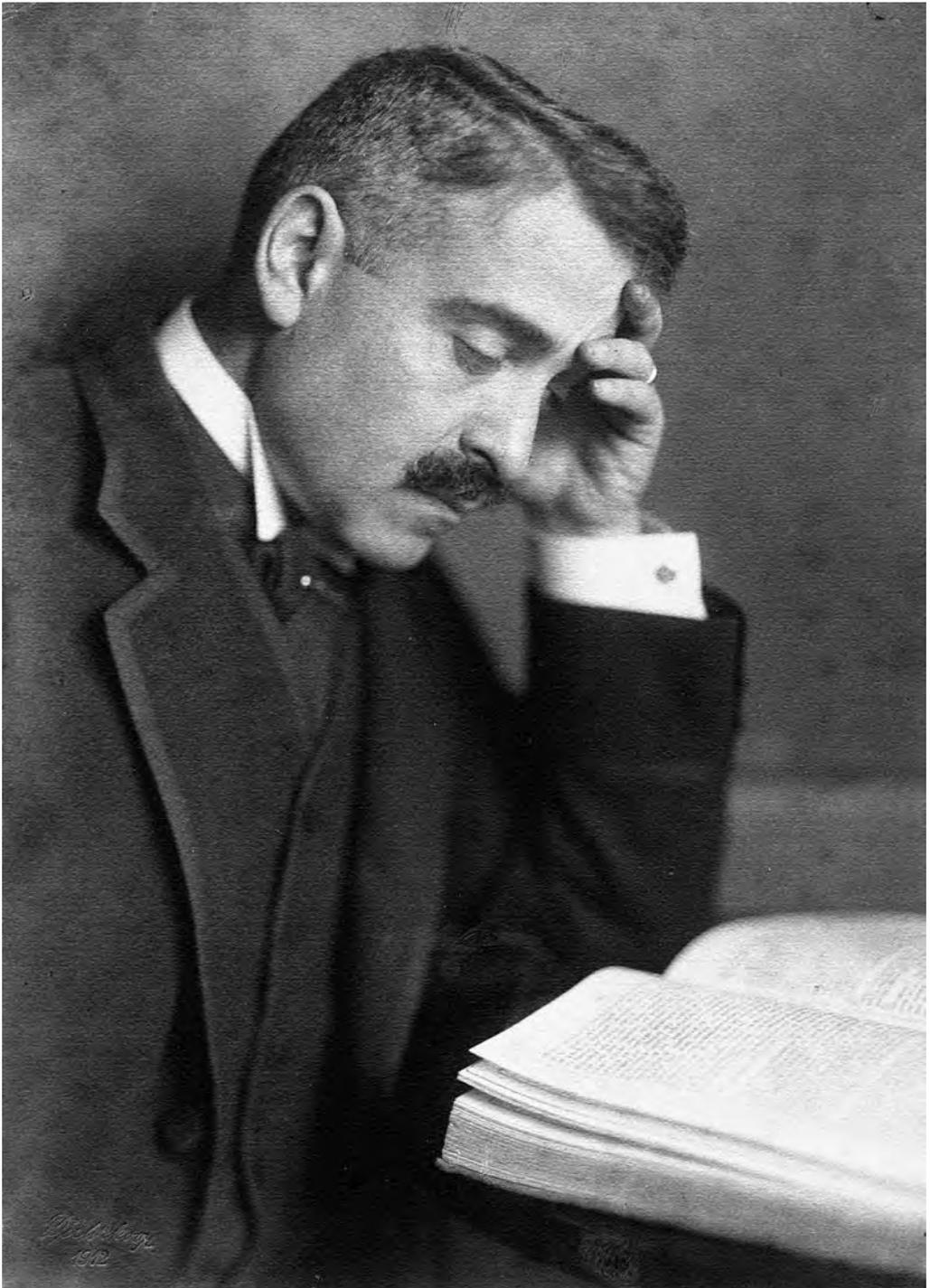
There are photographs of Aby Warburg (fig. 1).

An iconic, resembling portrait of the young scholar takes its place in the photo archive—the photographic memory of art history—of art historians. Its iconography—scholar, head in hand, reading a book—is pretty conventional. Let me contrast a collection of stately photographic portraits of Warburg's teachers and his contemporaries in their bourgeois European mode of representing the intellectual with a stunning eighteenth-century painted portrait of the founder of modern art history and a counter-thinker to Warburg on the question of the meaning of classical antiquity. Winckelmann was portrayed by Anton von Maron (1733–1808) in 1768, dressed in a gorgeous fur-lined, salmon pink dressing gown atopped with a golden yellow turban, set beside a brooding statue of the blind Homer and accompanied by an engraving of Hadrian's beloved Antinous as he takes up his quill to write (fig. 2). In the spirit of Warburg, I want to juxtapose this image with a photograph taken by Warburg (fig. 3). This is a Warburgian move, not to draw out similarities or differences between the images in any iconographic sense. The juxtaposition enables me to move from the close up of animal skins, feathers and the stately dance movements of the Hemis Kachina in Oraibi, Arizona, on 1 May 1896, to the ascetic librarian, Winckel-

¹⁶ Daniel L. Schacter, *Forgotten Ideas, Neglected Pioneers: Richard Semon and the Story of Memory*, Ann Arbor/MI 2000.

¹⁷ Agamben 1999 (note 4), p. 90.

¹⁸ Agamben 1999 (note 4), p. 94, referencing the lecture given in December 1908: *Die antike Götterwelt und die Frührenaissance im Süden und im Norden* (Ms.), transl. in: Gombrich 1970 (note 1), pp. 187–191.



1 *Portrait of Aby Warburg, c. 1900. Warburg Institute, University of London*



2 Anton von Maron (1733–1808), *Portrait of J.J. Winckelmann*, oil on canvas, 1768. Weimar, Schlossmuseum

vu par un Kodak” that Michael Steinberg suggests knowingly substitutes the naturalist author’s sensibility for a technological gaze that certainly records, but also make us see more.²⁰

Warburg photographed a new type of person he encountered in his travels in the United States: European missionaries and teachers, and other migrant Europeans living in a land still vividly imagined in a mythopoetic ritual life world of indigenous peoples that was being overwritten by railroads, churches, shops, electricity and telegraph wires (fig. 5a). One of the most renowned of the American snapshots taken by Warburg was snapped in February 1896. It is a photograph of an American business man that Warburg jokingly nicknamed “Uncle Sam” (fig. 5b).

The figure of Uncle Sam as representative of the new, modern, Euro-American was first used in 1812 and first illustrated in 1852 but it was fixed iconographically by the form in which it appeared

mann, who is represented, none the less, by von Maron encased in animal furs and crowned with gold amidst the colourless residues of sculptural ghosts and a faintly traced male torso.

What happens to the elegant portrait, replete with images of classical statuary when placed beside this photographed image of a still living ritual so that the differences art historians might typically stress in terms of art form, date, place, function and so forth are suspended temporarily for the disclosure of an unexpected cultural connection in the relation to the animal other, a moment of shared *Nachleben* of the magical and its sartorial taming?

More importantly, Aby Warburg (1866–1929) owned a camera. In 1896, he had a leather-cased Buck’s Eye camera made by the Boston Camera Company. He used it to take photographs during his travels in the United States of ritual-religious ceremonies performed by Hopi dancers.¹⁹

But I am more interested in the photographs he took of Euro-Americans (fig. 4).

Warburg presented his American and Indian photographs to the Hamburg Photographic Society on 21 June 1897 where he introduced them with a Zola-esque flourish as “un coin de nature



3 Aby Warburg, *Hemis Kachina dancing at Oraibi, Arizona*, 1896. Warburg Institute, University of London



4 Aby Warburg, *Chinatown, San Francisco, February 1896*. Warburg Institute, University of London

in 1861 in *Harper's Weekly* (fig. 6). Warburg's Uncle Sam is significantly photographed *stepping out*, walking down the streets of San Francisco in front of a neoclassical rotunda, while electricity-bearing wires and the poles sustaining them are clearly visible above the walking man's head. Not posed, but noticed by its optical unconscious, the photograph catches Benjamin-wise, or stages, an uncanny combination of human movement, classical architecture in the New World and technologically mastered energy. The street snap acquires significance because it captures an assemblage of elements that struck Warburg himself as having resonances with concurrent but more ancient cultures whose relations it would take the next thirty years to understand.

It also is significant because that photograph was selected almost thirty years later to conclude Warburg's lecture, given on 21 April 1923 at Ludwig Binswanger's Bellevue Clinic at Kreuzlingen in Switzer-

¹⁹ We will come back to them, but I will not engage here in the important debates about the ethics or the treachery of photographing secret ceremonies of other peoples without their full consent or understanding that by doing so the secret would be 'published'.

²⁰ Aby Warburg, *Images from the Region of the Pueblo Indians of North America*, transl. with an interpretative essay by Michael Steinberg, Ithaca 1995, p. 95.



5a Aby Warburg, Quaker Woman standing in front of the railroad on the Santa Fe Route to Holbrook, Arizona, April 1896. Warburg Institute, University of London

land, to confirm his recovery from a schizophrenic breakdown that occurred horribly in the final years of the First World War. His now famous lecture, which he never wished to have known or published, circulates under the title “Lecture on the Serpent Ritual” after an abridged English translation that appeared in the 1938–1939 issue of the *Journal of the Warburg Institute*. In its first full German publication in 1988, it was called “Serpent Ritual: An Account of a Journey”. In fact, in 1923, Warburg delivered the lecture as *Images from the Region of the Pueblo Indians of North America*.²¹ The lecture was thus about *images*, some of which were photographs, all of which encountered each other through photography. It was about images he saw *in the actions* of the Pueblo rituals and technical images that made them transportable and presentable as and through photography. The photographs/slides shown were thus not mere documents, *aide-mémoires* recorded by his photographic secretary. The images are already texts requiring a culturally, philologically and historically sensitised reading.



5b Aby Warburg, 'Westerner' [So-called Uncle Sam], San Francisco, 1896. Warburg Institute, University of London

The lecture begins:

"If I am to show you images, most of which I photographed myself, from a journey undertaken some twenty-seven years in the past, and to accompany them with words, then it behoves me to preface my attempts with an explanation."²²

Art history is performed by showing images accompanied by words. The images are not illustrations to a discourse but objects of analysis. Warburg wants to explain. Forty-seven slides were shown during the course of the lecture made from photographs taken during the journey or acquired in the United States from other sources. It was not only a photography-dependent, illustrated lecture as we normally think of art history. It was a lecture about *images* which is a very different project. Warburg then continues:

²¹ Warburg 1995 (note 20); Aby Warburg, "A Lecture on the Serpent Ritual", in: *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 2, 4 (1939), pp. 277–292; Aby Warburg, *Schlangenritual: Ein Reisebericht*, Berlin 1988.

²² Warburg 1995 (note 20), p. 1.



6 'Uncle Sam and Civil Service Reform', cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, 24 November 1876 [Uncle Sam became a popular term for the government of the United States by the 1820s, sharing the same initials US. The top hat only became the figure's signature with this image]

"The few weeks I have had at my disposal have not given me the chance to revive and work through my old memories in such a way that I might offer you a solid introduction into the psychic life of the Indians."²³

Images accompanied by words need some explanatory framing. Such framing might need time to revive and work through old memories which give access to his topic: the psychic life of the Pueblo peoples who are the settled indigenous farming societies already interacting for centuries with Catholic and Protestant European missionaries and impacted upon by the encroaching technologies that have brought them to the Southwest of this vast but sparsely populated continent.

Warburg then explains his further hesitations relating to the brevity of his time spent with the Pueblo peoples and the difficulties posed by not knowing well enough any of their many languages in any depth at all. This suggests the real scholarly anxiety of the anthropologist as well as the dedicated philologist for whom culture is complexly embedded in all sorts of scripts that need painstaking decipherment.

"If these impressions are now more blurred than they were, I can only assure you that in sharing my distant memories, *aided by the immediacy of photographs*, what I have to say will offer an impression both of a world whose culture is dying out and of a problem of decisive importance in the general writing of cultural history: In what ways can we perceive essential character traits of primitive pagan humanity?"²⁴

The modern technology of photography can capture as an image a culture that is still being lived and performed by living bodies in this liminal space between incoming/invasive modern European culture with its anthropological gaze and the long preserved and still lively mythopoetically charged life world of the Pueblo peoples. Photography enables this living remnant to enter into cultural knowledge *beside* other forms that will echo it and be explained by it. In contrast to the enfeebledness of human memory, the mechanical memory of photography has the paradoxical function of both immediacy and pastness. Roland Barthes would later identify the traumatic paradox of photography as holding together in a simultaneity hereness and thenness: this was there and then but is here now.

"The type of consciousness the photograph involves is indeed truly unprecedented, since it establishes not a consciousness of the *being-there* of the thing (which any copy could provoke) but an awareness of its *having-been-there*. What we have is a new space-time category: spatial immediacy and temporal anteriority, the photograph being an illogical conjunction between *here-now* and *there-then*."²⁵

Photography counters the fading of human memory that remains attached to the distance of time and place. In this case, it furthermore preserves what is dying—even before the visitor's eyes—namely the remnants of archaic cultural modes of lived, enacted ritual. The photograph *qua* photograph is not the topic

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²⁵ Roland Barthes, "The Rhetoric of the Image", in: *id.*, *Image / Music / Text*, essays selected and transl. by Stephen Heath, London 1977, p. 44.

²⁶ Steinberg also offers a very subtle analysis of this difficult term, see Steinberg 1995 (note 2), pp. 66–67.

²⁷ Warburg 1995 (note 20), p. 2.

of the lecture: the psychic life of the Pueblo Indians is. But through the photographs' immediacy something profoundly significant in the clash of temporalities (Indian and Euro-American cultural time) in space (made possible by railways) becomes visible because the optical unconscious may disclose to analysis what is not spontaneously grasped in seeing. The image becomes ostensive rather than indexical.

There are two places in which that is registered: distant memories of the cultural historian's trip in 1896 and the 'immediate' photographs, present in 1923, that display what he is only now understanding as happening in the encounter of one pre-technological culture with the technology that will enable him to 'see' its culture at work. Warburg's lecture explored the psychic life of a people, whom he considered as providing access to character traits of pagan humanity, *through images*: not merely what they are doing (a typical anthropological primitivism) but understanding the production of meaning through ritual that is at once a performative attempt to control rainfall for instance—a cause—but is at the same time a production of distance, a sign, what we might call the articulation of inner necessity through an externalised form: Warburg saw this in the dance, in the architecture, and in the drawings he asked several people to make for him.

These images were both held in his memory of the actual journey and his encounter and aided by photographs he took there and which then turned an event (his visit) and a ritual (what he witnessed) into that which could become knowable as cultural history. These photographs were dictated neither by pictorialist aesthetics nor rules of documentary realism. They register *as an image* what Warburg was interpreting through stored knowledge of other images of gestures, costumes, actions and aspirations. That is, his cultural archive shaped the optical unconscious of photography. What he was seeing was already rendered significant for him by the accumulated image contents of his own memory as an art/cultural historian with a specific interest in persistence of the originary pagan imaginary in post-classical European culture of the early modern period. His cultural/art-historical memory bank of images predetermined not only what he saw but what he would *use photography to disclose* as that which mattered in the scene/seen.

The word primitive arrests us momentarily.²⁶ Warburg participated unquestionably in the ideological frameworks of his European training and its modernist historicist consciousness; his terminology is a disturbance for our postcolonial consciences as is his intrusion on the privacy and secrecy of Pueblo peoples' rituals and spaces. But he is also more than a mere colonizing anthropologist. In the encounter he variously photographed, Warburg senses the historical poles of a single string. In his own framework, as a cultural historian, he felt he was a witness to the revealing collision in his own time and space, of an industrial-technological culture and an enclave of a living, but also possibly dying, archaic culture in which superstition and magical thinking "go hand in hand with livelihood" and where what was evident to the eye was "a *religious* devotion to natural phenomena". He states:

"To us, this synchrony of fantastic magic and sober purposiveness appears as a symptom of cleavage; for the Indian this is not schizoid but, rather, a liberating experience of the boundless communicability between man and environment."²⁷

The "us" are the moderns, the Europeans, who form the other, invisible aspect of the visible image track that the lecture created. We—that "us"—are confronted not with the other, but with a mirror (of the critical rather than consolidating kind of which I wrote in section III) in which our own otherness to this still living pagan culture in whose dying 'we' are implicated is represented. What is distilled by photographic capture is the psychic dimension, the psychological symptoms, of what the European now experiences as a complete intellectual cleavage between utility and superstition, or as schizoid tendencies which, however, in the festive Indian rituals are lived magically as profoundly and productively linked.

The moderns (fig. 5a, 5b) such as the San Francisco business man Uncle Sam walking to his work and or black clad missionary out in the desert live lives of daily purposiveness wherein the fantastic opens up a dangerous cleavage between their science and the Indians' magic, between modern instrumental rationality and an imaginative reason that is, none the less, an attempt at comprehension of the forces acting upon human life, and are thus a mode of human thought. Warburg wrote: "I was able to catch with my camera in the streets of San Francisco the conqueror of the serpent cult and the fear of lightening, the heir to the aboriginal inhabitants, the gold seeking intruder into the land of the Indians."²⁸

The Uncle Sam photograph is, therefore, not a simple image to read. The photograph is not a document. It is part of the puzzle made visible by the photographic, i.e. captured, the image and its elements are there to be read. For Warburg, the image of the modern American and his street setting contains just as many elements of the symbolic process of costume, gesture, architecture and relations to natural phenomena, that embody Warburg and the American as modern men, as could be brought into perception by a photograph of the Hemis Kachina dancers with their equally opaque or esoteric deployment of spruce branch belts and armbands, their woollen blanket skirts and fox tails. The forces of fire, lightening, energy and water are symbolically coded in negative and positive black and white diagrams on the masks worn by the dancers as they lend their living bodies to impersonation and animation of the forces that they themselves project out onto the natural world as their controlling others, while simultaneously projecting onto these non-human elements their own, human—owned and disowned—psychological characteristics of responsivity and unpredictability. In Uncle Sam, a new scientific-technology masters and subjects a brazen serpent of Edison's electricity company with which the walking man no longer projectively identifies, which he never dreams of embodying, even while his daily purposiveness relies upon its heating and lighting. As a result, he, modern man, experiences no liberating experience of the boundless communicability between man and environment which is the hallmark of pagan thought and which appears to be for Warburg the foundation for the imaginative, symbolic work of the image. The photograph of Uncle Sam is, therefore, a negative testament to the waning of creative psychic life that the necessity for working with natural resources once generated, but which does not disappear completely with scientific mastery and subsequent disenchantment of the natural world. It also heralds a certain waning, therefore, of art itself.

Yet this image has another level of significance. For it is not simply to be decoded as a semiotic scheme composed of signifiers and signifieds. *Qua* image, the photograph captures something deeper: the problem of movement, life, and energy, real and metaphoric, which are keys to the unreason of Warburgian thought. Energy involves polarization, charging negative and positive poles for instance, as well as transformations and transportations that run like electricity between such charged points. When we no longer wonder at lightening but harness the force it represents in the wire and the switch, is our faculty for imaginative work, association, resolution of contradiction by means of the imaging of the world eroded?

"We are in the age of Faust, in which the modern scholar—between magical practice and cosmological mathematics—strove to posit a space for enlightenment [*den Denkraum der Besonnenheit*] between himself and the object world. Athens always wants precisely to be reconquered anew from Alexandria."²⁹

Art was understood by Warburg to create the space for thought, for reflection in which the symbol emerged as the means of 'working through', to borrow a Freudian psychodynamic term, the unresolvable tensions in human life between the susceptibility to intense feeling, passion, fear, anxiety, rage, desire and the capacity for reasoned analysis, understanding and a containing distance from the passions which is not the same as their subjection or conquest, which would be deadly and deadening.

Warburg's attention to the divide between the still dancing Hopi and the stepping out Uncle Sam could easily sound like nostalgic primitivism. I suggest that his work is instead intensely political contemporary research into what is happening to the potencies of the imagining and symbolising mind in the modern world as a result of historical forces that appear to offer, ready-made, rational mastery and thus to evacuate the need for symbolic ways of encountering and transforming magical unreason which none the less may reassert itself without the Denkraum that transmutes it, or in Freudian terms sublimates it into creative thought or social purpose.

I want to suggest that this was, formulated differently, the issue Walter Benjamin would address in dangerously fascist times in 1936 when, via another more Marxist route, he thought about photo-mechanical imagery and *aura*, its loss, and its falsified resurrection in fascist aesthetics.³⁰ Benjamin wondered how to contain the power of the aura of the artwork that once charged the ritual object but which has been displaced by photomechanical reproducibility, so that a false version of aura could not be revived, politically and demonically, by a fascism that could recreate a cult of unreasoning frenzy and faked authenticity as a response to the aggravations created by the disenchantments typical of crisis-ridden capitalist modernity. It was not as a personal demon that such forces could return, but as political demagoguery and fascism.

Warburg and the Image

Warburg studied the image, not art. This does not mean he studied iconography rather than style. This does not mean that he looked at content rather than form. He theorized the image as a complex psychological and cultural event. It appears it was Fritz Saxl, the librarian at the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg during Warburg's illness, who prepared for Warburg frames for the screens covered in black hessian on which he could assemble, by hooking and unhooking, the montages of photographs that alone could 'narrate' the dynamics of transfer, polarization and inversion or even disenchantment that Warburg was proposing as cultural history in contradistinction to other contemporary linear, nationalist and progressivist histories of art. Thus, in his final years 1924–1929, Warburg began one of the great and still mysterious projects in the history of the formation of art history and its use of photographs, namely the *Mnemosyne Bilder Atlas* which was left incomplete at his death in 1929.

Mnemosyne, the personification of memory or rather reminiscence, was the Titaness daughter of Gaia and Uranus; she was the mother of the Muses through her nine consecutive couplings with Zeus. Mythologically, Memory is thus the product of the intercourse of the originating couple and herself carries into the world the muses, one of which Clio supervises our historical project. But we moderns do not personify memory; we research it as an operation of our minds. Some locate it in our brains; others trusting to their being a brain, investigate the mind as the site of cognitive operations, while yet others explore the most perplexing dimensions of memory: the impressed and inscribed unconscious, the archive of personal and cultural history to whose music and rhythms our fragile and limited consciousness unknowingly dances.

²⁸ Transl. in: Gombrich 1970 (note 1), p. 225.

²⁹ Cited by Steinberg 1995 (note 2), p. 69 and differently transl. in: "Pagan-Antique Prophecy in Words and Images in the Age of Luther (1920)", in: Aby Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, introduction by Kurt

Forster, transl. by David Britt, Los Angeles 1999, pp. 597–697, here p. 650.

³⁰ Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproducibility*, ed. by Hannah Arendt, transl. by Harry Zohn, London 1973, p. 254.

Saxl tells us that Warburg's project was specifically titled: *Bilderreihe zur Untersuchung der Funktion vorgeprägter Ausdruckswerte bei der Darstellung bewegten Lebens in der Kunst der europäischen Renaissance* translating as *A Picture Series Examining the Function of Preconditioned Antiquity-Related Expressive Values for the Representation of dynamised Life or Life Movement in the Art of the European Renaissance*. It is probably crucial to reclaim this title over the more abbreviated *Mnemosyne Atlas* because of Warburg's appropriation of Richard Semon's concept of memory. Gombrich summarises this concept beautifully:

"Memory is not a property of consciousness but the one quality that distinguishes living from dead matter. It is the capacity to react to an event over a period of time; that is, a form of preserving and transmitting energy not known to the physical world. Any event affecting living matter leaves a trace which Semon calls an 'engram'. The potential energy conserved in this 'engram' may, under suitable conditions be reactivated and discharged—we then say that the organism acts in a specific way because it remembers the previous event. [...] It was this concept of mnemonic energy, preserved in 'engrams', but obeying laws similar to those of physics which attracted Warburg when he took up theories of his youth on the nature of the symbol and its function in the social organism."³¹

Echoing Bergson's latter theory of memory as well as Freud's dynamics of psychic life, Semon's biological thesis on memory entered Warburg's intellectual life in his youth, the period of the visit to the Pueblo peoples of the American Southwest, but now found an expository form as well as a means of visual research which was not merely through photographs as *aide-mémoires*, as Berenson and in effect all art historians use reproductions of paintings, sculptures and the like.³² Instead, as a kind of fractured cinema, the assemblage of photographs, whose relations and 'passages' could be constantly reworked to disclose new circuits and transfers, realized the historico-psychological concept of culture towards which Warburg had been groping. While Freud himself famously shifted from Charcot's iconography of hysteria to the acoustic plane of the talking cure, he, none the less, surrounded himself and his patients with images that functioned as the bearers through time of cultural memory from ancient civilizations. These images echoed Freud's deeply archaeological concept of the individual psyche and culture's history.³³ Warburg differs from Freud's depth psychology in so far as he saw in culture not repression and excavation, but persistence, transmission and resuscitation which did not bury the archaic or infantile past in the unconscious but embedded its imprint in the living matter of human beings who externalised their engrammatic, almost physiological, memories through actions that led first to ritual enactment and then the encoding of the acts in the mythic and the imagistic in religion and symbolic forms that were capable of registering and transmitting the affective energy of life while also generating a space in which that could be 'formulated'. This means both being given a form external to the agitated site of enlivened, heated-up being, and given back to the human subject as a thinking space in which the energies could be modified or mediated or transformed symbolically. The photographic assemblage, in radical contradistinction to the archive or the dual slide projection models we have generally inherited, was the singular form in which Warburg's Semonian cultural history, enhanced in the 1920s by the British ritual-myth school notably in the work of Jane Harrison, could be performed.³⁴

We no longer have the original screens. We have to work with photographs of 40 wooden screens covered in black canvas to which are hooked a varying number of mounted photographs after pictures, reproduction photographs out of books, images from newspapers and ephemeral culture. We also have photographic documentation of the use of special exhibition screens which accompanied lectures such as the presentation on Claudius Civilis in the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg in 1926, a presentation on rape in Ovid in 1927 and the lecture at the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome in 1929 on Ghirlandaio («Die römische Antike in der Werkstatt Ghirlandaio's»³⁵

Thus we have a double scene: photographs of photographic assemblages, of assemblages of varied forms and modes of imagery brought together on a single, extended screen by means of a photomechanical imaging process. It is important to stress that Warburg's screens are not comparable to Malraux's later concept of the *musée imaginaire*/museum without walls in which the photographic reproducibility of art removes each artefact from its complex social and geopolitical location to assemble everything on the common, aestheticizing ground of being uniformly 'art'. As an anti-aestheticizing art history, Warburg's *Bilderatlas* was enabled by photography, which could produce all these diverse instances (newsphotos, sculptures, prints, postage stamps, tapestries, pageants and masks) as images. Clearly Warburg's method was calling for a good CD-Rom or interactive digitalisation, or PowerPoint, although I suspect that the seductive potency of digitalized imagery distracts us from seeing what the relatively poor quality images at Warburg's disposal, none the less, disclosed beyond the surface appeal of the visual image.

If we consider the *Mnemosyne Atlas* as one means of accessing the iconology of the interval as method or the cultural-analytical project associated with Aby Warburg, we have to think about its dependency on photography and hence its place in our consideration of photography, memory and archives in the constitution and practice of art history. But at the same time, saying that Warburg used photographs tells us absolutely nothing about what he used them to do. It is not only a matter of what photographs made possible that matters. Art historians largely use photographs as means to create comparisons, taxonomies through which to establish consistencies of the hand that forms authorships, oeuvres, or groupings of movements and styles. They are used to trace descent, influence, cause, and effect. This was not Warburg's aim. By tracing the migration of signs he aimed to reveal "incontestably that European civilization is the product of conflicting tendencies, a process in which—as far as these astrological strivings for orientations are concerned—we should look for neither friends nor enemies, but rather for symptoms of psychological oscillations swinging uniformly between the distant poles of magico-religious practice and mathematical contemplation—and back again".³⁶ The latter does not offer redemption from the former. It is their oscillation that we must confront.

As these initial photographic documents reveal, we are looking, in the case of Warburg's use of photographs, at a unique pictorial imagination at work, attuned to the image as symbologenic, a conceptualising creation of an elaborate co-emergent sequence of screens necessitating combinations of images, the meaning of whose assemblage depends upon identifying it at a level that is not visible except as a conceptual effect. Nothing is self-evident; nothing is simply there to be seen. Every connection has to be worked out according to the logic or rather the illogic of researched transformations specific to

³¹ Gombrich 1970 (note 1), p. 242.

³² Henri Bergson, *Memory and Matter*, transl. by N. M. Paul / W. S. Palmer, New York 1990 (first appeared 1896). It is significant that one of Warburg's key sources for his lecture, the ritual-myth classicist Jane Harrison drew upon Bergson's theses on memory for her analysis of the origins of classical art in ritual. See Jane Harrison, *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion*, London 1963, p. 13 (first appeared 1911).

³³ For an analysis of Freud's collection see Griselda Pollock, "The Image in Psychoanalysis and the Archaeological Metaphor", in: *Psychoanalysis and the Image*, Boston / Oxford 2005, pp. 1–29; id., "The Object's Gaze in the Freudian Museum", in: Griselda Pollock, *Encounters in the Virtual Feminist Museum: Time, Space and the Archive*, London 2007, pp. 67–88.

³⁴ Saxl brought Cambridge classicist Jane Harrison's work on the origins of Greek drama in ritual to Warburg's attention in 1923 when he was preparing his lecture on the Images from the Pueblo Peoples. See Ludwig Binswanger, in: Davide Stimilli (ed.), *Aby Warburg: La Guarigione Infinita. Storia Clinica di Aby Warburg*, Vicenza 2005, p. 179; Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, Cambridge 1922 (first appeared 1903).

³⁵ I do not have the space here to do justice to the photograph of the screens used for the Rembrandt lecture but these images themselves deserve analysis of the juxtaposition of the neighbourly books in the circular Warburg library with the neighbourly images propped up in front of them.

³⁶ Aby Warburg, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. II, pp. 564–565, transl. in: Gombrich 1970 (note 1), pp. 262–263.

the nature of polarized pressures under which they could persist or reanimate while *not remaining the same*. The method reveals its own form of the optical unconscious with its transmutations and inversions that can be traced through these conjunctions or collisions.

What knowledge becomes possible as a result of a method we hardly ever use now? What perspective on the history of the European or other cultures through the image rather than the artwork founds its visualization as a route to knowledge in this form? How does the polarization, that is not dialectic, between logic/illogic or the reason/unreason that Warburg constantly sought to reveal by logical and rational scholarly methods touch on art-historical research today, or rather on its self-questioning about what it counts as such and what it excludes as unreasonable readings of the image?

Photography as Philosophy

In *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*, first published in German in 1983, Vilém Flusser proposes a hypothesis that there have been two major turning points in human culture.³⁷ One is the invention of linear writing; the other is the invention of technical images. Flusser reads the image as a surface across which the gaze wanders seeking relations and repetitions. This constitutes a fundamentally magical nature in contrast to “the linear world of history in which nothing is repeated and in which everything has causes and will have consequences”.³⁸ He adds: “The magical nature of images must be taken into account when decoding them. Thus, it is wrong to look for ‘frozen events’ in images. Rather they replace events by states of things and translate them into scenes”.³⁹ Flusser then plots out the event of texts in relation to images before marking the invention of technical images which are the product of an apparatus predetermined by a programme to produce information. Yet within this field, there are experimental photographers who struggle with programmed informationism. Hence:

“A philosophy of photography is necessary for raising photographic practice to the level of consciousness, and this is again because this practice gives rise to a model of freedom in the post-industrial context in general. A philosophy of photography must reveal the fact that there is no place for human freedom within the area of automated, programmed and programming apparatuses, in order to finally show a way in which it is nevertheless possible to open up a space for freedom. The task of a philosophy of photography is to reflect upon this possibility of freedom—and thus its significance in a world dominated by apparatuses; to reflect upon the way in which, despite everything, it is possible for human beings to give significance to their lives in the face of the chance necessity of death.”⁴⁰

Using Flusser’s argument that takes us back to the Baudelairean idea of photography as a deadening instrument of information gathering at the same time as it equally opens up the Benjaminian space of the optical unconscious, a disclosure that escapes mere informationism, I would suggest that Warburg in his use of photography was such a philosopher. He was an experimental user of photography as a means to make something critical about Modernity visible to the moderns in their long battle for enlightenment

³⁷ Vilém Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*, London 2000.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 81–82.

⁴¹ Maurice Godelier, *Perspectives in Marxist Anthropology*, Cambridge 1977.

⁴² For evidence of the continuity of magical thinking in modern cultures see Preface in Franz Boas, *Primitive Art*, Cambridge 1928, where he reminds his readers of the persistence of superstition and susceptibility to gross propaganda and emotional appeals.

but which they could easily confuse with the technology itself. No longer worshipping lightning because electricity is available constantly at the flick of a switch does not of itself produce enlightened consciousness; it generates merely a deadening reliance on technological programming. Warburg tried to rescue culture from art history which would equally make art dead by its typical uses of photography as its technological instrument. He would show us how culture worked as a thinking space: *Denkraum*.

Conclusion

I am arguing that photography constituted a potential for translation in which specific aspects of the artwork, in its complex materialities and histories, emerge at a specific level for analysis: what Warburg considered the symbolic. Thus, he gestured towards what remained an unspecified, an untheorized domain that lies between religion, from which art emerges, and thought, for which art creates a reflective space: the creation of a distance, or interval between the self and the external world. Religion in this context is to be understood in terms similar to those in which Marxist anthropologist Maurice Godelier identifies mythological thinking, when he links Marx's work on the fetishism of the commodity with anthropological-religious imagery to expose the still magical thinking in the commodity form in capitalist society. According to Godelier, mythological thinking precedes scientific thinking as the means to explain, and imaginatively master the external forces of the world and of which humans develop imaginative (mythic) and ultimately conceptual representations.⁴¹ Thus, far from being primitive in the sense of lower or underdeveloped levels of emergent humanity, mythopoetic thought is closer to what Lévi Strauss named *la pensée sauvage*—wild thinking—which exhibits its work on its own surface, its work at negotiating contradictions confronting human consciousness prior to the development of the pseudo-mythology that is also an anti-mythology: science, whose emergence may transform or even damage the imaginative faculty but does not ever displace it entirely.⁴² If what we encounter in art is the trace of a kind of work in which imaginative, symbiogenic creativity occurs in response to a humanity exposed vulnerably to the world of life, death, time, violence, desire, passion, and otherness both human and inhuman, the impact of science as an anti-symbolic mode is bound to be extensive. As we saw in the work on Uncle Sam and the Pueblo dancers, Warburg also sensed, but not necessarily regretted, the potential in human history for the diminution of the enchantment through science and its tool technology. History could not be turned back. But art history or rather *Kulturwissenschaft* could become the scene of virtual re-encounters with the originating conditions for art in the mythological, and encounters with art which we, now never completely beyond mythological thinking, need in order to be instructed about ourselves, because we remain structurally attached and susceptible to that energising pole in our psychic lives—and dangerously so, as Warburg's own descent into psychological illness had revealed personally.

Warburg thus opposed the fake rescue mission being performed by formalism and aestheticism which reconfigured art as a mirror of pacifying reasonableness or calmly contemplated beauty. He also challenged the false solace offered by the humanist tradition in which the multiple threads of art history are presented as unidirectional advance, making art mirror back to the modern European only a one-sided and dishonest picture of himself (sic) as its destined master. Instead Warburg, not a dialectician in the manner of Marx or Benjamin, drew on Nietzsche's radical explosion of bourgeois classicism through insisting on the twin faces of the Dionysian and the Apollonian. To make Nietzsche finally displace Hegel, Warburg added contemporary physics and thermodynamics to propose *polarity* as the constant condition of human psycho-symbolic ambivalence. He saw in knowledge of this po-

larity not the suspension (*Aufhebung*) of the contradictions of the dialectic but the possibility for responsible and historical self-understanding of a specific culture that has emerged out of a particular structural hybridity and the unique space of culture as its laboratory and thinking space. The false attribution of rational purposes and constant progress to a history created for art by taxonomy refused to confront the struggle between reason and unreason, passion and thought, in which art bore witness to the creation of a space of mediation and thus provided an insightful mirror to the deluded human subject while fostering, in what art offered, the dynamising seductions of the emotional intensities and psychological heat.

This argument was, I am suggesting, ultimately dependent on a particular use of photography; it is based on the very different use of the photograph as a means of disclosing the invisible threads and transformative movements of thought and passion through assembled images whose montage in a single space and time—the screen of the *Mnemosyne Bilderatlas*—created a joint conceptual plane on which movement could be tracked. This movement is not development, succession, influence, comparability.

The final screen of the Atlas, numbered 79 (fig. 7), is not merely montage in the Eisensteinian manner that generates a third meaning from the juxtapositions. It is more like a page of the Talmud or a medieval glossed text.⁴³ The core text-image is Raphael's Vatican fresco of the *Mass of Bolsena* of 1511. The fresco represents the miracle of the bleeding host alleged to have occurred at Bolsena in 1263, which is one of many incidents reported across Europe following the declaration of transsubstantiation as dogma of the Christian Church at the Lateran Council in 1215. The priest at Bolsena apparently lacked conviction about this regular miracle and the host bled before his eyes to convince him of the reality of transsubstantiation: bread become flesh. But the manner in which Raphael has treated this scene by 1511 performs, through its own gestural distillation, a spiritualization of the legend exemplified in the uplifted gestures of devotion and contemplative attitude of the priest and those around him.

Warburg placed above the photograph of the Raphael fresco several images of the *Cathedra Petri*, the chair of St Peter from the Basilica which carries into the heart of Papal Christianity pagan myth in the form of Zodiacal signs—these register an ancient calling out to the power of the Olympian gods. Below is the figure of Hope by Giotto. Her form gestures to and repeats the *Nympha* figure that represents emotion through physical movement of the body and especially the draperies, but who now has been transformed into an image of 'spiritualized fervour' rather than pagan invocation through actual dance. Thus, the Raphael is 'framed' by persistence and transformation. To the right are contemporary newspaper cuttings showing the procession of the Eucharist: the *monstrance*, adjoined by engravings of a papal court attending a Mass, which clearly link back to the Raphael, its theology, but also to the idea of human sacrifice that the Mass masks and translates into a spiritual act. Then Warburg has added a whole page of an illustrated newspaper which, overriding all hierarchies and protocols of value with regard to the events thus jumbled, inserts a photograph of a champion swimmer into the image of the Eucharistic procession on which Warburg commented on 30 July 1929 to a group of Hamburg graduands.

"I ask myself: does this swimmer know what a monstrance is? Does this Brawnist—I do not refer to his person but his type—not need to know the meaning of the symbolism that is rooted in paganism and which provoked such strong resistance opposition in the North that Europe was split in half? [...] The brutal juxtaposition shows that the cheery *hoc meum corpus est* can be set beside the tragic *hoc est corpus meum* without this discrepancy leading to an outcry against such a barbarous breach of decorum."⁴⁴

⁴³ I am indebted to the work of Charlotte Schoell-Glass, "Serious Issues: The Last Plates of Warburg's Picture Atlas 'Mnemosyne'", in: Richard Woodfield (ed.), *Art*

History as Cultural History: Warburg's Projects, London 2001, pp. 183–208.

⁴⁴ Gombrich 1970 (note 1), pp. 280–281.



7 Aby Warburg, Mnemosyne Bilderatlas, plate 79, 1929. Warburg Institute, University of London

Modern athleticism and body culture thus echoes but demystifies the transsubstantiation theology of the monstrance with the mere self-display. Schoell-Glass glosses this with reference to Warburg's deep anxiety about eugenic and racist cults of 'redemption through muscles' in Germany during the 1920s. She also notes the images marking the treaty which has just been signed in Rome during Warburg's recent visit, which ceded secular power from the Vatican to Mussolini's militarized state. Then she draws our attention to the presence at the bottom of the screen of two woodcuts showing Jews desecrating the host, both from the fifteenth century, but recently published in anti-Semitic literature in 1927. As Jean Louis Schefer has recently shown in an extensive study of *Corpus Christi*, the legends of Jewish desecration of the host begin with the 1215 Lateran Council and introduce, into the bitter theological domain of the dogma of transubstantiation, that proposes a bloodied crucified body displaced and symbolised by the white host, the actually bleeding bodies of those Jewish folk who refused redemption through the host.⁴⁵ Schoell-Glass states:

"The real presence, invisible yet to be believed as a dogma: The Reality of the sacrificial body in the sacrament is the scandalous center of the Christian belief in redemption. Its reenactment fed on the blood of the Jewish sceptics who refused to believe in redemption accomplished. It was their role within this act of reconstitution of the Christian community to feed real flesh and real blood into an otherwise tamed sacrificial ritual."⁴⁶

The final image Schoell-Glass notes is a priest giving the sacrament of Extreme Unction to the victim of a train crash bringing death into social life. But the final piece of the puzzle is the reference to renewed rituals of the current Japanese Empire: suicide and mutilation. Schoell-Glass draws out from Warburg's *Tagebuch* comments which indicate that he was using his historical-cultural understanding of the management of violence ritualised and formalised by the Eucharist as "a system of filters or reflective thought" in order to draw attention to the potential break down—in his own moment of the rising of an imperialist fascism and dangerous anti-Semitism—of such forms of management, possibly releasing back into mythically fuelled action the forces 'bound' through cultural filtering into symbolic ideas upon which people did not act, as they had formerly done, by making the Jewish body bleed in reality.⁴⁷

Thus, Screen 79 is neither a reading of Raphael's painting nor evidence of mere persistence of motifs derived from the classical world. It is a dialectical image, a vicarious image that is the result of much work on the relays and displacements that make visible a plaited series of reflections on the registration within images of invisible conceptual and imaginative patternings about metaphorical transposition of real violence and the potential collapse of the system containing the latter. As the Vatican and Mussolini sign a treaty, *ecclesia militans* renounces power and violence, releases hope for an end to bloodshed in the name of religion over the question of the real and the metaphorical, trans- versus con-substantiation, the magical versus the symbolical again. At the same time, the threat posed by the return of the sacrificial in the Japanese Empire raises profound anxiety. Schoell-Glass concludes that this composite plate explores a proposition in Warburg's changing thinking which was leading him to an understanding of the need for 'metaphorical distancing', for ritual as a means of managing a space between the actual rituals of the pagan mythological life and practice and the aniconic symbolism of the Judaic and of Protestantism as a revival of Judaic disciplined an- iconicity. Thus, pondering the pre-Reformation European world of the flowering of incarnation visuality, what we mystically call the Renaissance, animated by, while not a revival of, the energies of pagan cultures' image-memory of the suffering, living and dying body, Warburg was enabled through photography to ignore art, its hierarchies of great versus minor painters, painting versus prints, high versus low art, art versus media. He made possible, and here I agree entirely with Schoell-Glass, *the politicization of the study of the image and a visualization of Theory*:

“We have to ask whether this attempt to use the specific visual quality of works of art to develop a tool which brings together history and the needs of the present, the practice of a comparative gaze and its linguistic translation could not—even today—be seen as exemplary”.⁴⁸

People identify theory with language, with texts, and theoretical work in art history as a kind of *iconicide*. Warburg did theory with images; saw images as the means to grasp (*greifen*), and hence to theorize (*begreifen*), what would otherwise not be visible to us at this intersection of image, imagining, and the passage to human thought grounded in biological (*zoë*) and socio-psychological (*bios*) material necessity but fostering lucid self-recognition. Where Warburg, afraid of a rising tide of racist or even genocidal violence he saw around him in Italy and Germany, took art, life and religion very seriously because its unrecognized freight could as easily lead to mass killing as to life, I, as a scholar engaged with issues of gender, racial, ethnic and sexual difference in our post-colonial but terrorized moment, find inspiration in this retrospectively discovered art-historical memory, this use of the photo-archive to re-imagine how to work with images encountered through the lens of the photographic gaze (its optical unconscious) and the cultural assemblage it makes possible. This lesson of Warburg is even more vital in our situation of expanding digital image technologies that is also witnessing a new kind of dialectic between image, ritual, violence, and dogma that hovers dangerously over the gulf between life and death. As a persecuted minority, the German-Jewish Warburg sensed a danger written across his own contemporary image culture. As a post-colonial feminist art historian today, I share Warburg’s distrust of dominant forms of art history: modernising rationality or entertaining aestheticism. Both are delusions we are creating for ourselves with images we fetishise as art. But the substitution of art (history) by visual culture is no closer to Warburg’s thinking. If the *Mnemosyne Atlas* represents the arrival of Warburg’s thought in a method of demonstration made possible through reproductive/reproductions of images, animated and heated up by the performative movement of his thought across the conceptually plotted assemblage, we need to think long and hard about our methods for the technologically assisted philosophy of image analysis.

⁴⁵ Jean-Louis Schefer, *L’Hostie Profanée: Histoire d’une fiction théologique*, Paris 2007.

⁴⁶ Schoell-Glass 2001 (note 43), p. 197.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 201, citing *Tagebuch*, 26 September 1929, vol. 9, p. 37.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

Collecting Photographs,
Shaping Art History

Pascal Griener

Pour une nouvelle histoire des images scientifiques. Eugène Müntz, la Renaissance et la nouvelle fonction de la photographie d'art

«L'idée d'étudier l'influence anglo-germanique en France sur le Romantisme ne nous serait pas venue à Paris, où l'élément purement national recouvre presque entièrement le fond d'importation étrangère. Mais à distance, et de l'autre côté du Rhin, on découvre, pour ainsi dire, dans la coupe verticale du Romantisme, les couches inférieures dues à l'infiltration germanique, et on les suit avec tout l'intérêt de la nouveauté.»

William Reymond, *Corneille, Shakspeare et Goethe. Etude sur l'influence anglo-germanique en France au XIXème siècle*, Berlin / Paris / Londres 1864, p.v.

Eugène Müntz (1845–1902) occupe une place importante dans l'histoire de l'art à la fin du XIXème siècle. Ancien membre de l'Ecole Française de Rome, cet écrivain alsacien gère les collections de l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts dès 1878 ; il y assume une suppléance d'enseignement en histoire de l'art et esthétique.¹ Son œuvre publiée fidélise un lectorat important en France comme en Europe, même si l'Université française le considèrera toujours avec méfiance. Quant aux éditeurs, ils apprécient ses livres généralement bien illustrés, au style plein d'urbanité. Esthète, Müntz éprouve un attachement indéfectible envers la Renaissance en Italie.² Cette période brillante de l'art, il l'élève au rang d'idéal presque absolu. A l'époque, de grands collectionneurs comme Nelly Jacquemart-André, Friedrich Samuel Spit-

¹ Camille Enlart, *Eugène Müntz. Notice biographique. Bibliographie par Georges de Manteyer*, Paris / Rome 1903 ; Pierre Gauthiez, « La Renaissance italienne et son historien français », dans : *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, XV/1 (1896), pp. 495–504, et XV/2 (1896), pp. 151–160 ; Henri Cordier, « In memoriam E. Müntz », dans : *Revue des Traditions Populaires* (1903), pp. 536–537 ; André Girodie, « Eugène Müntz », dans : *Revue alsacienne illustrée*, IV (1902) pp. 65–76.

² La littérature sur la réception artistique de la Renaissance

au XIXème siècle est vaste. Voir dans : Yannick Portebois / Nicholas Terpstra (eds.), *The Renaissance in the Nineteenth Century. Le XIXème siècle renaissance*, Toronto 2003 ; Maurizio Ghelardi, *La scoperta del Rinascimento. L'« Età di Raffaello » di Jacob Burckhardt*, Turin 1991 ; Rosanna Pavoni (ed.), *Reviving the Renaissance. The use and abuse of the past in nineteenth-century Italian art and decoration*, Cambridge 1997 ; Ralf Mennekes, *Die Renaissance der deutschen Renaissance*, Petersberg 2005.

zer, Gustave Dreyfus, ou la baronne Béatrice Ephrussi de Rothschild amassent des trésors italiens en vastes quantités;³ c'est sans doute dans cette classe opulente que se recrutent les lecteurs de Müntz – des assidus qui visitent Florence ou Rome en brillante compagnie, et qui enrichissent les antiquaires.⁴ Pourtant, le parti-pris italien d'Eugène Müntz le place en position délicate avec les milieux officiels français, surtout après la victoire prussienne de Sedan. Dans une France humiliée, une histoire de l'art national trouve en Louis Courajod son défenseur le plus véhément. La nouvelle école célèbre l'art national dans son développement endogène, et dénigre tout apport extérieur – fût-il italien – comme une influence inutile ou délétère.⁵

Les travaux de François-René Martin et de Michela Passini ont éclairé sa production scientifique, qu'ils ont contextualisée avec soin.⁶ Grâce à ces analyses, les rapports que Müntz entretenait avec l'Allemagne, avant comme après la guerre de 1870, se précisent. Le portrait intellectuel esquissé révèle une figure très ouverte aux courants internationaux. Müntz a cherché à comprendre les méthodes scientifiques d'une école brillante, mais souvent méprisée en France pour des raisons idéologiques ou linguistiques. Sa curiosité insatiable enrichit sa vaste bibliothèque, très internationale et où l'école allemande tient une place de choix. Par une ironie du sort, cette collection sera d'ailleurs dispersée à Francfort après la mort du savant.⁷

Michela Passini et François-René Martin relèvent justement que Müntz puise son inspiration chez Hippolyte Taine, mais surtout chez Jacob Burckhardt. Burckhardt et Müntz se connaissent de loin; leur ami commun, Heinrich von Geymüller, leur transmet leurs salutations mutuelles;⁸ le Bâlois apprécie

³ Paul Vitry / Jean Guiffrey / Gaston Migeon (eds.), *La collection de Gustave Dreyfus*, Paris 1908; Régis Vian des Rives (ed.), *La villa Ephrussi de Rothschild*, Paris 2002; sur le voyage d'Italie, voir le très beau catalogue d'exposition, *Voir l'Italie et mourir. Photographies et peintures dans l'Italie du XIXe siècle* (cat. d'exposition Paris 2009), Paris 2009; Maurizio Bossi / Max Seidel (eds.), *Viaggio di Toscana. Percorsi e motivi del secolo XIX*, Venise 1998. La Collection de Friedrich Samuel Spitzer, le plus fameux marchand d'armes anciennes du temps, est dispersée après sa mort en 1890; voir *Collection Spitzer Antiquité-Moyen Age – Renaissance*, préface d'Eugène Müntz, 6 vols., T. I, *Ivoires-Orfèvrerie religieuse-Tapisseries*; T. II, *Emaux peints-Meubles et bois sculptés-Faïences-Serrurerie et cuirs*; T. III, *Orfèvrerie civile-Incrustations, Verrierie-Bijouterie-Coutellerie*; T. IV, *Faïences italiennes, hispano mauresques. Plaquettes-Médailles-Dinanderie*; T. V, *Gemmes-Horloges-Instruments scientifiques. Etoffes, broderies, coffrets, jeux*; T. VI, *Armes et armures*, Paris 1890–1892; voir aussi John Fleming, « Dealing and the Risorgimento-I », dans: *The Burlington Magazine*, 115/838 (Jan. 1973), pp. 4–17.

⁴ A ce propos, voir le bel essai de Bernd Roeck, *Florence 1900. The Quest for Arcadia*, trad. par Stewart Spencer, New Haven 2009.

⁵ Lyne Therrien, *L'histoire de l'art en France genèse d'une discipline universitaire*, Paris 1998; Roland Recht / Philippe Sénéchal / Claire Barbillon / François-René Martin (eds.), *Histoire de l'histoire de l'art en France au XIXe siècle* (colloque Paris 2004), Paris 2008; Geneviève Bresc-Bautier (ed.), *Un combat pour la sculpture. Louis Coura-*

jod (1841–1896), historien d'art et conservateur (colloque Paris 1996), Paris 2003.

⁶ François René Martin / Michela Passini, « Ressentiment politique, affinités intellectuelles. Eugène Müntz et l'histoire de l'art allemande », dans: *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, Série 5, 1/1 (2009), pp. 227–253, pp. 332–335; Michela Passini, *Il nazionalismo e le origini della storia dell'arte. Francia e Germania 1870–1933*, Thèse ENS, Pise 2008. Sur l'historiographie française à cette époque, voir Recht / Sénéchal / Barbillon / Martin 2008 (note 5).

⁷ Voir le catalogue de la vente aux enchères chez Joseph Baer, Francfort/M.: *Bibliothek Eugen Müntz* (Lagerkatalog Joseph Baer, Nr. 477–481; 510), Francfort/M. 1903–1905, 6 parties: 1. *Schriften von Eugen Muentz*; 2. *Die Kunst des Mittelalters*; 3. *Die Kunst der Renaissance in Italien 1420–1600*; 4. *Die Kunst der Renaissance ausserhalb Italiens*; 5. *Die Kunst im XVII. u. XVIII. Jahrhundert*; 6. *Die Kunst des XIX. Jahrhunderts*; les ouvrages sur l'Alsace furent vendus séparément, voir *Alsatica. Geschichte, Topographie und Literatur ... ; elsässische Drucke; enthaltend die Bibliothek L. Dacheux und Eugen Müntz* (Lagerkatalog Joseph Baer, Nr. 490), Francfort/M. 1904.

⁸ Jacob Burckhardt, *Briefe*, ed. par Max Burckhardt, 11 vols., Bâle 1949–1994, voir la lettre de Jacob Burckhardt à Heinrich von Geymüller, Bâle, 29 janvier 1881 (n° 911), vol. VII, pp. 222–224, qui remercie Heinrich von Geymüller pour lui avoir transmis l'expression de l'admiration d'Eugène Müntz; lettre de Jacob Burckhardt à Max Alioth, Bâle, 16 février 1881 (n° 912), vol. VII,

chez Müntz l'impeccable maîtrise des sources archivistiques.⁹ L'historien français admire dans la *Cultur der Renaissance in Italien* (1860) une attention sans faille au contexte de la production artistique, comme l'ambition de reconstruire toute la culture d'une société créatrice de formes. Mais Burckhardt, dans ses deux ouvrages majeurs, n'utilise aucune illustration. La *Cultur* porte tant d'attention aux déterminants sociaux et culturels qui dessinent les états italiens de la Renaissance, que son auteur renonce à entamer l'examen de l'art proprement dit.¹⁰ Quant au *Cicerone* de 1855, il forme un *Reisebegleiter*, selon le qualificatif de Burckhardt lui-même ; l'art y est traité comme un domaine autonome dans sa mise en œuvre des tâches que la société lui confie.¹¹ Véritable histoire de l'art ventilée sur tout le territoire de la péninsule, l'ouvrage comporte un index géographique ; ce dernier permet de reconnaître, dans un même lieu, tous les monuments ou œuvres qui y sont conservés – siècle par siècle, domaine par domaine. Ce guide ne comporte pas non plus d'illustrations. Il vise le voyageur sur le Grand Tour, qu'il assiste en présence de l'œuvre. Il faudra attendre plus de vingt ans pour qu'Alexandre Schütz publie une série de photographies, ordonnées suivant la systématique du *Cicerone*, qui de fait illustre le guide à l'aide de portefeuilles.¹² Chez Burckhardt, l'illustration reste donc *en-deçà*, ou *au-delà* du Livre.¹³ Or chez Müntz, l'illustration, surtout photographique, joue un rôle fondamental. Elle ne se réduit pas à un supplément au texte. Elle tient au discours, elle s'y articule. Elle propose des modèles historiographiques propres, entés sur ceux qui régissent le texte.

Pour étudier le rapport de Müntz à la littérature artistique allemande, Burckhardt y compris, il me paraît donc nécessaire de dépasser une historiographie à dominante scripturale.¹⁴ Car cette perspective privilégie les *textes* comme porteurs de théories et de systèmes, c'est-à-dire comme documents d'une

pp. 224–227, ici p. 226 référence à cette même expression d'admiration ; lettre de Jacob Burckhardt à Heinrich von Geymüller, Bâle, 28 février 1884 (n° 1044), vol. VIII, pp. 186–190, cit. p. 186, Jacob Burckhardt regrette que Bâle ne possède pas *L'Art à la Cour des papes* ; lettre de Jacob Burckhardt au comte Pier Desiderio Pasolini, Bâle, 7 octobre 1890 (n° 1324), vol. IX, pp. 270–271, lui recommandant de contacter Eugène Müntz pour s'informer sur un manuscrit conservé à la Bibliothèque Ste Geneviève.

⁹ Josef Ploder / Georg Germann (eds.), *Heinrich von Geymüller (1839–1909), Architekturforscher und Architekturzeichner* (cat. d'exposition Bâle / Graz 2009–2010), Bâle 2009 ; Josef Ploder, *Heinrich von Geymüller und die Architekturzeichnung. Werk, Wirkung und Nachlass eines Renaissance-Forschers*, Vienne 1998. A p. 116, Geymüller et Müntz, hautement reconnu pour ses compétences de chercheur en archives, planifièrent une publication des sources relatives à la construction de St Pierre de Rome. A la mort de Müntz, Geymüller reçut une partie des notes de Müntz relatives à ce projet.

¹⁰ Jacob Burckhardt, *Cultur der Renaissance in Italien. Ein Versuch*, Bâle 1860.

¹¹ Jacob Burckhardt, *Cicerone. Eine Anleitung zum Genuss der Kunstwerke Italiens*, Bâle 1855 ; 1112 pages, traitant de l'architecture, sculpture, peinture, à chaque reprise de l'antiquité au XVII^e siècle ; un index topographique précis permet d'utiliser ce gros compendium comme un guide classique (« *Reisebegleiter* » est évoqué en p. X) ; Thomas Noll, *Vom Glück des Gelehrten. Versuch über Jacob Burckhardt*, Göttingen 1997 ; Christine Tauber,

Jacob Burckhardts «Cicerone»: eine Aufgabe zum Genießen, Tübingen 2000.

¹² Alexander Schütz, *Die Renaissance in Italien. Eine Sammlung der werthvollsten erhaltenen Monumente in chronologischer Folge geordnet*, Hambourg 1878–1882, 4 parties, in-2.

¹³ Dans les autres ouvrages de Burckhardt, l'illustration reste limitée à la mise à nu des composants morphologiques, à description sommaire d'une structure. Voir ses dessins peu artistiques, mais précis dans : Yvonne Boerlin-Brodbeck (ed.), *Die Skizzenbücher Jacob Burckhardts. Katalog*, Bâle 1994. Jacob Burckhardt a bien sûr largement utilisé la photographie pour nourrir ses travaux, rafraîchir sa mémoire et illustrer ses cours ; ces clichés, marouflés sur toile, étaient classés dans des boîtes reliées comme des volumes. Voir Edith Struchholz-Pommeranz dans ce volume, mais aussi : Nikolaus Meier, « Der Mann mit der Mappe. Jacob Burckhardt und die Reproduktionsphotographie », in : Maurizio Ghelardi / Max Seidel (eds.), *Jacob Burckhardt. Storia della cultura, storia dell'arte*, Venise 2002, pp. 259–297, ici pp. 260–263 ; Marc Sieber, « « Wo ich nicht von der Anschauung ausgehen kann, da leiste ich nichts ». Jacob Burckhardt und die Photographie », dans : Christine Tauber (ed.), *Jacob Burckhardt. Die Kunst der Malerei in Italien*, Munich 2003, pp. 7–19.

¹⁴ L'essai de Pierre Vaisse, à cet égard, reste malheureusement peu imaginaire et très incomplet : Pierre Vaisse, « Burckhardts Rezeption in Frankreich », dans : Andreas Cesana / Lionel Gossman (eds.), *Begegnungen mit Jacob Burckhardt. Vorträge in Basel und Princeton zum hun-*

histoire de l'histoire de l'art réduite à l'histoire des *idées* sur l'art. Or le dix-neuvième siècle est le siècle de l'illustration visuelle par excellence. Le coût d'une image imprimée baisse alors considérablement; dès les années 1850, la photographie accélère ce mouvement en supplantant graduellement l'artiste dans le champ de l'iconographie documentaire. Cette promesse d'exactitude fascine les amateurs dès les années 1840, comme le vicomte de Cussy: «N'allez pas croire qu'il s'agisse ici seulement d'une de ces moissons de dessins plus ou moins fidèles, plus ou moins heureux, qui doivent mettre à notre portée des monuments célèbres par leurs proportions et leurs détails. C'est au moyen d'un daguerrotype monstre (passez-moi l'expression), que nous serons en quelque sorte transportés sur les lieux, et mathématiquement certains de la vérité du tableau.»¹⁵ Les clichés d'œuvres d'art servent de modèles aux graveurs en bois de bout ou sur acier; peu à peu, ces épreuves sont même transférées mécaniquement sur un support métallique d'impression, au terme d'une soigneuse traduction des noirs et des blancs. La culture de l'image multipliée cause une révolution lente mais irrépessible. Elle change jusqu'au regard des contemplateurs. Au terme d'un mouvement dialectique, elle transforme jusqu'à la réalité de l'œuvre d'art qu'elle doit décrire. Bref, elle travaille l'immense transhumance d'objets patrimoniaux qui caractérise cette période; ces objets, elle va contribuer à les *positionner*, à les *produire* et à les *élaborer* au titre de documents d'analyse pour l'historien d'art. L'histoire de l'art trahit donc, en France comme en Allemagne, un *désir* graduel d'illustration – désir complexe, et qu'il s'agit de reconstruire.¹⁶

Qu'est-ce qu'une histoire de l'art illustrée, en France au XIX^e siècle? Un type tardif d'imprimé – en effet, cette forme naît lentement durant le siècle, et tout naturellement elle servira, comme la photographie, la transmutation des choses du monde en traces vivantes d'une culture matérielle.¹⁷ Au début, la photographie d'histoire de l'art se consomme le plus souvent sans texte. Montée sur un papier fort comme une gravure de reproduction, elle s'ordonne dans des porte-folios thématiques, qu'on consulte après avoir lu un texte sur Rome ou sur Florence, ou avant de visiter Venise ou Naples. Ce mode de connaissance se répand si rapidement qu'il oblitère parfois le regard du voyageur, dès la fin du siècle. Quand Hugo von Hofmannsthal visite Rome en 1902, il avoue ne pouvoir jouir des vues qui s'ouvrent devant lui. La photographie des sites contemplés avant le départ s'interpose entre le Grand-Touriste et les paysages qui s'ouvrent devant lui. La reproduction distancie le réel, et gâte le plaisir de la nouveauté. Le voyageur doit paradoxalement réapproprier *a posteriori* ces images mentales nées de la photographie, en les élevant à la dignité de *phantasma* originaux peints par son imagination. C'est ainsi qu'il croit recouvrer le sentiment de vivre un spectacle pittoresque: «Mein Verhältnis zu diesem merkwürdigen Aufenthalt im ganzen möchte ich so aussprechen: ich kann alles dergleichen eigentlich erst auf einem sehr mühsamen Umweg genießen, durch eine Art von Reproduktion, indem ich es in mich auf-

ersten Todestag = Encounters with Jacob Burckhardt. Centenary papers, Bâle / Munich 2004, pp. 149–169.

¹⁵ Vicomte de Cussy, «Nouvelles de M. Girault de Prangey», dans: *Bulletin monumental*, X (1844) pp. 235–238, cit. pp. 235–236, séance du 8 mars 1844.

¹⁶ Voir Katharina Krause / Klaus Niehr (eds.), *Bilderlust und Lese Früchte. Das illustrierte Kunstbuch 1750 bis 1920* (cat. d'exposition Mayence 2005), Leipzig 2005. Ma perspective, cependant, est très différente. Voir surtout dans: Christopher H. Lloyd (ed.), *Art and its images. An exhibition of printed books containing engraved illustrations after Italian painting* (cat. d'exposition Oxford 1975), Oxford 1975.

¹⁷ Voir Pascal Griener «Le livre d'histoire de l'art en France (1810–1850) – une genèse retardée. Pour une nouvelle

étude de la littérature historiographique», dans: Roland Recht / Philippe Sénéchal / Claire Barbillon / François-René Martin (eds.), *Histoire de l'histoire de l'art en France au XIX^e siècle* (colloque Paris 2004), Paris 2008, pp. 167–185, 514–515.

¹⁸ Lettre de Hugo von Hofmannsthal à ses parents, 1902, dans: Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Briefe*, Berlin / Vienne 1935–1937, 2 vols., vol. II (1900–1909), p. 90; Ursula Renner, «Das Erlebnis des Sehens. Zu Hofmannsthals produktiver Rezeption bildenden Kunst», dans: Ursula Renner / Gisela Bärbel Schmid (eds.), *Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Freundschaften und Begegnungen mit Deutschen Zeitgenossen*, Würzburg 1991, pp. 285–305; Carl-peter Braegger, *Das Visuelle und das Plastische. Hugo von Hofmannsthal und die bildende Kunst*, Bern 1979; Wal-

nehme und gleichsam aus mir heraus vor mich bringe wie etwas von meiner Phantasie Erfundenes.»¹⁸ Les clichés de villes décrivent des sites mémoriaux, alors que toutes les cités du *Risorgimento* connaissent une modernisation hausmannienne parfois brutale. Les vues évitent soigneusement les zones modernes. Elles monnaient une éternité trompeuse, sous l'espèce d'une Italie pittoresque mais fallacieuse, parce que déjà révolue.

Avec le livre d'histoire illustré, la contemplation de l'image accompagne la voix d'un auteur, telle une conférence murmurée dans le for de ses lecteurs. Mais surtout, l'ouvrage propose un discours historique articulé à des illustrations ordonnées en séquences. Le dispositif entier, qui associe texte, schémas et images, ambitionne de saisir l'art comme une production compréhensible dans la durée, soumise à des lois. Les *monumenta* qu'elle étudie, l'histoire illustrée les constitue en objets d'interprétation ; elle aspire à y lire les symptômes d'une transformation des formes, symptômes organisés dans un cadre chronologique construit. La présence des images rend toute *ekphrasis* dérisoire : inutile de verbaliser ce qu'une illustration représente sous une forme simplifiée, mais efficace. Le texte, libéré de la tâche descriptive, peut se concentrer sur sa tâche analytique. Joseph-Philibert Girault de Prangey photographie des architectures, puis il en tire des illustrations scientifiques gravées pour ses livres : « Si je n'ose en ce moment vous parler de ces lieux, j'en emporte avec moi l'empreinte précieuse et incontestablement fidèle, que le temps ni l'espace ne peuvent affaiblir, et c'est ici qu'il faut remercier avec la plus vive reconnaissance notre compatriote Daguerre, à jamais illustre par son admirable découverte.»¹⁹ Bref, le fonctionnement de l'image accélère la conscience du langage autonome de l'œuvre d'art – une découverte effectuée par le siècle des Lumières. Jacob Burckhardt le rappelle dans son *Cicerone* : « Das Reasonnement des 'Cicerone' macht keinen Anspruch darauf, den tiefsten Gedanken, die Idee eines Kunstwerkes zu verfolgen und auszusprechen. Könnte man denselben überhaupt in Worten vollständig geben, so wäre die Kunst überflüssig.»²⁰

À la fin du XIX^e siècle, le livre d'art illustré se négocie parfois à un prix modique, au format in 8° ou in-4° ; il connaîtra même le succès populaire.²¹ L'*Histoire de l'art* des Ménard s'imprime sur un papier digne des kiosques, les illustrations en bois-de-bout défigurent presque les chefs-d'œuvre qu'elles prétendent reproduire.²² Mais ce manuel coûte peu ; il pénètre ainsi dans des milliers de foyers français.

À l'autre extrémité de l'offre trône l'ouvrage cher, tel celui d'Eugène Müntz, l'*Histoire de l'art pendant la Renaissance : Italie* (Ill. 1). Ce monument paraît chez Hachette, en trois volumes de 1889 à 1895. Son format grand-in-8, son papier glacé, ses chromolithographies le classent dans la catégorie du luxe. On débourse soixante-cinq francs-or, rien que pour les deux premiers volumes – nous voici à l'étage du

ther Rehm, « Der Renaissancekult um 1900 und seine Überwindung », in : *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* (1929), pp. 296–328.

¹⁹ Philibert-Joseph Girault de Prangey (1804–1892), lettre à Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, Beyrouth, 4 août 1844 (coll. Privée), publiée dans : Philippe Quettier, *Sur les traces de Girault de Prangey, 1804–1892. Dessins, peintures, photographies, études historiques*, Langres 1998, pp. 86–89, cit. p. 86. Prangey utilise le daguerreotype pour préparer la confection de gravures représentant des vues d'architecture. Voir dans : Christophe Mauron / Christophe Brandt / Christophe Dutoit / Sylvie Henguely (eds.), *Miroirs d'argent. Daguerreotypes de Girault de Prangey*, Bulle / Genève 2008.

²⁰ Burckhardt 1855 (note 11), p. VII.

²¹ Pascal Griener, « La résistance à la photographie en France au XIX^e siècle. Les publications d'histoire de l'art », dans : Costanza Caraffa (ed.), *Fotografie als Instrument und Medium der Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin / Munich 2009, pp. 27–43.

²² Louis Ménard / René Ménard, *Tableau historique des Beaux-arts, depuis la Renaissance jusqu'à la fin du dix-huitième siècle. Ouvrage couronné par l'Académie des Beaux-Arts*, Paris 1866 ; René Ménard, *Histoire des beaux-arts illustrée de 414 gravures*, Paris 1875 ; René Ménard, *Histoire des beaux-arts, illustrée de 414 gravures représentant les chefs-d'œuvre de l'art à toutes les époques*, Paris 1875.

haut-de-gamme.²³ Après la mort de son fondateur en 1864, la maison Hachette poursuit son ascension fulgurante : sa stratégie vise à capter tous les publics, des plus humbles aux plus riches. Rappelons que Louis Hachette avait arraché un splendide monopole aux compagnies ferroviaires françaises : l'ouverture de librairies dans les gares principales. Les brochures qu'on y débitait pour quelques sous, romans ou autres, devaient satisfaire une consommation immédiate, légitimée par l'arrêt dans une salle d'attente ou par la crainte d'un voyage ennuyeux.²⁴ Mais à la fin du siècle, la librairie Hachette ambitionne également de ravir aux Maisons Rouam, Renouard, Delagrave, Fischbacher et Goupil le marché des beaux livres d'art. L'accueil réservé par Hachette à Eugène Müntz s'inscrit également dans cette visée. Lorsque la société des imprimeurs français organise une vaste exposition parisienne en 1881, elle accorde une place importante à l'historien d'art alsacien : la *Transfiguration*, telle qu'elle orne le *Raphael* de Müntz tout juste paru, exemplifie la belle illustration destinée au livre d'art – elle se positionne comme un chef d'œuvre de reproduction, digne imitation du Chef-d'œuvre de toute la peinture.²⁵

Aux yeux d'Eugène Müntz, l'illustration de son livre pose un réel problème d'ordre cognitif et historiographique. L'introduction d'une iconographie généreuse exige une refonte radicale du discours propre à la mettre en scène. C'est ce problème que Müntz tente de résoudre, en partie, mais en partie seulement à l'aide de Burckhardt ; d'ailleurs, l'usage paradoxal qu'il tire de l'historien d'art suisse mérite d'être interrogé.

L'évolution du livre d'histoire de l'art émerge partiellement au développement du manuel. Le beau livre illustré, tout d'abord réduit à l'album, tente lentement d'en approprier quelques techniques. Mais à cet égard, la France connaît un retard certain sur l'Allemagne. Plusieurs historiens d'art français relèvent que le genre du manuel reste l'apanage des Allemands. Même Ernest Vinet n'hésite pas à louer l'ennemi sur ce point – dans une bibliographie pourtant publiée juste après la guerre de 1870 !²⁶ D'ailleurs, plusieurs grands manuels germaniques paraissent alors en traduction française ; ils occupent une niche commerciale restée vide. En 1841, l'éditeur des manuels Roret emprunte le *Handbuch* de Karl Otfried Müller ;²⁷ trente ans plus tard, en 1874, William Reymond publie enfin un brillant manuel illustré relevant d'une histoire de l'art conceptualisée – le premier du genre jamais paru en langue française ; mais Reymond est un Suisse de Neuchâtel qui a fréquenté l'université de Berlin.²⁸ A l'époque de Müntz, le *Handbuch* de Wilhelm Lübke paraît à Paris chez Rouam.²⁹ En France, seule l'archéologie suscite

²³ Eugène Müntz, *Histoire de l'art pendant la Renaissance. Italie*, Paris 1889–1895, in-4° (vol. I, *Italie. Les Primitifs*, 1889, 744 p. ; vol. II, *Italie. L'Âge d'Or*, 1891, 864 p. ; vol. III, *Italie. La Fin de la Renaissance*, 1895, 757 p.) ; voir Otto Lorenz, *Catalogue général de la Librairie française (1840–1899)*, Paris 1867–1901, T. XIII, 1886–1890 p. 46 : 65.– francs-or pour les deux premiers volumes.

²⁴ Jean Mistler, *La Librairie Hachette de 1826 à nos jours*, Paris 1964 ; Eileen S. DeMarco, *Reading and Riding. Hachette's Railroad Bookstore Network in Nineteenth-Century France*, Bethlehem 2006 ; Olivier Corpet et André Derval projettent une *Histoire d'un groupe d'édition. Hachette de 1826 à 1940*.

²⁵ L'illustration-type, une phototypie d'après une gravure, exécutée par la Maison Quinsac, apparaît dans l'ouvrage d'Eugène Müntz, *Raphael, sa vie, son œuvre et son temps*, Paris 1881 ; c'est un des spécimens publiés dans le *Catalogue de l'exposition de gravures anciennes et modernes*, Paris 1881, non paginé. L'ouvrage comprend la reproduction de photographies. Voir Griener 2009 (note 21).

²⁶ Ernest Vinet, *Bibliographie méthodique et raisonnée des beaux-arts*, 2ème livraison, n° 1234, Paris 1877, p. 146 : « L'idée de présenter l'histoire de l'architecture, de la sculpture, de la peinture, dans un même cadre, depuis les origines de la civilisation jusqu'à nos jours, est une idée très-moderne, idée réalisée il y a plus de trente ans par Kugler, idée suggérée peut-être par l'excellent manuel d'archéologie d'art d'Ottfried (sic) Müller. Grâce à l'habileté de Kugler, qui a su mettre de l'ordre dans cette accumulation de matériaux, bien tracer l'itinéraire des trois grands arts à travers les siècles, marquer les étapes, indiquer le progrès ou la chute, on a sous les yeux un tableau complet de l'histoire de l'art. » Puis Vinet explique brièvement la méthode « de l'esthéticien allemand ».

²⁷ Karl Otfried Müller, *Nouveau manuel complet d'archéologie, ou Traité sur les antiquités grecques, étrusques, romaines, égyptiennes, indiennes, etc.*, trad. par M. O. Müller, 2 tomes en 3 vols. et atlas (Collection Manuels Roret), Paris 1841–1842 ; en Allemagne, l'édition la plus courante est celle-ci : Karl Otfried Müller, *Handbuch der Ar-*



1 Eugène Müntz, *Histoire de l'art pendant la Renaissance: Italie, vol. I*, Paris: Hachette, 1889, page de titre

France et en Allemagne: le concept d'*Alterthumswissenschaft* délimite le monde antique tout entier comme un vaste territoire de pratiques culturelles organiques, saisissable comme unité en dépit du temps qui sépare la Grèce attique de la Rome tardive. Un tel modèle favorise un discours historique qui

chäologie der Kunst, Breslau 1835². Jacob Burckhard avoue s'en être servi comme modèle pour l'examen de la sculpture antique dans son *Cicerone*, voir Burckhardt 1855 (note 11), p. IX.

²⁸ William Reymond, *Histoire de l'art*, Paris / Lausanne [1874] (l'ouvrage, imprimé par Howard-Delisle à Lausanne, sera constamment réimprimé par Delagrave); pour l'établissement de la date, voir Otto Lorenz, *Catalogue général de la Librairie française (1840-1899)*, vol. VI, Paris 1877, p. 475 (1874); sur William Reymond (1823-1880), qui enseigna l'esthétique et l'histoire de l'art à l'Académie de Genève de 1873 à 1875, voir Marc Vuilleumier, «L'exil des Communeux», dans: Michelle Perrot / Jacques Rougerie / Claude Latta (eds.), *La commune de 187. L'événement, les hommes et la mémoire* (colloque Précieux / Montbrison 2003), St Etienne 2004, pp. 265-288, surtout pp. 285-288; voir son *Corneille, Shakespeare & Goethe. Étude sur l'influence anglo-germanique en France au XIX siècle*, avec une lettre de Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, Berlin / Paris / Londres

quelques *vade-mecum* illustrés – et encore, leur ambition reste modeste. L'*Abécédaire* rédigé par Arcisse de Caumont, comme celui de Louis Batisser offrent quelques rares exemples de manuels d'histoire de l'art illustrés. Caumont se limite à proposer des critères de classement stylistiques, sur le modèle de ceux qui règnent alors dans les sciences naturelles. Il passe en revue le vocabulaire formel de l'architecture, puis les types de bâtiments qu'il schématise à l'aide d'illustrations; le texte détaille aussi l'usage pratique ou liturgique de formes-types, qu'il complète par un alphabet des connaissances iconographiques. Cependant, cet ouvrage ne propose nulle représentation globale, modélisée de son objet. Il se propose d'accroître la lisibilité des monuments visitables par le lecteur. Il lui livre les clés de lecture nécessaires à une contemplation *in-situ*. Par là, l'ouvrage demeure un simple instrument d'intelligibilité au service du voyageur.³⁰

Pourtant, la France compte alors des savants qui maîtrisent plusieurs constellations historiographiques nécessaires à construire un discours historique plus riche, et dûment illustré d'images. L'étude d'une civilisation, conçue comme totalité, s'opère selon des pratiques comparables en

1864 (Sainte-Beuve y remarque perfidement que les romantiques français ne maîtrisent pas la langue allemande); William Reymond, «La colonie suisse», dans: *Paris-Guide*, Paris 1867, pp. 1047-1051.

²⁹ Wilhelm Lübke, *Essai d'histoire de l'art, traduit par C. Ad. Koëlla d'après la 9e édition originale*, 2 vol. in-8°, Paris 1886-1887.

³⁰ Arcisse de Caumont, *Abécédaire, ou Rudiment d'archéologie*, Paris / Caen / Rouen 1850; Caumont projette les méthodes de classification linnéenne sur l'archéologie. Sur Arcisse de Caumont, Françoise Bercé, «Arcisse de Caumont et les sociétés savantes», dans: Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les Lieux de mémoire*, vol. II/2, Paris 1986, pp. 533-567; Bernard Huchet, *Arcisse de Caumont*, position de thèse de l'École des Chartes, 1984; Vincent Juhel (ed.), *Arcisse de Caumont (1801-1873), érudit normand et fondateur de l'archéologie française* (colloque Caen 2001), Caen 2004; Louis Batisser, *Éléments d'archéologie nationale, précédés d'une histoire de l'art monumental chez les anciens*, Paris 1843, p. 11.

rejette le *narratif* chronologique, au profit du *tableau* et de l'analyse. En France, même un Fustel de Coulanges, pourtant peu suspect de partialité pour la science germanique, dessine une idée de la Cité antique qui place Rome et Grèce sous un même éclairage.³¹ Ce qui manque à la tradition française, c'est le concept d'une *aesthetische Weltanschauung* propre à tirer tout le parti de ces grandes fresques d'histoire de la culture. Grâce à ce concept, l'historien d'art allemand tente de saisir la quintessence des représentations du monde propres à chaque époque, représentations qui se cristallisent dans toutes les formes artistiques. Ce concept-clé permet déjà à Karl-Otfried Müller de construire une représentation globale de l'art antique;³² même si son manuel n'est pas illustré, il livre un modèle central à tout futur *Handbuch* illustré en Allemagne. Avec la génération des hégéliens germaniques, Springer et Schnaase en tête, la notion connaîtra un développement presque inquiétant par sa généralité triomphante.³³ Une telle approche est tout naturellement appliquée au Moyen-Âge, comme on l'observe dans le manuel d'Heinrich Otte.³⁴ Otte est un pasteur sensible à l'usage liturgique des types d'édifices qu'il analyse; il les insère dans une brève histoire de la culture religieuse. Cet homme, qui connaît bien le manuel de Caumont puisqu'il le cite, élève l'analyse à un niveau que son devancier français ne pouvait jamais atteindre faute d'ambition historique.

L'ombre portée de la théologie, en Allemagne, est si grande qu'elle couvre jusqu'à la construction féconde, dans l'historiographie, de la notion de document. Il importe d'en dessiner les contours, car cette puissante présence seule permettra de comprendre la position d'Eugène Müntz face à ses modèles d'outre-Rhin. Au XVIII^e siècle, Bernard de Montfaucon avait posé que le monument visuel détenait une légitimité égale à celle de l'écrit, au titre de document historique.³⁵ Déjà dans le manuel de Karl Otfried Müller, la dimension mimétique de l'art fait l'objet d'une redéfinition radicale: « Die Kunst ist eine Darstellung, d. h. eine Thätigkeit, durch welche ein Innerliches, Geistiges in die Erscheinung tritt. »³⁶ Ici, la notion de représentation ne renvoie pas à l'imitation du réel, mais à la visualisation d'une idée germée dans le for intérieur de l'homme. En France, l'histoire monumentale romantique a opté pour un positionnement similaire, comme on le remarque chez Louis Batissier. Dans ses *Eléments d'archéologie nationale*, cet auteur explicite son admiration pour l'art du Moyen Âge, car « l'art vraiment religieux est toujours spiritualiste; il ne consiste pas dans une imitation savante des choses. Avec lui, c'est la pensée qui se fait matière, qui passe par les yeux pour s'adresser à l'intelligence, et nous donner de sublimes enseignements. »³⁷ Mais cette nouvelle posture, en France, n'est pas articulée dans une construction conceptuelle adéquate. Elle n'est pas, comme en Allemagne, encadrée dans une épistémologie générale fournie par la philosophie religieuse. Un théologien majeur de la première moitié du XIX^e siècle, Jakob Friedrich Fries, propose une assise puissante pour légitimer le statut cognitif de l'objet esthétique. S'appuyant sur Kant, Fries définit trois modes de Connaissance offerts à l'homme: *Wissen, Glaube, Ahndung*, c'est-à-dire la connaissance rationnelle, la foi, et la contemplation esthétique.³⁸ Une telle théorie accorde une fonction cognitive importante à la contemplation du beau sous toutes ses formes, dans la nature comme dans l'art. La connaissance de la forme accomplit alors un pro-

³¹ Arnaldo Momigliano, « The Ancient City of Fustel de Coulanges », dans: Glen Warren Bowersock / Tim Cornell (eds.), *Studies on modern scholarship*, Berkeley 1994, pp. 162–178; François Hartog, *Le dix-neuvième siècle et l'histoire*, Paris 1988; Hubert Locher, *Kunstgeschichte als historische Theorie der Kunst, 1750–1950*, Munich 2001.

³² Müller 1835 (note 27).

³³ Anton Heinrich Springer, *Die bildenden Künste in ihrer weltgeschichtlichen Entwicklung*, Prag 1857; voir Gabriele Bickendorf, « The Berlin School and the Republic of Letters », dans: Roland Recht / Philippe Sénéchal / Claire

Barbillon / François-René Martin (eds.), *Histoire de l'histoire de l'art en France au XIX^e siècle* (colloque Paris 2004), Paris 2008, pp. 35–46, 504–505; et, du même auteur, « Die Anfänge der historisch-kritischen Kunstgeschichtsschreibung », dans: Peter Ganz (ed.), *Kunst und Kunsttheorie 1400–1900* (Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, 48), Wiesbaden 1991, pp. 359–374.

³⁴ Heinrich Otte, *Handbuch der kirchlichen Kunst-Archäologie des deutschen Mittelalters*, Leipzig 1854³.

³⁵ Francis Haskell, *History and its images. Art and the interpretation of the past*, partie II, New Haven 1993.

grès méthodique majeur. L'herméneutique de Schleiermacher assigne à une interprétation conjuguée les deux types fondamentaux de documents qu'elle définit – le document littéraire et le document visuel. Elle enrichit du même coup la réflexion sur la lecture, sur l'interprétation de l'œuvre d'art; mais surtout, elle élabore les modalités de validation de l'interprétation. Ferdinand Piper, auteur de la célèbre *Einleitung in die Monumentale Theologie* (1867), fonde un musée d'architecture à l'université de Berlin; on y conserve l'image des monuments cardinaux de l'histoire de l'art. Dans l'*Einleitung*, Piper projette tout naturellement l'herméneutique textuelle sur l'analyse des monuments considérés comme supports de significations, dans la tradition de Schleiermacher.³⁹ Le résultat ne constitue pas une histoire de l'art proprement dite – Piper est trop pressé d'extraire les contenus théologiques, les doctrines religieuses « gravées » dans les monuments. A ses yeux, la matière de l'œuvre d'art contient l'esprit qui se révèle en elle; l'historien a pour tâche de l'extraire. Heinrich Otte, un disciple direct de Schleiermacher, s'avère plus raffiné. Pour Otte, « Die Kunst ist die gesetzmässige Darstellung einer Idee in sinnlicher Form ». ⁴⁰ L'historien d'art doit définir ces lois qui règlent les contours de la forme comme représentation de l'Idée. Tous ces manuels, cependant, restent dépourvus d'images. Ils offrent des clés de lecture et des méthodes d'interprétation à des lecteurs qui se déplacent pour étudier des monuments, ou pour contempler des œuvres d'art dans les musées. Peu à peu et sur le modèle de Caumont, de tels manuels vont s'orner d'images plus ou moins schématiques; ces documents visuels décrivent les composantes essentielles du vocabulaire architectural-type. Dans ce nouveau cadre, ils serviront un argument porté par une philosophie du développement des cultures anciennes. Eugène Müntz restera peu sensible à ces enjeux. Dans son maître livre, nous verrons qu'il emprunte de multiples stratégies d'illustrations, dont celles propres aux *Handbücher*, mais il les réduit à des recettes utilisables selon ses besoins. Le rapport de Müntz à l'école allemande est ici indissociable d'une autre question – celle de son usage des modèles germaniques au titre de formes pratiques, et non pas d'instruments scientifiques légitimés par un socle théorique, comme par une herméneutique.

Quant à l'histoire culturelle, le contact entre l'Allemagne et la France s'opère dans un contexte politique et social très délicat. L'historiographie germanique, contrairement à celle de la France, s'est enrichie principalement par l'étude du christianisme comme phénomène historique; cette étude est enseignée dans toutes les facultés de théologie. Or la plupart des historiens allemands du XIX^e siècle ont effectué des études de théologie, et Burckhardt ne fait nullement exception. L'histoire religieuse connaît alors une période de crise, à la frontière entre le théologique et l'historique. L'école de Friedrich Schleiermacher conçoit l'histoire du christianisme et de l'Eglise comme la composante essentielle d'une foi érudite, mais aussi comme un champ privilégié de l'herméneutique, après l'interprétation biblique. L'étude du christianisme dans le temps devient alors le lieu d'une tension majeure entre une vision téléologique de la religion, et une pratique scientifique de l'histoire qui considère la religion chrétienne avec la même distance que celle des païens. Un Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette, ancien professeur de

³⁶ Müller 1835 (note 27), p. 1.

³⁷ Louis Batissier, *Éléments d'archéologie nationale, précédés d'une histoire de l'art monumental chez les anciens*, Paris 1843, p. 11. Cet ouvrage comporte une bibliographie abondante, mais où domine la littérature française et anglaise, et où les références allemandes sont réduites à quelques unités.

³⁸ Jakob Friedrich Fries, *Wissen, Glaube, Ahndung*, ed. par Leonard Nelson, Göttingen 1905 (première ed. 1805).

³⁹ Ferdinand Piper, *Einleitung in die Monumentale Theologie*, Gotha 1867. Piper était un ancien disciple d'Au-

gust Neander, un professeur d'histoire de l'Eglise à l'université de Berlin fasciné, dans l'histoire de l'Eglise, par la force surnaturelle du christianisme s'imposant dans le temps. Neander s'était converti au christianisme après avoir lu les écrits de Schleiermacher. L'idée que cette force peut être lue dans l'histoire est capitale. Elle n'est pas qu'hégélienne. Eugène Müntz possédait plusieurs ouvrages de Piper: voir le catalogue de sa bibliothèque déjà cité (note 7), I n° 861, 862, II n° 260, 261, 262, 263, III n° 1817.

⁴⁰ Otte 1854 (note 34), p. 1.

théologie berlinois exilé à l'université de Bâle, exemplifie ce problème. Au jeune Burckhardt, de Wette soutient que la religion chrétienne connaît une destinée terrestre – comme phénomène humain, au même titre que toutes les religions de la terre. Dans son traité d'archéologie biblique, de Wette recommande l'usage du comparatisme.⁴¹ Même dans sa *Sittenlehre*, il propose une analyse anthropologique, pour étudier la formation de la dimension morale chez l'homme.⁴² Confronté à ces approches novatrices, mais distancées de la religion, Burckhardt perd la foi. Le théologien désenchanté se découvre tout naturellement la vocation d'un historien.⁴³ Or dans l'étude des religions comme phénomènes historiques soumis aux lois humaines, la question de l'autonomie individuelle joue un rôle important – en art, elle touche aux artistes comme aux commanditaires. L'histoire du christianisme offre un modèle prégnant, mais problématique pour évaluer la place des individus dans la totalité à laquelle ils appartiennent.⁴⁴ A mesure que l'école historique allemande, et particulièrement prussienne grandit en force, elle subit pourtant l'ascendant de modèles dogmatiques et téléologiques du développement des nations conçues comme des êtres organiques. Dans leur progrès, elle reconnaît un facteur essentiel : l'Etat. Le jeune Burckhardt entend Léopold von Ranke, alors le plus grand historien allemand, tonner de sa chaire : « Meine Herrn, Völker sind Gedanken Gottes! »⁴⁵ Tout d'abord impressionné, Burckhardt finira par opposer ses doutes à cette belle assurance. D'ailleurs, ce triomphe de l'abstraction philosophique suscite des controverses, même à l'université de Berlin. Un étudiant de Neander se rappelle qu'il n'était « ni abstrait, ni scientifique. Le péché originel des Allemands était, selon lui, leur amour exagéré pour la culture de l'intelligence : en Allemagne, tout devient science et formules ». ⁴⁶ De même, la *Cultur* comme l'*Histoire de l'art pendant la Renaissance* chantent l'éloge de l'individualisme, ferment d'une invention et d'une nouvelle conscience de soi caractéristiques de la modernité renaissante.

Est-ce à dire que Müntz a puisé ce modèle chez son devancier bâlois ? Rien n'est moins sûr. Un courant historiographique important du protestantisme, dans les deux pays, a facilité une prise de conscience très différente du problème. En Allemagne, l'école de Schleiermacher est totalement acquise à la perspective individualiste : celle-ci imprègne l'histoire du christianisme d'August Neander,⁴⁷ où les grandes

⁴¹ Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette, *Lehrbuch der hebräisch-jüdischen Archäologie nebst einem Grundrisse der hebräisch-jüdischen Geschichte*, Leipzig 1830², p. 4, recommande la « Vergleichung der Zustände anderer Völker, welche entweder gleichzeitig oder verwandt, oder vermöge des Grades ihrer Cultur und ihres Charakters vergleichbar sind. Die kritische Behandlung versteht sich ohnehin. » ; Werner Kaegi, *Jacob Burckhardt. Eine Biographie*, 7 vols., Bâle 1947–1982, vol. I, pp. 445–453 ; Ingmar Siebert, *Jacob Burckhardt. Studien zur Kunst und Kulturgeschichtsschreibung*, Bâle 1991.

⁴² Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette, *Christliche Sittenlehre*, 2 vols., Berlin 1819, voir le vol. I, chapitre I. L'ouvrage est dédié à Jacob Friedrich Fries.

⁴³ Thomas Albert Howard, *Religion and the rise of historicism. W.M.L. de Wette, Jacob Burckhardt, and the theological origins of nineteenth-century historical consciousness*, Cambridge 2000, pp. 51–77, avec une partie sur Schleiermacher ; Todd A. Gooch, *The numinous and modernity. An interpretation of Rudolf Otto's philosophy of religion*, Berlin 2000, pp. 72 et s., pp. 32–33, sur l'« aesthetic turn » ; Philipp Müller, *Erkenntnis und Erzählung. Ästhetische Geschichtsdeutung in der Historiographie von Ranke, Burckhardt und Taine*, Weimar / Cologne 2008.

⁴⁴ Peter Philipp Riedl, *Epochenbilder – Künstlertypologien.*

Beiträge zu Traditionsentwürfen in Literatur und Wissenschaft 1860 bis 1930, Francfort/M. 2005 ; Rainer Rosenberg, « Epochengliederung. Zur Geschichte des Periodisierungsproblems in der deutschen Literaturgeschichtsschreibung », dans : Jürgen Forhmann / Wilhelm Vosskamp (eds.), *Von der gelehrten zur disziplinären Gemeinschaft. Beiträge zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft im 19. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart 1987, pp. 216–235 ; Ulrich Muhlack, *Historisierung und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert*, Berlin 2003.

⁴⁵ Jacob Burckhardt, Lettre à sa soeur Louise Burckhardt, Berlin, 15 août 1840, dans : *Briefe* (note 8), vol. I, n° 49, pp. 158–161, cit. p. 161.

⁴⁶ Paul Mathieu, pasteur neuchâtelois, *Etude sur M. le Professeur Neander* (1854), manuscrit, Bibliothèque des Pasteurs, Neuchâtel cote cr 36589/7. Je remercie Dr Cecilia Hurley de m'avoir signalé ce document dont elle prépare la publication.

⁴⁷ August Neander, *Allgemeine Geschichte der christlichen Religion und Kirche*, 6 vols., Hambourg 1825–1852.

⁴⁸ August Neander, *La Vie chrétienne dans les premiers siècles de l'Eglise*, trad. par Alphonse Diacon et JJ L Vallette, Lausanne 1864.

⁴⁹ August Neander, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du*

figures de l'histoire religieuse semblent presque résumer leur siècle, ou celle de Leberecht de Wette. Or Neander connaît un grand succès en France. Et sa réception est soutenue par la vertu d'intermédiaires actifs en Suisse et en Alsace.⁴⁸ Les Neuchâtelois Christian Gerster et Jules Sandoz, l'alsacien Guillaume Fischbacher s'associent dès 1871 ; c'est eux qui publient nombre d'ouvrages allemands en France, et Neander en particulier.⁴⁹ A Genève, Joel Cherbuliez assume le même rôle d'intermédiaire.⁵⁰ Cette constellation revêt une grande importance – Müntz est un savant alsacien, très au fait de la culture allemande. Mais sa réflexion, en France prend racine sur un terreau tout particulier.

En France en effet, la perspective individualiste de Neander trouve un accueil original chez quelques historiens d'art influents, mais dans un contexte militant. De nombreux savants favorables au protestantisme tentent, dès le Premier Empire, de démontrer que la Réforme, contrairement à l'Eglise catholique, n'est pas ennemie de l'art. Sans l'aide directe de l'institution religieuse, l'art se développe plus librement parce qu'il repose sur la seule vitalité des artistes. En Allemagne, Carl Grüneisen et Alfred Woltmann mènent un combat similaire.⁵¹ Mais en France, l'essai de Charles de Villers sur Luther esquisse l'argument dès 1805.⁵² Cette idéologie triomphe sous Napoléon III, grâce à un pasteur et historien d'art alors très célèbre, Athanase-Josué Coquerel.⁵³ Chez Coquerel, Rembrandt sert à exemplifier la thèse de la liberté artistique, créatrice de beaux génies en pays réformés. Dans la traduction anglaise de son ouvrage sur l'art italien,⁵⁴ le pasteur adopte même un ton plus militant: « We let Roman Catholicism boast and brag unceasingly about its alliance with Art, and preach, and write, and print every day that the papal Church is the foster-mother of the Fine Arts, and their true efficient support on earth. [...] This I pretend to disprove. »⁵⁵ Dans ses *Libres études* consacrées aux *Stanze de Raphael*, Coquerel dénigre la *Disputa*, œuvre froide parce qu'abaissée à l'illustration littérale d'un message théologique alambiqué. Dans *l'Ecole d'Athènes* tout au contraire, l'artiste génial soumet l'œuvre au pouvoir libre de son imagination.⁵⁶ Or c'est par rapport à ce débat, tel qu'il a été colporté en France, qu'Eugène Müntz définit sa propre position. Il rejette la théorie de Coquerel, mais pour mieux renvoyer catholicisme et protestantisme dos à dos. La Renaissance tardive marque, dans les deux domaines protestant et catho-

christianisme et de la vie chrétienne, trad. par Alphonse Diacon, Neuchâtel / Genève / Paris 1829; Sandoz et Fischbacher publient ensemble un ouvrage majeur d'August Neander, *Histoire de l'établissement et de la direction de l'Eglise chrétienne par les apôtres*, trad. par Ferdinand Fontanès, Paris 1878; François Vallotton, *L'édition romande et ses acteurs, 1850-1920* (Mémoire éditoriale 3), Genève 2001, pp. 61-62.

⁵⁰ August Neander, *Histoire de l'établissement et de la direction de l'Eglise chrétienne par les apôtres*, trad. par Ferdinand Fontanès, Paris / Genève 1836; voir Josiane Cettlin, « Joël Cherbuliez (1806-1870) : Pour une critique, gardienne sévère des principes éternels du beau et du bon », dans : *Les Cahiers Robinson*, 24 (2008), pp. 49-70.

⁵¹ Carl Grüneisen, *De protestantismo artibus haud infest*, Stuttgart 1839; Pascal Griener, « Alfred Woltmann and the Holbein dispute, 1863-1871 », dans : Mark Roskill / John Oliver Hand (eds.), *Hans Holbein. Paintings, prints, and reception*, (Studies in the history of art 60), Washington / New Haven 2001, pp. 211-225.

⁵² Charles de Villers (1765-1815), *Essai sur l'esprit et l'influence de la réformation de Luther, ouvrage qui a remporté le prix sur cette question proposée dans la séance publique du 15 germinal an X, par l'Institut national de France*. « Quelle a été l'influence de la réformation de Lu-

ther sur la situation politique des différens États de l'Europe, et sur le progrès des lumières ? », Paris / Metz, an XII-1804.

⁵³ Sa biographie dans Jean-Marie Mayeur / Yves-Marie Hilaire (eds.), *Dictionnaire du monde religieux dans la France contemporaine*, vol. 5, Paris 1993, pp. 142-145 (notice d'André Encrevé); André Encrevé, *Protestants français au milieu du XIXème siècle. Les Réformés de 1848 à 1870*, pref. de Jean-Marie Mayeur, Genève 1986, pp. 107-112, 753-770; Ernest Stroehlin, *Athanase Coquerel fils. Etude biographique*, Paris 1886.

⁵⁴ Athanase-Josué Coquerel, *Rembrandt et l'individualisme dans l'art*, Paris 1869.

⁵⁵ Athanase-Josué Coquerel, *The Fine Arts in Italy in their religious aspect. Letters from Rome, Naples, Pisa, etc.*, trad. par Edward Higginson / Emily Higginson, Londres 1859, pp. VI-VII. L'original, une fois encore, fut publié par le libraire genevois Cherbuliez: Athanase-Josué Coquerel, *Des Beaux-arts en Italie au point de vue religieux. Lettres écrites de Rome, Naples, Pise, etc.*, Paris / Genève 1857.

⁵⁶ Athanase-Josué Coquerel, *Libres études. Religion. Critique. Histoire Beaux-arts et voyages*, Paris / Londres / New York 1868, pp. 338-343, sur la Madone Sixtine de Raphael.

lique de la Réforme et Contre-Réforme, une période où l'art s'est libéré de l'emprise de la religion. L'art erre, parce qu'il ne sert plus un propos supérieur. Dans les pays protestants, « si la Renaissance, avec sa large tolérance, a favorisé l'essor des talents les plus variés, la Réformation, avec son programme trop exclusif, trop strictement confessionnel, était plus propre à décourager qu'à inspirer ». Chez les catholiques, même constat : « Aussi bien l'art, en tant qu'interprète populaire des croyances religieuses, ne joue-t-il plus qu'un rôle effacé à partir de cette époque. [...] le courant de sympathie qui unissait l'artiste à la foule a été interrompu. C'est aux amateurs que les peintres modernes s'adressent ; c'est par les raffinements du dessin ou du coloris qu'ils nous séduisent, plutôt que par la profondeur de leurs convictions. La fantaisie individuelle a remplacé ces fortes règles qui donnaient à l'art chrétien primitif, comme à l'art du moyen-âge, sa raison d'être, son caractère de nécessité si frappant. »⁵⁷ Cette option, née d'un débat français, éloigne profondément Müntz de Burckhardt. Chez Burckhardt, la liberté nourrit toute la *Rinascita* ; elle garantit l'autonomie artistique. D'ailleurs, chez lui la morale ne joue aucun rôle dans le développement de l'art – les états italiens se créent dans le sang et l'arbitraire, mais leur civilisation brille de tous ses feux. Chez les protestants français, l'individualisme sert une théorie anti-catholique de l'art. Müntz, en rejetant cette dernière, la constitue en problème ; et ce problème, il le résout à l'aide d'une doctrine sans doute inspirée par John Ruskin.⁵⁸ Y domine une approche hétéronomique de l'art ; l'artiste ne saurait prospérer que lorsqu'il se place humblement au service de la morale et de la religion. La sécularisation d'un peuple, sa déchéance morale entraînent avec elles la décadence de l'art.

Il reste à évoquer une composante de la sensibilité qui domine au XIX^e siècle, et qui appelle de ses vœux de nouvelles formes éditoriales. Il importe de la rappeler, avant d'examiner l'usage qu'en tire Eugène Müntz grâce à l'apport massif de la photographie. En Europe, le désir d'illustrations gravées ou photographiques relève non seulement d'une ambition cognitive mais aussi d'une poétique nouvelle. Le processus est lent, mais irréversible. Au XIX^e siècle, Edward Gibbon fascine les historiens modernes ; ces derniers admirent qu'une ville comme Rome, avec ses ruines, puisse féconder une hypothèse historique grandiose. Ferdinand Gregorovius avoue subir l'emprise de Gibbon lorsque, jeune historien, il entre à Rome en 1852 pour y écrire sa *Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter*.⁵⁹ Longtemps, la Ville éternelle fournit un levain à l'ambition d'une histoire culturelle globale – celle qui aspire à suivre la lente chute des empires, ou à scander de grandes périodes. Au terme de ces vastes enquêtes, les monuments qui ont inspiré l'historien s'évanouissent devant la réalité ultime qu'ils évoquent avec tant de prégnance. Ils fournissent un théâtre où s'incarne l'idée de l'historien, avant que cette idée ne subisse l'épreuve des archives ; mais ce décor suggestif s'efface devant l'architecture d'une analyse historique

⁵⁷ Eugène Müntz, *Études sur l'histoire de la peinture et de l'iconographie chrétiennes*, Paris 1882, pp. 57–58.

⁵⁸ La bibliothèque de Müntz est fort bien achalandée en livres de Ruskin. Sur Ruskin, voir Stephen Bann / Matthias Waschek (eds.), *Relire Ruskin. Cycle de conférences organisé au Musée du Louvre du 8 mars au 5 avril 2001*, Paris 2003.

⁵⁹ Ferdinand Adolf Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter. Vom V. bis zum XVI. Jahrhundert*, 8 vols., Stuttgart 1859–1872 ; Alberto Forni, « Ferdinand Gregorovius storico di Roma medievale », dans : *Roma medievale. Aggiornamenti*, Florence 1998, pp. 13–24 ; Sigmund Münz, « Ferdinand Gregorovius », dans : *The English Historical Review*, VII/28 (October 1892), pp. 697–704, cite une lettre de Gregorovius qui mentionne sa fascination pour Gibbon, l'histoire et le modèle de la ville ; Carl E. Schorske, « History and the Study of Culture »,

dans : *New Literary History*, 21/2 (1990), pp. 407–420 ; David S. Chambers, « Ferdinand Gregorovius and Renaissance Rome », dans : *Renaissance studies* (2000), pp. 409–434 ; Hanno-Walter Kruft, « Gregorovius als Zeichner », dans : *Sitzungsberichte, Kunstgeschichtliche Gesellschaft zu Berlin*, N.F. 36 (1987/88), pp. 9–11 ; Arnold Esch (ed.), *Ferdinand Gregorovius und Italien. Eine kritische Würdigung*, Tübingen 1993 ; Jörg Garms, « Autour de l'idée de Rome. Écrivains et touristes du XIX^e siècle », dans : *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Italie et Méditerranée*, 102/1 (1990), pp. 97–109 ; Arnold Esch, « Rom-Erfahrung im späten 18. und im frühen 19. Jahrhundert. Winckelmann, Goethe, Humboldt, Bonstetten », dans : *Wege nach Rom. Annäherungen aus zehn Jahrhunderten*, Munich 2003, pp. 106–119 ; Andreas Beyer, « Leben in Gegenwart des Vergangenen. Carl Justi, Jacob Burckhardt und Ferdinand Gregorovius in Rom

où dominant les faits et les concepts – le visible, ici, se contente de préparer à l'invisible.⁶⁰ La poésie du Lieu n'est pas totalement oblitérée de telles fresques historiques : mais elle relève du style littéraire, comme le rappelle Wilhelm von Humboldt dans *Über die Aufgabe des Geschichtsschreibers* (1821) ; dans le *tableau* d'une époque, l'esthétique met en scène une période dans sa belle et grande unité.⁶¹ Gregorovius avoue sa fascination pour la langue rude, vigoureuse des chroniques anciennes, qui imite la brosse de Giotto ; styliste virtuose, il traduit dans sa prose l'ampleur qu'il a tant admirée en parcourant les rues de Rome.⁶²

A la fin du siècle, la majesté monumentale, comme signe tangible de la grandeur d'une culture, réclame sa contrepartie visuelle dans le Livre. L'auteur d'un livre d'art connaît, à la fin du siècle, une liberté de choix soudain sans limite. Les photographies qu'il collectionne pour documenter son propos, il peut en solliciter l'impression par un procédé mécanique de traduction, qui rend inutile le travail du graveur de reproduction.⁶³ Eugène Müntz, à cet égard, aura été l'un des premiers à offrir une fête d'images photographiques pour reconstruire, dans l'imagination de son lecteur, tout un monde perdu. Par le livre illustré, l'Italie à la Renaissance devient tout à la fois le théâtre d'un grand tableau de l'Histoire, et sa matière première.

Venons-en maintenant au fonctionnement de l'abondante iconographie offerte par l'*Histoire de l'Art pendant la Renaissance. Italie*. Les photographies proposent, encadrées dans des fenêtres, des vues – les sculptures sont généralement ségréguées de leur contexte originel ; les peintures, toujours sans cadre, offrent une *vera icona* désincarnée. Mais ces images transforment en icônes artistiques les chefs-d'œuvre qu'elles reproduisent. De fait, elles prescrivent déjà l'admiration que devra susciter l'œuvre originale, *in situ* ; cette dernière sera contemplée en silence, mais elle ne correspondra déjà plus à une impression native. Avant même le premier moment de sa contemplation, le chef d'œuvre a déjà pris la valeur d'une image, articulée dans sa constellation de photographies organisées, toujours les mêmes.⁶⁴ D'ouvrage en ouvrage, ces photographies sans cesse retrouvées légitiment les chefs-d'œuvre qu'elles décrivent, elles en sanctionnent le caractère incontournable. Tout d'abord, le texte d'Eugène Müntz ne connaît pas le système des renvois numérotés aux illustrations. Cette pratique, presque inconnue en Allemagne surtout dans les ouvrages pédagogiques, confère au Livre la dignité d'un album de luxe. Le texte et l'image se renvoient discrètement l'un à l'autre, grâce à une mise en page habile, et où l'image à pleine page, en hors-texte, apparaît moins souvent que le cliché intégré dans le miroir de page. Le rapport entre le texte et l'image évoque le contrepoint musical. L'approche de l'art qui se donne à voir ici relève de la

vor dem Hintergrund der italienischen Einigung», dans : Conrad Wiedemann (ed.), *Rom – Paris – London. Erfahrung und Selbsterfahrung deutscher Schriftsteller und Künstler in den fremden Metropolen*, Stuttgart 1988, pp. 289–300.

⁶⁰ Voir Pascal Griener, *La République de l'œil. L'expérience de l'art au siècle des Lumières* (Coll. Collège de France), pref. de Roland Recht, Paris 2010.

⁶¹ Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Über die Aufgabe des Geschichtsschreibers*, dans : *Gesammelte Werke*. Berlin 1841, vol. I, pp. 1–25 ; Johannes Süssmann, *Geschichtsschreibung oder Roman? Zur Konstitutionslogik von Geschichtserzählungen zwischen Schiller und Ranke (1780–1824)*, Stuttgart 2000, surtout le chapitre II ; Thomas Noll, *Vom Glück des Gelehrten. Versuch über Jacob Burckhardt*, Göttingen 1997, pp. 48–52 ; Jörn Rüsen, « Esthétisation de l'histoire et historisation de l'art au XIX^e siècle. Ré-

flexions sur l'historicisme », dans : Édouard Pommier (ed.), *Histoire de l'histoire de l'art*, Paris 1995–1997, vol. II, pp. 177–194.

⁶² Ferdinand Gregorovius, *Römische Tagebücher*, ed. par Friedrich Althaus, Stuttgart 1892, p. 38, fasciné par la langue des chroniques, qui ressemble à « die Sprache der Bilder von Giotto, Lippi, Ghirlandajo ».

⁶³ Voir Dorothea Peters, « Die Welt im Raster. Georg Meisenbach und der lange Weg zur gedruckten Photographie », dans : Alexander Gall (ed.), *Konstruieren, kommunizieren, präsentieren. Bilder von Wissenschaft und Technik*, Göttingen 2007, pp. 179–244.

⁶⁴ Alison Griffiths, *Shivers down your spine. Cinema, Museums and the Immersive view*, New York 2008, partie I.



2 Eugène Müntz, *Histoire de l'art*, vol. I, p. 77, *Vue de Sienne*



3 Eugène Müntz, *Histoire de l'art*, vol. I, p. 409, *Façade de la «Madonna di Galliera», Bologne; Façade de l'Église Saint-Zacharie à Venise*

littérature: nous croyons entendre une conférence éloquentes sur l'art, tandis que défilent, imperturbables et silencieuses, les images de chefs-d'œuvre, offertes à l'admiration muette. On admire ces images tandis que le texte, s'éloignant presque toujours de la dénotation pure, exploite les prestiges de l'évocation. Au fil de la lecture, les illustrations acquièrent tout à coup leur sens grâce à l'impact indirect de l'exposé: le texte sature subrepticement les images de significations, il leur confère soudain une profondeur creusée par un contenu esthétique ou historique — ce miracle du sens, sans cesse reproduit par la lecture, est mis en scène tout au long de l'ouvrage même. L'auteur du texte, dans son humilité, semble hésiter à assujettir les illustrations à son discours. Tout au contraire, le texte prépare ici le lit des images. Ces clichés assemblent un monde lumineux, presque autonome, que le lecteur transformera en une fantasmagorie historique: la Renaissance rêvée des nostalgiques. L'image accomplit l'histoire-résurrection d'une civilisation esthétique de part en part. Bref, la mise en scène du Livre rejette totalement

⁶⁵ Voir par exemple la vue de Sienne, Müntz, *Histoire* (note 23), vol. I, p. 77.

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 408–409 (architectures), et pp. 31–39 (coiffes féminines).

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 331, une remarque négative sur l'archéologie qui cède au culte de l'ancien pour l'ancien.

⁶⁸ Lucie Goujard, «L'inventaire pittoresque: photographie et sculpture ornementale au XIXe siècle. D'après «La

Normandie monumentale et pittoresque», recueil de planches héliogravées, 1892–1899», dans: *Livraisons d'histoire de l'architecture*, 12/2 (2006), pp. 59–70; Laure Boyer, *L'art révélé au monde. Le patrimoine monumental vu par les firmes photographiques du XIXe siècle en France, 1850–1880*, Strasbourg 1999 (DEA Univ. de Strasbourg 2: 1999).

⁶⁹ Müntz, *Histoire* (note 23), vol. I, p. 508–509.



4 Eugène Müntz, *Histoire de l'art*, vol. I, hors-texte après la p. 28 : Tête d'enfant. Fac-similé d'un dessin de Lorenzo di Credi (Musée du Louvre)



5 Eugène Müntz, *Histoire de l'art*, vol. I, p. 325, Dame italienne du XVème siècle. D'après un bas-relief de Mino de Fiesole (Musée national de Florence)

la stratégie allemande, qui reliait étroitement texte et image documentaire pour mieux démontrer que la forme, *interprétée* par une herméneutique adéquate, se décompose en signes lisibles.

D'emblée, le lecteur est frappé par la disparité des images. Il faut se rappeler qu'à cette époque, les matrices demeuraient coûteuses. Les éditeurs se prêtaient mutuellement les blocs après leur premier usage; c'est pourquoi on retrouve la même illustration dans plusieurs publications de la même période. Chez Müntz, les villes d'Italie sont évoquées par des esquisses pittoresques, exécutées au pinceau et à l'encre de Chine et imprimées en photogravure (Ill. 2). Ces vues imprécises affirment le primat du pittoresque qui enchante le touriste. Elles inscrivent la figure symbolique du voyageur au cœur du Livre, comme si cet album réunissait les croquis d'un Grand Tour à peine achevés.⁶⁵ D'autres images sont exécutées au trait et imprimées en gravure. Dans la tradition du *Handbuch* allemand, elles schématisent des architectures typiques, simplifient la comparaison de deux édifices réduits à leurs traits morphologiques essentiels (Ill. 3); parfois, elles détaillent les caractéristiques d'un costume renaissant.⁶⁶ Mais l'auteur utilise ce moyen avec parcimonie. Il avoue même son mépris à l'endroit de toute archéologie qui sacrifie au culte de l'antique pour l'antique; dans son histoire de l'art asservie à l'esthétique, le chef-d'œuvre seul mérite l'attention du savant.⁶⁷ Un certain nombre de ces gravures au trait sont exécutées d'après des photographies, pour éviter l'abus d'effets artistiques, et concentrer l'attention sur les principes, les structures régissant un objet d'art.⁶⁸ Mais le plus souvent, la photographie est reproduite telle quelle lorsqu'elle exhibe des sculptures, ou des dessins.⁶⁹ La peinture, avec ses couleurs, pose encore de

grands problèmes de traduction ; elle n'occupe pas encore la place qui sera la sienne au XX^{ème} siècle. Par contre, le fac-similé de dessins appartient, depuis plus d'un siècle, à l'apparat du connaisseur. Dans l'ouvrage de Müntz, cette apparition régulière relève davantage du registre symbolique que du domaine cognitif ; sa présence récurrente rassure le lecteur, qui admire sa beauté bien imitée, et reconnaît la marque de fabrique d'une publication pour connaisseurs (Ill. 4). La photographie est surtout sollicitée dans la reproduction de sculptures (Ill. 5).

L'image documentaire sert chez Müntz deux propos très distincts : par son image fidèle, l'art figuratif dépeint la *civilisation* de la Renaissance ; mais aussi, le cliché *exemplifie* l'art renaissant (Ill. 5). Par la magie de l'image, Müntz résout fictivement le dilemme auquel Burckhardt s'était confronté entre 1855 et 1860. Au terme d'un véritable chiasme, et grâce à la double fonction des images, l'art renaissant se donne ici à voir comme la représentation fidèle d'une société au quotidien, de part en part esthétique, mais aussi comme un répertoire de formes belles. *La Renaissance* se rehausse ici à la hauteur d'un rêve d'esthète, où l'image rejoint la réalité qu'elle idéalise. Si le processus d'idéalisation est reconnu par Müntz lorsqu'il explique le travail de l'artiste, il l'oublie tout à coup lorsqu'il transforme la représentation renaissante en document visuel fidèle, qui donne à voir la civilisation de la Renaissance, et nous transporte dans un passé idéal. On voit ici que l'illustration, chez Müntz, baigne la culture renaissante dans une atmosphère sereine, apollinienne. Telles œuvres d'art sont même élevées au rang d'allégories de la Renaissance ; la *Primavera* de Botticelli trône au seuil du premier volume, comme emblème lumineux d'une période.⁷⁰

Dans un magnifique texte consacré à Gabriele D'Annunzio, Hugo von Hofmannsthal pose que les siècles antérieurs nous ont légué deux choses : de beaux meubles, et des nerfs fragiles. Dépossédés de l'énergie de nos devanciers, dit-il, nous collectionnons les objets qu'ils créèrent. Ces choses, nous les mettons en scène, nous tentons de leur insuffler une vie imaginaire à l'aide de nos poumons affaiblis – bref, nous élisons notre Cythère dans les magasins d'antiquités : « Ja alle unsere Schönheits- und Glücksgedanken liefen fort von uns, fort aus dem Alltag, und halten Haus mit den schöneren Geschöpfen eines künstlichen Daseins, mit den schlanken Engeln und Pagen des Fiesole, mit den Gaßenbuben des Murillo und den mondänen Schäferinnen des Watteau. Bei uns aber ist nichts zurückgeblieben als frierendes Leben, schale, öde Wirklichkeit, flügelahme Entsagung. Wir haben nichts als ein sentimentales Gedächtnis, einen gelähmten Willen und Selbstverdoppelung [...]. Das ist es, was ich den Triumph der Möbelpoesie genannt habe, den Zauberreigen dieser Wesen, von denen nichts als Namen und der berücksichtigende Refrain von Schönheit und Liebe zurückgeblieben ist. »⁷¹ Cette élite européenne, argentée mais aux nerfs fragiles, aimait les beaux livres. *L'Histoire de l'art*, illustrée de luxueux clichés photographiques, la servit à merveille.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 41.

⁷¹ Hugo von Hofmannsthal, « Gabriele d'Annunzio », dans : id., *Gesammelte Werke in zehn Einzelbänden. Reden und*

Aufsätze, ed. par Bernd Schoeller / Rudolf Hirsch, vol. I, 1891–1913, Francfort/M. 1979, pp. 174–184 ; première parution : *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 9.8.1893.

Graham Smith

From Album to Archive: The Alinari Catalogues of 1856 and 1857*

An amiable young woman in a photograph taken about 1900 for the Fratelli Alinari provides an introduction to my paper (fig. 1). Intended to personify photography, she stands by her camera and holds the lens cap in one hand, indicating that she has been caught while making a photograph. With her right hand she supports a mirror, which reflects part of her dress. Mirrors appear often in paintings and photographic portraits of women during the nineteenth century, but the mirror is also an emblem of photography, for it brings to mind Oliver Wendell Holmes's characterisation of the daguerreotype as "*the mirror with a memory*".¹ Other objects connected with photography appear below the tripod—a second lens, a mortar and pestle, a printing frame and bottles for chemicals. Behind this paraphernalia is a photograph album, an example of the type of luxury item the Alinari produced for well-to-do travellers during the second half of the nineteenth century. The album displays a view showing the dome and south flank of Santa Maria del Fiore, the Cathedral of Florence.

A similar view appears as the third entry in the first printed catalogue of photographs by the Alinari, where it is described as a *Vue latérale de la Cathédrale* (fig. 2). Entitled *Collection de vues monumentales de la Toscane en photographie par les frères Alinari*, this inventory was published in April 1856 by Luigi Bardi, a Florentine print seller whose business was situated on the Piazza San Gaetano (now the Piazza Antinori); printed on a single sheet, it lists 115 photographs while indicating that additional plates were to be published soon afterwards.² Gathered under three principal headings—*Florence*, *Pise* and *Sienna*—are 54 views of buildings and sculpture in Florence, 24 of the monuments of Pisa and twelve of Siena. Most of the photographs show buildings or sculpture, but several plates record the renowned frescoes

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¹ The phrase—in italics in the original—occurs in "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph", an article published in: *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 1859. It is reprinted in: Alan Trachtenberg (ed.), *Classic Essays on Photography*, Stony Creek/CT 1980, pp. 71–82.

² Arturo Carlo Quintavalle, *Gli Alinari*, Florence 2003, p. 567.

in the Camposanto at Pisa. Two photographs reproduce paintings of particular interest to visitors to Florence in the nineteenth century. The first is a fresco portrait of Dante that had been discovered in the Bargello in July 1840 and was believed to have been painted by Giotto.³ The second is a Last Supper that had been discovered in 1843 in the refectory of the convent of Sant' Onofrio. Believed then to be by Raphael, this painting is in fact by Perugino.⁴ The first collection was followed in September 1856 by an



1 Gaetano Puccini, *Allegory of Photography*, albumen print from a glass negative, c. 1900, 21.90 x 16.20 cm. Florence, Fratelli Alinari Museum of the History of Photography

expanded inventory containing 165 views of Florence, Pisa, Siena and the Roman States of Perugia, Assisi, Todi and Viterbo.⁵

It would be illuminating to reconstitute the collections of April and September 1856 by associating entries in the catalogues with contemporaneous photographs, but this is easier said than done, partly because of the rarity of prints from the 1850s and partly because inventory numbers that appear on some early plates may be misleading. According to Giovanni Fanelli, the Alinari did not add inventory numbers to their negatives until 1863, when they published their first general catalogue.⁶ Consequently, a print bearing an inventory number cannot be contemporaneous with the 1856 inventories (although the negative may date from then). The situation is complicated further by the fact that numbers on early prints may not agree with those given to corresponding views in the 1856 inventories.

Fanelli suggested that blind stamps embossed on the mounts of photographs provide more reliable guidance for dating early prints. Photographs printed about 1856 typically exhibit the blind stamp “FRATELLI ALINARI / FOTOGRAFI / FIRENZE / PRESSO LUIGI BARDI” in an oval frame.⁷ Monica Maffioli indicates that this stamp was likely introduced in 1854, when Leopoldo Ali-

nari established the Alinari as a family concern.⁸ It was, therefore, the stamp in use when the 1856 inventories were published. By contrast, photographs issued during Bardi's earliest collaboration with Leopoldo Alinari bear the stamp “LUIGI BARDI / FIRENZE” in an octagonal frame, emphasising the print seller's roles as patron and entrepreneur.⁹

³ Ernst H. Gombrich, “Giotto's Portrait of Dante?”, in: *New Light on Old Masters: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, vol. IV, Oxford 1986, pp. 11–31.

⁴ Rosanna Caterina Proto Pisani (ed.), *Perugino a Firenze. Qualità e fortuna d'uno stile*, Florence 2005, passim.

⁵ See Quintavalle 2003 (note 2), p. 567. See also Monica Maffioli, “Fratelli Alinari: una famiglia di fotografi. 1852–1920”, in: Arturo Carlo Quintavalle / Monica Maffioli (eds.), *Fratelli Alinari. Fotografi in Firenze*, Firenze 2003, pp. 21–55, here p. 52, note 51.

⁶ Giovanni Fanelli, “La Fotografia di architettura degli Alinari 1854–1865. Oltre le convenzioni e gli stereotipi”, in: Arturo Carlo Quintavalle / Monica Maffioli (eds.), *Fratelli Alinari. Fotografi in Firenze*, Firenze 2003, pp. 87–119, here p. 92.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 88, pl. 1, II. See also Quintavalle 2003 (note 2), p. 595, 2.

⁸ Maffioli 2003 (note 5), p. 23.

⁹ Fanelli 2003 (note 6), p. 88, pl. 1, I; Quintavalle 2003 (note 2), p. 595, 1.



2 The Fratelli Alinari, Firenze. Veduta laterale del Duomo / Vue latérale de la Cathédrale, albumen print from a glass negative, c. 1855, 26.1 x 33.7 cm. Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture / Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, PH1979:0105:003

Taking into account these factors, it is possible to bring together contemporaneous examples of many of the views listed in the 1856 catalogues by collating plates in modern Alinari publications that reproduce incunabula from the firm's early activity. Such prints are reproduced in a catalogue of 1989 celebrating the sesquicentennial of the first public announcement of photography,¹⁰ and others are gathered in publications that appeared in 2003 to mark the 150th anniversary of the beginning of Alinari photographic activities. Fanelli has meticulously examined the architectural views of Florence dating from this period.¹¹ Furthermore, Arturo Quintavalle has reproduced and discussed a large number of plates dating from the first decade of Leopoldo's activity.¹²

It is also possible to reconstruct—at least in part—the first Alinari collections by examining albums produced by the firm at that time. One such, described by Maria Possenti in her census of early Alinari photographs, is preserved in the Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture / Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.¹³ Entitled *Views of Florence, Pisa and Siena, Tuscany, Italy* and measuring 48.0 x

¹⁰ Michele Falzone Del Barbarò / Monica Maffioli / Emanuela Sesti (eds.), *Alle origini della fotografia: un itinerario toscano 1839–1880*, Florence 1989, pp. 64–80.

¹¹ Fanelli 2003 (note 6), pp. 87–119.

¹² Quintavalle 2003 (note 2), pp. 139–247.

¹³ Maria Possenti, "Appunti per un primo censimento delle fotografie Alinari", in: Arturo Carlo Quintavalle / Monica Maffioli (eds.), *Fratelli Alinari. Fotografi in Firenze*,

63.5 x 4.5 centimetres, it compares in size with the album in the tableau reproduced at the beginning of this study. The Montreal album contains eighty photographs, of which 26 are large-format plates and 54 are smaller prints. Taking into account variations resulting from the fact that the photographs may have been trimmed before mounting, the smaller prints are close in size to those offered at six francs each in the 1856 catalogues (35 x 27 centimetres). Twenty of the twenty-seven large plates are larger than the dimension of 41 x 31 centimetres given for the larger photographs in the Alinari catalogue of September 1856 but fall within the dimensions (44 x 33 centimetres) given for the “extra” prints in the catalogue of October 1857, where they were offered at eight francs and fifty centimes.¹⁴ Handwritten captions are inscribed in Italian on each album page, and the blind stamp “FRATELLI ALINARI / FOTOGRAFI / FIRENZE / PRESSO LUIGI BARDI” appears on the mounts.

The Montreal album contains three views listed in the inventory of October 1857 but not present in the collection of September 1856: *Firenze. Cappella Pazzi nei Chiostri di Sta. Croce / La Chapelle de la famille Pazzi dans le cloître de Santa Croce, Firenze. Panorama del Palazzo Pitti / Le Palais Pitti and Panorama di Fiesole / Panoramme de Fiesole près de Florence*.¹⁵ Five plates depicting frescoes in the Piccolomini Library in Siena, of which there are three in the Montreal album, are introduced as “Dernières Publications” in September 1856 but appear in the body of the catalogue in October 1857.¹⁶ Furthermore, the dimensions of many of the large-format plates indicate that they had been drawn from the 1857 catalogue. Consequently, the Montreal album could have been acquired in Florence near the end of 1857 or during the spring or summer of 1858. The luxurious nature of the album is indicated by the fact that the photographs alone must have cost more than five hundred francs. This was a substantial sum at that time, for one learns from the 1858 edition of John Murray’s *Handbook for Travellers in Northern Italy* that “a large, comfortable carriage, accommodating 6 persons and a servant, between Rome and Florence, cost by way of Perugia 500 fr. [...], the journey being performed in 6 days—hotel expenses not included”.¹⁷

The catalogues of 1856 and 1857 are anthologies of the monuments of architecture and sculpture in Florence, Pisa, Lucca, Siena and the Papal States.¹⁸ Within the possibilities of existing technology, the collections were designed to satisfy the appetites of travellers for mementos of what they had seen in Italy. By performing this function, the Alinari contributed significantly to the economy of tourism in Italy during the second half of the nineteenth century.¹⁹ This is evident from contemporaneous travel handbooks. Baedeker, for instance, listed five photographic establishments in Florence in the 1877 edition of his handbook for travellers in Northern Italy.²⁰ The Alinari had two shops at that time, one on the Via Nazionale and another on the Via Tornabuoni.

Photographs played important roles in the social rituals of tourism, at home and abroad, as can be gleaned from Henry James’s correspondence and travel writings from the 1870s.²¹ James wrote from Venice in 1872 that he and his sister “ate innumerable figs, [had] ices every night at Florian’s and bought a few very beautiful photographs”. An early story entitled *Travelling Companions* (1870) illuminates

Firenze 2003, pp. 343–346. Collection Centre Canadien d’Architecture / Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, PH1979:0105:001–080.

¹⁴ Fanelli 2003 (note 6), p. 89.

¹⁵ PH1979:0105:039, 044 and 050; Alinari catalogue of October 1857, 44 and “extra” 26 and 46.

¹⁶ PH1979:0105:075–077; Alinari catalogue of October 1857, “extra” 54–58.

¹⁷ John Murray, *Handbook for Travellers in Northern Italy*, Part II, London 1858, p. 517.

¹⁸ Quintavalle 2003 (note 2), p. 563.

¹⁹ The Alinari also exhibited their photographs outside Italy. See Roger Taylor, *Photographs Exhibited in Britain 1839–1865*, Ottawa 2002, pp. 71–79.

²⁰ Karl Baedeker, *Italien. Handbuch für Reisende von Karl Baedeker. Erster Theil: Ober-Italien bis Livorno, Florenz und Ravenna nebst der Insel Corsica*, Leipzig 1877⁸, p. 319.

²¹ Graham Smith, “*Light that Dances in the Mind*”: *Photographs and Memory in the Writings of E. M. Forster and his Contemporaries*, Oxford 2007, pp. 103–128.

how acquiring photographs enriched the experience of being abroad, and *Four Meetings* (1877) shows how such pictures could enhance the pleasure of remembering being abroad, while also helping the uninitiated to prepare for the experience. Anyone who has read E. M. Forster's *A Room with a View* (1908) will remember that Alinari photographs play a decisive role in precipitating the romance between George Emerson and Lucy Honeychurch.

Alinari photographs were not only souvenirs for tourists, for they were also collected by students of the art and architecture of Italy. Indeed, the use of the term "collection" in the heading of the inventory of April 1856 suggests that the early catalogues may be considered to be archives designed for work as well as pleasure. It is also important to remember that the Alinari recorded the monuments as they appeared at a specific time on a particular day. Roland Barthes memorably defined the photograph as an "emanation of *past reality*". "The photograph", he continued, "possesses an evidential force, and [...] its testimony bears not [only] on the object but on time".²² Considered in relation to the Alinari photographs, Barthes's assertion indicates that they constitute a new type of document, one distinguished by its embedded temporality. In essence, the Alinari photographs comprise a visual archive commemorating the appearance of the cities of Tuscany—and of Florence in particular—in the years preceding the dissolution of the Grand Duchy.

On occasion, photographs provide windows into a past that would soon be erased. A view of the Palazzo della Signoria, for instance, shows the Lorraine escutcheon on the façade of the palace (fig. 3). This would be removed when Leopold II abandoned Florence in 1859. On the platform below, in the position he had occupied since 1504, Michelangelo's David stands under a wooden construction that had been erected in 1851, before the statue was moved to the Galleria dell'Accademia in 1873. A photograph identified in the early catalogues as *Palazzo Strozzi et Loggia Corsi* (properly the Loggia de' Tornabuoni) (fig. 4) shows the Strozzi and Corsi palaces before the widening in 1864–1867 of the Via Tornabuoni in the direction of the Piazza San Gaetano. This required the demolition of two bays of the Palazzo Corsi and the reconstruction, on the corner of the Via Corsi adjacent to the church of San Gaetano, of the Loggia de' Tornabuoni.

Alinari photographs were acquired as much for their instructional value as for their sentimental interest and came to be collected by scholars and by museums, libraries and academic institutions in Europe and North America. Beginning with Ruskin in the 1840s, scholars recognised that photographs were new tools for the investigation of the fine arts. Ruskin is best known for his daguerreotypes of sculpture and architecture in Venice and Tuscany,²³ but in the 1870s he collected photographs from the Alinari and other commercial firms in Italy, valuing them for the information they provided and for their usefulness for teaching.²⁴ In 1874 and in 1876, he commissioned photographs of the reliefs at the base of the Campanile in Florence to illustrate *The Shepherd's Tower*.²⁵ Also in 1876, he commissioned the Alinari to photograph Sandro Botticelli's fresco representing the episodes from the early life of Moses, in the Sistine Chapel.²⁶ During the 1870s, he presented many photographs to the Ruskin

²² Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, transl. by Richard Howard, New York 1981, pp. 88–89.

²³ Paolo Costantini / Italo Zannier, *I Dagherrotipi della collezione Ruskin*, Florence / Venice 1986.

²⁴ Paolo Costantini, "Ruskin e la fotografia: conoscenza e finalità educativa nella rappresentazione", in: Paolo Costantini / Italo Zannier (eds.), *Itinerario fiorentino: le "mattinate" di John Ruskin nelle fotografie degli Alinari*, Florence 1986, pp. 13–24.

²⁵ John Ruskin, "The Shepherd's Tower: A Series of Pho-

tographs of the Sculptures of Giotto's Tower to Illustrate Part VI of 'Mornings in Florence' (1881)", in: Edward Tyas Cook / Alexander Wedderburn (eds.), *The Works of John Ruskin*, vol. 23, *Val d'Arno: the Schools of Florence; Mornings in Florence; the Shepherd's Tower*, London 1906, pp. 459–467.

²⁶ Quintavalle 2003 (note 2), p. 343.



*Firenze
Palazzo Vecchio*

3 The Fratelli Alinari, Firenze. Palazzo Vecchio / Le Palais Vieux, albumen print from a glass negative, c. 1857, 42.5 x 31.4 cm. Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture / Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, PH1979:0105:015



4 *The Fratelli Alinari, Firenze. Palazzo Strozzi e Loggetta Corsi / [Palazzo] Strozzi et Loggia Corsi, albumen print from a glass negative, c. 1856, 34.3 x 26.4 cm. Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture / Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, PH1979:0105:041*

Drawing School at Oxford, and among the Alinari pictures listed in the Catalogue of the Reference Series are *Photographs of Moses and Zipporah, from the fresco [by Botticelli] in the Sistine Chapel* and *Photograph of Ghiberti's Gates at Florence*.²⁷

Like Ruskin, James appreciated the utility of photographs, although he bought very few on his first tour of Italy and could be severe in criticising them. In a letter sent from Rome in November 1869, for instance, he instructed his sister to tell his brother “not to cherish the fond illusion that in seeing the photos [sic] of M. Angelo's statues he has *même entrevu* the originals”. Charles Eliot Norton, who in 1874 became lecturer in Fine Arts at Harvard, was friendly with the James family, and the families shared photographs of art and architecture. In September 1870, Henry enthused over photographs of Siena that Mrs Norton's sister had brought him and that he had “literally devoured”. In another letter he thanked Norton for photographs of paintings by Vittore Carpaccio that his friend had sent him from Italy. After his appointment at Harvard as “Lecturer in the Fine Arts and their Relations to Literature”, Norton went to great lengths to acquire photographs for research and would display photographic reproductions of works of art in his classroom.²⁸

Less than a decade later, Alan Marquand was appointed to teach the history of art at Princeton and sailed to Europe to purchase photographs and prepare himself for teaching.²⁹ In June 1883, soon after the establishment of the “School of Art” at Princeton, Marquand was sent to Europe and the Near East to collect photographs for the new department.³⁰ Seven years later, Princeton received a “valuable collection of [Adolphe] Braun photographs of drawings and paintings by the Old Masters”.³¹ This donation, together with Marquand's purchases, formed the nucleus of what would become one of the most important study collections of photographs in North America.

At Cambridge University, John Middleton would show photographs and discuss art with undergraduates, who visited him in his rooms. “I go to him once or twice a week for a sort of informal lecture on art”, wrote Roger Fry in October 1886, “he shows me photographs &c. [...] He tells me about the development of Italian painting, illustrated by photos”.³² Fry himself continued this practice a decade later. In 1897, after hearing Fry lecture on the Venetian Renaissance painters, E. M. Forster, who was in his first year at King's College, went along to Fry's rooms to see photographs of the pictures he had discussed.³³ Eighteen months later, Forster told his mother that “the Rome people”—students who had gone to Rome on an excursion organized by Cambridge—“have brought back an astonishing amount of photographs which I have enjoyed looking at”.³⁴

It would therefore be misleading to draw too marked a contrast between the tourist's enjoyment of photographs and the specialist's practical use of them. In the field, the ‘culturally determined’ and ‘honorific’ expeditions made by the leisured classes of the nineteenth century were not essentially different from campaigns of study pursued by travellers with a serious interest in the history of art.³⁵ Furthermore, strategies employed by Victorian travellers to ‘do’ a monument were closely similar to those em-

²⁷ Edward Tyas Cook / Alexander Wedderburn (eds.), *The Works of John Ruskin*, vol. 21, *The Ruskin Art Collection at Oxford: Catalogues, Notes, and Instructions*, London 1906, pp. 37, 40, cat. nos. 108, 136.

²⁸ James Turner, *The Liberal Education of Charles Eliot Norton*, Baltimore/MA 1999, p. 316.

²⁹ Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, *The Eye of the Tiger: The Founding and Development of the Department of Art and Archaeology, 1888–1923*, Princeton University, Princeton 1983, p. 9.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

³² Quoted from Virginia Woolf, *Roger Fry: A Biography*, first American ed., New York 1940, p. 54.

³³ Edward Morgan Forster, *Selected Letters*, London 1983, p. 16.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

³⁵ William W. Stowe, *Going Abroad: European Travel in Nineteenth-Century American Culture*, Princeton 1994, pp. 16–28.

³⁶ Graham Smith, “Michelangelo's ‘Duke of Urbino’ in literature, travel-writing, and photography of the nineteenth century”, in: *Strange Sisters*, Oxford 2009, pp. 155–175.



5 *The Fratelli Alinari, Il Giudizio Universale. A fresco di Andrea Orgagna nel Camposanto di Pisa / Le Jugement Universel, célèbre frèsqe par A. Orgagna dans le Campo Santo, albumen print from a glass negative, c. 1857, 30.5 x 41.6 cm. Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture / Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, PH1979:0105:055*

ployed by specialists, for travel with Baedeker was a form of work much like the disciplined study performed by art historians. For much of the nineteenth century, strategies of exploration, assimilation and appropriation were common to art historians and to travellers. Furthermore, the range and character of the Alinari photographs accorded with the goals and aspirations of both interest groups.

The qualities that made travellers buy photographs from the Alinari and the functions those photographs performed within the ritual of travel were also those that equipped them for the roles they came to play in the scholarly discipline of art history. Views of monuments offered by the Alinari were legible and typical—qualities valued by art historians as much as by travellers. An 1856 view of the Ponte Santa Trinita, for instance, is lucid, informative and well contextualized. Furthermore, the canonical nature of this view becomes apparent if it is compared with earlier representations of the same subject by Giuseppe Zocchi, J. M. W. Turner and others. On the rare occasions when Alinari photographs are not clear, their obscurity can be linked to lighting conditions and to interpretative preconceptions among travellers and art historians.³⁶ Finally, the sequence from 'long' views to particular details, which the Alinari provided for major monuments, is consistent with the rituals of orientation, exploration and assimilation still performed by art historians today.

The heading to the catalogue of April 1856 mentions that the Alinari had exhibited their photographs at the Esposition Universelle in Paris in 1855 and had been awarded a medal. Ernest Lacan, the young



6 The Fratelli Alinari, Firenze. Porta principale del Battistero / La célèbre porte de Ghiberti, au Baptistère, albumen print from a glass negative, c. 1857, 42.7 x 31.3 cm. Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture / Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, PH1979:0105:009

production of this famous fresco that Bernardo Orcagna entitled *The Triumph of Death*, a work so profoundly philosophical". In relation to other plates, Lacan observed that those photographs constituted "precious pages for the history of painting in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries".

editor of the Paris weekly photographic magazine *La Lumière*, devoted three pages to these photographs in an extended review of the photography sections at the Exposition, indicating that Alinari pictures were already thought to have functions beyond tourist remembrance.³⁷ Congratulating the brothers for bringing together the monuments of Tuscany, Lacan reported that "Florence, Pisa and Siena have been reproduced in detail by these industrious artists".

Among the photographs Lacan singled out were four views of the Camposanto in Pisa. The first of these, item 66 in the April 1856 inventory (*Intérieur dit des Chaines*), showed a portion of the interior of the Camposanto with tomb monuments, antique statuary and the great chains that once closed the ancient harbour of Pisa. Lacan dwelt on the difficulty of taking this photograph with natural light and praised the brothers for achieving a positive result. He referred also to three photographs showing scenes from the cycle of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century frescoes that covered the interior walls of the Camposanto.³⁸ The first recorded the *Triumph of Death* (fig. 5), believed at that time to be by Andrea Orcagna. Here Lacan commented once more on the near-miraculous nature of the photographers' achievement: "But what would seem impossible is the re-

³⁷ Ernest Lacan, "La Photographie à l'Exposition Universelle", reprinted in *Esquisses photographiques*, Paris 1856, pp. 106–108; facsimile edition (*The Sources of Modern Photography*), New York 1979, pp. 106–108.

³⁸ The study of these paintings was one of Ruskin's principal concerns during his tour of Tuscany in 1845. See Jeanne Clegg / Paul Tucker, *Ruskin and Tuscany* (exhibition cat. Sheffield 1993), London 1993, pp. 36–40.

³⁹ Here follows the entire passage on the Alinari from Lacan 1856 (note 37): "MM. Alinari [...]. Mais il faut dire aussi que ces photographes ont assez de zèle et de talent pour soutenir à eux seuls la lutte contre les plus habiles exposants de France et d'Angleterre. Doués d'une imagination ardente et de cet enthousiasme que l'on éprouve à vingt ans pour toutes les belles choses créées par l'art et par la nature, ils ont largement compris la mis-

sion qu'ils avaient à remplir, et pour le succès de laquelle la photographie devait leur prêter une si puissante secours. Aussi ont-ils pu réunir dans leur riche collection tout ce que le temps, la guerre et les révolutions ont laissé de monuments en Toscane. Florence, Pise et Sienne ont été reproduites en détail par les laborieux artistes. Parmi les spécimens qu'ils ont exposés, nous citerons le Campo-Santo, une des vues les plus difficiles à reproduire en photographie. En effet, les chauds rayons de soleil qui pénètrent à travers les arcades gothiques du cloître s'arrêtent aux premières dalles et n'envoient qu'une lumière réfléchie sous la voûte élevée de la galerie. Pourtant ce clair-obscur a suffi pour reproduire les groupes, les statues et les inscriptions qui ornent ce Panthéon religieux de Pise. Mais ce qui semblerait impossible, c'est la reproduction de cette fresque célèbre que

The photograph that impressed Lacan most was one of Ghiberti's *Porta del Paradiso* for the Baptistery in Florence (fig. 6). "Bronze has never been represented with greater truth", proclaimed Lacan: "By striking obliquely the reliefs and figures that comprise those famous doors, [...] the light brings out the tiniest details, and one begins to pass a finger over this illusory image in order to trace projections that do not actually exist". Lacan next mentioned a photograph of the Palazzo Vecchio, one of Bernardo Buontalenti's grotto in the Boboli Gardens, another of Giovanni da Bologna's Neptune, also in the Boboli Gardens, and one representing Nicola Pisano's marble pulpit in the Pisa Baptistery, four plates he considered to equal the best work produced by French photographers. "The Alinari possess artistic feeling", he concluded, "[and] they are also skilful operators [...] They live in the world of the great masterpieces of the Renaissance, under the beautiful skies of Tuscany. Under like conditions, it is fitting that they should expand the taste of the new art throughout Italy. This is what they have done with great zeal, and for this we must be deeply grateful to them."³⁹

Bernardo Orcagna a intitulée le *Tromphe de la mort*, oeuvre si profondément philosophique, malgré la naïveté de la composition et de la forme, dans laquelle le peintre a, dit-on, réuni les portraits des hommes les plus connus de son temps. M.M. Alinari ont fait des copies séparées des diverses fresques dont les murs du Campo-Santo sont couvertes: l'Histoire de l'Ancien Testament, par Benozzo Gozzoli; le Miracle de saint Ranierus, par Antonio Veneziano, sont des pages précieuses pour l'histoire de la peinture aux quatorzième e quinzisième siècles. Mais le spécimen qui nous a paru le plus complet est celui qui représente les portes du baptistère de Florence. Jamais le bronze n'a été rendu avec plus de vérité. En frappant obliquement sur les bas-reliefs et les figures qui composent ces portes fameuses, 'dignes d'orner l'entre du paradis', suivant l'expression de Michel-Ange lui-

même, la lumière en fait ressortir les moindres détails, et l'on se prend à passer le doigt sur cette image trompeuse pour y chercher des saillies qui n'existent pas. Citons encore comme pouvant figurer à côté des meilleures productions de nos artistes, les vues du palais Vecchio, de la grotte de Buontalenti dans le jardin Boboli, la fontaine de Jean de Bologne à Florence, e la chaire sculptée par Nicolo Pisano à Pise. M.M. Alinari ont le sentiment artistique; ils sont de plus d'habiles opérateurs. Ils vivent au milieu des chefs-d'oeuvre de la renaissance, sous le beau ciel de la Toscane. Dans de pareilles conditions, il leur appartenait de répandre en Italie le goût du nouvel art; c'est ce qu'ils ont fait avec un zèle dont il faut leur savoir gré. Nous devons ajouter que M. Bardi, de Florence, leur a prêté dans cette oeuvre de vulgarisation un concours intelligent et désintéressé".

Dorothea Peters

From Prince Albert's Raphael Collection to Giovanni Morelli: Photography and the Scientific Debates on Raphael in the Nineteenth Century*

"Connoisseurship"—in an essay for the *Edinburgh Review* in 1883, an anonymous author wrote: "Connoisseurship is a strictly modern science, requiring the exercise of the closest observation and subtlest analysis. The connoisseur must be endowed with no common qualities. [...] His decisions depend solely upon evidence, but that evidence is of a nature very laborious to collect. Connoisseurship is not a matter of the highest taste, [...] but of the closest comparison. All knowledge of art is formed by comparison."¹ Thus, the connoisseur not only "must possess", as the author wrote, "the impartiality of a judge, the ardour of a zealot, and the patience of a saint",² but—one might add—an extensive collection of photographs of works of art which will enable him to observe, to analyze, and to compare images in a yet unknown way.

The constitution of such photographic archives in the nineteenth century was especially linked to the scientific research on the life and work of Raphael. Before photography, Raphael seems to have been

* I would like to thank Costanza Caraffa and Patricia Rubin for the invitation to this conference, which gave me the opportunity to present first results of my research in the Library and the Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz. I owe special gratitude to Anna Galeano Araque and Paul Galeano Araque, who gave me indispensable help with the English version of this text.

¹ Anonymous, "The Life and Works of Raphael", in: *Edinburgh Review*, 157/321 (Jan. 1883), pp. 168–204.—One may speculate about who may have written this brilliant review of Ivan Lermolieff's [Giovanni Morelli's], *Die Werke italienischer Meister in den Gallerien von München, Dresden und Berlin. Ein kritischer Versuch*, Leipzig 1880,

and of other contemporary published works on Raphael. Because of the author's sound knowledge of the international research on Raphael, it is probable that the review was written by Lady Eastlake (Elizabeth Rigby; 1809–1893). Some evidence points in this direction, e.g. the citation of old sources like the handbooks of Gustav Friedrich Waagen and Franz Kugler, which Lady Eastlake had (partially anonymously) translated, as well as the citation of a Passavant-review in the *Quarterly Review* from 1840, written (anonymously) by Lady Eastlake (see p. 204 of the 1883 review), and of the notebook of Sir Charles Eastlake from Sept. 1858 (see p. 190).

² Anonymous 1883 (note 1), p. 174.

known—at least to the upper classes—from the biographical notes of Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574), from the engravings of Marcantonio Raimondi (1475/80–1534), Nicolas Dorigny (1658–1746), Giovanni Volpato (1735–1803) or Raffaello Morghen (1758–1833),³ as well as from numerous paintings bearing his name that might have been seen in churches and galleries on the Grand Tour through Italy. Things changed when Johann David Passavant (1787–1861) wrote a monograph on Raphael, which for the first time was based not only on archival studies or second-hand engravings, but on personal inspection of paintings and drawings.⁴ Passavant had been travelling for nearly ten years throughout Europe, through public galleries and private collections in Germany, Italy, England and France, always drawing what he saw. His two-volume book, *Raphael von Urbino und sein Vater Giovanni Santi*, published 1839 in Leipzig, was completed by a picture atlas with 13 lithographs and engravings, seven of them from drawings by Passavant himself.

Even though Passavant's knowledge of Raphael's works was quite random because of limited access to the collections—his *catalogues raisonnées* in the second volume were very helpful in furthering the research methods of his time.⁵ Especially the topographical inventory of drawings, which contained the history and description of all known works as well as all places where they were kept, became the basis for a great project of Prince Albert (1819–1861), the Prince Consort of Queen Victoria. To make it more useful for general studies of art, Prince Albert planned to complete the collection of 15,000 Old Master drawings, engravings, and other prints in Windsor Castle, which included many works of or after Raphael. The Prince Consort, fascinated since the World Fair in London in 1851 by the authenticity of photography, sent out photographers all over Europe. Thus, photography entered art history and created a basis for systematic and scientific research.

This will be demonstrated here: the influence of the Raphael Collection on the photographic reproduction of works of art in the 1850s and 1860s, and, afterwards, the importance of photography in the discourse on Raphael in the 1870s and 1880s.

The Raphael Collection and its influence on the photographic reproduction of works of art (1850s–1860s)

At the end of 1852, Prince Albert started a stock-taking of all reproductions of Raphael's works in the collections of Windsor Castle.⁶ Soon he came to the realisation that there were a great number of pictures of which no engravings or lithographs existed. These pictures—paintings, drawings, and frescoes

³ See Corinna Höper (ed.), *Raffaël und die Folgen. Das Kunstwerk in Zeitaltern seiner graphischen Reproduzierbarkeit* (exhibition cat. Stuttgart), Stuttgart 2001.

⁴ See Elisabeth Schröter, "Raffaël-Kult und Raffael-Forschung. Johann David Passavant und seine Raffael-Monographie im Kontext der Kunst und Kunstgeschichte seiner Zeit", in: *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana*, 26 (1990), pp. 303–397, here p. 355.

⁵ See Johann David Passavant, *Rafael von Urbino und sein Vater Giovanni Santi*, vol. 2, Leipzig 1839.—The table of contents includes a chronological inventory of Raphael's paintings, a topographical inventory of Raphael's drawings in Italy, Germany, England, France, Spain and in the

Collection Crozat, as well as an inventory of engravings after Raphael's portraits and drawings.

⁶ See Frances Dimond, "Prince Albert and the application of photography", in: Frances Dimond / Roger Taylor, *Crown & Camera. The Royal Family and Photography 1842–1910*, London 1987, pp. 45–49; Jennifer Montagu, "The 'Ruland/Raphael Collection'", in: Helene E. Roberts (ed.), *Art History through the Camera's Lens*, Amsterdam 1995, pp. 37–57 (also in: *Visual Resources*, 3 [1986], S. 167–183); Charlotte Pangels, *Dr. Becker in geheimer Mission an Queen Victorias Hof. Die Briefe des Prinzen-erziehers und Bibliothekars Dr. Ernst Becker aus seiner Zeit in England von 1850–1861*, Hamburg 1996.

by Raphael that Passavant had referred to or Prince Albert knew about—were to be documented photographically. Ernst Becker (1826–1888), the librarian of the Prince Consort, had to organize the photographic campaigns. This was quite difficult, because there neither existed a network of photographers in Europe, nor had any of the talented photographers whom he could consult any deeper experience in photographing paintings. But finally Charles Thurston Thompson (1816–1868), Roger Fenton (1819–1869), Robert Howlett (1830–1858), Gustave Rejlander (1813–1875), Leonida Caldesi (active 1850s–1900), William Bambridge (1819–1879) and Joseph Cundall (1818–1895) photographed the works of Raphael in England; Pietro Dovizielli (1804–1885) and William Lake Price (1810–1896) photographed in Rome; Fratelli Alinari in Venice, Florence and Vienna; Charles Marville (1816–1879) in Milan; and Robert Bingham (1825–1870) in Paris and Lille. During the course of their work they had to overcome obstacles and master a lot of difficulties: for instance, frescoes had to be photographed in dark churches, which sometimes made an exposure of three or four days necessary; some paintings were covered with thick layers of yellow varnish, so that only empty frames with apparently black paintings were visible in the photographs. Alinari reported from Florence that no catalogue existed in the collection of the Uffizi: “it is impossible to have an idea of that collection; there are thousands of drawings which very few or none can see”.⁷ Thus, the photographers often were the first ‘public’ who came to know of these exclusive works of art. Nevertheless, this ‘learning by doing’ was an invaluable experience for the photographers and gave them the opportunity to achieve mastery in the reproduction of works of art. Within a few years, the Raphael Collection grew to become an impressive body of works (photographs, engravings and lithographs).

A project of this scope had never before been done for the work of a single artist. Nevertheless, for art-historical research the Raphael Collection seemed to be of limited value, because of its very uniqueness: many of the owners of the photographed art works gave their permission for making reproductions only if it was guaranteed that just one single print of the negative would be made, exclusively for the collection of the Prince Consort and not for commercial purposes. On the other hand the campaigns for the Raphael Collection had shown the powerful potential of photography for the reproduction of works of art, as well as its limitations and technical deficits, which were especially evident in the reproduction of paintings. Early photography not only reduced colour to black and white, but inverted the appearance of the different tones: the human eye is accustomed to see yellow as a light tone which can be translated to a light grey, blue and red as dark tones to nearly black. In early photography, blue came out white, red and yellow appeared black. That was the reason why most of the photographers concentrated on the reproduction of (monochromatic) drawings and graphics.⁸ Inspired by the photographic campaigns for the Raphael Collection, some early photographic collections from European galleries and drawing cabinets were produced, which became extremely useful for all those who were interested in

⁷ Montagu 1995 (note 6), p. 55, note 26.

⁸ These difficulties changed when at the beginning of the 1880s step by step the ortho- resp. panchromatic photography was developed through the competitive cooperation of scientists like Hermann Wilhelm Vogel (1834–1898) and Josef Maria Eder (1855–1944) or practical operators like Adolphe Braun (resp. Gaston Braun), Photographische Gesellschaft, Eugen Albert, Bruckmann etc.—See for example: Hermann Wilhelm Vogel, *Die Photographie farbiger Gegenstände in den richtigen Tonverhältnissen. Handbuch der farbenempfindlichen (isochromatischen oder orthochromatischen) Verfahren*, Berlin 1885; Josef Maria Eder, *Das Bromsilber-Collodion- sowie*

das Orthochromatische Collodion-Verfahren und das Bad-Collodion-Trockenverfahren. Ausführliches Handbuch der Photographie, vol. 2, pt. 3, Halle 1897; Eduard Röhl, *Hermann Wilhelm Vogel. Ein Lebensbild*, Borna 1939, pp. 59–74; Dorothea Peters, “Fotografie als ‘technisches Hilfsmittel’ der Kunstwissenschaft. Wilhelm Bode und die Photographische Kunstanstalt Adolphe Braun”, in: *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, N.F. 44 (2002), pp. 167–206; Helmut Hess, “‘O mira virtus ingeni!’. Graphik versus Fotografie. Die Galeriewerke des Kunstverlags Franz Hanfstaengl”, in: Katharina Krause / Klaus Niehr (eds.), *Kunstwerk – Abbild – Buch. Das illustrierte Kunstbuch von 1730 bis 1930*, München 2007, pp. 217–237.

the development of art: in 1856, the so-called “Raphael Sketchbook” in Venice was reproduced in more than a hundred photographs by Antonio Perini (1830–1879). In 1857, the South Kensington Museum published 52 photographs, which Charles Thurston Thompson had taken in the Windsor Castle collection of Raphael’s drawings. He also photographed the cartoons of the Raphael tapestries in Hampton Court in 1859—due to their dimensions, a masterpiece of early photography.⁹ In addition, in 1858 and 1859, the Fratelli Alinari published four series of altogether 350 photographs after drawings of Raphael and other Renaissance artists from the Uffizi in Florence, from the Academy in Venice, and the Albertina in Vienna.¹⁰

Soon photography was used to document art in a wider sense as well. In 1857 in the Brera in Milan, the famous restorer Giuseppe Molteni (1800–1867) commissioned the photographer Luigi Sacchi (1805–1861) to document the state of Raphael’s *Sposalizio* before restoration.¹¹ In another case, the painter and merchant amateur Morris Moore (1811–1885) used early photography as proof in a “European scandal”, that ended in “Un martyr de l’attribution”, as Francis Haskell called it in an essay.¹² In 1850, Moore had bought a painting, *Apollo and Marsyas*, which he—in contrast to the opinions of most of the art historical authorities of the time—thought to be by Raphael. Over the years, he travelled throughout Europe, to London, Paris, Berlin, Dresden, Milan, Venice, and Rome, and presented photos and copies of the painting or showed this single painting in specially arranged exhibitions. He wrote pamphlets against Charles Eastlake, Johann David Passavant, Gustav Friedrich Waagen, and Prince Albert, and at some point he was arrested and sent to prison—all because of his desire that the attribution of the painting to Raphael be accepted.¹³

In Moore’s argumentation, photography played a key role, not only as a substitute for the original work of art, but for use in making comparisons with preparatory drawings that he thought he had found in the Venice Academy. In the photographic collection of the Academy of Brera in Milan, a photographic “expertise” on the *Apollo and Marsyas* of Morris Moore is preserved, that he gave to Giuseppe Molteni in 1857. Molteni was one of the experts who spontaneously thought the painting to be a Raphael when Morris Moore showed him a daguerreotype of it.¹⁴ The “expertise” or better: the photographic docu-

⁹ “Raffaello’s Drawings in the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle, photographed by C. Thurston Thompson. Publ. by Authority of the Royal-Consort Prince Albert at the South-Kensington Museum”, 52 photographs, London 1858–1860 (see *Rudolph Weigel’s Kunstlager-Catalog* [in the following: Weigel], 33 [1864], p. 29, no. 24277).—“Die Cartons von Raphael in Hampton Court von C. Thurston Thompson. Grosse Ausgabe. Breite 37 Z. 6 L. bis 46 Z. [ca. 95 bis 117 cm], Höhe 25 Z. 6 L. bis 29 Z. [ca. 65 bis 74 cm] à 2 Blätter altfranz. Mass”, 7 photographs, London 1859 (Weigel, 31 [1861], p. 32, no. 23065 I).

¹⁰ “Disegni di Raffaello e d’altri Maestri esistenti nelle Gallerie di Firenze, Venezia e Vienna, riprodotti in Fotografia dai Fratelli Alinari”, Firenze 1858, ed. by Luigi Bardi in three series of 50, 80 and 90 photographs (Weigel, 29 [1859], pp. 42–52, no. 21885); another series of 132 photographs (“Disegni di Raffaello e d’altri Maestri esistenti nelle Gallerie di Firenze”) followed in 1859 (Weigel, 31 [1861], pp. 27–32).

¹¹ Thanks to Roberto Cassanelli for the friendly reference; see Mariolina Olivari, “Appunti d’archivio sullo ‘Sposalizio’ a Brera”, in: Mariolina Olivari (ed.), *Raffaello e Brera*, Milan 1984, pp. 30–34.

¹² See Francis Haskell, “Un martyr de l’attribution. Morris Moore et l’Apollon et Marsyas du Louvre”, in: *Revue de l’art*, 42 (1978), pp. 77–88 (in English: “A Martyr of Attributionism. Morris Moore and the Louvre *Apollo and Marsyas*”, in: id., *Past and Present in Art and Taste. Selected Essays*, New Haven / London 1987, pp. 155–174; in Italian: “Un martire dell’attribuzionismo: Morris Moore e l’*Apollo e Marsia* del Louvre”, in: id., *Le metamorfosi del gusto. Studi su arte e pubblico nel XVIII e XIX secolo*, Turin 1989, pp. 224–258; in German: “Morris Moore und der *Apoll und Marsyas* des Louvre – ein Opfer der Zuschreibung”, in: id., *Wandel der Kunst in Stil und Geschmack. Ausgewählte Schriften*, Cologne 1990, pp. 270–304, notes pp. 416–422).

¹³ (Morris Moore), *Le Raphael de M. Morris Moore Apollon et Marsyas. Documents accompagnés de préfaces, de traductions, de notes et d’une étude par Léon Batté*, Paris / London 1859; Morris Moore, *Raphael’s “Apollo and Marsyas”*. *A European Scandal*, Edinburgh 1884.

¹⁴ The daguerreotype was probably done by William Kilburn in commission of Morris Moore, as Anthony Hamber has pointed out (Anthony Hamber, “A Higher Branch of the Art”. *Photographing the Fine Arts in England, 1839–1880*, Amsterdam 1996, pp. 232–233,



Fotografia da un disegno a penna di Raffaello Sanzio in Urbino esistente nell'Accademia di Belle-Arti in Venezia nella stanza XXIII, sotto il n. 16. La fotografia è della medesima grandezza che l'originale.



Morris Moore, 3 Agosto, 1857.

1 Page 3 of a photographic "expertise" on the "Apollo and Marsyas", given by Morris Moore to Giuseppe Molteni in Milan: A sketch from the so-called "Raphael Sketchbook" in Venice, photographed by Antonio Perini (attributed), salt paper print, 1856. Signed and dated: "Morris Moore, 3 Agosto, 1857"

mentation contains three photographs: one photograph of the original painting, one of a preparatory sketch, held by the Academy in Venice, and one of a drawing from the so-called “Raphael Sketchbook”. Some time before, Robert Bingham had photographed the original painting in Paris,¹⁵ but for several years Morris Moore had tried without any success to get a photograph of the Venetian sketch with the composition of the *Apollo and Marsyas*. He suspected a conspiracy by Charles Eastlake (1793–1865), but since the drawing was on a yellow/orange background, the still restricted photochemical sensitivity of the collodium negatives may have made photographing impossible. The respective photograph in the expertise was supposedly done by the Fratelli Alinari, who had included it in their *Disegni di Raffaello di Venezia* of 1858, but under the name of Mantegna.¹⁶ The other photograph of the sketch of a young man was done—I suppose—by Antonio Perini (see fig. 1). It is not directly connected to the painting and did not play any role in the further discussions about the attribution of the painting. Presumably, Moore took Perini’s photo as a proof only because it was available. This demonstrates to which degree art history, and especially questions of attribution, depended on the offerings of commercial photographers in these early times.

Only a few years later, in 1863, a first scientific evaluation of the Raphael Collection by Ernst Becker and the art historian Carl Ruland (1834–1907), who had succeeded Becker as royal librarian, demonstrated the utility and further role of photography for art history. In *The Fine Arts Quarterly Review*, they brought to light that, in more than 30 collections all over Europe, 800 drawings of Raphael had been photographed. For the *Disputa*, for instance, photographs of sketches and drawings had been taken in Paris, Windsor, Oxford, Vienna, Munich, Milan, Florence, Montpellier and Lille; for the *Entombment* in the Villa Borghese in Rome, 17 engravings and 23 photographs after the painting, the studies, and drawings had been collected.¹⁷ This extensive material enabled, through comparison, a new kind of study of Raphael’s work methods and helped in deciding which works were undoubtedly by him and which ones were copies—a fact that was recognized by the art historians at once. Herman Grimm (1828–1901), later the first professor of art history at the Berlin University, wrote with enthusiasm in 1865: “Such collections nowadays are nearly more important for art historical studies, than the most extensive galleries of originals.”¹⁸ He explained that, because of the wide dispersion of the artworks, each researcher could only have a partial knowledge of them, separating him from the other researchers. The lack of a common visual basis made it difficult to talk about works of art. But now, due to photography, the reproductions of a painting, of every sketch which had been made for it and of every engraving after it, could be laid out on a table and be compared again and again. Only if “libraries of photographic prints” exist-

fig. III. 150).—On the “expertise”, of which Francis Haskell did not know, see Roberto Cassanelli, “Morris Moore, Pietro Selvatico e le origine dell’expertise fotografico”, in: Tiziana Serena (ed.), *Fotografia e raccolte fotografiche* (Quaderni 8, Centro di Ricerche Informatiche per i Beni Culturali, Scuola Normale Superiore), Pisa 1998, pp. 41–47, fig. 1–4.—I would like to thank Roberto Cassanelli for showing me the “expertise”, held by the Accademia di Brera, Fototeca storica, in Milan, in April 2009.

¹⁵ See J. G. Waller, “The ‘Apollo and Marsyas’”, correspondence in: *The Academy* (Oct. 13, 1883), p. 253. Waller says: “A beautiful photograph by Bingham of Paris, has been in my daily sight for twenty-five years” (see also Haskell 1990 [note 12], p. 419, note 42).

¹⁶ See Rudolph Weigel, *Die Werke der Maler in ihren*

Handzeichnungen. Beschreibendes Verzeichniss der in Kupfer gestochenen, lithographirten und photographirten Facsimiles von Originalzeichnungen grosser Meister, Leipzig 1865, p. 580, no. 6876: “Apollo und Marsias, angeblich von Raphael und übereinstimmend mit dem schönen aber zweifelhaften Gemälde bei M. Morris-Moore. Feder und lavirt [sic]. H. 10”, Br. 8“3” “. Alinari, *Disegni di Venezia*. Serie II. No. 80.”

¹⁷ Ernst Becker / Carl Ruland, “The ‘Raphael Collection’ of H.R.H. the Prince Consort”, in: *The Fine Arts Quarterly Review*, 1 (1863), pp. 27–39, here p. 34 (*Disputa*), pp. 34–37 (*Entombment*).

¹⁸ Herman Grimm, *Über Künstler und Kunstwerke*, 1 (1865), p. 38 (“Solche Sammlungen sind für das Studium beinahe wichtiger heute als die größten [sic] Gallerien von Originalen”).

ed, including every attainable work of art, could one talk of modern art history as a well founded science.¹⁹

About 1865, when the retouching of negatives became more and more common, commercial photographers started compiling such 'photographic libraries' made up of reproductions of paintings and especially—considering the technical problems involved with reproducing paintings—of drawings. From 1864 onwards, Ludwig Angerer (1827–1879) photographed hundreds of drawings in the Albertina in Vienna;²⁰ John (Giovanni) Brampton Philpot (1812–1878), who worked in Florence from 1850, photographed in the Uffizi and offered more than 2,000 photos of drawings for sale in 1866;²¹ and, most important, in 1864, Adolphe Braun (1812–1877), from Dornach in Alsace, started photographing drawings in the most illustrious collections in Europe.²² In Basel, in the Louvre, where Braun photographed nearly 1,000 sheets of drawings, in Weimar, in Venice, in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana and in the Academy in Milan, in Rome, in the Vatican and in the Uffizi in Florence nearly 5,000 photographs were taken between 1867 and 1869. Unlike the other photographers, Braun did not produce salted paper or albumen prints, but inalterable carbon prints in the original colour of the respective drawing.

The quickness of photography produced immense quantities within a short time and directed the researcher's view to the work of art itself. "Pictures are allowed now to speak for themselves", as the above-mentioned anonymous author wrote in 1883.²³ Because of their authenticity, photographic reproductions of drawings in particular were seen as substitutes for the originals.

Photography and the discourse on Raphael in the 1870s and 1880s

So, art historians started building their own private collections of photographic reproductions of works of art. Undertaken in the comfort of the scholars' own workplace, the close study, in photographs, of the dispersed works led to two important monographs on Raphael, signaling that art history was going to change under the influence of photography. First, in 1872, Herman Grimm's *Das Leben Raphaels von Urbino*, a commented version of Vasari's text on Raphael, was published in Berlin. This book, mainly based on archival and cultural studies, became very popular and over the course of several decades was

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Table of contents.

²⁰ See Maren Gröning, "Schatten des imaginären Museums. Die Albertina und die Fotografie im 19. Jahrhundert", in: *Fotogeschichte*, 21/81 (2001), pp. 3–20, here p. 12.

²¹ See Mattie Boom / Hans Rooseboom (eds.), *Een nieuwe kunst. Fotografie in de 19de eeuw. De Nationale Foto-collectie in het Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (A New Art. Photography in the 19th Century. The Photo Collection of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)*, Amsterdam 1996, p. 91, fig. 53.

²² See Maureen C. O'Brien / Mary Bergstein (eds.), *Image and Enterprise. The Photographs of Adolphe Braun*, London 2000; Peters 2002 (note 8).

²³ Anonymous 1883 (note 1), p. 174.

²⁴ Anton Springer, "Raphaelstudien (H. Grimm, das Leben

Raphael's von Urbino. Berlin 1872)", in: *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, 8 (1873), pp. 65–80, here p. 70: "Und zuletzt entdeckt man, daß dem Verfasser die Fähigkeit abgeht, Kunstwerke genau zu betrachten und auch nur stofflich richtig zu beschreiben. (Man vergleiche die beigegebenen Abbildungen)". One of the reasons for the critique was a portrait of Bindo Altoviti that Grimm included—in the new printing process of collotype—as the frontispiece, and which he thought to be a portrait of Raphael himself. Springer countered with Raphael's self-portrait from the *School of Athens* (p. 65) in a woodcut.—Grimm replied to Springer's critique with a little booklet of 12 pages, and this was the beginning of a deep enmity (Herman Grimm, *Zur Abwehr gegen Herrn Professor Dr. A. Springer's Raphaelstudien*, Berlin 1873).

released in numerous editions. However, Anton Springer (1825–1891), like other art historians, criticized the book very sharply in the renowned *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, because the author was “incapable of a precise observation of the works of arts or even to describe them exactly”.²⁴ It is interesting to see what different roles photography played in the studies of Grimm and Springer, who were the most important university teachers of art history in Germany at that time. Both were convinced of the utility of photography for the further development of art history; both built up—on their own and with great difficulties—a photographic “apparatus” at their universities in Berlin and Leipzig; both referred explicitly to Prince Albert’s Raphael Collection with the greatest respect. But in spite of Herman Grimm’s appeal of 1865, photography seemed to be without deeper influence on his scientific approach to art history; for him photography only seemed to make private studies more comfortable, relieving him of a lot of travel. Thus, from a similar basis they developed quite divergent kinds of art history. That became evident when in 1878 Anton Springer published his monograph on *Raffaël und Michelangelo*. It was oriented more towards the artworks themselves than Grimm’s book was, and it was filled with close observations and careful attributions. This can be seen in the illustrations: facsimile woodcuts after photographs,²⁵ or comparisons of details, like hands or feet, in different paintings or drawings (see fig. 2).²⁶

During this time, there had been other important publications, which were of great influence on the further shaping of art history: in 1876 the final concluding report of Carl Ruland on the Raphael Collection at Windsor Castle was published in an edition of only a hundred copies.²⁷ In the catalogue, the various versions of Raphael’s works were arranged under iconographical categories such as Historical Subjects, Holy Families, Saints, Madonnas, and the like. This might have been the consequence of the comparative view of photography, and corresponded to the arrangement of pictures in the numerous volumes of the Raphael Collection, that combined virtually all related subjects from different collections.²⁸ With this impressive volume, the work of Passavant, which it was based on, had become obsolete.

Besides this, and at first nearly unnoticed, an unknown Russian named Ivan Lermolieff published a long series of articles on the painting galleries of Rome in the *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* between 1874 and 1876.²⁹ The so-called *critical attempt* (*Ein kritischer Versuch*) originated from the pen of the famous connoisseur Giovanni Morelli (1816–1891), who lived in Milan. In his articles on Italian Renaissance art, he tried to develop a more objective method of connoisseurship based on the detailed study of the forms of the human body. Morelli demonstrated how in the less important forms of the body,—in the ears, feet, hands or in the folds of the garment—the pupil could be distinguished from his master, the copy from the model—quite obviously, Anton Springer had read these articles with great attention.

In 1880, Giovanni Morelli published, again under the name of Ivan Lermolieff, his innovative work on the galleries of Munich, Dresden, and Berlin, which combined the critical examination of the attributions in the gallery catalogues with essays on the Northern Italian painters and the paintings of the Renaissance. Morelli demonstrated his method of close and detailed observation, which was based not

²⁵ Anton Springer, *Raffaël und Michelangelo*, Leipzig 1878, e. g. the figure on p. 68 (p. 93, fig. 33 in the 2nd edition of 1883), which obviously is done after an albumen print of Giovanni Brampton Philpot, no. 1149.

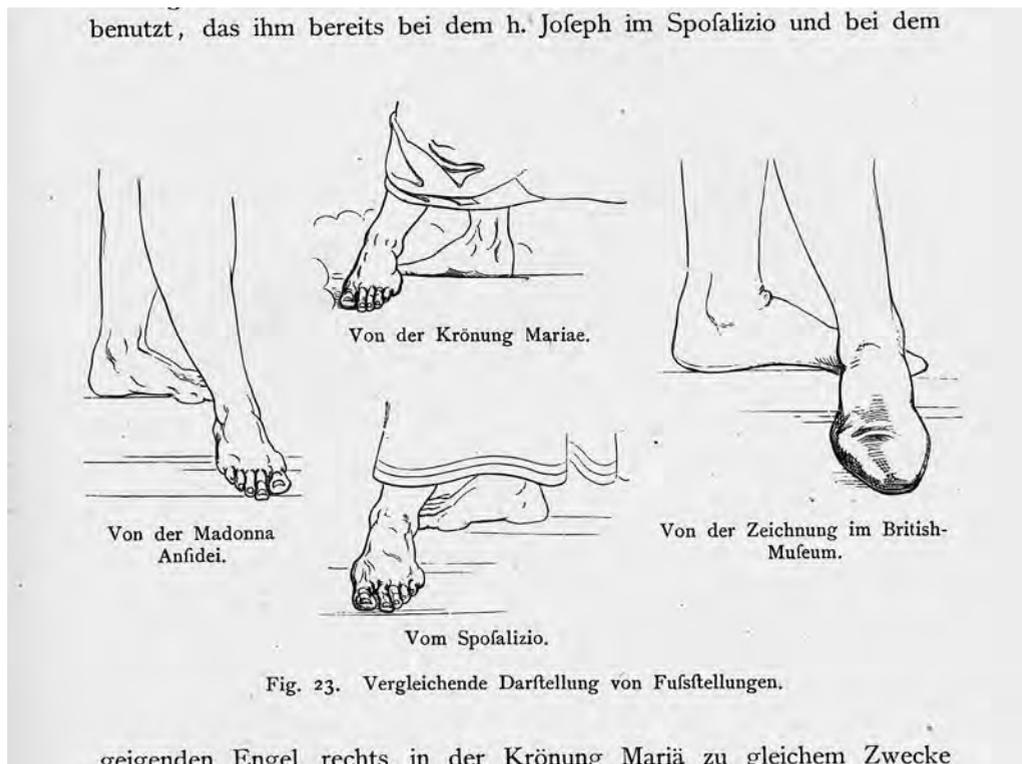
²⁶ *Ibid.*, e. g. the figure on p. 53 (1883²: p. 73, fig. 23): “Vergleichende Darstellung von Fußstellungen”; p. 55 (1883²: p. 76, fig. 25 / p. 77, fig. 26): “Gewandmotiv vom Jüngsten Gericht des Fra Bartolommeo” / “Gewandmotiv aus Raffaels Fresco in S. Severo zu Perugia”.

²⁷ Carl Ruland, *The Works of Raphael Santi da Urbino as represented in the Raphael Collection in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle, formed by H. R. H. The Prince Con-*

sort, 1853–1861 and completed by Her Majesty Queen Victoria, Weimar 1876.

²⁸ See the illustration in: Dimond / Taylor 1987 (note 6), p. 47 (now: Lo Spagna, *Agony in the Garden*, London, National Gallery).

²⁹ Ivan Lermolieff [Giovanni Morelli], “Die Galerien Roms. Ein kritischer Versuch. I. Die Galerie Borghese. Aus dem Russischen übersetzt von Dr. Johannes Schwarze”, in: *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, 9 (1874), pp. 1–11, 73–81, 171–178, 249–253; 10 (1875), pp. 97–106, 206–211, 264–273, 329–334; 11 (1876), pp. 132–137, 168–173.



2 "Vergleichende Darstellung von Fußstellungen". Woodcut after photographs. From: Anton Springer, *Raffael und Michelangelo*, Leipzig 1883², p. 73, fig. 23

only on an impressive knowledge of the originals from many European collections, but also on an adept handling of photographs.³⁰ Drawings played, thanks to photography, a crucial role in all his arguments, and he declared their study to be "one of the purest enjoyments granted to mankind on earth".³¹ Just as a scientist commonly quoted the literature to his subject, Morelli quoted the numbers of the photographs by Perini, Philpot, Alinari, Braun, and others, pictures which were so widespread that every art historian could go have a look or acquire them in the photograph traders' stores. As a result, a general basis for the discourse grew, and the attributions became provable.

Morelli's book was quite revolutionary, and of course it was greeted not only with enthusiasm, but also with a lot of polemic reactions, especially from the art historians of the Berlin museums. Most of the struggle between Morelli and August Schmarsow (1853–1936), Friedrich Lippmann (1838–1903), Herman Grimm, Wilhelm Bode (1845–1929) and Anton Springer was focused on Raphael's early years and on distinguishing his work from that of his teachers Pietro Perugino, Pinturicchio and Timoteo Viti.

³⁰ See Dorothea Peters, "Das Schwierigste ist eben ... das, was uns das Leichteste zu sein dünkt – nämlich das Sehen". *Kunstgeschichte und Fotografie am Beispiel Giovanni Morellis (1816–1891)*", in: Costanza Caraffa (ed.), *Fotografie als Instrument und Medium der Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin / Munich 2009, pp. 45–75.

³¹ Quoted from Anonymous 1883 (note 1), p. 185.

³² See also Silvia Ferino Pagden, "Raffaello come *test-case* della validità del metodo Morelliano", in: Giacomo Agosti / Maria Elisabetta Manca / Matteo Panzeri (eds.), *Giovanni Morelli e la cultura dei conoscitori* (proceedings Bergamo 1987), 2 vols., Bergamo 1993, vol. 2, pp. 331–349.

VON FRIEDRICH LIPPMANN.

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Fig. 1. Kreidezeichnung in Lille.



Fig. 2. Federzeichnung in der Albertina.

Fig. 3. Madonna del Duca di Terranuova,
Berliner Galerie No. 247A.Fig. 4. Maria mit dem hl. Franciscus und Hieronymus,
Berliner Galerie No. 145.

3 Attribution of a sketch, held in the Berlin Gallery, to Raphael by comparison with other drawings and paintings. Woodcuts after photographs by Ad. Braun. From: Friedrich Lippmann, "Raffael's Entwurf zur Madonna del Duca di Terranuova und zur Madonna Staffa-Connestabile", in: *Jahrbuch der Königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 2 (1881), p. 63



4a Sketch for the “*Madonna del Duca di Terranuova*” (Berlin Gallery), by Friedrich Lippmann attributed to Raphael. Collotype by Albert Frisch. From: Lippmann 1881, frontispiece



4b Sketch for the “*Madonna del Duca di Terranuova*”, by Giovanni Morelli attributed to Perugino. Woodcut after photograph. From: Giovanni Morelli, “*Perugino oder Raffael? Einige Worte der Abwehr*”, in: *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, 16 (1881), p. 243, fig. A

In the resulting articles—called “words of defence” or “words of understanding”—some of the disputes of the 1850s were raised again or were finally clarified.³²

The dispute on the authenticity of a specific sheet from the Berlin Gallery of Prints and Drawings distinctly shows the careful argumentation based on photographs. The Berliners—particular-



4c “*Baptism of the Christ*” (Louvre), authentic drawing by Perugino. Woodcut after photograph. From: Morelli 1881, p. 244, fig. B

ly Friedrich Lippmann as director of the collection—thought it to be a drawing by Raphael for the *Madonna del Duca di Terranuova* in Berlin and the *Madonna Staffa-Connestabile* in Petersburg (both drawings were on the same sheet of paper). In his book, Morelli, however, had attributed it to Perugino with well-substantiated arguments.³³ In 1881, a short article came out in the *Jahrbuch der Königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen* by Friedrich Lippmann, in which he replied and argued by comparing those drawings with other drawings and—more or less authentic—paintings: (1) a chalk drawing in the Musée Wicar in Lille, which he thought to be by a later copyist, (2) a drawing in pen in the Albertina in Vienna, which

he thought to be by Raphael, (3) the *Madonna del Duca di Terranuova*, an authentic painting by Raphael in the gallery in Berlin, and (4) a painting showing *Mary with St. Francis and Jeremy*, from the same collection, which Lippmann thought to be by Raphael after an, at the time, widespread model of Martin Schongauer (composition with three figures). All drawings and paintings in the journal were presented in little xylographs after photographs of Adolphe Braun, whose numbers Lippmann quoted in the text, as Morelli had done (see fig. 3).³⁴

In a detailed essay in the *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* Lermolieff/Morelli countered immediately.³⁵ He also illustrated his text with six drawings: (A) the drawing in question in the Berlin gallery, and an authentic drawing by Perugino in the Louvre (B; *Baptism of the Christ*) (see fig. 4a–c).³⁶ Carefully, Morelli compared these drawings: the hard contours, the tube-shaped form of the little Child's body, the puffy crossing folds on the right knee of the Virgin, the broad, wooden form of her fingers, the tight crossing lines in the shadows and especially at the neck and the cheek in the Berlin drawing, and attributed it again to Perugino because of the similarities to the Louvre drawing. Then Morelli took the Lille drawing (C) and compared it in the same way, through close observation, to an authentic early drawing of Raphael—the sketch for the *Madonna del Cardellino* in Oxford (D); in conclusion he thought the Lille drawing to be by Raphael (see fig. 5a–c).³⁷

Finally, he examined the Albertina drawing (A II), which Lippmann thought to be by Raphael, Wilhelm Bode thought to be by Perugino, and the director of the Albertina, Moritz Thausing (1838–1884), thought to be by Pinturicchio. Morelli compared this drawing with a sketch from the so-called “Raphael Sketchbook” in Venice (B II), included in a xylograph after a photograph of Antonio Perini (see fig. 6a–c).³⁸ Referring to a lot of further photographs of authentic works of Pinturicchio, reproduced by Braun, Alinari, Philpot and Perini, he pointed to the position of the Madonna's head, to the stepwise, one upon another, drawn folds, to the hands with the long sharp fingers, and the like. He concluded that both—the Albertina drawing and the Venetian drawing—were done by Pinturicchio. On this occasion, Morelli attributed most of the sketches in the so-called “Raphael Sketchbook” to Pinturicchio, and this was gradually generally accepted (since they now call it “Venice Sketchbook”).

It might have been the first time that a scientific dispute, a scientific argumentation was based on photographs in this way. But, though based on photographs, the illustrations could not offer the authenticity of photography, because of the technical difficulties of the printing process. The photographs had to be translated into xylographs, or could only be printed on separate pages in photomechanical colotypes, heliogravures and the like, but all these processes were quite expensive. So the illustrations in the publications did not come up to the level of the scientific discourse. How, for example, should the reader decide whether the narrow lines of the drawings were by Pinturicchio or by the woodcutter? Only

³³ See Lermolieff [Morelli] 1880 (note 1), p. 375–376.

³⁴ See Friedrich Lippmann, “Raffaels Entwurf zur Madonna del Duca di Terranuova und zur Madonna Staffa-Connestabile”, in: *Jahrbuch der Königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 2 (1881), p. 62–66, here p. 63, fig. 1, “Kreidezeichnung in Lille”, phot. Braun no. 46; fig. 2, “Federzeichnung in der Albertina”, phot. Braun no. 134; fig. 3, “Madonna del Duca di Terranuova, Berliner Galerie No. 247A”; fig. 4, “Maria mit dem hl. Franciscus und Hieronymus, Berliner Galerie No. 145”; each in the size of 7.5 x 6.5 cm.

³⁵ Ivan Lermolieff [Giovanni Morelli], “Perugino oder Raffael? Einige Worte der Abwehr”, in: *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, 16 (1881), pp. 243–252, 273–282.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 243 (fig. A), 244 (fig. B).

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 248 (fig. C), 249 (fig. D).

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 273 (fig. A II), 276 (fig. B II).

³⁹ Dorothea Peters, “Die Welt im Raster. Georg Meisenbach und der lange Weg zur gedruckten Fotografie”, in: Alexander Gall (ed.), *Konstruieren, Kommunizieren, Präsentieren. Bilder von Wissenschaft und Technik*, Göttingen 2007, pp. 179–244.

⁴⁰ Ivan Lermolieff [Giovanni Morelli], “Raphael's Jugendentwicklung. Worte der Verständigung gerichtet an Herrn Prof. Springer in Leipzig von Ivan Lermolieff”, in: *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, 5 (1882), pp. 147–177, here pp. 151–152.



Fig. 1. Kreidezeichnung in Lille.

5a Drawing in the Musée Wicar, Lille, by Lippmann attributed to a later copyist of Raphael. Woodcut after photograph. From: Lippmann 1881, p. 63, fig. 1



Fig. C. Sammlung Wicar, Lille. (Raffael.)

5b Drawing in the Musée Wicar, Lille, by Morelli attributed to Raphael. Woodcut after photograph. From: Morelli 1881, p. 248, fig. C

after the invention of the halftone-etching (in Germany: *Autotypie*) in 1883 did it become possible—little by little—to print photographs within the text.³⁹

There was an anticipation of it when in 1892—posthumously—the first English edition of Lermolieff / Morelli's *Italian painters* was published by Murray in London. Now, when Morris Moore had sold his *Apollo and Marsyas* to the Louvre in



Fig. D. Oxford. (Raffael.)

5c "Madonna del Cardellino" (Oxford), authentic drawing by Raphael. Woodcut after photograph. From: Morelli 1881, p. 249, fig. D

1883, the art historical fate of it was decided by Morelli's attribution to Perugino. He had pointed that out ten years before in his article on *Raphael's Jugendentwicklung* in the *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* in an extensive footnote:⁴⁰ Morelli wrote that he knew the *Apollo and Marsyas* of Morris Moore quite well, since he had seen it at the exhibition in Milan in 1858. Around 1880, he had been shown a painting by an art dealer, which was very similar to the sketch of the *Apollo and*



6a Drawing in the Albertina, Vienna, by Lippmann attributed to Raphael. Woodcut after photograph. From: Lippmann 1881, p. 63, fig. 2



6b Drawing in the Albertina, Vienna, by Morelli attributed to Pinturicchio. Woodcut after photograph. From: Morelli 1881, p. 273, fig. AII

Marsyas in Venice, of which he possessed a photograph. In this painting, the Apollo was changed to Eve, the Marsyas to Adam. Morelli attributed it to Bacchiacca, who had been a pupil of Perugino. Morelli, nearly seventy years old, sent his friend Gustavo Frizzoni (1840–1919) to Morris Moore in Rome to have a look at the *Apollo and Marsyas*. When Frizzoni saw the painting for the first time,



6c Drawing from the so-called “Raphael Sketchbook”, Venice, by Morelli attributed to Pinturicchio. Woodcut after photograph. From: Morelli 1881, p. 276, fig. BII

he thought it to be by Raphael, but in a second close observation he noticed that the lower extremities could not be by Raphael, but rather by Perugino. So the painting was attributed to Perugino. This 1882 footnote could have been translated ten years later into illustrations in halftone-etching (see fig. 7a–b).⁴¹ As a result, everybody could

follow Morelli's argumentation or decide not to. The discourse was based upon a common obligatory visual basis. The attribution of the *Apollo and Marsyas* to Perugino remains accepted until today.

Yet there was one reproach that could not be forgotten. In 1881, Friedrich Lippmann reproached Morelli for having formed his judgement on the Berlin drawing of Raphael / Perugino without having seen the actual drawing, having relied only on a mediocre photograph in which the finer qualities of a drawing were distorted. Even the collotype, Lippmann wrote, was not able to show the gradations of the colour or the clarity and sharpness of the pencil stroke, and even less the softer lines.⁴² August Schmarsow concurred with this in his essay on *Raphael's Skizzenbuch in Venedig* of 1881. He concluded that everyone who only knew the photographs of Braun and Perini instead of the originals would necessarily come to a wrong judgement. "The sheets", he wrote, "are nearly all drawn with fine pen strokes [...]; the ink has a light brown, nearly blond tone, that becomes infallibly black in the photograph; [...]. So even the most scrupulous researcher, who handles photographs on a daily basis, has to suffer from the worst infection of his memory, from when he saw the originals in Venice".⁴³ The more the researchers



7a "Adam and Eve", painting attributed to Bacchiacca. Halftone-etching. From: Giovanni Morelli (Ivan Lermolieff), *Italian painters. Critical studies of their works. The Borghese and Doria-Pamfili Galleries in Rome*, London 1892, to p. 106



7b "Apollo and Marsyas", painting attributed to Perugino. Halftone-etching. From: Morelli 1892, to p. 106

⁴¹ Giovanni Morelli [Ivan Lermolieff], *Italian painters. Critical studies of their works. The Borghese and Doria-Pamfili Galleries in Rome*, London 1892, p. 106 and 2 ill.

⁴² Lippmann 1881 (note 34), pp. 62, 66.

⁴³ August Schmarsow, "Raphaels Skizzenbuch in Venedig", in: *Preußische Jahrbücher*, 48 (1881), pp. 122–149. Here

quoted after id., "Raphaels Skizzenbuch in Venedig", in: *Festschrift zu Ehren des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz, dargebracht vom Kunsthistorischen Institut der Universität Leipzig 1897*, Leipzig 1897, pp. 95–121, here pp. 95–96: "Die Blätter sind bis auf wenige Ausnahmen mit feinen Federstrichen auf nicht ganz leimfestem Pa-

got used to the use of photographs in their daily work, the more closely they learned to observe all details in permanent comparison, and the more critical their attitude became towards photography. But even if Lippmann, Schmarsow, and others were right in their criticisms, the magnificent role of photography in developing the intellectual culture in art history can not be denied. Their judgements should be a reminder to us of that critical sentiment, coming from a time when the careful consultation and study of photographs was at its very conception.

pier gezeichnet; die Tinte hat einen hellbräunlichen fast blonden Ton, der in der Photographie unfehlbar schwarz wird; [...]. Gerade der gewissenhafteste Forscher, der täglich mit den Photographieen [sic] verkehrt, ist so der schlimmsten Infektion des Erinnerungsbildes ausgesetzt, das er aus Venedig von der Betrachtung der Originalzeichnungen mitgebracht [sic] [...]. [...] die vielgepriesene Photographie lässt die leichtesten Federzüge derb

und ungeschickt erscheinen oder leiht flüchtig hingeworfenen Skizzen ein ängstlich pedantisches Aussehen. Tritt man jedoch, vollständig skeptisch, [...] wieder vor die Zeichnungen hin, so erschrickt man wie völlig falsch die Vorstellungen sind, die man mitbringt, und muss [...] erklären, dass ein Urteil über diese Blätter überhaupt nur vor den Originalen selbst gefällt werden kann."

Geraldine A. Johnson

Using the Photographic Archive: On the Life (and Death) of Images

“Ars longa, vita brevis” goes the famous aphorism. Whether or not art really does endure, there is no doubt that reproductions of works of art certainly can, although they too are born and can eventually die as technologies and tastes change. How and why this happens is the subject of the present essay, using reproductions of sculpture from Renaissance Italy as a case study through which to explore these questions.¹

The decision to concentrate on images of Renaissance sculpture is not arbitrary, but rather grows from the fact that one of the most influential figures in the early history of Art History as an academic discipline, Heinrich Wölfflin, himself focused on this topic in a pair of articles published in 1896–1897 and 1915, titled “Wie man Skulpturen aufnehmen soll” or “How one should photograph sculpture”.² Actually, this was the title of the first article; in the second publication, Wölfflin added a question mark, thus changing an emphatic directive to a more open-ended query. But Wölfflin’s conclusions in both pieces were equally proscriptive since, according to him, there was only one correct way to photograph Renaissance sculpture and the art of other “classic” periods, namely, directly from the front and head-on, since this was, according to Wölfflin, the originally-intended principle view.³

¹ This essay was completed during a Research Fellowship very generously funded by the Leverhulme Trust. On the photography of sculpture in general, see esp. Mary Bergstein, “Lonely Aphrodites: On the Documentary Photography of Sculpture”, in: *Art Bulletin*, 74 (1992), pp. 474–498; Geraldine A. Johnson (ed.), *Sculpture and Photography: Envisioning the Third Dimension*, Cambridge 1998.

² Heinrich Wölfflin, “Wie man Skulpturen aufnehmen soll”, in: *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, 7 (1896), pp. 224–228, and 8 (1897), pp. 294–297; id., „Wie man Skulpturen aufnehmen soll? (Probleme der italienischen Renaissance)“, in: *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, 26 (1915), pp. 237–244. Most of the examples used by Wölfflin were

Italian Renaissance ones, although some Classical works appeared in the second part of the first article. On Wölfflin, see: Joan Hart, “Reinterpreting Wölfflin: Neo-Kantianism and Hermeneutics”, in: *Art Journal*, 42 (1982), pp. 292–300; Michael Podro, *The Critical Historians of Art*, New Haven 1982, pp. 117–151; Martin Warnke, “On Heinrich Wölfflin”, in: *Representations*, 27 (1989), pp. 172–187; Matthias Waschek (ed.), *Relire Wölfflin*, Paris 1995; Daniel Adler, “Painterly Politics: Wölfflin, Formalism and German Academic Culture, 1885–1915”, in: *Art History*, 27 (2004), pp. 431–456; and David Summers, “Heinrich Wölfflin’s ‘Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe’, 1915”, in: *Burlington Magazine*, 151 (2009), pp. 476–479.



1 Anonymous artist [left], Woodcut reproduction of a Marian relief attributed to Donatello, and Anonymous photographer [right], Photographic reproduction of a Marian relief attributed to a follower of Donatello. Reproductions in Wilhelm von Bode, *Die italienische Plastik*, Berlin 1891 (1st ed.), pp. 68–69

In 1891, a few years before Wölfflin's first article appeared, another important late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholar, Wilhelm von Bode, published the first edition of his survey of Italian sculpture, with many of the examples coming from the Berlin Museum where he served initially as a curator and later as director.⁴ Although photographs of works of art had been available for more than half a century—indeed, reproductions of sculpted objects had even appeared in the first-ever book illustrated with photographs, William Henry Fox Talbot's *The Pencil of Nature*, published in the mid-1840s⁵—Bode's volume included both photographic and woodcut reproductions of Renaissance sculpture, sometimes even on facing pages (fig. 1).⁶ This was probably due to the fact that photographs suitable for publication were not yet available at this date for all the objects under discussion.

The impact of photography is, however, evident even in the woodcuts. For instance, the woodcut of a Marian relief attributed to Donatello on the left-hand page of the spread illustrated here (see fig. 1) is

³ Photographs have been used to support similar claims about the essential frontality of ancient Roman reliefs. See Jàs Elsner, "Frontality in the Column of Marcus Aurelius", in: John Scheid / Valérie Huet (eds.), *La colonne aurelienne*, Turnhout 2000, pp. 255–259.

⁴ Wilhelm von Bode, *Die italienische Plastik*, Berlin 1891. On Bode, see: Manfred Ohlson, *Wilhelm von Bode: Zwischen Kaiserermacht und Kunsttempel: Biographie*, Berlin 1995; Jaynie Anderson, "The political power of connoisseurship in nineteenth-century Europe: Wilhelm von Bode versus Giovanni Morelli", in: *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 38 (1996), pp. 107–119; Alexis Joachi-

mides, "The Museum's Discourse on Art: The Formation of Curatorial Art History in Turn-of-the-Century Berlin", in: Susan A. Crane (ed.), *Museum and Memory*, Stanford 2000, pp. 200–219; and Catherine B. Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation and the Practice of Connoisseurship*, Amsterdam 2004, ch. 1–2.

⁵ See the two views of a plaster bust in William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, London 1844–1846, pls. V and XVII. On this publication in the context of early photographically illustrated books, see Carol Armstrong, *Scenes in a Library: Reading the Photograph in the Book, 1843–1875*, Cambridge/MA 1998, pp. 107–178.

a print that very self-consciously seems to reproduce every one of the original object's nicks and scratches (e.g., see the chips and gouges along the base), thereby visually echoing the apparent "truthfulness" of photographic reproductions—although whether the print was based on a photograph or on a drawing that mimicked "photographic" ways of seeing remains unclear.⁷ More significantly, despite the visual clues hinting at the print's pseudo-photographic accuracy, even a quick comparison with a photograph of what is apparently the same relief, which was published in another book by Bode in 1902, shows significant differences between the woodcut and its source object: not only is the seemingly convincingly worn base in the former different from the latter, but one now realizes that the haloes around the two figures' heads must have been eliminated from the woodcut, not to mention further differences in the Virgin's hair and in details of both figures' draperies (fig. 2).⁸ Although woodcut illustrations would have allowed art historians, editors and publishers creatively to "edit" the objects reproduced as they saw fit, glaring discrepancies such as entirely missing haloes must have become increasingly obvious to a visually literate public and would have helped to hasten the "death" of woodcut reproductions in serious academic publications. In fact, by the time a sixth edition of Bode's 1891 survey was published in 1922, the final triumph of photography was evident, for now all but one of the book's 103 illustrations was a printed photographic reproduction, including that of Donatello's Marian relief.⁹

The transition to fully photographically illustrated publications is also demonstrated by the case of the Italian art historian G.B. Cavalcaselle. The biography of Cavalcaselle that was added to the 1903–1914 edition of his monumental *A History of Painting in Italy* (co-authored with J. A. Crowe and first published in 1864–1866) spoke admiringly of the fact that this scholar's "extraordinary [visual] memory [had] enabled him to do



2 Anonymous photographer, Marian relief attributed to Donatello (formerly in the Berlin Museum). Photographic reproduction in Wilhelm von Bode, *Florentiner Bildhauer der Renaissance*, Berlin 1902, p. 114, fig. 47

⁶ For example, see Bode 1891 (note 4), pp. 68–69.

⁷ There is a vast literature on the 'truthfulness' or 'transparency' of photography, but see esp. Joel Snyder / Neil Walsh Allen, "Photography, Vision and Representation", in: *Critical Inquiry*, 2 (1975), pp. 143–170; Rosalind Krauss, "A Note on Photography and the Simulacral", in: Carol Squiers (ed.), *The Critical Image: Essays on Contemporary Photography*, Seattle 1990, pp. 15–27; and Peter Galison, "Judgment against Objectivity", in: Caroline A. Jones / Peter Galison (eds.), *Picturing Science, Producing Art*, New York 1998, pp. 327–359.

⁸ The relief was reproduced photographically in Wilhelm

von Bode, *Florentiner Bildhauer der Renaissance*, Berlin 1902, p. 114, fig. 47. The version of this design (known as the *Verona Madonna*) most similar to the woodcut in Bode's 1891 volume is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, although the Madonna sports a halo. The relief in the photographs in Bode's publications, which may have served as the model for the woodcut in the 1891 volume, seems to be the one now in the Kaiser Wilhelm Museum, Krefeld. See Anna Jolly, *Madonnas by Donatello and his circle*, Frankfurt 1998, figs. 46 and 49.

⁹ Wilhelm von Bode, *Die italienische Plastik*, Berlin 1922⁶, p. 78.

without the help of photographs” and to accomplish more than current scholars could ever hope to even “with all the modern aids to study”.¹⁰ The irony was that the re-issued volumes were now illustrated with photographic reproductions and photogravures, including a frontispiece based on an Alinari photograph of a Marian statue by the late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century sculptor Giovanni Pisano, very much in contrast to the engravings and diagrams that had appeared in the original edition (fig. 3). Equally tellingly, the title page that had in 1864 proudly proclaimed that the text was based on “recent researches in the archives of Italy; and from personal inspection of the works of art scattered throughout Europe”, now simply stated that the volumes were “illustrated”, mostly with Alinari photographs and including a number of reproductions of works by sculptors, notwithstanding the title’s ostensible focus on painting.¹¹ The art historian Raimond van Marle’s admiration for Cavalcaselle’s heroic scholarship, supposedly conducted without the aid of photographs, was evident when he praised the “enormous advances” of his predecessor’s “scientific treatise”, especially given that “it is well known that CAVALCASELLE had to make sketches of the works of art which he wished to study or compare”.¹² In reality, even Cavalcaselle had relied in his research on photographic reproductions in addition to personal sketches, and when his opus was re-issued just after the turn of the twentieth century, photographs had in practice also become the only suitable form of reproduction in art historical publications.¹³

But how exactly did art historians and their viewer-readers define a “suitable” photograph in this period? One aspect of suitability was undoubtedly related to technical developments in photographic and printing technologies. For instance, only in the early 1880s could actual photographic reproductions be printed directly onto book pages, rather than having to be pasted in by hand (a slow and expensive process) or merely used as models for wood engravings, and only in the 1890s could the full chromatic range of art objects be properly captured in photographic negatives.¹⁴ Indeed, in the case of paintings with a wide range of colours, photographs initially were often taken from engravings after the paintings, rather than from the original works themselves.¹⁵ Just how problematic printing photographic reproductions could be is suggested by the curious case of Henry Goodyear’s *A History of Art*, which appeared in a first edition in 1888 illustrated entirely in photographic half-tone images, but was published in a second edition just one year later primarily with traditional wood engravings and just a smattering of the new-fangled half-tones largely due to the unsatisfactory appearance of the latter when printed on paper.¹⁶

But the suitability of photographic reproductions was not just a question of their quality when printed. As Wölfflin made clear in his articles on the photography of sculpture, photographs could also be “correct” or “incorrect” thanks to their formal and aesthetic qualities. In fact, in his first publication on the subject in 1896–1897, the captions beneath side-by-side illustrations of the fifteenth-century sculp-

¹⁰ Joseph A. Crowe / Giovanni B. Cavalcaselle / Langton Douglas (ed.), *A History of Painting in Italy. Umbria, Florence and Siena. From the second to the sixteenth century*, London 1903–1914², vol. I, p. XVII.

¹¹ Joseph A. Crowe / Giovanni B. Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in Italy from the second to the fourteenth century*, London 1864–1866, vol. 1, title page; Crowe / Cavalcaselle / Douglas 1903–1914 (note 10), vol. 1, title page.

¹² Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian School of Painting*, The Hague 1923–1938, vol. 1, p. IX.

¹³ Until the end of the nineteenth century, the supposed advantages of prints over photographs in the reproduction of art continued to be asserted by some writers, but

this debate had fizzled out by the early twentieth century. For Cavalcaselle’s use of photographs, see Trevor Fawcett, “Graphic versus Photographic in Nineteenth-Century Reproduction”, in: *Art History*, 9 (1986), p. 206.

¹⁴ William M. Ivins, Jr., *Prints and Visual Communication*, Cambridge/MA 1953, pp. 127–130; Estelle Jussim, *Visual Communication and the Graphic Arts*, New York 1974, pp. 56–69; Fawcett 1986 (note 13), p. 206; and Sylvie Aubenas, “The Photograph in Print: Multiplication and the stability of the image”, in: Michel Frizot (ed.), *A New History of Photography*, Cologne 1998, pp. 225–231.

¹⁵ Jussim 1974 (note 14), pp. 237–278; and Fawcett 1986 (note 13), pp. 188–189.



3 Alinari photographer, *In the Campo Santo Pisa: Giovanni Pisano. Photographure in: Joseph A. Crowe / Giovanni B. Cavalcaselle / Langton Douglas (ed.), A History of Painting in Italy. Umbria, Florence and Siena. From the second to the sixteenth century, London 1903-1914 (2nd ed.), vol. I, title page*

tor Andrea del Verrocchio's bronze statue of David very clearly stated that the left-hand image was an "Unrichtige Aufnahme" ("incorrect photograph"), while the one on the right was "Richtig" ("correct") (fig. 4).¹⁷ As previously noted, Wölfflin believed that sculpture produced in "classic" periods like the Renaissance should only be photographed head-on in order to capture the originally intended "direct frontal view" ("die direkte Vorderansicht"), something that, according to him, was not the case in the left-hand reproduction.¹⁸ As I have discussed elsewhere, the historiographic and methodological implications of such claims were very much tied to Wölfflin's formalist approach to Art History.¹⁹ But how, in practice, did art historians and their editors and publishers (it is often impossible to split one from the other) actually use, misuse or not use the images available in the contemporary collective photographic archive to illustrate their writings?²⁰

Wölfflin's example of the photography of Verrocchio's *David* is a good starting point from which to try to answer such questions. By the time Wölfflin published his first article on the photography of sculpture in 1896-1897, several reproductions of this object were already available. But for Wölfflin, none of the photographs offered for sale by companies such as the Alinari were adequate, including the example illustrated in his own article (i. e., the left-hand image in fig. 4).²¹ For Wölfflin, this image showed the figure too much from its right side, which made it difficult to see the space between the feet and to appreciate that the arms projected into different planes. It also

¹⁶ Jussim 1974 (note 14), pp. 262-271, where the author discusses the importance of paper quality, as much as printing technology, for illustrated books in this period.

¹⁷ Wölfflin 1896-1897 (note 2), p. 226, captions for figs. 2 and 3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 225. Wölfflin cites Adolf von Hildebrand on the importance of frontal views. In light of this, the ever-changing illustrations in the various editions of Hildebrand's influential *Das Problem der Form in der bildenden Kunst*, Strasbourg 1893—there were at least eight German editions by 1910, plus translations—merit further study.

¹⁹ See Geraldine A. Johnson, "'(Un)richtige Aufnahme':

Sculpture, Photography and the Visual Historiography of Art History", *Art History*, forthcoming.

²⁰ The use of photographic reproductions in teaching and lecturing is a separate subject. See Robert S. Nelson, "The Slide Lecture, or The Work of Art History in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", in: *Critical Inquiry*, 26 (2000), pp. 414-434.

²¹ Wölfflin 1896-1897 (note 2), p. 225. In his second article, Wölfflin used an 'incorrect' photograph of the statue taken by Anderson to make his point. See Wölfflin 1915 (note 2), p. 240, fig. 3.



4 Alinari photographer [left], Andrea del Verrocchio's David ("Unrichtige Aufnahme"), and Anonymous photographer (commissioned by Heinrich Wölfflin) [right], Plaster cast of Verrocchio's David ("Richtige Aufnahme"). Photographic reproductions in: Heinrich Wölfflin, "Wie man Skulpturen aufnehmen soll", in: *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, 7–8 (1896–1897), p. 226, figs. 2–3

5 Brogi photographer, Andrea del Verrocchio's David (incorrect view). Photographic reproduction in: Hans Mackowsky, *Verrocchio*, Bielefeld / Leipzig 1901, fig. 4

over-foreshortened the sword and showed the unattractive metal brace between the hand and the weapon, all of which resulted in a photograph that was both "false" and "unclear" ("falsch" and "unklar").²² Wölfflin's solution was to commission his own, new photograph of the statue.²³ However, because he was probably in Basel when writing his first article, Wölfflin substituted a plaster cast of Verrocchio's statue for the bronze in Florence, with the paradoxical result that the supposedly more "correct" photograph had actually been taken from a three-dimensional copy of the original sculpture (see the right-hand image in fig. 4).

In 1901, the German scholar Hans Mackowsky published another pair of full-length images of Verrocchio's statue, once again contrasting an apparently inadequate photograph of the original object (this time taken by Brogi) with a marginally differently-positioned photograph of another plaster cast (the latter presumably in Berlin, where Mackowsky was based, given that it looks different from the

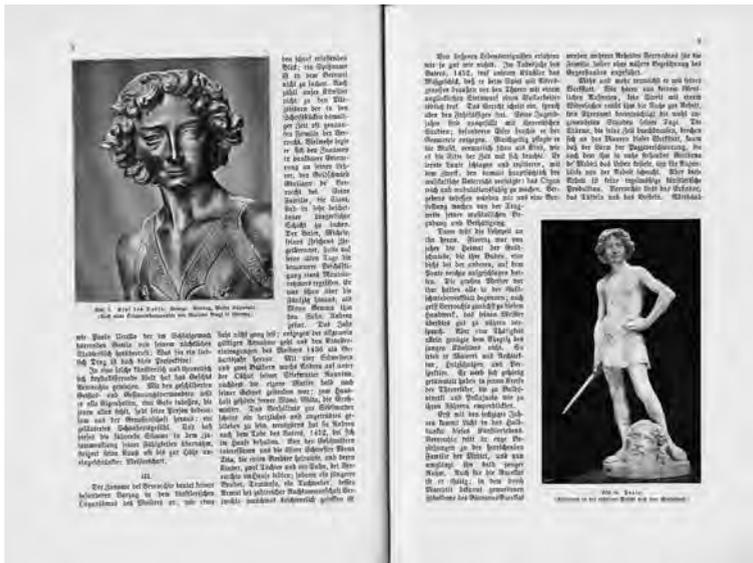
²² Wölfflin 1896–1897 (note 2), p. 224, and Wölfflin 1915 (note 2), p. 238.

²³ In his first article Wölfflin states that the photograph was taken by an "amateur", but in his 1915 article noted that he himself had commissioned it. See Wölfflin 1896–1897 (note 2), p. 226, note 1, and Wölfflin 1915 (note 2), p. 239, note 2.

²⁴ Hans Mackowsky, *Verrocchio*, Bielefeld / Leipzig 1901, figs. 4 and 6. Mackowsky worked for the National Muse-

um in Berlin and died in 1938 in a concentration camp. It is sadly ironic to see a 1934 letter by the Jewish Mackowsky on National Museum letterhead signed "Heil Hitler!". The letter was recently on sale on the Austrian ebay website. See http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hans_Mackowsky and <http://cgi.ebay.at/HANS-MACKOWSKY-KUNSTHISTORIKER-BRIEF-/250616809776> (both accessed 20 May 2010).

²⁵ Mackowsky 1901 (note 24), p. 23.



6 Brogi photographer [left], Head of Andrea del Verrocchio's David, and Anonymous photographer (presumably commissioned by Hans Mackowsky), Plaster cast of Verrocchio's David (correct view). Photographic reproductions in: Hans Mackowsky, Verrocchio, Bielefeld / Leipzig 1901, figs. 5–6

cast in Wölfflin's photograph) (fig. 5 and the right-hand illustration in fig. 6).²⁴ A detail of just the head of Verrocchio's *David* taken by Brogi (see the left-hand illustration in fig. 6), which is close to the position of the head in the photograph of the cast, seemed to meet with Mackowsky's approval. For the full-length figure, however, it was only by selecting a photograph taken from what Mackowsky defined as "the absolutely frontal viewpoint" ("die reine Frontansicht") that a clear image of the sculptor's artistic conception emerged.²⁵ Although Mackowsky did not acknowledge Wölfflin in his discussion of the *David*, the photograph he commissioned and his formalist terminology clearly echo Wölfflin's earlier textual and visual arguments. Interestingly enough, Wölfflin himself did refer to Mackowsky in a note in his second article of 1915 in which he stated that the latter had used a "similar photograph" ("ähnliche Aufnahme") to his own, but that the angle chosen—even though almost imperceptibly different from his own illustration—nevertheless was still taken from too far to the right (compare the right-hand images in figs. 4



7 Alinari photographer, Andrea del Verrocchio's David ("nearly [...] correct"). Photographic reproduction in: Maud Cruttwell, Verrocchio, London 1904, plate facing p. 64

and 6).²⁶ Ironically, in a letter written in 1897 to the historian Jacob Burckhardt, Wölfflin had complained that “today people want to have only the photographs explained”, even though explaining photographs was precisely his main concern in his 1896–1897 and 1915 articles.²⁷

In 1904, Maud Cruttwell, a one-time housekeeper for the connoisseurs Bernard and Mary Berenson who eventually became a respected writer on art herself, published a monograph on Verrocchio in which, once again, a debate on the formal qualities of the various photographs of the sculptor’s bronze *David* ensued.²⁸ Cruttwell used a different Alinari photograph of the sculpture to illustrate her volume than had either Wölfflin or Mackowsky, claiming that the image “here reproduced is taken nearly, though not quite, from the correct point of view”, which she believed should be slightly more to the right (rather than less, as Wölfflin suggested) so that “the face be [sic] completely full-front” (fig. 7). In a note, she specified that the correct view was best captured in “the reproduction taken from a cast in Dr Mackowsky’s ‘Verrocchio’”.²⁹ Therefore, nearly a decade after Wölfflin’s initial critique, the images available to writers on Renaissance sculpture apparently still did not include exactly the right head-on view of Verrocchio’s bronze figure. Despite the fact that the collective photographic archive now numbered in the tens or possibly even hundreds of thousands—for instance, by 1912, Harvard and Princeton University each owned c. 45,000 photographs and lantern slides³⁰—at least some contemporary art historians continued to feel that photographs taken from plaster casts were more “truthful” than any “professional” images currently available. Indeed, as late as 1931, Wölfflin was still complaining that there were not enough appropriate photographs of Italian Renaissance sculpture in circulation.³¹

Despite such laments, there is no doubt that by the mid-twentieth century, the collective photographic archive had continued to expand. But in 1969, the German art historian Günther Passavant nevertheless continued to critique photographic reproductions of Verrocchio’s sculpture. He noted that, for decades, scholarly views about the correct position from which to view the statue had continued to concur with Mackowsky’s “opinion, based on a photograph of a plaster cast, [...] that the figure was to be looked at so that the head of the boy was directly facing us”. Using his own formal analysis of the statue and the position of the figure’s eyes, Passavant argued that “[a]mong earlier published photographs of the bronze *David* the most nearly correct viewpoint is that illustrated by Max Dvorák”—a photograph that, like Passavant’s own illustrations, was unattributed, but looks very similar to the Alinari photograph that was labeled “nearly [...] correct” by Cruttwell (see fig. 7).³² Although Passavant still subscribed to the idea of a dominant view, he also believed that the statue, which was “not conceived to stand in a niche”, had actually been designed by Verrocchio to be nearly as successful, from a formal point of view, from three or four other positions. Passavant’s claim was supported visually by his decision to use four full-figure and three head-only photographs of the sculpture, each taken from a different angle.³³ Interestingly enough, the most head-on of the full-length views seems to be identical with the Alinari photograph published in Cruttwell and Dvorák.

²⁶ Wölfflin 1915 (note 2), p. 239, note 2.

²⁷ Cited in Wolfgang M. Freitag, “Early Uses of Photography in the History of Art”, in: *Art Journal*, 39 (1979–1980), p. 120. On Wölfflin’s ambivalence about using photographs, see also Frederick N. Bohrer, “Photographic Perspectives: Photography and the Institutional Formation of Art History”, in: Elizabeth Mansfield (ed.), *Art History and Its Institutions: Foundations of a Discipline*, London 2002, pp. 254–255.

²⁸ Maud Cruttwell, *Verrocchio*, London 1904. On Cruttwell, see <http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/cruttwellm.htm> (accessed 20 May 2010).

²⁹ Cruttwell 1904 (note 28), p. 65 and see pl. facing p. 64.

³⁰ Earl Baldwin Smith, “The Study of the History of Art in the Colleges and Universities of the United States [1912]”, a pamphlet reprinted in: Craig Hugh Smyth / Peter M. Lukehart (eds.), *The Early Years of Art History in the United States*, Princeton 1993.

³¹ Heinrich Wölfflin, *Die Kunst der Renaissance: Italien und das deutsche Formgefühl*, Munich 1931, p. 72.

³² Günter Passavant, *Verrocchio. Sculptures, Paintings and Drawings*, complete ed., London 1969, p. 15; and Max Dvorák / Johannes Wilde / Karl M. Swoboda (eds.), *Geschichte der italienischen Kunst im Zeitalter der Re-*

Writing in 2005 and still presenting an essentially Wölfflinian formal analysis of the sculpture, Dario Covi was much more proscriptive than Passavant, claiming that “although finished on all sides [...] Verrocchio’s [*David*] is nevertheless conceived as having a single correct viewpoint, with David looking straight out at the observer”. Indeed, in a footnote, Covi even cited Wölfflin’s first article on the photography of sculpture as the initial source for this conclusion. More significantly, many of Covi’s own observations about the figure’s composition seem to be based as much on the single full-figure photograph chosen to illustrate his book as on the object itself—for example, when emphasizing the figure’s “openness” (a very Wölfflinian term) and the diagonal aspects of the design, features that are most evident in photographs taken from head-on rather than from a fully embodied encounter with the statue or, indeed, when relying on multiple views of the figure as Passavant had done.³⁴ The photograph used by Covi may well be the same image that appeared in yet another monograph on Verrocchio published more than six decades earlier by Leo Planiscig in 1941.³⁵ More importantly, Covi’s image, like his formalist argument, is a further descendent of the text and image first published by Wölfflin in 1896–1897. Indeed, the latter’s initial photographic reproduction of a white plaster cast of Verrocchio’s statue lingers like a ghost or, better, acts as a kind of palimpsest underlying any number of later photographs, including those taken of the original bronze itself from a supposedly “head-on” position (even though, as we have seen, exactly where the front of the statue should be located from a formal point of view varied from one scholar—and one photograph—to the next).

The rather convoluted history of the photographic reproductions of Verrocchio’s *David* demonstrates the persistence of images within the collective photographic archive and art historical memory, images that appear, disappear and reappear, with even the slightest variations in angle and pose between one example and the next noted by scholars of a formalist bent working both near and far from the object itself. The life and, one might say, afterlife of photographic images is further illustrated by another example from Renaissance Italy: the photographs taken of Donatello’s marble *St John the Evangelist*. This statue had originally been made for the facade of Florence’s cathedral, the Duomo, in the early fifteenth century, but since the later sixteenth century had been displayed inside the building in one of the central tribune’s chapels. By 1903 at the latest, an Alinari photographer had taken a very Wölfflinian head-on photograph of the piece, an image that appeared that year in three different books on Donatello published in England, Germany, and the United States (fig. 8).³⁶ Several writers around this time complained about how difficult it was to see the original statue properly in the tribune due to poor lighting, the implication being that viewing the brightly-lit photographic reproduction might actually be more helpful than encountering the object itself.³⁷ Such an attitude was made explicit by Bernard Berenson, who happily admitted in later life that he actually preferred assessing art works through photographic reproductions; indeed, his “time could have been better spent in the library, with books and photographs”, rather than travelling to see the original objects themselves.³⁸

naissance, Munich 1927–1928, vol. 1, plate 69. The editors stated that the images in the latter book were selected from lantern slides used in Dvorák’s lectures. See *ibid.*, p. VIII.

³³ Passavant 1969 (note 32), pp. 15–17 and pp. 16–22; there is also a detail of the head of Goliath in pl. 23.

³⁴ Dario A. Covi, *Andrea del Verrocchio: Life and Work*, Florence 2005, p. 48 and fig. 25.

³⁵ The image is credited to Brogi in Leo Planiscig, *Andrea del Verrocchio*, Vienna 1941, pl. 25, but in Covi’s volume is attributed to Alinari, which bought the Brogi archives in 1958. See John Hannavy, *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-*

Century Photography, New York 2007, vol. 1, p. 26. Like Passavant, Planiscig also included additional full-length views of the statue, as well as reproductions of various details.

³⁶ Alfred Gotthold Meyer, *Donatello*, Bielefeld / Leipzig 1903, p. 11; Lord Balcarres [David Lindsay Crawford], *Donatello*, London 1903, pl. facing p. 18; and E.H. Colvin / E.W. Bashfield / A.A. Hopkins (eds.), *Donatello*, Boston 1903, pl. 8.

³⁷ See, for instance, Balcarres 1903 (note 36), p. 14, and Maud Cruttwell, *Donatello*, London 1911, p. 27.

³⁸ Cited in David A. Brown, *Berenson and the Connois-*

Such attitudes notwithstanding, in 1904, Donatello's *St John* was moved to a much better-lit position in an aisle of the cathedral's nave and then, after being placed into storage during the Second World War, was installed in Florence's Museo dell'Opera del Duomo where it remains to this day, albeit without the halo seen in the pre-1904 photograph.³⁹ Despite these peregrinations and the fact that the statue was now no longer framed by the architectural decoration of the



8 Alinari photographer, Donatello's *St John the Evangelist* (photographed in Florence Cathedral's tribune). Photographic reproduction in: Lord Balcarras [David Lindsay Crawford], *Donatello*, London 1903, fig. facing p. 18

seurship of Italian Painting, Washington/DC 1979, p. 44; from Bernard Berenson, *Sketch for a self-portrait*, New York 1949.

³⁹ For a summary of the sculpture's movements, see John Pope-Hennessy, *Donatello: Sculptor*, New York 1993, p. 321, note 28. It is unclear when the halo was removed. It no longer appears in photographs of the sculpture taken in the 1930s by Brogi for Jenő Lányi (discussed below), but the halo may have still been in place between the initial move to the cathedral's aisle in 1904 and the



9 Alinari photographer, Donatello's *St John the Evangelist* (photographed in Florence Cathedral's tribune, but with background excised), original photograph taken by 1903. Photographic reproduction in: Arduino Colasanti, *Donatello*, Rome 1933, plate VIII

cathedral's tribune, it was the pre-1904 photograph that continued to be reproduced in any number of books published in the following decades.⁴⁰ In a 1933 survey of Donatello's works, the Italian writer Arduino Colasanti did try to update the standard Alinari image precisely in re-

1930s given that it is visible in an undated photograph credited to Ilse Schneider-Lengyét in Ludwig Goldscheider, *Donatello*, London 1941, pl. 9.

⁴⁰ See Paul Schubring, *Donatello: Des Meisters Werke in 277 Abbildungen*, Stuttgart 1907, p. 3 of "Donatellos Werke" section; Cruttwell 1911 (note 37), pl. 4; Arduino Colasanti, *Donatello*, Rome 1933, pl. 8; Emilio Cecchi, *Donatello*, Rome 1943, pl. 2; and Leo Planiscig, *Donatello*, Florence 1947, pl. 12.

gards to the distracting, historically-inaccurate architectural background. Rather than obtaining or commissioning a new photograph against the Cathedral aisle's blank white wall, however, Colasanti instead simply arranged for every trace of the sculpture's pre-1904 setting (including even its shadow) to be excised from the negative (fig. 9).⁴¹ Interestingly enough, Wölfflin explicitly deplored the practice of deleting backgrounds from negatives in order to silhouette statues, thereby creating what he felt were false contours, even though most of his own illustrations of sculpture set the objects against neutral white, grey or black backgrounds, thereby resulting in a very similar effect.⁴²

Even when new photographs began to be more widely available, the original head-on, Wölfflinian view of Donatello's *St John* persisted. For instance, in H.W. Janson's landmark 1957 monograph on Donatello, the statue was illustrated with specially commissioned photographs taken by Brogi in the 1930s under the direction of Jenő Lányi, who had begun the book eventually completed by Janson.⁴³ Although now no longer sporting a halo nor framed by the tribune's architecture, the statue was still photographed frontally and head-on. What is more surprising is that this type of view persisted well into the 1990s despite Charles Seymour's oft-cited conclusion, first published in 1966 in his well-known survey of Italian Renaissance sculpture, that the "correct" view of the figure should actually be from below, not head-on, given that the statue was originally designed to be placed well above head height on the Cathedral's facade. Indeed, according to Seymour, only when seen from below were the work's formal oddities resolved into a satisfactory composition, a point supported in his book with an appropriately *di sotto in su* photographic illustration.⁴⁴ A print of this photograph now at Villa I Tatti in Florence, Bernard Berenson's erstwhile home, includes an anonymous annotation stating that the image was taken for Seymour in 1955 (fig. 10). Interestingly enough, a second annotation in Berenson's own hand on the verso of the photograph states emphatically: "Donatello as meant to be seen on façade of Duomo".⁴⁵ However, John Pope-Hennessy and Joachim Poeschke, despite both explicitly agreeing with Seymour's



10 Brogi photographer (commissioned by Charles Seymour Jr.), Donatello's *St John the Evangelist* (photographed from below in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Florence), original photograph taken in 1955. Photographic print now in the Fototeca Berenson, Villa I Tatti, Florence

⁴¹ Colasanti 1933 (note 40), pl. 8.

⁴² Fawcett 1986 (note 13), p. 207; and Joel Snyder, "Nineteenth-century Photography of Sculpture and the Rhetoric of Substitution", in: Geraldine A. Johnson (ed.), *Sculpture and Photography: Envisioning the Third Dimension*, Cambridge 1998, pp. 29–30.

⁴³ Horst W. Janson, *The Sculpture of Donatello*, Princeton

1957, vol.1, pp. IX, XIX and 11–16. On Lányi, see John Pope-Hennessy, *The Study and Criticism of Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, Princeton 1980, p. 29, and the essay by Alessandra Sarchi in the present volume.

⁴⁴ Charles Seymour, Jr., *Sculpture in Italy, 1400 to 1500*, Harmondsworth 1966, pp. 56–57 and pl. 13.

conclusion that the “correct” view is from below, commissioned new photographs for their respective 1993 monographs on Donatello that continued to depict the statue head-on, rather than seen from below.⁴⁶ An earlier example of this phenomenon is found in a 1935 survey of Italian sculpture by Eric Maclagan, at the time director of the Victoria & Albert Museum. While Maclagan suggested in his text that the apparent distortions of Donatello’s prophets for the bell tower of Florence’s cathedral were only rendered satisfactorily when viewed from below, he too illustrated this point with head-on views taken by the Alinari—although in this case, this was probably because no *di sotto in su* photographs of the statues were readily available and Maclagan himself was unable or unwilling to commission new ones.⁴⁷ But the fact that Pope-Hennessy and Poeschke continued to favour essentially Wölfflinian, head-on views even when commissioning new photographs in the 1990s demonstrates just how powerful a visual paradigm can be, even as scholarly (written) paradigms change.

The persistence of Wölfflinian views of Renaissance sculpture and, similarly, of architecture and even paintings and drawings produced in this period (all of which are, after all, very rarely seen absolutely head-on in practice) is a phenomenon also found in the photography of art objects made in many other times and places. Indeed, one could argue that the Wölfflinian front-and-centre photograph has become *the* standard view for the vast majority of serious academic and museological publications, whatever the original viewing circumstances may have been. Exploring the paradigmatic case of the photography of Renaissance sculpture and considering the life and, occasionally, death of such images, as well as examining what kinds of reproductions were available in the collective photographic archive at any given time, can be profoundly revealing about the practices and priorities of art historians. As we enter further into the digital age, with its ever-increasing virtual archive of images (ARTstor’s online database, for instance, now includes more than 1 million images, while the *Bildindex für Kunst und Architektur* has approximately 2 million),⁴⁸ and with the advent of ever more technologies for manipulating these images, it becomes even more important to explore the relationships that exist amongst scholars, art historical memory and the collective photographic-*cum*-digital archive.

⁴⁵ Although credited in Seymour’s book to “I.D.E.A., Brogi-Seymour” (*ibid.*, p. XIII) and stamped with the Brogi name on the print at Villa I Tatti, the image does not appear to have entered the Brogi archives, which were purchased in 1958 by Alinari (see note 35 above). The photograph thus seems to have been privately commissioned by Seymour. On Seymour, see <http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/seymourc.htm> (accessed 4 August 2010). I would like to thank Giovanni Pagliarulo for confirming the annotations on Villa I Tatti’s print and Alessandra Biagianni for searching for this image in the archives now held by Alinari.

⁴⁶ Pope-Hennessy 1993 (note 39), pp. 25 and 321, note 27, and fig. 12; Joachim Poeschke, *Donatello and His World: Sculpture of the Italian Renaissance*, New York 1993, p. 7, p. 380, and fig. 46.

⁴⁷ Eric Maclagan, *Italian Sculpture of the Renaissance*, Cambridge/MA 1935, pp. 100–101.

⁴⁸ Email communication from Caroline Caviness (ARTstor), “The size of ARTstor’s collections”, 17 May 2010. For the *Bildindex* (kindly brought to my attention by Costanza Caraffa), see <http://www.bildindex.de>.

Machtelt Israëls

The Berensons, Photography, and the Discovery of Sassetta

The name of Sassetta (ca. 1400–1450) had long remained unknown to the art critics Bernard Berenson (1865–1959) and his future wife, Mary Smith Costelloe (1864–1945).¹ But in 1900, upon seeing the painter’s triptych in his native Cortona, Mary wrote to her family: “I have had a most ‘fruitful’ time here, seeing a quantity of pictures which were here, to be sure, seven years ago, when I was last in this town, but which my eyes were not open to see nor my heart to feel! Best of all was a great golden altarpiece by an early Sienese named Sassetta, a most beautiful thing. How could I have been so blind as not to see it!?”²

By the fall of 1900, the couple had “connoshed” (“studied pictures”) of the Renaissance painter to such an extent that they could tell his hand at first glance.³ They had just found their home at Villa I Tatti near Florence and combed the city’s antique shops to furnish it. In a letter to her family dated I Tatti 27 October 1900, Mary rhapsodized how in a “tiny little out-of-the-way hole-and-corner sort of place” she and Bernard found “a marvellous altarpiece by one of the rarest painters of Italy, an early Sienese named Sassetta, of whom, as it happens, nobody knows anything except my Mr. Berenson [...] and myself and one very scrubby little Professor at Siena.”⁴ She continued about how she could bargain for the “triptych” composed of *Saint Francis in Glory*, the *Blessed Ranieri of Borgo San Sepolcro*,

¹ Parts of the present argument are in Machtelt Israëls, “Introduction”, in: id. (ed.), *Sassetta. The Borgo San Sepolcro Altarpiece*, 2 vols., Florence / Leiden 2009 (in the following *Sassetta*), vol. I, pp. 11–22. Letters and diaries by the Berensons are in Florence, Villa I Tatti, Archivio Berenson (ABF), unless otherwise stated.

² Letter dated Cortona 29 May 1900 to her mother Hannah Whitall Smith and daughters from her first marriage, Ray and Karin Costelloe.

³ Their self-invented verb occurs with a definition in Mary’s letter to her mother dated Milan 20 September

1906: “We ‘connoshed’* [*note in the margin*: *studied pictures] all the morning”. David Frasier, librarian of the Lilly Library, Indiana, where this letter is preserved, kindly provided the transcription.

⁴ Quoted from Israëls 2009 (note 1), pp. 11–12; James R. Banker, “Appendix of Documents Relating to the High Altarpiece, the High Altar, and the Tomb of the Blessed Ranieri in the Church of San Francesco at Borgo San Sepolcro”, in: *Sassetta*, vol. II, pp. 566–583, here p. 582, doc. XLV.

and *Saint John the Baptist* (fig.1), since their author was unknown, and she concludes: “It is a capital investment, but I must wait a while until people know more about the early Siense painters.”

Personal attachment proved stronger than business instinct and the paintings still take pride of place in the *salone* of the villa of the Berensons turned Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies. The connoisseurs’ sensitive research and felicitous acquisition of three panels of the double-sided altarpiece of 1437–1444 from the church of San Francesco in Borgo San Sepolcro heralded the rediscovery of Sassetta.

It was largely through photography that they appraised the scenes from the legend of Saint Francis (now London, National Gallery), which had also formed part of this polyptych. We will see that the latter discovery exemplifies how, around 1900, reproduction photography could both aid and twist the memory of the art historian and connoisseur. A century later, between 2005 and 2008, when a team of art historians and conservators confronted the reconstruction of Sassetta’s altarpiece, the photographs used by the Berensons proved to be historical time capsules, which, with changed research questions, released key information. It is these two services that photography may render to art-historical imagination—the filtered *aide-mémoire* and the time capsule—that are here put into focus.

When buying the three Sassetas, Mary boasted that nobody except she, Bernard, and Robert Langton Douglas (1864–1951), that “very scrubby little Professor at Siena”, knew about the artist. Their competitive interest guaranteed a celebrated series of articles in *The Burlington Magazine*.⁵ It was Douglas who first published the *Mystic Marriage of Saint Francis* at the Musée Condé in Chantilly as by Sassetta, while Bernard, who in 1897 had seen it with his friend the art historian Salomon Reinach (1858–1932),⁶ had attributed it to Sano di Pietro, and in 1898, with Mary, to Vecchietta.⁷ It was Douglas who identified it as part of the documented but disassembled and dispersed altarpiece for the Franciscans of Borgo San Sepolcro and who attempted to reconstruct the artistic personality. Douglas’s article appeared in March–May 1903. The Berensons must have exulted learning in secret about the existence of other Franciscan scenes by Sassetta.

Early in April 1903, Mary traveled to Paris “to see some pictures there which are essential to an article we have to write”.⁸ At Georges Chalandon’s, at 16 rue de Bourgogne, she spent an hour with six Franciscan scenes by Sassetta and learned that a seventh, the *Wolf of Gubbio*, was at the Château d’Uriage in Isère.⁹ From Florence, Bernard replied in elated tones to Mary’s discovery: “What splendid news [...] six new Sassetas! [...] I can scarcely abide waiting the full account.” and he urged Mary to keep the discovery to herself: “By the way, unless you have to speak to Dell about getting them photographed, I would not speak of them to anyone else.”¹⁰ Chalandon had arranged that Paris-based Adolphe Giraudon (1849–1929), an entrepreneurial photographer who served artists and scholars with an archive of over 115,000 negatives of artworks from around the globe,¹¹ would photograph the paintings for

⁵ Robert Langton Douglas, “A Forgotten Painter”, in: *The Burlington Magazine*, I (1903), pp. 306–319; Bernhard Berenson, “A Siense Painter of the Franciscan Legend. Part I”, in: *The Burlington Magazine*, III (1903), pp. 3–35; id., “A Siense Painter of the Franciscan Legend. Part II”, in: *The Burlington Magazine*, III (1903), pp. 171–184; Robert Langton Douglas, “A Note on Recent Criticism of the Art of Sassetta”, in: *The Burlington Magazine*, III (1903), pp. 265–275. See Ernest Samuels, *Bernard Berenson. The Making of a Connoisseur*, Cambridge/MA / London 1979, pp. 390–399.

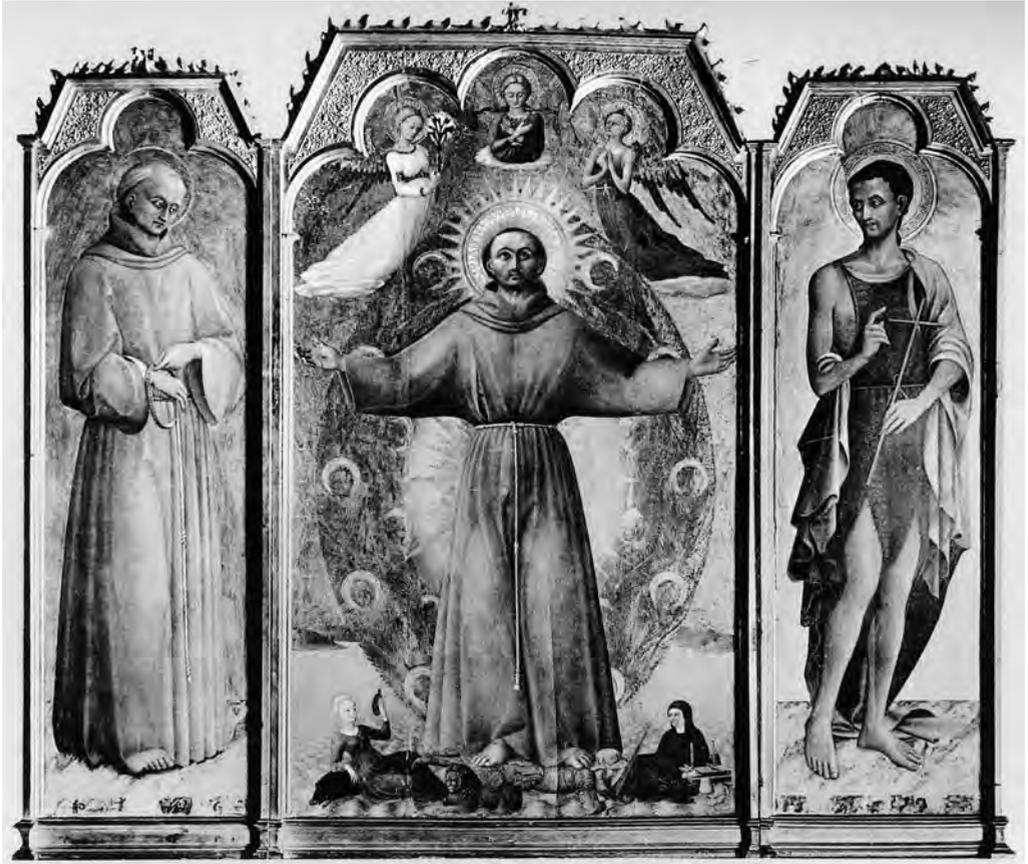
⁶ Annotation in the Berenson Library copy of François-Anatole Gruyer, *La peinture au château de Chantilly. Écoles étrangères*, Paris 1896.

⁷ Bernhard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, New York / London 1897, p. 175; [Bernhard Berenson / Mary Smith Costelloe; unsigned], “Sacred Pictures”, in: *The Golden Urn*, III (1898), p. 144.

⁸ Banker 2009 (note 4), p. 582, doc. XLVIII.

⁹ Banker 2009 (note 4), p. 582, doc. XLIX; also p. 583, docs. LI, LII, LV; and ABF, Notes, Places (Paris).

¹⁰ Banker 2009 (note 4), pp. 582–583, doc. L.



1 Sassetta, “The Blessed Ranieri of Borgo San Sepolcro”, “Saint Francis in Glory”, and “Saint John the Baptist”, 1437–1444, tempera and gold on panel. Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Florence. Photographer Vittorio Jacquier, before 1911 (Fototeca Berenson, Florence)

publication with Bernard’s article. Robert Dell (1865–1940), the first editor of the *Burlington*, was found willing to take care of the considerable expense.¹² The collector in Isère also had his panel photographed.

In May and June 1903, the large-scale carbon prints entered the Fototeca at I Tatti. Bernard studied the photographs and Mary’s description of the paintings,¹³ and imbibed Franciscan literature.¹⁴ Mary wrote, in a letter dated I Tatti 22 May 1903 to her sister Alys Whitall Pearsall, wife of Bertrand Russell:

¹¹ Monique Le Pelley Fonteny, *Adolphe et Georges Giraudon. Une bibliothèque photographique*, Paris / Bourges 2005, pp. 19–51.

¹² Banker 2009 (note 4), pp. 582–583, docs. XLIX–LV. Giraudon did not move fast, and an impatient Bernhard wrote to Mary from Florence on 14 April 1903: “Giraudon has proved himself unreliable before. Do ask Dell to get his man to photograph the Sassettas. Douglas’ letter will help.” It is not clear whether Giraudon eventually took action. The photographs in the Fototeca Berenson do not have a photographer’s name, and neither do the

illustrations in the *Burlington*, except for that of *Saint Francis Renounces His Earthly Father*, which is on different paper and has a caption in a different typeface, with the addition of “London Stereo Co.,” a firm of stereoscopic photographers which Dell may eventually have contacted.

¹³ Banker 2009 (note 4), p. 583, doc. LV.

¹⁴ Israëls 2009 (note 1), p. 12, note 14.

“We are immersed in the Dream of St. Francis. It was an attempt to get rid of the sordid elements in life.” In a couple of month’s time, Bernard wrote the famous essay in which he compared Sassetta’s spirituality to that of Asian art.¹⁵ It appeared later that year in the *Burlington*, divided between the issues of September/October and November.¹⁶

In this essay Bernard inquired: “why is Christian art so unreligious, so unspiritual, as compared to the art of Buddhism?” (p. 8). His main answer was that Western art tended to modelling, whereas “Eastern design is almost exclusively an art of contours, of values of movement, and, in its own way, not ours of space-composition” (p. 13). Searching for an equivalent to the Eastern expressions of spirituality, he finds: “Of European schools of design none comes so close to those of the far east as the school of Siena” (p. 13). “Sienese design [...] tends to avoid modeling in the round and to procure its effects by pure line” (p. 13). In Sassetta at Borgo San Sepolcro, rather than in Giotto at Assisi, Bernard found the truest expression of the Franciscan spirit: “it is he, Stefano Sassetta, who has left us the most adequate rendering of the Franciscan soul that we possess in the entire range of painting” (p. 14). This insight led to Bernard’s pioneering reappraisal of Sassetta on the basis of his concept of “imaginative design”. Whereas Giotto had been unable to “dematerialize the object of vision” (p. 26), Sassetta had ventured into the realm of “imaginative design [...] the kind of design which, instead of expounding facts, no matter how exalted, makes a direct appeal to the imagination, communicating emotions, feelings, and atmospheres, and exhaling dreams—as fragrant odours are exhaled from sweet-smelling roses” (p. 26).

Bernard’s formulation comes at the end of an appraisal of the newly discovered scenes from the legend of Saint Francis. Yet, it is worth realizing that the initial discovery of Sassetta—both of the three panels at I Tatti and of the seven Franciscan scenes—was primarily Mary’s, and that Bernard saw the seven newly discovered Franciscan scenes through the eyes of his wife and the eyes of a photographer. That he had not examined the original paintings himself, but was working with the photographs in hand, transpires also from the absence of colour in his discussion of them. When, occasionally, he does touch on Sassetta’s palette, he errs. The photograph of *Saint Francis Renounces his Earthly Father* beguiled him when he wrote how “the limpid azure of the motionless sky” in tandem with the “swiftness of line where the action is most vehement” and “the virginal daintiness of the architecture” (p. 19) dematerialize the scene. In reality the sky is golden (fig. 2).

Bernard’s idea of “imaginative design” was a grandchild of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel’s “geistige Schönheit”: Sassetta’s achievement was seen as a sensuous manifestation of the inwardness and freedom of the Franciscan spirit, expressed in the idealized human figure, rather than in colour. The fabric of Bernard’s idea of imaginative design and of his comparison with Asian art seems to have incorporated a flaw: black-and-white photography. Following the completion of his *North Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (New York / London 1907), Bernard was assailed by a wave of intellectual panic,¹⁷ and Mary and their mutual friend Carlo Placci (1861–1941) exhorted him to return to his Sassetta essay of four years before and distil a book on imaginative design out of it. On 29 January 1907, Mary wrote in her diary: “BB sat down with his old article on Sassetta to see what he really meant by ‘Imaginative Design’, on which Placci and I want him to write. He came to the melancholy conclusion that he didn’t know what he meant! He says it is like walking on an apparently solid stone pavement, in which

¹⁵ See Carl Brandon Strehlke, “Berenson, Sassetta, and Asian Art”, in: *Sassetta*, vol. I, pp. 37–49.

¹⁶ Mary’s diary, entry dated St. Moritz, 17 July 1903 (p. 197): “The Proofs of Bernhard’s ‘Sassetta’ came, and we polished them off with great interest.”

¹⁷ Ernest Samuels / Jayne Newcomer Samuels, *Bernard Berenson. The Making of a Legend*, Cambridge/MA / London 1987, p. 42.

however now and then you come across barred openings down through which you see, hear water (generally sewage!) rushing.”

A couple of days later he had “squeezed out a few more sentences of his book” and Mary expressed her hope that “he will treat colour”.¹⁸ Her remark seems to indicate that they had felt colour had been missing in the Sassetta essays.

And in fact, these essays had to a large extent been grafted on a black and white vision of Sassetta’s brush. Bernard was well-acquainted with developments in reproduction photography and had rejoiced in 1893 at the sight of Alinari’s isochromatic photographs—made with prepared plates with a greater spectral sensitivity—because the “old system of photography was [...] incapable of rendering the values of the colors—only fit, at best, to give an accurate notion of the outline. [...] Isochromatic photography alone is capable of keeping the relative values of the different colors. [...] Leaving out the color, they are the pictures themselves on a smaller scale.”¹⁹ Enthusiasm about these achievements may have overshadowed awareness of the unchanged pitfalls of the monochrome medium. The tendency of black-and-white photography to underscore patterns, shapes, and lines may have instilled the idea of imaginative design. This filter between the art historian and the art he was studying might also explain why Bernard could not bring himself to write a book on imaginative design and why the concept never got airborne.

The 1903 photographs of the seven Franciscan scenes did contribute decisively to the rediscovery of Sassetta and they codetermined the parameters of his reappraisal, to which a linearity interpreted in a spiritual key was central. It would take Roberto Longhi’s monograph on Piero della Francesca of 1927 and John Pope-Hennessy’s on Sassetta of 1939 before the painter’s historical position and artistic value were grasped through a comparison of his oeuvre with the art of the early Florentine Renaissance.

In her letter to Bernard of April 1903 about the discovery of the Franciscan scenes, Mary, like generations of art historians to follow, had been puzzled by the fact that some had golden skies and others blue ones. Unaware that the applied frames were original, she explained the discrepancy in the skies by claiming that four of them would have had trefoil-arched frames, whereas the others would originally have featured rectangular tops and frames, but had been given trefoils and gilt skies at a later time. She thought they could have made up a tabernacle door and in her letter she sketched what can be considered the first attempt at reconstruction.²⁰

When pondering the jigsaw puzzle in more depth, the Berensons realized that the scenes had belonged to the same altarpiece as their own three Sassetta panels: the altarpiece for the church of San Francesco in Borgo San Sepolcro.²¹ On 19 May 1903, during the intense months of reflection and writing leading up to the *Burlington* articles, the Berensons visited the church in eastern Tuscany. Mary recorded in her diary, “We thought of giving back our Sassetta to the Church it was painted for, but found they had utterly made over a fine Gothic Church into an insignificant nondescript stucco horror—unworthy of receiving our altarpiece!”²²

¹⁸ Diary entry dated Florence 2 February 1907: “Bernhard squeezed out a few more sentences of his book. It runs very slowly at first: but already he is happier, and his ideas are taking a new definite shape. I hope he will treat colour in this book.”

¹⁹ Bernard Berenson, “Isochromatic Photography and Venetian Pictures”, in: *The Nation*, 57, no. 1480 (November 1893), pp. 346–347; reprinted in: Helene E. Roberts (ed.), *Art History Through the Camera’s Lens*, Amsterdam 1995, pp. 127–131. See Costanza Caraffa,

“Einleitung”, in: id. (ed.), *Fotografie als Instrument und Medium der Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin / Munich 2009, pp. 7–26, here pp. 12–13.

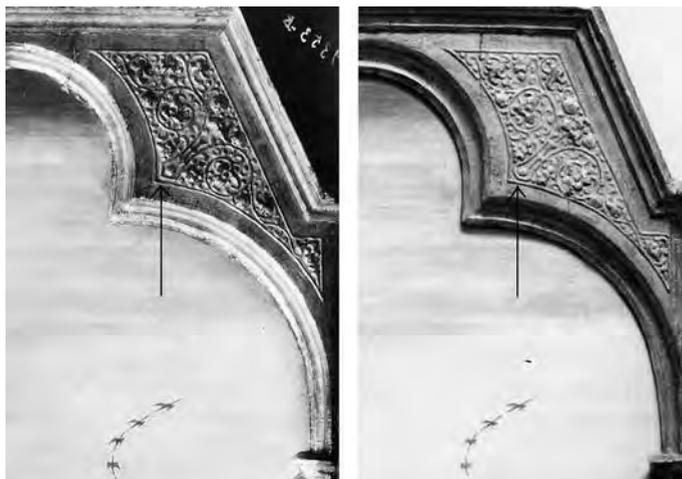
²⁰ Banker 2009 (note 4), pp. 582–583, docs. XLIX, LV, figs. 384–385.

²¹ They knew Scipione Borghesi and Luciano Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell’arte senese*, Siena 1898, pp. 119–120, doc. 64, pp. 142–144, doc. 82.

²² Banker 2009 (note 4), p. 583, doc. LVI.



2 Sassetta, "Saint Francis Renounces his Earthly Father", 1437–1444, tempera and gold on panel, 87.5 x 52.4 cm (painted surface). National Gallery, inv. NG4758, London. Photograph carbon print by Adolphe Giraudon(?) or the London Stereo Co.(?), 1903 (Fototeca Berenson, Florence)



3 Sassetta, detail of the *pastiglia* ornament on the frame of the “Wolf of Gubbio”, 1437–1444. National Gallery, inv. NG4762, London. Photographs by Adolphe Giraudon(?), 1903 (Fototeca Berenson, Florence) (left; with the original, applied frame still attached) and National Gallery, London (right; after 1926 when the painting had been cut from its original, applied frame and reinserted in a modern frame in which the spandrels of the original, applied frame of one of its companion panels were reused)

The panels of the double-sided polyptych are now dispersed over twelve collections in Europe and the United States and chances are slim that they will ever be reunited, let alone reinstalled in the church. Ever since the Berensons, art historians have attempted to reconstruct the work.²³ Initially, it was thought to have been a double-sided triptych, with the three panels now at I Tatti on the front and the eight Franciscan scenes on the back. A better understanding of the altarpiece was achieved by the Louvre’s acquisition in the 1950s of three more panels from the front main tier, showing it had been a double-sided pentaptych.²⁴ In the 1980s, Henk van Os and Dolf van Asperen de Boer studied how the main tier of the altarpiece, with the *Virgin* and four lateral saints on the front, and *Saint Francis in Glory* and eight scenes from his legend on the back, had been painted on single planks aligned by dowels.²⁵ Between 1578 and 1583, it had been removed from the high altar of San Francesco in Borgo San Sepolcro and in the early nineteenth century the fronts and backs of its main panels had been separated by sawing them longitudinally down the middle, halving and exposing the dowel channel.²⁶ This observation seemed an important key to the reconstruction of the double-sided work, although unfortunately, due to subsequent interventions, traces of dowels seemed not to have survived in all the fragments. In 1991, an understanding of the placement of the surviving panels was greatly enhanced, though not fully resolved, by James Banker’s publication of the 1439 iconographic program for the altarpiece.²⁷

²³ Machtelt Israëls et al., “The Reconstruction of Sassetta’s Borgo San Sepolcro Altarpiece”, in: *Sassetta*, vol. I, pp. 161–203, here pp. 161–163.

²⁴ Enzo Carli, “Sassetta’s Borgo San Sepolcro Altarpiece”, in: *The Burlington Magazine*, XCIII (1951), pp. 144–153.

²⁵ Henk van Os, *Sieneese Altarpieces 1215–1460. Form, Con-*

tent, Function, vol. II, 1344–1460, Groningen 1990, pp. 93–94.

²⁶ Israëls et al. 2009 (note 23), pp. 161–203 and the provenance information in “Technical Catalogue”, in: *Sassetta*, vol. II, pp. 411–563.

²⁷ James R. Banker, “The Program for the Sassetta Altar-

For narrative and iconographical reasons, in the reconstruction attempts, the placement of the scenes was the most challenging nut to crack. Pope-Hennessy considered the reconstruction of their placement “an equation between literary and aesthetic considerations”,²⁸ the latter having to do above all with the distribution of the four golden and four blue backgrounds of the scenes; he placed the scenes with a golden sky in the top row and the ones with a blue sky in the lower row.²⁹ To live up to his own aesthetic criteria, he had to suppress other observations, as he acknowledged in a footnote: “In reconstructing the altarpiece I deliberately ignore the evidence, if evidence it can be called, of the framing of these panels at the beginning of this century. This can be studied in the photographs then made which show three panels framed with rectangular tops and four framed with tops cut away like the lateral frames of the Berenson triptych.”³⁰

The photographs had in fact become documents of a no-longer existing situation, since in 1926, eight years before the panels entered the National Gallery, the art dealer Sir Joseph Duveen (1869–1939) had had the panels cut from their original applied frames.³¹ The supports of the paintings were planed, cradled, and reinserted in an arbitrary order in new frames in which only the original spandrels were incorporated. Technical data such as dowel-holes seemed to have become a dead end and a technically informed reconstruction seemed unattainable. Visual and narrative arguments therefore continued to inspire no less than nine further reconstructions of the sequence of Sassetta’s Franciscan narrative.

Between 2005 and 2008, I coordinated a new reconstruction of the Borgo San Sepolcro altarpiece, which saw the participation of all collections and museums harbouring its fragments as well as of the world’s Sassetta experts. One of the triggers for reconsidering the technical evidence and re-examining the panels with the Franciscan scenes, were the 1903 photographs. Comparison of slight variations in the *pastiglia* made it possible to reconnect each panel with its original spandrels. For example, prior to the separation of its painting and frame, the *Wolf of Gubbio* had a pointed *pastiglia* loop (fig. 3 left), whereas after that treatment its spandrel had obviously been swapped, since its *pastiglia* then had a rounded loop (fig. 3 right). Being able to reconnect each panel with its original spandrels meant that the evidence of dowel channels remaining in some of them could now be taken into consideration and matched with similar marks on panels that originally backed or flanked them. Rachel Billinge at the National Gallery X-rayed not only the panels, but also their spandrels and her evidence, taken together with examinations by Elisabeth Ravaud of the panels now in Paris and by the Opificio delle Pietre Dure of the panels at I Tatti, meant we could technically and incontrovertibly match the panels from the front and back main tiers of Sassetta’s altarpiece, comparing not only dowel channels, but also the grain and knots in the wood of these paintings that had originally shared a common support in the double-sided altarpiece (fig. 4).³²

The position of the Franciscan scenes (fig. 5), established on the basis of the 1903 photographs and scientific photographic methods, corresponds to the sequence in which the Berensons discussed the paintings and to the arrangement, also based on the photographs, which Pope-Hennessy had rejected in his footnote. Our reconstruction has implications for a consideration of Sassetta’s iconography, narrative, and composition and counters several aesthetic assumptions. There was, for example, no regular, compositional alternation of gold and blue skies, other than that they correspond to indoor and outdoor settings respectively. Sassetta’s thoughtful topical pairing of the scenes has now become ap-

piece in the Church of S. Francesco in Borgo San Sepolcro”, in: *I Tatti Studies*, IV (1991), pp. 11–58.

²⁸ John Pope-Hennessy, *Sassetta*, London 1939, p. 107.

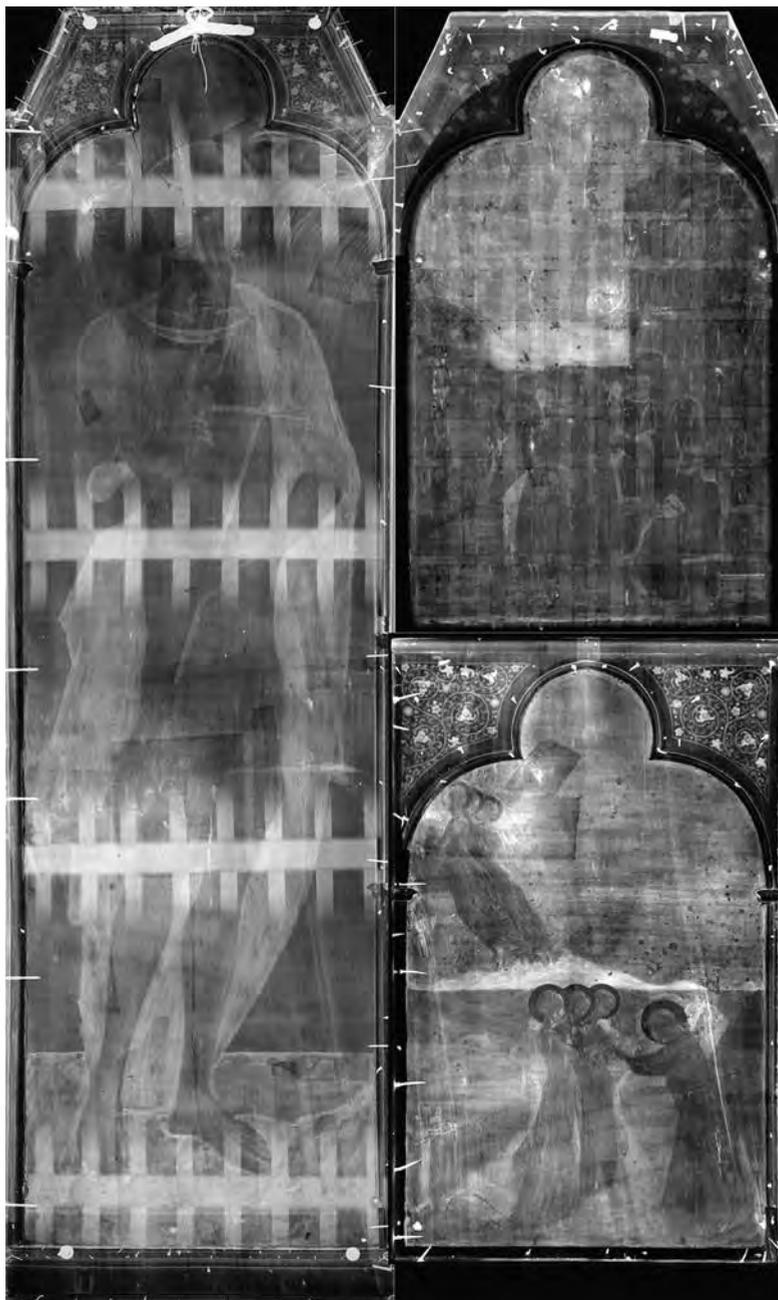
²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 132–133, note 21. See Henk van Os, “Reconstructing Sieneese Altarpieces. A Historical and Method-

ological Review of Two Spectacular Examples”, in: *Sassetta*, vol. I, pp. 151–160, here pp. 156–159.

³¹ Rachel Billinge, in: *Sassetta*, vol. II, pp. 489–490; Israëls et al. 2009 (note 23), p. 179.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 177–191.



4 X-radiograph of Sassetta's "Saint John the Baptist" (Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Florence) and inverted X-radiographs of the "Wolf of Gubbio" (as in fig. 3) and "Mystic Marriage of Saint Francis" (Musée Condé, inv. CHY 10, Chantilly), showing correspondences of knots, grain, and dowel channels for the original composition of a lateral unit of the main tier of the altarpiece, with the saint on the front and the two scenes on its back (X-radiographs by respectively Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Florence; Rachel Billinge, National Gallery, London; and Elisabeth Ravaud, C2RMF, Paris)



5 Reconstruction of Sassetta's *Borgo San Sepolcro* altarpiece (back view) by Machtelt Israëls, James R. Banker, Roberto Bellucci, Rachel Billinge, George Bisacca, Ciro Castelli, Cecilia Frosinini, Christa Gardner von Teuffel, Babette Hartwig, Elisabeth Ravaud, Andrea Santacesaria, Carl Brandon Strehlke, Dominique Thiébaud, Serena Urry et al. Three-dimensional drawing by Andrea Santacesaria, Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Florence. Rendering by Giacomo Tenti, Culturanuova, Arezzo

parent.³³ For instance, the usual positioning of the *Wolf of Gubbio* and *Saint Francis before the Sultan* (the upper right scenes in fig. 5) has now had to be reversed, showing that the hill from the landscape in the left-hand scene continued behind the open door of the palace in the scene to its right. The coupling serves to underscore a common theme: Saint Francis's pacification of the infidel, represented on the left by the ferocious wolf and by the sultan and the Saracens on the right.

A panel from the rear predella of the altarpiece, discovered by the Louvre in 1965, long after the Berensons' deaths, represents the Blessed Ranieri's liberation of ninety prisoners, a posthumous miracle recorded in his 1305 *Liber miraculorum* (fig. 6).³⁴ In Sassetta's composition the action accelerates from the plain prison wall at the right to the variegated flurry of the incredulous breakaways disappearing beyond the picture plane at the left: a deft example of what Bernard Berenson might have called "imaginative design". Yet, there is a strong idiomatic and realistic exponent to the narrative, too. The prison can be identified as that of Le Stinche in Florence, which was used predominantly to coerce debtors.³⁵ Since the Franciscans fiercely opposed usury, Ranieri's act to relieve them from the predicament of incarceration was a praiseworthy one. Early fourteenth-century Le Stinche was situated to the northwest of Franciscan Santa Croce, but was demolished in 1833 to make place for the Teatro Verdi. Old maps and descriptions preserve the appearance of the building: an entire, trapezoidal city block surrounded by tall walls perforated only by a door so low that one had to bow one's head to enter.³⁶ In 1437–1444, Sassetta thus painted a city view, and although imaginatively designed, he did materialize



6 Sassetta, "The Blessed Ranieri of Borgo San Sepolcro Liberates the Prisoners of Florence", 1437–1444, tempera and gold on panel, 45.8 x 63.4 cm. Musée du Louvre, inv. RF 1965-2, Paris (Elsa Lambert, Paris)

³³ See Donal Cooper, "The Franciscan Genesis of Sassetta's Altarpiece", in: *Sassetta*, vol. I, pp. 285–303; and Dillian Gordon, "What the Friars Saw. The Evolution of the Iconography of the Altarpiece and its Message", *ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 271–283.

³⁴ Leonilde Amadori Tani (ed.), *Il libro dei miracoli del*

beato Ranieri dal Borgo, Montepulciano 2004, pp. 58–59; Banker 2009 (note 4), p. 566, doc. III.

³⁵ Guy Geltner, *The Medieval Prison. A Social History*, Princeton / Oxford 2008, pp. 17–21.

³⁶ See Piero del Massaio's bird's eye view of Florence of c. 1475–1480 (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris). Francesco

the object of vision. This, along with the topical narrative of his Franciscan legend, grounds him solidly among the innovative masters of the Early Italian Renaissance.

This consideration of a century of rediscovering the early Italian Renaissance artist Sassetta has allowed us to lift the lids of the art historian's cooking pans. Photography emerges as a key ingredient, one that adds a flavour of its own and therefore needs careful preparation and consideration. When in 1903 Mary Berenson procured the photographs of seven of Sassetta's Franciscan scenes for Bernard Berenson, they enabled a sensitive reappraisal of the artist. At the same time, the black-and-white photographs distorted the memory and the perception of the art historian and gave a slant to his theories of spirituality and "imaginative design" in Sieneese art, a concept that proved hard to develop. When the paintings themselves had undergone profound interventions, the same 1903 photographs became historical documents. The photographs encapsulated and preserved information that was released and became relevant when new research questions changed the gaze and the discernment of the art historian.

Berni (1497/98–1535) wrote "In lode del debito" (cited *ibid.*, p. 117): "A voi [Le Stinche] ne vien la gente à capo

chino, / E prima che la vostra scala saglia / S'abassa in su l'entrar dell'uscioolino."

Edith Struchholz

Von der Anschauung ausgehen – Jacob Burckhardts Fotosammlung und seine kunsthistorischen Texte

Am 15. August 1881 schreibt Jacob Burckhardt aus Florenz: »Heute waren wegen Mariä Himmelfahrt alle Butiken zu, aber von morgen an wird das Handeln mit den Photographen anfangen, welches nun einmal zu meinem Erdenschicksal gehört [...].«¹ Dass sowohl seine Briefe und die kunst- und kulturhistorischen Manuskripte als auch seine Sammlung kunstreproduzierender Fotografien weitgehend erhalten blieben, kann wohl als Glücksfall bezeichnet werden. Im Zuge der neuen, kritischen Edition der *Jacob Burckhardt Werke* (JBW) und der fortschreitenden Digitalisierung historischer Fotobestände rückt Burckhardts Abbildungssammlung in den Blick von Forschung und Öffentlichkeit. Als Dokument für die Geschichte der Fotografie und für die Entwicklung der Kunstgeschichte im 19. Jahrhundert kommt der Fotosammlung eines der Gründerväter der Kunstwissenschaft zentrale Bedeutung zu.

Für Burckhardts Kunstverständnis ist die ›Anschauung‹ eine der wesentlichen Grundlagen. Schon der 24-Jährige berichtet, dass sein Surrogat für abstraktes Denken eine täglich mehr auf das Wesentliche gerichtete, täglich sich schärfende Anschauung sei.² Und im selben Jahr 1842 schreibt er: »Wo ich nicht von der Anschauung ausgehen kann, da leiste ich nichts.«³ Burckhardt zeigt sich hier einmal mehr Goethe nahestehend, in dessen *Paralipomena* zu lesen ist, dass Denken interessanter sei als Wissen aber nicht als Anschauen.⁴ Dass Burckhardt eine so umfangreiche Abbildungssammlung aufbaute, liegt in seiner geistigen Grundhaltung, in seiner wissenschaftlichen Denk- und Herangehensweise begründet.

Das Schlüsselwort ›Betrachten‹ steht in seiner Antrittsrede von 1874 *Über die Kunstgeschichte als Gegenstand eines akademischen Lehrstuhls* im Vordergrund. Dort definiert er seine Kurse als »eine

¹ Max Burckhardt (Hrsg.), *Jacob Burckhardt. Briefe*, 11 Bde., Basel 1949–1994 (im Folgenden: Briefe), Bd. 7, S. 274.

² Vgl. Briefe, Bd. 1, S. 206.

³ Ebd., S. 204.

⁴ Siehe dazu Rolf Hochhuth, »Burckhardt der Philosoph«,

in: Andreas Cesana / Lionel Gossman (Hrsg.), *Begegnungen mit Jacob Burckhardt (Beiträge zu Jacob Burckhardt* [im Folgenden: BJB], Bd. 4), Basel / München 2004, S. 197–214, hier S. 209–210.

kurze Anleitung zur Betrachtung der Kunstwerke nach Zeiten und Stilen« und nennt als Hauptbedingung, »daß *das Auge überhaupt* noch der Betrachtung fähig« sei.⁵ Für die von Burckhardt vor allem in seiner Forschungsarbeit angestrebte Kunstgeschichte nach Aufgaben war ein ständiges Vergleichen, ein unablässiges Parallelisieren unerlässlich. So spricht er bereits in den 1860er Jahren in der *Asthetik der bildenden Kunst* vom »Geist der vergleichenden Betrachtung«. ⁶ Einer im Burckhardt-schen Sinne sowohl nach Aufgaben und Sachen als auch nach Stilen und Formen ausgerichteten Kunstgeschichte kam die rasche technische Entwicklung der Fotografie somit überaus entgegen. Die durch immer neue Ankäufe stetig wachsende Fotosammlung wurde eine wichtige Quelle seiner täglichen kunstwissenschaftlichen Arbeit. Noch 1895 schreibt er über Kunst: »[...] und ihre Betrachtung, selbst in schwachen Nachbildern, gehört zu den lieblichsten Tröstungen unseres Erdenlebens.«⁷ Die folgenden Ausführungen skizzieren anhand der späten kunsthistorischen Schriften und der Vorlesungsmaterialien aus dem Nachlass, aufbewahrt im Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, die komplexe Beziehung von Texten und Abbildungssammlung sowie Burckhardts differenzierten, durchaus kritischen Umgang mit kunstreproduzierenden Fotografien.

Die Funktionen der Fotosammlung für die kunstwissenschaftliche Arbeit

Als der 55-Jährige den Basler Universitätsbehörden 1873 vorschlug, zusätzlich zu den Geschichtsvorlesungen ein dreistündiges kunsthistorisches Kolleg zu lesen, betonte er die Notwendigkeit des Ankaufs von Demonstrationsmaterial.⁸ Burckhardt stand vor der Herausforderung, innerhalb von zwei Jahren, für den ersten Zyklus von vier Kursen, eine Abbildungssammlung von der Antike bis weit über die Renaissance hinaus präsentieren zu können. Seine Briefe geben ein beredtes Zeugnis davon, wie nach dem Antritt des Amtes der Kunstgeschichte 1874 seine Begeisterung für den Kauf von Fotografien, sein Sammlerdrang und damit auch seine Fotosammlung wuchsen.⁹ Noch im selben Jahr berichtet er: »Im April war ich 16 Tage in Paris, um Stiche, Lithographien, Photographien zu kaufen für mein neues kunsthistorisches Amt das ich seither angetreten habe.«¹⁰ Und bereits ein Jahr später ist er in Rom, um seine Erinnerungen aufzufrischen und Fotografien zu erwerben.

Burckhardt ging nun kontinuierlich auf Galerie- und zugleich Einkaufsreisen und baute parallel zu seinen schriftlichen Vorlesungsmaterialien systematisch einen Fundus an Fotografien auf. Er freute sich über endlich gefundene Motive, perfekte Architekturaufnahmen, Rabatte und Schnäppchen und schreckte auch vor Ausschussware »di scarto, zum massenhaften Vorzeigen«¹¹ nicht zurück. In späte-

⁵ Jacob Burckhardt, »Über die Kunstgeschichte als Gegenstand eines akademischen Lehrstuhls«, in: Urs Breitenstein / Andreas Cesana / Martin Hug (Hrsg.), »Uner-schöpflichkeit der Quellen«. *Burckhardt neu ediert – Burckhardt neu entdeckt* (BJB, Bd. 7), Basel / München 2007, S. 167–179, hier S. 167 u. S. 172.

⁶ Peter Ganz (Hrsg.), *Asthetik der bildenden Kunst – Über das Studium der Geschichte* (Jacob Burckhardt Werke. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe* [im Folgenden: JBW], Bd. 10), München / Basel 2000, S. 120.

⁷ Briefe, Bd. 10, S. 229.

⁸ Briefe, Bd. 5, S. 209–210.

⁹ Siehe dazu auch Werner Kaegi, *Jacob Burckhardt. Eine Biographie*, 7 Bde., Basel 1947–1982, Bd. 6.1, S. 295–305; Nikolaus Meier, »Der Mann mit der Mappe. Jacob Burckhardt und die Reproduktionsphotographie«, in: Maurizio Ghelardi / Max Seidel (Hrsg.), *Jacob Burckhardt. Storia della cultura, storia dell'arte*, Venedig 2002, S. 259–297, hier S. 260–263; Marc Sieber, »Wo ich nicht von der Anschauung ausgehen kann, da leiste ich nichts«. Jacob Burckhardt und die Photographie«, in: Christine Tauber (Hrsg.), *Jacob Burckhardt. Die Kunst der Male-ri in Italien*, München 2003, S. 7–19, hier S. 12–13.

¹⁰ Briefe, Bd. 5, S. 225.

ren Jahren, als ihm das Reisen zu beschwerlich wurde, kaufte er nach Katalogen und bevorzugte vor allem preisgünstige Anbieter. Hatte er sich in früheren Jahren oft ironisch über eine Art Kaufzwang geäußert, so beurteilte er seinen Sammlerdrang später positiv. Im Sommer vor seinem letzten Winterkurs 1892/93 schreibt er: »Ich tröste mich aber auch ohne dieß, seit ich 100 Stück Niederländer aus Amsterdam und Haag bezogen habe womit ich mein Wintercolleg (wenn ich Leben und Kräfte behalte) gehörig ergänzen kann neben allem was ich schon sonst besitze.«¹² In den rund 25 Jahren bis 1897 wuchs seine Sammlung auf weit über 10.000 Fotografien an.¹³ Aus dem, was als Demonstrationsmaterial für den Unterricht begann, war ein kunstwissenschaftlicher Apparat, ein Abbildungsarchiv mit einer kunstgeschichtlichen Systematik und nicht zuletzt ein Lebenszeugnis geworden.

Burckhardt hatte zunächst das Verbleichen und insgesamt die Vergänglichkeit der Fotografie befürchtet, gestand ihr aber später angesichts der technischen Weiterentwicklung das Potential zu, als Dokumentationsmedium ältere Zustände verlässlich festzuhalten und als Demonstrationsmedium Kunstwerke einem größeren Publikum zugänglich zu machen. Nach Kriegs- und Krisenerfahrungen beruhigte ihn die Option der Sicherung von Kulturerbe. So betonte er 1896 in einem Brief an Heinrich Wölfflin: »Seit der Photographie glaube ich nicht mehr an ein mögliches Verschwinden und Machtloswerden des Großen.«¹⁴ Kunsthistorische Lehre verstand Burckhardt als Anleitung zur Betrachtung von Kunstwerken. Mittels optischer und geistiger Anschauung sollten die Studierenden angesichts wachsender Bilderflut eine Orientierung auf das Wesentliche, »auf das Primäre und Mächtige« hin erhalten.¹⁵ Kunstreproduzierende Fotografien, einerseits Hilfsmittel und andererseits selbst der kunsthistorischen Erläuterung bedürftig, wurden daher für seine Vorlesungen und Vorträge unverzichtbar. Ende der 1880er Jahre zählte die Fotografie allgemein bereits zum selbstverständlichen Arbeitsinstrument der Kunsthistoriker und trug wesentlich zur Etablierung der Kunstgeschichte als akademischer Disziplin bei.

Unkritisch stand Burckhardt der Reproduktionsfotografie jedoch nicht gegenüber. Er sah ihre vielfältigen Funktionen und Einsatzmöglichkeiten, aber auch ihre technischen Abhängigkeiten und Grenzen in Bezug auf Perspektive oder Objektivität. Zum »wahren« Anblick des *Apoll von Belvedere* bemerkt er 1896 in einem Brief an Wölfflin: »Daß die Photographen diesen Anblick vermeiden, weil Ihnen die Hand zu groß gerathen würde, versteht sich von selber.«¹⁶ Auf seinen Reisen stand zunächst die Besichtigung der Originale im Vordergrund – auf die dort entstandenen Galerienotizen griff er für seine kunsthistorischen Schriften immer wieder zurück. Den Großteil seiner Fotosammlung vermachte er ausdrücklich seinen Freunden und Reisebegleitern vor den Originalen Gustav Stehelin und Robert Grüninger. Burckhardt stellte Wölfflin aber Fotomappen zur Verfügung, und sie tauschten sich in Gesprächen und Briefen über Fotografien aus. Wölfflin hegte bekanntlich durchaus Zweifel an ihrem Erkenntniswert und schrieb 1897 aus Rom dezidiert an Burckhardt: »Daß man über monumentale Kunst nicht nach Photographien urteilen kann, merke ich täglich deutlicher [...]«¹⁷ Für Burckhardt war

¹¹ Briefe, Bd. 6, S. 33.

¹² Briefe, Bd. 10, S. 43.

¹³ In der Universitätsbibliothek Basel werden heute aus Burckhardts Sammlung ein Kernbestand von 9.500 Fotografien, ein Konvolut mit ca. 200 Fotografien zur Kunst Venedigs und ein Konvolut mit verschiedenen Abbildungsmaterialien zur Kunst der Antike aufbewahrt. Die Photothek des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut, besitzt etwa 2.900 Fotografien, die aus Burckhardts Umkreis nach Florenz kamen.

¹⁴ Briefe, Bd. 10, S. 293–294; vgl. Joseph Gantner (Hrsg.),

Jacob Burckhardt und Heinrich Wölfflin. Briefwechsel und andere Dokumente ihrer Begegnung. 1882–1897, Basel 1948, S. 113–114.

¹⁵ Burckhardt 2007 (wie Anm. 5), S. 169.

¹⁶ Briefe, Bd. 10, S. 297 u. S. 594. Burckhardt antwortet auf einen heute verlorenen Brief Wölfflins, den dieser wenige Tage zuvor aus Rom gesandt hatte und in dem er offenbar den »wahren« Anblick des *Apoll von Belvedere* und die Aufstellung in einer Dreiergruppe vorschlug. Vgl. Gantner 1948 (wie Anm. 14), S. 115.

¹⁷ Gantner 1948 (wie Anm. 14), S. 122.

kunstreproduzierende Fotografie aber nicht nur ein kunstwissenschaftliches Hilfsmittel; das Betrachten seiner Fotografien war für ihn nicht zuletzt mit Genuss verbunden. Von der technischen Weiterentwicklung der Diaprojektionen erfuhr er zwar noch, konnte sie aber selbst nicht mehr nutzen. Als einer der Gründerväter der Kunstgeschichte war Burckhardt auch in Bezug auf das Medium Fotografie vor andere Aufgaben gestellt als die Generation der Nachfolger.

Zur Bedeutung der Fotografie für die kunsthistorischen Schriften

Da die Quellenlage zur Forschungspraxis, zur handwerklichen Seite kunsthistorischer Denkwerkstätten des 19. Jahrhunderts allgemein dürftig ist, kommt Burckhardts Zeugnis große Bedeutung zu. Die vergleichende Formenanalyse und die »Kunst nach Aufgaben«, die er laut Wölfflin an seinem 75. Geburtstag als sein »Vermächtnis« bezeichnete,¹⁸ wurden durch die rasche Entwicklung der Fotografie erheblich befördert. Wie eng und komplex sich in Burckhardts täglicher Forschungsarbeit die Beziehungen von Textpassagen, Notizen, Exzerpten und von Fotografien, Stichen, Abbildungswerken gestaltete, kann nun im Kontext der neuen, kritischen Gesamtausgabe auch anhand der kunsthistorischen Manuskripte aus dem Nachlass aufgezeigt werden. Burckhardt baute seine Fotosammlung systematisch aus und legte parallel dazu Vorlesungsmaterialien mit Literatur- und Abbildungshinweisen und Listen von Abbildungsnachweisen an. Ergänzt durch die Fachliteratur, entstand somit ein kunstwissenschaftlicher Apparat, der die Grundlage für Vorlesungen, Vorträge und für die späten Schriften schuf.

Unter den drei Arbeitsinstrumenten Bibliothek, handschriftliche Materialsammlung und Abbildungssammlung war ihm letztere für seine kunsthistorische Forschung das wichtigste. An Heinrich von Geymüller schrieb Burckhardt 1892, ein Jahr vor seinem Rücktritt vom Lehramt: »In der letzten Zeit habe ich aus Italien eine Masse von Photographien bezogen, hauptsächlich Malereien; ein Luxus, welcher meine alten Tage erheitert und den ich mir auch noch weiter zu gönnen entschlossen bin.«¹⁹ Nach 1893 widmete er sich seinen späten Schriften *Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte von Italien*²⁰ und *Erinnerungen aus Rubens*,²¹ für die sein ausgezeichnetes Bildgedächtnis, die vor den Originalen entstandenen Galerienotizen und sein Abbildungsarchiv wichtige »visuelle« Voraussetzungen bildeten. Burckhardts spätestes Werk, im Sommer 1896 vollendet, erweist sich als das Ergebnis einer lebenslangen Auseinandersetzung, als Quintessenz seiner Erinnerungen aus Rubens.

Über Jahrzehnte hinweg war Burckhardt bestrebt, sich einen umfassenden Überblick des Rubens-Ceuvres zu verschaffen und sammelte daher auch Reproduktionen schlechterer Qualität. Er besaß eine fast vollständige Kollektion der belgischen Werke, auch die Standorte Rom, Florenz und Paris sind unter den insgesamt rund 330 Blättern zu etwa 250 Werken gut repräsentiert.²² Burckhardt stand ein

¹⁸ Ebd., S. 83, aus Wölfflins Rede »Jacob Burckhardt und die Kunst«, Basel 1936.

¹⁹ Briefe, Bd. 10, S. 20.

²⁰ Stella von Boch / Johannes Hartau / Kerstin Hengevoss-Dürkop / Martin Warnke (Hrsg.), *Das Altarbild – Das Porträt in der Malerei – Die Sammler. Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte von Italien* (JBW, Bd. 6), München / Basel 2000.

²¹ Edith Struchholz / Martin Warnke (Hrsg.), *Erinnerungen aus Rubens* (JBW, Bd. 11), München / Basel 2006.

²² Siehe dazu auch Emil Maurer, *Jacob Burckhardt und Rubens*, Basel 1951, S. 141–145.

²³ Eva Mongi-Vollmer / Wilhelm Schlink (Hrsg.), *Neuere Kunst seit 1550* (JBW, Bd. 18), München / Basel 2006, S. 385–461.



1 Peter Paul Rubens, *Liebesgarten*, Madrid, Museo del Prado. Fotografie aus der Sammlung Jacob Burckhardts

weites Panorama an Abbildungen zur Verfügung, auch aus der Rubens-Literatur, in der zunächst Stiche oder Drucke und gegen Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts auch Fotografien der Werke reproduziert werden konnten. Er beschränkte sich aber für die *Erinnerungen aus Rubens* fast ausschließlich auf die Werke, die er selbst im Original gesehen hatte. Ausgangsbasis waren zunächst seine Vorlesungsmaterialien zur *Neueren Kunst seit 1550*,²³ deren Listen von Abbildungsnachweisen die Verbindung zur Fotosammlung herstellten. Das definitive Manuskript für die geplante Drucklegung gibt keine direkten Hinweise mehr auf seine Abbildungssammlung. Mit Hilfe von Publikationen, Katalogen, Fotografien und Stichen hat Burckhardt sich auch Werke in St. Petersburg oder Madrid erschlossen. Da er die Originale jedoch nicht gesehen hatte, war er bei Datierungen oder Zuschreibungen sehr vorsichtig, wie das Beispiel des *Liebesgartens* zeigt.

Burckhardt besaß eine passable Fotografie des Madrider Exemplars (Abb. 1). Dieser im Rubens-Text mit dem Zusatz »(Eigenhändig, uns nur aus der Photographie bekannt)« versehene und von ihm als »vermuthlich spätere« Redaktion bezeichnete *Liebesgarten* im Museo del Prado wird heute als das Hauptexemplar angesehen. Ein von ihm als das »höchst wahrscheinlich« »früheste Bild« im »Besitz Rothschild zu Paris« benanntes Werk befindet sich in Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire, Sammlung James Rothschild, und gilt heute als zweite Fassung des Themas, wobei die Zuschreibung in der Forschung umstritten ist. Das von Burckhardt als »Copie des Jan van Balen in der Galerie von Wien« mit dem Vermerk »könnte noch unter den Augen des Meisters entstanden sein« angegebene Bild, von dem er eine Fotografie besaß (Abb. 2), gilt heute als freie Kopie nach Rubens, traditionell Jan van Balen



2 Kopie nach Peter Paul Rubens, *Liebesgarten*, Jan van Balen zugeschrieben, Wien, Kunsthistorisches Museum. Fotografie aus der Sammlung Jacob Burckhardts

zugeschrieben.²⁴ – Nur für eine Handvoll weiterer Stellen im Rubens-Text zieht Burckhardt Fotografien hinzu und macht dies ausdrücklich durch Zusätze kenntlich wie »(nach der Photographie zu urtheilen)« oder »(selbst nach einer bloßen Photographie)«.²⁵

Aufschlussreiche Hinweise auf Burckhardts Verwendung und Beurteilung der Fotografie finden sich auch in den *Beiträgen zur Kunstgeschichte von Italien*. Ob der Vielzahl an Werken verschiedener Künstler waren hier die vergleichende Betrachtung und damit Einsatzmöglichkeiten und Nutzen von Fotografien ungleich wichtiger. Bei den Beiträgen über *Das Altarbild* oder über *Das Porträt in der Malerei* konnte Burckhardt nicht allein auf im Original Gesehenes zurückgreifen. Zwar setzte er ebenfalls oft Einschränkungen hinzu wie »laut Photographie« oder »nach der Photographie zu urtheilen«, lobte aber auch ausdrücklich die Qualität neuerer Fotografien. Burckhardt spricht hier zudem wichtige Funktionen für die kunstwissenschaftliche Arbeit an wie die Möglichkeit zur vergleichenden Analyse: »Eine reiche parallele Forschung würde sich mit Hilfe von Abbildungen in Betreff der Schönheit von Madonnen, Engeln und Heiligen des XIV. Jahrhunderts durchführen lassen.«²⁶ Er weist auf die Sichtbarmachung von Details, die verbesserte Zugänglichkeit von Kunstwerken und auf den Dokumentationswert verschiedener Zustände hin. Diejenige Funktion aber, die ihm die Fotografie lieb und teuer machte, ist die Bewahrung von Kulturgut für spätere Generationen. So sagt er über den »Bambino« bei den großen Meistern von Leonardo bis Tizian: »Früher hat ihm der Kupferstich oft seine besten Kräfte gewidmet, und nun geht in einer guten Photographie von diesem Kinde und seinen Genossen wenig oder nichts verloren, und sie sind im Abbild der Welt auf ewig gesichert.«²⁷

²⁴ Zitate aus Struchholz / Warnke 2006 (wie Anm. 21), S. 119.

²⁵ Zitate aus Struchholz / Warnke 2006 (wie Anm. 21), S. 84 u. S. 134.

²⁶ Boch / Hartau / Hengevoss-Dürkop / Warnke 2000 (wie Anm. 20), S. 34, Anm. 1.

²⁷ Boch / Hartau / Hengevoss-Dürkop / Warnke 2000 (wie Anm. 20), S. 58–59.

Zur Beziehung von Text und Bild in den Vorlesungsmaterialien

Die späten Schriften, für die er eine Drucklegung in Erwägung zog, liefern somit viele Ansatzpunkte für eine Burckhardtsche Kritik der Fotografie. Die Vorlesungsmaterialien hingegen geben vor allem seinen Umgang mit der Abbildungssammlung in der täglichen kunstwissenschaftlichen Arbeit wieder. Das Konvolut zur *Kunst des Mittelalters*²⁸ legte Burckhardt für die erstmals im Winter 1874/75 und dann regelmäßig alle vier Semester bis 1890/91 gehaltene Vorlesung an. Der Grundstock des Manuskriptes wurde dementsprechend kontinuierlich um Beiblätter und Zusatzblätter erweitert und durch zahllose Randnotizen bereichert. In den Textpassagen selbst finden sich viele Abbildungshinweise und die Folge von Textblättern ist von zahlreichen Listen, sogenannten »Abbildungsnachweisern«, unterbrochen. Diese wurden zum einen ständig ergänzt und aktualisiert, zum anderen organisierte Burckhardt die Auflistungen der Abbildungsnachweise häufig komplett neu auf zusätzlichen, mit »Neues Schema« bezeichneten Blättern.

Die Gründe für die Aktualisierung und Neufassung insbesondere der »Abbildungsnachweise« erschließen sich aus Burckhardts spätester Einleitungsfassung von 1890 im Manuskript zur *Kunst des Mittelalters*: »Dabei die enorm gesteigerte Kunde unserer Zeit durch die Eisenbahnen und die Photographie, welche das Stylwesen in manchen Fällen so wiedergiebt, daß wir den Anblick des Originals entbehren können. Geringfügigkeit meines Vorrathes gegenüber von den vorhandenen Abbildungen [...]. Für Vieles und Wichtiges sind wir hier angewiesen auf das was kunsthistorische Handbücher und Atlanten aus großen Sammelwerken und Photographien mittheilen. Und solche Handbücher werden wenigstens in den letzten Jahren sehr viel stärker mit Illustrationen versehen als früher.«

Burckhardts Abbildungssammlung, für die er kein eigenes Verzeichnis führte, wurde durch die Listen mit Abbildungsnachweisen in den Vorlesungsmaterialien weitgehend thematisch erschlossen und mit den schriftlichen Materialien eng vernetzt.²⁹ Auf den Blättern mit Abbildungsnachweisen notierte er sich sein auf die jeweiligen Kapitel oder Texteinheiten bezogenes Arbeits- und Demonstrationmaterial an Fotografien und Stichen, an Abbildungssammelwerken und sonstigen Illustrationen jeglicher Art aus der Fachliteratur. In vielen Kapiteln des Manuskripts zur *Kunst des Mittelalters* bilden die Listen mit Abbildungsnachweisen das eigentliche Rückgrat. Im Abschnitt zur italienischen Kunst der Gotik zum Beispiel sind die erläuternden Textpassagen äußerst knapp gehalten und die Seitenränder gefüllt mit Abbildungshinweisen. Die beigefügten Blätter mit Abbildungsnachweisen, geordnet in alten und neuen Schemata, sprechen aber weitgehend für sich und veranschaulichen die Thematik. Den Profanbau hält Burckhardt lediglich stichwortartig nach Städten geordnet auf einer Textseite fest, welche kaum mehr Informationen als die parallel dazu geführten Listen mit Abbildungsnachweisen beinhaltet. An Architekturaufnahmen stellte Burckhardt höhere Qualitätsansprüche und sammelte oft verschiedenste Ansichten. In einem der »Abbildungsnachweise« zur »Baukunst« wird etwa eine später erworbene größere Fotografie des Palazzo Vecchio, eine »Eckansicht von den Uffizi aus«, in der Liste nachgetragen (Abb. 3).

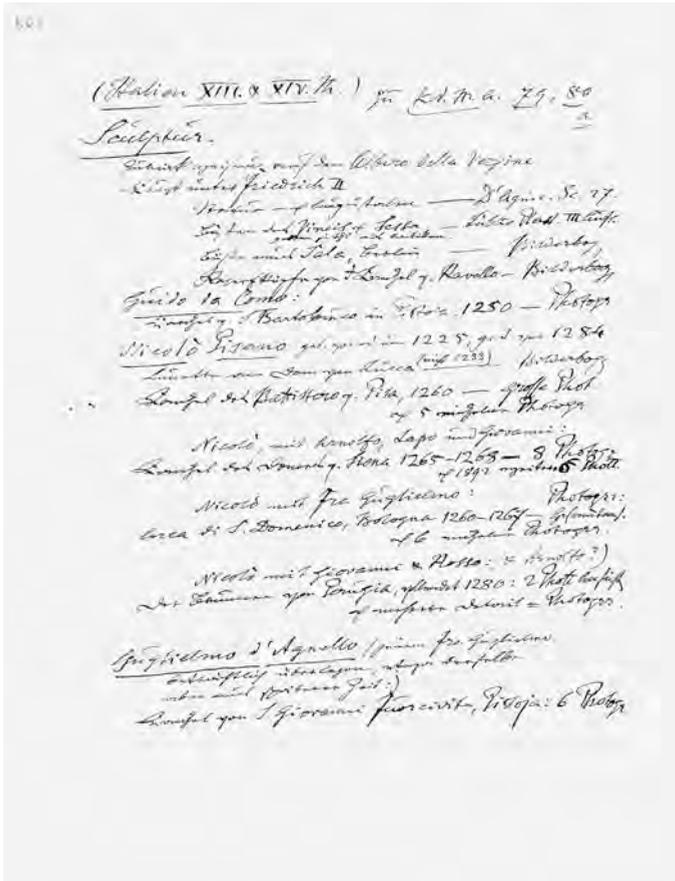
Im Abschnitt »Sculptur« widmet er Niccolò und Giovanni Pisano sowohl in den Textpassagen als auch in den »Abbildungsnachweisern«, wo er ein ausführliches neues Schema mit Auflistungen anlegte, besondere Aufmerksamkeit. Entsprechend sind die Kanzeln in seiner Fotosammlung durch zahl-

²⁸ Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, PA 207, 150.

²⁹ Siehe auch Mongi-Vollmer / Schlink 2006 (wie Anm. 23), S. 1277–1278.



4 Palazzo Vecchio, Florenz. Fotografie aus der Sammlung Jacob Burckhardts



5 Jacob Burckhardt, *Abbildungsnachweise* »zu Kunst des Mittelalters 79, 80 a«, PA 207, 150

reiche gute Gesamt- und Detailaufnahmen vertreten. Zu bereits vorhandenen acht Fotografien der Kanzel im Dom von Siena fügt er in den Abbildungsnachweisen hinzu: »und 1892 weitere 6 Photographien« (Abb. 5, 6). In seinen schriftlichen Vorlesungsmaterialien mit ihrer durch eine Vielzahl von »Abbildungsnachweisern« hergestellter Verbindung zur Abbildungssammlung hat Burckhardt privat in seiner Arbeitsstube das bereits ansatzweise begonnen, was er im Brief an Gustav von Bezold 1884 lobend hervorhebt: »Ihr Werk ist von der neuen und fortan selbstverständlichen Art, da der Text wesentlich die großen zusammenfassenden Übersichten, der Atlas die fortlaufende Wandelung der Formen giebt.«³⁰

³⁰ Briefe, Bd. 8, S. 248–249 u. S. 525–526. Burckhardt bezieht sich hier auf *Die Kirchliche Baukunst des Abendlandes*, die Gustav von Bezold gemeinsam mit Georg Dehio herausgab. Bezold hatte Burckhardt einige Tage

zuvor ein Exemplar des ersten Textheftes und der ersten Lieferung von 78 Tafeln übersandt.

³¹ Für die Auskünfte dazu danke ich Dr. Elisabeth Oeggeli und Dr. Andreas Bigger, Universitätsbibliothek Basel.



6 Kanzel im Dom von Siena. Fotografie aus der Sammlung Jacob Burckhardts

Die Digitalisierung der Fotosammlung

Den Erben der Burckhardtschen Abbildungssammlung ist es zu verdanken, dass sich mit etwa zwei Drittel der größte Teil erhalten hat. Rund 10.000 Fotografien bewahrt die Universitätsbibliothek Basel heute auf. Den Kernbestand bilden 89 Mappen mit etwa 9.500 Fotografien, die Robert Grüninger dem Kunstmuseum schenkte und 1985 als Depositum in die Universitätsbibliothek kamen. Die Fotografien sind noch auf den Kartons aufgezogen, die Burckhardts Beschriftungen tragen. Die Mappen, wohl nicht mehr die ursprünglichen, zeigen sich heute grundsätzlich nach Ländern und Gattungen geordnet, vielleicht noch Burckhardts System. In der Universitätsbibliothek Basel hat Ende 2009 die Digitalisierung der dort aufbewahrten Fotografien Burckhardts begonnen.³⁴ Eine erste Katalogisierung und an den Mappen orientierte Grundstruktur zur Aufnahme der Daten wurde angelegt. Die weitere Erschließung muss in Anschlussprojekten geleistet werden. Die Fotografien werden möglichst in der Originalqualität belassen. Die digitalen Daten sollen nicht das fotografierte Kunstwerk perfekt wiedergeben, sondern die von Burckhardt ausgewählte, gekaufte, beschriftete, eingeordnete und ihm ständig als Arbeitsgrundlage für seine Forschungen zur Verfügung stehende Fotografie aufzeigen. Mit der Digitalisierung sind in erster Linie bessere Zugänglichkeit für die Forschung und für ein größeres Publikum sowie der Schutz des historischen Bestandes intendiert.

Durch die Digitalisierung der Fotosammlung und die Edition der *Jacob Burckhardt Werke* (JBW) wird ein weitreichender Einblick in die Burckhardtsche Anschauungs-, Denk- und Schreibwerkstatt ermöglicht und somit ein einzigartiger Zugang zu kunstwissenschaftlichem Arbeiten im 19. Jahrhundert eröffnet. Von den kunsthistorischen Vorlesungsmaterialien ist bereits im Jahr 2006 der Band 18 *Neuere Kunst seit 1550* erschienen, und der Herausgeber Wilhelm Schlink musste noch feststellen: »Daß Burckhardts Abbildungsverweise in die Edition der Materialien JBW 18 nicht übernommen werden konnten, ist zweifellos bedauerlich; das Geflecht von Bild und Text, Anschauung und schriftlicher In-

formation, das Burckhardt so wichtig war, kann nur bedingt nachvollzogen werden.«³² Für den Band 15 *Kunst des Mittelalters*, der von G. Ulrich Großmann und mir zur Zeit ediert wird, ist die Digitalisierung der Fotografien eine hervorragende Ergänzung. Durch diese neue Zugänglichkeit der Fotosammlung wird es nun sinnvoll, die Abbildungshinweise im Text und die Listen mit Abbildungsnachweisen in die noch zu publizierenden Bände der JBW aufzunehmen.

Gegen Ende seines Lebens sah Burckhardt, angesichts der Entwicklung der Kunstwissenschaft und des technischen Fortschritts der Fotografie, den Wert seiner Sammlung vor allem als einen persönlichen, auf seine kunstgeschichtliche Arbeit und die Erinnerung an die Kunstwerke bezogenen. Nicht zuletzt deshalb vermachte er die Fotosammlung seinen Freunden und Reisebegleitern. Burckhardt schätzte die Bedeutung seiner Fotosammlung für die Nachwelt jedoch zu kritisch ein. Als wissenschaftsgeschichtliches Dokument und für die Erschließung seines kunsthistorischen Nachlasses an Schriften und Vorlesungsmaterialien ist sie für die Forschung und die Öffentlichkeit heute von hohem Erkenntniswert. Was sie für Burckhardt selbst bedeutete, beschreibt er 1892 anlässlich des Umzugs in die Wohnung am Aeschengraben: »Inzwischen arbeitet in Basel der Schreiner Fuchs an genau bestellten neuen Möbeln für meine Photographiensammlung, und in das Bild des Ganzen meines Besitzes von Abbildungen versenkt sich jetzt schon meine Seele mit gründlichem Verlangen.«³³

³² Wilhelm Schlink, »Burckhardts Werkstatt. Zu den Vorlesungsmaterialien ›Neuere Kunst seit 1550‹«, in: Urs Breitenstein / Andreas Cesana / Martin Hug (Hrsg.), »Unerschöpflichkeit der Quellen«. *Burckhardt neu ediert – Burckhardt neu entdeckt* (BJB, Bd. 7), Basel / München

2007, S. 219–233, hier S. 231–232, Anm. 13; siehe auch Mongi-Vollmer / Schlink 2006 (wie Anm. 23), S. 1282–1283.

³³ Briefe, Bd. 10, S. 46.

Giovanni Pagliarulo

Photographs to Read: Berensonian Annotations*

The photographs collected by Bernard Berenson (1865–1959) from the 1880s onwards throughout his long life constitute the historic nucleus of the Fototeca bearing his name. The fiftieth anniversary of Berenson’s death on 6 October 1959 has been recently celebrated by a conference¹ held at his home, the Villa I Tatti, which in accordance with his wishes became the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies in 1961. Since then, the number of photographs has considerably increased through continuous acquisitions.

The Fototeca occupies a room which in Berenson’s time was a garage. During the mid-1960s it was rebuilt to accommodate the photographs originally situated in the “Big Library”—so-called because it was the largest of three rooms built by Cecil Pinsent for Berenson’s study.² There they were shelved in deep wooden cupboards at the bottom of a tiered arrangement. Even today, works of art—for example, precious Islamic miniatures, a Tibetan *Tanka*, or sculptures from China and the Italian Renaissance—are displayed on the counter directly above these cupboards. Over this counter are the open shelves for all the books. This scheme reflects Berenson’s own tri-pronged approach to the study of artworks, an approach that combined three routes in the pursuit of knowledge: direct contact with the original object, study based on photographic reproduction, and the consultation of printed texts. The physical location of the photographs, stored and protected beneath the book shelves, correspond to their fundamental role in Berenson’s aim to make definitive attributions and to elaborate upon his critical judgements.

The intimate rapport between Berenson and his photographs was eloquently recorded in a series of snapshots taken by David Lees in 1957.³ These show the aged scholar in bed, intently examining the

* I would like to express my gratitude to Eve Borsook, Elisabetta Cunsolo, Ilaria Della Monica and Scott Palmer for the useful suggestions. A special thanks to Eve Borsook for having translated the Italian text.

¹ *Bernard Berenson at Fifty*, Villa I Tatti, Florence, 14–16 October 2009.

² For a detailed story of the Fototeca Berenson see Fiorella Gioffredi Superbi, “The Photograph and Bernard Berenson. The Story of a Collection”, in: *Visual Resources*, 26/3 (2010), pp. 289–303.

³ See the one published by David Allan Brown, *Berenson and the Connoisseurship of Italian Painting. A Handbook*

photographs spread out around him. Berenson maintained this daily study up to the end of his life—continuously refreshing, revising and refining his perceptions. Significantly, these images, like frames in a cinematic sequence, catch Berenson as he reads and reconsiders the notes he scribbled over the years on the backs of his photographs.

A special feature of the Fototeca, particularly valued by scholars, is the way the photographs are arranged just as Berenson had them. The material is divided into schools according to the criteria used for his famous lists, in which the artists are grouped in alphabetical order, although in the Fototeca they are arranged chronologically, facilitating the sequence of each school's development.

But what renders the Fototeca Berenson particularly interesting, beside the rarity of its material, is Berenson's notes written on the backs of the photographs. I have chosen a series of examples illustrating Berenson's use of the photograph as an integral part of his method of research based on comparisons. In fact, the notes show how Berenson's eye and mind reacted to photographic details and how he mentally integrated the images kept in his photo collection with others found in the volumes of his library. We can catch the dialogue between these two collections, as Berenson conceived them. Similarly, this dialogue was explicit in the original physical arrangement of the Fototeca as the foundation of the library into which it was integrated. Furthermore, this interplay between Fototeca and Library also extended to the Berenson Archive and the art collection which he used to furnish his home. Also to be considered is the importance of photographs in the network between Berenson and other scholars.

The paper support of the photographic print provided a writeable surface conveniently joined to the image—something Berenson took advantage of. His most attentive biographer, Ernest Samuels, noticed how Berenson habitually wrote down his opinions concerning an attribution on the back of the photos sent to him by Georges Wildenstein:

His laconic notations often simply confirm an attribution; dismiss a picture as "Fake," "Perhaps a Fake," or "Forgery"; correct an attribution—"Bernardo Daddi—More likely Allegretto Nuzi"; or add a qualification—"With—but not—Perugino," "Close to but not Perugino himself," "So-called Bellini probably forgery."⁴

Much more is to be found on the backs of Berensonian photographs. There is not only information regarding the object photographed (such as its provenance—its passage from one owner to another), but also elements important to the history of photography sometimes provided by the stamps or marks left by the relevant photographer or company involved. Of course, most interesting of all are Berenson's notes, which record his evolving thoughts often accompanied by current bibliographical references. Reading this data, one can see how, for him, each photograph became a working document that could be easily consulted and modified over the course of time.

Although the scripts we shall consider are Berenson's, the fundamental role of his wife, Mary (1864–1945), in organizing the photographic material must not be overlooked. Her role was eventually assumed by Nicky (Elisabetta Mariano, 1887–1968), who came to I Tatti as secretary in 1919, and later became curator of the Berenson legacy until her death in 1968.

to the Exhibition (exhibition cat. Washington 1979), Washington/DC 1979, no. 108, illustrated at p. 44, and listed at p. 68 as by anonymous.

⁴ Ernest Samuels, *Bernard Berenson. The Making of a Legend*, Cambridge / London 1987, pp. 501–502.

⁵ In 2007 the Fototeca Berenson started the digitization and cataloguing of ca. 16,000 photographs of Italian paintings and drawings from the mid 13th to the end of the six-

teenth century whose whereabouts are unknown. Since 2009 this pilot project, begun by Valentina Branchini, is being carried on under the supervision of Elisabetta Cunsolo. So far, the digitization of all the Florentine, Central Italian and Venetian schools has been completed. At present, the cataloguing of the Florentine material is finished, and that of the Venetian and Central Italian schools is under way. The photographs (front and back) and the rel-

Besides the handwriting of these three historic I Tatti protagonists, the hands of many others appear on the backs of the photographs—some identifiable, others not. These consist of notes of the photographers, dealers, collectors, and art historians who sent photographs to Berenson.

Also, visiting scholars left their trace via contributions of further information and comments. Then of course there are the additions of the Fototeca staff.

For the purposes of this essay, I have decided to focus on the Florentine school of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As an aside, it may be of interest that the “homeless” material in this section is being catalogued at I Tatti.⁵

One general aspect worthy of attention is how Berenson’s notes register his reactions to photographic details. Apparently, his comments were stimulated by the particular format of the details selected which isolate, focus, and enhance the legibility of certain aspects of the object, thereby inviting concentrated observation.

Let us consider some photographs of the Giottesque Cross at San Marco in Florence. The photographic view of the entire work (Brogi 19877) has no note on its back and was used to illustrate the 1963 edition of the lists, in which the painting was set among “Giotto’s Anonymous Contemporaries and Immediate Followers”.⁶ However, the backs of the Brogi details that complete the photographic documentation reveal how time and again Berenson’s attribution oscillated between Maso di Banco and Bernardo Daddi. His uncertainty was stressed by question marks varying in number: for *Christ’s Head* and for the *Virgin’s Head* “Maso??”; but for *John Evangelist* “Daddi???”; and for the *Donor* at the foot of the Cross “Daddi?”; but for the figure on the right “Maso??”.

Turning to two details of Bernardo Daddi’s *St. Paul* in the National Gallery, Washington/DC, one sees that the first shows the saint’s hand holding a book. On the back Berenson wrote: “nearest to St. John’s [hand] in / Simone’s S. Casciano / Crucifixion”. The reference to John the Evangelist’s hand in Simone Martini’s *Crucifixion* (Misericordia of San Casciano Val di Pesa) has, in fact, its counterpart in a photo detail from Simone Martini’s *Cross*, where one finds this St. John referred to. On its back, Berenson also mentions the wavy hair resembling the “hair as at Assisi and / in Uffizi of 1333”—references to the murals in the Montefiore Chapel at Assisi and to the *Annunciation* in the Uffizi.

Returning to the *St. Paul* in Washington, one finds a note by Berenson on the back of a photo showing a detail of the lower part of the painting: “short sleeve and full / of mantle is latish / and definitely Trecento”. This comment emphasizes the importance he gave to the study of fashion for the dating of pictures—he devoted an essay to the subject in 1951.⁸ Here, his observation was certainly stimulated by the horizontal format of the photographic image, which enhanced the legibility of the row of small kneeling figures, with their carefully depicted garments, gathered at the saint’s feet and visible along with the edge of his mantle.

Another example of how a photographic detail could suggest and stimulate stylistic connections by isolating a single figure from a large composition is offered by a Reali photo of Puccio di Simone’s signed polyptych in the Galleria dell’Accademia, Florence (no. 8569). The photographer singles out the very Daddesque figure of *St. Lawrence*, provoking Berenson’s comment: “comes out of / Daddi last phase”.

evant records are now being published and visible in VIA (Visual Information Access), the union catalogue of visual resources at Harvard (http://via.lib.harvard.edu/via/deliver/advancedsearch?_collection=via).

⁶ Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance. A list of the principal artists and their works with an index of places: Florentine School*, 2 vols., London 1963, pl. 80, p. 83.

⁷ Ibid., plate 79.

⁸ Bernard Berenson, “Importanza della moda nella datazione delle opere d’arte”, in: *Arte Tessile e Moda*, Torino 1951, pp. 35–39, republished in *Essays in Appreciation*, London 1958, pp. 39–43, with the title: “Importance of fashion in the dating of pictures”.

Occasionally, one can catch the power of the image to reveal unexpected associations symptomatic of profound aesthetic preferences. Such is the case in an Alinari photo (no. 4101) of a detail from Andrea da Firenze's murals in the Spanish Chapel of Santa Maria Novella. This large detail from the east wall focuses on the figures to the pope's left. On the back we read the artist's name, "Andrea da Firenze", in Mary's handwriting along with Berenson's note "Curiously / like Altichiero." But what is particularly striking is another remark at the centre where Berenson also notes: "Very Chinese / countenances." It is easy to imagine that what evoked this Chinese association are the figures in the foreground—especially the cross-legged, seated personage absorbed in reading. Although one cannot be sure which image Berenson had in mind, one finds, for example, some seated figures on a Chinese scroll belonging to him probably purchased from Vignier in Paris in 1914.⁹ This is one of the most important pieces of Berenson's collection of Oriental art and could well explain the source of his observation on the back of this photo.

Another Alinari detail from the same mural (no. 4102) focused on the group of figures to the right of the pope, and provoked the identification of a possible Dante portrait, as Berenson's note on the verso informs us: "2d row right [...] / frontal face with book / may possibly meant for / Dante." His investigation of the portrait continued with the help of a further Alinari photo (no. 4109) on the back of which Berenson noted: "verso / so-called / head of / Dante" and traced a cross corresponding to the head on the recto. The same figure is referred to again in a Brogi photo (no. 25600) which present a closer view of the same detail: "r[ight]. of Saint with hands / folded over Great profile / of Dante?" Berenson's interest in Dante iconography was expressed in two of his essays of the 1890s.¹⁰

On another Alinari detail (no. 4106) of the same mural, a close-up of four women's faces labelled by Alinari as *Quattro teste fra le quali quella di Laura*, Berenson's comment once again evokes Far Eastern art. On the verso, Berenson noted "Haronobu." The word shows signs of insistent retracing with the same spelling. Above this was a phrase today indecipherable to the naked eye but legible with the help of digital technology: "The half hooded / woman very Jap[anese]." Therefore, this detail reminded him of Suzuzi Harunobu (1725–1770), the famous Japanese artist of the Ukiyo-e style. One could say that thanks to the format of this photographic detail, Berenson was moved to make a comparison between a fourteenth-century Florentine mural and graphic art of eighteenth-century Japan. Berenson's brief notes further reveal the breadth of his visual knowledge, his predilection for Far Eastern art and for the wide array of suggestive cross references available to his mind. In all this, photographs served as the role of catalysts.

Indeed, his interest in Harunobu went back a long time. There are already traces of it in his 1896 article concerning Botticelli's Dante illustrations. Where Berenson establishes a rapport between the linearism of the Florentine Renaissance painter and the great masters of China and Japan among whom he mentions Harunobu. He saw Botticelli thus:

⁹ *Painting of a Country Retreat (Shan-zhuang tu)*, Song dynasty? After Li Long-mian; cf. Laurance P. Roberts, *The Bernard Berenson Collection of Oriental Art at Villa I Tatti*, New York 1991, no. 3, pp. 32–43. I am referring to the scene illustrated at p. 37.

¹⁰ Bernard Berenson, "Dante's Visual Images, and His Early Illustrators", in: *The Nation*, 58/1492 (February 1, 1894), pp. 82–83, which was dated as "Florence, December 24, 1893"; id., "Botticelli's Illustrations to the *Divina Commedia*", in: *The Nation*, 63/1637 (November 12, 1896), pp. 363–364, dated as written in Florence on October 22, 1896.

¹¹ Berenson 1896 (note 9), p. 363.

¹² Berenson Archive, Villa I Tatti, Florence.

¹³ These Raffaelli-Armoni photographs in the Fototeca Berenson are probably the same sent to Berenson by Pietro Toesca in 1929 as stated in Toesca's letter of January 16, 1929 to Nicky Mariano (Berenson Archive, Villa I Tatti) quoted by Loredana Lorizzo, "Pietro Toesca all'Università di Roma e il sodalizio con Bernard Berenson", in: Paola Callegari / Edith Gabrielli (eds.), *Pietro Toesca e la fotografia. Saper vedere*, Milano 2009, pp. 103–125, in particular p. 111.

“His real place as a draughtsman is not among great Europeans, but with the Great Chinese and Japanese, with Ririomin, Harunobu and Hokusai. Like these, he is a supreme master of the single line”.¹¹

His interest in Harunobu is also evinced by the presence in the I Tatti library of the two volume monograph by Julius Kurth published in Munich in 1923 (*Suzuki Harunobu. Mit 54 Abbildungen nach Japanischen, Originalen und seiner Signarentabelle*) and another later publication, *Japanese Colour Prints: from Harunobu to Utamaro* with an introduction and notes by Wilfried Blunt (London, 1952). Berenson obviously kept himself up-to-date on the subject until the end of his life.

In the context of Berenson’s appreciation of Harunobu, we can grasp the appropriateness of a postcard sent from Chicago by Luisa Vertova to Berenson and Nicky Mariano on 13 November 1954.¹² It reproduces a work by Harunobu in the Art Institute of Chicago (Clarence Buckingham Collection), and provides an interesting comparison with the Alinari detail showing the gentle dialogue between Andrea da Firenze’s women in the Spanish Chapel.

Turning to the beginning of the section dedicated to the Florentine School, we find some very interesting photos of the *Madonna and Child* by the Bigallo Master. The painting is now in the Uffizi (fig. 1) but was previously in the collections of George Hann in Pittsburgh and Carl Hamilton in New York. These photographs are exemplary in demonstrating how Berenson used the backs of photos to establish a wide context of cross references for the photo’s subject. The first photo bears the photographer’s stamp of Murray Kendall Keyes of New York and probably dates from the time that the picture belonged to Carl Hamilton. The back (fig. 2) is completely covered with Berenson’s notes and is packed with comparisons to other images in the illustrated books and in other photographs that can still be found in the Fototeca and on the Library’s shelves. Following his notes from top to bottom, we first see: “Compare Madonna between Pudenziana and Prassede / at S. Pudenziana, Rome. / Compare Plate 133 Wilpert.”

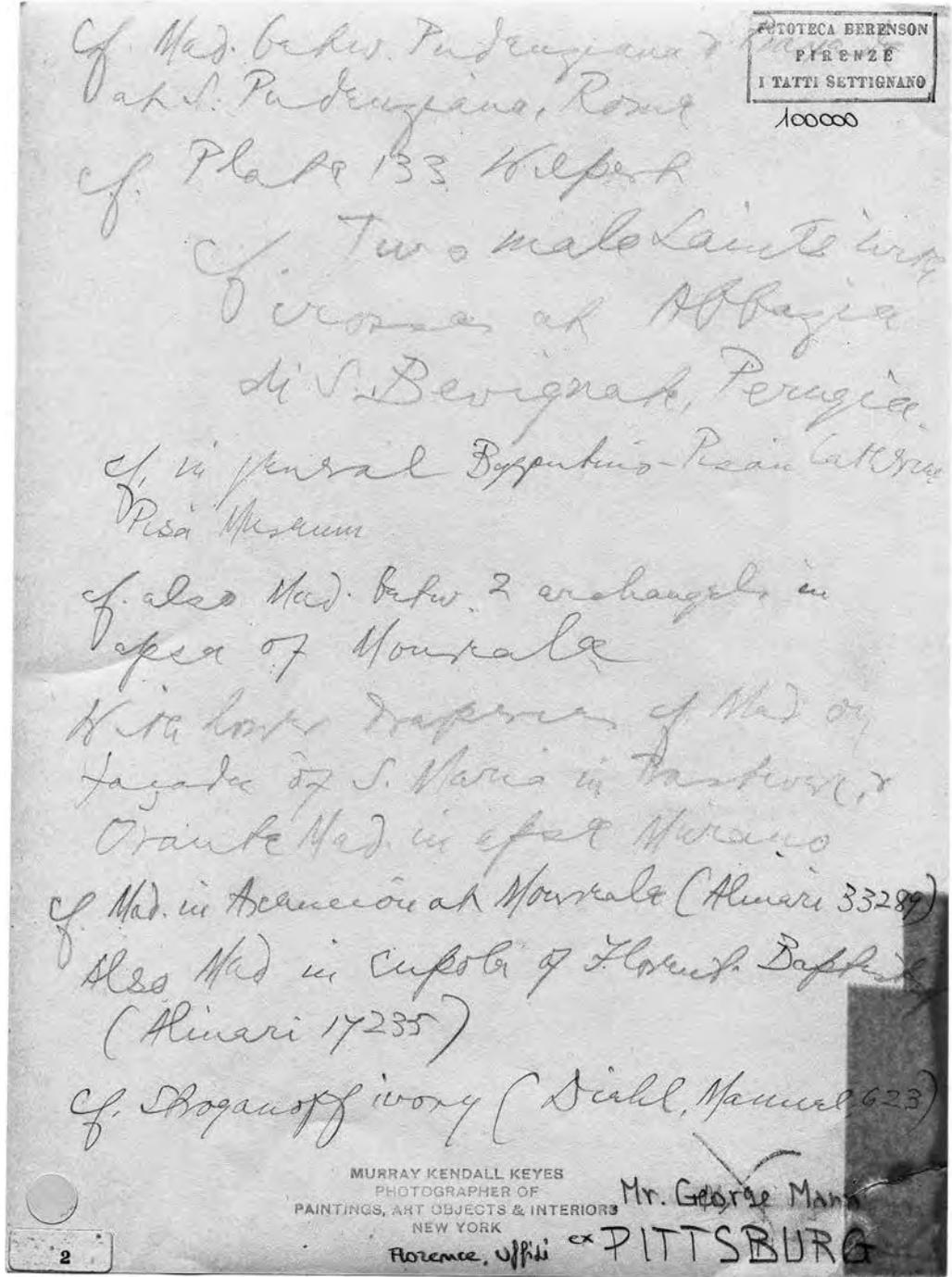
In this case, the image referred to was to be found in one of his books, easily identified as *Die römischen Mosaiken und Malereien der kirchlichen Bauten vom IV. bis XIII. Jahrhundert* by Joseph Wilpert, published by Herder in Freiburg im Breisgau in 1916, of which Berenson owned the second edition issued in 1917.

This is followed by “Compare Two male Saints with / crosses at Abbazia di S. Bevignate, Perugia,” which seems to refer precisely to two photographs in his Fototeca, namely Alinari no. 21271 and no. 21271a, that depict the two *Saints with Crosses* mentioned in the note. The same applies to the next comparison: “Compare in general Byzantino-Pisan Catherine / Pisa Museum.” This depiction of Saint Catherine can be identified in the Brogi photo no. 19397 on the back of which Berenson noted: “E-CATERINA = is this / Italian or Byzantine” followed by the linguistic notation: “Greek. cf. Russian Yecaterina.” At another moment (the handwriting varies) he added: “eagle on robe as in Coppo’s / Mad. Servi. Orvieto.” Thus, in a continuous play of cross-references from one image to another, Berenson noted that the eagle motif on the saint’s mantle recurred on Coppo di Marcovaldo’s *Madonna* in the Servite Church at Orvieto, now hanging in the Orvieto Opera del Duomo Museum. His comparison was enabled by the fact that he owned not only a photo of the entire figure but also two details of this painting taken by the Luigi Raffaelli-Armoni company in Orvieto.¹³ Consideration of the drapery spurred further comparisons: “With lower draperies compare Madonna on / façade of S. Maria in Trastevere and *Orante* Madonna in apse Murano”: and again just this detail in the Roman mosaic turns up among the Berensonian photos as Alinari no. 28400.

Sometimes, for particular photographic comparisons he had in mind, Berenson even gave the reference to the relevant negatives: “Compare Madonna in Ascension at Monreale (Alinari 33289) / Also Madonna in cupola of Florentine Baptistery (Alinari 17235)” —the latter exists in the documentation Berenson gathered for the Florentine Baptistery mosaic.



1 Murray Kendall Keys, *Maestro del Bigallo, Madonna, Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi*. Fototeca Berenson



2 Murray Kendall Keys, Maestro del Bigallo, Madonna, Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi. Fototeca Berenson, verso

The final visual comparison refers to a relief: “Compare Stroganoff ivory (Diehl, Manuel, 623)”. Again, Berenson refers to a volume in his library: the *Manuel d’art byzantin* published by Charles Diehl in Paris, 1910, which reproduces this ivory on p. 623.

Some of these comparisons were repeated on two more photos of the same *Madonna* by the Bigallo Master. One, without the identifying photographer’s stamp, reproduces another detail of the Uffizi panel. On the back, the notes begin with a Morellian reference to the way the Child’s ear was painted—an example of the positivistic criteria introduced by Giovanni Morelli and embraced by Berenson by which the painter’s identity can be recognized by the study of minor details such as the design of an ear: “Child’s ears as in head of / Francis at Subiaco”. Also, in this case, the relevant details can be found among Berenson’s photographs, as in Alinari no. 26239, which focuses on the particular design of Saint Francis’ head in the mural in the Lower Church of the Sacro Speco at Subiaco.

The notes continue: “Madonna type, hood with four pointed star and mantle compare Ascension / at Monreale—also nose” indicating the comparison to the Alinari photo no. 33289 already referred to on the back of the Murray Kendall Keyes photo¹⁴.

Another photo of the same painting, bearing the stamp of R. Gauthier in Paris, gave rise to another comparison this time to be found in a manuscript illustration. “Compare Mad[onna] Miniature / by Conrad v[on]. Scheyern / in Munich, dated 1241. / plate 26 of Mayer’s *Expressionistische Miniature[n]*”. This volume, cited and consulted by Berenson, is still in the Library: August L. Mayer, *Expressionistische Miniaturen des Deutschen Mittelalters*, Delphin Verlag, Munich, 1918. It contains the very image he referred to.

Some notes also testify to the exchange of photographic material between Berenson and other scholars. This aspect can be reconstructed thanks to the vast correspondence conserved in the Berenson Archive at Villa I Tatti where in many cases one can find the letters that originally accompanied the photographs. A wide range of contacts emerges even from the limited material chosen for this study—ranging from Raymond Henniker-Heaton, to Richard Offner, Leo Planiscig, Pietro Toesca, Vladimir G. Simkhovitch and Osvald Sirén. For reasons of space we will consider only Sirén.

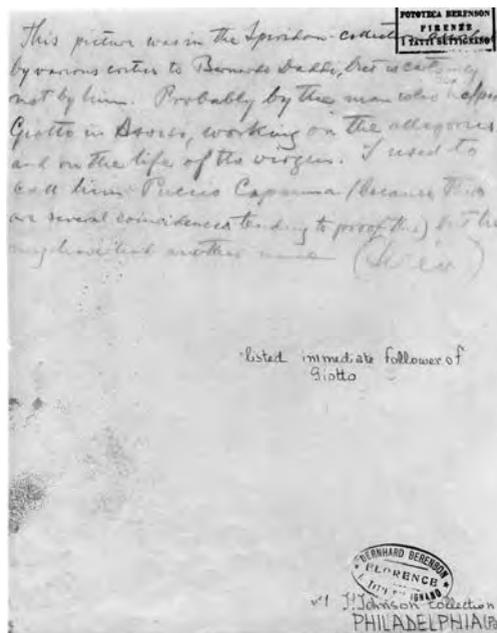
The first example concerns the panel with the *Crucifixion, Nativity and Annunciation* in the Johnson Collection of Philadelphia (fig. 3) recently attributed to the Paduan School by Carl Strehlke in the splendid catalogue of the collection published in 2004.¹⁵ This picture, dated around 1320–1330, was listed by Berenson as “Immediate follower of Giotto”¹⁶ and on the back of the photo (fig. 4), written in first person singular by a hand which is clearly not Berenson’s, there is a long text commenting on the picture. The information conveyed has to do with provenance and the writer’s personal ideas about the attribution:

“This picture was in the Spiridon collection attribut[ed?] by various critics to Bernardo Daddi, but is certainly not by him. Probably by the man who helped Giotto in Assisi, working on the allegories and on the life of the Virgin. I used to call him Puccio Capanna (because there are several coincidences tending to proof [sic] this) but he may have had another name.”

At the end of this passage, Berenson wrote in parenthesis: “Sirén”—indicating that the author of these lines was the Swedish art historian Osvald Sirén (1879–1965). A consultation of the Berenson Archive helps us to understand the context of this photo. In the Berensonian correspondence, the relationship between the two scholars is documented by 18 letters spanning a period of more than fifty years. The handwriting on the back of the photo of the Philadelphia picture corresponds exactly to that of Sirén’s letters. These show that the exchange of photos between Berenson and Sirén began quite early starting in February 1903. In January 1911, a letter from Sirén refers to a shipment of photographs that had to do with the Johnson collection. There is no doubt that there is a connection between this letter and the



3 Unidentified photographer, Paduan School, c. 1320–1330, *Crucifixion, Nativity and Annunciation*, Philadelphia, John G. Johnson Collection. Fototeca Berenson



4 Unidentified photographer, Paduan School, c. 1320–1330, *Crucifixion, Nativity and Annunciation*, Philadelphia, John G. Johnson Collection. Fototeca Berenson, verso

arrival at I Tatti of the photo mentioned above along with others from the same collection. The letter's text, furthermore, explains the presence of the notes on the back of this photo:

“On the back of the photos you will find those notes which I could make in a [sic] haste, but there are among these pictures one or two problems I would like to work out a little more. I thought you were in a great hurry with the catalogue so therefore I have not kept the photos for close examination.”

Later he explains the reason for his letter and the sending of the photographic material:

“I am eagerly waiting for your catalogue of the Johnson collection and wishing you good health and restfulness so that you can work with pleasure [...]”

In fact, Berenson was preparing the catalogue which came out in 1913.¹⁷

The Sirén correspondence records other exchanges of photographic material during the following years. Responding to Berenson on 13 December 1914, Sirén states that he has been at work on fourteenth-century Florentine painting for some time, and asks Berenson for a photo of a work owned by

¹⁴ This comment is followed by a return to the Pisa *St. Catherine*, whose hair reminded Berenson of that belonging to the Child in the Bigallo Master's picture.

¹⁵ Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian paintings, 1250–1450 in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art*, Philadelphia 2004, pp. 448–452, pl. 87.

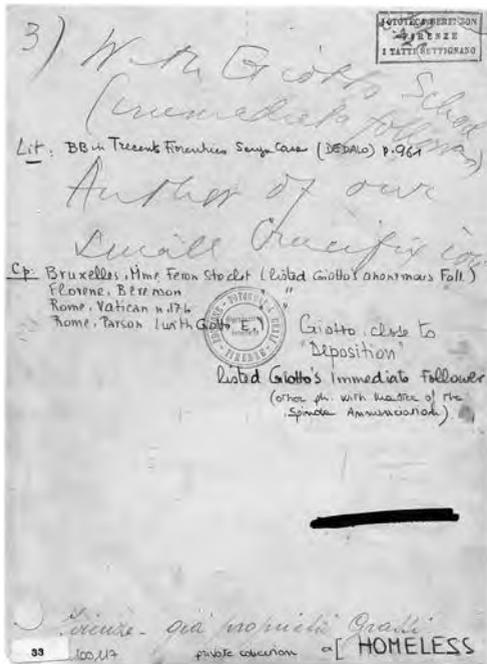
¹⁶ Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance. A*

list of the principal Artists and their works with an index of places, Oxford 1932, pp. 236–237; ed. 1963, p. 84 in “Giotto's Anonymous Contemporaries and Immediate Followers”.

¹⁷ Bernard Berenson, *Catalogue of a Collection of Paintings and Some Art Objects*, vol. I, *Italian Paintings*, Philadelphia 1913.

the American scholar himself—the Giottesque *Entombment of Christ*: “I would be very much obliged if you would send me a photo of your little picture of Giotto’s atelier, representing the Entombment”.

Keeping to the same theme but returning to the photographs, there are of course notations by Berenson concerning pictures in his own collection. In the boxes containing “Giotto’s immediate Followers,” Berenson kept the photos of two small Giottesque panels. On the back of the Reali photo of the *Deposition*, a painting once in the Grassi Collection in Florence (fig. 5), Berenson’s note reads: “With Giotto School / (immediate follower) / Author of our small Crucifixion.” On another photo, this time of the *Enthroned Madonna* in the Vatican Pinacoteca (no. 176), Berenson’s ini-



5 Foto Reali, *Master of the Spinola Annunciation, Deposition, whereabouts unknown*. Fototeca Berenson, verso



6 Mortimer Offner, *Maso di Banco, St Anthony of Padua*. New York, Metropolitan Museum, Maitland F. Griggs Bequest, 43.98.13. Fototeca Berenson, verso

tial attribution “With Al[legretto] Nuzi” was cancelled and followed by the addition: “immediate follower / of Giotto perhaps / author of our / crucifixion.”

Therefore, he recognized that possibly both pictures were by the same hand and belonged to the same group. Today, these paintings are attributed to the Master of the Spinola Annunciation or to the young Jacopo del Casentino.¹⁸

Browsing through the masters of the Giottesque School, one comes across another interesting reference. This time it concerns a picture of *Saint Anthony of Padua* which in 1943 came to the Metropolitan Museum in New York from the Maitland F. Griggs Bequest (43.98.13) and which Berenson listed under Maso di Banco. The backs of two photographs reveal the painting’s chang-

¹⁸ See Luciano Bellosi, in: Fabrizio Moretti / Gabriele Caioni (eds.), *Da Allegretto Nuzi a Pietro Perugino*, Florence 2005, pp. 8–19.

ing location and attribution. Behind the first photo, at the top, is written: “Andrea Orcagna / Berlin, Magazine,” referring to its location until 1926 when it passed to the Maitland Griggs Collection in New York as acknowledged by Berenson’s note further down dated 1928: “now (1928) Maitland / Griggs / Maso,” recording his new attribution to Maso di Banco. The second photo, dating from between 1926 and 1943, when the picture was still in the Griggs Collection, was taken by Mortimer Offner (Richard’s brother) as recorded by the stamp. The date of this photo can be narrowed down to before 1934, when Offner ceased his activity as a photographer. He left New York for a new career as a writer with the film studios in Hollywood. There are further Berensonian notes here, some cancelled, as in a virtual palimpsest. At the top, barely visible due to erasure, one can make out: “With Giotto’s / immediate / followers” followed by a new idea: “Giotto himself / over / cleaned?” And, lower down, the interesting addition: “close to our Giotto / but harder and / stiffer” (fig. 6). The Giotto referred to in his collection is the *Franciscan Saint*, which he compared to Griggs’ *Saint Anthony of Padua*. Berenson emphasized the higher quality of the I Tatti picture, which he believed was by Giotto himself.

This study of Berenson’s notes reveals various aspects of his method of work and helps us to better understand his use of photographs. The quantity and variety of these comments, written directly behind the relevant objects reproduced, enhance the value of the photographic collection greatly. It must thus be considered not only a precious archive of images but also of texts. We have tried to show how the Fototeca is integrated with the other sources available at Villa I Tatti, where one can still follow the interrelationship between photos, printed texts in the library, documents in the archive and the works of art in the Berenson Collection itself.

Giulio Manieri Elia

Giulio Cantalamessa, le Regie Gallerie di Venezia e la fotografia

Antefatto: Cantalamessa e Venturi, la fotografia tra documentazione e creatività

Adolfo Venturi ricorda in più occasioni l'incontro con Giulio Cantalamessa avvenuto a Bologna nel 1885, in occasione di un convegno organizzato da Corrado Ricci.¹ Nasce allora una frequentazione destinata a durare negli anni. Cantalamessa, nato ad Ascoli Piceno nel 1846,² non ha ancora accantonato del tutto l'attività artistica ma si cimenta, nel contempo, in esercizi di critica cui esorta il collega a dedicarsi, abbandonando la Storia dell'arte, nella prima missiva che gli invia nel febbraio del 1886.³

¹ Adolfo Venturi, "Giulio Cantalamessa", in: *Roma*, 2 (1925), pp. 241-247, ivi p. 242; id., *Memorie autobiografiche*, Torino 1991 (prima ed. 1917), p. 40. Cfr. Giacomo Agosti, "Un contributo per Giulio Cantalamessa", *Venezia Arti*, 6 (1992), pp. 99-84, ivi p. 79; id., *La Nascita della storia dell'arte in Italia. Adolfo Venturi dal museo all'università 1880-1940*, Venezia 1996, p. 71.

² Adolescente studia disegno ad Ascoli, presso lo studio dello scultore Giorgio Paci, e completa la formazione artistica a Bologna e Firenze con Antonio Puccinelli e Antonio Ciseri. Si distingue nella pittura di soggetto storico ottenendo anche qualche riconoscimento pubblico. Tra Roma e la città natale, dal 1876 al 1888, indirizza i suoi interessi critici verso la storia dell'arte. Gli studi si intensificano quando, stabilitosi a Bologna e divenuto professore di Storia dell'arte presso il Collegio artistico Venturoli, entra in contatto con la cultura cittadina e con Giuseppe Carducci. I suoi interessi spaziano ora dal Rinascimento al Seicento emiliano. Nel 1891 a Roma ottiene dal Ministero della pubblica istruzione, con l'appoggio di

Venturi e di Ricci, l'incarico della revisione degli inventari delle locali confraternite e gallerie fidecommissarie. Con l'appoggio dello stesso Venturi e di Carducci, divenuto viceispettore, ottiene il comando, nel 1893, alla direzione della Galleria Estense di Modena con l'impegno di riallestire filologicamente le collezioni. Cfr. Maria Cristina Pavan Taddei, "Cantalamessa Giulio", in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. XVIII, Roma 1975, pp. 230-232; Stefano Papetti, "Il ruolo di Giulio Cantalamessa nell'incremento delle raccolte veneziane e romane. L'acquisto del 'Tobiolo e l'angelo' del Savoldo per la Galleria Borghese", in: *Paragone Arte*, 42 (1991), 493/495 (n.s. 26/27), pp. 137-146; Agosti 1992 (nota 1); Giovanna Bosi Maramotti, "Giulio Cantalamessa alla direzione della Galleria Estense di Modena", in: *Gli anni modenese di Adolfo Venturi* (atti Modena 1990), Modena 1994, pp. 43-56; Giulio Manieri Elia / Marina Minozzi, "Giulio Cantalamessa", in: *Dizionario biografico dei Soprintendenti Storici dell'Arte (1904-1974)*, Bologna 2007, pp. 134-143.

I due si scambiano riflessioni sulla metodologia critica di Giovanni Morelli e dal gennaio successivo, dimostrando crescente intimità, passano a darsi del *tu*.⁴

In febbraio Cantalamessa prende l'impegno, per conto di Venturi, di far eseguire alcuni scatti fotografici dai *Trionfi* dipinti da Antonio Tempesta nel Casino dell'Aurora Rospigliosi a Roma.⁵ Le immagini sono pronte solo in luglio; il ritardo è motivato dalle difficoltà esecutive per la collocazione del ciclo, ma soprattutto per la lentezza di Ludovico Tuminello che Cantalamessa aveva scelto poiché "per questa specie di lavori mi è parso il più abile di tutti".⁶ Dopo averlo definito anche "fotografo tartaruga" ne prospetta la sostituzione con Michele Mang, "fotografo che ieri un bravo artista mi lodò e raccomandò molto".⁷ Nell'inviare gli scatti, infine ultimati, Cantalamessa chiede di informarne della spesa il Duca di Rivoli,⁸ committente dunque ed interessato probabilmente al soggetto, visto che lo stesso anno pubblica uno studio sui *Trionfi* di Petrarca.⁹

L'utilizzazione della fotografia assume per Cantalamessa, due anni dopo, connotati diversi: nel marzo del 1889 scrive a Domenico Gnoli dell'intenzione di accompagnare un suo saggio, dedicato ad una *Madonna* di Francesco Francia e destinato con ogni probabilità all'*Archivio Storico dell'Arte*,¹⁰ con "un disegno a penna, a solo contorno, valendomi di un lucido che si può trarre da una fotografia. Ella poi dovrebbe farla riprodurre, molto impicciolata, in zincografia".¹¹ La rivista, che utilizza estesamente illustrazioni di derivazione fotografica a corredo iconografico, rifiuta tuttavia l'immagine e Cantalamessa vive il gesto come sfiducia nelle sue capacità di "esercizio dell'arte", "eppure" scrive a Venturi "mi pare che quel disegno l'avrei fatto bene, perché sentivo nell'animo quella soavità di contorni, quella squisitezzezza di gusto".¹² La fotografia è qui, dunque, strumento di esercizio creativo, condito di atmosfere critiche di gusto purista.¹³

Cantalamessa, le Regie Gallerie e la fotografia come strumento di lavoro

Passano quasi dieci anni. Venturi è alla Direzione Generale Antichità e Belle Arti del Ministero dell'Istruzione Pubblica e Cantalamessa è incaricato, dal settembre 1894, della sistemazione dei musei veneziani, in occasione dell'inaugurazione della prima Biennale internazionale d'arte, per la primavera successiva.¹⁴ All'allestimento delle Gallerie dell'Accademia, secondo le linee direttive stabilite da Venturi nel 1893,¹⁵ è operativo Angelo Conti dal 5 agosto 1894. Auditore aggiunto presso la Galleria degli

³ Biblioteca della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, *Fondo Venturi* (qui di seguito SNS), lettera di Cantalamessa a Venturi, VT C2 B2 1. Quando non diversamente specificato il mittente è sempre Cantalamessa e il destinatario è Venturi.

⁴ SNS, Cartolina postale, 24 marzo 1886, VT C2 B2 2 e 6 gennaio 1887, VT C2 B2 13.

⁵ "Al Rospigliosi ho scritto un biglietto accludendo quello del Duca di Rivoli. Se mi darà il permesso richiesto, penserò io a far fare le fotografie". SNS, Cartolina postale, 6 febbraio 1887, VT C2 B2 11.

⁶ SNS, Cartolina postale, 18 marzo 1887, VT C2 B2 7.

⁷ SNS, Cartolina postale, 12 giugno 1887, VT C2 B2 21.

⁸ SNS, Cartolina postale, 24 luglio 1887, VT C2 B2 25.

⁹ Victor Masséna d'Essling, "Études sur les 'Triumphes' de

Pétrarque, par le duc de Rivoli", in: *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 35 (1887), pp. 311-321; 36 (1887), pp. 25-34.

¹⁰ Al periodico aveva già contribuito nel 1888 con *Cronaca d'arte contemporanea*, 1 (1888), pp. 42-45 e 46-48, nonché *Artisti ignoti nella Marche*, 1 (1888), pp. 374-378.

¹¹ SNS, Lettera di Cantalamessa a Gnoli (n.n.) da questi inviata a Venturi, 4 marzo 1889, VT C2 B2 39.

¹² SNS, Cartolina postale, 17 aprile 1889, VT C2 B2 42. È possibile che il saggio sia poi quello accolto lo stesso anno in *Lettere ed Arti*, rivista diretta da Enrico Panzacchi. Pappetti 1991 (nota 2), p. 138.

¹³ Ettore Spalletti, *La documentazione figurativa dell'opera d'arte, la critica e l'editoria nell'epoca moderna (1750-1930)*, 2 voll., Torino 1979, vol. 2, pp. 415-484; in particolare pp. 434-437.

Uffizi dal 1891, quest'ultimo giunge a Venezia con una collezione di foto Alinari e con l'intenzione di completare il suo trattato di estetica su Giorgione.¹⁶ La pubblicazione del volume e forse le procedure per l'allestimento del museo gli attirano l'ostilità del Direttore Generale Carlo Fiorilli e di Venturi; i lavori vengono sospesi e affidati, appunto, a Cantalamessa con Conti nel ruolo subordinato di collaboratore.

A Venezia la fotografia è divenuta, per quest'ultimo, strumento quotidiano di lavoro; possiede una raccolta di immagini che, lasciata alla Direzione del museo dopo il trasferimento a Roma (nel 1906), è all'origine dell'attuale Archivio fotografico della Soprintendenza.¹⁷ La presenza, sul retro, di informazioni autografe e sovente della precisazione: "Proprietà di Giulio Cantalamessa" chiarisce il ruolo che la fotografia ha acquisito nell'attività alle Gallerie. L'acquisto degli scatti, che avviene tra il 1894 e il 1901,¹⁸ coincide del resto con il momento di più intenso lavoro di studio e riordino delle collezioni.

I soggetti degli scatti sono, tranne casi rarissimi, opere di scuola veneta o di autori legati a quella tradizione o comunque artisti presenti (o considerati tali) nella collezione del museo. Vi è una predominanza – prevedibile – dei grandi maestri del Quattro-, Cinque- e Settecento. Il repertorio iconografico riflette la struttura portante dell'allestimento museale cui si stava ponendo mano; così le opere del Seicento, assenti della raccolta fotografica, vengono in contemporanea espunte dal percorso museale.

Le note manoscritte rimandano alla necessità di approfondimento di conoscenza sulla scuola veneta¹⁹ e al lavoro classificatorio destinato sia alla costruzione del percorso museale che alla predisposizione di un catalogo delle collezioni, che rimarrà tuttavia inedito.²⁰ Esse riportano informazioni sulla collocazione delle opere raffigurate, la scuola artistica (quando non veneta), l'esistenza di altre versioni o copie del medesimo soggetto, quasi sempre la provenienza e spesso informazioni bibliografiche con non rari brevi commenti critici. Appaiono invece rarefatte le riflessioni sull'iconografia, le informazioni di carattere conservativo e gli spunti di critica attributiva: "è facile pensare che questo quadro possa essere di Jacopo Bellini" (fig. 1, 2), si legge sul retro di una immagine di un'opera che, entrata all'Accademia Carrara di Bergamo con assegnazione a Gentile da Fabriano, viene attribuita al maestro veneziano da Gustavo Frizzoni;²¹ non è chiaro se Cantalamessa giunga alla stessa conclusione in autonomia.

¹⁴ Per l'attività alle Gallerie: Sandra Moschini Marconi, *Gallerie dell'Accademia. Opere d'arte dei secoli XIV-XV*, Roma 1955, pp. VII-XXXIV; Giovanna Nepi Sciré, *Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia. Storia della collezione dei Disegni*, Milano 1982, pp. 11-24; Papetti 1991 (nota 2); Agosti 1992 (nota 1); Agosti 1996 (nota 1), soprattutto pp. 120-125; Manieri Elia / Minozzi 2007 (nota 2).

¹⁵ Estratto della relazione di Venturi in Archivio Centrale dello Stato di Roma, Direzione Generale Antichità e Belle Arti (da ora in poi solo ABA), II vers. I serie, fasc. 311.5313, *Estratto della relazione del prof. Cav. Adolfo Venturi*, 1 settembre 1893. In Anna Mazzanti, "Note di museologia veneziana. Il ruolo di Angelo Conti funzionario presso le gallerie dell'Accademia", in: *Saggi e Memorie di storia dell'arte*, 26 (2002), pp. 431-457, ivi p. 432n. Venturi dell'allestimento si attribuirà tutti i meriti: "improvvisai il nuovo ordinamento della Galleria veneziana" (Venturi 1991 [nota 1], p. 74), ma le vicende sono più complesse.

¹⁶ Mazzanti 2002 (nota 15), p. 432. Angelo Conti, *Giorgione*, Firenze 1894, ora riedito a cura di Ricciarda Ricorda, Novi Ligure 2007.

¹⁷ Giulio Manieri Elia, "L'Archivio fotografico di Soprin-

tendenza. Storia, conservazione e ricerca", in: Anna Maria Spiazzi / Luca Majoli / Corinna Giudici (a c. di), *Gli Archivi fotografici delle Soprintendenze. Tutela e storia. Territori veneti e limitrofi* (Atti Venezia 2008), Crocetta del Montello 2010, pp. 153-163.

¹⁸ La data più antica compare nei timbri a secco delle fotografie di Franz Hanfstaengl; il 1901 è determinabile per la citazione dell'articolo di Gerolamo Biscaro, "Ancora di alcune opere giovanili di Lorenzo Lotto", in: *L'arte*, IV (1901), pp. 152-161.

¹⁹ Cantalamessa aveva già intrapreso studi sull'arte veneta: "Artisti veneti nelle Marche", in: *Nuova Antologia*, CXXI (1892), pp. 401-431, e acquisito una certa dimestichezza con tale scuola, conoscendo il territorio marchigiano e avendo lavorato al riordino della Gallerie Estense.

²⁰ A Cantalamessa viene del resto precisato, in polemica con la metodologia ritenuta frettolosa di Conti, che: "l'ordinamento di una galleria deve essere il frutto di indagini diligenti sulla provenienza delle opere, sulla loro attribuzione e la loro data"; ABA, II vers. I serie, 311.5313, lettera del segretario ministeriale Costantini da Roma per Cantalamessa a Venezia. Cfr. Mazzanti 2002 (nota 15), p. 434n.



1 Jacopo Bellini, *Madonna con il Bambino*, Accademia Carrara, legato Lochis, inv. 525. Fotografia A. Taramelli, Bergamo. SSPSAEPMVE, Archivio fotografico e dei restauri, Fondo storico, n. 2280



2 Fotografia del retro della precedente con iscrizione autografa di Cantalamessa, in alto con grafia molto regolare. SSPSAEPMVE, Archivio fotografico e dei restauri, Fondo storico, n. 2280, verso

Riguardo alla bibliografia citata nelle note, si tratta per lo più di fonti: Boschini, Ridolfi, Zanetti per Venezia; Brandolese per Padova; Federici per la Marca; Vasari nell'edizione di Milanese e Lanzi; ma anche della produzione bibliografica dei conoscitori contemporanei, con particolare riferimento a Cavalcaselle, Morelli, Venturi, Berenson e Frizzoni. Vengono ricordati i cataloghi dei musei: di Berlino del 1880; della Galleria Borghese di Venturi; della Galleria di Parma di Ricci e della Carrara di Frizzoni; nonché il catalogo della quadreria Crespi pubblicato da Venturi e i saggi contenuti nell'*Archivio storico dell'arte* e in *L'Arte*. Cantalamessa confronta le notizie tratte dalla letteratura coeva con le fonti.²²

Le fotografie hanno dunque una funzione di vero e proprio strumento mnemonico ove conservare e incrociare informazioni sia visive che testuali sulle opere d'arte. Attraverso l'analisi di queste, e mediante il sussidio dei documenti d'archivio, si possono seguire oggi i percorsi critici di un ispettore dell'Amministrazione, nell'esercizio della sua attività conoscitiva e istituzionale.

²¹ Jacopo Bellini, *Madonna col Bambino*, cat. 525, legato Lochis. Francesco Rossi, *Accademia Carrara. 1. Catalogo dei dipinti sec. XV-XVI*, Bergamo 1988, p. 50.

²² Sul retro di una foto si legge: "Galleria di Berlino. E' una predella di cui non è facile rintracciare la destinazione originaria. Di Antonio Vivarini c'erano due tavole in S. Stefano, in uno dei quali la predella (in Ridolfi) avea storia di S. Monica. L'altra avea predella anch'essa? [...] E in caso affermativo sarebbe questa? [...] Il museo di

Berlino l'acquistò nel 1821 a Londra della collezione Solly". Soprintendenza speciale per il patrimonio storico artistico ed etnoantropologico e per il Polo museale della città di Venezia e dei Comuni della gronda lagunare (qui di seguito SSPSAEPMVE), Archivio fotografico e dei restauri, *Fondo storico*, n. 78.

²³ "Ho scritto, cedendo ad un desiderio del Conti, acciòché si faccia una sala del Carpaccio". SNS, Lettera, 16 novembre 1894, VT C2 B1 38. Conti annuncia un suo vo-

Carpaccio snodo critico

A Venezia, ad un mese dall'arrivo, Cantalamessa entra nel merito del lavoro sul percorso del museo con due temi subito sul tappeto: la redistribuzione delle opere della collezione Contarini, collocate in un ambiente apposito, e la costituzione di una sala monografica dedicata a Carpaccio, proposta ereditata da Angelo Conti.²³ La forzatura di taglio monografico, rispetto all'imperativo storicistico volto alla costruzione di un percorso strettamente cronologico e per affinità stilistiche, obbliga Cantalamessa a trovare una giustificazione, ovvero quella di voler riunire il solo *Ciclo di Sant'Orsola* mentre "gli altri quattro o cinque quadri del Carpaccio resterebbero in compagnia degli altri maestri affini, tanto che la continuità storica non sarebbe interrotta".²⁴

Con il procedere dei mesi, le idee portanti dell'allestimento si chiariscono in concomitanza con la consapevolezza delle difficoltà nel realizzarlo. All'inizio del 1895 il progetto è inviato al Ministero: "la distribuzione idealmente perfetta sarebbe quella [...] che, cominciando dai più antichi veneti andasse di sala in sala gradualmente sino al Tiepolo, riservando una sala, possibilmente appartata, ai pochi esemplari delle varie scuole italiane ed un'altra a quelli di scuole straniere. Ma questa idea [...] urta con le condizioni dello spazio [e le] interruzioni troncano con prepotenza questo filo logico". Dopo il primo ambiente dedicato ai Primitivi, il percorso s'interrompe subito con la sala dedicata all'*Assunta* di Tiziano – "quel santuario dell'arte veneziana", come si esprime Cantalamessa, che non aveva avuto cuore di smantellare²⁵ – e con una sala dedicata ai disegni. La disposizione riprende con Giovanni Bellini e i belliniani e con "i loro affini di Vicenza in due sale, poi coi friulani, ai quali avrei assegnata una sala attigua, ma distinta". Una sorta di percorso parallelo per la scuola correlata. Poi sul margine appuntava: "non parlo di Giorgione, di cui sventuratamente la galleria non possiede alcun dipinto; né di Tiziano, per ragioni che si dirà di poi". Segue una nuova interruzione nel percorso diacronico, per l'impossibilità di collocare altrove il grande *Convito in casa di Levi* di Paolo Veronese; per questa sala Cantalamessa propone almeno di eliminare le incongrue presenze come Carpaccio, che "rappresenta una manifestazione così singolare", cui andava dedicata una sala con attigua un'altra ove "si schiereranno Gentile Bellini, il Sebastiani, e non in tutte le loro opere, ma in quelle che rappresentano il momento del principio carpaccesco; ed a questi ho aggiunto un quadro di Benedetto Diana, in cui, per una volta almeno, questo pittore s'è proposto lo stesso principio". Motivava criticamente la separazione tra Gentile e Giovanni Bellini poiché riteneva il primo "fratello di Carpaccio".²⁶

Dal percorso venivano espunti gli artisti moderni, secondo la proposta di Venturi, e molte opere del Seicento per via, egli chiarisce, del loro formato troppo esteso.

lume dedicato a Carpaccio nel 1893 e Gabriele d'Annunzio parla dell'imminenza di tale pubblicazione, ancora nel 1895, nella *Note su Giorgione e la sua critica*. Mazzanti 2002 (nota 15), p. 433.

²⁴ SNS, Lettera, 16 novembre 1894, VT C2 B1 38.

²⁵ La sala era stata del resto appena sistemata, tra il 1883 e il 1886. Moschini Marconi 1955 (nota 14), p. XXIII.

²⁶ Archivio SSPSAEPMVE, *Gallerie dell'Accademia, Carte Vecchie*, II B, Cantalamessa, *Relazione sull'ordinamento*

delle RR. Gallerie, 28 gennaio 1895. L'assunzione di un ruolo critico di snodo per Carpaccio e Gentile Bellini, nel percorso, è in qualche modo anche nella progettazione degli spazi: vengono allestite infatti le due nuove sale a pianta ottagonale.

Tiziano al vertice del percorso museale

Nella stessa relazione Cantalamessa propone la ricollocazione della *Presentazione di Maria al Tempio* di Tiziano, nella sala e sulla parete per la quale era stata dipinta, “con accanto poche altre opere, tutte di Tiziano [...] adunate [...]. E con questa sala di Tiziano [...] il giro delle gallerie si chiuderebbe nobilissimamente”.²⁷ La creazione di uno scrigno per l’opera del principale artista della scuola veneta obbliga a rivedere l’allestimento della sala, avviando pratiche per l’acquisto di dossali da porre in sostituzione a quelli esistenti.²⁸ Se la proposta di ricollocazione del capolavoro spetta ancora al Conti,²⁹ come Cantalamessa riconosce,³⁰ il ripensamento dell’atmosfera contestuale si deve a Venturi: “parve opportuno al sig Ispettore cav. Adolfo Venturi che il famoso quadro [...] fosse ripresentato nelle condizioni più favorevoli. Quindi è che tolti i sedili e i dossali del secolo passato, che per lo stile e per la tinta arrogamente gialla nuocevano all’intonazione del dipinto, fu acquistato un antico coro cinquecentistico [...] di una tinta buona e tranquilla, e fu adattato a circuire in basso le pareti della sala dell'albergo, divenuta per tal modo un gioiello in cui tutto coopera al Trionfo della pittura di Tiziano”.³¹

Jacopo Bellini riscoperto e il completamento della serie

Impegno che vede molto attivo Cantalamessa è anche quello di completare la serie pittorica, per consolidare la vocazione del museo a rappresentare lo sviluppo della scuola veneta,³² promuovendo scambi con altri musei o acquisti sul mercato. Nel 1895 rinviene due dipinti su tela, raffiguranti *L'adorazione dei Magi* e *Lo sposalizio della Vergine*, che ritiene, attraverso sue indagini, opera di Jacopo Bellini e provenienti da un disperso ciclo, ricordato dalle fonti, già nella Scuola grande di San Giovanni Evangelista di Venezia (fig. 3);³³ Cantalamessa vorrebbe che il Ministero li acquistasse e per rafforzare il teorema attributivo conta sul sussidio della fotografia. Egli avrebbe voluto, per proporre confronti

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ SNS, Lettera, 8 maggio 1895, VT C2 B1 44.

²⁹ “Proposi un ordinamento nuovo della Galleria, che fu in gran parte accettato e compiuto da lei”. Lettera di Conti al Cantalamessa, 15 ottobre 1895, Archivio SSPSAEPM-VE, *Gallerie dell'Accademia, Carte Vecchie*, IVa, fasc. 4/36, *Angelo Conti*.

³⁰ “Ella mi ha suggerito alcune idee; principalissime: quella di rimettere all’antico posto la Presentazione di Tiziano e di riunire in una sala, ordinatamente, le storie di S. Orsola del Carpaccio”, mentre per il resto Conti pare latitante, come lamenta Cantalamessa che prosegue “ma è qui tutto il lavoro? [...] E il viluppo di infinite complicazioni e il pungolo di tormentose dubbiezze nel meditare un assetto ragionevole di tutto il resto? Non ho io implorato invano il suo aiuto, quando mi stillarono il cervello ad applicare i miei scacchetti di carta sui rotoli simulanti le pareti delle Sale? Se ricordi che dai primi dell’anno fino circa alla metà del marzo Ella in Galleria non fece che rare e brevi apparizioni”. Lettera di Cantalamessa al Conti, 16 ottobre 1895, *ibid.* Altrove, per la verità, Cantalamessa dichiara che la proposta di ricolloca-

zione del capolavoro di Tiziano spetterebbe invece a Camillo Boito che l’avrebbe raccomandato al Consiglio accademico dell’11 giugno del 1885. Giulio Cantalamessa, “RR. Gallerie di Venezia”, in: *Le Gallerie Nazionali Italiane*, II (1896), pp. 27–43, *ivi* p. 40 e Giovanna Nepi Sciré, “Il restauro della *Presentazione di Maria al Tempio di Tiziano*”, in: *Bollettino d’Arte, Supplemento*, 5 (1983), pp. 151–164, *ivi* p. 163, nota 24.

³¹ Archivio SSPSAEPMVE, *Gallerie dell'Accademia, Carte Vecchie*, IIB, Cantalamessa al R. Ministero P.I., 13 giugno 1895.

³² La vocazione parrebbe avere origini più antiche e legate alla nascita dell’istituzione durante il Regno Italico, nonché alle difficoltà di dotarsi di una collezione con le opere non selezionate per la Corona. Cfr. Isabella Cecchini / Giulio Manieri Elia, “Le collezioni accademiche durante il Regno Italico nei documenti d’archivio dell’istituto veneziano”, in: Sandra Sicoli (ed.), *Milano 1809. La Pinacoteca di Brera e i musei in età napoleonica* (Atti Milano 2009), Milano 2010, pp. 214–220.

³³ “L’avvocato erariale Cav. Costantino Canella possiede due quadri, che gravissime ragioni conducono a ritene-

tra i disegni e le composizioni pittoriche, reperire sul mercato positivi dagli album di Bellini del British Museum e del Louvre.³⁴ Il tentativo si rivela infruttuoso poiché i disegni di Londra, “troppo impalliditi”, non si riusciva a fotografarli, mentre per quelli parigini (che conosce solo per i pochi pubblicati su le *Gazette des Beaux Arts*)³⁵ riesce ad avviare ottenendo, attraverso Mariano Fortuny, due schizzi “fatti dal pittore sig. Madrazo [...] ove in diverso modo è svolto il soggetto: adorazione dei magi”.³⁶ La composizione, pur analoga nel soggetto, risulta tuttavia diversa.

Per il progetto d’acquisto, Cantalamessa cerca il sostegno in Venturi esortandolo a raggiungerlo a Venezia per analizzare le opere, che avevano avuto il plauso di Angelo Alessandri e di Fortuny ma non di Gustavo Frizzoni.³⁷ Quando infine Venturi vede i dipinti, ne rimane poco convinto e la transazione salta.³⁸ Cantalamessa ne è afflitto e ci presenta un’interessante proposta didattica che voleva introdurre in museo: “accanto a quei due quadri volevo mettere l’album con le fotografie dei disegni di Jacopo Bellini del Louvre, sopra un apposito mibileto [...]. Farò ad ogni modo l’album delle fotografie che riproducono tutti i dipinti del Carpaccio sparsi pel mondo, e lo metterò nella sala del Carpaccio, a disposizione del pubblico”.³⁹



3 Jacopo Bellini, *Sposalizio della Vergine*, Madrid Prado, particolare. Sul retro della fotografia iscrizione di Cantalamessa: “Riproduzione parziale di un quadro, posseduto dall’avv.to Costantino Canella a Venezia forse di Jacopo Bellini”. SSPSAEPMVE, Archivio Fotografico e dei restauri, Fondo storico, n. 91

re abbiano appartenuto alla serie dei dipinti fatti da Jacopo Bellini per la Scuola di S. Giovanni Evangelista [...]. Il sig. avv.to Canella, persona delle più serie e rispettabili, mi espone questo stato dei fatti. Suo nonno, il pittore Natale Schiavone, possedeva dieci di tali quadri, tutti della stessa dimensione, tutti di soggetti relativi ai fatti della vita della Vergine e di Cristo. Morto il possessore, furono fatte le divisioni ereditarie tra i due figli Felice ed Elisa. Ognuno ebbe cinque di tali quadri. Felice Schiavone, morto da molti anni, vendé i suoi all’estero; Elisa li ritenne; finché, morta nel 1858 i quadri non passarono in proprietà dei suoi figli Francesco e Costantino Canella. Proceduti alla divisione, Francesco ebbe tre di tali quadri, Costantino due. [...]. Da questa serie di fatti scaturisce almeno una ragione congetturale a favore della supposizione che i due quadri sopravanzati al negozio siano veramente della serie che Jacopo Bellini dipinse per la Scuola di S. Giovanni Evangelista”. Archivio SSPSAEPMVE, *Offerte e acquisti, 1887-1911*, n. 45/C, 24 luglio 1895, Lettera di Cantalamessa al MPI.

³⁴ SNS, Lettera, 12 giugno 1895, VT C2 B1 45. La vicenda anche in Manieri Elia 2010 (nota 17).

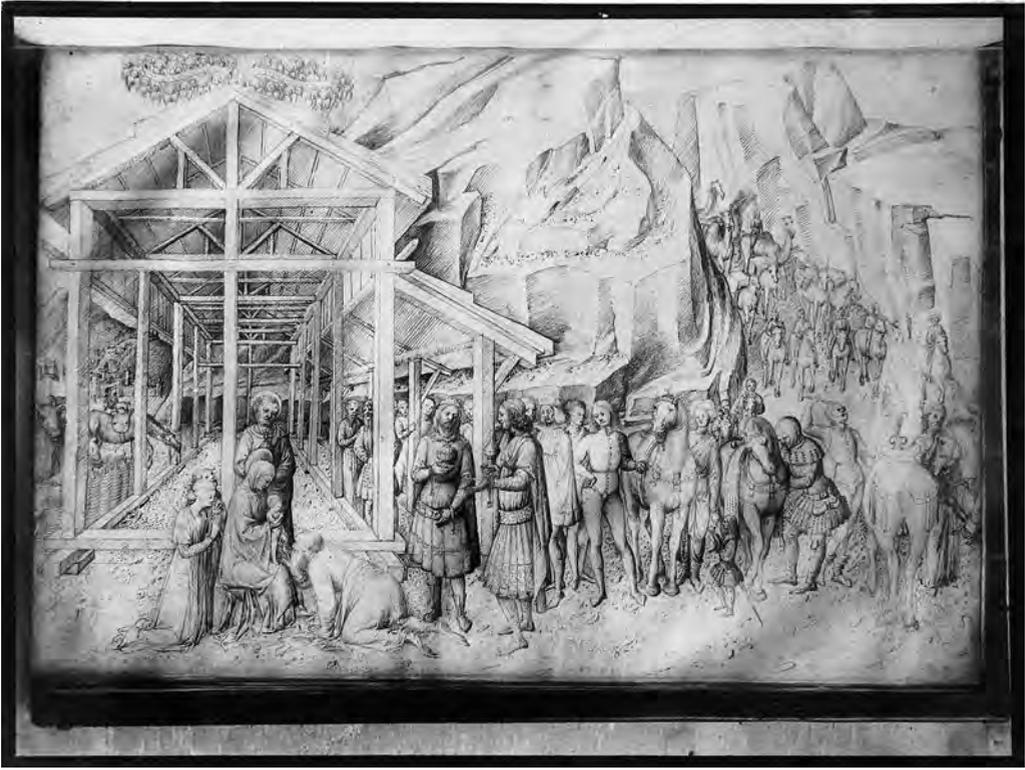
³⁵ Eugène Müntz, “Jacopo Bellini et la Renaissance dans l’Italie septentrionale, d’après le recueil récemment acquis par le Louvre”, in: *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 30 (1884), pp. 346-355; pp. 434-446.

³⁶ Archivio SSPSAEPMVE, *Offerte e acquisti*, Lettera cit. Madrazo potrebbe essere Raimundo o Riccardo de Madrazo, zii materni di Marino Fortuny.

³⁷ SNS, Lettera, 13 luglio 1895, VT C2 B1 46. Cfr. anche Manieri Elia 2010 (nota 17).

³⁸ SNS, Lettera, 10 ottobre 1895, VT C2 B1 52. Nel 1902 i dipinti vengono presentati all’Ufficio Esportazione da Ferdinando Ongania e emigrano a Londra, ottenuto il permesso di esportazione dalla commissione composta da Augusto Sezanne, Angelo Alessandri e Pietro Paletti (Archivio SSPSAEPMVE, *Offerte e acquisti, 1887-1911*, n. 45/C). Passano poi negli Stati Uniti, dove transitano in collezione John J. Chapman di Barrytown/NY, e infine giungono al Prado (Colin T. Eisler, *The Genius of Jacopo Bellini, The Complete Paintings and Drawings*, New York 1989, pp. 521-523).

³⁹ SNS, Lettera, 18 ottobre 1895, VT C2 B1 54.



4 Jacopo Bellini, *Adorazione dei Magi*, disegno, Parigi, Louvre. SSPSAEPMVE, Archivio Fotografico e dei restauri, Fondo storico, n. 537

Mentre la realizzazione del volume di Bellini viene probabilmente accantonata e le fotografie dell'album parigino – immagini che dunque in un secondo tempo è riuscito ad ottenere – rimangono sciolte nella collezione della Soprintendenza (fig. 4), viene invece completato un volume fotografico dedicato a Carpaccio, conservato tutt'oggi in archivio. Si tratta di un album rilegato, con coperta rigida in pelle e fogli protetti esternamente da una battuta metallica, in modo da resistere all'usura. Il volume, che contiene positivi sia di dipinti che di disegni posti a confronto, veniva esposto nella sala monografica dedicata a Carpaccio in modo da completare la conoscenza della sua opera con i dipinti mancanti in collezione (fig. 5).

Le riflessioni di questi anni su Jacopo Bellini, in sintonia con altri storici d'arte,⁴⁰ non sono senza esito e lo portano a maturare una rilettura sulla sua centralità nel contesto artistico locale: “per circa un secolo e mezzo, ossia fino al termine della vita di Paolo Veronese, [i pittori veneti] prenderanno le mosse da un artista che è grande ingiustizia non aver prima d'ora considerato di più”.⁴¹ La sua sfortuna critica sarebbe derivata dalla dispersione dell'opera e dall'ombra gettata dai figli; mentre il ruolo rivestito in seno alla scuola è riscontrabile “sul fondamento dei disegni di lui”.⁴² Nella stessa sede riprende l'idea, già prospettata a Venturi, dell'esposizione della grafica belliniana attraverso “fotografie, raccolte in libro [...] acciocché, ove gli originali mancano, queste riproduzioni vengano almeno a supplire”.⁴³ Cantalamessa riponeva una grande fiducia nella capacità di penetrazione conoscitiva propria al mezzo fotografico al punto di affermare, in relazione ancora al Bellini: “è un uomo la cui immagine è destinata ad ingigantirsi, quando le fotografie dei suoi disegni saranno offerte alla comune conoscenza”.⁴⁴

La ricerca di opere di Lorenzo Lotto e Giorgione e una sala dedicata a Giovanni Bellini

Nel completamento delle serie pittoriche, Cantalamessa ha due priorità: reperire un dipinto di Lotto e uno di Giorgione; ma non ha, in questo, il sostegno dell'Amministrazione centrale: “il Ministero m'in-fligge un quadro attribuito a fra Paolino [...] il programma di questa galleria deve essere l'acquisto di pitture venete che colmino le gravi lacune. A questo proposito non vorrei che l'affare del quadro di Giorgione posseduto dal sig. Alberto Giovanelli, imbastito si bene quand'era qui il ministro, cadesse in dimenticanza”.⁴⁵ Mentre il Fra Paolino finisce immancabilmente in deposito, Cantalamessa amaramente commenta: “si è perduta una buona metà della somma che forse mi occorrerebbe a comprare un superbo Lorenzo Lotto, che tengo di mira, e che appartiene ad una parrocchia di campagna!”;⁴⁶ potrebbe trattarsi forse proprio del capolavoro di Santa Cristina al Tiverone.



5 Vittore Carpaccio, *Santo Stefano consacrato diacono, Berlino, Staatliche Museen*. SSSPAEPMVE, Archivio Fotografico e dei restauri, Fondo storico, volume rilegato in pelle con fotografie tratte da opere di Carpaccio

⁴⁰ Oltre ai citati articoli di Müntz, Cantalamessa conosce e cita “notizie del Courajod e di Héron de Villeform (Bulletin de la Société des arts graves de France, 1884)”, un “articolo di Gronau (Chronique des arts, 16 febbraio 1895)” e uno “di Venturi (Kunstfreund [forse Kunstfreunde], 1885)”. Archivio SSSPAEPMVE, *Offerte e acquisti*, Lettera cit.

⁴¹ Giulio Cantalamessa, “Appunti di critica d’arte”, in: *Ate-neo Veneto*, 1896 (XIX), I, pp. 145–167, ivi pp. 148–149.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁴⁴ Archivio SSSPAEPMVE, *Offerte e acquisti*, Lettera cit.

⁴⁵ SNS, Lettera, VT C2 B1 45. Si tratta ovviamente della *Tempesta*.



6 Lorenzo Lotto, *Madonna col Bambino e angeli*, già Comune di Osimo. SSPSAEPMVE, Archivio Fotografico e dei restauri, Fondo storico, foto n. 1188

Cantalamessa si consola per le operazioni sfumate, mettendo a segno due acquisti straordinari: un comparto di polittico di Carlo Crivelli, della dispersa ancona della Cattedrale di Camerino,⁴⁷ e la *Madonna col Bambino* di Cosmé Tura.⁴⁸ L'impresa di colmare la lacuna per Lotto si rivela, invece, sempre più ardua. Insegue, senza troppa convinzione, la *Madonna col Bambino e angeli* di Osimo senza abbandonare tentativi più ambiziosi. Del dipinto marchigiano scrive a Venturi: “quel Lotto di Osimo posso sperarlo? [...] Aiutami”⁴⁹ (fig. 6). Qualche giorno dopo, ritorna sconsolato sul tema: “hai fatto male a mandarmi a vuoto il mio tentativo di avere il piccolo quadro del Lotto di Osimo. Non è gran cosa [...] ma sarà meglio di zero! Credi forse che io non abbia tastato già il terreno per tirare un Lotto in Galleria? Uno superbo ce n'è a S. Cristina del Tiverone, vicino a Treviso [...] il parroco m'è parso

⁴⁶ SNS, Lettera, 24 luglio 1895, VT C2 B1 47.

⁴⁷ La vicenda è ricostruita in: Giulio Manieri Elia, “Risarcimento di un ‘difetto’. L'ingresso delle tavole di Carlo Crivelli nelle Gallerie dell'Accademia (1881-1895)”, in: *Carlo Crivelli alle Gallerie dell'Accademia, un capolavoro ricomposto* (cat. della mostra Venezia 2002), Milano 2002, pp. 23-38.

⁴⁸ SNS, Lettera, 13 febbraio 1896, VT C2 B1 62.

⁴⁹ SNS, Lettera, 14 gennaio 1896, VT C2 B1 58.

⁵⁰ SNS, Lettera, 27 gennaio 1896, VT C2 B1 59.

⁵¹ Gustavo Frizzoni, “Lorenzo Lotto pittore. A proposito di una nuova pubblicazione”, in: *Archivio Storico dell'Arte*, II (1896), pp. 195-224 e pp. 427-447.

⁵² SNS, Lettera, 27 ottobre 1896, VT C2 B1 78. La notte tra 4 e 5 settembre 1911 il quadro è stato trafugato ed è a tutt'oggi disperso.

⁵³ La saletta occupava una piccola porzione dell'ampio ambiente che attualmente accoglie il *Ciclo di Sant'Orsola* di Carpaccio.

⁵⁴ “La porta [...] in stile del Rinascimento, sarà eseguita in

poco disposto a trattare”. Mentre ne teneva sott’occhio un altro, a Monte San Giusto (Macerata), che i proprietari nonostante laute offerte non sembravano propensi a cedere, il problema per Lotto risultano essere le quotazioni: “avere un Lotto è cosa difficilissima, e di quello di Osimo, almeno provvisoriamente, io mi contentava”.⁵⁰

Passa quasi un anno e la pubblicazione di un lungo saggio di Frizzoni⁵¹ toglie infine ogni speranza: “hai visto come il Frizzoni ha esaltato il Lotto di Osimo? E’ proprio il quadro che forse, se il Ministero mi secondava l’anno scorso io potevo avere. Adesso sarebbe più difficile il tentativo”.⁵²

Cantalamessa, che nutre grande fiducia nella funzione didattica del museo e nel contributo che la fotografia in ciò può dare, riprende il progetto della predisposizione di album fotografici dedicati a singoli artisti da esporsi in sale monografiche. Questa volta realizza una raccolta dedicata a Giovanni Bellini da collocarsi nella nuova sala allestita su progetto di Pietro Paoletti. Si tratta di un piccolo ambiente, l’allora sala XVIII,⁵³ da inaugurarsi nel 1901; l’allestimento è concepito “in stile del Rinascimento” e vi vengono raccolti tutti i dipinti del Giambellino tranne la monumentale *Pala di San Giobbe*;⁵⁴ sotto una delle finestre trova, dunque, posto “un leggio e su questo un libro contenente le riproduzioni fotografiche di tutte le opere di Giovanni Bellini”.

legno, dipinto poscia in maniera di simulare il marmo, e sarà sormontata da una cornice e da un fregio, con vari ornamenti di fogliami e con la medaglia recante l’effigie del pittore; il soffitto, il cui disegno il Paoletti trasse da un quadro del Cima, sarà diviso in tre scomparti, con ornamenti geometrici, e tinto in rosso ed in azzurro. [...] La piccola sala, adornata delle stupende immagini religiose, avrà il carattere severo d’un oratorio”. E.[ttore] R.[omanello], “*La sala di Giovanni Bellini*”, in: *L’Adriatico*, 20 gennaio 1901. L’articolo mi è stato segnalato da

Michela Scarazzolo, che ringrazio, ed è trascritto in: Michela Scarazzolo, “*Tanto merito di generosità e di amor patrio*”. *La donazione di Girolamo Contarini alla città di Venezia (1838)*, tesi di dottorato, a.a. 2009–2010, supervisore Linda Borean, Università degli Studi di Udine, doc. 58.

Silvia Paoli

Fotografia come documento. Luca Beltrami architetto, storico dell'arte, collezionista, fotografo

Luca Beltrami (1854–1933) fu un uomo profondamente radicato nella cultura storica e politica dell'Italia post-unitaria e un architetto, storico dell'arte e collezionista, precocemente consapevole delle enormi potenzialità del linguaggio della fotografia. Durante il 'lungo' Ottocento, in Italia, la fotografia si confronta con la storia dell'arte mentre va acquisendo sempre più qualità, solidità di mestiere e dimensione professionale. La storia dell'arte si va affermando, in parallelo, come disciplina universitaria,¹ mentre gli storici dell'arte divengono sempre più consapevoli dell'importanza della fotografia nello studio dell'arte italiana. Considerata come una fondamentale fonte documentaria, la fotografia ha un ruolo attivo nel determinare le vicende della storia dell'arte e, tramite la divulgazione a vasto raggio, veicola la percezione delle opere determinando anche la più o meno consapevole attenzione degli studiosi.

Beltrami nasce a Milano nel 1854, ancora in epoca austriaca (la Lombardia viene annessa al Regno di Sardegna nel 1859), ma acquisisce ben presto, negli anni che seguono l'unificazione, una formazione di carattere internazionale dovuta agli studi compiuti al Regio Istituto Tecnico Superiore di Milano e quindi all'École des Beaux Arts di Parigi, cui viene ammesso nel 1876.²

Nei primi anni della sua formazione, condotta tra Parigi e Milano, non perde i contatti con la città natale e continua a frequentare i circoli della Scapigliatura, oltre a numerosi artisti e studiosi: è amico

¹ Attraverso l'introduzione del primo insegnamento all'Università "La Sapienza" di Roma, tenuto da Adolfo Venturi (1856–1941) cfr. Giacomo Agosti, *La nascita della storia dell'arte in Italia. Adolfo Venturi dal museo all'università 1880–1940*, Venezia 1996.

² Sulla vicenda biografica e culturale di Luca Beltrami, cfr. Luciana Baldrighi (a c. di), *Luca Beltrami architetto. Milano tra Ottocento e Novecento* (cat. della mostra Milano

1997), Milano 1997; cfr., inoltre, i numerosi scritti di Amedeo Bellini, tra cui ricordiamo quelli dedicati all'archivio di Beltrami, Amedeo Bellini (a c. di), *Il fondo di carte e libri della Raccolta Beltrami nella Biblioteca d'arte del Castello Sforzesco di Milano*, Milano 2006; id., *Le carte di Luca Beltrami. Un architetto attraverso il suo archivio*, Milano 2008.

di Tranquillo Cremona, Giuseppe Grandi, Luigi Conconi – grazie al quale diviene acquafortista,³ poi di Gaetano Moretti, Giacomo Boni, Giovanni Segantini, di cui è grande ammiratore.⁴

A Parigi Beltrami ha il primo prestigioso incarico ufficiale per la ricostruzione dell'Hotel de Ville distrutto dopo i fatti della Comune, oltre agli incarichi per il Trocadero e l'Opera di Charles Garnier. Dalla Francia partecipa al concorso per il monumento alle Cinque Giornate, poi realizzato da Giuseppe Grandi e inaugurato nel 1895, e a quello per l'insegnamento all'Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, ove viene invitato da Camillo Boito, suo maestro. Questi primi successi gli valgono l'ingresso a pieno titolo nella vita cittadina milanese e sono alla base di una prestigiosa carriera professionale esplicita in più direzioni, dalla storia dell'arte, al restauro, all'architettura, alla tutela dei monumenti e all'attività politica, ma anche all'attività di romanziere e di polemista sui quotidiani. Dopo il primo lavoro di restauro, condotto sul Castello di Soncino, ne conduce molti altri a Milano e in Lombardia. È impegnato inoltre sul fronte della tutela come membro della Commissione conservatrice dei monumenti della Provincia di Milano, poi come delegato del Ministero per i monumenti della Lombardia e infine come membro della Direzione dell'Ufficio Regionale per la Conservazione dei Monumenti, istituito nel 1892, anche per sua iniziativa, e da lui diretto fino al 1895.

Dopo l'Unità d'Italia numerosi sono i cambiamenti che mutano il volto della città di Milano e che si susseguono fino agli inizi del Novecento. Beltrami è al centro di molti interventi sin dagli anni Ottanta: in primo luogo la battaglia, culturale e politica, volta a strappare il Castello Sforzesco alla distruzione – voluta anche da chi aveva interessi legati alla speculazione edilizia – battaglia che lo vede protagonista di un vasto e complesso progetto di ricostruzione del Castello stesso, condotto sul filo di una rigorosa indagine storica. Partecipa poi al concorso internazionale per la facciata del Duomo – ma viene sconfitto dall'allievo Giuseppe Brentano – e realizza molti edifici commissionati dalle classi dirigenti milanesi: la sede per il *Corriere della Sera*, il Palazzo per l'Esposizione Permanente in via Turati, il Palazzo delle Assicurazioni Generali in Piazza Cordusio, le due sedi della Banca Commerciale in piazza della Scala.

Gli anni milanesi sono quelli che più segnano e qualificano il suo percorso come uomo di cultura, animato da una concezione della storia positiva e lineare, in cui è fondamentale il rigore dell'analisi e della ricostruzione storica attraverso le fonti documentarie – di cui fanno parte le fotografie –, per la definizione di un'identità nazionale e per la conservazione della memoria, base di questa stessa identità. Beltrami non ammette indugi o cedimenti nei confronti di tutto ciò che può provocare fratture e rivolgimenti, come le avanguardie artistiche, le idee socialiste – è però antifascista – o le teorie rivoluzionarie in campo scientifico – combatterà le tesi di Albert Einstein –, proprio in virtù di questa sua lineare e progressiva concezione della storia.

La carriera politica lo porta a ricoprire la carica di deputato al Parlamento per ben tre legislature e infine a divenire Senatore del Regno col governo Giolitti nel 1905. Nell'ambito di queste cariche non mancherà di occuparsi della tutela e della conservazione dei monumenti, interesse che percorre tutta la sua attività e che lo vede anche salire al grado di conservatore dello Stato Pontificio, una volta tras-

³ Egli pubblicherà in anni successivi un opuscolo con 15 tavole tratte da sue acquaforti, con la descrizione di altre 43 incisioni realizzate tra il 1875 e il 1879: *Luca Beltrami acquafortista*, Milano 1909.

⁴ Cfr. Luca Beltrami, *Giovanni Segantini 1858-1899*, Roma 1899.

⁵ Cfr. Silvia Paoli, "Il Circolo Fotografico Lombardo. Associazione e cultura fotografica alla fine dell'Ottocento", in: Matteo Ceriana / Marina Miraglia (a c. di),

Brera 1899, un progetto di fototeca pubblica per Milano. Il "ricetto fotografico" di Brera (cat. della mostra Milano 2000), Milano 2000, pp. 68-75.

⁶ Cfr. Elena Dagrada / Elena Mosconi / Silvia Paoli (a c. di), *Moltiplicare l'istante. Beltrami, Comerio e Pacchioni tra fotografia e cinema (Quaderni Fondazione Cineteca Italiana)*, Milano 2007.

⁷ Cfr. Luca Beltrami, *Il Castello di Milano*, Milano 1894 (ediz. anastatica Milano 2002); id., *Guida storica del Ca-*



1 Antonio Paoletti, attr., Castello Sforzesco, Sala del Tesoro con sala di lettura per la Raccolta Luca Beltrami, 1939, gelatina al bromuro d'argento, Milano, Civico Archivio Fotografico, inv. AM 187

feritosi a Roma a partire dal 1920. Qui, grazie anche a un personale rapporto, dovuto a interessi e comunanze di studio, con Achille Ratti, papa Pio XI, avrà numerosi incarichi, tra cui quelli per gli interventi nella Basilica Vaticana, di cui restaura la cupola, e per la costruzione della nuova Pinacoteca Vaticana nel 1931, ultima sua opera.

L'impegno culturale di Beltrami rivolto alla fotografia si esplica soprattutto tra la fine degli anni Ottanta e l'inizio del nuovo secolo, periodo in cui egli compie le imprese più importanti, come la ricostruzione del Castello Sforzesco di Milano, e in cui assume cariche amministrative e politiche di rilievo. Sono anni in cui nascono enti e associazioni, a Milano e in Italia, con una forte attenzione alla fotografia e Luca Beltrami vi partecipa e li promuove. A Milano nasce il Circolo Fotografico Lombardo, di cui Beltrami è membro, sin dalla fondazione, come fotografo.⁵ È uno dei Circoli più importanti d'Italia, fondato nel 1889 e chiuso nel dicembre 1899, dopo i sanguinosi moti milanesi del maggio 1898, aperto al confronto internazionale, luogo di formazione di una cultura fotografica avanzata, cui partecipano importanti personalità della cultura e dell'imprenditoria milanese, ma anche personalità di rilievo internazionale, come i fratelli Lumière (Milano è la prima città italiana a organizzare proiezioni cinematografiche, sin dal 1895). Tra i suoi membri, compare anche Giuseppe Beltrami (1854-1935), fratello di Luca e fotografo amatore tra i più qualificati.⁶ Luca si servirà del suo aiuto per avere riprese fotografiche dei lavori al Castello Sforzesco, poi pubblicate nei suoi studi.⁷ Nel 1892 Luca Beltrami lancia un appello ai soci del Circolo Fotografico Lombardo perché donino copie di loro fotografie di "mo-

numenti e oggetti interessanti la storia artistica della Lombardia” all’Ufficio tecnico per la conservazione dei monumenti in Lombardia – da lui diretto tra il 1892 e il 1895 – consapevole della “particolare importanza che potrà assumere in avvenire la raccolta completa” di queste fotografie.⁸ Nel 1899, quando il Circolo Fotografico Lombardo chiude, nasce a Milano la prima raccolta pubblica di fotografia nel Palazzo di Brera, di cui Beltrami è promotore e sostenitore.⁹ In un articolo¹⁰ egli plaude all’iniziativa di fondazione della raccolta, chiamata “Ricetto fotografico”, fondata da Corrado Ricci, direttore della Pinacoteca di Brera dal 1898, Camillo Boito, professore di architettura dal 1860 all’Accademia di Brera e poi dal 1877 al Politecnico (e maestro di Beltrami), Giuseppe Fumagalli, direttore della Biblioteca Braidense dal 1896, e Gaetano Moretti, direttore dell’Ufficio regionale dei monumenti dal 1895, dopo Beltrami.¹¹ Egli sostiene decisamente la necessità di rendere accessibili al pubblico, in una Biblioteca, i materiali iconografici (stampe, disegni, fotografie) fondamentali per lo studio del patrimonio storico-artistico: “non può a meno di sembrare strano come, mentre gli esemplari di qualsiasi pubblicazione a stampa debbano, a termini di legge, essere depositati presso le Biblioteche governative, a disposizione del pubblico, una analoga prescrizione non esista per tutte le riproduzioni grafiche le quali, al pari di uno stampato in tipografia, hanno carattere di documento, e possono concorrere a preparare un prezioso materiale di studio. Perché si dovrà raccogliere ed ordinare in una pubblica Biblioteca qualunque ristampa di un romanzaccio, magari tradotto da un’altra lingua, e non si dovranno raccogliere ed ordinare incisioni e fotografie, il cui interesse apparentemente superficiale di attualità, può invece assumere fra pochi anni un particolare ed inatteso valore?” Afferma altresì, nello stesso articolo, consapevole del valore di ‘ricordo’ delle fotografie, purtroppo soggette al deperimento e alla dispersione: “Già si possono indicare oggidì delle fotografie, divenute rarissime, eseguite già da qualche decennio, le quali ci ricordano monumenti, opere d’arte, strutture che oggi più non esistono, od ebbero già a subire notevoli modificazioni; fotografie di avvenimenti e di personaggi storici [...]. Si aggiunga come, ad agevolare la dispersione delle fotografie concorra lo stesso rapido deterioramento che le medesime subiscono, per l’alterazione dei preparati chimici coi quali sono ottenute: alterazione che si verifica specialmente nelle prove eseguite nei primi tempi dell’invenzione, e che solo oggidì, con i processi al carbone, e colla tiratura in eliotipia, può essere evitata”. Il ricordo può essere mantenuto in vita con le fotografie, ma ciò non è ancora entrato nel “sentimento del pubblico”: ricorda “il vecchio Cordusio di cui da pochi giorni sono scomparse le ultime case [...] le vedute del Castello prima del suo restauro: dell’antica piazza d’armi prima che fosse trasformata in parco, ecc: di molte delle quali vedute forse non è già più possibile rintracciare una fotografia, e forse non venne neppure fatta, poiché non è ancora entrata nel sentimento del pubblico l’idea che di tutto quanto si distrugge o si trasforma si debba, col rapido ed economico mezzo della fotografia, assicurare il ricordo”.

stello di Milano. 1368-1894, Milano 1894 (ediz. anastatica Milano 2009); entrambi i volumi contengono fotoincisioni tratte da fotografie di Giuseppe Beltrami.

⁸ Luca Beltrami, “Comunicato dell’Ufficio Tecnico per la Conservazione dei Monumenti”, in: *Rivista Scientifico Artistica di Fotografia. Bollettino mensile del Circolo Fotografico Lombardo*, 1/1 (1892), p. 39.

⁹ Cfr. “Corriere Milanese. Una pubblica raccolta fotografica”, in: *Corriere della Sera* (1-2 novembre 1899), p. 2.

¹⁰ Polifilo [Luca Beltrami], “Per il maggior incremento degli studi (a proposito dell’Archivio fotografico)”, in: *Corriere della Sera* (15-16 novembre 1899), p. 1.

¹¹ Cfr. Matteo Ceriana / Marina Miraglia (a c. di), *Brera*

1899, un progetto di fototeca pubblica per Milano: il “ricetto fotografico” di Brera (cat. della mostra Milano 2000), Milano 2000.

¹² Beltrami 1899 (nota 10). Rimane testimonianza di questa donazione in una lettera presente negli Archivi della Soprintendenza di Brera, in cui Luca Beltrami esprime l’intenzione di donare “alcuni album e cartelle di fotografie” che suo fratello – Giuseppe – aveva ritirato dal Circolo Fotografico Lombardo, in liquidazione nel dicembre 1899: cfr. lettera del 5 dicembre 1899, Archivio Antico, parte II, cassetta VII, fascicolo “Pubblica Raccolta Fotografica”, Soprintendenza al Patrimonio Storico Artistico e Demo Etno Antropologico di Milano.



2 Luigi Sacchi, Sant'Ambrogio, 1849-1851, carta salata, Milano, Civico Archivio Fotografico, inv. RLB 2732

La preoccupazione per la conservazione delle fotografie si traduce poi concretamente nel contributo che egli dà al “Ricetto” di Brera: “chi scrive, tanto per predicare anche con l’esempio [...] manda all’Archivio di Brera le rare fotografie di monumenti milanesi, scomparsi o trasformati, che l’affetto per la città natale spinse a raccogliere.”¹²



3 Ad. Braun & C., Dipinto murale – Putto sotto un pergolato – Bernardino Luini - Chantilly – Musée Condé (da Milano - Villa Rabia detta “La Pelucca”), ante 1911 (volume di Beltrami su Luini), stampa al carbone, inv. RLB 209

Se il “Ricetto” fosse durato più a lungo – ne rimane traccia solo fino al 1906 – Beltrami avrebbe forse lasciato la sua collezione a Brera. È lecito tuttavia pensare che egli lasciò la propria collezione fotografica al Castello non come ripiego, ma come destinazione propria, in ragione di tutto lo studio e la dedizione da lui profusi al fine di ricostruire il Castello e donarlo ai cittadini come sede dei Musei civici.

Ancora due anni dopo, in un altro articolo sul “Corriere della Sera”, ritornava sul valore della fotografia per lo studio e l’apprendimento, sostenendo la necessità di costituire una Biblioteca per gli “artefici” che raccogliesse, oltre ai libri, “stampe, fotografie e disegni”,¹³ sul modello di quella fondata quindici anni prima a Parigi da Forney per “l’arte industriale”: le facoltà intellettuali, sosteneva Beltrami, si devono sviluppare grazie ai libri ma anche a “quell’altro materiale grafico” [e fotografico] che valorizza la “funzione più diretta e individuale che ha l’occhio nostro”.

La “Raccolta Luca Beltrami”, comprensiva dei materiali di studio, dei libri, disegni e appunti di Luca Beltrami, fu aperta alla consultazione pubblica nella Sala del Tesoro ai Civici Musei del Castello Sforzesco di Milano nel 1939, grazie alla volontà del Beltrami che aveva voluto donarla al Comune di Milano (fig. 1).¹⁴

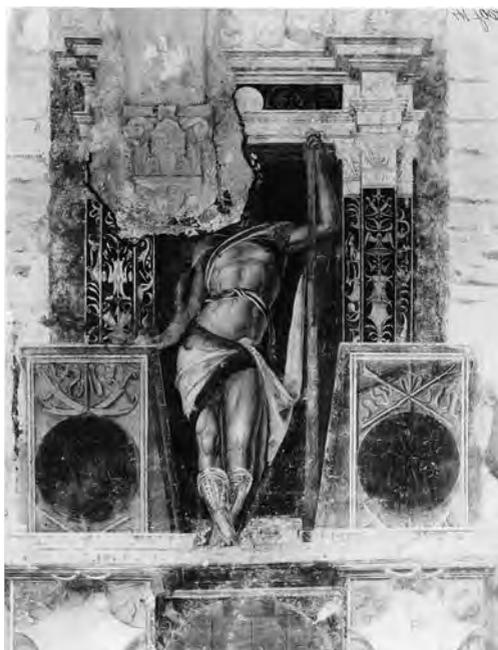
La “Raccolta” comprendeva all’epoca 70.000 fotografie – oggi ne sono state identificate circa 5.000 – e la sua apertura al pubblico era la realizzazione di quello che si può considerare, per i Musei Civici di Milano, il primo progetto museologico destinato alla consultazione pubblica anche delle fotografie. Il primo nucleo della “Raccolta”, dedicato alla documentazione dell’opera di Leonardo (e denominato “raccolta vinciana”), era stato costituito dal Beltrami nel 1900, anno dell’apertura dei Musei Civici al

¹³ Luca Beltrami, “Corriere Milanese. Per una biblioteca tipo Forney”, in: *Corriere della Sera* (6–7 ottobre 1901), s.p.

¹⁴ Cfr. “Corriere Milanese. Una preziosa raccolta nella definitiva sistemazione”, in: *Corriere della Sera* (26 agosto 1939), s.p.



4 Ad. Braun & C., Leonardo da Vinci, Studio per il volto di S. Anna e S. Giovannino, Chatsworth, Duke of Devonshire's House, ante 1889, stampa al carbone, Milano, Civico Archivio Fotografico, inv. RLB 89



5 Achille Ferrario, Castello Sforzesco, Sala del Tesoro, Donato Bramante, *Argo*, albumina, 1894–1914, Milano, Civico Archivio Fotografico, inv. RLB 2712/1 D

Castello. Il nucleo si era poi ampliato alla documentazione, comprensiva delle fotografie, di tutta l'arte lombarda studiata dal Beltrami.

Dopo la seconda guerra mondiale, e le dispersioni che la "Raccolta" subì, i diversi materiali furono divisi fra i vari Istituti del Castello: i disegni andarono al Gabinetto dei Disegni, la maggior parte delle fotografie al Civico Archivio Fotografico, i libri e l'archivio delle sue carte andarono alla Biblioteca d'Arte, insieme a un piccolo nucleo di fotografie.

Il Civico Archivio Fotografico ha attuato un intervento di catalogazione scientifica, condotto secondo i parametri indicati dall'ICCD per la scheda F ("fotografia"), e di restauro che ha permesso di studiare interamente la "Raccolta Luca Beltrami" gettando nuova luce sulla natura del fondo e sull'attenzione del Beltrami per la fotografia, sottesa ai suoi studi di storia dell'arte, alle imprese di restauro, tra cui i lavori dedicati al Castello Sforzesco dal 1893 al 1905, all'opera di tutela che lo vede impegnato nelle prime strutture italiane attive in tal senso e che lo portarono ad occuparsi, in particolare, degli interventi per la chiesa di Santa Maria delle Grazie, per la basilica di Sant'Ambrogio, per la Certosa di Pavia e per il Duomo di Brescia.

Nella sua attenzione alla fotografia, considerata nella sua materialità e nelle sue specificità di linguaggio, egli mostra particolare consapevolezza delle tecniche fotografiche e si orienta, nel collezionare le fotografie, più verso le antiche tecniche di stampa fotografica, come la carta salata e poi la stampa all'albumina e al carbone, che verso la fredda esattezza della gelatina ai sali d'argento. Fu quindi un raffinato conoscitore dell'oggetto 'fotografia' e dei migliori fotografi del periodo, non solo italiani, con alcuni dei quali, oltre naturalmente al fratello Giuseppe, ebbe documentati rapporti, anche di amicizia, per la realizzazione di campagne fotografiche, sul patrimonio storico-artistico, e di progetti editoriali: tra costoro vanno citati soprattutto Achille Ferrario (1848–1914), Antonio Paoletti (1881–1943),¹⁵ Carlo Fumagalli (1849–1912).¹⁶

La quasi totalità delle sue imprese e dei suoi studi trova riscontro nella collezione di fotografie e l'esigenza di avere una documentazione di qualità lo porta alla conoscenza di quelli che furono e sono i migliori esiti della fotografia soprattutto ottocentesca.

Risulta subito evidente, studiando la sua collezione, come egli lavorò acquisendo, relativamente ad un soggetto di studio, più stampe fotografiche derivate dallo stesso negativo (per esempio la stampa a contatto e più stampe definitive, per poterle usare anche per appunti di lavoro), oppure di tecniche diverse (per esempio, albumine con diversi viraggi, o stampe al carbone in diversi pigmenti). Ciò sta a indicare quindi una particolare sensibilità verso la fotografia che lo porta a considerare impossibile consegnare l'evidenza documentaria relativa a un soggetto di studio a un unico scatto o a un'unica stampa fotografica.



6 Antonio Paoletti, Castello Sforzesco, Sala del Tesoro, 1914–1915, gelatina bromuro d'argento, Milano, Civico Archivio Fotografico, inv. RLB 2718/1

L'attenzione alle tecniche antiche è evidente nella presenza di veri e propri 'incunaboli' della storia della fotografia italiana, presenti nella sua raccolta.

In primo luogo vanno citate le fotografie dedicate a Sant'Ambrogio (254), basilica di cui si occupa durante i suoi incarichi per la tutela dei monumenti (fig. 2).¹⁷ Alcune di queste fotografie sono dovute a Luigi Sacchi (1805–1861),¹⁸ pittore, incisore e primo fotografo milanese ad usare il procedimento per fotografia su carta di Blanquart-Evrard. Luigi era padre di Archimede, che fu maestro di Beltrami al Regio Istituto Tecnico Superiore. Beltrami fu assistente di Archimede alla cattedra di "architettura pratica" e poi lo sostituì alla sua morte. Sarà proprio Beltrami a commemorarne la scomparsa in un intervento presso il Collegio degli Ingegneri ed Architetti di Milano, non mancando di introdurre nel suo

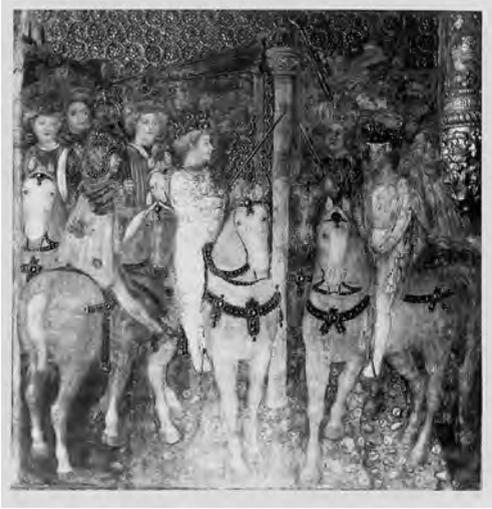
¹⁵ Su Antonio Paoletti, cfr. Jessica Brigo, "Il Civico Archivio Fotografico di Milano. Antonio Paoletti fotografo dei Civici Musei del Castello Sforzesco", in: *Rassegna di Studi e di Notizie*, XXXI/XXVIII (2004), pp. 131–148.

¹⁶ Sulla fotografia dell'Ottocento a Milano, cfr. Silvia Paoli (a c. di), *Lo sguardo della fotografia sulla città ottocentesca. Milano 1839–1899*, Torino 2010. Su Achille Ferrario, cfr. id., "Achille Ferrario", *ibid.*, pp. 283–284; su

Carlo Fumagalli, cfr. Sergio Rebora / Giorgio Sassi, "Luigi Montabone", *ibid.*, pp. 291–292.

¹⁷ Luca Beltrami dedica diversi scritti alla basilica di Sant'Ambrogio; cfr. Bellini 2006 (nota 2).

¹⁸ Cfr. Silvia Paoli, "Luigi Sacchi", in: id. (a c. di), *Lo sguardo della fotografia sulla città ottocentesca. Milano 1839–1899*, Torino 2010, pp. 299–301.



7 Carlo Fumagalli, *Monza, Duomo, cappella di Teodolinda, ante 1891, albumina, Milano, Civico Archivio Fotografico, inv. RLB 1068*

tale condensazione e acutezza di effetti e di dettagli, per cui il pregio precipuo del monumento, e cioè l'equilibrio e il rapporto delle masse, si trova bene spesso sacrificato o perduto.”¹⁹

Il brano ben esemplifica la preferenza di Beltrami per le antiche fotografie, e non per le “recenti”, che non hanno la “minuzia di dettaglio” di queste ma hanno “grandiosità di effetto”. Nelle parole di Beltrami è evidente lo sconcerto e il disorientamento di un uomo dell'Ottocento di fronte alla visione proposta dalla fotografia, una visione del reale immediata, non selettiva, come quella dell'occhio umano, ma sovrabbondante nei dettagli e nei particolari.²⁰

Tra gli anni Ottanta e i primi del secolo successivo Beltrami è il più autorevole esperto di architettura, per gli studi sull'arte lombarda e su Leonardo. Molte sue fotografie (488) sono dedicate alle opere di Bernardino Luini o a lui attribuite, come gli affreschi di Villa Rabia detta “La Pelucca” o quelli, ancora ripresi dal Sacchi, della chiesa di San Maurizio al Monastero Maggiore, in relazione con gli studi

scritto interessanti osservazioni sulle fotografie di Luigi Sacchi: “Archimede Sacchi ebbe una straordinaria occasione per esercitare quello spirito d'osservazione, quella curiosità in lui così istintiva. Questa occasione [...] è stata quella di accompagnare il padre suo nel giro della penisola [...] il padre di Archimede [Luigi], artista d'animo e di professione, si era proposto d'illustrare colla fotografia i principali nostri monumenti. Molti di noi certo ricordano le fotografie del Sacchi: presentano sempre un interesse, un'attrattiva speciale. Benché non abbiano quelle minuzie di dettaglio che troviamo nelle recenti fotografie, anzi forse per ciò, le riproduzioni conservano quella grandiosità di effetto che caratterizza la impressione del vero. In fondo, la finezza di riproduzione fotografica al giorno d'oggi, toccando un estremo grado di perfezione, è giunta a risultati che sono eccessivi, perché sorpassano la potenza visiva del nostro nervo ottico, cosicché invece di sottoporci la genuina impressione del vero, ci presentano una

¹⁹ Luca Beltrami, “Commemorazione della vita e delle opere di Archimede Sacchi”, in: *Atti del Collegio degli Ingegneri ed Architetti in Milano*, XX/3-4 (1886), pp. 181-199.

²⁰ Si pensi al concetto di “inconscio ottico” proposto da Walter Benjamin nel 1931 con la sua *Piccola storia della fotografia* (prima edizione italiana in Walter Benjamin, *L'opera d'arte nell'epoca della sua riproducibilità tecnica*, Torino 1966) o alle precedenti considerazioni di László Moholy-Nagy nel suo *Malerei Fotografie Film* (Bauhausbücher VIII), München 1925, relative all'“eccesso” di visione dell'occhio umano.

²¹ Cfr. Luca Beltrami, *Luini 1512-1532*, Milano 1911.

²² Cfr. Luca Beltrami, “A chi si possa attribuire l'applicazione della camera oscura”, in: *Rivista Scientifico Artistica di Fotografia. Bollettino mensile del Circolo Foto-*

grafico Lombardo, 1/1 (1892), pp. 6-10: in questo articolo Beltrami riflette storicamente sui primordi della fotografia ponendosi il problema dell'uso della camera oscura: fu Leonardo, a suo parere, a individuare in essa delle caratteristiche che poi portarono all'invenzione della fotografia.

²³ Cfr. Carlo Fumagalli / Luca Beltrami / Diego Sant'Ambrogio, *Reminiscenze di storia ed arte nel suburbio e nella città di Milano*, Milano 1891; Carlo Fumagalli / Luca Beltrami, *La Cappella detta della regina Teodolinda nella basilica di San Giovanni in Monza e le sue pitture murali*, Milano 1891; Carlo Fumagalli / Luca Beltrami, *Guida storico-descrittiva della città di Monza*, Monza 1891; Carlo Fumagalli, *Il Castello di Malpaga e le sue pitture*, Milano 1893; Carlo Fumagalli, *Il Castello di Milano e i suoi Musei d'Arte*, Milano 1902.

che Beltrami gli dedicò.²¹ I putti della serie di Villa Rabia sono presenti con numerose fotografie, di tecniche diverse (fig. 3). Il nucleo dedicato alle opere di Leonardo da Vinci (187 fotografie)²² fu il primo ad essere composto da Beltrami nel 1900 e fu di supporto alla mostra dedicata a Leonardo al Palazzo della Triennale a Milano nel 1939 (anno in cui la Raccolta Beltrami fu aperta al pubblico): in esso compaiono stampe fotografiche di varie tecniche dello stesso soggetto, anche tradotte in fotoincisione (fig. 4).

Uno dei nuclei più importanti è quello dedicato al Castello Sforzesco, interessato dai lavori di ricostruzione diretti da Beltrami tra il 1893 e il 1906 (348 fotografie): in questo caso le fotografie coprono tutti gli aspetti di studio e di lavoro, dedicate all'insieme come ai dettagli costruttivi e decorativi, per finire con gli allestimenti. Un grande lavoro, ove Beltrami esplica una concezione di recupero dell'edificio legata alla sua destinazione civile in virtù della funzione educativa dell'arte e dei valori positivi della storia per l'educazione e che la fotografia rispecchia in tutti i suoi aspetti.

Molti sono gli esempi che si possono fare, legati alle modalità d'uso della fotografia da parte di Beltrami, il quale sempre interloquisce con i fotografi per avere da loro diverse prove positive tratte dallo stesso negativo. Basti guardare, come esempio, le serie di fotografie presenti nella Raccolta dedicate all'affresco di Argo, scoperto nel 1893 nella Sala del Tesoro del Castello Sforzesco e allora attribuito a Bramante: quelle di Achille Ferrario, del 1894 (fig. 5), e quelle di Antonio Paoletti, del 1914 (fig. 6), eseguite dopo gli interventi di restauro di Oreste Silvestri. Con Antonio Paoletti Beltrami lavorò dall'apertura dei Musei Civici fino al 1920, anno in cui egli si trasferì a Roma.

Un caso particolare sono poi i lavori condotti insieme a Carlo Fumagalli, fotografo, col quale Beltrami firmò diversi suoi libri, conferendogli dignità di autore (fig. 7).²³ Carlo Fumagalli fu socio, come fotografo dilettante, del Circolo Fotografico Lombardo dal 1889 al 1896, poi divenne fotografo professionista. Rilevò lo storico stabilimento fotografico Luigi Montabone nel 1901 e lo tenne fino al 1910, specializzandosi in raffinate pubblicazioni d'arte, anche grazie a un archivio di oltre settantamila lastre, in gran parte relative al patrimonio conservato presso le istituzioni museali ambrosiane.

La "Raccolta Luca Beltrami" è oggi pienamente consultabile al Civico Archivio Fotografico del Castello Sforzesco di Milano e costituisce uno dei fondi fotografici più importanti dedicati soprattutto alla storia dell'arte lombarda.

Andrea Mattiello

Giacomo Boni: A Photographic Memory for the People. Documenting Architecture through Photographic Surveys in Post-Unification Italy

Introduction—The Historical Context

This paper analyses Giacomo Boni's strategic use of photography in relation to the campaign of valorisation of Italy's national heritage, which was initiated at the time of the country's unification. We will focus on a specific case study, a photographic survey of what he considered medieval architecture in the city of Vicenza, realized by Boni in the fall of 1887. The survey was collected in a little pamphlet, which, although already known in the literature, was thought to be rare and to exist in only one draft-copy in Boni's archive.¹ During research conducted for the Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio in Vicenza, another copy of the album was identified, which today is preserved at the Biblioteca Civica Bertoliana in Vicenza.²

Before talking about Boni, we need to take a step back and review the context in which Boni operated and the role photography had in architectural surveys of the time.

The new unified Italian State of 1861 was infused with a conscious drive to create a sense of belonging, a sense of unity for its very much diversified people. The most evident instance of this drive can be found in the case for one language: in a country with a high level of illiteracy and multiple co-existing dialects, a linguistic unity needed to be found. This drive to alphabetize the population was also seen as a necessary step towards a truly democratic people, inevitably passing through the reform and consolidation of schools and cultural institutions.³

¹ Cf. Eva Tea, *Giacomo Boni nella vita del suo tempo*, vol. I, Milano 1932, p. 176; Adele Simioli, "Il sostrato archeologico della modernità. Il carteggio tra Giacomo Boni e Philip Webb", in: Maria Antonietta Crippa (ed.), *Luoghi*

e modernità. Pratiche e saperi dell'architettura, Milano 2007, pp. 119–138, here p. 138.

² Biblioteca Civica Bertoliana, Vicenza, GONZ. 371, busta 10.

A similar drive towards unity was the one aiming to create a unified cultural perception of Italy's artistic and architectural heritage. Both linguistic and aesthetic unification were driven by the same underlying social and political principle: the idea that creating a common sense of belonging through cultural heritage recognizable by the people would be a fundamental pillar of a newly constructed sense of national identity.⁴

Based on this strong conception of the leading role of the State, the intellectual elite of the country led a campaign to develop a national survey program to document, preserve and restore the most significant monuments, ancient remains and important architectures of the country.

In this context, architects and archaeologists such as Luca Beltrami, Camillo Boito, Alfredo D'Andrade, Alfonso Rubbiani, historians of art and architecture such as Giovanni Morelli, Pietro Selvatico Estense, Pietro Toesca, Adolfo Venturi, all recognized photography as a fundamental tool for such campaigns. Giulio Bollati in his 1975 essay "Notes on photography and history" writes:

"A vast working field opens up to photography as a unifying tool. There is the need to inventory, catalogue, classify in order to educate, share and exalt. [...] More generally it collaborates to the creation of a didactic and celebrative national rhetoric [...]. The collection of these activities forms a sort of visual dictionary of the Italian people, the validity of which is still active today".⁵

The traditional use of photography

The use of photography as an operational tool to catalogue and to conduct artistic and architectural surveys can be traced back to the lesson of John Ruskin⁶ and Viollet-le-Duc.⁷ During his 1845 trip to Italy, Ruskin developed an interest in Venetian architecture. Being unsatisfied by his own sketches, unable to capture on paper the complexity and the actual state of decay of Venetian palaces, he felt the new technology of daguerreotypes was more suited to his needs, almost akin to bringing back the actual building with all its details. Ruskin was impressed by its speed and ease of use, which freed him from the subjectivism of drawn representation and enabled a scientific translation of reality.⁸

³ Cf. Alberto Asor Rosa, "Una lingua per la nazione", in: *Storia d'Italia. Dall'Unità a oggi*, vol. 4, 2, Torino 1975, pp. 900–909, here p. 902.

⁴ Cf. Tullio De Mauro, *Storia linguistica dell'Italia unita*, Bari 1963, here pp. 34–43; Alberto Asor Rosa, "I problemi reali – Creazione e assestamento dello stato unitario (1860–1887)", in: *Storia d'Italia. Dall'Unità a oggi*, vol. 4, 2, Torino 1975, pp. 839–850, here pp. 839–840.

⁵ "Un vasto campo di lavoro si apre alla fotografia come strumento di unificazione. Occorre inventariare, catalogare, classificare, per far conoscere, mettere in comune, esaltare. [...] Più in generale essa collabora alla creazione di una retorica nazionale didattica e celebrativa [...]. Dall'insieme di queste attività prende forma una sorta di dizionario visivo degli Italiani la cui validità non si può dire del tutto esaurita neppure oggi." Giulio Bollati, "Note su fotografia e storia", in: *Storia d'Italia. L'immagine fotografica 1845–1945*, Annali 2, I, Torino 1979, p. 31 [Author's translation].

⁶ Paolo Costantini / Italo Zannier (ed.), *I dagherrotipi della collezione Ruskin*, Florence 1986.

⁷ Cf. Massimo Cova, "Fotografia e restauro architettonico", in: *Fotologia*, 8 (1987), p. 24; Marco Mozzo, "Note sulla documentazione fotografica in Italia nella seconda metà dell'Ottocento tra tutela, restauro e catalogazione", in: Enrico Castelnuovo / Giuseppe Sergi (eds.), *Arti e storia nel Medioevo. IV. Il Medioevo al passato e al presente*, Torino 2004, pp. 847–870.

⁸ "I have been lucky enough to get from a poor Frenchman here [...] some most beautiful though very small Daguerreotypes of the palace I have been trying to draw; and certainly Daguerreotypes taken by this vivid sunlight are glorious things [...]. It is a noble invention [...] and any one who has worked and blundered and stammered as I have done for four days, and then sees the thing he has been trying to do so long in vain done perfectly and faultlessly in half minute, won't abuse it afterwards", in a letter from John Ruskin to his father from Venice, 7 October 1845, as transcribed in Harold L. Shapiro (ed.), *Ruskin in Italy: Letters to his Parents 1845*, Oxford 1972, letter n. 142, p. 220.

By contrast, the mainstream trend in Italian architecture photography at the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century is well documented by the cases of James and Domenico Anderson, Fratelli Alinari, Giacomo Brogi. Their photographic portraits of architectures and monuments were mostly focused on objectification: buildings, monuments, city spaces were all approached with the same methodology,⁹ aimed at reducing the complexity of the specific architecture or city space into a single, contained, highly recognizable image. This sort of architectural icon was able to communicate a synthetic experience of the building, and would become one of the many *vistas* of the city, collected in city specific photographic catalogues edited by the photographers themselves.

These aesthetic choices were clearly related to the specific market of the Grand Tour and of the *vedutismo*. It is not a coincidence that some of the photographic firms were established by former engravers and by publishers specialising in city views. The direct relation to this tradition informs the geometric and optic structure of the first photographic surveys of Italian cities: cameras were positioned on tripods high above the ground level so as to have a central perspective on the building, the monument, or the piazza that was being portrayed. This was the same view found on engravings depicting similar subjects. Diaphragms and time of exposure were set to allow maximum depth of field and clarity on all surfaces of the photograph. All eccentric or disturbing elements, such as people, animals, and clouds, were either carefully removed from or added to photographic prints in order to mirror the picturesque quality of eighteenth-century *vistas*.

To find the first applications of photography as a surveying tool in Italy,¹⁰ we have to refer to examples such as the campaigns that took place during the restoration of the Scrovegni chapel in Padua by Carlo Naya in 1865–1867,¹¹ and the collaboration between the architect Alfonso Rubiani and the photographer Pietro Poppi in Bologna between 1880 and 1900. The latter case was an explicit integration of photography and survey, where the architect Rubiani drafted survey measurements and compositional solutions directly onto the photographic prints realized by Poppi.¹²

These occasional surveys subsequently merged into a coordinated national program in the form of the “catasto dei monumenti in Italia”, the National Catalogue of Italian monuments.¹³ Three connected institutions were involved in supporting this effort: the Department for Education, the Directorate of Fine Arts and Antiquities, and the Regia Calcografia. The latter, which commissioned copies of art pieces from antiquity for the purpose of the study of art in the academies, also became the home of the Gabinetto Fotografico, the Italian Photographic Cabinet, which collected photographs in support of the national catalogue.¹⁴ Photographs collected in this cabinet show an analytic and scientific quality, which is different from those of *vedutismo* photography. Amongst the founders of this cabinet, which later became the Fototeca Nazionale, the National Photo Archive, was Giacomo Boni.

⁹ Monica Maffioli, *Il Belvedere. Fotografi e architetti nell'Italia dell'Ottocento*, Torino 1996.

¹⁰ Marina Miraglia, “La fortuna istituzionale della fotografia dalle origini agli inizi del Novecento”, in: Marina Miraglia / Matteo Ceriana (eds.), *Brera 1899, un progetto di fototeca pubblica per Milano: il “ricetto fotografico” di Brera* (exhibition cat.), Milan 2000, pp. 11–21.

¹¹ Paolo Costantini, “Pietro Selvatico: fotografia e cultura artistica alla metà dell'Ottocento”, in: *Fotologia*, 4 (1985), pp. 54–67, here p. 65; Cova 1987 (note 7), pp. 24–30.

¹² Cf. Maffioli 1996 (note 9), p. 67.

¹³ Cf. Giacomo Boni, “Il catasto dei monumenti in Italia”, in: *Archivio Storico dell'Arte*, IV/VI (1892), p. 4.

¹⁴ Paola Callegari, “Il Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale: storia di un'istituzione tra esigenze conservative e promozione del patrimonio culturale”, in: Paola Callegari / Valter Curzi (eds.), *Venezia: la tutela per immagini. Un caso esemplare dagli archivi della Fototeca Nazionale* (exhibition cat. Rome 2005), Bologna 2005, pp. 55–68; Donata Levi, “Da Cavalcasella a Venturi. La documentazione fotografica della pittura tra connoisseurship e tutela”, in: Anna Maria Spiazzi / Luca Majoli / Corinna Giudici (eds.), *Gli archivi fotografici delle Soprintendenze. Tutela e storia. Territori veneti e limitrofi* (proceedings Venice 2008), Crocetta del Montello 2010, pp. 23–33.

Medieval Vicenza—a case study

Giacomo Boni was born in Venice in 1859. In 1878 he was active as a draftsman in the restorations of the Palazzo Ducale. During this time he also came to know the work of Ruskin through his interactions with William D. Caröe, Philip Webb, Georges Wardle, Frederick Bunnay, English architects and artists visiting or living in Venice at the time. He then studied in the Architecture Department of the Accademia delle Belle Arti in Venice, and during that period he met Ruskin, with whom he subsequently entertained a correspondence. In 1898, Boni was appointed director for the excavations of the Foro Romano and in 1900 was amongst the first promoters of aerial photography for archaeological purposes.¹⁵

Boni encountered photography early on in his career while still working in Venice. Under Ruskin's influence, and in a continuous exchange with British institutions, Boni conducted a number of photographic surveys around Italy.¹⁶ As with other surveys of the time, Boni pushed the limits of photography in an analytic direction, contributing an attention to details and to data that was otherwise excluded from mainstream commercial photography.

One of the surveys he conducted, and the focus of this paper, was a series of photographs of medieval architecture in Vicenza. In a letter to William H. White of the Royal Institute of British Architects on 16 December 1887, Giacomo Boni reported on one of these photographic campaigns, undertaken that same year. Boni writes to White in English:

“[...] Just now I am trying to deliver a few collections of the medieval antiquities of Vicenza, which I studied during last autumn. Vicenza, while celebrated for its classic edifices, contains also, unnoted [...] though intact, ancient monuments of Ecclesiastical, Military and Civil architecture, often of the purest Venetian style, together with examples of brickwork of the Romanesque and Lombard schools, as well as frescoed gothic buildings, such as are scarcely to be found even in Venice. To preserve some record of these precious remains I have photographed some of the most characteristic examples, which I propose to print on Bromide paper, in black tints etchings. These prints I desire to publish private subscription at the price of 20 francs for the collection of 20 sheets.”¹⁷

Almost at the same time, during December 1887, Boni sent an identical request to his friend Philip Webb, architect and member of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, who, on 21 December 1887, replied by saying that he and some others would buy a print of the pamphlet.¹⁸

In the spirit of the *Gothic Revival* aesthetic highly regarded by his British friends, the twenty-two photographs (in divergence from the letter cited above, twenty-two were actually printed) portray church steeples, details of seemingly Gothic buildings, city palaces, barns, and cloisters in and around Vicenza. Boni specifically chose buildings that he considered Gothic, although their temporal and stylistic attribution is not always clear.¹⁹ It should be noted that, based on visual inspection and on Boni's own words, these appear to be examples of gelatin silver prints on paper, at the time of Boni's work a relatively recent innovation. The prints are in a good state of preservation, although traces of oxidation can be observed.

¹⁵ Cf. Guido Zucconi, “Tra archeologia ed estetica urbana: Giacomo Boni alla direzione dei Fori (1898–1911)”, in: *Roma moderna e contemporanea*, I/3 (1993), pp. 121–138.

¹⁶ Cf. Rossana Puddu / Lucia Pallaver, “Giacomo Boni e le applicazioni della fotografia”, in: *Fotologia*, 8 (1987), pp. 31–36.

¹⁷ Giacomo Boni, *Letter by Giacomo Boni from Venice to William H. White*, manuscript, LC/26/6/13, p. 2, Royal Institute of British Architects, London.

¹⁸ Cf. Simioli 2007 (note 1), pp. 132–133, 135–136.

¹⁹ The twenty-two photographs are titled by Boni as follows: “1. Torre dei SS. Felice e Fortunato (1160–13.); 2. Idem; cella fortificata (1160–13.); 3. Castello di Montecchio Maggiore (1355); 4. Muro del Territorio; Armamentario (1234–1338); 5. Casa Lanzè-Sesso (1200–1450); 6. Idem; resti di muratura lombarda (1200–1450); 7. Campanile di S. Corona (1270–...); 8. Chiesa di S. Lorenzo (1242–1324); 9. Idem; sculture della porta (1242–1324);

Upon analysis of the twenty-two photographs of the pamphlet, three themes emerge that shed light on the underlying motivations of Boni's work: first, the compositional approach to the building and its context; second, the attention to the condition of the edifice itself, a keen interest in the construction of monuments and in their degradation; third, the architectural and decorative details of the buildings, revealing stylistic evolution during the life of the buildings themselves.²⁰ While these themes are present in most of his photographs, we can choose a few examples to illustrate them.

Let us start from his compositional approach. Photograph 1 (fig. 1) is a view of the church of SS Felice e Fortunato. The church is seen from the front and is clearly related to the surrounding city. Boni adopts a functional view of the building itself. This is an innovative compositional approach, evident from a comparison with a photo of the same subject taken by a contemporary of Boni. Unlike other photographers, Boni does not show a full traditional view of the church, which usually was shown from the rear, but only part of the building in relation to the specific urban context of Vicenza, highlighting the relationship between the building and the actual, real landscape. In other words, he does not provide a romantic view of the building, but wants to show the architectural construction as a signal within the specific city. Signals such as the steeples shown in photos 1 and 7 portray the underlying, structural relation between the bell tower and the city. In some ways, these are related to the composition of specific city views as printed for example in the fifteenth century.

Similarly, photo 3 (fig. 2) reveals the architectural elements of the landscape in the portrait of the castle of Montecchio Maggiore, as seen in relation to the surrounding hill. The image has a picturesque quality, it captures information that the *vedutisti* would have also collected, but which Boni analyses with a scientific attitude. Notice the shrub visible on the top of the tower, which clearly indicates the state of decay of the building. Such a detail, which could have been easily eliminated while printing the picture, becomes for Boni an important element for the evaluation of the state of decay of the building. In a letter sent on 15 December 1886 to Philip Webb, regarding a similar shrub, Boni notes: "I attach some of the leaves of the parasite of that steeple; it also grows in cracks of the marbles covering the



1 Tav. n. 1 "Torre dei SS. Felice e Fortunato (1160-13...)", in *Vicenza Medioevale, Stab. tipo-lit.* M. Fontana, Venezia, 1888, 10.5 x 12.7 cm, silver print on paper. Photographer Giacomo Boni

10. Idem; leone stiloforo (1242-1324); 11. Facciata del Duomo (...-1467); 12. Strada gotica (1300-1400) [contrà Porti]; 13. Casa Regaù; con affreschi del rinascimento (1450 circa); 14. Casa gotica; con affreschi del rinascimento (1400-1500); 15. Casa colonica (1500); 16. Casa Brugger; decadenza gotica (1460 circa); 17. Casa Pigafetta; gotico-lombardesca (1481 Cal. d'Agosto); 18. Idem; sculture ed iscrizioni (1481 Cal. d'Agosto); 19. Cortile del vescovado (1495); 20. Porta del Palazzo

Toso-Da Schio (1500); 21. Palazzo del rinascimento (1500); 22. Stalla a Ponte Alto; con colonne del rinascimento."

²⁰ These three themes reveal an almost archaeological approach in studying buildings in the urban context, an approach that Boni had been interested in since the stratigraphic excavation he directed in 1885 around the foundation of the S. Marco steeple in Venice.



2 Tav. n. 3. “Castello di Montecchio Maggiore (1355)”, in *Vicenza Medioevale*, Stab. tipo-lit. M. Fontana, Venezia, 1888, 12.5 x 20.3 cm, silver print on paper. Photographer Giacomo Boni

façade of Palazzo Ducale”.²¹ In picturing these details, Boni shows appreciation of the danger caused to the wall’s structure by this arboreal parasite.

The second theme is that of his attention to the construction and decay of buildings: photo 4 (fig. 3) depicts the entrance to the courtyard of the Olimpico theatre. Boni uses the bare nature of the object depicted in a functional way. He is not particularly interested in the theatre or in the courtyard. He titles the photograph “Muro del Territorio: Armamentario”. The city view in this case is transformed into a palimpsest to present archaeological evidence. What Boni is interested in is the brickwork of the wall itself. The title of the picture does not give any reference to the fact that the wall encloses one of the great examples of Palladian architecture. The photograph does not attempt to gloss over the lack of elegance of the outer structure, with its asymmetric and seemingly inelegant, disorganized windows and the many different brick textures. Boni wants to show an example of a city wall which has been extensively reworked over the centuries. By revealing the scars of its transformations, Boni wants to juxtapose the compact homogeneity of Renaissance architecture and the quality of irregular brickwork shown here or in photo 6.

He also shows architectural elements in unusual ways, far-removed from traditional architectural photographs. Photo 2 for instance shows the detail of the texture of the wall of the steeple of the church of SS Felice e Fortunato. He chooses to show such a detail rather than the steeple itself. This archaeological approach highlights the stratifications present in the object, providing information on its state

²¹ Cf. Letter from Giacomo Boni to Philip Webb on 15 December 1886, see Simioli 2007 (note 1), p. 127.

²² Giacomo Boni, *Letter by Giacomo Boni from Venice to*

William H. White, manuscript, LC/26/6/13, p. 2, Royal Institute of British Architects, London.



3 Tav. n. 4. "Muro del Territorio; Armamentario (1234-1338)", in *Vicenza Medioevale, Stab. tipo-lit.* M. Fontana, Venezia, 1888, 20.3 x 12.6 cm, silver print on paper. Photographer Giacomo Boni

of conservation. In photos 8 and 11 he shows limited views with the intent of focusing again on texture and detail, without any interest in providing a full view. It is true that in the case of the Duomo there is another building obstructing a full view, so that one could argue that he neglected this view for spatial reasons. However, the photograph of Saint Lorenzo shows that this is not the case: the church is unobstructed, and yet Boni chooses to focus on the burials in the external niches, highlighting their architectural quality and their cultural function in relation to the public, as shown by the two people standing next to them.

As we have said before, Boni's strategic use of photography aims to collect information for an analytical understanding of the object observed rather than to turn it into a romanticized view. This is clear in photograph 14 (fig. 4), showing a frescoed façade. The interest he demonstrates for this façade is not dependent on the nature of the fresco itself but on the fact that its state of decay is read as witnessing its antiquity and as proof of its true Gothic origin. In a letter sent to Webb, Boni argues that this is the type of fresco that could be found in medieval Venice.²² More generally, the state of disrepair of frescoes in city palaces was interesting to him as indicating pre-Renaissance architecture, representatives of frescoes that might have been common before what he believed had only been monochromatic frescoed façades, such as that of the Villa Capra or Palazzo Chiericati.

The last theme is Boni's focus on architectural details.

Boni has a particular appreciation for the decoration of palace façades. Photographs 5 and 6 are examples of this particular interest. In neither photograph does Boni show a complete façade, but rather (in 6) he highlights the remains of a kind of brickwork he referred to as *lombarda*. This term refers to pre-Renaissance architecture and masonry. In photo 6 (fig. 5), two arches which have been walled-in are shown. The relevant detail here is that these arches were built in *cotto*, not in stone, and therefore,

according to Boni, were constructed with building techniques different from those of antiquity or the Renaissance. His interest for details revealing historical values is evident in a number of the photos collected in the pamphlet, such as the detail shown in photo 10, where he chooses to focus on a *stiloforo* lion at S. Lorenzo's church, a Romanesque church. Again, this type of architectural solution is strictly tied to a practice of the thirteenth to the fourteenth century.

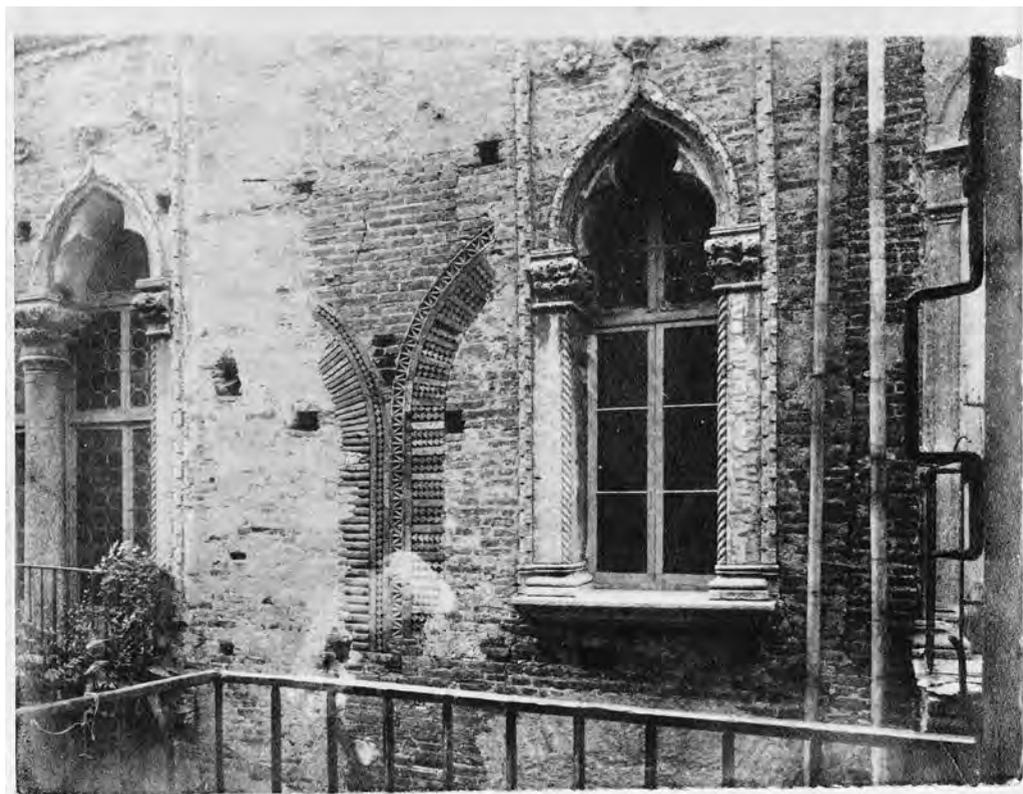
Boni's interest for architecture that is not recognized as Renaissance—or at least Renaissance in terms of Italy's Northeast such as in the works of Palladio and Sansovino—is testified by his photographs of the Casa Pigafetta, the palace of Magellan's diarist, shown in photos 16 and 17 in the pamphlet (fig. 6). Here again he focuses on the construction details that show a hybrid phase. In his letter to Webb he says: "the house is relatively modern (MCCCCLXXXI) [...] It is a very interesting example of the transition between Gothic and Renaissance, for instance, the *capitello* which supports the arch is monolithic, but furthermore the part that is over the spiral column (*la colonna ritorta*) has gothic foliage [...]"²³ In this case, Boni recognizes an architectural element and a construction technique that he reads as Renaissance (monolithic as *all'antica*), while at the same time he reads design elements that he relates to a Gothic tradition (the foliage).

These three themes show that Boni's images carry an informational value on how and what to preserve. What makes Boni particularly interesting is that he takes his strong analytical perspective with him to the Ministero and subsequently to the Regia Calcografia. The impulse towards restoration and preser-



4 Tav. n. 6. "Casa Lanzè-Sesso; resti di muratura lombarda (1200-1450)", in *Vicenza Medioevale, Stab. tipo-lit. M. Fontana, Venezia, 1888, 12.7x10.0 cm, silver print on paper. Photographer Giacomo Boni*

²³ Letter from Giacomo Boni to Philip Webb, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, December 1887, see Simioli 2007 (note 1), p. 133.



5 Tav. n. 14. “Casa gotica; con affreschi del rinascimento (1400–1500)”, in *Vicenza Medioevale*, Stab. tipo-lit. M. Fontana, Venezia, 1888, 20.3 x 12.7 cm, silver print on paper. Photographer Giacomo Boni

vation was central to his activity throughout his life, from his participation in debates on the restoration of parts of Venice to the transformation of the Foro Romano in a park. This also coincides with a specific tradition in restoration, which does not intend to reconstruct the original look of the building, replacing imperfections with a reconstruction of what is believed to have been the original, but rather strives to conserve what is left—damaged or otherwise modified by time—without replacement, having always in mind the idea that history can be shown only through the signs left on things by the passing of time.

For Boni the idea of showing the effects of time was equivalent to the idea of allowing its visual and immediate reading by the people, even by those who were illiterate. Underlying all of this, therefore, is a will to return to the people the architectural values of the country: he wants to give the wider public access to the broader monumental heritage, while transmitting its historical values.

This broader public is that also seen in the last photographs in Boni’s pamphlet. Even though the first of these photos resembles a staged scene, Boni shows people busy with farming activities occupying the space of a barn supported by columns, which he recognises as Renaissance, as he states in the title of the photograph. Similarly, he chooses to show ordinary people under the early Renaissance archway of Palazzo Toso-Da Schio in Vicenza. In some sense he places the people, or more generally the People, he photographs under the vestiges of Italian history, as the ultimate recipients of his surveying activities.



6 Tav. n. 17. “Casa Pigafetta; gotico-lombardesca (1481 Cal. d’Agosto)”, in *Vicenza Medioevale, Stab. tipo-lit. M. Fontana, Venezia, 1888, 12.6 x 20.2 cm, silver print on paper. Photographer Giacomo Boni*

his pamphlet. This might be an indirect proof that Boni may have actually succeeded in selling some of his pamphlets, as some of his exchanges with William H. White of the Royal Institute of British Architects suggest. In fact, in the 1887–1888 correspondence, Boni specifically asks if White is interested in acquiring some of the prints.²⁴ We also know that part of the photography collection of RIBA was donated to the Conway Library in the 1930s, so there is reason to believe these photographs came into the library’s possession at that time. The second level of reading shows the importance of cross-referencing archives—even when located at greater distances from each other—in order to facilitate the full understanding and valuing of the historical importance of certain photographic material that at first sight might seem marginal.

Not being a traditional academic or a traditional photographer, Boni recognized the social value of cultural heritage and the importance of making it available to people, creating a collective visual memory. This visual memory will eventually find its place in the National Photographic Cabinet, to the establishment of which he would be central.

Epilogue

My first encounter with these photographs by Giacomo Boni was not in Italy, but at the Courtauld Institute, more specifically at the Conway Library. At the time, I ran across one of the pictures here discussed, but it did not hold particular meaning for me, as it was unattributed and bore only a title. Only later was I able to identify it as part of the pamphlet I just analysed here. That a copy of this picture was held at the Conway Library, is evidence that some of the contacts Boni had with British scholars resulted in at least a sale of one of the pamphlets. After a second and thorough research in the Conway Library, all twenty-two photographs were found. They were separately filed, unattributed, with only hand-written titles to identify them, titles that actually correspond to the descriptions Boni gives to these photographs in

²⁴ Giacomo Boni, *Letter by Giacomo Boni from Venice to William H. White*, manuscript, LC/26/6/13, p. 2, Royal Institute of British Architects, London.

Alessandra Sarchi

Sulle tracce di Lányi e Malenotti. Il fondo Brogi su Donatello nella Fototeca Zeri

L'esplorazione e lo studio dei materiali della fototeca di Federico Zeri avviato da quando la Fondazione a lui intitolata è attiva – dal 2003 circa – ha portato all'individuazione di numerosi gruppi di fotografie dotati di omogeneità quanto a provenienza, autore, e tipologia delle opere riprese. I materiali fotografici di tali fondi non sono stati preservati da Zeri in base a criteri di unità archivistica, ma ridistribuiti sulla base della loro pertinenza cronologica e stilistica. Le ricerche avviate hanno permesso la ricostruzione 'virtuale' di alcuni fondi, come quello di Umberto Gnoli,¹ forse una delle prime raccolte ad essere confluite nella fototeca di Zeri già a partire dai primi anni '50. Si tratta di 1.212 immagini che corrispondono in buona parte agli studi sull'arte umbra di Gnoli e che si sono potute identificare grazie alle note autografe di Gnoli stesso sul verso delle immagini (fig. 1 verso e recto, inv. 97320). Altri fondi sono stati individuati e studiati, come quello di Evelyn Sandberg Valalà, di 1.237 fotografie, quello di Guglielmo Matthiae di circa 2.000 fotografie, la raccolta di Giuseppe Sangiorgi di più di 1.800 immagini² (fig. 2, inv. 99923 verso e recto).

¹ Giulia Alberti, *Il fondo fotografico di Umberto Gnoli nella fototeca di Federico Zeri. Per una analisi storica e una restituzione catalografica*, tesi di specializzazione in Storia dell'arte, Università degli Studi di Bologna, scuola di specializzazione in Storia dell'arte, a.a. 2007–2008.

² Per una panoramica degli studi sugli specifici fondi della Fototeca Zeri si veda il saggio di Elisabetta Sambo, "Per una storia della fototeca di Federico Zeri", in: Anna Ottani Cavina (a c. di), *Federico Zeri. Dietro l'immagine. Opere d'arte e fotografia* (cat. della mostra Bologna 2009), Torino 2009, pp. 109–112. Su Giuseppe Bellesi sono state condotte ricerche da Paola Bracke, *L'antiquario Giuseppe Bellesi e il suo fondo di fotografie all'interno della foto-*

teca Zeri, tesi di laurea in storia dell'arte moderna, Università degli studi di Bologna, Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, relatore Anna Ottani Cavina, a.a. 2007–2008. Mentre su Sandberg Valalà e Sangiorgi vedi rispettivamente: Valentina Marano, *Il fondo fotografico Sandberg Valalà, nella fototeca Zeri*, tesi di laurea, Università degli studi di Bologna, Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, relatore Anna Ottani Cavina, a.a. 2005–2006. Deborah Loiacono, *Collezionismo e mercato artistico a Roma tra '800 e '900. La Galleria Sangiorgi*, tesi di laurea in Metodologia della ricerca storico-artistica, Università degli studi di Bologna, Facoltà di conservazione dei beni culturali, relatore Alberto Cottino, a.a. 2007–2008.

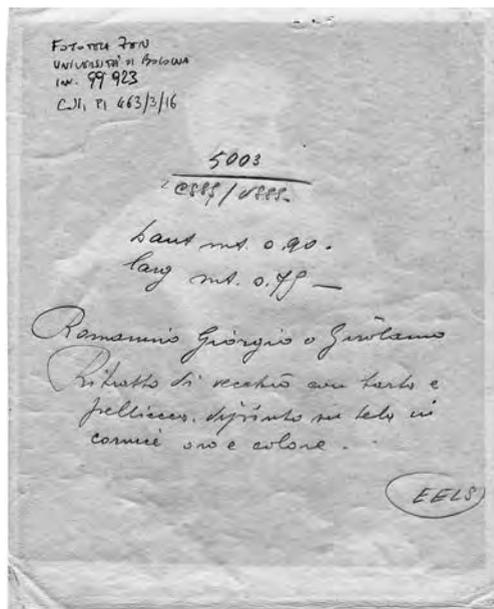
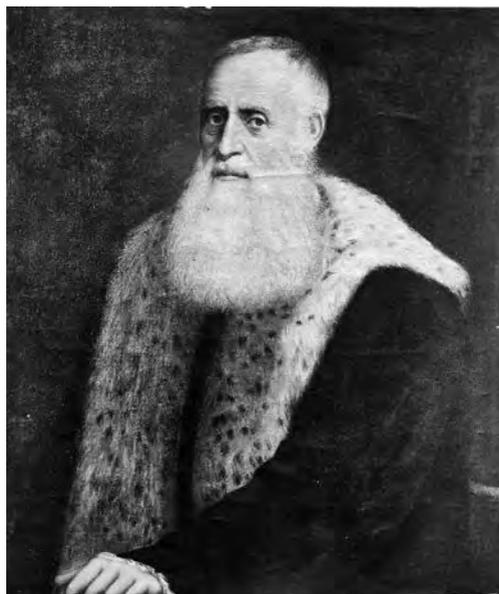


1 Giuseppe Ceretti, albumina su carta 1909 circa. Girolamo Bassano, (autore opera), “Noè e gli animali entrano nell’arca”, sec. XVI, Piemonte Collezione privata. Fondo Umberto Gnoli, Fondazione Federico Zeri, inv. 97320

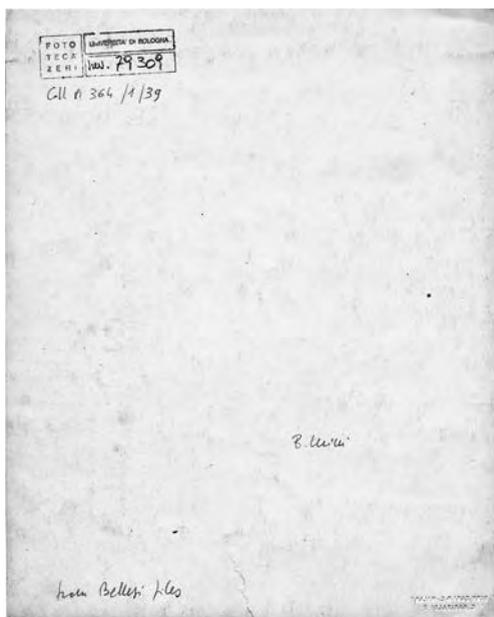
In alcuni casi, come per le fotografie dell’antiquario Giuseppe Bellesi, l’indicazione da cui partire non era niente di più della scrittura di pugno di Zeri medesimo sul retro delle fotografie: “from Belle-si files”. Zeri infatti, pur disponendo le immagini nei raccoglitori in base alla propria scansione storico-geografica e stilistica, non mancava di registrare l’appartenenza e la provenienza da uno specifico archivio o fondo da lui acquistato (fig. 3, inv. 79309, verso e recto).

Pertanto, spero non suoni troppo imprecisa, dal punto di vista archivistico, la definizione di ‘fondo Brogi’ per le 804 fotografie di sculture di Donatello conservate nella fototeca Zeri – con questa non s’intendono tutte le foto Brogi presenti, ma un nucleo ben preciso così definito da Zeri stesso (fig. 4), che era al corrente della provenienza delle fotografie da un’unica campagna fotografica commissionata da Jenő Lányi alla ditta Brogi. Sulla consistenza effettiva di questa campagna fotografica rimangono dei dubbi: Horst Janson, nell’introduzione alla monografia su Donatello pubblicata nel 1957,³ racconta in maniera forse un po’ romanzesca che la moglie di Jenő Lányi, Monika Mann, era venuta da lui, e che insieme a Ulrich Middeldorf e Clarence Kennedy avevano esaminato la valigia di fotografie fatte eseguire da Lányi, per decidere se c’era materiale per ulteriori pubblicazioni postume del marito; tuttavia Janson non specifica il numero di foto che ebbe in visione, e per il proprio libro utilizzerà la metà circa

³ Horst W. Janson, *The sculpture of Donatello. Incorporating the notes and photographs of the late Jenő Lányi*, Princeton/NJ 1957 (s.p.).



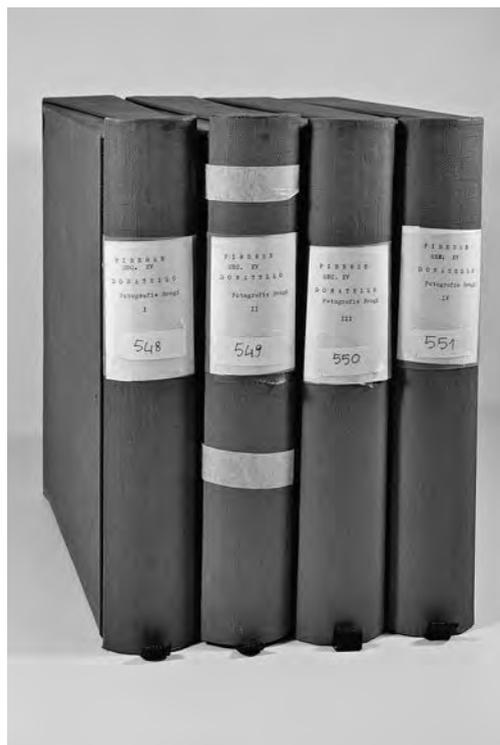
2 Anonimo, 1892-ante 1920 albumina su carta, verso e recto. Girolamo Romanino, "Ritratto maschile", sec. XVI prima metà, ubicazione sconosciuta. Fondo Galleria Sangiorgi Roma, Fondazione Federico Zeri, inv. 99923



3 Dino Zani, gelatina ai sali d'argento su carta baritata, 1920-1950 ca, verso e recto. Bernardino Luini, "La madonna del latte", 1530 ca., New York Stati Uniti, French & Co. prov. Fondo Giuseppe Bellesi, Fondazione Zeri, inv. 79309

della campagna, almeno di quella a me nota dell'archivio Zeri. D'altra parte una prima ricognizione alla fototeca della NYU di New York, che conserva l'archivio di Janson, ha dato esito negativo.⁴ Viceversa ho avuto modo di visionare le lastre originali conservate all'archivio Alinari, e di constatare che in alcuni casi sono ancora avvolte da una busta di carta che reca nell'intestazione l'originale numerazione Brogi, il nome del committente Lányi e la rinumerazione apposta da Alinari. La ricostruzione della consistenza numerica della campagna fotografica non è peraltro possibile a partire dai cataloghi Alinari poiché le fotografie furono riassorbite nella numerazione interna, come si evince consultando *La scultura di Donatello nelle fotografie Alinari, Anderson, Brogi* (Firenze 1976), dove sono segnalate

come originali Brogi solo fotografie già pubblicate nei cataloghi, mentre quelle eseguite su commissione di Lányi sono state incorporate senza alcuna segnalazione e solo il confronto con i positivi posseduti nella fototeca Zeri e pubblicati da Janson ne permette l'identificazione.



4 Marcello Rossini, *Filze del fondo Brogi nella fototeca Zeri*, 2009, *Fototeca Zeri*

Nella sezione della scultura italiana della Fototeca Zeri sono presenti altre 180 fotografie dedicate alle opere di Donatello e realizzate da autori vari, il blocco di fotografie acquisito da Zeri fu dunque consapevolmente perseguito poiché lo studioso conosceva il valore e la preziosità di quel materiale.

D'altra parte, queste fotografie non sono tutte le fotografie Brogi presenti nell'archivio, poiché ve ne sono molte altre realizzate dalla ditta fiorentina, ma sono le uniche che Zeri riuni in una serie di faldoni rossi con l'etichetta esterna battuta a macchina: "Scultura. Donatello. Foto Brogi".

Zeri infatti sapeva benissimo che si trattava della già menzionata campagna fotografica commissionata alla ditta Brogi dallo studioso ungherese, esperto di Donatello, Jenő Lányi.

Viceversa pochi sono gli elementi di cui disponiamo per determinare quando Zeri ne entrò in possesso e come avvenne l'acquisizione dei positivi.

Una sicura data *ante quem* per l'acquisizione è suggerita dalle indicazioni che lo studioso mette sul verso degli scatti dedicati alla *Giuditta*, che egli colloca ancora sotto la loggia dei Lanzi, quindi prima del 1984, quando la statua fu trasferita all'interno di Palazzo Vecchio (fig. 5, inv. 143262 verso e recto).

Lo stato di conservazione dei positivi, molto piegati e velati da specchiature prodotte dall'affiorare dei sali argentici, non è sufficiente per determinare l'epoca di stampa, poiché tali condizioni si verifi-

l'intera campagna, eseguita per la ditta dal fotografo Gino Malenotti, ammontava a 2.800 fotografie.

⁴ Silvia Silvestri, "Lo studio Brogi a Firenze: da Giacomo Brogi a Giorgio Laurati", in: *Archivio Fotografico Toscano*, 20 (1994), pp. 9-32, in particolare a p. 10 afferma che



5 Gino Malenotti (Ditta Brogi), gelatina ai sali d'argento su carta baritata, 1930-1958. Donatello, "Giuditta e Oloferne", Firenze, Palazzo Vecchio, 1456-1460. Fondo Brogi, Fototeca Zeri, inv. 143262

cano anche in breve tempo se i positivi vengono conservati in presenza di umidità e a temperature superiori ai 18 gradi; per avere un riscontro certo a partire dallo stato di conservazione sarebbe dunque necessario sottoporli ad approfondite analisi chimiche.

Sull'esecuzione degli scatti abbiamo viceversa elementi più stringenti di datazione. Nel 1938, dopo l'entrata in vigore delle leggi razziali, Lányi lasciava l'Italia rifugiandosi in Inghilterra, pertanto dopo questa data non poté commissionare più alcuno scatto. I profeti del campanile sono fotografati ancora *in situ*, prima del trasferimento al Museo dell'Opera del Duomo⁵ avvenuto nel 1936; abbiamo inoltre un'immagine di Lányi sul ponteggio insieme al fotografo Malenotti (fig. 6), e sappiamo che alla fine del 1935 Lányi pubblicava il suo ponderoso studio sulle statue del campanile, seguito nel 1936 dall'approfondimento sul profeta Isaia.⁶ Pertanto è probabile che gli scatti siano stati eseguiti proprio nel 1935.⁷

Per quanto concerne invece il momento di acquisizione da parte di Zeri degli 804 positivi, possiamo ragionare per induzione. Le fotografie Brogi recano sul verso un tipo di classificazione, coincidente con chiari scrupoli catalografici, ossia di identificazione dell'autore, del titolo o soggetto dell'opera e della sua ubicazione, che nel caso di opere tanto note come quelle di Donatello lascia perplessi e risulta quanto meno inusuale nella pratica di Zeri, sempre molto preciso nel registrare provenienze collezionistiche, passaggi d'asta, eventuali indicazioni bibliografiche di rilievo, ma che raramente si concede la pedanteria di scrivere il titolo di un'opera, soprattutto se questa è piuttosto conosciuta. Inoltre, altra peculiarità delle note apposte sui versi del fondo Brogi, là dove si tratti di scatti fotografici che riprendono dettagli in sequenza di uno stesso monumento, ad esempio i pergami in San Lorenzo a Firenze, Zeri specifica non solo di quale parte dell'insieme si tratta, ma anche in quale sequenza andrebbe letto in relazione agli altri. Lo vediamo bene, ad esempio nella sequenza delle fotografie della trabeazione del pulpito della passione, dove Zeri annota: "Firenze, chiesa di S. Lorenzo, Donatello, Primo Pulpito. Trabeazione 10" (fig. 7-8-9, inv. 143481 e 143470 recto e verso).

Non è solo il carattere insolitamente didascalico, ma anche la presenza di una numerazione successiva apposta sulle varie fotografie che induce a pensare che Zeri stesse mettendo in ordine del materiale. L'impressione è dunque quella di trovarsi di fronte a una schedatura fatta da Zeri non per uso personale, bensì con l'intento di ordinare per altri una complessa campagna fotografica. Per chi dunque?

Sappiamo che nel 1958 cinquantamila negativi Brogi furono ceduti dalla ditta al conte Vittorio Cini allora presidente della Società Alinari⁸ e, secondo la testimonianza di Miklos Boskovits, Federico Zeri

⁵ Giovanni Poggi, *Il duomo di Firenze: documenti sulla decorazione della chiesa e del campanile, tratti dall'archivio dell'opera*, Berlino 1909, rist. anast. con note a c. di Margaret Haines, Firenze 1988; Luisa Becherucci, Giulia Brunetti (a c. di), *Il museo dell'opera del Duomo di Firenze*, 2 voll., Milano 1969-1970, vol. 1, pp. 265-270.

⁶ Jenő Lányi, "Le statue quattrocentesche dei profeti nel campanile e nell'antica facciata di S. Maria del Fiore", in: *Rivista d'arte*, XVII (1935), pp. 121-159 e 245-280, seguito da id., "Il profeta Isaia di Nanni di Banco", in *Rivista d'arte*, XVIII (1936), pp. 137-178.

⁷ Carlotta Crosera mi ha gentilmente segnalato e trascritto una lettera che fa parte del Fondo Emilio Cecchi conservato all'Archivio Contemporaneo Bonsanti, alla signatura IT ACGV EC. I. 1543. 2.

Si tratta di una lettera inviata a Cecchi dal fotografo Giacomo Pozzi Bellini nel gennaio del 1946, mentre sta eseguendo delle fotografie di Donatello a Firenze; dalla missiva si evince che la campagna fatta eseguire per conto di Lányi rimase a lungo non consultata e che, oltre all'intere-

ressamento di Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli, probabilmente già subito dopo la guerra Janson si era fatto avanti per poter disporre in maniera esclusiva di quel materiale: "Sapevo delle fotografie del Lányi eseguite dal Brogi; e circa un mese fa uno degli eredi venne a Firenze insieme ad alcuni direttori di musei inglesi, in uscita in Italia, e so che si è recato dal Brogi. Ignoro se questo erede o parente abbia ritirato gli originali in gran parte ancora da stampare; la persona più al corrente dovrebbe essere Ranuccio che a suo tempo, durante il periodo di guerra, prese accordi con il Brogi in merito a questo importante materiale. Certo io sarei molto interessato a consultare queste fotografie, ma ho la sensazione che attorno a questa roba ci sia un po' d'inghippo' e che altri aveva cullato il proposito, approfittando o fidando nella guerra, di far suo questo materiale. Non conosco il Brogi e non vorrei andando da lui apparire inopportuno o curioso, ma se lei vuole mi mandi due righe di presentazione [...]".

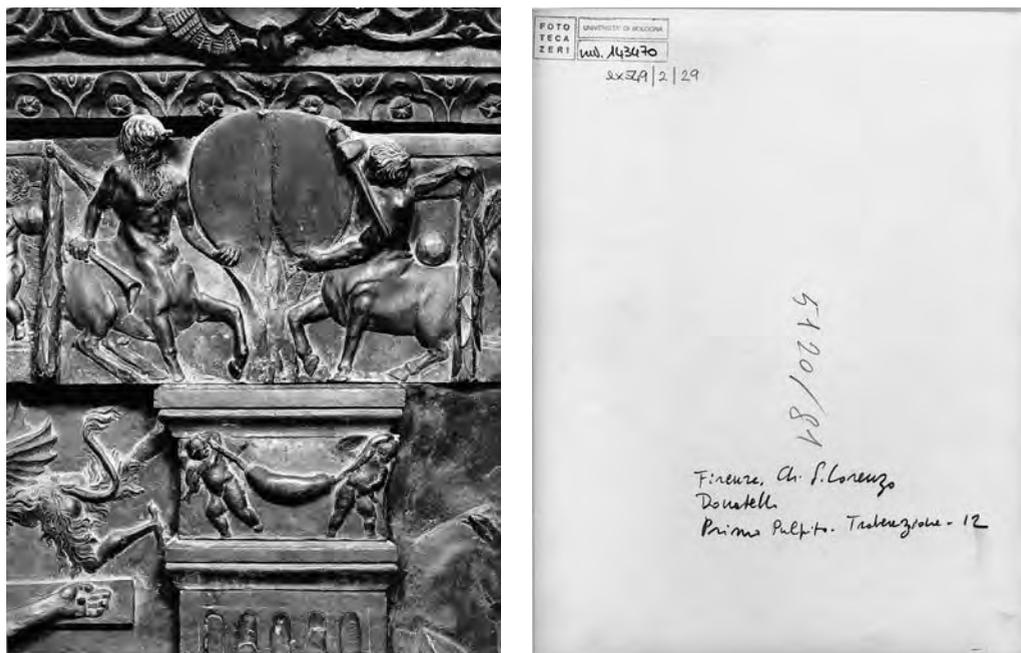
⁸ Donatella Valente, scheda in Michele Falzone del Barbarò, Monica Maffioli, Emanuela Sesti (a c. di), *Alle ori-*



6 Anonimo, gelatina ai sali d'argento. "Gino Malenotti e Jenő Lányi sul ponteggio del campanile di Giotto davanti allo "Zuccone" di Donatello prima della rimozione", Firenze 1935 ca., da Archivio Fotografico Toscano, numero 20, 1994, pag. 13



7-8 Gino Malenotti, gelatina ai sali d'argento su carta baritata, 1930-1958, recto e verso con annotazioni di F. Zeri. Donatello e collaboratori, "Fregio con putti e centauri", particolare, trabeazione del pulpito di sinistra della basilica di S. Lorenzo a Firenze, 1460-1470, Fondo Brogi, Fototeca Zeri, inv. 143481



9 Gino Malenotti, gelatina ai sali d'argento su carta baritata, 1930–1958, recto e verso con annotazioni di F. Zeri Donatello e collaboratori, “Fregio con putti e centauri”, particolare, trabeazione del pulpito di sinistra della basilica di S. Lorenzo a Firenze, 1460–1470, Fondo Brogi, Fototeca Zeri, inv. 143470

venne chiamato per una consulenza al fine di catalogare l’ingente materiale fotografico che non rientrava nei cataloghi pubblicati da Brogi, poiché eseguito su commissione speciale di studiosi o artisti. La campagna sulle sculture di Donatello era una delle tante. Non è dunque inverosimile che in occasione di tale consulenza Zeri abbia catalogato la commissione di Lányi e che abbia avuto in cambio la possibilità di tenerne le stampe, probabilmente eseguite in quell’occasione stessa.⁹

Anche sull’etichetta “Foto Brogi” occorre una precisazione, non si tratta infatti *strictu sensu* di fotografie realizzate da Giacomo o Carlo Brogi.

All’epoca in cui vennero realizzati gli scatti e stampati i positivi, intorno al 1935, erano entrambi, padre e figlio, morti. Carlo Brogi era deceduto nel 1925 e aveva lasciato la gestione della florida azienda familiare al nipote, figlio della sorella Eugenia, Giorgio Laurati che gestirà patrimonio, archivio ed attrezzature del mestiere fino alla morte avvenuta nel 1986.

Autore delle fotografie possedute da Zeri, come della maggior parte delle riprese riguardanti la scultura, è il fotografo Gino Malenotti, che nelle pochissime notizie biografiche disponibili viene indicato in maniera decisamente riduttiva, come operatore dei Brogi. In realtà stando alla testimonianza di Giancarlo Kaiser, suo assistente e stipendiato dalla ditta Brogi-Laurati, Gino Malenotti era la vera anima fotografica e artistica della ditta Brogi dopo la morte di Carlo. Fotografava spesso su commissione degli studiosi, vale a dire si occupava delle campagne più difficili e impegnative, dietro le quali stavano le ri-

gini della fotografia: un itinerario toscano 1839–1850, Firenze 1989, p. 212.

⁹ Secondo la testimonianza di Miklòs Boskovits riportata da Sambo 2009 (nota 2).

chieste precise e puntigliose di storici dell'arte che sul materiale fotografico impostavano gran parte del loro lavoro di analisi stilistica.¹⁰ Queste campagne normalmente non rientravano nei cataloghi editi dalla ditta Brogi e anche la stampa e la vendita dei positivi poteva essere condizionata alla volontà e alle esigenze di ricerca e di pubblicazione del committente. Spesso si trattava di fotografie che minuziosamente riprendevano le opere fin nei loro minimi dettagli; di questo tipo è senz'altro la campagna che Lányi fece svolgere su Donatello.

Malenotti aveva sviluppato una tecnica impeccabile e una sensibilità estremamente attenta sia al tipo di luce – uniformemente diffusa e raramente naturale – sia alla sequenza di inquadrature con cui i monumenti e le sculture in particolare modo andavano ripresi per poi essere dissezionati dall'occhio del critico e messi in sequenza nelle tavole di monografie che sull'argomento si candidavano a diventare i testi di riferimento.

Ma cosa rendeva gli scatti di Malenotti così richiesti da essere lui il fotografo “più amato e conteso dai critici e dagli studiosi d'arte italiani e stranieri e dagli artisti che lavoravano a Firenze, specialmente gli studiosi che volevano rivedere nelle foto le loro opere così come loro le avevano modellate”?¹¹

Vale la pena rileggere la testimonianza diretta di Kaiser relativa alla campagna compiuta nel 1954 da Malenotti sulla facciata di San Petronio a Bologna per conto dello studioso Charles Seymour, che pubblicò poi nel 1973 la monografia su Jacopo della Quercia per i tipi della Yale University Press. Saliti sull'impalcatura già eretta davanti alla facciata, Kaiser descrive il modo di lavorare di Malenotti nei riguardi della luce: “Dopo che Gino ebbe inquadrato la prima formella in alto con i fari già a posto con luce radente mettemmo ad altezza d'uomo dei teli neri fissati con asticelle tutto intorno a macchina e fari e principalmente sul pavimento come a formare un tunnel che riparava da tutti i lati la luce riflessa dalla facciata e in modo particolare dal pavimento della piazza, una luce dal basso che avrebbe compromesso tutte le riprese. [...] Nel frattempo lo vedevo palpare con le mani le figurine scolpite e i basorilievi più leggeri, con minore spessore e lui sentiva che esisteva una modellatura che però non vedeva a causa di un riflettore mal diretto per cui mi faceva di nuovo spostare le luci fino ad ottenere l'illuminazione migliore”.¹²

È un brano piuttosto bello sulla particolare sensibilità che il fotografo aveva sviluppato nei confronti della materia dei suoi scatti, il sostituire o compensare la vista con il tatto, è eloquente dell'affinità che Malenotti sentiva con la scultura e lascia capire come gli studiosi e gli artisti volessero avere le sue immagini. L'importanza attribuita da Malenotti all'incidenza della luce nella fotografia delle sculture risultò determinante nella qualità delle immagini ottenute, in merito basterebbe fare un confronto tra uno scatto di Malenotti e uno eseguito dalla ditta Alinari, ad esempio, del fronte del battistero di San Giovanni a Siena. Laddove la fotografia Alinari è ancora fortemente disturbata dall'ombra proiettata dalla cornice superiore della formella, e di conseguenza i contorni e gli angoli della composizione perdono di leggibilità, la fotografia di Malenotti è uno scatto nitido che rende con eguale chiarezza i gruppi di persone in primo piano e l'architettura sullo sfondo. Due personalità d'eccezione stanno alla base di questa campagna Brogi su Donatello, da una parte il fotografo Gino Malenotti, autore degli scatti, dall'altra il suo regista: Jenő Lányi, uno storico dell'arte ungherese, nato a Varna (all'epoca Un-

¹⁰ Nel paragrafo che introduce la “list of illustrations” della monografia di Charles Seymour, *Jacopo della Quercia*, New Haven / London 1973, si legge: “The numerous photographs still uncataloged take especially for my use by the late Signor Malenotti from the Brogi firm are indicated by the rubric Seymour-I.D.E.A. The last photographs had been restricted in their sale up to the time of this publication but are now available to the public”.

¹¹ Silvestri 1994 (nota 4), p. 11. In questo articolo si trova, oltre alla testimonianza di Giancarlo Kaiser qui citata, anche quella di Vincenzo Silvestri, a sua volta fotografo, amico e collega di Giorgio Laurati ed erede di parte dell'archivio Brogi-Laurati.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Katia Mazzucco mi segnala che alla biblioteca del Warburg Institute di Londra esiste documentazione relativa

gheria, ora Slovacchia) che fin dalla metà degli anni Venti era approdato in Italia per perfezionare i propri studi, inizialmente incentrati su Jacopo della Quercia, di cui rimane traccia in due lettere conservate alla Biblioteca Ariostea di Ferrara, in cui lo studioso si rivolge al direttore Giuseppe Agnelli, con la richiesta di verifiche documentarie sullo scultore toscano.

In Italia aveva incontrato nel 1934 Monika Mann, una delle due figlie dello scrittore Thomas Mann, che aveva poco dopo sposato. Con il sopraggiungere delle leggi razziali Jenö e Monika decisero di lasciare l'Italia, fuggirono a Londra dove rimasero per un anno e mezzo circa e nel 1940, imbarcatisi da Liverpool sulla nave *City of Benares* diretta in Canada, furono colpiti dai bombardamenti di un sottomarino tedesco. Monika riuscì a salvarsi e a raggiungere il padre negli Stati Uniti, Jenö Lányi morì anegato. La morte precoce e tragica unita alla notevole produzione scientifica che lo studioso ungherese aveva già pubblicato contribuirono a consacrarlo nell'infelice mitologia degli studiosi morti tragicamente e prematuramente. Manca, per quanto sta nelle mie conoscenze, uno studio sistematico delle sue carte e delle sue fotografie approdate all'Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento di Palazzo Strozzi a Firenze.

Da un articolo in *memoriam* pubblicato da Carlo Ragghianti nel 1955 in *Critica d'arte*, apprendiamo quali erano le frequentazioni di Lányi negli anni fiorentini: Ragghianti stesso, Roberto Salvini e Renuccio Bianchi Bandinelli. I due si rividero anche a Londra nel '39, incontrandosi al Warburg Institute e intrattenendosi in discussioni appassionate con Fritz Saxl.¹³ A Londra sul numero di ottobre del *Burlington Magazine* Lányi pubblicò l'ultimo dei suoi lavori su Donatello.¹⁴

Ragghianti pubblica nel ricordo dell'amico un paio di lettere di Lányi allegandovi le proprie considerazioni sui temi che li tenevano impegnati in quegli anni.¹⁵

Da queste poche righe emerge un retroterra di speculazione metodologica sulla disciplina e sui suoi strumenti che può aiutarci a capire come Lányi considerasse la riproduzione fotografica.

In una delle lettere a Ragghianti Lányi invoca a più riprese, per la disciplina della storia dell'arte, il ruolo di 'scienza' in contrapposizione ad una pratica basata sul 'colpo d'occhio', l'impressione inverificata e non dimostrata. Ragghianti chiosa in nota che con ogni probabilità Lányi aveva in mente le osservazioni di Hildebrand espresse nello scritto *Das Problem der Form* del 1893.¹⁶ Il riferimento a questo testo è importante poiché ad esso si rifaceva anche il saggio che più di tutti aveva problematizzato la fotografia della scultura, ossia "Wie man Skulpturen aufnehmen soll" di Heinrich Wölfflin, uscito in due parti nella rivista *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst* nel 1896–1897.¹⁷ Se lo scultore e teorico Hildebrand si era posto il problema di cogliere l'essenza di un'opera di scultura in una visione che non fosse solo quella istantanea e per forza parziale, poiché considerava solo un punto di vista dei tre possibili alle arti plastiche, Wölfflin arrivava a teorizzare che esisteva un punto di vista privilegiato attraverso il quale le opere si rivelavano e che la questione diventava cruciale nel momento in cui se ne proponeva una riproduzione fotografica. Siamo nell'epoca in cui cominciano ad uscire i primi testi di storia dell'arte massicciamente corredati da fotografie e la Germania era senz'altro l'epicentro di una riflessione metodologica sul fare storia dell'arte che coinvolgeva sia i suoi fondamenti teorici sia i nuovi supporti tecnologici; uno degli obiettivi polemici di Wölfflin erano i dodici volumi dei *Denkmäler der Renais-*

a un progetto di una mostra fotografica su Donatello risalente proprio al 1939–1940.

¹⁴ Jenö Lányi, "Donatello's angels for the Siena font: a reconstruction", in: *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, 75 (1939), pp. 142–151.

¹⁵ Carlo L. Ragghianti, "Care reliquie: in memoriam Jenö Lányi", in: *Critica d'arte*, N.S. 8 (1955), pp. 164–172.

¹⁶ Adolf von Hildebrand, *Das Problem der Form in der bil-*

den Kunst, Strasburgo 1893, trad. it. *Il problema della forma nell'arte figurativa*, a c. di Andrea Pinotti / Fabrizio Scrivano, Palermo 2001.

¹⁷ Heinrich Wölfflin, "Wie man Skulpturen aufnehmen soll", in: *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*, VII (1896), pp. 224–228 e VIII (1897), pp. 294–297.

sance-Sculptur Toscanas in historischer Anordnung di cui Wilhelm Bode aveva recentemente avviato la pubblicazione.¹⁸ L'esempio che Wölfflin portava come banco di prova era il *David* di Verrocchio di cui criticava la fotografia pubblicata da Bode dove l'opera risultava ripresa di tre quarti, quella che Wölfflin definiva una falsificante veduta pittorica, mentre elogiava la ripresa frontale della foto Brogi. In realtà la difficoltà di fotografare la scultura, di cogliere con un solo scatto le molteplici vedute che un oggetto tridimensionale comporta, era già stata sottolineata nel testo di William Lake Price, *Manual of Photographic Manipulation*,¹⁹ e la riflessione era destinata ad estendersi non solo al problema della scelta di una veduta principale, quello che Wölfflin chiamava lo "Standpunkt", ma anche alla questione del sostegno e dello sfondo: andavano fotografati o eliminati? Hans Tietze, ad esempio, nel suo *Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte*,²⁰ stigmatizzava e rifiutava la cancellazione dello sfondo, spesso praticata al fine di ottenere una precisa silhouette su fondo nero così, l'opera diventava un'astrazione.

Lányi, che aveva studiato in Germania, era certamente consapevole di queste riflessioni e non doveva essere insensibile all'istanza espressa da Wölfflin di far coincidere la forma strutturale, o esistenziale, dell'opera e l'altra propria della visione dello spettatore nel momento in cui se ne dava traduzione in un altro medium, cioè nello scatto fotografico, e che solo se si mantenevano uniti questi due momenti non si travisava l'opera. D'altronde dopo gli anni '30 le considerazioni di Wölfflin avevano cominciato a diventare normative:²¹ basta sfogliare i cataloghi Brogi, Alinari e Anderson per rendersi conto come ci si attenesse alle prescrizioni sulla luce uniformemente diffusa, sulla frontalità della ripresa e sulla ricerca di un punto di vista unico e privilegiato da cui guardare l'opera. Allo stesso tempo per Lányi, come non esisteva 'il colpo d'occhio', così lo studio visivo non si poteva ridurre a una serie di riprese più o meno evocative o coincidenti con la supposta forma esistenziale dell'opera. Le meticolose sequenze di immagini con cui egli volle riprendere millimetricamente le opere di Donatello, variandone le vedute, la distanza, la messa a fuoco di taluni dettagli, sono piuttosto un nuovo strumento di filologia: la campagna di Lányi sulle sculture di Donatello diventa un esempio da seguire per chi voglia lavorare sulle immagini in termini stilistici e attributivi, alla stregua dell'edizione filologica di un testo.²² La storiografia anglosassone, e americana in particolar modo, da Janson in poi che nel 1957 pubblicava la monografia su Donatello utilizzando circa 350 immagini tra quelle fatte eseguire da Lányi, ha un debito enorme nei confronti di questo uso moderno e agguerrito della fotografia per catturare le molte facce della scultura che, come aveva già espresso un secolo e mezzo e prima Gotthold Ephraim Lessing nel suo *Laocoonte* (1766), è arte che si dispiega nel tempo e nello spazio.²³ Il tipo di ripresa fotografica voluto da Lányi è uno dei modi di piegare il mezzo al tempo che la percezione visiva richiede per impadronirsi dell'opera, le sue sequenze sistematiche ordinate secondo criteri topografici e gerar-

¹⁸ Wilhelm Bode (a c. di), *Denkmäler der Renaissance-Sculptur Toscanas in historischer Anordnung*, 12 voll., Monaco di Baviera 1892-1905.

¹⁹ William Lake Price, *Manual of Photographic Manipulation*, Londra 1858, seconda ed. Londra 1868.

²⁰ Hans Tietze, *Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte*, Lipsia 1913, pp. 252-253.

²¹ Si veda in merito il saggio di Geraldine Johnson in questo stesso volume.

²² Proprio a partire da una delle fotografie commissionate da Lányi e pubblicata da Janson (pl. 467), Giovanni Previtali ricavava la data del 15 giugno 1465 apposta sul frontone sinistro dell'architettura che chiude il *Martirio di S. Lorenzo* nel pergamano con le scene della Passione a Firenze e ne ricavava ragion sufficiente per stabilire che tale fronte era stato ultimato quando Donatello era an-

cora in vita. Giovanni Previtali, "Una data per il problema dei pulpiti di S. Lorenzo", in: *Paragone*, 12/133 (1961), pp. 48-56. In realtà la data trovata da Previtali apriva anziché chiudere il problema della datazione e soprattutto della collaborazione con Bartolomeo Bellano, cfr. Luisa Becherucci, *Donatello, i pergamani di S. Lorenzo*, Firenze 1979, pp. 5-6.

²³ Janson aveva perfettamente capito la natura filologica dell'apparato iconografico approntato da Lányi, ad esso infatti si riferiva come a un testo base, come si legge nell'introduzione della sua monografia: "All I could hope to accomplish, I decided, was to lay the foundation for future research means of thorough critical apparatus designed to establish as firmly as possible the original text of Donatello's oeuvre".

chici sembrano già pensate per la visione digitale, seriale e organizzata, frutto di un lavoro di ricerca e sistematizzazione precedente che agli studiosi restituisce il piacere della scoperta. La sequenza delle immagini avvolge il monumento senza enfasi, con diligente attenzione, il senso della percorrenza va dal generale al particolare. La visione in successione aiuta l'occhio a correggere di volta in volta eventuali travisamenti o idiosincrasie ottiche che potrebbero indurre a privilegiare un aspetto piuttosto che un altro. La campagna orchestrata da Lányi supera di fatto il principio wölffliniano dello "Standpunkt" moltiplicando i punti di ripresa dell'opera in modo tale che la loro sommatoria restituisca l'effetto di una visione quasi cinetica intorno all'opera.

Per Rumberg

Aby Warburg and the Anatomy of Art History*

“Einen Gedanken finden ist Spiel, ihn auszudrücken Arbeit.”¹

Hermann Usener

On 4 September 1928, Aby Warburg went to visit Albert Einstein. Engaging the services of his brother's chauffeur, Warburg and his wife set out for Scharbeutz, a small beach resort by the Baltic Sea, where the famous physicist was spending his summer holiday (fig. 1). The discussion between the two scholars, which revolved around questions of astronomy and astrology, seems to have been a memorable one. Warburg was using photographs to underline his argument, a common practice for an art historian, but *how* he presented these photographs was rather unusual. The event is recorded in a passage from the *Tagebuch* of the Warburg Library, in which Warburg praises the good fortune of the encounter. After jokingly referring to the nice weather conditions (“relatively speaking, of course”, a pun he could not resist), Warburg proudly describes that he presented the photographs by pinning them to the curtain of the veranda. In his effervescent notational style, Warburg concludes: “The horae's cornucopia was poured forth over these hours. Four hours drive. Four hours talk.”² The eccentric display of the

* The ideas discussed in this paper were first developed in the research seminar *Writing Art History*, held at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London between 2007 and 2010. I would like to thank Patricia Rubin and Costanza Caraffa for inviting me to contribute to this volume. I am most grateful to the Warburg Institute in London for granting me access to its archives and, in particular, to Claudia Wedepohl for her invaluable help and expertise. Furthermore, I owe heartfelt thanks to Horst Bredekamp, Elizabeth Sears, Meredith Brown, Scott Nethersole and Willa Beckett.

¹ “To locate a thought is child's play, to express it means work.” Aby Warburg added these words as a motto to a photograph that shows him working at his desk (dated December 1898). See Bernd Roeck, *Florence 1900: The Quest for Arcadia*, transl. by Stewart Spencer, New Haven / London 2009, pp. VIII, 66.

² The translations into English, where not otherwise indicated, are my own. “Mieken und ich mit Kelting nach Scharbeutz zu Einstein gefahren bei schönem (natürlich: ‘relativ’) Wetter. Die einzige Enttäuschung war, daß er offenbar schwer herzleidend ist, sonst trug ihn eine jugenhafte Güte und er nahm meine Vorstellung (mit Photographien) (die wir an den Vorhang der Verandah anpinnten) wie eine freudige Überraschung auf. [...] Der Herbsthoren Füllhorn war über diese Stunden ausgeschüttet. 4 Stunden Fahrt. 4 Stunden Rede.” Diary entry, 4 September 1928, see Aby Warburg, *Tagebuch der Kulturwissenschaftlichen Bibliothek Warburg*, ed. by Karen Michels / Charlotte Schoell-Glass, Berlin 2001, p. 339. See also Horst Bredekamp, “4 Stunden Fahrt. 4 Stunden Rede: Aby Warburg besucht Albert Einstein”, in: Michael Hagner (ed.), *Einstein on the Beach: Der Physiker als Phänomen*, Frankfurt/M. 2005, pp. 165–182.



1 Albert Einstein in Scharbeutz, July 1928. Ullstein Bild, Berlin, Photograph Atelier Balassa

photographs is also mentioned in a letter to his brother Max, where Warburg recalls: “I had brought along my photographs in four heavy folders and we then pinned them to a curtain (according to the method I have developed here [in Hamburg])”.³

This “method” also played an important role in Warburg’s magnum opus, the so-called *Mnemosyne*, a visual atlas (*Bilderatlas*) devoted to the psychology of human expression from pagan antiquity to the present day. The *Mnemosyne* was intended to be published in two folders of plates and two volumes of explanatory text.⁴ In order to develop the plates for publication, Warburg arranged photographs, prints and cut-outs on custom-built screens measuring c. 150 x 120 cm. Made out of black hessian stretched over a wooden frame, the construction of these screens was somewhat similar to a painter’s canvas.⁵ As the project progressed, Warburg assembled pictures on a considerable number of screens. In May 1928, he refers to 40 screens dispersed over both halls of his house as well as the vestibule and the large reading room of the new library building.⁶ By July he had completed 53 screens and by August 1928,

³ “Ich hatte meine Photographien in 4 schweren Mappen mitgebracht, die wir dann an einer Gardine (nach meinem Verfahren hier) anpinnnten”. Warburg Institute Archive, London, WIA General Correspondence, Max Warburg, 5 September 1928, fol. 2, see Bredekamp 2005 (note 2), p. 173. For the relationship between Aby and his brother Max, see also Gabriele Hofmann, *Max Warburg*, Hamburg 2009.

⁴ Diary entry, 6 October 1929, see Warburg 2001 (note 2), p. 543.

⁵ According to my own measurements, based on the evidence of the surviving photographs, the screens were slightly smaller than previously suggested, see for example Aby Warburg, *“Mnemosyne” Materialien*, ed. by Marianne Koos / Wolfram Pichler / Werner Rappl / Gudrun Swoboda, Hamburg / Munich 2006, p. 4.

only a few days before visiting Einstein in Scharbeutz, Warburg exclaims enthusiastically: "For the 'Mnemosyne' 77 screens with 1,292 pictures *prontil!*"⁷

A few weeks later, Warburg left for Italy, where he stayed until the following summer to gather fresh inspiration and additional material for his atlas. On 19 January 1929, he gave a celebrated lecture at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, where, not projecting one single slide, he spoke only in front of screens displaying his photographic arrangements.⁸ Although it must have been difficult for the audience to actually *see* the pictures, Kenneth Clark—who, on a visit to Rome at the time, followed the lecture with great enthusiasm—would later refer to it as an experience that had changed his life.⁹ Warburg returned to Hamburg in July 1929 and continued to work on the arrangement of the screens until his fatal heart attack on 26 October 1929. The project remained unfinished.

Only a few years after Warburg's death, the political situation in Germany forced the library into exile. In December 1933, thanks to the mediation of Lord Lee of Fareham and Samuel Courtauld, all books (and photographs) were shipped to London. The library was kept temporarily in Thames House and, from 1937, in the Imperial Institute Buildings in South Kensington. In 1944, the Warburg Institute officially became part of the University of London and has been housed in its present location on Woburn Square since 1958.¹⁰

The screens of the *Mnemosyne* themselves have not survived, but they are documented in several series of photographs.¹¹ In the early 1990s, based on the evidence of these photographs, the screens were reconstructed and shown in a number of exhibitions.¹² Since then, the possible meaning of Warburg's complex and often enigmatic visual arrangements has been discussed at great length.¹³ I shall

⁶ "In den beiden Sälen im alten Haus, im Vorplatz und im großen Leesaal circa 670 Abbildungen auf circa 40 Gestellen ausgestellt (ohne Perseus Illustrationen) also sicher schon circa 750". Diary entry, 2 May 1928, see Warburg 2001 (note 2), p. 252.

⁷ "Für die 'Mnemosyne' 77 Tafeln mit 1292 Abbildungen prontil!" See diary entries of 29 July 1928 and 28 August 1928, *ibid.*, pp. 320, 337.

⁸ On the lecture at the Hertziana, see Elizabeth Sears, *Warburg Circles* (forthcoming). See also Michael Diers, "Atlas und Mnemosyne: Von der Praxis der Bildtheorie bei Aby Warburg", in: Klaus Sachs-Hombach (ed.), *Bildtheorien: Anthropologische und kulturelle Grundlagen des Visuellen Turn*, Frankfurt/M. 2008, pp. 181–213.

⁹ See Kenneth Clark, *Another Part of the Wood: A Self-Portrait*, London 1974, pp. 188–190.

¹⁰ For the history of the Warburg Library, see Fritz Saxl, "The History of Warburg's Library (1886–1944)", in: Ernst H. Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, London 1970 (Oxford 1986), pp. 325–338, and Dieter Wuttke, "Die Emigration der Kulturwissenschaftlichen Bibliothek Warburg und die Anfänge des Universitätsfaches Kunstgeschichte in Großbritannien", in: *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, 7 (1984), pp. 179–194. See also Michael Diers (ed.), *Portrait aus Büchern: Bibliothek Warburg und Warburg Institute*, Hamburg 1993. Acquired by the city of Hamburg in 1993, the building in Heilwigstraße 116 is now used by the University of Hamburg, see also <http://www.warburg-haus.de>.

¹¹ The last extant series consisted of 63 screens: *Tafel A, B,*

C, 1–8, 20–23, 23a, 24–27, 28/29, 30–41, 41a, 42–49, 50/51, 52–60, 61/62/63/64, 70–79. See Aby Warburg, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, ed. by Martin Warnke / Claudia Brink, Berlin 2000. See also Aby Warburg, *Werke*, ed. by Martin Tremml / Sigrid Weigel / Perdita Ladwig, Berlin 2010, pp. 601–659.

¹² See Warburg 2006 (note 5). A reconstruction of the screens has recently been exhibited again at the exhibition *Aby Warburg: Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* held at the Albertina in Vienna 2007–2008.

¹³ The first and still seminal study of the atlas was provided by Ernst Gombrich, see Gombrich 1970 (note 10), pp. 283–306. For a more thorough investigation, see Peter van Huisstede, *De Mnemosyne Beeldatlas van Aby M. Warburg*, Ph.D. Thesis, Universiteit Leiden 1992, and Katia Mazzucco, *Il progetto Mnemosyne di Aby Warburg*, Ph.D. Thesis, Università degli Studi di Siena 2006. For the numerous interpretations of the atlas, see for example George Didi-Huberman, *L'image survivante: Histoire de l'art et temps des fantômes selon Aby Warburg*, Paris 2002; Philippe-Alain Michaud, *Aby Warburg and the Image in Motion*, transl. by Sophie Hawkes, New York 2004; Griselda Pollock, *Encounters in the Virtual Feminist Museum: Time, Space and the Archive*, London 2007. For more methodological questions, see Peter van Huisstede, "Der Mnemosyne-Atlas: Ein Laboratorium der Bildgeschichte", in: *Aby M. Warburg: "Ekstatische Nympe ... Trauernder Flussgott": Portrait eines Gelehrten*, ed. by Robert Galitz / Brita Reimer, Hamburg 1995, pp. 130–171; Kurt W. Forster / Katia Mazzucco, *Introduzione ad Aby Warburg e all'Atlante della memoria*,



2 Tafel 75 of the Mnemosyne, 1929. Warburg Institute, London, Photographer Fritz Junghans

here refrain from adding another chapter to this discourse, intriguing though it is, and instead devote my attention to one particular aspect: the way in which Warburg used the photographs to develop his arguments. As a case study, I will take a closer look at *Tafel 75* of Warburg's atlas, distinguishing in particular between the photographs *on* the screens and the photographs *of* the screens.

Tafel 75 is devoted to the presentation of anatomy scenes (fig. 2). The two key pictures on the screen, placed in the bottom right, are Rembrandt's 1632 *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp* (Mauritshuis, The Hague) and his 1656 *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Deyman* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). Arranged around them are, above, a lamentation scene, a sarcophagus relief with the *Entombment of Christ* and two further anatomy scenes. To the left are four depictions of *Hippocrates and Democritus*, Guido Reni's painting of *Saints Peter and Paul* and a page from a sixteenth-century book showing an augur—a priest, whose main role was to interpret the will of the gods by studying body parts of dead animals, in particular the liver.¹⁴ This (at first sight rather eclectic) arrangement evolved from Warburg's lecture on Rembrandt, delivered on 29 May 1926 on the occasion of the opening of the new purpose-built library that summer. A set of notes hints at the intention behind this particular arrangement: the juxtaposi-



3 File of Rembrandt's *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*. Warburg Institute, London

Milan 2002; Anke te Heesen, "Exposition Imaginaire: Über die Stellwand bei Aby Warburg", in: *Fotogeschichte*, 112 (2009), pp. 55–64; and Katia Mazzucco, "Mnemosyne, il nome della memoria: Bilderdemonstration, Bil-

derreihen, Bilderatlas", in: *Quaderni del Centro Warburg Italia* (forthcoming).

¹⁴ See Warburg 2000 (note 11), pp. 124–125.

tion of the ‘neutral’—or, as it were, scientific—analysis of the human body and various practices deriving from pagan antiquity that can be related more closely to magic and superstition.¹⁵

As to how Warburg assembled his arrangements, the principle of the atlas extends far beyond comparative analysis. By carefully arranging the individual photographs in relation to each other, Warburg constructed a complex visual matrix suggesting specific relationships between individual pictures. The pictures assembled on *Tafel 75* are both printed and photographic reproductions, and most of these survive to the present day. They are preserved in the Photographic Collection of the Warburg Institute, an archive consisting of around 300,000 pictures, organised not by artist or period but by subject.¹⁶ The reproduction of Rembrandt’s *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp* can be found in the section “Medicine” in a folder entitled “Anatomy: Lessons in Dissection”. The picture is a printed reproduction of an etching mounted on a sheet of brown paper (fig. 3). In addition, the screen also shows photographic reproductions, like for example the anatomy scene from Bartholomaeus Anglicus’s *De proprietatibus rerum*, which is kept in the same folder. The picture was reproduced from an antiquarian’s catalogue, which can still be found in the Warburg Institute Library, and the photograph can positively be identified as the one used for *Tafel 75*, as the margins still show the indentation of the clips used to affix the photograph to the screen (fig. 4). The photograph, which was added to the screen at a later stage and must have been made at Warburg’s specific request, was taken by Fritz Junghans, the library’s in-house photographer, who had been hired in August 1929.¹⁷



4 Clips used for the *Mnemosyne*. Warburg Institute, London

¹⁵ “Die ‘interesselose’ Betrachtung des menschl. Körpers im Gegensatz zur 1) miraculösen (Lykosthenes) 2) magischen zu Weissagungszwecken (Demokrit + Heraklit [Hippocrates]) 3) affectbetonten (Totenklage) 4) einverleibenden (Totenfresser). Demokrit + Heraklit [Hippocrates] als Vertreter des Wendepunktes. Die Weissagungsleber wird zum Objekt der (philosophischen) Kontemplation. Schema der Totenklage resp. Grablegung (ebenso wie d. gleichfalls medizinische Holzschnitt des Angelicus).” Written in Bing’s hand though

certainly dictated by Warburg, the passage is recorded in a notebook containing explanatory texts for each of the screens of the *Mnemosyne*, see Warburg Institute Archive, London, WIA III.108.1.3, fol. 44.

¹⁶ For an index of the subjects and a brief introduction to the collection, see *Summary Guide to the Photographic Collection of the Warburg Institute*, London 1988. The collection is currently in the process of being digitised, see http://warburg.sas.ac.uk/VPC/VPC_search/portal.php.



5 Reading Room of the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg in Hamburg, 1926. Warburg Institute, London

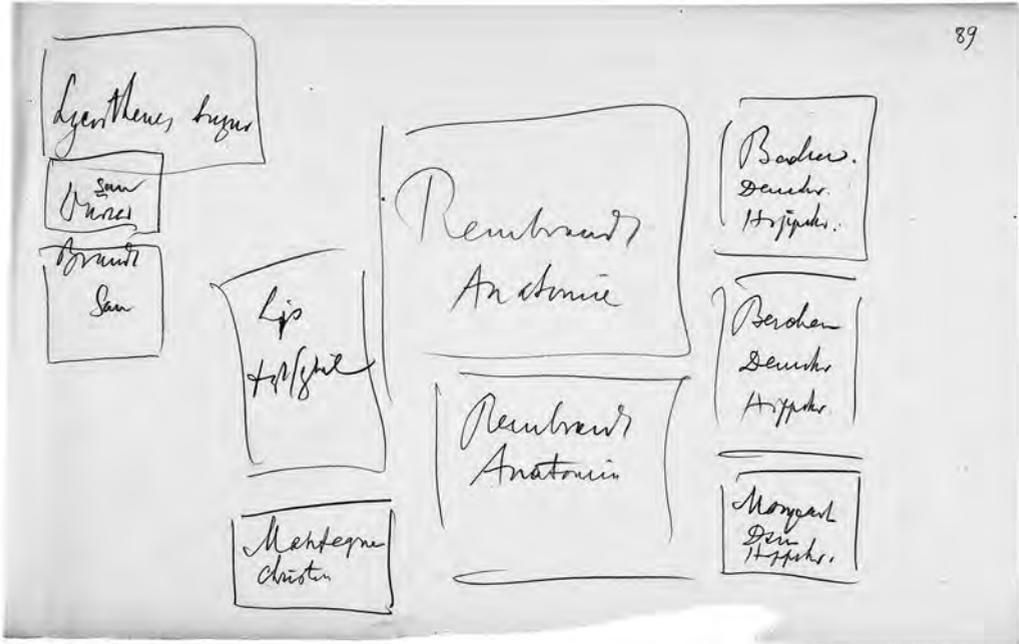
in the background imply that *Tafel 75*, like the other screens of that series, was photographed in the reading room of the new library building where it was attached to the upper left hinge of the main entrance door (fig. 5). The location must have been chosen for the amount of natural light provided by the elliptical glass roof of the reading room, yet the overall quality of the photographs is considerably poor. The framing is arbitrary and the uneven lighting often makes it difficult to identify the individual pictures on the screen.

Before exploring the purpose of these photographs, I want to consider another method Warburg had developed to record his photographic arrangements, the sketches for the so-called *Bilderreihen* (picture series). Like the arrangements for the *Mnemosyne*, the *Bilderreihen* were no 'permanent' installation. Here too, Warburg arranged photographs, altering the composition until he found a con-

¹⁷ A jar with a few of the original clips, which feature a sharp hook that made it possible to attach them to the hessian, survived in a drawer of the photographic collection and is now preserved in the Warburg Institute Archive. The photograph of Bartholomaeus Anglicus was reproduced from catalogue 220 of the antiquarian Gilhofer & Ranschburg, Vienna (Warburg Institute Library NCP 2100 A 113v). The inscription on the back of the photograph, referring not only to the subject but also the source of the reproduction, is written in Junghans's

hand. For notes on Junghans, see diary entries of 19 August 1929, 25 September 1929 and 8 October 1929, Warburg 2001 (note 2), pp. 508, 535, 544. See also Hans-Michael Schäfer, *Die Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg*, Berlin 2005, pp. 318–320.

¹⁸ The photographs for the different versions as well as all extant glass-plate negatives are preserved at the Warburg Institute Archive.



6 Bilderreihe for the Lecture *Italianische Antike im Zeitalter Rembrandts*, 1926. Warburg Institute, London

figuration to suit his argument. Once he had established a specific arrangement, he made a quick pencil sketch to record the position of the photographs, jotting down a number of frames with short-title references referring to a specific work of art. One of these sketches, devoted to Warburg's Rembrandt lecture, seems to have provided the point of departure for *Tafel 75* (fig. 6).¹⁹ To identify the designated works, it is necessary to decode Warburg's shorthand. In the centre, both labelled "Rembrandt, Anatomie", are the two paintings that would later form the nucleus of the screen for the *Mnemosyne*. The sketch also includes some of the other pictures of the screen: to the right, we can identify three of the four paintings of *Democritus and Hippocrates* and, to the far left, the page devoted to the practices of the augur.

The *nature* of the notation deserves further attention. The sketch does not actually show the pictures, the rectangles merely act as placeholders for the reproductions (which themselves are placeholders for the original works of art). The notation must be read, like sheet music, and the arrangement recreated by using the original reproductions. The sketch seems to have served as an *aide-mémoire*, a mnemonic device that made it possible for Warburg to record a specific disposition at a specific moment in time. The photographs of the screens for the *Mnemosyne*, which served the same function and eventually replaced the sketches, had the advantage of actually *showing* the pictures. Warburg had ordered the first set of photographs in the end of May 1928, when he wrote in the diary: "I'm off to Frankfurt. The K.B.W. [Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg] has a 'holiday from me', surely a great

¹⁹ There are twenty sheets devoted to the Rembrandt lecture, see Warburg Institute Archive, London, WIA III.97.2, fols. 73–91, here fol. 89. A critical edition of these sketches, currently in preparation, will be published

as part of the *Gesammelte Schriften*, see Aby Warburg, *Ausstellungen und Bilderreihen*, ed. Uwe Fleckner / Isabella Woldt (forthcoming).

relief; unfortunately, I have to take 'it' [the atlas] with me. Please photograph each screen in 18 x 24 [cm]!"²⁰ Apparently, Warburg intended to continue working on the arrangement of the screens while he was away, and the photographs represented an easily transportable substitute for the cumbersome screens. In addition, the later series may have served a complementary function. Considering that the atlas was supposed to be published as a book, it was certainly not by chance that the screens were set up in a portrait instead of a landscape format, which suggests that the photographs of the screens could also be seen as blueprints for the plates of the final publication.

Mnemosyne—the name deriving from the personification of memory in Greek mythology—was intended as a synopsis of Warburg's oeuvre. The idea of the project was not developed until Warburg had returned from Bellevue, an exclusive sanatorium outside of Kreuzlingen in Switzerland, where he had spent the previous years under close psychiatric supervision.²¹ In addition to his mental instability, Warburg suffered from a severe heart condition, so he knew that he was living on borrowed time. The method of employing screens was supposed to help Warburg advance his project towards completion, and it proved fundamental to his approach. By not simply laying out the photographs in front of him, Warburg was able to alter the way he looked at the material. On the vertical surface of the screen, the arrangement could become a picture in its own right. Affixed to the hessian, the individual reproductions could be perceived as a new, unified entity, which could be approached like a painting. This method underscores the visual nature of the procedure, which was crucial to Warburg's thinking. Even when the screens were not at hand, as was the case on Einstein's veranda in Scharbeutz, Warburg clearly preferred the vertical surface, even if it meant leaving Einstein's curtains worse for wear.

And yet, in a "desperate struggle with the company of ghosts",²² Warburg could not bring himself to stop working on the atlas. Not only did he continuously arrange and re-arrange the photographs on the screens, he also cut up the photographs of the screens, trying out new configurations on a separate sheet of paper.²³ With both the photographs *on* and the photographs *of* the screens, Warburg continued to keep his argument in flux, constructing, de-constructing and re-constructing, but never bringing the project to a close.

To conclude, I want to return to the central picture of *Tafel 75*, Rembrandt's *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*. A corpse is laid out on a table, its left forearm cut open, while the anatomist, Dr Nicolaes Tulp, exposes the muscles and tendons to a group of scholars gathering around the head of the table. Tulp displays the individual components of the body in order to convey a better understanding of the structure and functions of the human body as a whole. Warburg, in contrast, was not moving *closer* to his object of study, but he continued to move *further away* from it—from the original to the reproduction to the reproduction of the reproduction (fig. 7).²⁴ The detachment from the original seems to have been a necessary step for Warburg to develop an argument. The first reproduction (the photograph *on* the screen) isolated the original picture from its context, turning it into a unit which could

²⁰ "Reise ab nach Frankfurt. Die K.B.W. hat 'Ferien von mich' [sic] was gewiß sehr schön ist; ich muß 'ihm' [sic] leider mitnehmen. Bitte jede Tafel 18 x 24 fotografieren lassen!" Diary entry, 3 May 1928, see Warburg 2001 (note 2), p. 254.

²¹ See Chantal Marazia / Davide Stimilli (eds.), *Die unendliche Heilung: Aby Warburgs Krankengeschichte*, Zurich 2007. See also Leland de la Durantaye, "Ghost Stories for the Very Adult", in: *The Believer*, 6 (2008), pp. 26–30.

²² "Vormittags verzweifelter Kampf mit der Geister Com-

pagnie". Diary entry, 17 August 1928, see Warburg 2001 (note 2), p. 330.

²³ In the archive, I found eleven such sheets with cut-outs from different photographs, see Warburg Institute Archive, London, WIA III.105.1.2.

²⁴ On the loss of the aura, see also Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, transl. by James A. Underwood, London 2008, first published as "L'œuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproduction mécanisée", in: *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, 5 (1936), pp. 40–66.



7a Rembrandt, *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, 1632. Mauritshuis, The Hague; 7b File of Rembrandt's *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*. Warburg Institute, London (see fig. 3); 7c *Tafel 75 of the Mnemosyne*, 1929. Warburg Institute, London, Photographer Fritz Junghans

be reconfigured in a new context, while the second reproduction (the photograph of the screen) documented the established argument. Rembrandt's painting, at this stage, had been reduced to the size of a postage stamp. In a letter from 13 December 1928, inviting Ludwig Curtius, Director of the German Archeological Institute in Rome, to his lecture at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Warburg wrote: "I will show only photographs, no slides, and consider the whole as a kind of anatomical demonstration of the methodology of art history".²⁵ As it seems, it was not primarily the individual work of art Warburg was trying to lay bare, it was the discipline itself.

²⁵ "Ich werde nur Photographien und keine Lichtbilder zeigen, und sehe das Ganze als eine Art anatomische Demonstration zur Methodologie der Kunstwissenschaft an". Warburg Institute Archive, London, WIA General

Correspondence, Ludwig Curtius, 13 December 1928. I am deeply thankful to Elizabeth Sears for this reference and for sharing her transcription of the letter with me.

We Make Our Photo Archives
and Our Photo Archives Make Us

Ann Jensen Adams

The Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie and the Subject of Dutch Art History: The Market, the Scholar, and National Identity

“To acquire a photograph of a van der Meer, I have done crazy things”,¹ wrote French critic Théophile Thoré in 1866. When they invented the photograph in the 1820s and 30s, little did Daguerre and his contemporaries envision that their creation would later turn an art lover into a raving lunatic. But one can appreciate Thoré’s excitement when we compare black and white photographs of Vermeer’s *View of Delft* or his *Woman at a Virginal* with the reproductive prints with which Thoré illustrated his series of groundbreaking articles on the artist (figs. 1, 2).² In 1893, Bernard Berenson enthused over the photograph, equating the invention’s significance for connoisseurship with the importance of the printing press for the study of texts.³

The photograph, and the systems by which photographic collections have been ordered, have importantly shaped the history of our field. The earliest photographs reproduced line better than tone, so the first art book to reproduce paintings by means of photographs, William Stirling-Maxwell’s *Annals of the Artists of Spain* (1848), actually published calotypes of engravings after paintings. The first fully illustrated *catalogue raisonné* photographically reproduced Rembrandt’s etchings (1853).⁴ Shortly there-

¹ W. Bürger [pseud. Théophile Thoré], “Van der Meer de Delft”, in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 21 (1866), p. 299: “[P]our obtenir une photographie de tel van der Meer, j’ai fait des folies”.

² Located respectively, Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen, Mauritshuis, The Hague; The National Gallery, London.

³ “Printing itself scarcely could have had a greater effect on the study of the classics than photography is beginning to have on the study of the Old Masters”, from: Bernard Berenson, “Isochromatic Photography and Venetian Pic-

tures”, in: *The Nation* (November 1893), pp. 346–347; see also Wolfgang M. Freitag, “Early Uses of Photography in the History of Art”, in: *Art Journal*, 39/2 (1979/80), pp. 117–123.

⁴ William Stirling-Maxwell, *Annals of the artists of Spain*, London 1848, see Trevor Fawcett, “Graphic versus photographic in the nineteenth-century reproduction”, in: *Art History*, 9/2 (June 1986), pp. 185–212, here pp. 188–189. Charles Blanc, *L’oeuvre de Rembrandt reproduit par la photographie*, Paris 1853.



1 Maxime Lalanne after Jan Vermeer, *View of Delft from the South*, in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, vol. 21 (1866), between pp. 298 and 299



2 Jan Vermeer, *View of Delft from the South*, Koninklijk Kabinet von Schilderijen, Mauritshuis, The Hague

after, art lovers began to pour over photographs of paintings themselves. The minutes of the meeting on 26 January 1863 of the recently founded Koninklijk Oudheidkundig Genootschap, Amsterdam, recorded that members examined “a few photographs after old and new paintings”.⁵ By 1901, W. Martin Conway recommended that connoisseurs form photographic collections for study, and envisioned in some detail a comprehensive institutional collection of photographs that would create, in the words of his page headings, “A Museum of Photographs” that recorded the history of art.⁶

Photographs figured prominently in the blockbuster exhibition of Rembrandt's work mounted in the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, in 1898. By the end of the nineteenth century, Rembrandt—both the man and his work—had become an icon of Dutch national identity. It seemed fully appropriate, then, to celebrate the coronation of Holland's new queen, Wilhelmina, with an exhibition of the works of the “King of Dutch Artists”.⁷ Pulling together all of the etchings and 350 drawings was not so difficult. Although the city of Amsterdam owned only four paintings by the master, the organizers brought together an astonishing 124 paintings, including the *Nightwatch*, which had to be shoehorned in through a window. But if this was to be an exhibition suitable for a queen, comprehensiveness was necessary: the organizers' goal was to display every known work by the artist. Given that by 1898 Rembrandt's oeuvre stood at over 500 paintings, 124 paintings was a pathetic percentage.⁸ Not to be deterred, the organizers represented the remaining 400 paintings—on the walls of the museum—with photographic reproductions hung in a separate room

The two themes that undergirded the exhibition, national identity and comprehensiveness, also lay behind the parliamentary act of 1929 that established the Dutch national photographic archive: the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie in The Hague—fondly known to historians of Dutch art by its acronym, the RKD. Its founding purpose was to assemble an archive of photographs of all paintings ever produced by Dutch artists, in order to, in the words of the foundational Parliamentary act, “illustrate Dutch artistic history”. Today the website of the RKD asserts that it is the largest centre in the world for art-historical visual material, with “more than six million photographs, reproductions, and slides of paintings, drawings, sculpture, graphic arts, and design” covering the Middle Ages to the present.⁹ At the core of the collection lie the photographs of old master Dutch paintings of the fifteenth through the eighteenth centuries, some 700,000 strong.¹⁰

I first began using this resource in the late 1970s while preparing my PhD dissertation, a monograph and *catalogue raisonné* of the seventeenth-century Dutch painter Thomas de Keyser. The RKD was an incredible boon: photographs of almost all works by the artist (and comparative works by his predecessors, contemporaries, and followers) were located in the same building, a handsome nineteenth-century structure across the street from the Mauritshuis Museum (fig. 3). In contrast, a friend of mine, who was at the same time preparing a monograph on the seventeenth-century Italian painter Francesco Albani, found herself dashing all over Europe to consult photographs of works by her painter: to the Villani archive in Bologna to examine photographs of works produced or located in Bologna, to the Bibliotheca Hertziana and Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale in Rome to examine photographs of works produced or located in Rome, to the Böhm archive in Venice, the Louvre in Paris, and the Witt Library in London.

⁵ “Eenige photographiën naar oude en nieuwe schilderijen”, cited by Mattie Boom, “Een geschiedenis van het gebruik en verzamelen van foto's in de negentiende eeuw”, in: *Voor Nederland. De verzamelingen van het Koninklijk Oudheidkundig Genootschap in her Rijksmuseum bewaard* (Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek 10), Baarn 1995, pp. 173–294, here p. 277.

⁶ Sir W. Martin Conway, *The Domain of Art*, London 1901, pp. 129–137.

⁷ Pieter J. J. van Thiel, “De Rembrandt-tentoonstelling van 1898”, in: *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum*, 40/1 (1992), pp. 11–93.

⁸ Wilhelm Bode with the assistance of Cornelis Hofstede

de Groot, *Rembrandt. Beschreibendes Verzeichnis seiner Gemälde, mit den [595] heliographischen Nachbildungen. Geschichte seines Lebens und seiner Kunst*, 8 vols., Paris 1897–1905. For a fine analysis of early Rembrandt connoisseurship see Catherine B. Scallen, *Rembrandt, reputation, and the practice of connoisseurship*, Amsterdam 2004.

⁹ <http://english.rkd.nl/Collections>, accessed 19 August 2010.

¹⁰ http://english.rkd.nl/Collections/Visual_Documentation/Early_Netherlandish_Painting/default_Early_Netherlandish_Painting, accessed 19 August 2010.



3 Study room, Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, former location Korte Vijverberg, The Hague, 1965

Of course I, too, wore thin my Eurailpass viewing originals. But my work at the RKD tracing iconography and style was comfortable and civilized—tea was even brought to the drawings archive at 3:30 every afternoon. So while I worked in comfort, the system by which the photographs were ordered struck me as strange. Photographs of drawings were on the first floor, separated from photographs of paintings on the ground floor. Portraits were located in the Beelddocumentatie Portreticonografie (Iconografisch Bureau), a completely different department in the back of the building. Moreover—what puzzled me most about the ordering system—within each of these departments, boxes were filed on the shelves by iconographic subject, the number of whose subdivisions are staggering. Each genre—history, history painting, landscape, still-lives, genre painting, and portraiture—were again broken down, either by time period, or by a set of ‘stylistic schools’ that sometimes included separate categories for artists who are not always considered major figures today. (These individual categories appear to have been derived from a nineteenth-century taste for painters influenced by Italian art, and for the fine handling of paint, to which I return, below). The works of my artist, Thomas de Keyser, were—and still are—spread over boxes in no less than twelve different subject areas (fig. 4).

De Keyser was primarily a portrait painter. I soon discovered that many of his portraits were to be found not among the boxes of photographs of paintings but in another department entirely, the separate Iconografisch Bureau, where photographs—in all media—are arranged by sitter. While I was not spending my nights on trains dashing across over Europe in order to begin to assemble his oeuvre, I was traipsing all over the building—and had boxes on my study table from twelve different sections of the archive.

In the remainder of this essay, I would like to consider the source of this idiosyncratic ordering, and the implications this has had for the subsequent study of Dutch art history. I suggest that, unlike the

¹¹ John Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish, and French Painters*, 9

vols., London 1829–1842, vol. 1, 1829, p. VI, and vol. 7, p. VII.

very different organization of Italian archives by region and monument, it is in part the result the conception of art as being important to *national* identity as opposed to *regional* patrimony. In the case of Dutch art, this results in an emphasis on subject, or genre, over individual artists or local stylistic schools. And it is this organization, along with the qualities of the black and white photograph, that, I propose, has gone hand-in-hand with the iconographic turn taken by the study of Dutch art in the second half of the twentieth century.

At the time of the founding of the RKD in 1929, Dutch art history had in fact inherited two alternative approaches to its subject that implied two radically different ordering systems for Dutch art, both of which, however,—in different ways—shaped that of the RKD and by extension the practice of Dutch art history. The first was a succession of comprehensive catalogues of Dutch paintings ordered by artist, the organization of which created a hierarchy repeated in the RKD and has influenced the

structure of the field up to the present day. The second conceived of Dutch painting primarily as subject pictures: specifically, as picturing the secular material world. Eventually, the latter—underscored by a national cultural identity that sought to differentiate its artistic production from the production elsewhere in Europe—shaped the ordering system of the RKD. Because of the importance of the RKD for the study of Dutch art history, its ordering system has, I argue, played a role in the types of questions investigated by twentieth-century students of Dutch art.

It was the art market, and thus connoisseurship, that lay behind the first, artist-based, ordering system of the English dealer John Smith (fl. 1835) in his ambitious nine-volume catalogue of the work of thirty-five—primarily Dutch—artists published in London between 1829 and



4 Box numbers/location of photographs, works by Thomas de Keyser, Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague

1842. Smith's full title describes his project: *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters; in which is included a short biographical notice of the artists, with a copious description of their principal pictures; a statement of the prices at which such pictures have been sold at public sales on the continent and in England; a reference to the galleries and private collections, in which a large portion are at present; and the names of the artists by whom they have been engraved; to which is added, a brief notice of the scholars & imitators of the great masters of the above schools.* In his dedication to Robert Peel in the first volume, Smith stressed that “the primary object [...] of the work [i.e. his catalogue] is, to convey such information to amateurs of Pictorial Art as may prevent, in a great measure, the success of the frauds and impositions too much practiced”; in volume 7 he underscores that the purpose of his publication is to “improve the commerce of genuine works of art”.¹¹ Smith included in his entries a brief biography of the artist, and then what he perceived to be the defining features of a painting, features that are still standard today in the genre of the *catalogue raisonné*, in the photographic mounts of the RKD, and now in the presentation of images in the Internet: description (often including his evaluation), date, dimensions and support, provenance and sales prices, present location, and today also the bibliography of books and articles in which the work has been published. Smith specifically noted when a description was based on a print, and warned his readers that “Prints do not always correctly correspond to the Pictures from which they are taken”.¹²

In Smith's world, the archive was the text and the categorical unit the artist, although these are ordered neither alphabetically nor by primary theme.¹³ Within the work of each artist he arranged works primarily by collection, until he reached Rembrandt where paintings are grouped in categories loosely derived from the traditional hierarchy of genres codified by André Félibien in 1667.¹⁴ While Félibien ranked, in descending order, histories, portraits, genre painting, landscapes, animal painting, and still lifes, Smith inserted "Fancy and Familiar Subjects" before portraiture. Although this category included Rembrandt's *Nightwatch*, and the *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp*, it also contained the *Young Woman Bathing*, and *Boy with a Dead Bittern*.¹⁵ For him these, including the group portraits, were subject or genre paintings: by "Fancy" he understood works from the imagination, and "Familiar", works from life.¹⁶ Secular subjects of everyday life, arranged or created by the imagination of the artists, had been moved to just below history paintings in stature.

Half a century later, Cornelis Hofstede de Groot (1863–1930) updated and expanded Smith's catalogue in a ten-volume twenty-one-year project covering now forty, exclusively Dutch, seventeenth-century artists and published in German and in English translation beginning in 1907.¹⁷ Although Hofstede de Groot's volumes present artists in a different order, the work of every artist is organized by subject or genre, in the same hierarchical order that Smith had used for Rembrandt's paintings. Connoisseurship and the market also lay behind his project, for Hofstede de Groot's primary occupation was expertising the authenticity of paintings (fig. 5): he even developed a form letter for the purpose.¹⁸

The hierarchical canon of major masters who cast their long shadows over their contemporaries is rooted in the early nineteenth-century taste of John Smith and his clients, shaped by their familiarity with artists that circulated on the London market. This list was supplemented by those artists who had attracted the attention of contemporary collectors as Hofstede de Groot was revising Smith's work. Smith had concluded the catalogue of each artist with a list of those about whom he knew little, but surmised to be the "scholars [i.e. pupils] and imitators" of the primary artist, in a practice that goes back at least to a publication by Jean Baptiste Pierre Lebrun at the end of the eighteenth century.¹⁹ Like

¹² Ibid., p. XXIX.

¹³ Smith's volumes treat the following artists: vol. 1: Gerrit Dou, Pieter van Slingelandt, Frans van Mieris, Willem van Mieris, Adriaen von Ostade, Isaac von Ostade, and Philips Wouwermans; vol. 2: Peter Paul Rubens; vol. 3: Anton van Dyck, and David Teniers; vol. 4: Jan Steen, Gerard ter Borch, Eglon Hendrik van der Neer, Pieter de Hooch, Gonzales Cocques, Gabriel Metsu, Gaspar Netscher, A. van der Werff, Nicolaes Maes, Godfried Schalcken; vol. 5: Nicolaes Berghem, Paulus Potter, Adriaen van de Velde, Karel Dujardin, Aelbert Cuyp, Johan van der Heijden; vol. 6: Jacob Ruysdael, Meindert Hobbema, Jan and Andies Both, Jan Wynants, Adam Pijnacker, Jan Hackaert, Willem van der Velde, Ludolf Backhuijzen, Jan van Huysum, Rachel Ruysch; vol. 7: Rembrandt van Rijn; vol. 8: Nicolas Poussin, Claude Lorraine, and Jean-Baptiste Greuze; vol. 9: Supplement.

¹⁴ In his preface to lectures to the French Academy, published as André Félibien, *Conférences de l'académie royale de peinture et de sculpture pendant l'année 1667*, Paris 1668.

¹⁵ Smith 1829–1842 (note 11), vol. 7, pp. 59–77, respectively no. 139 (now Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam), no. 142 (now Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen, Mauritshuis, The Hague), no. 165 (now National Gallery, London), and

no. 171 (*Self-Portrait with Dead Bittern*, now Gemäldegalerie, Dresden).

¹⁶ I am grateful to Ann Bermingham for clarifying these terms as understood in the early nineteenth century.

¹⁷ Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts; nach dem Muster von John Smith's Catalogue raisonné*, Esslingen am Neckar 1907–1928; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century based on the Work of John Smith*, transl. by Edward G. Hawke, London 1907–1927. A comparison of the two works provides a study in changing information and taste. Hofstede de Groot excluded the French and Flemish artists treated by Smith, modified the order of artists treated, and added: Carel Fabritius, Jan Vermeer, Frans Hals, Adriaen Brouwer, Eglon Hendrik van der Neer, Jan van de Cappelle and Jan van Goyen.

¹⁸ Scallen 2004 (note 8), p. 130.

¹⁹ Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Lebrun, *Galerie des peintres flamands, hollandais et allemands*, Paris 1792–1796, noted by Ivan Gaskell, "Tradesmen as Scholars: Interdependencies in the Study and Exchange of Art", in: Elizabeth Mansfield (ed.), *Art History and Its Institutions: Founda-*

archive of the RKD. Before the RKD became the central scholarly resource for the study of seventeenth-century Dutch art history, historians of Dutch art were writing monographic studies of individual artists—like their colleagues studying the art of Italy, France, Germany, or England. Dutch art was, however, originally understood as—and ultimately valued for—its subject matter. The inherited perception of Dutch art by both foreigners and natives alike focuses upon its secular subjects. In a widely quoted passage, Michelangelo is reported to have asserted:

“In Flanders they paint [...] stuffs and masonry, the green grass of the fields, the shadow of trees, and rivers and bridges, which they call landscapes, with many figures on this side and that.”²³

His description was, of course, to celebrate—in contrast—the genius of the Idea behind the art of his native Italy, for he continued:

“And all this, though it pleases some persons, is done without reason or art, without symmetry or proportion, without skilful choice of boldness and, finally, without substance or vigour.”²⁴

Nineteenth-century French left-wing journalist and critic Théophile Thoré, with whose praise of Vermeer I opened this essay, celebrated Dutch art for just these qualities. In a well-known passage, he praised “these good Hollanders who care little for the hieroglyphs of pagan or Catholic mythology, and who paint, quite simply, human life”;²⁵ sentiments followed by Hippolyte Taine, Eugene Fromentin, and later, in the twentieth century, Vincent van Gogh, and Roland Barthes, among others.

Seventeenth-century Dutch comments on painting, as well as inventory entries confirm that Dutch paintings were neither created nor understood by contemporaries according to the subject categories which were developed in the Renaissance, and codified in seventeenth-century France, for art that was predominantly religious in subject matter. As noted above, in their ordering of paintings within their catalogues of individual artists, Smith and Hofstede de Groot grouped Dutch paintings by these categories, but gave recognition to the diversity and prominence of secular subject matter by moving this category to second place. Photographs made it possible for Hofstede de Groot to compare similar subjects with a much finer grain, and were helpful in sorting out the large numbers of repetitions, copies, and variants of popular themes. His classifications of the work of Jan Steen, for example, included such categories as “the starved family and the well-fed family”, under “Illustrations of Proverbs, and Pictures of a Didactic Nature”, to “Scenes in and about the Tavern” broken down into seven sub-categories, including “people at play” divided again into five additional subjects including “backgammon”

²³ Francisco de Hollanda, *Four Dialogues on Painting*, transl. by Aubrey F. G. Bell, London 1928, p. 16.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ W. Bürger [pseud. Théophile Thoré], *Musées de la Hollande*, 2 vols., Paris 1858–1860, vol. 2, *Musée Van der Hoop à Amsterdam et Musée de Rotterdam*, 1860, pp. 115–116; elsewhere he wrote: “Mais vraiment il y a temps pour tout. L’Italie catholique a fait des dieux et des héros. Laissons la Hollande nous faire un peu des hommes et des bohémiens” (Catholic Italy made its Gods and heroes. Let us permit Holland to make for us a few men and tramps). W. Bürger [pseud. Théophile Thoré], *Musées de la Hollande*, 2 vols., Paris 1858–1860, vol. 1, *Amsterdam Et La Haye, Etudes Sur L’Ecole Hollandaise*, 1858, p. 92.

²⁶ *Bulletin of the American Art Union* (1846), pp. 143–144, cit. by Fawcett 1986 (note 4), p. 188.

²⁷ Princeton Index of Christian Art (medieval art), Charles Rufus Morey, conceived in 1912 and opened in 1917, see <http://ica.princeton.edu/>.

²⁸ A guide to the system itself was published as Henri van de Waal, *Decimal Index of the Art of the Low Countries D.I.A.L. Abridged edition of the Iconclass System*, The Hague 1968; Henri van de Waal et al., *Iconclass, an iconographic Classification System*, 17 vols., Amsterdam / New York, 1973–1985.

²⁹ To list only a few Monographs on history painting: Albert Blankert et al., *Gods, Saints & Heroes. Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt* (exhibition cat. Washington DC / Detroit / Amsterdam 1980–1981); Albert Blankert et al., *Dutch classicism in 17th-century painting* (exhibition cat. Rotterdam / Frankfurt 1999–2000). Dutch genre painting: Eddy de Jongh, *Zinne- en minnebeelden in de schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw*, [n.p.] 1967; Peter

and “cock-fighting”. Once moved to the RKD, however, Hofstede de Groot’s photographs, along with those of Frits Lugt, were reordered giving primacy to these subject categories: instead of being grouped together by artist, works were separated by media and then disbursed among a vast number of detailed subject categories. Pendent portraits of a man and wife, for example, can end up separated, in sections for “Portraits of men” and “Portraits of women”, which are then divided into sections “with hands” and “without hands”, subdivided again into folders titled “facing left” and “facing right”. This has had a deep impact upon the practice of Dutch art history.

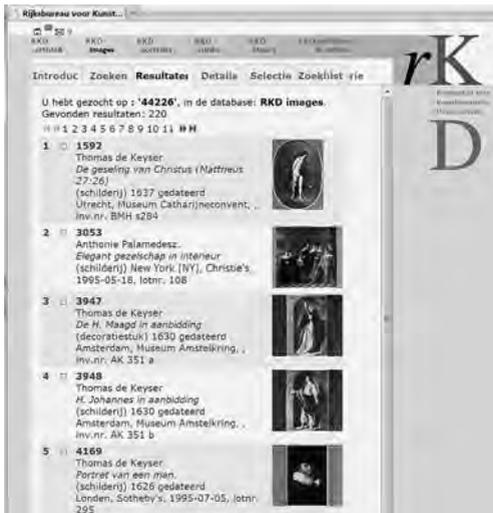
Most black and white photographs in photographic collections—and certainly the RKD—are of a quality that lends themselves primarily to identifying works by subject and composition, rather than colour, finer gradations of light, touch, or the handling of paint. Indeed, in 1846, the Bulletin of the American Art Union had described the qualities of the photograph itself—as they revealed no trace of the artist’s touch or the handling of paint—as “triumphs of the Dutch school”.²⁶ Ordering of works of art by subject matter had been employed for Medieval art by Charles Rufus Morey (1877–1955) in the establishment of the Princeton Index of Christian Art in 1917.²⁷ While originally useful for those works for whom the name of the originator was lost in the shadows of history after World War II, it gained further importance when, under the influence of such German art historians as Erwin Panofsky (1892–1968) and Willem Heckscher (1904–1999), an interest developed in analyzing the subject matter of Dutch painting—and in particular the study of iconography.

At the RKD, Henri van de Waal (1910–1972) created an extraordinarily ambitious project: to systematically order all art by subject, devising a decimal system entitled *Iconclass*—a system comprising 28,000 classification rubrics, with 14,000 keywords that has been adopted by many museums and institutions. An abbreviated version of this system, known as the Decimal Index to the Art of the Low Countries, or D.I.A.L., was used for a project publishing postcard-sized images of all known Netherlandish art.²⁸ The latter was ultimately aborted, but this ordering of Netherlandish painting by subject has remained the central organizing feature of the world’s primary resource for the study of Dutch art.

While monographs continued to be written and monographic exhibitions continue today, since shortly after World War II a substantial number of publications have begun to examine Dutch art by subject: appearing with great regularity have been major studies of Dutch landscape painting, still life painting, history painting, genre painting, and most recently portrait painting in both exhibition catalogues and monographs.²⁹ Although some of these studies treat the formal aspects of their subject, the field was shaped in the second half of the twentieth century above all by more detailed iconographic

C. Sutton, *Masters of 17th-century Dutch genre painting* (exhibition cat. Philadelphia / Berlin / London 1984); Christopher Brown, *Images of a golden past: Dutch genre painting of the 17th century*, New York 1984; Wayne E. Franits, *Dutch seventeenth-century genre painting: its stylistic and thematic evolution*, New Haven/CN 2004; Nanette Salomon, *Shifting priorities: gender and genre in seventeenth-century Dutch painting*, Stanford/CA 2004. Portraiture: Eddy de Jongh, Alois Riegl, *Das Holländische Gruppenporträt*, 2 vols., Vienna 1931 [orig. ed. 1902]; Eddy de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw: huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw* (exhibition cat. Haarlem 1986); Ann Jensen Adams, *Private Faces and Public Identities in Seventeenth-century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community*, New York 2009; Landscape painting: Wolfgang Stechow, *Dutch Landscape Painting of the seventeenth century*,

London 1966; Peter C. Sutton et al., *Masters of 17th-century Dutch landscape painting* (exhibition cat. Amsterdam / Boston / Philadelphia 1987–1988); Albert Blankert, *Dutch 17th Century Italianate Landscape Painters*, Soest 1978. Still lives: Ingvar Bergstrom, *Dutch Still-Life Painting in the Seventeenth century*, New York 1956; N. R. A. Vroom, *A modest message as intimated by the painters of the monochrome banketje*, 2 vols., Schiedam 1980; Sam Segal, *A prosperous past: the sumptuous still life in the Netherlands, 1600–1700* (exhibition cat. Delft / Cambridge/MA / Fort Worth/TE 1988); Paul Taylor, *Dutch flower painting, 1600–1720*, New Haven/CN 1995; Alan Chong et al., *Still-life paintings from the Netherlands, 1550–1720* (exhibition cat. Amsterdam / Cleveland 1999–2000).



6 Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, on-line database, <http://website.rkd.nl/Databases/RKDartists>, search result Thomas de Keyser

began a process resulting in a boon for art historians seeking relief from outrageous reproduction fees for scholarly publications.³¹ But we are all aware that the black and white photograph conveys a limited amount of information, foregrounding specific qualities of painting in favour of others. In so doing, the photograph has shaped and perpetuated definitions of artistic style in ‘idea’ conveyed by outline and tone—gradations of light and shade—first articulated in the Italian Renaissance. Only in the last forty years have the chemistry of paint composition and application techniques begun to figure prominently in connoisseurship decisions, such as those made from the early 1970s by the Rembrandt Research Project. For these, the photographic—and now digital—representations of the x-ray, ultra-violet light reflectography, autoradiographs, and paint samples viewed through high-powered microscopes are invaluable.³² But until their systematic use and widespread circulation, Renaissance concepts of style as subject, outline, and tone will continue—if only subliminally—to shape our field.

The RKD has since moved to a new home. And some of its photographic resources are now available in digital form for searching on the Internet. Searches by artist, for example, now make possible the reassembly of an artist’s oeuvre—or as much of it as may be on-line (fig. 6). But like all early adaptations to new media, the form this takes more or less reproduces the existing archive. Grouping of

studies of these genres, first by Jan Gerrit van Gelder (1903–1980) and William Heckscher at Utrecht, and brought to the wider attention of art history in the work of Eddy de Jongh. In an apparently mundane domestic scene by Jan Molenaer, for example, de Jongh noted the reference to vanity in the skull used as a footstool, and the telling juxtaposition of the map of the world above the young woman’s head—bringing to mind well-known contemporaneous emblems warning of the dangerous seductions of Lady World, whose primary attribute is the globe atop her head.³⁰

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there were a few who voiced the opinion that for art-research photographs were even superior to the work of art. At one level, even the law now considers the photograph of a two-dimensional work of art as transparent to the original. In the case of Bridgeman Art Library vs. Corel Corporation in the year 1999, the courts decided that the photograph added no “sweat of the brow”—which

³⁰ Eddy de Jongh, “Vermommingen van Vrouw Wereld in de 17 de eeuw”, in: Josua Bruyn / Jan A. Emmens (eds.), *Album amicorum Jan Gerrit van Gelder*, The Hague 1973, pp. 198–206, transl. as “The Changing Face of Lady World”, in: Eddy de Jongh, *Questions of Meaning: Theme and Motif in Dutch Seventeenth-Century Painting*, transl. and ed. by Michael Hoyle, Leiden 2000, pp. 60–82.

³¹ *Bridgeman Art Library v. Corel Corp.*, 36 F. Supp. 2d 191 (S.D.N.Y. 1999); http://www.law.cornell.edu/copyright/cases/36_FSupp2d_191.htm, accessed 19 August 2010.

³² Maryan W. Ainsworth, “From Connoisseurship to Tech-

nical History: The Evolution of the Interdisciplinary Study of Art”, in: *The Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter*, 20/1 (2005), pp. 4–10.

³³ *Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories*, The Frick Art Reference Library, <http://research.frick.org/montias/home.php>, accessed 19 August 2010; *Economic and Artistic Competition in the Amsterdam Art Market, c. 1630–1690* (ECARTICO), research team: Eric Jan Sluiter and Marten Jan Bok (co-supervisors), Erna Kok, Elmer Kolfin, Frauke Laarmann, Harm Nijboer.

paintings by subject are still shaped by the keywords that cataloguers subjectively assign, and the thumbnail photographs are useful primarily for identification purposes.

At the same time, computer databases of historical material—such as the inventories and sales catalogues pioneered by economic historian Michael Montias and the remarkable database by Marten Jan Bok and his colleagues have opened up a new field of study—that of collecting and the marketplace.³³ We look forward to the next steps in computer assisted research, which will include the creation of a powerful relational database linking archival data with digitized images. Meanwhile, we can fully understand the excitement of Théophile Thoré, with whose comments about the black-and white photograph I began this paper, in our own excitement at the possibility to access, nearly anywhere, the technical aspects of a painting's creation, along with glorious colour images in digital form.

Anthony Hamber

Observations on the Classification and Use of Photographs at the South Kensington Museum: 1852–1880

Within the context of the historiography of photo archives and libraries it is timely that a conference held to consider the role and future of art history photo archives is taking place towards the end of the seventh generation of the medium's existence and in a year that saw some significant milestones.

If one takes 25 years as a generation, then the much lauded writings of Walter Benjamin (1892–1940) fall within the fourth generation and the most oft quoted writings on art by André Malraux (1901–1976) fall within the fifth generation of photo libraries. The fact is that the prolific and influential French art critic Jules Janin (1804–1874) had published his predictions of “the museum without walls” as early as April 1839.¹

During 2009, three significant announcements affecting art history photo archives were made. Kodak announced that after 74 years, its Kodachrome colour transparency film had been discontinued. In London, the University of London Central Slide Library containing 35 mm transparencies was closed and the Conway and the Witt photographic print libraries at the Courtauld Institute faced closure. Such closures will be mirrored across the world as the second generation of digital imaging takes effect. This may be seen as a prompt for a range of scholars to begin to examine and document the historiography of photo archives. It also begs questions about what might be described as the “business case” for analogue photo archives and their interrelationship with digital surrogates.

This situation is made additionally complex through the variety of physical formats that make up photo archives. While emphasis is often given to photographic print collections, there are also glass slide collections (6 cm x 6 cm format), 35 mm slides and a wide range of glass, nitrocellulose, acetate and polyester negatives. Each collection has a historiographic dimension. Some images have impor-

¹ Jules Janin, “Le Daguerotype [sic]”, in: *L'Artiste* (April 1839), pp. 145–148.

7. Report of the Keeper of the National Art Library. 427

NATIONAL ART LIBRARY RETURN, 1865 to 1869 inclusive.

Appendix D.
REPORT BY
MR. SODEN
SMITH.

1865.	1866.	1867.	1868.	1869.	
309	311	311	312	311	Days open.
10,719	11,622	12,822	15,283	18,772	Readers.
<i>Acquisitions.</i>					
1,696	857	1,391	1,427	993	Volumes purchased.
139	144	211	987	538	presented.
1,418	1,657	1,784	1,746	1,919	Parts, pamphlets, &c. purchased.
215	175	478	2,107	830	presented.
160	363	125	440	96	Drawings purchased.
127	15	267	393	287	presented.
1,869	151	205	2,126	1,185	Prints purchased.
249	103	44	1,881	5,470	presented.
411	1,245	5,710	5,378	2,314	Photographs purchased.
2,161	1,836	984	2,214	306	presented.
<i>Circulation.</i>					
2,000	1,538	780	630	846	Books borrowed.
1,957	1,589	593	601	845	returned.
1,040	1,263	2,795	1,449	1,061	Drawings, prints, &c. borrowed.
1,749	734	803	690	408	returned.
			1,394	260	Photographs borrowed.
			470	255	returned.
<i>Cataloguing, Registration, &c.</i>					
1,931	1,529	909	5,596	9,145	Catalogue and Inventory slips copied.
—	—	—	2,691	7,114	Index slips written.
—	—	—	637	5,913	Drawings and prints registered.
—	—	—	19	2,325	Drawings, &c., Catalogue slips written.
—	—	—	2,275	4,260	Drawings, &c., Index Slips written.
—	—	—	1,706	5,028	Photographs registered.
—	—	—	29	2,001	Catalogue slips written.
—	—	—	274	896	Index slips written.
—	—	—	12,245	77,447	Stamps impressed.
572	680	504	651	551	Volumes bound.

1 Statistics of National Art Library Returns—Acquisitions, Circulation and Cataloguing & Registration of items from 1865 to 1869

tant, though perhaps unrecognised, significance. Collectively these photographic archives are on a transitional journey from representing a core component of operational infrastructure to artefacts of the archaeology of art history. The key decisions to make are to classify the significance and relevance of these collections—or rather individual images within these collections—and secure them for future generations. This may require new collaborative approaches both within and between institutions.

At this point, it is worth making a couple of preliminary observations regarding image classification. Firstly, there is no extensive bibliography covering the historiography of this field. Little interest has been shown in the historiography of either manual reprographic or photographic collections relevant to the history of art, architecture and archaeology. Secondly, the first generation of photographic images was not necessarily automatically integrated with existing collections of engraved, etched or lithographed images. These images increasingly stood alone and set out on an administrative pathway that can be considered fell below that of the kudos bestowed on the established order of collections of “prints and drawings.” Thirdly, in the early twenty-first century, we now have a generation’s worth of experience with digital databases, data structuring, thesauri and complex Boolean queries and analy-

sis. This aspect needs to be juxtaposed with the rise in the mid-nineteenth century of methodologies exploiting analogue cross-referencing and indexing and the related issues, challenges and decisions these pioneers faced.

The South Kensington Museum was one of a number of institutions that formed the Science and Art Department created in 1853 as a subdivision of the British government Board of Trade to promote education in art, science, technology and design in Great Britain and Ireland. Several of these institutions formed significant photographic collections, such as the Museum of Construction and the Science and Navigation schools, though these to date have been largely ignored by historians.

Between 1852 and 1880, the South Kensington Museum assembled a collection of more than fifty thousand photographs of a wide range of subjects covering the fine and decorative arts, architecture

12. Summary of Art Circulation. 523

2. PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS, &c., LENT and RETURNED.					Appendix D. REPORT ON SOUTH KENSING- TON MUSEUM.
			Paintings, &c. Lent.	Paintings, &c. Returned.	Total.
January	-	-	181	72	253
February	-	-	80	284	364
March	-	-	100	70	170
April	-	-	1,075	645	1,720
May	-	-	356	357	913
June	-	-	642	45	687
July	-	-	824	1,176	2,000
August	-	-	115	384	499
September	-	-	586	219	805
October	-	-	510	255	765
November	-	-	588	723	1,311
December	-	-	893	784	1,677
Total	-	-	5,950	5,214	11,164

(b.) NATIONAL ART LIBRARY RETURNS.

(1.) Return of Results for the Years 1876 to 1880 inclusive.

1876.	1877.	1878.	1879.	1880.	
24,043	26,527	23,821	25,453	27,339	Readers.
					<i>Acquisition of Books, &c.</i>
775	1,212	963	1,445	2,583	Volumes purchased.
882	351	233	177	347	" presented.
98	122	140	297	348	Parts, Pamphlets, &c. purchased.
113	161	102	139	278	" " presented.
453	876	331	1,328	382	Drawings purchased.
689	76	413	97	2,490	" presented.
955	13,223	6,928	5,849	4,546	Prints purchased.
58	75	535	17	173	" presented.
453	500	159	752	1,007	Photographs purchased.
420	631	383	560	22	" presented.
-	-	-	-	1,273	" transferred.
34	30	-	-	-	Drawings and Prints received for circulation.
15	48	29	2	2	Photographs received for circulation.
					<i>Circulation, &c.</i>
659	578	455	490	443	Books borrowed.
669	740	431	449	437	" returned.
1,481	1,317	827	695	843	Drawings, Prints, &c. borrowed.
1,297	1,033	679	633	643	" " returned.
1,104	1,189	1,112	592	1,106	Photographs borrowed.
945	846	943	651	928	" returned.
987	1,611	1,824	1,592	1,909	<i>Cataloguing, Registration, &c.</i> Volumes classed, placed, and press-marked.

2 Statistics of National Art Library Returns—Acquisitions, Circulation and Cataloguing & Registration of items from 1876 to 1880

and industrial manufactures. These primarily consisted of loose photographic prints ranging from *carte de visite* format to an image more than seventy metres in length. Photographically illustrated publications—including books with additional inserted pages with mounted photographs and portfolios of photographs—were also prevalent, while lantern slides were added at the end of the century. This in itself points to the perennial differentiation between book librarians, photographic print collection librarians, and slide/diapositive librarians; their classification and usage also varied.

However, it is worth pointing out that while there were calls in 1871 by the photographic printer Duncan C. Dallas for the South Kensington Museum to found a Museum of Photography,² the South Kensington Museum's (renamed the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1899) strategic and operational management of its photographic collection was, at best, sporadic. The historiography of the Photograph Collection from the end of the period covered in this essay into the late twentieth century is relevant as an insight into the wider management of photograph collections and their usage.

Henry Cole (1808–1882) was a career civil servant who had been at the heart of the events that formed and shaped the South Kensington Museum. He was a driving force behind the Great Exhibition of 1851 and held the office of both the Secretary of the Science and Art Department and the Director of the South Kensington Museum. In 1873, Cole retired and the South Kensington Museum failed to secure and build on his achievements and administrative legacy. There was no “keeper” or “curator” of the Photograph Collection. T. C. Grove was appointed Assistant Keeper of photographs in 1897, probably the knee-jerk reaction to a critical government report. Grove may have been the author of a new system of classification with thirty-five headings introduced in that year. In June 1908, Grove wrote a report on the “Photographic Section” that highlighted the poor state of the collections management. Crudely put, it was not even clear how many photographs were held in total. In the same year, the Science Museum became a separate institution with its own photography collection—some of which had originated in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The Department of Engraving, Illustration and Design was only created in 1909, yet the photographs remained within the art library. In 1933, Charles Gibbs-Smith (1909–1981) succeeded Grove as head of the Photograph Collection and though he did much to popularise photography, he is best known today as a historian of aeronautics and aviation. Around 1968, there began a system of classifying part of the Photograph Collection using the letter X followed by a number. Some eight hundred “X” numbers were allocated.³ The background to this has yet to be established.

The Photograph Collection was transferred from the art library—its home since the origins of the South Kensington Museum—and added to the newly formed Department of Prints, Drawings & Photographs and Paintings as late as 1977. A campaign to catalogue the Photograph Collection along the lines of prints and drawings was commenced. However, by this date significant parts of the Photograph Collection had been dispersed. Some photographs were transferred to a number of the specialist departments within the Victoria and Albert Museum. The photographs of paintings were loaned to the University of Essex.

² Duncan Dallas, “The Museum of Photography”, in: *The British Journal of Photography Annual*—(1871), p.116; the article was reprinted in: *Image, Journal of Photography of George Eastman House* (February 1952), p. 2.

³ Victoria and Albert Museum, *Library Photograph collection, Index to the Principle “X” Numbers*, London 1968.

⁴ Hogarth raised his suggestion in a letter, dated 18 November 1856, that was published in the *Journal of the Photographic Society*, no. 50 (21 January 1857), p. 209.

⁵ Joseph Vinzenz Degen, *Adam Bartsch. Le Peintre-graveur*, 21 vols., Vienna 1803–1821. See the entry for Bartsch under Lee Sorensen (ed.), in: *Dictionary of Art Historians*, www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org.

⁶ See Jennifer Montague, “The ‘Ruland / Raphael Collection’”, in: Helene E. Roberts (ed.), *Art History through the Camera’s Lens*, Newark 1995, pp. 37–57.

Classification

The context of the classification of the photographs held by the South Kensington Museum should be evaluated within a matrix of considerations. Firstly, during the early to mid-1850s the number of available photographs—commercial or otherwise—was initially a mere trickle. This did not represent a sufficient critical mass to necessitate an administrative or organisational policy. Quite how commercial photograph dealers targeted the Science and Art Department and the South Kensington Museum remains unclear, though they would clearly have seen a potentially profitable public sector client that had significant budget and a remit. However, this situation was quickly replaced by the comparative flood of photographs that became available during the second half of the 1850s. In 1856, the prominent London print seller and photographic publisher John Hogarth called for a consolidated catalogue of the rapidly expanding number of commercially available photographs.⁴ While this would have provided a useful tool Hogarth's suggestion was never realised.

Secondly, the photographic collection was aligned to the wider aims and objectives of the South Kensington Museum and the Department of Science and Art with respect to industrial art and design. To date no evidence of a detailed policy or strategic plan supporting the acquisition of photographs by the South Kensington Museum has been identified. Nevertheless, as early as the summer of 1853 Charles Thurston Thompson (1816–1868) and Francis Bedford (1816–1894) were photographing temporary exhibitions on behalf of the Science and Art Department. This represented a clear statement of intent as does the secondment of a detachment of Royal Engineers to South Kensington to assist with the emerging photographic department. The hand of Henry Cole was behind both of these developments.

Thirdly, the forms of acquisition—internal museum photography, commercial purchase, purchase by members of staff when on foreign visits, donations, and international exchanges—form the picture of a fragmented and somewhat disjointed approach. It is unclear, for instance, how the acquisition budgets were established. Similarly, while the Art Library focussed on reproductions of works of art rather than complete photographic publications, it is unclear how the Science Departments, also held at the South Kensington Museum, selected photographic images.

Fourthly, consideration should be given to the existing classification systems for manual reprographic images—either by subject matter, portraits, landscapes etc. or by reprographic process, such as engravings, etchings, lithographs etc.

In this last respect, Adam von Bartsch's (1757–1821) authoritative but unillustrated twenty-one volume catalogue of Old Master prints represented one model that the South Kensington Museum might have adhered to.⁵ Bartsch drew heavily on the classification of images by period and artist listed alphabetically that had been created by Pierre Jean Mariette *fils* (1694–1774), the son of the Parisian art dealer and the compiler of the print collection of Prince Eugene of Savoy (1663–1736). Bartsch's structure was by artist under a hierarchy of country, school and subject matter.

Prince Albert's "Raphael Collection" represents another exemplum, though it has been shown that the classification system evolved and was modified during the project.⁶ Institutions such as The British Museum and the Royal Academy might have served as another precedent. However, the first catalogues for the Department of Prints and Drawings of the British Museum were not written until the 1870s and these in themselves were only relevant to one part of the South Kensington Museum's collections and function.

A key factor was the wide gamut of subject matter that encompassed the Science and Art Department. There were, in effect, no specific all-encompassing paradigms. While the photographic reproduction of art and architecture would predominate, the manner in which photography was exploited

by all walks of human activity opened a veritable floodgate of new imagery. To an extent, this overwhelmed the nascent administrative infrastructure of the South Kensington Museum.

Another dimension is represented by the network of commercial outlets that sold photographs. By the middle of the nineteenth century there was an international network of print dealers. How these dealers classified photographs and integrated them into their existing stock provides insights into the disruptive nature of photographic prints.

The *Kunstkatalog* of the Leipzig publisher Rudolph Weigel (1804–1867) is one example of how the commercial art world listed and classified photographs of works of art.⁷ This is significant because Weigel had an international client base, though he was not unique in this respect. While Weigel included photographs under subject matter headings, he also acknowledged individual photographic print processes—such as photolithography—and listed images by such processes. Such was Weigel’s attention to detail that he would list the individual images that made up photographic publications, in some instances listing literally hundreds of descriptions. Weigel’s publications encompassed much of the core responsibilities of the South Kensington Museum and that of its Art Library though these covered only one part of the wider remit of the Science and Art Department

The Department of Practical Art had been set up in 1852. In its first official report published in November of that year, the Departmental librarian Ralph Nicholson Wornum (1812–1877) listed twenty-five subject areas covering the collections, though there is no reference to photography at all. However, it is possible that there were photographs held in the two portfolios containing four hundred “prints, drawings etc.” housed in the Library in Rooms 12, 13 and 14 of Marlborough House, the South Kensington Museum’s first home and known as the Museum of Ornamental Art. Wornum’s report includes two notable statements; firstly that “the development of cross references is a matter of time, and will arise out of the due classification of the works according to their subjects” and secondly, that “the Library [...] will open out a new mine of information for the manufacturer and the artisan, by virtue not of its magnitude, but of its selection and arrangement.”⁸ Whether these two statements of Wornum’s were aspirational or evidenced a policy of the Department of Practical Art remains unclear.

In July 1853, a prospectus for the Museum of Ornamental Art stated that the object classification followed the “classification of arts and trades adopted in the Great Exhibition of 1851” though this does not appear to have been directly applied to photographs.⁹ Significantly, photography was not classified as a separate “art” or “trade” or “class” at the Great Exhibition. The majority of photographs were to be found in Class X, “Philosophical, Musical, Horological and Surgical Instruments”. Some were exhibited as part of the displays of “Foreign States”. However, there were three photographic exhibitors in Class XXX in the “Fine Arts Court”, which covered “Sculpture, Models and Plastic Art, Mosaics, Enamel”.

In 1855, a catalogue to the library of the *Division of Art at Marlborough House* was published. It included multiple cross references to photographic publications, reflecting the approach to photographs as a form of illustration rather than a distinct reprographic process worthy of its own separate classification.¹⁰

Another dimension was the introduction of a new breed of innovatory photographic publishers. Louis Désiré Blanquart-Evrard (1802–1872), originally a French cloth merchant, became one of the

⁷ This publication commenced in 1838 as *R. Weigel’s Kunstkatalog. Erste bis siebente Abtheilung, nebst Register*, Leipzig 1838. It continued publication until 1866.

⁸ *First Report of the Department of Practical Art*, Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, London 1853, paragraph 9, p. 293 and paragraph 11, p. 294.

⁹ *Journal of the Society of Art* (8 July 1853), p. 404.

¹⁰ Ralph N. Wornum, *An Account of the Library of the Division of Art at Marlborough House: With a Catalogue of the Principal Works Classified for the Use of Visitors to the Library*, Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, London 1855.

— 24 —

Rhr.

V. Galleriewerke, Handzeichnungswerke, Maler- und Zeichnungswerke, Original-Compositionen, Albums etc.

23728 Sammlung alt-, ober- und niederdeutscher Gemälde. Eine Auswahl photographischer Nachbildungen aus der Boisserée'schen Gallerie, jetzt in der Königl. Pinakothek zu München. Mit einer geschichtlichen Uebersicht der altdeutschen Malerei von J. A. Messmer. 88 Bl. Photogr. Münthen 1862. fol. 66

29 Les Chefs-d'Oeuvre du Musée de Bruxelles par Emile Leclercq. Ouvrage illustré de vingt-cinq Photographies par Joseph Maes. Paris et Bruxelles 1861. gr. fol.
Erscheint in Lieferungen à 1 Blatt Photographie nebst Text. 1. Lieferung enthält: Adam und Eva von J. van Eyck.
2. 3. Lieferung: Die Legende vom Grafen von Dirk Stuerbout. à Lieferung 22 $\frac{1}{2}$

30 Le Musée d'Anvers. Collection de Quarante Tableaux principaux photographiés par Fierlands et accompagnés d'un Texte descriptif par W. Bürger. Bruxelles (1861) gr. fol. 40
Enthält: No. 1. J. van Eyck, S. Barbe (auch bekannt durch den Stich von C. van Noorde.) No. 2. Josse van Gent, Geburt Christi. No. 3. Antonello von Messina, der Calvarienberg. No. 4. 5. Roger van der Weide, Die sieben Sacramente und der englische Gruss. No. 6. 7. H. Memling, Portrait eines Canonikus und Portrait eines Mannes aus der Familie Croy. No. 8–11. Von unbekanntem Alt-Niederländischen Meistern. Ein Triptychon: Madonna della Misericordia, Portrait in ganzer Figur von Robert de Clercq, Abt von Dunes, Portrait in ganzer Figur eines Abtes, Salvator Mundi. No. 12–15. Quentin Messis. Christuskopf, Madonnenkopf. Triptychon: Grablegung Christi mit den beiden Seitenflügeln der Herodias und der Marter Johannes des Evangelisten. No. 16. 17. J. Gossaert de Mabeuge (Mabuse), die vier heiligen Marien und Zug von Richtern zu Pferd und Fuss. No. 18.

3 Example of cataloguing photographic art reproductions available on the market, from Rudolph Weigel's *Kunstlager-Catalog. Zweiunddreissigste Abtheilung*, Leipzig 1863, p. 24

most prominent of the first generation of commercial photographic publishers. In 1851, he established a photographic printing company, the *Imprimerie Photographique* in Lille, to mass-produce photographic prints. Blanquart-Evrard published a number of titles in portfolio format covering the fine arts and architecture, and their titles reflect an irregular approach; a monograph, *L'Œuvre de N. Poussin*. (1853); one volume on drawings and engravings, *Dessins originaux et gravures célèbres* (1853); a volume on religious art, *L'Art religieux. Architecture-Sculpture-Peinture* (1853–1854) and a volume on contemporary art, *L'Art contemporaine. Architecture-Peinture-Sculpture* (1854).

From the mid-1860s another new and prominent publisher of photographs of works of art appeared, the firm of Adolphe Braun et Cie. In 1869, Braun published a highly influential portfolio of one hundred and twenty-one carbon prints of the Sistine Chapel frescoes by Michelangelo. From the late 1860s, Braun also sold portfolios of photographs classed by the great collections—the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, the Uffizi, and the Albertina—rather than sets based on individual artists. However, one characteristic of many emerging photography collections was ultimately to break up such publications and redistribute them by school and artist categories along the lines of Bartsch's classification system.

Some commercial firms and specialist organisations that had commercial relationships with the South Kensington Museum had a business need to classify the photographs held at or created by the museum. The photographic firm of Cundall, Downes & Co. obtained a license to publish photographs in the early 1860s; The Arundel Society had a contractual arrangement with the Department of Science and Art and a room dedicated to the sale of photographs within the museum.¹¹

Evidence suggests that the classification and organisation of photographs within the South Kensington Museum was revised a number of times. The first annual *Report of the Department of Science and Art* in 1854 did not list photography under its heading of "Portfolios of Prints, Drawings &c." However, six portfolios were of photographs, numbering 139 images in total. One hundred and twenty-five of these were Maxime du Camp's views of Egypt, Nubia, Palestine and Syria and were distributed between portfolios 3, 4, 5. Eleven photographs of "French sculpture" were held in portfolio 1. A single photograph of "Miscellaneous furniture" was held in portfolio 2, and two photographs of "Moorish Ornament in Spain" by Bisson frères were held in portfolio 11. An assumption is that these portfolios held images of mixed reprographic processes—though this is not clearly documented.

In the early 1860s, somewhat retrospectively, the South Kensington Museum introduced a "Photograph Register" to document acquisitions though the origin of this important primary source has yet to be established. Each photograph was allocated a five digit reference number that was manually written on the card mount immediately below the right hand corner of the photograph. All photographs were mounted, those photographs purchased unmounted being pasted onto mounts or within albums. Curiously, the first number allocated was 31,623. Significantly, this number was not allocated to the first photographs to be acquired—the portfolio of Maxime du Camp's views of Egypt, Nubia, Palestine and Syria. Thereafter, photographs accessioned were allocated numbers on a sequential basis. Even individual photographic illustrations within books were allocated Photograph Register numbers. However, these numbers represent no subject or date classification scheme. They are merely an incremental sequence of numbers related to acquisition. This system was replaced in 1885 by a numeric/date system with the syntax of item number and year of accession e.g. "1-1886".

Significantly, the photographs were held as a single collection in the Art Library at the South Kensington Museum, not as a separate visual resources collection. However, while this can be considered

¹¹ See Tanya Ledger, *A Study of the Arundel Society 1847–1898*, University of Oxford 1978; see also Anthony Hamber, *A Higher Branch of the Art—Photographing the Fine Arts in England 1839–1880*, Amsterdam 1996.

¹² *Fourteenth Report of the Science and Art Department*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London 1867, p. 224.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

¹⁴ *Index to the collection of photographs in the National Art Library of the South Kensington Museum: Nos 1–55, 890 December 1867*, London 1868. By the early 1880s the number of portfolios had increased to over 500. See also

Order of arrangement of the books, prints and photographs in the reading rooms of the National Art Library, South Kensington Museum, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London ["1884?"] [sic]. Copies can be found in the National Art Library of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

¹⁵ *Fifteenth Report of the Science and Art Department of the Committee of Council on Education*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London 1868, p. 236.

¹⁶ *Transactions of the Proceedings of the Conference of Librarians held in London*, October 1877 [1878], p. 239.

an innovatory approach to the study of “image & text”, the photographs were not necessarily given commensurate administrative and financial support nor were they effectively integrated.

Robert Henry Soden Smith (1822–1890) became keeper of the Art Library in 1866, a post he held until his death. In the 1866 Department of Science and Art annual report, Soden Smith reported that there were now 18,162 photographs in the South Kensington Museum collection (including duplicates) and that a “register of the entire collection is now ready for press, and a general index to the whole is in progress.”¹² The report noted that “arrangements have also been made so that the public may consult a complete collection of the photographs in the Art Library. A classified catalogue has been prepared, containing a list of 3,748 photographs.”¹³

In 1868, a two hundred and eighty-two page index to photographs “Nos 1-55,890” held at the South Kensington Museum was published in London by Eyre & Spottiswoode. These photographs were distributed across three hundred and thirty-eight portfolios.¹⁴ In certain respects this index highlights a key aspect of early photographic image classification—that of cataloguing publications rather than individual images. That year’s Report of the Department of Science and Art describes this printed index as an “iconographic dictionary of objects relating to art more comprehensive than has previously attempted.”¹⁵ This immodest statement seems unjustified. The photographic *Index* consists of a five page alphabetical listing of the three hundred and thirty-eight portfolios, each with a description of the “Title of Portfolio”. The interrelationship between the two is imprecise. Firstly, the descriptions of the portfolios range from general headings such as Portfolio 98, “Spain, Paintings, Sculpture, and Art Objects”, to the very specific, such as Portfolio 60, “Reveley Drawings”—referring to the commercial set of 60 photographs of Old Master drawings in the collection of Henry Reveley published by Bell & Daldy in 1858. However, Portfolio 95 is titled “Exhibition at Barnstaple”. Barnstaple, in North Devon, neither appears in the *Index* as a main heading or as a sub-heading of the main heading of “Exhibitions”.

By at least 1867, another classification variant appeared in published form, the *Classified List of Photographs of Drawings and Paintings*, though the publisher was the Arundel Society rather than the South Kensington Museum.

At a conference of librarians held in October 1877, Soden Smith reported that “an alphabetical register of the photographs is printed, and a complete catalogue is now in progress. As the collection is of great extent, this catalogue will form a dictionary of objects of art with photographic illustrations of each.”¹⁶ This catalogue was never realised and it is not clear what the printed alphabetical register refers to—possibly index cards.

So even after 1880, classifying the extremely wide range of subject matter of the South Kensington Museum photograph collection remained a work in progress. One area worth further investigation is that of the exchange of international cataloguing and classification practices. Photo archives appeared in a variety of public institutions across Europe and beyond. It has yet to be established whether or through which channels ideas on classification systems for photographic holdings were passed between international colleagues.

Usage

There were a number of channels by which photographs held at the South Kensington Museum were disseminated and could be examined both within and outside the museum.

Photographs—including coloured photographs—were hung in the main Art Museum. For instance, from 1873 a full-size photographic copy of the Bayeux Tapestry, over 70 metres in length and coloured

524 *Appendix D.—South Kensington Museum.*

Appendix D. REPORT ON SOUTH KENSING- TON MUSEUM.	1876.	1877.	1878.	1879.	1880.	
944	2,139	2,012	1,681	3,113		Catalogue titles written and revised.
1,347	2,176	1,800	1,155	1,346		Catalogue titles copied.
926	598	703	1,326	1,240		" slips inserted.
400	2,836	1,718	1,375	1,310		Index references marked and slips written.
1,236	342	2,810	888	1,054		Index slips inserted.
4	4	4	4	4		Copies of Art Catalogue checked and marked.
1,626	13,002	7,978	5,208	5,795		Drawings and Prints registered.
—	483	—	—	—		Drawings, &c., Catalogue titles written.
1,780	650	5,194	2,570	1,500		Drawings, &c., Index slips written.
869	1,928	708	448	1,638		Photographs registered.
914	2,510	851	449	230		" Catalogue slips written.
447	1,217	950	884	973		" Index slips written.
79,592	93,427	59,532	61,832	42,892		Stamps impressed.
244	254	544	514	315		Sale Catalogues examined.
442	572	441	462	744		Books on approval examined and returned.
76	1,156	204	393	1,216		Drawings, Prints, &c. examined and returned.
96	1,376	7	10	83		Photographs examined and returned.
825	556	477	1,525	758		Volumes collated and prepared for binding.
720	256	670	534	277		Slips for binding, lettering and repairing, written.
539	394	332	413	276		Volumes bound and collated.
551	361	205	200	71		" repaired.

(2.) NUMBER OF READERS in ART LIBRARY in 1879 and 1880.

	1879.	1880.
January	2,362	2,811
February	2,547	2,775
March	2,672	2,812
April	2,051	2,768
May	2,301	2,165
June	1,926	2,270
July	1,964	2,246
August	1,608	1,932
September	1,255	1,021
October	2,471	2,279
November	2,608	2,970
December	2,288	2,140
Total number of readers	25,453	27,339
Number of days open	311	312
Average number of daily readers	81	87

N.B.—For corresponding numbers for the years 1852 to 1878, see previous Reports.

4 *Statistics of Cataloguing in the National Art Library from 1876 to 1880 together with Number of Readers in 1879 and 1880*

in imitation of the original needlework, was on display in the Architectural Court. Copies could be purchased for £75. A photograph of Trajan's column was placed next to its plaster cast reproduction in the Cast Court.¹⁷ Photographs were also used as exhibits in temporary exhibitions in the South Kensington Museum.

The number of visitors to the South Kensington Museum was significant—in the 1850s almost half a million visitors a year. In 1867, the South Kensington Museum had some 646,516 visitors. However, we may never know how many of these stopped to examine photographs on public display and what impact and influence they had.

¹⁷ *A Guide to the Art Collections of the South Kensington Museum*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London 1870, p. 22.

As mentioned, the South Kensington Museum photograph collection was held in the Art Library, to which admission was by entrance tickets. These cost from 6d. for one week to 10s. for an annual ticket. 12,822 people visited the National Art Library in 1867 and this rose to over 24,000 in 1878.

Photographs were loaned to the provincial Schools of Art. In 1867, there were some five hundred and eighty-four frames of photographs for use by the Schools of Science and Art, including Greek and

7. Report of the Keeper of the National Art Library. 429

NUMBER OF VOLUMES, PHOTOGRAPHS, &c. borrowed by Schools of Art, 1857 to 1869. Appendix D.

Marked * are Photographs, Prints, or Drawings.

REPORT BY
MR. SODES
SMITH.

	1857	1858.	1859.	1860.	1861.	1862.	1863.	1864.	1865.	1866.	1867.	1868.	1869.	Circulation of Art Books, &c. on loan to Schools of Art.
Aberdeen	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
Andover	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Basingstoke	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	19	-	-	17	15	-
Bath	-	-	2	2	1	-	6	16	-	-	-	-	-	-
Birkenhead	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	9	17	11	3	4	3	4
Birmingham	-	*118	2	5	3	-	7	9	17	11	3	4	3	4
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bridport	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	3	6
Brighton	-	*193	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bristol	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cardiff	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	12	8	21	-	3	8
Chester	6	3	4	6	-	7	12	8	21	-	-	-	-	-
Gloucester	-	-	-	5	5	1	-	-	-	5	5	11	9	3
Darlington	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Devizes	-	-	-	2	4	5	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	9
Devonport	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Dudley	6	6	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26*
Dundee	-	10	13	-	-	-	*54	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Durham	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exeter	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-
Frome	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	5	-
Glasgow	4	5	6	-	1	5	1	5	1	-	-	-	-	-
Gloucester	-	-	7	6	-	-	*106	3	38	14	3	3	7	6
Greenock	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Halifax	-	-	-	-	-	-	*49	-	6	5	1	-	-	1
Hailey	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ipswich	-	-	-	-	-	*56	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Kidderminster	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-
Lambeth	-	-	-	-	-	-	*85	8	5	5	8	15	11	11
Leeds	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Lewes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Limerick	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lincoln	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	7	-	-	-	1	6
London:							*192							
Bloomsbury	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Charterhouse	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
Kensington	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	12	11	11	16
Marylebone	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	4	2	3	-	-
St. Martin's	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-
Spitalfields	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*2	4	-	-	-	1	6
Macclesfield	1	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Newcastle-on-Tyne	24	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	12
Newcastle-under-Lyme	1	-	1	9	2	14	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Norwich	17	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	3	-	-	-	-	-
Nottingham	2	4	-	7	8	-	-	-	-	10	10	9	-	-
Oxford	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
Penzance	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Perth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Plymouth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Preston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	4	-	-
Reading	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	6
Salisbury	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Sheffield	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	4	12	-	-	-	6
Shrewsbury	-	-	-	5	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Soko	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Stroud	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Taunton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-
Torquay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1
Trowbridge	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	-	-	-
Truro	6	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Warminster	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-
Worcester	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Yarmouth, Great	2	-	4	1	4	12	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
York	-	-	-	-	-	*12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	102	47	49	70	41	6	128	111	107	120	97	143		
{ Vols.	-	813	-	-	68	48	130	65	-	-	25	32		
{ Prints, &c.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

5 Statistics of the Number of Volumes, Photographs, &c. borrowed by Schools of Art, 1857 to 1869

Roman busts from the British Museum, Turner's *Liber Studiorum* and original Old Master drawings. Details of the number and size of the frames were published in the annual reports (and presumably made available in other printed form) in order to help the schools prepare the necessary wall space for the hanging of these frames. In 1876, Henry Cole stated that in the previous twenty years 23,911 "pictures"—including photographs—had been circulated among the schools of art and estimated that they had been seen by more than six million people.¹⁸

Photographs were also loaned to provincial exhibitions. For instance, in June 1866 the South Kensington Museum lent objects, including coloured photographs, to an exhibition held in the author's home town of Salisbury. This exhibition formed part of a meeting of the Bath and West of England Society. The Department of Science and Art annual report recorded that this exhibition had had some 28,025 visitors.

Photographs and photographically illustrated publications were issued by the Department of Science and Art.¹⁹ These included photographically illustrated catalogues of the collections and were presented as art prizes and awards to students in the various schools of art. The publications were also commercially available.²⁰

By 1860 George Wallis (1811–1891), the first Keeper of the Fine Art Collection, had been appointed the South Kensington Museum employee designated as the Agent for the sale of Official Photographs and Reproductions.²¹ The South Kensington Museum sold photographs through accredited trade channels, primarily the Arundel Society. The *Examples of Art Workmanship* volumes—at least sixteen in number—were published in the late 1860s and early 1870s and represent another form of photographic publication. These volumes, published by the Arundel Society under the sanction of the Department of Science and Art and each containing around twenty photographs with a couple of pages of accompanying text, were extensively used as part of the Circulation Collection, though their impact in the provincial schools of art has yet to be established.

Photographs were used to illustrate lectures within the South Kensington Museum. In 1874, George Gustavus Zerffi (1820–1892), an official lecturer at the department of Science and Art, delivered forty photographically illustrated lectures on the "Historical development of ornamental art" at the museum.²²

Our knowledge of the use of lantern slides within the South Kensington Museum is currently very limited. The format became widely available commercially during the 1880s, but it was not until 1898 that a lantern slide collection was founded in the museum. The first catalogue of the Victoria and Albert collection of lantern slides for loan was published in 1921.²³

¹⁸ *Journal of the Society of Arts* (1876), p. 997.

¹⁹ See *A Catalogue of Books Illustrated with Photographs, published under the sanction of the Science and Art Department*, London 1875.

²⁰ See *A Catalogue of Works illustrative of Decorative Art: Chromolithographs, Etchings and Photographs of objects of art: chiefly selected from the South Kensington Museum: Produced for the use of schools of art, for prizes, and generally for public instruction: published by the Arundel Society for Promoting the Knowledge of Art*, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, London 1869.

²¹ Significantly, in the 1861 census Wallis is listed as living at 16 Victoria Grove, Chelsea, with the profession of "photo artist". See <http://www.localhistory.scit.wlv.ac.uk/genealogy/wallis/wallis13.htm>.

²² *Art Journal* (1874), p. 349. John Ruskin noted that the enlarged photographs he had used in his 1870 series of lectures on sculpture delivered at Oxford had been prepared by Sergeant Spackman of the South Kensington Museum. *Aratra Pentelici. Six Lectures on the Elements of Sculpture, Given before the University of Oxford in Michaelmas Term, 1870*, New York 1872, p. VII.

²³ See Katsura Miyahara, "The impact of the lantern slide on art-history lecturing in Britain", in: *British Art Journal* (Autumn 2007), pp. 67–71.

²⁴ Quoted by Mark Haworth-Booth, *Photography: An Independent Art. Photographs from the Victoria and Albert Museum 1839–1996*, London 1997, p. 97.

²⁵ *The Times* (28 April 1917), p. 3.

International exchange agreements between governments and museums coupled to the various international exhibitions also offered other opportunities for observers to view and be influenced by the photographs held, created or managed by the South Kensington Museum. The museum played a central role in organisation and management of the 1862 International Exhibition in London and the four “Annual International Exhibition[s] of All Fine Arts, Industries and Inventions” held in London between 1871 and 1874. These were photographically documented. The “International Convention of promoting universally Reproductions of Works of Art” was the brainchild of Henry Cole and the exchange of photographs between institutions formed part of this agreement, signed at the 1867 international exhibition in Paris by fifteen European princes.

Conclusions

That the South Kensington Museum created such a sizeable and influential photo archive was largely due to the character of Henry Cole. As has already been highlighted, there was no specific government policy highlighting the value and need of photo archives within major public institutions. The strategy and associated tactics were Cole’s, though he was supported by a number of able colleagues including Wornum, Robinson, Wallis and Soden Smith.

Between 1852 and 1880, the South Kensington Museum primarily classified photographs as publications or in groups representing subjects of general interest. The sheer volume of photographs of all types of subject matter overwhelmed attempts at effective classification. Quite when photographic portfolios were split and classified by individual image type deserves further research. However, following the retirement of Henry Cole in 1873, the South Kensington Museum slid into a state of administrative disarray. In 1896, a government enquiry into the Museums of the Department of Science and Art included the photography collection. The Select Committee on Museums of the Science and Art Department published its reports in 1897 and 1898. One of the witnesses called before the government select committee was William Henry James Weale (1832–1917), National Art Librarian from 1890 until 1897. He was asked by the committee to explain the “bizarre numbering sequence of the Photography Collection.”²⁴ Weale’s obituary in *The Times* stated that the 1897 report on the library characterised the National Art Library as being in a state “which years of mis-management had reduced to chaos”, in an organization which had resisted all of Weale’s efforts at reform.²⁵

Nevertheless, as Henry Cole—who could claim to be the chief architect of the South Kensington Museum photograph collection—pointed out, millions saw, examined, and purchased photographs held by or emanating from the South Kensington Museum. Their short, medium and long term effect was enormous.

Ewa Manikowska

Building the Cultural Heritage of a Nation: The Photo Archive of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments at the Twilight of the Russian Empire

In this article, I intend to explore the notion of cultural heritage in respect to early photographic archives of art history. I will argue that research on photo libraries of art and architectural monuments should be properly contextualised. Accordingly, not only the state of the discipline, personal tastes, academic interests, commercial value, and survey or conservation goals of an archive's founder should be taken into consideration, but it is also necessary to re-examine the historical and socio-political circumstances in which such collections were created.

The birth of the notion of cultural heritage (patrimony) is strictly linked to that of the nation-state.¹ In the second half of the nineteenth century, special offices for the protection of monuments were established in Germany, France, Austria-Hungary and Italy.² Conservation and art history became widely recognized academic disciplines, state registers of works of arts and monuments were composed and state museums established. Moreover, state-sponsored projects aimed at framing various aspects of national heritage were pursued, and photography became an indispensable tool in these endeavours.³

Cultural heritage was an important affair of state: it played a significant role in establishing a state's image and prestige. Photographs of architectural monuments and art works became a perfect propaganda instrument.⁴ Richly illustrated luxury editions dedicated to monuments of art and architecture—the result of scientific research in conservation offices, museums and universities—served to prove the greatness of a nation and of a state. In fact, the ability to register, protect and study national heritage

¹ Ana Filipa Vrdoljak, *International Law and the Return of Cultural Objects*, Cambridge 2008, pp. 20–44.

² Jukka Jokilehto, *A History of Architectural Conservation*, Oxford / Auckland / Boston 1999.

³ Rudy Koshar, *Preservation and National Memory in the*

Twentieth Century. Germany's Transient Past, Chapel Hill/NC 1998.

⁴ Angela Matyssek, *Kunstgeschichte als fotografische Praxis*, Berlin 2009, pp. 184–192.

was among the determinants of modernity and civilization. The definition of local monuments as part of a wide notion of national heritage also constituted an important tool in the process of building a common state identity and the best way to popularize it among citizens was through the visual medium of photography: in postcards, newspapers, and the like. Accordingly, early photo archives of artistic and architectural monuments need to be analysed also in national and political contexts.

In this light, I will present the photo archive of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments, active in the Polish lands under the rule of the Russian Empire.⁵ Since the establishment of the Polish state in 1918, the ensemble of about ten thousand glass plates and as many prints, which together once formed the Society's photo archive and photo library, constitutes the most important Polish visual archive of art history.⁶ The collection is mainly the fruit of surveys undertaken by the Society since 1906, in particular at the time of the Great War (fig. 1).

Nowadays, the historical and political contexts of this collection are perceived as secondary to its iconographical value. Accordingly, the archive is primarily considered as a precious visual source for monuments of art and architecture destroyed during the two world wars. However, in its origin, it had a much more profound meaning going far beyond a mere documentary dimension. The goals of the Society, founded at the time of the dissolution of the Russian Empire, were strictly tied to the nation's efforts to establish its own statehood. Therefore, the camera was focused not only on the depiction of a particular monument, but it also aimed at capturing the visual notion of a distinct Polish cultural heritage.

Prior to 1918, Polish lands were divided, and they were subjugated to three Empires: on the south to Austria-Hungary, on the West to Germany and on the East to the Russian Empire. In these multi-national and multi-ethnic entities, the notion of cultural patrimony hardly embraced the artistic and historic monuments of all ethnic groups and national minorities. The priority was given to the culture of the ruling nation: exclusion of certain aspects of heritage played an important role in shaping a coherent state image. Accordingly, Polish monuments were scarcely documented by official institutions dealing with cultural heritage. In the lands under Austrian and Prussian rule, where state offices for the protection of monuments were established, the partial registration of Polish patrimony was pursued at the end of the nineteenth century.⁷ However, only the monument's universal and artistic value was officially recognized. Thus, the civilizing mission of an empire consisted of the ability to appropriate the universal values of monuments in the subjugated territories.

But, Polish monuments could be documented outside state institutions through the activity of non-state civic and scientific societies. Such organizations, established at the end of the nineteenth century in many parts of Europe, played an important role in describing and popularizing the notion of cultural patrimony as they focused on local aspects of heritage. Their activity was often supported by state authorities. This was the case for the *Heimatschutz* movement, which at the outbreak of the First World War had as many as 30,000 members in numerous regional societies in all parts of the German Empire.⁸ The *Heimatschutz* built an awareness of cultural heritage tied to the idea of homeland (*Heimat*)

⁵ Towarzystwo Opieki nad Zabytkami Przeszłości (TONZP). See Piotr Jacek Jamski / Ewa Manikowska (eds.), *Polskie dziedzictwo kulturowe u progu niepodległości. Wokół Towarzystwa Opieki nad Zabytkami Przeszłości*, Warsaw 2010.

⁶ Nowadays preserved in the Institute of Art, Polish Academy of Sciences.

⁷ Paweł Dettloff, *Odbudowa i restauracja zabytków architektury w Polsce w latach 1918–1939. Teoria i praktyka*, Cracow 2006, pp. 25–44.

⁸ Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials. The German Idea of Heimat*, Berkeley / Los Angeles / Oxford 1990; Thomas M. Lekan, *Imagining the Nation in Nature. Landscape Preservation and German Identity 1885–1945*, Cambridge / London 2004.

⁹ Cracow, Archiwum PAN-PAU, Zbiór Karoliny Lanckorońskiej, 150/61, *Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz letter to Karol Lanckoroński of 4 I 1914*.

¹⁰ Today in the Polska Akademia Umiejętności in Cracow and in the Accademia Polacca delle Scienze in Rome.



1 Juliusz Klos, *War Damages in Kazimierz Dolny*, 1916

and bound to the sense of pride in being German. In the German and Habsburg Empires, there were also civic and scientific societies funded by members of ethnic or national minorities. As regards Polish lands, such organizations were active primarily in Cracow, where at the turn of the century a special art history commission was established within the structure of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences, a scientific society. Apart from that, two other organizations, dealing with Polish artistic monuments in Galicia, were founded. All these societies strictly collaborated with each other. Importantly, they promoted new patriotic trends in Polish painting (the representation of great historical events). Through the publication of lavishly illustrated scientific monographs of key medieval and Renaissance monuments, they laid the foundation for Polish art history. In this activity, they followed the examples of leading research centres, especially Vienna, and applied the same tools and methods as these. Interestingly that the said Polish societies addressed their activity not only to the local Polish community but also to the larger public of the Habsburg Empire.

The formation of a photographic archive of Polish monuments was among the main goals of civic and scientific organizations dealing with cultural heritage in Galicia. The first serious attempt to form such a photo library was not undertaken until the beginning of 1914, when Count Karol Lanckoroński suggested the foundation of a Photographical Society of Polish Monuments of Art.⁹ Karol Lanckoroński, one of the richest Polish aristocrats, a great collector and connoisseur of art, living in Vienna, was strongly engaged in Galicia's cultural and academic life. He was perfectly conscious of the importance of a photo library as a modern research tool, as he himself owned an immense, well-organized archive.¹⁰ He was convinced of the significance of photography for the popularization and protection of cultural heritage. As a civic member of the Vienna conservation office, he commissioned the pho-



2 Ł. Wolski, *Liturgical objects in the church in Kobile Wielkie, 1909*

tographer August Stauda to undertake a comprehensive documentation of Vienna's monuments. Stauda was also asked to reproduce a series of photographs by the first professional photographer of the city, Ignacy Krieger, who documented the monuments of Cracow and whose works were in the Lanckoroński collection. This series was then popularised in the Empire. The Photographical Society was to consist of students of architecture from the Polytechnic School in Lwów, who during student excursions were to pursue an organized plan of registering Galicia's artistic heritage. Lanckoroński's project was very ambitious. His vision was for the Photographical Society to form, in a short time, the most complete, large, and modern artistic heritage photo archive in Austria-Hungary. This utopian idea, which was never realized,¹¹ was thus meant to promote the notion of Polish cultural heritage, but even more to make a local groundbreaker of the Polish initiative.

¹¹ Several survey photographs from the collection of the Lwów Polytechnic School were identified among the prints in the photo archive of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments. It may be supposed that they were the fruit of the Photographical Society's activity.

¹² On this photo archive, see also Karolina Puchała-Rojek,

„Fotograficzna gorączka. Aspekty dokumentowania zabytków w pierwszych latach działalności TonZP”, in: Piotr Jacek Jamski / Ewa Manikowska (eds.), *Polskie dziedzictwo kulturowe u progu niepodległości. Wokół Towarzystwa Opieki nad Zabytkami Przeszłości*, Warsaw 2010, pp. 227–251.

The activity of the civic and scientific societies dealing with Polish cultural heritage in Galicia should therefore be described in terms of an attempt to cross civilization barriers, to battle against stereotypes of the nation's backwardness and to establish the singularity and significance of Polish culture in the multi-national and multi-ethnic Austria-Hungary. Photography was among the main tools of this struggle. The societies active in Galicia named the features of Polish monuments for the first time and popularized them in the medium of photography. However, they focused only on the immediate region and its most important centres. Their activity up to the outbreak of the First World War rarely extended to encompass the notion of a common, cross-border national Polish cultural heritage. They aimed at introducing modern research and propaganda tools, of which the formation of a photo archive of artistic monuments was among the most important ones, but were not able to reach these goals until the regaining of Polish independence.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the concept of Polish cultural heritage was developed in the most mature, substantial and modern way in the western provinces of the Russian Empire. This comes as a surprise. Despite the fact that imperial collections in Moscow and St Petersburg aspired to a place among the most important world museums and libraries and that the Imperial Archaeological Commission was established in St Petersburg as early as 1859, the Russian Empire at the outbreak of the First World War did not have any cultural heritage legislation, any conservation or registration offices. What is more, art history and conservation were not recognized in the Empire as academic disciplines. Disregard for Polish cultural heritage was arguably caused both by the nationalistic policy of the Russian Empire and by its backwardness. After the defeat of the Polish insurrection of 1863, serious restrictions were introduced, including the interdiction of any kind of activity of a national character. Not until 1905, did the imperial edict of tolerance put an end to several religious, social and national restrictions, reintroducing in particular the right to associate in social, national, religious or scientific organizations. In a short time, numerous Polish civic and scientific societies were founded. They aimed at fulfilling the social, national and cultural needs of Poles in the Russian Empire. Among these, the definition, popularization, and protection of Polish cultural patrimony were of great importance.

Warsaw became the capital of this movement. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments, the most important among the organizations dealing with cultural heritage, aimed at protecting and registering architectural monuments in the Polish lands under the rule of the Russian Empire. It organized surveys, in which photography was acknowledged as an indispensable tool. A separate, well organized photo library consisting both of prints and negatives was established as early as 1914.¹² The assembled material was registered according to the geographical key, but it was also classified more specifically according to the represented topic or the name of the photographer. The archive was not limited to survey documentation and it was enriched by acquisitions of



3 Stanisław Pronaszko, the Church in Brześć Kujawski, 1909



4 Zdzisław Kalinowski, *A cottage in Inowłódz, before 1918*

private collections as well as through gifts. In 1914, it already consisted of more than 3,000 classified negatives and 6,000 classified prints.

The Society acted as an informal conservation office and its activity was modelled on the best European examples. A comparison between its photo archive and those of German conservation offices, like the Provinzialdenkmalamt Königsberg, active from the end of the nineteenth century, reveals close similarities.¹³ The differences were mostly caused by financial issues. Due to the lack of state support, the materials used by the Society were of a lesser quality, austerity in the use of photographic plates is also evident (fig. 2). Elements of improvisation can be observed: the vestment is photographed on the priest himself, the proportions of a building are rendered by the presence of a standing person, the help of local citizens is evidenced, and on many pictures the photographer's hat that has been set aside is visible (fig. 3).

These unintentional elements were rarely retouched—there was neither time nor money for this. However, in several instances this documentation is not at all inferior to the professional documenta-

¹³ The photo archive of the Provinzialdenkmalamt Königsberg is edited as a CD-ROM, see Jan Przytkowski (ed.), *Prusy Wschodnie – dokumentacja historycznej prowincji. Zbiory fotograficzne dawnego urzędu Konserwatora Zabytków w Królewcu*, IS PAN 2006.

¹⁴ See Adam Czarnowski / Wanda Skowron, *Historia fotografii krajoznawczej. PTK – PTTK, Łódź 2000.*

¹⁵ Adam Sobota, "Jan Bułhak and the Conceptions of the National Character of Photography", in: Zofia Jurkowlaniec (ed.), *Jan Bułhak (1876–1950). Pictorial Photographer*, Warsaw 2006, pp. 176–197.

¹⁶ See Puchała-Rojek 2010 (note 12).



5 M. Boretti, *The church in Charlupia Mała, 1914*

tion of the German conservation offices. This is true in the case of the medieval and Renaissance monuments, whose survey was considered to be an act of unveiling precious gems of Polish heritage. The documentation of the medieval churches of Sandomierz or the Renaissance city of Kazimierz Dolny thus consists of hundreds of detailed photographs.

The Society's photo archive reveals a larger understanding of cultural patrimony and great attention to photography's aesthetic values. Many amongst the Society's members were also active in organizations dealing with other aspects of Polish cultural heritage, such as landscape, archaeology or folklore. The Polish Sightseeing Society aimed at propagating and describing the idea of homeland. The end of its activity was the knowledge, description and popularization of the unique features of Polish landscape, of which monuments, historic cities and traditional wooden villages were an important element. Photography played a crucial role in the activity of this organization and its archive project was very ambitious. In the journals addressed to professional photographers, the Society launched an enquiry as to their holdings of photographs of any aspect of Polish cultural heritage, about the presence of Polish cultural heritage in their neighbourhood and about their willingness to photograph it. Its goal was to cross the political borders and form an immense archive of everything defined as Polish. The Sightseeing Society paid attention to the quality and beauty of photography, organizing professional courses for its members as well as photographic excursions.¹⁴ It started a movement which Jan Bułhak, an eminent Polish photographer, named "Homeland photography"¹⁵ in 1927. Many members of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments were also active in the Warsaw Photographic Society, both as amateurs and professional photographers. This organization encouraged pictorial photography. In its journal, alongside technical news and explanations, articles on the ways of picturing various subjects, including monuments and landscape, were featured.¹⁶

It should therefore not come as a surprise that in the archive of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments many photos are to be found depicting the features of Polish landscape, local customs, dress, and inhabitants of different regions (fig. 4–5). This documentation records small wooden or brick churches of lesser quality, whose rebuilding or demolition was approved by the Society. This kind of survey often created an excuse to photograph the beauty of the village, its citizens, and the surrounding landscape. Some of the photographers dedicated themselves to the idea of pictorial depiction of cultural heritage. Heedless of the costs, they used many glass plates to capture—in the best way possible—a picturesque motive which often did not have anything to do with monuments. This was a conscious operation, having to do not only with artistic ambitions but with the understanding of Polish cultural heritage as well. In 1915, in the middle of the war, when faith in regaining independence was rising, the question of its definition became burning. The war operations were devastating both Polish monuments and Polish cultural landscape, whose existence, due to the lack of statehood, was not universally acknowledged. Photography, again, was a great aid in the struggle for cultural identity and independence; the importance of the homeland understanding of cultural patrimony became evident.

In 1915, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments organized a large photographic exhibition: *The Village and the Country Town*.¹⁷ This was the first of a series dedicated to the depiction of Polish monuments: exhibitions on castles, towns and sacral architecture were to follow. It is telling that traditional wooden architecture, combined with folklore and landscape, were acknowledged as the main feature of Polish cultural heritage. Similar exhibitions were organized during the war years in various Polish cities, with the aim of propagating traditional examples for the reconstruction of villages destroyed by war operations. A sense of destruction and irreparability hovered over these initiatives. The societies dealing with cultural heritage launched public pleas to Polish citizens to send them photographs of anything and everything in their neighbourhoods which due to the war operations might disappear forever. These war archives are a reflection of a larger understanding of cultural heritage, which comprised such elements as a family gathering in the country manor house. To fully understand them, national mythology exemplified in literature and painting must be invoked.

By promoting Polish wooden architecture, the idea of cultural heritage based on the universally acknowledged artistic features was challenged. In the words of the architect Kazimierz Skórewicz: “We justly regret the faith of the Reims cathedral. However, our old humble village church for *our art* has often greater significance, it might be unique in its genre, while there are so many Gothic cathedrals”.¹⁸ Skórewicz was referring to a largely discussed French-German controversy about the destruction of medieval monuments on the Western front. Photography played an important propaganda role in this debate and the bombing of the Reims cathedral functioned as an icon. In French and Belgian academic publications, as well as in newspapers, the pictures of the destroyed cathedrals and cities juxtaposed with those from be-

¹⁷ *Wieś i miasteczko*, Warsaw 1916.

¹⁸ Jamski / Manikowska 2010 (note 5), p. 40.

¹⁹ Nicola Lambourne, “Production versus Destruction: Art, World War I and Art History”, in: *Art History*, 22/3 (September 1999), pp. 347–363.

²⁰ Paul Clemen, *Kunstschutz im Kriege. Berichte über den Zustand der Kunstdenkmäler auf den verschiedenen Kriegsschauplätzen und über die deutschen und österreichischen Maßnahmen zu Ihrer Erhaltung, Rettung, Erforschung*, 2 vols., Leipzig 1919. See Jamski / Manikowska 2010 (note 5), p. 14.

²¹ Andrzej Jakubowski, „Restytucja i repatriacja polskich zabytków i dzieł sztuki z Rosji Radzieckiej po 1921 roku.

Artykuł XI traktatu ryskiego”, in: Piotr Jacek Jamski / Ewa Manikowska (eds.), *Polskie dziedzictwo kulturowe u progu niepodległości. Wokół Towarzystwa Opieki nad Zabytkami Przeszłości*, Warsaw 2010, pp. 93–125.

²² As Elizabeth Edwards’s research has shown, the notions of nation and cultural patrimony are generally crucial for any survey photo collection formed in Europe in this period. See Elizabeth Edwards, “Photography, ‘Englishness’ and Collective Memory. The National Photographic Record Association 1897–1910”, in: Annette Kuhn / Kirsten Emiko McAllister (eds.), *Locating Memory. Photographic Acts*, New York / Oxford 2006, pp. 53–79.

fore the war served to accuse the German barbarian invader.¹⁹ Polish societies followed this example and in newspapers and publications, both local and international, in a battle for the universal recognition of Polish cultural heritage, decried its destruction. Survey photography was therefore an important tool in the struggle for independence. Even Paul Clemen, in his monumental *Kunstschutz im Kriege*, had to concede Poland's right to its own cultural heritage and admitted that in preparing this publication he had had to rely on the photo archive of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments.²⁰

The role played by photographs of cultural heritage in Poland's struggle for independence is best evidenced in a series of pictures taken in Moscow in 1918. The photographic documentation of 24 heads from the Renaissance ceiling of the Royal Castle in Cracow, kept in the Rumiancev Museum in Moscow, was made with great accuracy in 1918 by a Polish artist-photographer so as to recreate the lighting in the place of origin (fig. 6). These suggestive pictures can be read as icons of the self-definition of the Polish nation at the time of the dissolution of Empires. They were the first images of the Renaissance masterpiece confiscated by the Russian army after the defeat of the insurrection of 1863 to be popularized in newspapers and post-cards in Polish society. The series was taken upon the initiative of Polish war refugees in Russia, who, by documenting cultural objects from former Poland incorporated into metropolitan collections, were defining national cultural heritage and advocating its restitution. Among these objects were such important elements of Polish cultural heritage as regalia, the famous Flemish tapestries from the Royal Castle in Cracow, royal archives, or Bertel Thorwaldsen's monumental statue of prince Joseph Poniatowski. This photographic documentation was a strong argument in the Polish-Soviet negotiations on the restitution of Polish cultural treasures. According to the peace treaty signed in Riga in 1921 between Soviet Russia and the Republic of Poland, these cultural treasures were to be returned only if their provenance was proved, as well as if their removal would not destroy the integrity of such universal collections as the Hermitage or the Public Library in St Petersburg.²¹ Russia's museums and libraries did not deserve the name 'modern' or 'universal', as they did not care for the proper documentation of objects removed from Polish collections: the Wawel tapestries, the wooden Renaissance heads, the Bellotto views of Warsaw or the regalia were photographed for the first time by Poles.

The notions of national and cultural heritage are crucial for the understanding of the Society's for the Protection of Ancient Monuments photo archive. The dramatic struggle between European nations, which characterized the beginning of the twentieth century, had a great impact on the importance, shape, and ideological content of photo collections of the monuments of art and architecture of both the Empires and the nations struggling for independence.²² It seems that for a proper under-

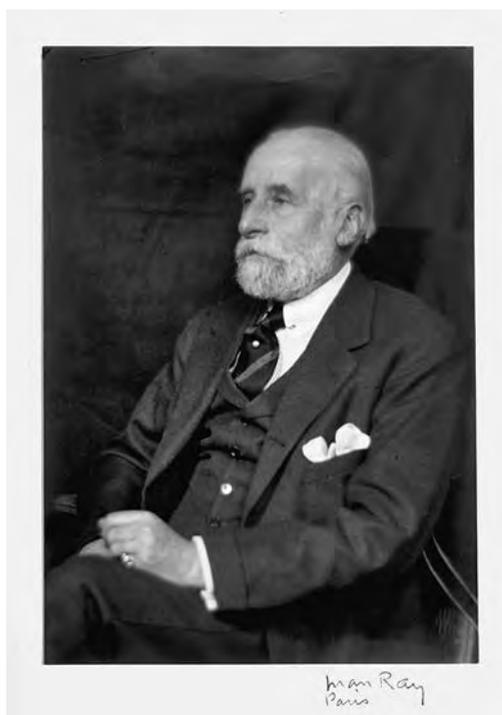


6 Stefa Plater-Zyberk, *the Renaissance Wawel Head*, 1918

standing of such photo archives very complex ideological, nationalist, political, and imperial considerations must be taken into account. In this context, the Society's for the Protection of Ancient Monuments photo archive is not simple to explain. Paradoxically, the Society, which battled against the exclusion of the monuments of ethnic and national minorities from the universally established concept of heritage, adapted the same imperial model marginalizing everything that was not Polish: the Jewish monuments, for example, or those of Belarusian or Ukrainian origins.

Dominique Morelon

L'image documentaire et ses métamorphoses : les collections photographiques de la bibliothèque de l'INHA



1 Emmanuel Radnitzky dit Man Ray, *Portrait de Jacques Doucet*

Au commencement des collections photographiques conservées par la bibliothèque de l'Institut national d'Histoire de l'Art au cœur de Paris, dans les locaux de l'ancienne Bibliothèque nationale, on trouve la volonté et la passion d'un homme. Le grand couturier collectionneur et mécène Jacques Doucet, conscient du besoin criant de documentation en histoire de l'art constitue, entre 1908 et 1917, une extraordinaire bibliothèque qu'il met à la disposition des amateurs et des chercheurs. Il y rassemble 100 000 volumes d'imprimés, des manuscrits et autographes, des estampes, des fichiers et répertoires divers, et, bien entendu, des photographies.

En 1917 il donne ce magnifique outil à l'Université de Paris. En 2003 la Bibliothèque d'art et d'archéologie Jacques Doucet est confiée au tout nouvel Institut national d'histoire de l'art créé en 2001.

Au-delà de ces événements administratifs, l'histoire des collections photographiques de la bibliothèque de l'Inha reflète les métamorphoses qu'a connues en un siècle l'utilisation de l'image

documentaire dans le domaine de l'histoire de l'art. Et, comme nous le verrons, c'est toute la question de la signification de ces collections qui est ainsi posée.¹

La constitution de la photothèque (1908–1917)

Une visée ambitieuse



2 Eugène Atget, Paris, rue Croulebarbe, mégisserie sur la Bièvre, 1900

monde entier, de l'Antiquité à l'époque contemporaine et toutes les formes d'art. Seuls l'art préhistorique, encore peu étudié et les arts « premiers », considérés alors comme relevant de l'ethnologie, n'y figurent pas.

Les méthodes d'acquisition sont des plus pragmatiques. On achète massivement les reproductions des grands éditeurs photographiques, à partir de leurs catalogues – qui d'ailleurs ont été conservés – et l'on comble leurs lacunes par des campagnes de prises de vues, systématiques dans les musées français, plus ponctuelles à l'étranger. Atget livre des listes entières de ses photographies. On profite aussi des occasions qui se présentent et l'on acquiert les photographies d'Ermakov pour le Caucase et l'Arménie, celles de Barchewski pour la Russie, ou encore celles de Sebah et Joaillier pour Constantinople.

Dès l'origine de sa bibliothèque d'art et d'archéologie, Jacques Doucet se rend compte de la nécessité de l'accès aux images pour les études en histoire de l'art. De concert avec le responsable de la bibliothèque, il jette les bases d'une collection de photographies qui devra illustrer l'art du



3 Jean-Pascal Sebah et Polycarpe Joaillier [Statue du Musée de Constantinople]

La Bibliothèque s'adresse également à des institutions dans le monde entier pour qu'elles la fassent bénéficier de leurs propres contacts ou qu'elles mettent à sa disposition leurs fonds photographiques. Par ailleurs elle accorde des subventions à divers organismes tels l'École française d'Athènes ou l'École française d'Extrême-Orient² et même à des chercheurs individuels pour qu'ils réalisent des campagnes de prises de vue. En outre, tous les collaborateurs de Doucet participent à la chasse aux photographies et lui-même, quand il voyage, court les boutiques des photographes pour enrichir les collections. Cette politique porte ses fruits et le nombre des photographies s'élève en 1918 à 150 000 tirages et 16 542 négatifs.

Une volonté de diffusion

Le but de Jacques Doucet était de favoriser la diffusion des images d'œuvres d'art. Mettre une collection organisée d'épreuves photographiques à la disposition du public de sa bibliothèque n'était qu'une partie de son programme: il avait également organisé un laboratoire de reproduction et rassemblé des milliers de clichés. Aux 6 379 négatifs produits par l'atelier photographique de la bibliothèque et par les campagnes menées à l'extérieur, s'étaient adjoints ceux des expéditions Pelliot en Asie centrale et Goloubew aux Indes et les plaques du commandant Espérandieu sur l'archéologie gallo-romaine. Les dépôts de clichés offraient toutes les garanties au dépositaire, puisque chaque tirage est subordonné à l'obtention de son accord préalable. De plus, Doucet soutenait la Société de reproduction des dessins de maîtres (1909) et la Société française de reproduction de manuscrits à peintures (1911) auxquelles il apportait une participation financière ainsi que les ressources de son atelier. Mais, en 1921, l'atelier photographique sera supprimé et les plaques dispersées entre différentes institutions.

L'âge de raison 1918–1939

Avec le don de la bibliothèque à l'Université de Paris, en 1917, les achats de photographies vont connaître un brutal coup d'arrêt, la bibliothèque manquant dramatiquement de personnel et de moyens. Le nouveau directeur, André Joubin, est pourtant très conscient de l'intérêt des collections photographiques, « matériel le plus important de l'histoire de l'art »,³ selon lui. L'importance de la photothèque est reconnue également par le 11^e Congrès d'histoire de l'art, en 1921, qui émet le vœu qu'« une collection complète de photographies des œuvres de tous les musées du monde soit constituée à la Bibliothèque d'Art et d'Archéologie de Paris »,⁴ ce qui a le mérite d'encourager les échanges, comme avec la National Gallery, la même année. Un peu plus tard Miss Helen Clay Frick fournit gratuitement des milliers d'épreuves.

La fin de cette période, à partir de 1930, sera pour la photothèque celle de la mise en ordre des collections. A cette date, en effet, Clotilde Brière-Misme, collaboratrice du directeur depuis 1919 prend la

¹ Cette communication doit beaucoup à Jérôme Delatour, conservateur chargé des photographies à la Bibliothèque de l'INHA et à Anne-Laure Pierre qui le remplace actuellement dans ce poste le temps, pour lui, d'une année de formation.

² Voir « Lettre de Claude-Eugène Maître à René-Jean du 24 octobre 1912 », dans: *Bulletin de la Commission archéologique de l'Indochine*, 1 (1913), p. VIII-X et Bibliothèque de l'INHA, Autographes 143-3/399.

³ André Joubin, « La fondation Salomon de Rothschild: I, la bibliothèque d'art et d'archéologie », dans: *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 10 (1924), pp. 323-324.

⁴ Rapporté par Claude Roger-Marx dans son article « La bibliothèque d'art et d'archéologie », dans: *L'Information* (17 octobre 1921).

photothèque en main. Dans les premières implantations de la bibliothèque, les boîtes étaient proposées en libre accès et il n'y avait pas de catalogue ni d'inventaire. Rapidement s'était posé le problème du choix du classement. Fallait-il privilégier la topographie, la stylistique, la chronologie, les formes d'art ? D'emblée l'image se montrait rétive à la taxinomie. Doucet avait chargé de la collection naissante Louis-Eugène Lefèvre, un archéologue amateur, avec pour première mission de constituer un inventaire visuel du patrimoine architectural et mobilier de la France médiévale. Pour cette série, celui-ci avait d'abord opté pour un classement par style, genre, et époque « ce qui la distingue des collections du Trocadéro où il est impossible de rapprocher pour comparaison les œuvres d'une même époque ». ⁵ Mais il était revenu ensuite à un classement topographique. Les autres séries étaient classées par ordre alphabétique de noms ou de lieux ; mais celle des peintures, déjà morcelée en trois formats, s'éparpillait en « maintes subdivisions : musées, morceaux de réception à l'Académie, etc. ». ⁶ Les épreuves étaient « peu, mal ou point annotées » ; les œuvres d'un artiste donné rangées sans ordre. ⁷

Clotilde Brière-Misme s'attaque avec méthode et énergie au signalement des collections et commence par faire ouvrir un registre d'inventaire puis, nantie de fichiers grâce à la générosité d'un mécène, Georges Wildenstein, elle entreprend de décrire pièce à pièce les séries de dessins, peintures et sculptures, qu'elle refond chacune en une seule suite alphabétique par noms d'artistes. Elle rédige des règles « scientifiques » de classement et de rédaction, extrêmement détaillées. A coups de bénévolat et de vacations d'étudiants quelques 70 000 photographies sont classées et fichées. Mais il en reste au moins deux fois autant à traiter.

D'autres photographies et de nouveaux usages

Le grand sommeil

La seconde guerre mondiale vient donner un nouveau coup d'arrêt et cette fois la photothèque s'endort pour longtemps. Elle ne figure même pas dans l'énorme *Répertoire international des archives photographiques d'œuvres d'art* de l'Unesco (1950). En 1961 le directeur de la bibliothèque envisage de limiter le champ de la documentation et se consacrer à une seule catégorie de documents sur la peinture par exemple. ⁸

Le manque de crédits qui touche toutes les bibliothèques universitaires dans les décennies 1960–1980 joue son rôle. S'y ajoute le manque de place : dès les années 1960, la bibliothèque est à l'étroit, et la photothèque encombre. En 1992 la bibliothèque est déménagée dans les locaux de la Bibliothèque nationale, au centre de Paris, destinés à être laissés vacants par le départ dans un nouveau bâtiment du Département des Imprimés. Pour la photothèque ce déménagement est le coup de grâce. Ses milliers de boîtes, entassées dans un petit sous-sol grillagé, souvent sur double rang, cessent à peu près d'être accessibles au public.

⁵ *Commission des antiquités et des arts du département de Seine-et-Oise*, 31 (1911), pp. 22–23.

⁶ Clotilde Brière-Misme, « Le département des photographies à la bibliothèque d'art et d'archéologie », dans : *Société des amis de la bibliothèque d'art et d'archéologie de l'université de Paris*, 3 (1930), p. 10.

⁷ Clotilde Brière-Misme, « Rapport sur le développement du département des photographies et du cabinet de gravures en 1931, lu à l'assemblée générale », dans : *Société*

des amis de la bibliothèque d'art et d'archéologie de l'université de Paris, 6 (1932), p. 16.

⁸ Conseil d'administration, 12 octobre 1961 ; registre des procès-verbaux de la Société des amis de la Bibliothèque d'art et d'archéologie, p. 171.

⁹ Bibliothèque de l'INHA, collections Jacques Doucet, 4 fotogr. 17–19 (voyages de France, Espagne, Portugal, Perse).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 4 fotogr. 15.

D'autres collections de photographies



4 Hippolyte Malègue, *Saint Théodore*, papier salé (Album photographique d'archéologie religieuse, 1857, Fol G 47, pl. 1)



5 Eugène Piot, *Florence [Baptistère]*, calotype sur papier salé, 1849 (Fol Phot 047)

Pourtant en silence, presque en secret, s'était accumulé, à côté de la photothèque « historique », un grand nombre d'autres photographies. C'est ce que découvre en 1999 Jérôme Delatour, le conservateur qu'on vient d'affecter, enfin – mais seulement à mi-temps – aux collections de photographies. Son premier soin est d'en faire le tour et il se rend compte que la photothèque représente moins de la moitié des 350 000 à 400 000 photographies conservées. On trouve, par exemple, de très intéressants ensembles de photographies réunis en albums, certains constitués à titre personnel, d'autres résultant d'un travail éditorial. Citons l'album photographique d'archéologie religieuse d'Hippolyte Malègue (1857); un très riche ensemble des photographies des monuments de Rome et d'Italie réunies par l'archéologue John Henry Parker de 1864 à 1877 qui outre le nombre très important d'épreuves (4 715) a la particularité de comporter les catalogues annotés; les albums originaux que Marcel et Jane Dieulafoy, dont le nom reste attaché aux fouilles de Suse (1884–1886), réalisèrent au retour de leurs voyages en France et à l'étranger;⁹ ou bien encore 329 rares platinotypes réalisés par l'Écossais John Thomson, pionnier du photojournalisme, lors d'un voyage en Perse, Turquie et Caucase en 1891.¹⁰ Des ensembles documentaires importants ont été donnés par des personnalités connues, comme Salomon Reinach, ou moins connues comme le chanoine Broussolle dont le fonds comprend 19 000 photographies concernant l'Italie, principalement des clichés Alinari.

Au cours du temps, enfin, des fonds d'archives d'historiens de l'art, de galeristes, plus rarement d'artistes, souvent riches en photographies, ont rejoint la bibliothèque. Citons par exemple le fonds Robert Manens, qui comprend 181 classeurs rangés par département comprenant chacun une centaine de photographies réalisées en 1960, 1977–1978 et 1981, complétées par des cartes postales, montrant l'intérieur et l'extérieur d'églises ayant contenu des jubés. Au total une documentation exceptionnelle sur l'architecture religieuse, en particulier rurale, au Moyen-âge.

Par ailleurs la bibliothèque a hérité tardivement d'une partie de la documentation photographique de l'Institut d'Art : plus de 7 000 épreuves sur papiers et

18 000 plaques pour projection destinées à l'enseignement. Les épreuves sur papier sont particulièrement intéressantes, diverses épreuves assez rares de photographes opérant au Louvre avant Braun comme Dontenville et Dumeteau, des photographies anciennes prises en Grèce et Egypte et surtout 215 négatifs et 78 tirages réalisés par d'Eugène Piot pour son projet d'album : « L'Italie monumentale ».

Un nouveau regard

Parallèlement le regard porté sur les photographies anciennes a changé du tout au tout à partir des années 1990. Certaines d'entre elles passent du côté de l'œuvre d'art, comme celles d'Atget.

Beaucoup de ce qui était considéré comme document obsolète dans les décennies 1960–1980 devient témoignage historique au cours de la période suivante. Tel album, par exemple, sobrement intitulé « Musée d'Arras », reproduit une quinzaine d'œuvres de ce musée, disparues dans la tourmente de la première guerre mondiale.¹¹ L'exigence accrue en matière de restauration y puise également : le restaurateur des sculptures de la cathédrale de Reims peut voir « ses » statues telles qu'elles étaient avant les deux dernières guerres et les interventions qui les ont suivies. L'archiviste du Museo Nazionale Archeologico de Naples, trouve des témoignages absents de ses propres fonds sur la façon dont les œuvres y étaient présentées dans les années 1910.

De façon générale, l'émergence des disciplines nouvelles que sont l'histoire de l'histoire de l'art et l'histoire de l'archéologie ouvre des champs d'étude nouveaux pour lesquels la photothèque et les fonds les plus anciens représentent des sources d'un grand intérêt.

C'est dans cet esprit qu'en 2006 la bibliothèque accepte la proposition de don de 260 000 photographies constituant les archives de l'agence Giraudon, faite par la Bridgeman Art Library, très consciencieuse, elle aussi, de la valeur historique de cet ensemble.

La photographie et l'écran

Heureusement de nouvelles technologies ouvrent des possibilités pour répondre à ces intérêts nouveaux.

Un catalogue informatisé

Le signalement devient primordial, il doit recenser toutes les photographies et il doit être informatisé. Le rattachement de la bibliothèque à l'Inha a ouvert sur ce plan des perspectives nouvelles. L'Institut a prévu de se doter d'une grande base de données multimédia qui fédérera les bases réalisées par les chercheurs. Nous y voyons l'outil qui nous permettra de signaler nos documents non imprimés et élaborons, en collaboration avec l'ingénieur de recherche chargée de la mise au point de la base, des grilles de description adaptées à chaque type de document ou d'ensemble de documents. Comme la plupart des photographies ne pourraient pas être décrites à l'unité mais par lots, nous décidons d'intégrer leur signalement dans la base des fonds d'archives de la Bibliothèque, dont le format, conforme à la norme internationale des archives (ISAD[G]), offre précisément cette souplesse et garantit une reprise facile des données. Cette solution permettra, en outre, de donner aux ensembles appartenant à des fonds d'archives une description adaptée à leur nature, sans les dissocier de leur contexte.

¹¹ Ibid., 4 fotogr. 1.

Nous avons désormais l'outil, mais les forces pour le mettre en action nous manquaient. Seul le concours d'un mécène engagé et de premier plan pouvait nous permettre de mener à bien un objectif aussi ambitieux. L'Inha s'est tourné vers le Getty, dont les *archival grants* sont précisément destinés à venir en aide aux institutions désireuses d'inventorier leurs collections. Une cartographie chiffrée des collections photographiques fut alors établie, afin de dégager une suite d'actions à mener et de déterminer le personnel nécessaire pour mener le projet à bien. Ces données furent transmises au Getty et la demande recueillit aussitôt l'attention bienveillante de la fondation qui accorda une bourse en juillet 2007. Grâce à cette bourse, cinq personnes ont été recrutées pour repérer, inventorier, coter, conditionner les collections photographiques de la bibliothèque, évaluées à 370 000 pièces environ (le fonds Giraudon, devra faire l'objet à lui tout seul d'une autre campagne du même type). Le résultat est d'ores et déjà accessible sur le site de l'Inha sous forme d'un document PDF et ne tardera pas à être interrogeable sur la base Agorha, dont l'interface de consultation est en cours de mise au point.

La numérisation : un nouveau mode de diffusion

Indispensable pour faire connaître notre collection au public, ce signalement est aussi l'outil qui manquait au personnel de la bibliothèque pour définir une politique de diffusion renouant avec le projet de Jacques Doucet, selon des modalités qui l'auraient sans doute enthousiasmé. La numérisation qui permet de sauvegarder des originaux anciens fragiles, difficiles à communiquer et devenus rares et précieux sera, bien sûr, le moyen privilégié de cette politique. Les images ainsi reproduites deviennent accessibles à la communauté des chercheurs et des amateurs d'art dans le monde entier, sans restriction d'accès. En retour la numérisation permettra d'ailleurs également d'améliorer le signalement pour certaines parties de la collection qui pourront plus facilement être cataloguées et indexées image par image. Des recherches fines par auteur ou mot-clef, la constitution de corpus et la mise en valeur d'ensembles spécifiques seront alors possibles.

Nous n'en sommes pour le moment qu'au tout début de la constitution de notre « photothèque numérique ». Le site de l'Inha comprend surtout des photographies de l'ENSBA, dont la magnifique col-



6 Florence, l'Arno, cliché stéréoscopique sur plaque de verre, fonds Collinet-Guérin (années 1910)

lection était bien répertoriée, mais on y trouve aussi, venant de la bibliothèque de l'Inha, 1 750 plaques stéréoscopiques de la collection Collinet-Guérin, qui livrent un vaste panorama de l'Italie – paysages, monuments, jardins – vue par un voyageur des années 1910, choix du à la fois à des raisons de sauvegarde et à la relation aux fonds de la bibliothèque, très riches en ce qui concerne l'Italie. Nous travaillons actuellement à définir des projets plus larges.

Toutefois, compte tenu des coûts de prise de vue, de mise en ligne et d'archivage, le choix des images à numériser implique nécessairement une sélection. Celle-ci sera établie en fonction de critères à la fois intellectuels et physiques. L'intérêt documentaire et historique des fonds sera déterminant surtout lorsqu'une documentation de qualité, en particulier des légendes précises et scientifiques leur est associée. Les nécessités de conservation et les difficultés de communication seront également prises en compte. La rareté des documents, leur représentativité dans les collections et leur complémentarité avec les bibliothèques numériques existantes seront également des critères importants. Il est important de signaler que les images numérisées ne sont toutefois que des reproductions des originaux – les photographies conservées dans la bibliothèque de l'INHA – qui ne sauraient apporter l'ensemble du contenu historique, artistique voire émotionnel que ceux-ci contiennent. Il est donc indispensable de préserver les originaux qui devront pouvoir rester consultables pour des recherches spécifiques ou proposés à un public plus large par exemple lors d'expositions.

Les projets

La collection de photographies créée par Jacques Doucet dans un but de documentation s'est muée en une archive de première importance pour l'histoire des œuvres, des collections privées, des musées et galeries, de la discipline elle-même. L'inventaire rendu possible par la subvention du Getty a été la première étape, indispensable, d'une série d'actions en matière de signalement, de conservation et de valorisation. Les ensembles les plus rares ou les plus intéressants, désormais identifiés, feront l'objet d'un catalogage pièce à pièce. Le fait de passer en revue les photographies dans leur matérialité pour les inventorier a permis d'établir un plan de conservation, en particulier pour les albums et les plaques, et de restauration pour un certain nombre de pièces. La valorisation de la collection, non seulement par la numérisation mais aussi par le développement de la politique de prêt aux expositions extérieures a déjà commencé.¹² Des publications et des expositions virtuelles sont prévues. Nous espérons également intensifier le dialogue autour des collections, qu'il s'agisse des relations avec les usagers-internautes, ou de la coopération avec d'autres institutions travaillant sur ce domaine (photothèques, bibliothèques, centres de documentation et musées en France et à l'étranger).

Du statut d'outils documentaires à celui d'œuvres d'art et d'archives, des fichiers manuscrits à l'inventaire informatisé, des lourdes boîtes que l'on compulse au site Internet que l'on explore, c'est bien une métamorphose qui s'est produite. Il est important toutefois de s'attacher à conserver les originaux dans leur matérialité, gage essentiel de leur valeur historique, en même temps que l'on donne accès à leurs impalpables copies numériques.

¹² 8 photographies d'Eugène Piot ont été prêtées pour l'exposition *Eloge du négatif. Les débuts de la photographie*

sur papier en Italie 1846-1862, Paris Petit Palais, fév.-avril 2010 puis Florence, Alinari, 9 sept.-24 oct. 2010.

Hubert Locher

Hamann's Canon: The Illustration of the *Geschichte der Kunst* (1933) and the Photo Archive of the Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar in Marburg

The art historian Richard Hamann (1879–1961) is little known outside of Germany. He completed a doctorate under philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey in Berlin in 1902, achieved his Habilitation—the German qualification for lecturing at university level—with the support of Heinrich Wölfflin in 1911, taught as a professor in Posen, West-Prussia, and from 1913 to 1949 held a position as full professor at the Department of Art History of the Philipps University in Marburg. Between 1947 and 1957, he was a guest lecturer at the Humboldt University in Berlin.¹ Today his name is chiefly associated with the Marburg image archive founded by him. The German Documentation Centre for Art History—Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, as it is called, is currently one of the major photo archives in Europe and it was Richard Hamann—himself a technically adept photographer—who formulated the call to document objects relevant for art history as comprehensively as possible. Soon, photography became a very specific form of art-historical research in Marburg.² The origin of the Marburg image archive, however, is an art-historical concept which does not stem from the practice of photography.

In the following, I will try to explain this by taking a look at the most famous and probably most significant of Hamann's books, the *Geschichte der Kunst* (History of Art) from 1933.³ This work holds Hamann's art-historical legacy, not least because, in a representative way, it echoes the archive's un-

¹ Cf. here Jost Hermand, *Der Kunsthistoriker Richard Hamann. Eine politische Biographie (1879–1961)*, Cologne / Weimar / Vienna 2009, with older publications. Ruth Heftrig / Bernd Reifenberg (eds.), *Wissenschaft zwischen Ost und West. Der Kunsthistoriker Richard Hamann als Grenzgänger* (proceedings Marburg 2008), Marburg 2009. Hamann's written legacy is located in the Marburg University Library, Ms. 1026.

² In this respect and many others discussed throughout, see Angela Matyssek's fundamental publication, *Kunstgeschichte als fotografische Praxis. Richard Hamann und Foto Marburg*, Berlin 2009.

³ Richard Hamann, *Geschichte der Kunst von der altchristlichen Zeit bis zur Gegenwart*, Berlin 1933.

derlying idea of an all-embracing archive, revealing Hamann's exceptional vision. As a dialectical construction of totality, it echoes Hamann's call for "More Hegel"⁴ previously expressed in his book on Impressionism. The image archive and the *Geschichte der Kunst* are two different implementations of the general project of nineteenth and early-twentieth-century art history, whose goal was to capture art history's full range of objects and present it through the lens of a construction of allness.⁵

Like most single or multi-volume overview works, the *Geschichte der Kunst* is hardly read today.⁶ The book was first published in 1933, while the preface dates from October 1932. Further editions were published in 1935 and 1938. In the latter edition, passages were modified to comply with the new political situation in Germany, namely the cultural politics of the Nazi regime. In 1945, a German edition with the text version from the original edition was published in the United States. After the war had ended, there were additional publications in East and West Germany. Judging from the number of printed copies, it was an enormously successful book.⁷

The subject of the *Geschichte der Kunst* is the presentation of the "development of art" as a "meaningful progression of intellectual life". Hamann is interested in the general view, the "linking of events", whose presentation lessens the significance of the individual work. According to Hamann, to view the linking "as a whole, we must move so far away from the individual events that—as in a landscape—not the details of the vegetation, but the individual physiognomy of the entire area is captured. We are interested in this general overview".⁸ In the next sentence, Hamann notes that the importance of the "great masters" remains, the challenge for the art historian being to work in an exemplary manner at the same time. Despite this historical perspective and the obvious reference to great canonical figures, Hamann claims to present everything according to the individual "standpoint" in the sense of a personal "overview",⁹ and consequently admits to the subjectivity of the selection associated with this view. In the preface, Hamann writes, "every art has its age, and every age has its art",¹⁰ and one could expand the thought by stating that every age has its perspective and its interest. His goal, he writes, is thus to

⁴ Richard Hamann, *Der Impressionismus in Leben und Kunst*, Cologne 1907, p. 320. Cf. Rudolf Zeitler, "Richard Hamanns Buch 'Der Impressionismus in Leben und Kunst', 1907. Notizen zur Ideengeschichte", in: Ekkehard Mai / Stephan Waetzoldt / Gerd Woland (eds.), *Ideengeschichte und Kunstwissenschaft. Philosophie und bildende Kunst im Kaiserreich*, Berlin 1983, pp. 293–311, p. 304; Hermand 2009 (note 1), pp. 35–36.

⁵ Cf. generally Hubert Locher, *Kunstgeschichte als historische Theorie der Kunst 1750–1950*, Munich 2010², rev. ed.; see also Matyssek 2009 (note 2), p. 52, in which reference is made to "Weltprojekte um 1900" (World Projects around 1900). Hamann's project, however, positions itself in a different context, concentrating not on an attempt to standardise, but to archive and construct a presupposed ideal of allness.

⁶ Cf. here Klaus Niehr, "Standpunkt und Überschau – Richard Hamann betrachtet die Kunst", in: Nikola Doll / Christian Fuhrmeister / Michael H. Sprenger (eds.), *Kunstgeschichte im Nationalsozialismus. Beiträge zur Geschichte einer Wissenschaft zwischen 1930 und 1950* (publication accompanying the exhibition "Kunstgeschichte im Nationalsozialismus", Bonn / Hamburg / Berlin 2005), Weimar 2005, pp. 183–197. Hamann's descriptive language is discussed in the same collection by Anja Schürmann, "'Rechte' und 'Linke' Ideologisierung-

gen. Wilhelm Pinder und Richard Hamann beschreiben staufische Kunst", *ibid.*, pp. 245–259. Matyssek 2009 (note 2) largely excludes the book.

⁷ Unless otherwise specified, quotations are taken from the first edition (English translation by the author). Additional editions were published in Munich by Droemer / Knauer 1951, 1953, 1958; by Ostberliner Akademieverlag 1955, 1957, 1959, 1962, 1965. The publication numbers may well have exceeded 360,000. The 1959 Akademie-Verlag edition, according to its own specifications, ranges from copy 346,000 to copy 353,000.

⁸ "[...] die Entwicklung der Kunst [...] als ein sinnvoller Verlauf geistigen Lebens. [...] Um diese Verkettung der Ereignisse im ganzen zu übersehen und ein Gesamtbild zu empfangen, müssen wir so weit von den einzelnen Ereignissen zurücktreten, daß, wie in einer Landschaft, nicht mehr die Einzelheiten der Vegetation, sondern die individuelle Physiognomie der ganzen Gegend erfasst wird. Auf diese Überschau, auf das Gesamtbild kommt es uns an". Hamann 1933 (note 3), p. 7.

⁹ "Standpunkt und Überschau" (Standpoint and Overview) are the terms used in the heading of the introduction to *Geschichte der Kunst* (*ibid.*, p. 9).

¹⁰ "Jede Zeit hat ihre Kunst, und jede Kunst hat ihre Zeit". *Ibid.*, p. 7. This is evidently a modified version of the Ludwig Hevesi quote, "Der Zeit ihre Kunst. Der Kunst ihre

“gain an understanding of our time out of the meaningful development, and grasp it as the result of the process as a whole”.¹¹

Handbooks on Art History

The particularity of Hamann's approach is visible in comparisons with works which for him must have been primary sources. These were primarily two large-scale scholarly projects of his time, the *Geschichte der Kunst* published from 1923 until 1930, by the Berlin Propyläen publishers, in sixteen volumes along with a supplementary volume, and the *Handbuch der Kunstwissenschaft*, which had been in print since 1913. In twenty volumes with numerous sub-volumes as well as five supplementary volumes, this monumental collective work was nearly complete in the early nineteen-twenties. The value of these works lay in the contributions of renowned authors as well as in the excellent illustrations they featured. Each of the Propyläen volumes contains close to 600 illustrations, most of them in full-page format, including a number of colour reproductions. The individual volumes of the *Handbuch der Kunstwissenschaft* differ in length, but each of them contains several hundred illustrations, some of them as plates glued onto black paper.

The multi-volume handbooks reveal the canonical framework for Hamann's large-scale project of creating a world archive of art history. From a methodological point of view, they provided contrasting material for Hamann's *Geschichte der Kunst* given that he was mainly interested in the project of synthesis, which because of specialisation, appeared to have become obsolete. Hamann sees the main advantage of his presentation in its unity. “The new and fundamental aspect of it [*Geschichte der Kunst*] is that it attempts to arrange that which has been analysed in large, multi-volume art histories by numerous authors, necessarily resulting in a number of different opinions, according to a single individual experience and belief”.¹² The entire presentation is to be “seen from the perspective of today's tasks and problems”,¹³ which—as Hamann frankly admits—results in opinions which deviate from those prevalent up until now. Accordingly, his *Geschichte der Kunst* suggests a uniform perception of art history as a whole, and since this always will depend on when it was written, is thus especially authentic and essentially modern.

The commitment to the individual standpoint could appear problematic if it merely meant the articulation of a subjective or “impressionist”, so to speak, opinion. However, Hamann prefers to present his ideas as modern and scientifically objective, and thus empirically provable, by committing himself to an “objective” position. “Our standpoint is an objective one”.¹⁴ Hamann associates a certain artistic opinion with the term “objectivity” (“Sachlichkeit”) and at the same time, uses it to refer to an interpretational attitude towards the object. Convinced that his own time period was essentially dominated by such “objectivity”, he held that his position was not only intellectually appropriate but also aesthetically modern as an approach (preface, p. 7). This is true at least inasmuch as the term “Sachlichkeit” it-

Freiheit” (To every age its art. To art its freedom), which appeared in 1905 on the façade of the exhibition building of the Vienna Secession.

¹¹ “Wohl aber liegt uns daran, aus der sinnvollen Entwicklung heraus ein Verständnis unserer Zeit zu gewinnen und sie als ein notwendiges Ergebnis des Gesamtverlaufes zu begreifen”. Ibid., p. 7.

¹² “Neu und grundlegend an ihr [der *Geschichte der Kunst*]

möchte sein, daß sie das, was in großen, vielbändigen Kunstgeschichten von verschiedenen Autoren bearbeitet ist und notwendig zu verschiedenen Standpunkten führt, aus einer einzigen Erfahrung und Überzeugung heraus zu gestalten versucht”. Ibid.

¹³ “von den Aufgaben und Problemen der heutigen Zeit her gesehen”. Ibid.,

¹⁴ “Unser Standpunkt ist ein sachlicher.” Ibid.

self was contemporary and had become a customary expression with respect to the arts since Gustav Friedrich Harlaub's 1925 exhibition *Die Neue Sachlichkeit. Deutsche Malerei seit dem Expressionismus* (New Objectivity: German Painting since Expressionism) in the Kunsthalle Mannheim.¹⁵ It is in this sense that Hamann generally sees the art of his time as "objective". The last chapter in his book analyses, among other questions, the "Ways to Objectivity"; the final word in the table of contents is "objectivity", and the final passage of *Geschichte der Kunst* is dedicated to the portrayal of this viewpoint within the field of architecture, where objectivity, to the mind of the author, has plainly become the subject of its design. This passage, one of the most impressive in the book, was considerably revised in the 1938 edition (pp. 886–892). Hamann's view thus presupposes the historicity of the object, but at the same time, recognises that the position of the history-making individual always depends on the age, which is the "standpoint" of the author.

This notion is plausible from a scholarly point of view because the historian never argues in a purely subjective, idiosyncratic way, but generally shares his standpoint with his contemporaries, whose eyes and minds he wishes to open for achieving a similarly "objective" view. Still, access to the objects of the history of art remains subjective inasmuch as any appropriate portrayal of the history of art through its works can only be based on the individual perception of the single work of art. Hamann's theoretical position, which he articulated in earlier years, plays an important role in this context. Of importance here are his knowledge of Wilhelm Dilthey's philosophical hermeneutics, of the aesthetics of empathy, and his familiarity with the ideas of art historians Heinrich Wölfflin and Wilhelm Worringer, who are among the few authors that Hamann explicitly mentions.¹⁶ Accordingly, Hamann unfolds his portrayal of the history of art in an intensive analysis of selected pieces with respect to their aesthetic qualities, qualities which can be experienced—at least by him—and which the readers are meant to relive through his descriptions.

However, given that the focus is not on the individual interpretations, but on the portrayal of history, the selection of examples is the critical point. Justifying his choice, Hamann notes in the preface that "the fact that well-known and familiar names are missing is not meant as criticism, but is a result of the necessity to provide examples which best demonstrate the development".¹⁷ But what is the basis of this selection? Succinctly and very frankly, he relies on his authority as an experienced art historian. His selection, he argues, has evolved "out of a lifelong process of research and reflection on the meaning of historical development".¹⁸ And as the choice of and the emphasis on the selected pieces as well as the argument demonstrate, it is obviously the perspective of a German art historian of that time who is particularly interested in determining the German share of the imagined development of art as a whole.¹⁹

His remarks made in the preface indicate that Hamann was well aware of the unusual choice of objects and of emphasis, and that he accepted the challenge of finding plausible reasons for his choice of

¹⁵ Cf. Markus Heinzelmann, "Die Theorie der Neuen Sachlichkeit", in: Damian Dombrowski (ed.), *Zwischen den Welten. Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte für Jürg Meyer zur Capellen*, Weimar 2001, pp. 312–319.

¹⁶ Worringer is mentioned in Hamann 1933 (note 3), pp. 20, 21, 30, 31; Wölfflin *ibid.*, p. 47, with reference to Heinrich Wölfflin, *Die Klassische Kunst*, München 1899. As another reference author, Hamann, in the book's modernity section, mentions Jacob Burckhardt and his "eternally young book" *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*, Leipzig 1899 (*ibid.*, p. 43); furthermore (*ibid.*, p. 43), Erwin Panofsky's essay on perspective as symbol-

ic form (see Erwin Panofsky, *Die Perspektive als symbolische Form*, Leipzig / Berlin 1927).

¹⁷ "Das Fehlen bekannter und manchem vertrauter Namen bedeutet keine Kritik, sondern ist durch die Notwendigkeit bestimmt, die Beispiele heranzuziehen, durch die die Entwicklung am besten verdeutlicht wird". Hamann 1933 (note 3), p. 8.

¹⁸ "Diese Auswahl hat sich herauskristallisiert aus der Lebensarbeit eigenen Forschens und Nachdenkens über den Sinn der geschichtlichen Entwicklung". *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Cf. Niehr 2005 (note 6), whose evaluation of Hamann's ideological position has a very critical drift.

examples—through his argumentation, but also through the exceptional illustrations he provides. He notes, “also the photographs, upon which the illustrations are based, are—for the most part—the result of my own work. Great effort has been made to replace universally known models with new ones which express the essence of the development. The long-time practice of the Art Historical Institute at the Marburg University allowed adjusting the photographic technique to the contemporary view and thus making statements about the piece of art through the mere process of photography. In addition, it was thus possible to add illustrations to the text in such wealth that anything which is said can be demonstrated to the reader in a vivid image”.²⁰

Rarely ever has the informative value of photography been so clearly identified in the theory of art history. With his intention to create a new view of the history of art—in both a figurative and a literal sense—Hamann resumes a *topos* which originated in the very beginnings of modern art-historical documentation: criticism of the indirect visual tradition and the value of individual perception. It was Johann Joachim Winckelmann who attempted to demarcate his *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (1764) from previously published works, emphasising his own vision in the preface. “All that I have cited as evidence—painting, statues, gems, and coins—I have myself seen and examined repeatedly”. By contrast, other authors, “made judgements through the eyes of others, and from drawings and engravings”.²¹ Into this discussion, Hamann can introduce photography. With his remark that universally known models have been replaced, he suggests that he engaged in this process himself and that the material, in many cases, even represents his own view. It does so in those cases in which he took the photographs himself and thus—according to his argument—parted with imprecise or false clichés. The self-produced photograph, in Hamann's case, verifies the autopsy, whose importance for credibility is visible in the almost formulaic-sounding sentence added at the end of the preface: “The publisher enabled the author to verify his opinion face to face with the originals by travelling all across Europe so that there is almost no piece in this history of art which the author has not seen with his own eyes”.²² The authenticity of the photographic image as well as the elucidation of the author's perception, which claims to be equally “objective”, empower the reader to undertake what could be called a virtual autopsy of the surrogate of the object.

A reading of the *Geschichte der Kunst* confirms Hamann's introductory remarks on disposition and method. In fact, he provides a significant number of self-produced illustrations. According to Hamann's specifications, out of a total of 1,110 illustrations, 259 are taken from external source material; 42 from Fratelli Alinari, 36 from Domenico Anderson, 35 from Franz Hanfstaengl, 14 from Franz Stödtner—some of these were produced by Hamann himself on Stödtner's order. 119 photographs were taken from books, 18 from unknown sources. Consequently, more than 700 photographs are of Hamann's own making. Some of them are indeed likely to have been retaken when the book was published. Still, it is generally true that the book's choices in where to place the emphasis mirror the focus of the archive's

²⁰ “Auch die photographischen Aufnahmen, die den Abbildungen zugrunde liegen, sind zum ganz überwiegenden Teile Resultate eigener Arbeit. Es ist großer Wert darauf gelegt, allbekannte Vorlagen durch neue und für das Wesen der Entwicklung sprechende zu ersetzen. Die langjährige Praxis des von mir geleiteten Kunstgeschichtlichen Instituts der Universität Marburg erlaubte es, die photographische Technik dem neuen Sehen der Gegenwart anzupassen und schon durch die Art der Aufnahme eine Aussage über das Kunstwerk zu geben. Ebenso war es dadurch möglich, die Abbildungen in so reicher Fülle dem Text beizugeben, daß fast

alles, was im Text behauptet wird, dem Leser auch anschaulich werden kann.” *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²¹ The quote is taken from the 2006 English translation. Johann Joachim Winckelmann, “Preface, Rome, July 1763”, in: *History of the Art of Antiquity*, transl. by Harry Francis Mallgrave, Los Angeles 2006, p. 76 and p. 73.

²² “Der Verlag hat es dem Verfasser ermöglicht, auf Reisen durch ganz Europa seine Ansichten vor den Originalen noch einmal nachzuprüfen, so daß kaum ein Werk in dieser Kunstgeschichte besprochen ist, das der Verfasser nicht mit eigenen Augen gesehen hat”. Hamann 1933 (note 3), p. 8.

image collection and thus Hamann's research interests. The second chapter of the book, which focuses on the Middle Ages, discusses medieval sculpture and architecture in France and Germany in long passages furnished with 98 illustrations or 173 illustrations respectively. For England, the book provides 34 illustrations, while Italy is treated rather thinly with only 23 illustrations. In the voluminous chapter on Modernity ("Neuzeit"), which covers more than 450 pages, the visual arts account for around two-thirds of the total of approximately 600 illustrations, followed by architecture, to which about 120 illustrations were assigned. The focus is placed on individual artists such as Raphael and Michelangelo, Dürer and Leonardo, and for the seventeenth century, on Rubens, Rembrandt, and Velazquez. The distribution of the illustrations among the different nations is in fact revealing. Over one hundred illustrations are dedicated to German painting; in addition, there are more than thirty illustrations of architecture and more than twenty of sculptures—a total of more than 160 illustrations. Italy, so to speak, immediately follows with a little less than one hundred illustrations of paintings, almost fifty of architecture and well over twenty of sculptures. French art was allocated slightly more than seventy illustrations for the field of painting, and an additional one hundred for architecture and sculpture. A special position is held by Spain with its thirty illustrations, among which there are about a dozen works by Velazquez mostly from the seventeenth century. England plays but a minor role.

By and large, the selection agrees with the established art-historical canon, and yet there are significant omissions and choices of emphasis. Most notable is the presence of German art throughout the book. German art is discussed consecutively in an analysis starting with the Migration Period. Quite a large space is reserved for Italian painting and architecture, but still, Italy's special role is not valued as highly as in traditional art history. Occasionally, and often with references to Marburg, examples from outside the general canon are added, but they always correspond with the circumstances demonstrated by the more canonical examples. In general, Hamann's selective and technical decisions are not meant to achieve balance in quantity in accordance with the general consensus, but to define the emphasis and to underscore the content-based focus.

As far as the sections on the individual genres are concerned, there is a distinct predominance of the visual arts, which may be astonishing given that the photo archive in Marburg is especially famous for its photographs of architecture. Even the chapter on the Middle Ages, in which architecture seems to be used for introducing the subject and for key examples, and which includes the discussion of architectural sculptures in relatively great length, only a handful of examples, taken from painting, are provided. In the chapter on Modernity, the predominance of painting is unmistakable. In an alternating manner, this chapter places the focus of the examination on the arts of one or the other nation, while it does not cease to analyse individual artists quite closely. References to architecture occur in suitable passages, often to elaborate on insights gained from paintings. The author treats them in consecutive sections, never losing sight of the development as a whole.

Image Parallels

The introductory chapter, titled "Standpoint and Overview", outlines the overall argument and explains the basic patterns as well as the often peculiar terminology of the stylistic periods within major epoch segments. The choice of terminology, which will be criticised below,²³ seems less far-fetched

²³ Cf. Martin Warnke, "Richard Hamann", in: *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft*, 20 (1981), pp. 11–20,

here p. 11, with reference to the criticism in early reviews by Adolph Goldschmidt and Ernst Kühnel.

when its motivation is taken into account. It aims at a consistent line in the history of style, wherefore common terms such as Renaissance are explained in the introduction, but avoided in the individual chapters and replaced with terms such as “folkloric pre-Baroque” (“volkstümlicher Vorbarock”) and “classicist early Baroque” (“klassizistischer Frühbarock”). This shows the author’s effort to create a clear terminology and to limit the discovery of new “isms”, which had recently become inflationary in his generation. In opposition to these, Hamann juxtaposes the major epochs, which in his opinion are consistent in their stylistic development.

The emphasis of the introductory chapter differs greatly from the emphasis of the larger section of the book. It holds 49 illustrations ranging from early Christian art up until Hamann’s present. The passage on “Ancient Christian Art” contains illustrations of Roman catacomb paintings, a mosaic, a sarcophagus relief from the fourth century, a bust, an antique and an early Christian relief. The chapter devoted to the Middle Ages holds the largest portion with 23 illustrations, while only 19 are taken from Modernity or from the present. However, ten images in the passage on the Middle Ages show objects from antiquity. Consequently, the main focus is on identifying the relation between medieval and antique art. In principle, Hamann adopts the relevant thesis from Wilhelm Worringer, with significant modifications,²⁴ however, and creates a set of parallels to demonstrate it. He engages in comparisons between the Hera of Samos, an ordination gift from the sixth century B. C., and the jamb figures of the Chartres Cathedral; between a fourth-century B. C. relief and an early-fourteenth-century tomb sculpture located in the Elisabeth church in Marburg—the local, non-canonical evidence of the universal nature of his argument. Expanding the argument, he juxtaposes the Apollon of Olympia in the Temple of Zeus with a king figure from one of the flying buttresses of Notre-Dame de Reims (pp. 26–27, fig. 16–17). Subsequently, a parallel is drawn between the Temple of Poseidon in Paestum and a page-size photograph of the western façade of the Reims Cathedral (pp. 28–29, fig. 18–19; here fig. 1). Finally, there is a comparison between the nave and the transept of Amiens and a Pompeian wall painting from the first century.

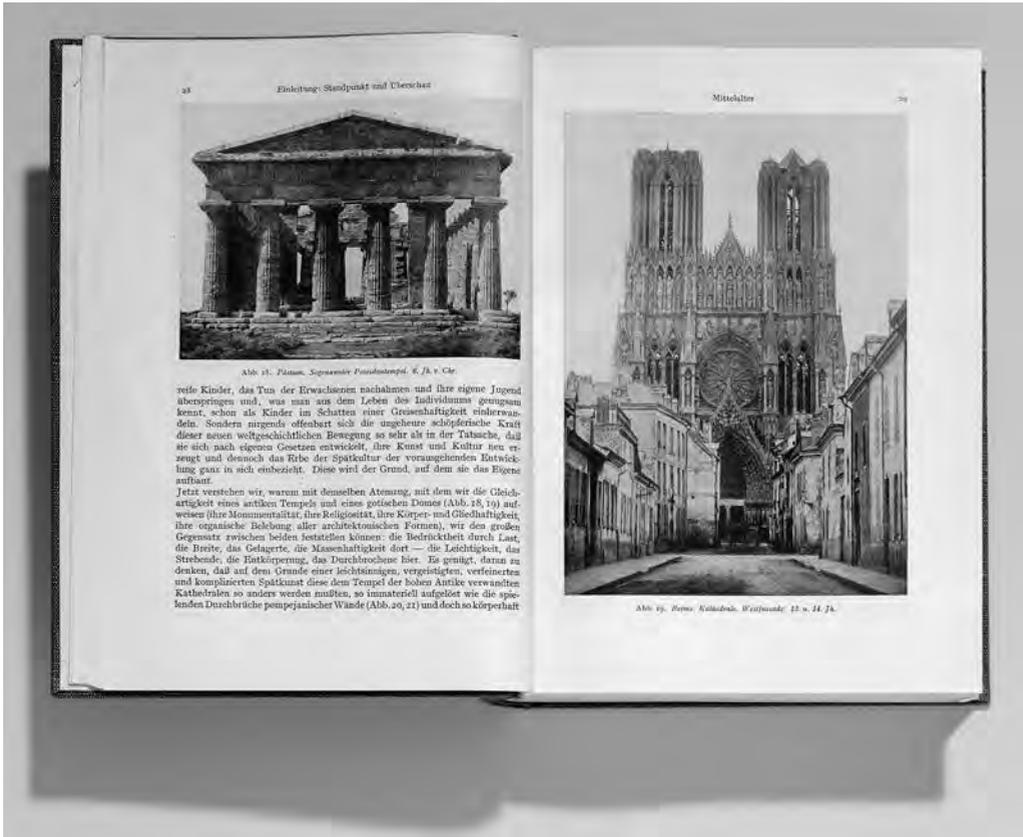
These parallels obviously intend to make evident the affinity of antique and medieval art. Hamann’s argument is not about difference, but about continuity. It is based on the common conception of a cyclical stylistic development, which he intends not to explain by way of its intrinsic laws, but attempts to deduce from a comparable cause in the intellectual development of mankind determined by changing material circumstances: “It is as though mankind—in like manner as the individual—needs to unfold similarly according to laws intrinsic to intellectual development, whenever it is cast back—by cataclysms such as migration—into its earliest stages and—through the replacement of old peoples and cultures with barbaric, primitive peoples coming freshly into history—experiences a new youth”.²⁵ In the Gothic period, Hamann sees a “captivating spectacle of the development of mankind re-enacted”, and an art which is “sensuous and glorifies the profane as only pagan art has ever done”.²⁶

²⁴ Cf. Wilhelm Worringer, *Formprobleme der Gotik* (Form Problems of the Gothic), Munich 1911, pp. 20, 25; see also id., *Griechentum und Gotik. Vom Weltreich des Hellenismus*, Munich 1928. Hamann reviewed *Formprobleme*, in: *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*, 10 (1915), pp. 357–361, and had reviewed Worringer’s magnum opus *Abstraktion und Einfühlung* (Abstraction and Empathy, Munich 1921), already in the second edition of the same periodical in vol. 5 (1910), pp. 276–281.

²⁵ “Es ist, als ob die Menschheit – ähnlich wie das einzelne Individuum – sich nach immanenten Gesetzen geistiger Entwicklung im gleichen Sinn entfalten muß, wenn sie

durch eine solche Umwälzung wie die Völkerwanderung auf ihre früheste Stufe zurückgeworfen wird und durch den Ersatz alter Völker und Kulturen durch neu in die Geschichte eintretende – barbarische, primitive – Völkerschaften eine neue Jugend erlebt”. Hamann 1933 (note 3), p. 25.

²⁶ “Ein hinreißendes Schauspiel der Menschheitsentwicklung wiederholt sich noch einmal in der Kunst. So gesehen, ist auch die mittelalterliche Kunst sinnenfreudig, diesseitsverklärend, wie nur je die heidnische gewesen war: sie ist eine Rückkehr zur Formung von Körper und Welt – und insofern unchristlich”. Ibid., p. 26.



1 Temple of Poseidon in Paestum, photograph taken by Richard Hamann, and a view of the western façade of the Reims Cathedral, photographer François Rothier, from Richard Hamann, *Geschichte der Kunst*, 1933, p. 28/29, fig. 18, 19

Evidently, the images are arranged in a rhetorically suggestive order. Hamann intentionally chooses similar genres and gestures, or corresponding image sections. The comparison between the Paestum temple and the façade of the Reims Cathedral, despite the low print quality, seems especially grand and can be seen as the climax of the sequence. The photograph of the Doric temple, a full frontal view taken during one of Hamann's first photograph campaigns to Italy in 1919,²⁷ is of his own making. The image of the cathedral façade, on the other hand, was taken by François Rothier (1852–1914),²⁸ a photographer residing in Reims at the time (fig. 2). It is in no way self-evident that Hamann should have chosen this photograph. A comparison with the photographs used in previous handbooks shows that the view of the image is in fact unusual. In the fourth edition of Anton Springer's *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte*, published in 1895,²⁹ the façade appears in a xylograph in a picturesque portrayal with a forecourt and without the street running south (fig. 3). The *Handbuch der Kunstwissenschaft* contains a photograph of the façade taken from an elevated perspective³⁰—probably one of the houses in the row to the north—

²⁷ FM 001.880, year taken 1919.

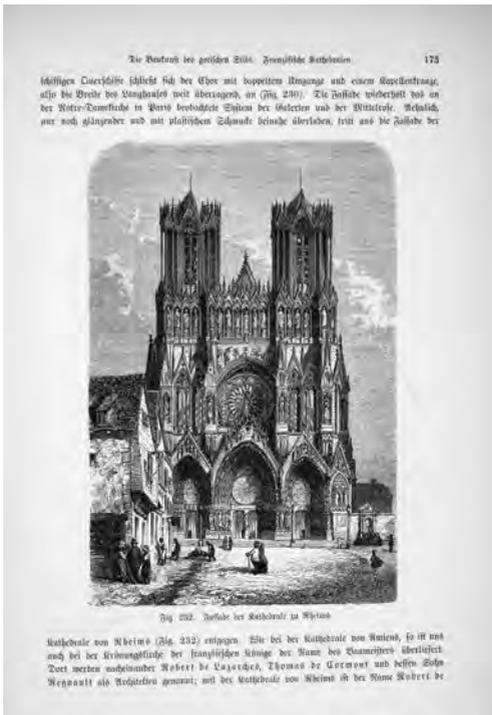
²⁸ The Marburg image archive holds a copy (?) of the plate of the photograph (FM 58.845; here fig. 2).

²⁹ Anton Springer, *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 2, Leipzig 1895⁴ (illustr. ed.), fig. 232.

³⁰ Karl Heinz Clasen, *Die gotische Baukunst* (Handbuch der



2 Western façade of the Reims Cathedral, photographer François Rothier, before 1914, Glass negative



3 Western façade of the Reims Cathedral, Woodblock print, from Anton Springer, *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte*, 4th illustrated edition, vol. II, Leipzig: Seemann, 1895, fig. 232



4 Western façade of the Reims Cathedral, photograph-er unknown, Karl Heinz Clasen, *Die gotische Baukunst (Handbuch der Kunstwissenschaft, vol. 4, 2)*, Potsdam: Athenaion, 1930, plate IV

so that the edifice appears free against the light background as though cropped (fig. 4). A copy of the same photograph is held in the Marburg photo archive. Despite this, Hamann favoured Rothier's shot, which shows the cathedral from the centre of the street running directly towards it, including the row of houses, which in 1914 was partly destroyed. In doing so, he includes the original urban surroundings of the cathedral in a manner which portrays the monumental appearance of the cathedral against the dwarfed houses from a point of view which was once actually possible. This suggests that Hamann attempts to pursue an argument in a visual way. The strict frontal view of both the temple and the cathedral is used to stress the impressive sacral and monumental character of the two edifices. At the same time, however, Hamann wishes to avoid the cliché of the picturesque angular view of the cropped cathedral as is to be seen for instance in paintings by Domenico Quaglio.³¹ This is much more crucial than the fact that Hamann shows a partly destroyed building in a condition prior to its rebuilding.

In the introduction, there are additional parallels transcending time and place, which effectually articulate arguments formulated in the text in a similar fashion. A less spectacular example is the parallel created between Michelangelo's Medici tomb and Rubens' *The Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus*, with the help of which Hamann wishes to introduce his new terminology of stylistic history. He uses

Kunstwissenschaft, 4, 2), Potsdam 1930, plate IV (inserted on black paper between pp. 56 and 57).

³¹ Domenico Quaglio, *Die Kathedrale von Reims* (1833), oil

on canvas, 74.5 x 94.5 cm, Museum der Bildenden Künste, Leipzig.

the term “classicist early Baroque” (“klassizistischer Frühbarock”) for Michelangelo’s works in order to label Rubens’ paintings “sensualist high Baroque” (“sensualistischer Hochbarock”) in the progression of stylistic history. The reference, which is indeed present in the example (although it is rather a reference to the figure of the *Night*) is used as a basis for a general claim about stylistic development. Contrasting comparisons of this kind are known especially from Wölfflin’s writings, as for example from *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (Munich 1915) but also from *Italien und das deutsche Formgefühl* (Munich 1931). However, these strongly emphasise the stylistic differences between the sixteenth and the seventeenth century, or Renaissance and Baroque respectively, or in the latter book, between Italian and Northern art, whereas Hamann is interested mainly in stressing the continuity of the development. There are further examples of the same type on the following pages. Invariably, the visual argument corresponds with a thesis presented in the text, the canonical rank of a piece being of little importance. Neither Carlo Crivelli’s *Enthroned Madonna with Child Handing out the Key to Peter* (p. 62, fig. 45) nor Nicolas Lancret’s *Dancers* (p. 60, fig. 43), shown in an image section of a piece located in Potsdam; neither Karl Hofer’s *Stilleben* (p. 66, fig. 48) from the Marburg Museum—established in 1927 with the help of Hamann himself—nor architect Otto Firlé’s *Europa-Haus* (p. 67, fig. 49; here fig. 5), are part of the traditional canon of artistic monuments.



5 Otto Firlé, *Europa-Haus*, Berlin, 1930–1931, photograph by Richard Hamann (? or staff), see Richard Hamann, *Geschichte der Kunst*, 1933, p. 67, fig. 49

Consequently, if there are examples of both key and lesser importance in Hamann’s *Geschichte der Kunst*, it is a characteristic feature of this concept of the history of style that the examples are exchangeable. Hamann exploited this feature when he felt the urge to modify several passages for the 1938 edition so that they would comply with the new political conditions of the Hitler regime. He thus re-

placed a still life by Karl Hofer,³² which had been declared “degenerate” and confiscated, with one of futurist Gino Severini’s still lifes. Likewise, he exchanged Curt Herrmann’s *Winter Landscape* (p. 850, fig. 1054)—which had been among the Marburg Museum’s possessions, but also had been declared “degenerate” and removed—only marginally altering the corresponding text passages. In the last section of the book, which Hamann had reworked for the new edition, he replaced an edifice by Le Corbusier (p. 889, fig. 1108) with an equivalent example by Jan A. Brinkman and Leen C. van der Vlugt, two Dutch architects. The images of the interior of one of Le Corbusier’s houses at Weißenhof in Stuttgart (p. 890, fig. 1109), of Hans Poelzig’s *Großes Schauspielhaus* in Berlin (p. 886, fig. 1105), as well as the view of the interior of the “Kraftzentrale” (central power plant) in the Fagus Works designed by Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer (p. 887, fig. 1106) disappeared. Instead, Hamann added two industrial buildings from the 1930s, the Opel works in New Brandenburg—the construction had been demanded by the Hitler regime—and Eugenio Miozzi’s grandiose multi-storey car park built from 1931 to 1934 as part of a project to create a road connection between the Venice peninsula and the main land.³³ The addition of the last two illustrations is ultimately revealing, showing Karl Albiker’s *Staffettenläufer* from 1936 (fig. 1090). The venue, Werner March’s Reichssportfeld in Berlin, interestingly enough, is shown from the “perspective of the Fuehrer’s seat on the adjacent Maifeld towards the Olympiastadion” (fig. 1091).

These alterations correspond with the alterations of the text passages allowing compliance with the “new civil disposition” and the “new Fuehrer principle” without creating the need for Hamann to change the basic position of his book. On a political level, Hamann did not sympathise with the new authorities, and yet the alterations regarding the aesthetic positions took very little effort. Hamann adapted and also removed, for example, a passage clearly opposing the racial ideology.³⁴ However, rather than a *Bräunung* of politically objectionable passages or—literally—a dyeing of them in the colour of the Nazi ideology,³⁵ Hamann’s action indicates that his aesthetic standpoint as portrayed in earlier editions persists even under the new conditions. A quite remarkable example in this context is the replacement of the illustration of the Europahaus—indeed an adorable Leica photograph—with a new, equally well-designed photograph of the *Deutzer Hängebrücke* in Cologne dated 1936 (fig. 6).³⁶

The fact that the latter photograph was taken by Karl Albiker, who in the early years of the war worked for Hamann as a photographer, is not explicitly mentioned in the text, but may be of some importance. In any case, the new illustration is indeed more consistent with the argument in the text passages. The old illustration was also removed because of an alteration in the rewritten version of the final section of the book, which in the first edition mentioned the multi-story office or apartment building with references to the illustration (p. 889). The last photograph in the book, a view of *Berlin Alexan-*

³² Cf. Hans-Joachim Kunst / Heiko Laß / Dirk Richardt et al., “Kunstwissenschaften”, in: Burghard Dedner / Kai Köhler / Waltraud Strickhausen (eds.), *Germanistik und Kunstwissenschaften im ‘Dritten Reich’. Marburger Entwicklungen 1920–1950* (Academia Marburgensis, 10), Munich 2005, pp. 27–82, pp. 67–70; Christoph Otterbeck, “Richard Hamann und die moderne Kunst”, in: *Wege zur Moderne. Richard Hamann als Sammler* (exhibition cat. Marburg 2009), Munich 2009, pp. 52–71, here p. 61.

³³ FM LA 189/32. Hamann had travelled to Venice in his own car and had apparently used the newly completed *autorimessa*.

³⁴ The first edition contains the passage: “We avoid the dis-

cussion of the yet open questions of racial theory. Thus far, its adherents—unable to secure their value through their own achievements—have used the method of presumptuously claiming their entitlement in the present by right of the alleged positive qualities of their ancestors.” (“Wir vermeiden, die noch ungeklärten Fragen der Rastentheorie anzuschneiden. Einstweilen besteht das Verfahren der meisten ihrer Anhänger darin, aus der Unfähigkeit heraus, den eigenen Wert durch Leistungen zu sichern, an die Gegenwart Ansprüche zu stellen, die man sich aus angeblichen Eigenschaften der Vorfahren anmaßt.” Hamann 1933 [note 3], p. 31.) This passage was omitted in the third edition.

³⁵ Michael H. Sprenger, “Richard Hamann und die Mar-



6 Karl Moritz, *Deutzer Hängebrücke*, Köln, 1913–1915, photograph taken by Karl Albiker, 1936, see Richard Hamann, *Geschichte der Kunst*, 2nd ed., 1937, p. 67

derplatz while under construction, also shows this office building (p. 891, fig. 1110). Indeed, the construction of the highway (1938 ed., fig. 1081) and the images of the *Reichssportfeld* mirrored the overall spirit of the present much better. Hamann's remark in the brief preface to the second edition that the changes were made "mostly in view of the trendsetting decisions of the recent past" holds true without exception. Being the author, Hamann takes partial responsibility for the changes, but in no way sympathised with the Nazi regime.³⁷

burger Kunstgeschichte zwischen 1933 und 1945", in: *Kunst und Politik. Jahrbuch der Guernica-Gesellschaft*, 5 (2003), pp. 61–91, *ibid.*, p. 75–77; "Bräunung" translates into "embrowning" and is a German term which here refers to the process of modifying writings to achieve conformity with the Nazi regime. Brown was the colour associated with the fascist party NSDAP. After Sprenger, Matyssek 2009 (note 2) also mentions the term (p. 195).

³⁶ The photograph of Europa-Haus (LA 31/12) is a Leica small-scale photograph. The photograph of the Deutzer Bridge is dated 1936 (76 692). The Deutzer Hängebrücke was built according to the design created by Karl Moritz, winner of the 1912 competition. However, he closely followed Peter Behrens' highly praised model.

³⁷ Hermand 2009 (note 1), S. 118, sees "a few minor compromises" in Hamann's modifications, which have been made to retain the possibility of presenting his opinions on avant-garde art to the public. This argument misses the point: Hamann now indeed largely omits the "song of praise" to the Bauhaus school (it is in no way, as Hermand suggests a song of praise to "Bauhaus socialism"). However, Hamann does mention the architecture of the 1930s, which has to be described as "fascist".

Viewing as Experience

To what extent the selection of images depends on the one hand on a wilful attitude towards art development, but on the other hand, is designed with the perceiving viewer in mind, is visible in the introductory passage of the chapter on the Gothic period in France. Hamann, for whom this passage had special relevance, discusses this matter in the second of the three parts of the Middle Ages section, dividing it into two segments. The first segment explains the Gothic period in terms of its ideal characteristics, while the second delineates how the period unfolds and develops its style in “special ways”.

The first item in the initial image series of the chapter on the Gothic period (pp. 177–192) is a photograph of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris taken from a distant, southwest perspective across the Seine (fig. 171). Subsequently, there is a reference to the façade of Notre-Dame de Reims mentioned in the introduction (fig. 19), which Hamann describes as the “only monumentalised portal”, explaining the portal’s alignment, and calling the church a “convivial, opening house of the Lord”. The next image shows the western portals of the Reims Cathedral, followed by a page-size photograph of the figures of Saint Nicasius and an angel worked into its architecture (fig. 172, 173). There are additional examples of Gothic portal sculptures, such as the tympanum of the left western portal in Paris, a page-size view of the *Vierge Dorée* from the southern transept (fig. 174, 175), two additional images of the Reims Cathedral, the Christ portal at the northern end of the nave, and a close-up photograph of a part of the tympanum sculptures (fig. 176, 177). The series continues with two strictly axial views of the interior of Amiens and Mantes (fig. 178, 179), and an angular view of the jamb of the central nave (fig. 180). Three close-up views conclude the introduction of the chapter on the Gothic period. They show a motif of the interior western wall of the nave of the Reims Cathedral, a relief of the exterior of Amiens, and finally, the flying buttresses in Reims (fig. 181–183). The images Hamann provides are photographs of four different edifices, and yet they merge into a virtual building representing the Gothic cathedral. Following the author, the reader approaches the architecture from a distance, stands at its façade in front of the portal, which is presented as an overall and as a close-up view. The reader is then visually taken into the interior of the cathedral and finally leaves it to look back on a portal relief and eventually the structure of the exterior flying buttress, which in fact permits the construction of the building as a whole. The principle of presenting ideas as images and text simultaneously is the dynamic, empathetic method of capturing the substance, which is of special importance with respect to architecture. The author articulates the descriptions as an actual visit verbalised as an experience of space and matter. The architectural as well as the figurative design are interpreted as symbolic expressions of a view of the world and a view of life dependent on the respective age. Hamann occasionally presents this dimension in a boldly metaphorical language, noting for instance that he sees “the full view of a Gothic cathedral as an animal’s organism [...], the choir as its back extending behind it, its long neck striving forward, and its large eye, the rose window, gazing westward”. Thus, he argues “that the large, elongated structure of the church appears as a grand living organism”; it is a sculptural monument.³⁸ As throughout the entire book, Hamann here attempts to create an immediate link between the virtual ex-

³⁸ “Es ist mehr als ein Bild, wenn wir die Seitenansicht, d. h. die Gesamtansicht einer gotischen Kirche als einen tierischen Organismus empfinden, der mit dem Chor den Rücken nachzieht, mit dem gestreckten Hals nach vorn strebt und mit dem Auge der großen Rose im Westen in dieselbe Richtung schaut. [...] Damit ist schon gesagt, daß hier das große langgestreckte Haus der

Kirche in der Gestalt eines großen, lebendigen Organismus, d. h. als plastisches Denkmal, erscheint”. Hamann 1933 (note 3), p. 177.

³⁹ Thus, Hans Karlingers volume VII of *Propyläen Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin 1926², uses Chartres, Noyon, St Denis, St Yved, Wassy, Poitiers, Dijon, Lisieux (details), Laon, Paris, etc. as examples of Gothic art. The Reims Cathe-

perience of the explained form and its symbolic meaning. He sees form not only as a manifestation of a formal stylistic development and as a change in the history of perception, but also as a motivated formula of expression in which specific notions—concerning, for example, the significance of a Gothic church—are revealed.

Finally, the unique and original character of Hamann's approach, which also affects technical decisions of photography, is visible when compared with the argumentation and the selection of images and objects in other multi-volume handbooks, whose approach is fundamentally different. The handbooks, too, base their arguments upon a framework of stylistic manner. However, due to the division by period, their discussion follows the framework within equivalent sequences. In principle, the handbooks, in as balanced and representative completeness as possible, create a chronological succession of such monuments as are geographically or stylistically related to one another. In this process, they also mostly pay attention to distinction by genre.³⁹ The purpose of this is a representative documentation of the individual object, while Hamann, on the other hand, was interested rather in a representative portrayal of the ideals of the Gothic cathedral as the substance of aesthetic experience. As a consequence of the handbooks' focus on the single objects, its illustrations—above all in the *Propyläen* volumes—are detached from the arguments presented in the text.

Although, in respect to the selection of buildings, Hamann does in fact place some importance on standardisation, in *Geschichte der Kunst*, he generally avoids standardised sequences of objects. Nor is he interested in attractive and representative individual images of a monument, but much more—as explained above—in their combination. By contrast, the principle of the representative individual image plays an important role in *Handbuch der Kunstwissenschaft* and is a governing aspect of the *Propyläen Kunstgeschichte*. The latter contains a compilation of equal-size photographs, each of them intended to represent a complete artwork individually. Something similar is true for the page-size illustrations of *Handbuch der Kunstwissenschaft*. Hamann's *Geschichte der Kunst* does in fact also contain several page-size illustrations, and a number of large images among the text passages depict objects in an impressive manner, but in terms of the print quality, they cannot compete with the precious collotype images in *Propyläen Kunstgeschichte*. Most importantly, however, as the analysed examples were meant to demonstrate, the succession of the images is more vital than the individual photograph. After all, Hamann—although following the canon of monuments, as a comparison of the handbooks demonstrates—concentrates primarily on a convincing argument strengthened by the images accompanying the text passages. Image and text are instruments of a characterisation of stylistic principles designed to be as suggestive, i.e. as intelligible as possible for the reader. The purpose of all this is to identify the fundamental mood of a certain period, which the stylistic principles supposedly circumscribe.

Finally, this practical use of images sheds light upon the issue of the connection between the *Geschichte der Kunst* and Hamann's photography practice. The grand project of a world archive is but a virtual frame for Hamann's view, which unfolds around the object itself. Completeness had never been an actual attainable goal, neither in the *Geschichte der Kunst* nor in the image archive; neither with respect to the entirety of all the works ever created nor with respect to the individual object. It was, however, an ideal which could be approximated in practice. Art history, in the archive and in its con-

dral is presented here, as well, as a key example with seven illustrations. There is a view of the façade, a close-up photograph of the western portal structure, a view of the northern exterior of the transept, an interior view towards the north-west, towards the north-east, and finally comparing close-up views of the ornaments (Reims, Dijon) and the exterior artwork (Amiens, Reims). The

image series referring to Reims is arranged systematically. However, it is not designed as a portrayal of an organism which should inspire a visual experience in the reader.

tinuous interpretation, thus turns out to be a never-ending story of labouring with images and their perception.

With his *Geschichte der Kunst*, Hamann presented both a kind of concise anthology of the image archive and a methodologically elaborated example of his approach. The claim in Hamann's introduction that the photographs taken by himself or by his employees have been selected to mirror the modern perception seems comprehensible enough. This view is the "objective" opinion, recognised by Hamann as both an aesthetic and a scholarly ideal (preface, p. 7), which is interested in clear and undistorted form. Natural perspectives and views are used to help experience the structure of a building and recognise the position of a sculpture or a detail enclosed in the series as a close-up photograph. Hamann, in no way, thought only self-produced photographs suitable for his purposes. Apparently, however, he was aware that perceptions are subject to change, and consequently new photographs had to be taken over and over again. This awareness is one of the ideas at the root of the photographic practice customary in Marburg. Any object is invariably photographed from all angles, and, on occasion, new photographs are taken regardless of the existing stock. This vast pool of photographs is needed, in each case, to provide the correct image—i.e. the image matching the individual view—for any argument to be pursued or comparison to be drawn.

(Translation Ruben Bieker)

Pepper Stetler

Art History without Words: The Photographic Books of the Marburg Archive*

In a 1935 article, Richard Hamann, professor in the art history seminar at the University of Marburg, explains how photography resolves one of the main problems in the study of medieval works of art. Many sculptural and architectural details are not immediately accessible to the human eye and therefore unavailable for aesthetic appreciation. He praises photography for “mak[ing] an invisible spiritual world visible, grasp[ing] the ungraspable, bring[ing] what is at a distance closer to us and the past present.”¹ The images that accompany Hamann’s article demonstrate these functions of photography (fig. 1). One photograph shows Marburg students attempting to access the distant corners and crevices of a medieval church with a telescopic lens. Other images of architectural details show what the student-photographers might have seen through their camera, such as the cluster of sculpted heads from the façade of the church of San Gilles in France on the opposite page. “Details are revealed”, the caption states, compelling the viewer to notice the distinct features of each carved face positioned too high to be noticed by visitors to the church. The opposite page displays a vaulting keystone in the church of St. Martin in the Polish city of Kolmar. The text underneath the photograph describes the keystone as “Art that enraptures the human eye”.

The article reveals at least two important aspects of the photographic archive of the Marburg art history seminar in the 1920s and 30s. First, Hamann and his students approached photography as a process of art-historical investigation and discovery. They explored the visual and cognitive experiences the

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¹ “[...] eine unsichtbare Geisterwelt sichtbar machen, das Unfassbare begreifen lassen, das Ferne uns nahe bringen, das Vergangene vergegenwärtigen und das Jenseitige verdiesseitigen”. Richard Hamann, “Wie kommt man an die Dinge heran?”, in: *Die Woche*, 37/37 (1935), pp. 26.

medium facilitated and used photography as a way of generating new visual insights. Second, *Die Woche*, where Hamann's article was published, was a mainstream weekly, a "modern illustrated magazine", according to its subtitle, which suggests the relevance of these photographed details and their visual study to scholars and laymen alike. In fact, a reader of *Die Woche* in 1935 might have already been familiar with photographs from the Marburg photographic archive. Starting in 1922, the Marburg Press published books for a mass audience that consisted almost entirely of images from this archive, founded by Hamann in 1913.² More than collections of documents and illustrations, the Marburg photographic archive and its photographic books offer insight into a particular methodological approach to art history. This approach involves faith in the potential of photographs to convey information in a more efficient and effective way than text. In what follows, I explore the photographic books published by the Marburg Press as a method of art-historical investigation. Through the sequencing and organization of photographs, Hamann sought to train his audience in visual skills that he believed were valuable to all modern viewers, not just specialized art historians.

In the art history seminar at Marburg, training as an art historian and as a photographer went hand in hand. Students took photographs of art and architecture in order to expand the seminar's archive, which was used for study, publication, and pedagogical purposes. But the process of viewing photographs also trained the art-historical eye. A report on the photographic archive, published in the *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* in 1924, explains,

The photographer, scholar, and aesthete must be united in one person in order to photograph an artistic impression that captures the original. Different photographs that were taken of the same object show how important it is to find a point of view that has never been possible in other instances. Proof of how far photography must advance in this direction develops from the Marburg photographs of the sculpture of the Bamberg Cathedral and of the figures of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia. Not only is variety characteristic of these series, but especially with the Greek photographs, they call for a change in assessment of these objects.³

As this report states, photographs were expected to do more than capture works of art as they appeared to a viewer.⁴ Seeing a work of art from a different angle could produce new visual evidence and a new art-historical interpretation.⁵ According to the report, the most intellectually valuable photographic

² The definitive study of the Marburg photographic archive is Angela Matyssek, *Kunstgeschichte als fotografische Praxis: Richard Hamann und Foto Marburg*, Berlin 2009. My understanding of the Marburg archive is indebted to Matyssek's insightful research.

³ "Photograph, Wissenschaftler und Ästhet müssen sich in einer Person vereinigen, um ein Aufnahme zustande zu bringen, die auch den künstlerischen Eindruck, den das Original macht, fest hält. Immer wieder zeigen die verschiedenen Aufnahmen, die von dem gleichen Gegenstand angefertigt werden, wie wesentlich es ist, die eine Ansicht zu finden, die in manchen Fällen nur möglich ist. Einen Beleg dafür, wie weit die Photographie in dieser Richtung ihr Ziel stecken muß, bilden die Marburger Aufnahmen von den Bamberger Domsulpturen und von den Figuren des Zeustempels in Olympia. Nicht nur die Reichhaltigkeit dieser Serien ist das Charakteristische, sondern daß, vor allem bei den griechischen Photos, die Photographie eine veränderte Bewertung des Objekts hervorrief". Boymann, "Bericht der photographischen Ab-

teilung", in: *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft*, 1 (1924), p. 274.

⁴ On the place of the Marburg photographic archive within a longer history of art reproduction, see Heinrich Dilly, "Das Auge der Kamera und der Kunsthistorische Blick", in: *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft*, 20 (1981), pp. 81–89; Ulrich Keller, "Nachahmen, Aufzeichnen, Erleben. Zu Krones Stellung in der Geschichte der Kunstreproduktionen", in: *Fotogeschichte*, 18/68–69 (1998), pp. 189–202.

⁵ Matyssek argues that Marburg's approach to photography develops as a way to compensate for the medium's inadequacies as a form of art historical evidence. See Angela Matyssek, "Fotografieren ist Sehen: Kunsthistorische Forschung und Bildpraxis bei Richard Hamann und Foto Marburg", in: *Fotogeschichte*, 25/97 (2005), pp. 69–79; id., "Entdecker und Erfinder: Über die fotografische Wissensproduktion der Kunstgeschichte und die Probleme der Reproduktion von Kunstwerken", in: *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, 28 (2005), pp. 227–235.



Kunst, die dem Menschaugen entrückt ist
Der Gewölbekapitelstein im Chor von St. Martin in Kolmar bildet den Schutzpatron der Kirche sorgfältig und mit allen Einzelheiten der Mantellegende ab. Nichts charakterisiert die idealen Absichten der mittelalterlichen Kunst besser als diese Plastiken in höchsten Höhen; sie sind zur Ehre Gottes da und nicht zur Bewunderung durch den Menschen

Die Schwierigkeiten, die das Auge durch diese Aufstellung erfährt, die für das religiöse Bewußtsein nicht bestehen, reizten sich für die Kamera, die die Objekte aufnehmen möchte. Ein Beispiel: In Saint-Gilles steht eine Skulptur, ein Sockel mit Löwen und Menschen, so an der Wand, daß das Auge, an die Spalte zwischen Skulptur und Wand geteilt, diese interessante Rückseite mehr abtasten als sehen kann. Aber wie die Wand verschieben, daß man einen Apparat in die zum Aufnehmen nötige Entfernung stellen kann? Der gewöhnliche Photograph verzieht, der Marburger stellt einen Spiegel hinter die Figur und photographiert von vorn, wo er Bewegungsfreiheit hat, das Spiegelbild.

Vor allem aber, mittelalterliche Kunst ist mit der Architektur fest verbunden, ist Wandmalerei oder Architekturplastik und schon deshalb oft an Stellen untergebracht, die dem Auge des Betrachters entzogen und der photographischen Kamera des einfachen Amateurs so gut wie unzugänglich sind oder nur von hohen Gerüsten aus aufgenommen werden können. Sahn die Statuen an den Portalen oder die herrlichen Bogenfelder der romanischen und gotischen Kirchen bedürfen zur Aufnahme mit einem gewöhnlichen Apparat eines hohen Standpunktes, von Kapitellen oder Schlüsselsteinen unter den Gewölben der hohen Kirchen ganz zu schweigen. Würde man diese Statuen oder Reliefs in den Bogenfeldern mit einem normalen Objektiv aus großer Nähe — um die Platte ganz mit dem Objekt zu füllen — und von unten photographieren, so würden sie übermäßig verkrüppelt auf dem Abzug erscheinen, das heißt oben beträchtlich schmaler als unten, und viel kürzer und entsprechend breiter, als sie wirken sollen. Dem Kopf steht man in die Nasenlöcher und unter das Kinn, und statt geradeaus oder zum Betrachter scheint der Dargestellte in die Luft ins Nirgendwo zu



Links
Auserstehende am Engelsfeld des Straßburger Münsters, der durch seine Höhe der Betrachtung Schwierigkeiten bereitet

Rechts
Artisten der Kamera! Man sieht das Handwerkszeug der Marburger, die Riesenscheitern, -slative und die „Kanone“, in der Ableikirche zu Vézelay
Aufnahmen (3). Kunstgesch. Seminar Marburg



bilden. Alles ist genau verzeichnet und divergiert. Ein Gerüst aber zu bauen, würde eine Aufnahme so teuer machen, daß nur ganz große wissenschaftlichen Interessen sie rechtfertigen und nur große vermögende Väterschaften oder der Staat selber sie unternehmen können. Wo diese Mittel fehlen, aber die großen wissenschaftlichen Interessen vorhanden sind, muß auf andere Weise Abhilfe geschaffen werden.

Die großen photographischen Expeditionen des Marburger Instituts und seiner photographischen Abteilung haben nur dadurch durchgeführt werden können, daß mit relativ einfachen Hilfsmitteln die Schwierigkeiten des Standpunktes überwunden wurden, und doch die schnelle Beweglichkeit und Reichheit des Handlens gewahrt blieb. Will man ein hohes oder hochstehendes Denkmal, zum Beispiel einen Turm, ganz und relativ unverzerrt überblicken (das heißt dem

1 Richard Hamann, "Wie kommt man an die Dinge heran?", in: Die Woche (1935), p. 27

collections in the archive offer a variety of viewing angles of an art-historical topic. This suggests that multiple photographs are necessary in order for sufficient information about an object to be obtained. The Marburg archive thereby encouraged its users not to choose one way of seeing, but to compare and synthesize many perspectives and views. A series of photographs denies the existence of an ideal point of view from which art objects can be studied. Instead, the viewer's understanding of the art object changes, builds, and shifts from image to image. Looking at a group of photographs facilitates comparative analysis. Each photograph of sculptural detail thus assumes its position within a larger accumulation of images. Rather than conveying a holistic representation of a work of art, each photograph functions as part of a collection.

By amassing an inventory of different views, the Marburg archive presented works of art as a collection of details to be scrutinized. According to Bernhard von Tieschowitz, Lecturer in Academic Photography at Marburg, "Photography has opened up unexpected possibilities for the researcher. [...] Many times photography acts as a discoverer by releasing parts or whole objects from their connections. The peculiarity and beauty of sculpture, architectural ornament, and sections of paintings are first made known through photography's isolation".⁶ According to Tieschowitz, the study of details enhances formal appreciation and analysis. Through collection and isolation, the Marburg photographic archive reconfigured the work of art as a series of photographs, allowing the art historian to interact with images in interpretive ways. For Hamann and his seminar, photography uncovered defining characteristics or stylistic connections that had gone unnoticed by the naked eye. These revelations occurred by isolating works of art from their original context. Comparisons of works of art in distant places no longer depended on the art historian's memory. Poor lighting and other inconveniences of context no longer hindered visual analysis. A sequence of photographs, showing "views of the most variety", could provide a new way of experiencing a work of art.⁷ A photographic sequence therefore provided a method of analysis that looking with the naked eye could not.

The photographic books published by the Marburg Press facilitate this process of visual comparison and discovery. Many of these books were meant for a scholarly audience and consisted of unbound photographic plates that could be displayed in seminar discussions or public lectures. But the Marburg Press also published photographic books that consisted almost entirely of sequenced images. With these cheaper publications, Hamann sought to make Marburg's photographic archive available to a wider audience than a limited circle of experts. "Not only are scholars familiar with the images from our photographic department", wrote Hamann, "our photographs and publications have become known beyond the narrow circle of experts and in the wider circle of the art-loving public in and outside Germany".⁸ A responsibility to distribute these edifying images to the public accompanied the expansion of the Marburg photographic archive. As the 1924 report states, "an archive of this extent also has sig-

⁶ "Dennoch erschloss die Photographie der Forschung ungeahnte Möglichkeiten [...] Die Photographie ist vielfach Entdecker gerade durch die Herauslösung eines Teiles oder eines Ganzen aus seinem Zusammenhang: einer Bauplastik, einer architektonischen Schmuckform, eines Ausschnittes aus dem Gemälde; erst durch die isolierende Photographie wird ihre Eigenart und Schönheit offenbar und weitesten Kreisen bekannt gemacht". Bernhard von Tieschowitz, "Die Photographie im Dienste der kunstgeschichtlichen Forschung", in: *Festschrift Richard Hamann zum sechzigsten Geburtstage 29. Mai 1939*, Burg 1939, pp. 151–152.

⁷ Boymann 1924 (note 3), p. 273.

⁸ "Nicht nur der Wissenschaftler kennt die Aufnahmen unserer Photographischen Abteilung, über die engeren Fachkreise hinaus drangen unsere Photographien und Publikationen in die weiten Kreise des kunstliebenden Publikums im In- und Ausland". Richard Hamann, Foreword to *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft*, 1 (1924) n.p.

⁹ "Ein Archiv von diesem Ausmaß hat aber auch für die breite Öffentlichkeit seine Bedeutung und auch hier hat die Marburger Arbeitsgemeinschaft eine Aufgabe erkannt und in Angriff genommen. In dem Verlage des kunstgeschichtlichen Seminars ist ein Organ geschaffen, das die wertvollsten Aufnahmen unter den verschiedensten

nificance for a wide public and the Marburg study group has recognized its duty here and taken on the challenge. The publishing house of the art history seminar is an opportunity to collect the most valuable photographs from various points of view and communicate through inexpensive publications".⁹ These volumes are small and portable, and their photographs are printed on glossy paper of a lesser quality than the thick, grainy texture of instructional plates. Despite these differences, the cheaper books display the same details and dramatic points of view that were studied by experts in the Marburg archive. The book *Olympische Kunst (Art of Olympia)*, for example, is a condensed version of the 103 unbound plates of the more scholarly volume, *Die Skulpturen des Zeustempels zu Olympia (The Sculptures of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia)*.¹⁰

Many publishers in the 1920s were interested in providing a form of edifying entertainment through photographic books. The art historian Wilhelm Pinder wrote introductions to several volumes in *Die Blauen Bücher (Blue Books)* series, published by Karl Robert Langewiesche. With titles such as *Deutsche Dome des Mittelalters (German Cathedrals of the Middle Ages)* and *Innenräume deutscher Vergangenheit (Interiors of the German Past)*, the works of art and architecture that appeared in these photographic books were almost entirely German. These volumes introduced by Pinder were integrated into *Die Blauen Bücher's* larger program of culturally enriching topics, including photographic books of flowers, animals, modern dance, and the German landscape.¹¹ Like Pinder's books, Marburg's photographic books had a nationalistic slant. Topics such as *Deutsche Köpfe des Mittelalters (German Heads of the Middle Ages)* and *Deutsches Ornament (German Ornament)* identified a German style that had endured through centuries, while *Olympische Kunst, Tempel Italiens (Temples of Italy)* and *Griechische Tempel (Greek Temples)* aimed to connect their modern German audience to a classical past.¹²

Hamann and the Marburg Press sought to introduce the public to key works of art and architecture from German history. But these photographic books also guide their audience through an art-historical way of seeing. These books include a brief, approximately five-page introduction followed by about 60 images printed on the verso and recto of each page. The title page of each volume in the series includes a brief statement that explains the impetus for its publication:

With this volume we continue a series of books in which our study group in Marburg hopes to make a gift to the German people of a selection of the best from our private artistic circle. With few words, speaking in images through selection and arrangement, these published works should give joy to the inexperienced and also offer something for the knowledge of the experienced.¹³

While nationalism clearly drives the topics selected for publication, the photographic sequences in these books do not clearly present a specific interpretation of works of art. By emphasizing the edifying potential of the photographic sequence and the indefinite "joy" that the images could provide, Hamann

Gesichtspunkten zusammenfaßt und in billigen Publikationen allen mitteilt". Boymann 1924 (note 3), p. 275.

¹⁰ Richard Hamann, *Olympische Kunst*, Marburg 1923; Ernst Buschor / Richard Hamann, *Die Skulpturen des Zeustempels zu Olympia*, Marburg 1924.

¹¹ See Gabriele Klempert, "Die Welt des Schönen": eine hundertjährige Verlagsgeschichte in Deutschland: *Die Blauen Bücher 1902–2002*, Königstein im Taunus 2002; Timm Starl, "Die Bildbände der Reihe 'Die Blauen Bücher'", in: *Fotogeschichte* 1/1 (1981), pp. 73–82.

¹² The German Archaeological Institute in Athens had been excavating at Olympia since the 1870s. Thus Germans would have had a particularly close link to this site.

¹³ "Mit diesem Bande eröffnen wir eine Reihe von Büchern, mit denen die in Marburg sich sammelnde Arbeitsgemeinschaft durch eine Auswahl des Besten geschlossener Kunstkreise dem deutschen Volk ein Geschenk zu machen hofft. Mit wenig Worten, im Bilde durch Auswahl und Anordnung sprechend, sollen diese veröffentlichten Werke dem Unkundigen sich zur Freude eröffnen, dem Kundigen auch für seine Kenntnis etwas bieten". Richard Hamann, *Deutsche Köpfe des Mittelalters: Auswahl nach Aufnahmen des kunstgeschichtlichen Seminars*, Marburg 1922, n.p.



2 “Zeustempel, Westgiebel, Apollo, Oberkörper,”
plate 1, *Olympische Kunst* © Bildarchiv Foto Marburg

a single volume to a wide public”.¹⁴ Hamann goes on to explain that poor quality photographs and bad lighting made it impossible to view the pediment sculpture thoroughly. “Adverse lighting was allowed to destroy the powerful form of the body”, he writes. “Shade covered expression in darkness. [...] The old camera angles were not capable of grasping the unprecedented power of these sculptural forms”.¹⁵ His mention of “power” refers to the striking angles and close proximity of the photographs as much as the sculptures themselves. But in addition to the aesthetic appreciation that Hamann encourages, the photographic sequence also has a constructive purpose. The pediments had once been covered in darkness, shaded from the physically and intellectually illuminating light of the camera. As a result, the reconstruction of the pediments and their art-historical interpretation remained incomplete. But in *Olympische Kunst*, Hamann prompts viewers to undertake the archaeologist’s task of studying the pediments, and the photographic sequence sets up a process of spatial reconfiguration and stylistic comparison. The book presents the pediment’s sculptures as a collection of fragments that the viewer must mentally reconfigure like pieces in a puzzle. The process of turning through the book enacts the challenge of organizing and interpreting archaeological remains. Rather than constructing a coherent stylistic history, the book presents the fragments of that history for evaluation, thereby allowing the reader-viewer to re-enact the work of the art historian in the archive.

seems more interested in providing an opportunity for visual discovery than in limiting the meaning of the photographic sequence to a particular art-historical argument. These photographic books provide the opportunity for each viewer to undertake art-historical work. The books guide the viewer through a process of art-historical analysis, instructing him or her in the skills of the trade. They present a photographic sequence as a way of seeing, a form of visual training that could be as useful for the modern public as for art historians. Rather than constructing a clear art-historical argument about a work of art, the Marburg photographic books provide an exercise in the visual skills of comparison, spatial reconfiguration, and close looking.

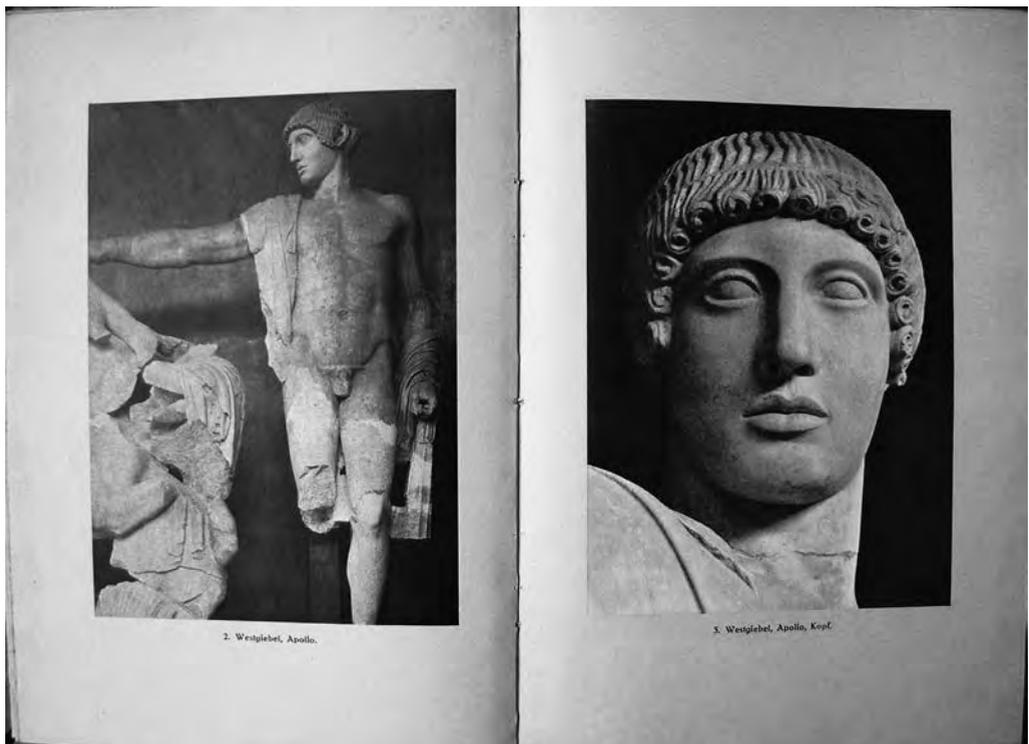
These books guide reader-viewers through an intellectual process similar to that of the scholar working in the photographic archive. *Olympische Kunst* (1923) presents the pediment sculpture of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia as a sequence of details. In his introduction to the book, Hamann informs us, “for some decades, since around the time of the discovery of these sculptures, it was considered a risk to present their photographs in

¹⁴ “Vor einigen Jahrzehnten, nahe dem Zeitpunkt der Entdeckung dieser Skulpturen, wäre es ein Wagnis gewesen, der breiten Öffentlichkeit diese Bildwerke in einem Bande darzubieten”. Hamann 1923 (note 10), p. 3.

¹⁵ “[...] daß Schatten wache Miene verdunkelten [...] Vielleicht ist auch jetzt alte Einstellung noch nicht fähig, die unerhörte Kraft dieser plastischen Formung zu verstehen”. Ibid.

Olympische Kunst's photographic sequence showcases radical angles and hidden details that were once invisible to the naked eye. Plate 18 exposes the torso and top of the head of a struggling lapith. Plate 19 shows a struggling centaur. These details are often left floating, unattached to a precise location or larger sculptural form. Plate 35, for example, shows a piece of ornamented hair, unanchored to any object before or after it in the photographic sequence. Different views of the same sculpture or sculptural fragment are occasionally sequenced together. For example, the first three photographs in the book show the sculpture of Apollo from the west pediment (fig. 2–4). The first is a torso-length view; the second is a longer shot of the sculpture's entire body, while the third is a close-up of Apollo's face. Plates 4 and 5 move around the torso of a woman. We turn the page and see the face of the same woman paired with a similar shot of the head of a young lapith. The close-up camera angles isolate the heads of the two sculptures in a portrait-like format. Their coupling suggests a physiognomic comparison of the sculpted facial features. The next two pages show the body of the young lapith next to a man in a similar reclining pose on the east pediment. This symmetrical layout continues on the next pages, where the head of the young lapith turns toward the profiled face of a man from the east pediment. In the next two photographs we see the same man from different angles as if we are moving around his sculpted form in space. The attention to detail compromises a sense of scale and spatial orientation. The sculptures appear before a blank grey background and feet are enlarged to the same size as torsos.

Toward the end of the book, the focus switches abruptly to other works of classical sculpture. Plates 43 through 52 show the metope of the Temple of Zeus, followed by details of the Hermes of Praxitiles,



3 "Westgiebel, Apollo" and "Westgiebel, Apollo, Kopf", plates 2 and 3, *Olympische Kunst* © Bildarchiv Foto Marburg



26. Törichte Jungfrau. Stein. Magdeburg, Dom, Nordquerschiffportal. Um 1260.

4 “Törichte Jungfrau”, plate 26, *Deutsche Köpfe des Mittelalters* © Bildarchiv Foto Marburg



27. Kluge Jungfrau. Stein. Magdeburg, Dom, Nordquerschiffportal. Um 1260.

5 “Kluge Jungfrau”, plate 27, *Deutsche Köpfe des Mittelalters* © Bildarchiv Foto Marburg

the Athena Nike of Paionios. The book concludes with a close-up of a sculpted head of Hera, isolated, resting on a grey pedestal against a black background. In the introduction, Hamann states that these last images link the sculpture of the Temple of Zeus to “glances forward and backward” in time. In other words, they are meant to facilitate connections, to help the viewer place the sculptural details of the Temple of Zeus within a trajectory of style and progress. However, a narrative of stylistic development in the classical world remains suggested rather than explicitly formed. Viewed in sequence, the last images in the book look forward to the sculpture of the “next generation” with the Hermes and Athena Nike. The book then ends anachronistically by turning back to the “ancient head of Hera” that predates the Temple of Zeus. With its long sequence of details and images of stylistic reference appended to the end, *Olympische Kunst* enacts the challenges of reconfiguring archaeological fragments into a coherent whole and making stylistic associations through time.

In *Deutsche Köpfe des Mittelalters*, published by the Marburg Press in 1922, the close comparison of details acquires a physiognomic purpose. The book presents 60 photographs of heads from medieval woodcarvings, stone sculptures, and architectural ornament. The camera has cropped out any variables that would deter from their comparative study. The photographic close-ups allow for the edifying scrutinisation of undiscovered details, but it also decontextualises the sculpted heads and gives no indication of their relationship to the sculpture or building from which they originated. Although they serve as examples of stylistic development, the heads also encourage physiognomic comparison. Physiognomy traditionally claims to reveal an individual’s true character by “reading” the details of a face. In *Deutsche Köpfe des Mittelalters* each individual sculpture contributes to the overall identity of the group. In the book’s introduction, Hamann explains: “This does not mean that each of these heads

brings a racially German type to expression. Instead it means that these heads, brought forth from German art, reveal properties of German art and therefore German character". According to Hamann, German character cannot be expressed through a single photograph. Instead, an underlying generalized characteristic emerges by comparing and contrasting the heads in the sequenced group. "With these 60 heads", Hamann continues, "an abundance of varied appearances and continually new faces are pressed upon us. And not only the external form, but also the momentary actions and internal content that are unexpected from a time when the typical features of the face and conventional expressions were only permitted to appear as modifications of courtly ideals".¹⁶ Hamann encourages a visual process of comparison and differentiation, and emphasizes that a relatively large quantity of images are required for this form of analysis to take place.

In his introductory text, Hamann discusses the sculptures as expressions of regional and national style, but he also treats them like portraits. He argues that the social status and occupation of individuals corresponds to visually recognizable features. Directing us to the sculpted faces of the bishop Gerhard von Eppstein in plate 34 and Friedrich von Hohenlohe in plate 35, Hamann draws our attention to the piety and devotion to God, self-evident in the "softly dimpled sagging of their flabby skin and the blissfully idle expression of their moist eyes".¹⁷ Hamann then contrasts the "beardless, cultivated heads" of these men with the "hard and brutal" face of Konrad von Thüringen seen on the previous page. The captions under plates 26 and 27 tell us that we are looking at a "foolish maiden" and a "clever maiden" from the north transept portal of the Magdeburg Cathedral (figs. 5–6). The pairing suggests differences between the bewildered frown of the maiden on the left and the grin of the maiden on the right. Besides their expressions, the faces of the two sculptures are the same: the rounded head and soft jaw line, wide eyes and arched eyebrows. The humanization of sculpture through the camera conflates art-historical analysis with the more popular skill of physiognomic study. Paging through the book and comparing its images constitutes a process of recognizing unifying features as well as aberrations. Hamann ends his text by stating, "Each one of these heads speaks so forcefully to the observer as art and as human that without any more words we can encounter them face to face".¹⁸ This concluding statement draws a parallel between art-historical and physiognomic viewing. Despite the prompts and explanations given to us, Hamann suggests that a trenchant analysis of these German heads can occur without textual guidance. According to Hamann, the process of viewing signs of individual character alongside stylistic conformity brings us closer to the spirit of the German Middle Ages. But this mode of physiognomic viewing also had a particularly modern resonance. That is, the recognition of differences and similarities among faces was an essential skill for modern viewers. The book's physiognomic comparisons even seem to anticipate Walter Benjamin's declaration in 1931 that the ability to read facial types would be of vital importance in the modern world.¹⁹ Several years later, the Nazi Party would put this skill to use as part of their radical nationalist ideology, an outcome that complicates any attempt to isolate Hamann, Marburg, and art history more generally from larger cultural forces.

Benjamin made his claim when praising another photographic book, August Sander's *Antlitz der Zeit* (*Faces of the Time*, 1929). Nonetheless, the association of Marburg's photographic books with modern trends in photography seems appropriate.²⁰ Hamann's statement that he wanted his photographic books to "speak with few words" expresses confidence that photography was a more efficient and

¹⁶ Hamann 1922 (note 13).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Walter Benjamin, "Little History of Photography", in: *Selected Writings*, ed. by Michael W. Jennings / Gary

Smith / Howard Eiland, vol. 2, 1927–1934, Cambridge/MA 1999.

²⁰ For a discussion of *Deutsche Köpfe des Mittelalters* in the context of photographic portraiture and its service to physiognomic projects in the Weimar Republic, see

powerful carrier of meaning than written language. Avant-garde artists, photographers, and critics were making similar statements at the time. In 1928, the Bauhaus photographer László Moholy-Nagy predicted that those ignorant of photography, rather than reading and writing, would be the illiterate of the future.²¹ The typographer Johannes Molzahn, called for the replacement of text by photographic images in a 1929 essay entitled “Stop Reading! Look!”²² Rather than providing a substitute for text, Marburg’s photographic books attempt to train its audience in a form of visual literacy based on the unconventional points of view and photographic arrangements found in the Marburg archive. In this way, the Marburg archive and its photographic books generate modern cognitive practices as much as revelations of the past.

Wolfgang Brückle, “Wege zum Volksgesicht: Imagebildung für das Kollektiv im fotografischen Portrait des Nachexpressionismus”, in: Andreas Köstler / Ernst Seidl (eds.), *Bildnis und Image: das Portrait zwischen Intention und Rezeption*, Köln 1998, pp. 285–308.

²¹ László Moholy-Nagy, “Die Photographie in der Reklame”, in: *Photographische Korrespondenz*, 63/9 (1927), p. 259.

²² Johannes Molzahn, “Nicht mehr lesen! Sehen!”, in: *Das Kunstblatt*, 12/3 (1928), pp. 78–82.

Melissa Beck Lemke

A Connoisseur's Canvas: The Photographic Collection of Clarence Kennedy

Personal research collections of accomplished scholars are among the most valued treasures preserved in photographic archives and libraries. They can influence future generations and provide a window into a career or a moment in scholarship. In the case of Clarence Kennedy, an art historian and documentary photographer, his personal archive sheds light on the work of a complex individual. Kennedy's photographs are well-known in Italian *Quattrocento* sculpture circles, but his activity as a scholar has been largely overlooked. A survey of his photograph and research files, preserved in Harvard University's Fine Arts Library, reveals a multi-faceted individual who tackled teaching, photography and art history with meticulous scrutiny.¹ His art-historical personality in particular emerges from these materials—revealing a method based in observation and a large body of unrealized projects and unpublished work.

Clarence Kennedy was born in 1892 and received his Ph.D. in Greek art from Harvard University in 1924. From 1916–1960, he taught art history at Smith College focusing on architecture and Italian Renaissance art. In 1921, he married Ruth Doggett, an economics professor at Smith, who assisted him in many aspects of his early scholarship and photography. She eventually became an art historian herself, concentrating on Italian painting. During his doctoral work, Kennedy became increasingly interested in the photography of sculpture and by the early twenties was not only taking pictures for his own studies, but was also selling mounted photographs to universities for their art history programs. In addition, he worked for the dealer Sir Joseph Duveen, photographing sculptures in prestigious private collections such as those of Joseph Widener, Henry Clay Frick, Henry Goldman and Clarence Mackay. These photos were intended to illustrate folio-sized collection catalogues.

¹ Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard College Library, Cambridge/MA: *Clarence Kennedy. Papers and photographs, 1921–1958*. I would like to thank Amanda Bowen and Joanne Bloom at the Fine Arts Library for

their assistance during my multiple trips to examine this archive. This research was funded by a generous Robert H. Smith Fellowship from the National Gallery of Art.

In the mid-1920s, Kennedy decided to take his documentation of sculpture a step further and began work on his *Studies in the History and Criticism of Sculpture*, seven limited-edition folios including more than three hundred mounted photographs of Greek and Italian Renaissance sculpture.² On the title pages of several of the *Studies*, Kennedy describes them as “photographic details of figure sculpture and architectural decoration taken expressly to facilitate the study of attributions and the critical analysis of style”.³ Two of the early volumes focus on Greek subjects, including a study of the Erechtheion and the Treasury of the Siphnians at Delphi. The remainder concentrate on the Italian *Quattrocento* and Desiderio da Settignano in particular. They include monographic volumes on Desiderio’s *Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini* in Santa Croce and the *Tabernacle of the Sacrament* at San Lorenzo, as well as thematic volumes focusing on portraiture and reliefs. In all of these portfolios, Kennedy allows the sculptures—or rather their photographs—to speak for themselves without explanatory text.

In 1932, Kennedy published volume seven, *The Unfinished Monument by Andrea del Verrocchio to the Cardinal Niccolò Forteguerri*, which unlike the previous six, is bound and includes documents and text written by a colleague.⁴ The following year he planned to publish *The Tomb by Antonio Rossellino for the Cardinal of Portugal* as volume eight, but it was left unfinished due to World War II and Kennedy’s increasing involvement in research on the implementation of stereography in the classroom.

Museums and art libraries throughout North America and Europe own copies of the *Studies*, which have been Kennedy’s legacy to art history.⁵ The combination of his intense study of a sculpture together with carefully chosen points of view, lighting, and background resulted in a new type of documentary photography. Never in the history of art documentation had so much attention been paid to details or the subtleties of an object. His three-quarter view of Verrocchio’s *Bust of a Young Woman* in the Frick Collection (fig. 1) is illustrative of this new approach. Kennedy carefully selected the view and cropped the image to emphasize the best features of the bust. He then bathed it in a diffused light, highlighting the subtleties of the marble and not losing any details in shadow. Lastly, he guided the viewer’s eye through the manipulation of curved boards placed in the background to reflect the light back onto the subject. In his heart-felt obituary for Kennedy, Ulrich Middeldorf says of the *Studies*, “Here were not only unexpected details, taken from new angles, which allowed closer study, but there was a totally new vision of sculpture. Those photographs taught what to look for: structure, design, modelling and textures. They were not ‘more beautiful than the originals’ as has been said, they made their qualities better understood than any verbal analysis could do”.⁶

Kennedy’s own photography makes up a large portion of the Harvard files, which contain photos of the works of approximately one hundred and fifty sculptors ranging from well-known to minor masters. The collection is dominated by Florentine artists active throughout the *Quattrocento* and into the *Cinquecento*. While expansive, it is not encyclopaedic, but instead follows Kennedy’s art-historical and professional interests. Major artists, such as Michelangelo, are completely absent. The greatest attention is paid to the four artists that Kennedy returned to repeatedly in his work: Desiderio, Donatello, Verrocchio, and Antonio Rossellino. In addition, a small portion of the archive focused on Greek and Japanese sculpture, reflecting his early scholarly interests and a photographic commission.

² Clarence Kennedy, *Studies in the History and Criticism of Sculpture*, New York / Northampton 1928–1932. The series includes: *Three Greek Bronzes and The Erechtheion*, vol. 1, part 1 and 2, 1928; *The Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini*, vol. 2, 1928; *Certain Portrait Sculptures of the Quattrocento*, vol. 3, 1928; *The Treasury of the Siphnians at Delphi*, vol. 4, 1929; *The Tabernacle of the Sacrament by Desiderio da Settignano and Assistants*, vol. 5, 1929; *The*

Magdalen and Sculptures in Relief by Desiderio da Settignano and his Associates, vol. 6, 1929; *The Unfinished Monument by Andrea del Verrocchio to the Cardinal Niccolò Forteguerri*, vol. 7, 1932.

³ This description appears on the title pages of the first three volumes.

⁴ Elizabeth Wilder, one of Kennedy’s prized students, wrote the text.



1 *Andrea del Verrocchio, Bust of a Young Woman, The Frick Collection, photographer Clarence Kennedy*

⁵ The Department of Image Collections, National Gallery of Art Library, owns the most complete collection of Kennedy's published work.

⁶ Ulrich Middeldorf, "Clarence Kennedy 1892-1972", in: *Art Journal*, 32/3 (Spring 1973), p. 372.

These files, containing over 6,000 photographic and photomechanical prints, were originally housed in file cabinets in Kennedy's office at Smith College. The material ranges from 1921 to 1959, essentially spanning Kennedy's entire career. He retired from Smith in 1960 and because of the slow onset of what would now most likely be called Alzheimer's disease, did not do any significant work after this point. According to his family, Kennedy did not clear out his office upon his retirement, presumably due to his illness, and eventually the college hired movers and deposited its contents haphazardly at the Kennedy home. His daughter recounted that she and her mother spent months reconstructing the files.⁷ In 1968, Ruth Kennedy sold the files to the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard for inclusion in the Coolidge/Mongan papers. The Kennedys' connection to Harvard was two-fold: Clarence was an alumnus and Agnes Mongan, then director of the Fogg Art Museum, was a prized student of both Clarence and Ruth. The files were later transferred to the Fine Arts Library. The original intention was to interfile the photos into the library's photographic archive and to dispose of Kennedy's papers and ephemera, but thankfully, this never occurred.⁸

As a result of these events, the collection has been rehoused and potentially reorganized twice, once by Ruth and Melinda Kennedy and again by Harvard. Kennedy's original folders have been replaced in most cases by modern acid-free versions, but enough original material was retained to enable one to imagine their previous appearance. The photos were organized according to sculptor and in some cases folders were made for each object. Kennedy, always mindful of appearances, labelled them in his arts and crafts script both with name and with notes on the artist or monument's chronology.

The majority of the photographs in the collection are silver gelatin prints from the traditional sources for Italian art documentation: Fratelli Alinari, Brogi and Anderson. Many are stamped "Smith College, Department of Art, Division of Graduate Study" implying that Kennedy purchased them through Smith for instruction in his classes. Another substantial portion is stamped "Duplicate Fogg Museum, A. Kingsley Porter." Porter taught at Harvard while Kennedy was a student there.⁹ Perhaps the Fogg gave these superfluous images away to students or Porter gave them to Kennedy himself. This group includes many albumen and photomechanical prints from sources similar to the Smith material. The third source for the photographs is Kennedy himself. For the most part, these are not his elegant final prints, but, instead, quick reference proofs which often have a golden cast. The majority come from the *Studies* and his work with Duveen. The files also include a large number of clippings, articles, letters and notes.

The stamp denoting Smith's financial support indicates that this collection was established as an aid to Kennedy's teaching. One former student from the 1950s remembers him bringing the folders with him to class and hanging the photos on the walls to supplement his slides.¹⁰ Kennedy did not keep any formal lecture notes in the folders, but there are many small cards with notes about the objects and chronologies which were most likely his teaching aides.

Kennedy's high esteem for his students is also reflected in the artist files. Intermittently, in the period from 1925–1933, Clarence and Ruth ran a year-long graduate art history program in Florence and Paris.¹¹ Small groups of women studied the art *in situ* with the Kennedys and local experts. Clarence kept many of the papers produced by these advanced students in his photo files, often without designation as student work. For instance, his extensive object files on Antonio and Bernardo Rossellino

⁷ Author's communication with Kennedy's granddaughter, Amy DeSalvatore and his daughter, Melinda Kennedy Talkington's notes, now in the Smith College Archive: "Smith College sent movers after this to cart away his photos. [...] It took MK [Melinda Kennedy] and RK [Ruth Kennedy] a whole summer to get them back into

any semblance of order". In: Kennedy Collection, Series VI. Scrapalbums, Smith College Archives.

⁸ Communication with Joanne Bloom, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University, Cambridge/MA.

⁹ Porter taught at Harvard beginning in 1920. Kennedy also contributed photographs to Arthur Kingsley Porter,

contain typed, unattributed *catalogue raisonné* entries on each object, which came from a master's thesis by Dorothy Boyd Graves¹²—her authorship (as opposed to Kennedy's) was revealed only when the manuscript in its entirety was found later in the papers.

Mixed in among the Alinaris and Brogis are photos that Kennedy took for various projects. As mentioned previously, he travelled through Europe in the early 1920s photographing sculptures to sell to universities. That these individual photographs have not appeared in the author's surveys of repositories of Kennedy's work is not surprising since they were used for teaching and not valued as fine art photography. Occasionally, small rough prints from these campaigns appear in the artist files, such as several views of the *Equestrian Statue of Cangrande della Scala* from Castelvecchio Museum, Verona (fig. 2).

Also pervasive through the archive are rough 7 x 11 inch prints made for Kennedy's *Studies in the History and Criticism of Sculpture* series. These prints are often labelled on the back with notes on his photographic process or assessment of the print's quality. Alternative views of a sculpture not chosen for the final portfolio are common, such as a raking view of the rushing angels around the *sportello* in Desiderio's *Tabernacle of the Sacrament* in San Lorenzo (fig. 3). It is unfortunate that this view was not used for the volume on the tabernacle. Unlike the head-on, comparatively flat shot that was chosen for the portfolio, it illustrates Desiderio's uncommon command of low relief.

Copious notes almost always accompany Kennedy's photographs. He believed passionately that in order to document an object successfully, one must know it on more than an aesthetic level.¹³ Studying a sculpture's art-historical and conservation background before picking up the camera was imperative to his method. He explained that, "a commercial photographer may be given instructions outlining with some care the subjects he is to take, but only a person actually engaged in research in the history of art could recognize, among the infinite combinations of pose and lighting possible [...] those which contain the answer to some disputed question, or show most clearly some significant phase of the artist's style."¹⁴



2 Bonino da Campione, *Equestrian Statue of Cangrande della Scala*, detail, Castelvecchio Museum, Verona, photographer Clarence Kennedy

Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgrimage Roads, 10 vols., Boston 1923.

¹⁰ Author communication with Priscilla Cunningham (graduate of Smith College, 1958), September 2009.

¹¹ This was a full year program. A summer version began in 1949.

¹² Graves participated in the 1927–1928 program abroad.

¹³ Kennedy explained his method in two articles: "Photographing Art", in: *Magazine of Art*, 30 (April 1937), pp. 212–218; Willard Detering Morgan (ed.), "Sculpture Photography", in: *The Complete Photographer*, 9 (1943), pp. 3190–3199.



3 Desiderio da Settignano, *Rushing Angels, Tabernacle of the Sacrament*, detail, San Lorenzo, Florence, photographer Clarence Kennedy

This philosophy is reflected in his notes, which contain painstakingly detailed visual analyses of each work, conservation information, and instructions for photography and mounting. For example, his notes on Desiderio's *Turin Madonna* (fig. 4) contain this typically intricate description: "There is a very delicate indication of the brows [...] [They] continue upward the arch of the nose throughout in a continuous curve and the brow disappears before it would begin to droop again toward the outer corners [...]".¹⁵ Many of his notes, like this one, are on loose sheets of paper and appear to have been made in

¹⁴ Clarence Kennedy, unpublished and undated progress report to Carnegie Corporation, c. 1934, Kennedy Collection, Series I. Clarence Kennedy, Writings, Box 3, Smith College Archives, p. 1.

¹⁵ Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard College Library, Cambridge/MA, in: *Clarence Kennedy. Papers and photographs, 1921–1958*, MS. 3/7, folder 6.



4 *Desiderio da Settignano, Madonna and Child, detail, Pinacoteca, Turin, photographer Clarence Kennedy*

the presence of the object. Some are not in his handwriting, so one can imagine him dictating his observations to Ruth or a student while pouring over the sculpture. Many notes are also found on the backs of his test prints, normally involving details for shooting, mounting, or stylistic analyses. No detail was too small for Kennedy's examination. For instance, in his notes on the Marsuppini tomb, Kennedy describes every aspect, often with the aid of sketches, including the seemingly inconsequential ribbons, flowers, and garland found along the tomb's base.

Kennedy's power of observation was equally prevalent in his work for Joseph Duveen. These prints are generally quite rough, uncropped and are often discoloured. Kennedy had his early negatives developed and printed by another photographer whose imperfect process unfortunately yielded yellowish prints over time.¹⁶ Most of the Duveen images come from the Widener, Mackay and Frick collections. A typical example is the *Neptune on a Sea Monster*, called Bellano by Kennedy, but now ascribed to Severo da Ravenna.¹⁷ Two views of this bronze, formerly in Joseph Widener's collection and now at the National Gallery of Art, are preserved along with five pages of observations. Here Kennedy documents in words what he will capture with the camera. He notes the patina and the flaws and theorizes on what may or may not have been modern additions. Other sheets record his process for photographing the object, noting details on light sources, backgrounds and exposures. He often made sketches, and in some cases even took rubbings of the signatures.¹⁸

While most of these notes are descriptive in nature, Kennedy occasionally divulges information learned directly from the owner. This is particularly prevalent regarding objects owned by Joseph Widener. In several instances, previously unknown conservation details have been revealed in these pages, including descriptions of the treatments performed by Widener himself on Desiderio's *St. Jerome in the Desert*, now in the National Gallery.¹⁹ Such recollections provide us with great insights into Kennedy's relationship with Widener, whose willingness to share such information indicates his high esteem for Kennedy.

Unlike other archives of Kennedy's papers, which include materials regarding his meticulous processes, the notes in these object dossiers are the only reference to his own photography in the artist files.²⁰ Kennedy the photographer is of secondary importance here. His passion as an art historian brought him to photography and was cultivated in these papers.

It is not surprising that Kennedy is primarily known today as a photographer, as opposed to an art historian, because he published little. In 1930, he wrote an influential article documenting Desiderio's early history.²¹ In addition, he wrote a few articles on sculptural subjects, which according to Middeldorf, "were all a long time maturing, but eventually turned out perfect".²² His most significant publication is a monograph on the Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal by Antonio Rossellino, which was meant to accompany the photographs in volume eight of the *Studies*. World War II halted this nearly completed project and it remained unpublished until it was discovered by Frederick Hartt in the late

¹⁶ Kennedy, report to Carnegie Corporation, c. 1934 (see note 14), p. 2.

¹⁷ Severo da Ravenna, *Neptune on a Sea Monster*, Widener Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington/DC, accession no. 1942.9.104.

¹⁸ An example of an object from which Kennedy took rubbings is Widener's *Bust of Voltaire* by Jean-Antoine Houdon, also at the National Gallery, Washington/DC, accession no. 1942.9.127.

¹⁹ Desiderio da Settignano, *St. Jerome in the Desert*, Widener Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington/DC, accession no. 1942.9.113. Melissa Beck Lemke, "The

Mysteries of Desiderio's 'St. Jerome' revealed by Clarence Kennedy", in: *The Burlington Magazine*, 150/1268 (November 2008), pp. 755-757.

²⁰ Materials specifically pertaining to Kennedy's photography, in addition to many prints and his negatives, make up the Edwin Land collection of Clarence Kennedy photographs, also located in Fine Arts Library, Harvard University, Cambridge/MA.

²¹ Clarence Kennedy, "Documenti inediti su Desiderio da Settignano e la sua famiglia", in: *Rivista d'Arte*, 12/2 (1930), pp. 243-291.

²² Middeldorf 1973 (note 6).

1950s.²³ Hartt and Gino Corti augmented Kennedy's pre-existing text for their 1964 monograph on the chapel. Though the photos are among his best known, his art-historical role in this project has been largely overlooked, despite multiple citations throughout the book.

Kennedy's lack of publications is perplexing when one studies these files, which are replete with unfinished manuscripts. In addition to the Rossellino project, he wrote sizable texts on Desiderio, Donatello's family, and the Silver Altar in Pistoia. He also intended to publish a translation of Alberti's writings on perspective and Vasari's *Life of Desiderio*. Partial versions of both of these exist in the files.

The artists that intrigued Kennedy most, such as Desiderio, Donatello, Rossellino and Verrocchio, led large workshops that created monuments with complicated attribution questions. Kennedy once said, "the more one looks—the more one sees"²⁴ and his thick files on these types of issues illustrate his fascination with untangling attribution mysteries by constantly comparing motifs and trends. For example, the archive contains many charts comparing details in an attempt to sort out the numerous hands at work in monuments such as the Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal and the Marsuppini tomb. Similarly, he cut up his photographs and mounted details together to aid a visual comparison of various details. This can be seen in a compilation of photos of putti heads from the Pazzi chapel (fig. 5), where Kennedy compares the roundels and assigns possible attributions including Desiderio, Donatello, Pasquino and simply "Donatellesque".

With the exception of his students' term papers, the research contained in these files appears to be Kennedy's alone. He worked very closely with his wife, Ruth, team teaching classes, providing photos for her publications and even printing her books on his press. Evidence of her projects within these files would not be surprising, but for the most part, she only appears as his assistant. Many notes on objects from his early projects, especially Desiderio, are in her hand, but one gets the sense that she is working at his behest. The only project of hers that is included involves the portrait busts of Francesco



5 Desiderio da Settignano and workshop, Pazzi Chapel frieze, details, Santa Croce, Florence, photographer unknown, with attributions by Clarence Kennedy

²³ See Hartt's account of his learning of Kennedy's work in the preface of: Frederick Hartt / Gino Corti / Clarence Kennedy, *The Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal (1434–1459) at San Miniato in Florence*, Philadelphia 1964.

²⁴ From notes of June 24, 1924, on Luca della Robbia shop, *Madonna and Child with Lilies*, Widener Collection, Na-

tional Gallery of Art, Washington/DC, accession no. 1942.9.141; Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard College Library, Cambridge/MA, in: *Clarence Kennedy. Papers and photographs, 1921–1958*, b.MS.3/36, p. 2.



6 Circle of Desiderio da Settignano, Saint Constance ("La Belle Florentine"), Musée du Louvre, photograph and comments by Clarence Kennedy

Laurana where biographical notes on the sitters, in her hand, appear on the backs of Kennedy's photos that illustrated her booklet.²⁵

Many of the artists included in these files were also painters and architects, but for the most part, only the sculptures concerned Kennedy. The significant exception is Verrocchio, whose paintings hold similar, if not more complicated, attribution questions than his sculptures. Verrocchio's paintings and

²⁵ Ruth Wedgwood Kennedy, *Four portrait busts by Francesco Laurana*, Northampton 1962.

²⁶ Kennedy 1937 (note 13), p. 212.

drawings were of great interest, as were members of his shop such as Lorenzo di Credi and especially Leonardo da Vinci.

Kennedy's devotion to connoisseurship and his astounding gifts of careful observation emerge from the Harvard papers. His hand is everywhere. This was not solely a collection of photographs to consult and share with one's students, but instead it was a workspace where he could form his ideas through comparison and meticulous study. In some instances we can actually see how the photos aided his thought processes. He never viewed the photograph itself as sacrosanct as can be seen by an altered Alinari photo of Agostino di Duccio's tabernacle, formerly in the Convento di Ognissanti, Florence. This altarpiece was later augmented by a Ghibertesque *Madonna and Child* which Kennedy cut out of the print, presumably so he could better understand the artist's original intent.

Kennedy's extensive notes are occasionally found on the prints themselves, as seen on an image of the *Saint Constance*, a bust in the Louvre (fig. 6), now attributed to Desiderio's circle. His comments on this photo, taken years earlier, deal almost exclusively with damage and treatments. In this case, accompanying notes, made by Ruth, indicate that they brought these photographs with them to the Louvre and noted changes in the bust that had occurred since the photos were initially taken.

These research files created by Kennedy augment our understanding of an elusive individual who has historically been viewed rather one-dimensionally. They provide a window into his intense art-historical interests and intentions, many of which were unfulfilled.

The riches of this collection highlight the importance of the preservation of such personal archives. The Fogg Art Museum's original intention to remove the photographs and dispose of the rest is not a unique plan for such acquisitions. Especially in times when photographic archives and libraries are suffering from financial difficulties and pressures to downsize, such collections remind us of the importance of primary materials. These papers not only illuminate the career of one man, but also an uncommon level of connoisseurship and observation so imperative to art history. Clarence Kennedy, an art historian who became what he called a "scholar/photographer",²⁶ steps out of the pages of these files in fuller focus than history has heretofore provided.

Regine Schallert

I tesori nascosti d'Italia: l'archivio dello studio *Foto Arte Minore* di Max Hutzel*

Gli archivi fotografici di riproduzioni di opere d'arte non sono sorti soltanto per iniziativa di studiosi o all'interno delle università, delle soprintendenze e degli istituti di ricerca: anche i fotografi sono da considerare fra i creatori di archivi degni di nota e dotati di una propria e ben precisa impostazione. Il fotografo tedesco Max Hutzel (1911–1988) ci ha lasciato un corpus di oltre 90.000 negativi, con riprese di monumenti e opere d'arte italiana, nonché innumerevoli stampe custodite quasi *in toto* nella fototeca del *Getty Research Institute* e in piccola parte in alcuni dei più importanti archivi fotografici per la storia dell'arte italiana (cfr. appendice).¹ Nonostante le fotografie di Hutzel siano da sempre state un mezzo di ricerca e documentazione indispensabile per la storia dell'arte,² all'archivio nel suo insieme non è stato finora dedicato uno specifico studio.³ Il presente contributo si propone di illustrare l'archivio nelle sue caratteristiche generali e di evidenziare le finalità di Max Hutzel come fotografo-cronista delle bellezze e del degrado del patrimonio artistico e architettonico italiano.

* Ringrazio il *Getty Research Institute* (Los Angeles) per aver sostenuto questa ricerca con una borsa di studio bimestrale. Nelle mie ricerche mi sono stati di grande aiuto Louis Marchesano, Tracey Schuster e Marta Steele. Molto grata sono inoltre a Roberto Sigismondi, che mi ha fornito generosamente tante informazioni su Max Hutzel. Per l'accesso alle fotografie di Hutzel conservate nell'archivio di famiglia presso gli eredi della vedova ringrazio sentitamente Marinella Canale.

¹ Hutzel ha venduto il suo archivio al *Getty Research Institute* negli anni Ottanta, dopo il fallimento delle trattative con *Bildarchiv Foto Marburg*. Presso la fototeca sono inoltre custodite le lettere di accompagnamento alle fotogra-

fie spedite, vere e proprie guide alle campagne fotografiche e alle opere fotografate, di altissima importanza per la valutazione dell'archivio.

² Questo si può dedurre non solo dal fatto che le fotografie compaiono in tantissimi scritti su temi della storia dell'arte medievale e rinascimentale dell'Italia centrale, ma anche dalle risposte a un'inchiesta della fototeca del *Getty Research Institute* sulle fotografie di Hutzel, rivolta a vari studiosi. Così Mario D'Onofrio, ad esempio, valuta l'archivio denominandolo "miniera preziosa e inestimabile d'immagini" nella sua risposta del 13.9.1985, in: *Getty Research Institute*, Photo Study Collection, Max-Hutzel Research Files – 86.P.8 (qui di seguito GMH), Los Angeles.

Lo studio *Foto Arte Minore*

Max Hutzel ha realizzato il catalogo del suo studio *Foto Arte Minore* tra la fine degli anni Cinquanta e il 1988. L'archivio ha oggi un altissimo valore documentario in quanto comprende soprattutto riprese di monumenti e opere d'arte dei centri minori in Italia, considerati all'epoca relativamente meno importanti dalle soprintendenze e dagli studiosi di storia dell'arte, e che spesso sono rimaste gli unici documenti visivi di un certo stato di conservazione o, addirittura, di opere non più esistenti.

La scelta dei centri minori era programmatica e trova un suo riscontro nel nome che Hutzel ha dato alla sua impresa *Foto Arte Minore*, come lui stesso ha spiegato nel 1982: "Vor fast 30 Jahren erkannte ich, dass die bestehenden italienischen staatlichen oder privaten Archive lediglich nur Fotomaterial der grossen Museen, der grösseren Städte, der berühmten Paläste und Kirchen; der berühmten und aller Welt bekannten Malern, Bildhauern und Architekten gesammelt hatten. Niemand hatte daran gedacht, dass abseits der Autobahnen und grossen Landstrassen – in den Tälern und in den Bergen – tausende von kleinen Städten und Dörfern liegen – teils von 'Gott und den Menschen vergessen' – wo im frühen Mittelalter eigentlich die handwerkliche Kunst geboren wurde. Gerade hier in diesen unbekanntesten Dörfern befindet sich die Wiege oder die Quelle der italienischen Kunst überhaupt. Aus ihr heraus entwickelten sich die berühmten Meister, von denen heute die Welt spricht, leider nur von diesen. Mein angesammeltes Material soll den Beweis erbringen auf bescheidene Weise – dass diese unbekanntesten Kunstschatze, verborgen in diesen abgelegenen Städtchen und Dörfern, nicht weniger zu beachten sind und nicht weniger 'gross' sind. Leider, ein Grossteil davon ist schon als verloren zu betrachten und geht täglich noch dem Verfall, der Zerstörung entgegen".⁴

La formazione di Max Hutzel: dalla *Neue Sachlichkeit* ai reportage fotografici di opere d'arte e di architettura

Hutzel non ha avuto una specifica formazione per l'indirizzo di fotografia documentaria di opere d'arte. Tra il 1928 e il 1930 aveva frequentato un corso di tipografia all'accademia di belle arti nella sua città natale, Stoccarda.⁵ La sua formazione era cominciata quindi in un momento vitalissimo per la storia

³ L'unica pubblicazione su Max Hutzel è un breve articolo di Roberto Sigismondi, il principale allievo e successore del fotografo, con cui ha lavorato dal 1977 in poi. Dopo la morte di Hutzel nel 1989 Sigismondi ha fondato il proprio studio *Foto Arte Italiana*. Cfr. Roberto Sigismondi, "Max Hutzel, il mio maestro", in: *Gazzetta di Casal Palocco*, 232 (dicembre 1998). Dell'archivio al *Getty Research Institute* fa menzione Brent Maddox, "Bunched Images Begetting Ideas", in: Helene E. Roberts (ed.), *Art History through the Camera's Lens*, Amsterdam 1995, pp. 349–387, ivi p. 360.

⁴ "Circa trent'anni fa ho rilevato che negli archivi italiani statali e privati esistenti era stato raccolto soltanto materiale fotografico dei più grandi musei e città, dei più famosi palazzi e chiese; [...] pittori, scultori e architetti noti

in tutto il mondo. Nessuno si era reso conto che lontano dalle [...] grandi strade – nelle valli e montagne – si trovano migliaia di piccole città e paesini – quasi dimenticati da 'dio e gli uomini' – dove è nata propriamente l'arte artigianale. Proprio qui, in questi villaggi sconosciuti, si trova la culla oppure la fonte di tutta l'arte italiana. Da essa si sono formati i maestri più famosi, dei quali parla oggi il mondo, purtroppo solo di loro. Il mio materiale accumulato intende modestamente fornire la prova che queste opere d'arte sconosciute, nascoste in paesi remoti, non sono meno considerevoli e meno 'grandi'. Purtroppo una gran parte di esse è già da considerare persa e va ogni giorno incontro a degrado e distruzione". Lettera di Max Hutzel a George Goldner, del 4 maggio 1982, GMH, 86.P.8 (traduzione dell'autrice).

della fotografia che culmina nell'importante mostra *Film und Foto*, organizzata nel 1929 dal *Deutscher Werkbund* proprio nel capoluogo svevo.⁶

I valori estetici acquisiti in quegli anni vennero ulteriormente sviluppati negli anni in cui Hutzel lavorò presso Paul Wolff (1887–1951), esponente della fotografia della nuova obiettività e pioniere della Leica. La data di inizio di questo tirocinio e la sua durata non sono noti,⁷ ma sembra che Hutzel abbia accompagnato Wolff in Italia tra il 1932 e il 1936, dove questi eseguiva le riprese per il libro *Kleine Italienfahrt*,⁸ un tour fotografico sulle orme di Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Erano stati probabilmente i viaggi per questo progetto a rinforzare, o addirittura a risvegliare, nel giovane tedesco l'interesse e l'amore per l'Italia.

Nella prefazione a questo libro Wolff si esprime sulla campagna fotografica, aiutandoci a comprendere meglio le basi della successiva attività di Hutzel. Come spiega Wolff, nella campagna erano previste inizialmente molte riprese di architettura da eseguire a regola d'arte con una macchina fotografica di grande formato. Nel corso del lavoro, tuttavia, il fotografo cambiò opinione ritenendo più idonea al tema – il viaggio di Goethe – e più affascinante per il pubblico nordalpino, l'illustrazione dei monumenti nel loro ambiente urbanistico e nel contesto della vita quotidiana delle città italiane. Per questo tipo di ripresa si rendeva più opportuno l'uso del formato Leica, con cui effettivamente furono eseguite buona parte delle fotografie del libro. Per le fotografie d'architettura più complesse era stato usato invece un formato medio, sufficiente, come spiega Wolff, grazie alla maggiore intensità della luce in Italia.⁹ In seguito, Wolff approfondisce tali considerazioni in una riflessione sul ruolo di luce e ombra, in cui precisa che questo tipo di ripresa va comunque collocato nel campo della fotografia artistica: “Creiamo con il gioco svariato di luce e ombra, che conferisce voluminosità e freschezza alla espressione delle nostre immagini. Possiamo [operare] anche diversamente, ma non lo vogliamo, sì, non possiamo volerlo diversamente. Qualsiasi parere, [secondo cui] si potrebbe [fare] a meno di questo, è riservato al reporter, che deve fotografare, indifferentemente al modo in cui gli si presentano gli oggetti. Il suo lavoro è finalità, è documento. Dovrà prendere le cose come stanno davanti a lui”.¹⁰

Questa citazione si presta perfettamente a circoscrivere il punto di partenza e di arrivo del percorso professionale di Hutzel. Egli ha da subito lavorato con formati piccoli e medi, mai con grandi, per cui non poteva trovare migliore maestro che Paul Wolff, il quale con le sue ricerche ha dato il principale contributo al vasto utilizzo della Leica.¹¹ L'esperienza in Italia con Wolff rendeva particolarmente

⁵ Hutzel lo chiamava retrospettivamente “Akademie oder Schule des Bauhaus”, in: GMH, lettera di accompagnamento alla campagna “Museo Campano di Capua”.

⁶ Cfr. Karl Steinorth (ed.), *Internationale Ausstellung Film und Foto, Ausstellung des Deutschen Werkbunds*, Stoccarda 1929, rist. Stoccarda 1979.

⁷ L'informazione è stata comunicata da Roberto Sigismondi.

⁸ Paul Wolff, *Kleine Italienfahrt*, Berlin 1938. Le date delle riprese di Wolff, riportate nel libro (p. 31), e quelle che si trovano su alcune fotografie di Hutzel combaciano. Nel 1934, per esempio, entrambi i fotografi si trovavano a Venezia. L'archivio Hutzel-Canale a Roma comprende fotografie scattate tra il 1930 e il 1936. Cfr. fig. 1.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 25–26 e 31–32 (per le date delle riprese). Wolff era comunque anche attivo nel campo della tradizionale fotografia architettonica, cfr. Paul Wolff / Wilhelm Pinder, *Drei Kaiserdome. Mainz – Worms – Speyer*, Lipsia [c. 1933].

¹⁰ “Wir gestalten mit dem mannigfaltigen Spiel von Licht

und Schatten, das unseren Bildern die Körperlichkeit und die Frische des Ausdrucks verleiht. Wir können es auch anders, aber wir wollen es nicht, ja wir dürfen es anders gar nicht wollen. Jede Spekulation, es gehe auch so, ist dem Reporter vorbehalten, der photographieren muß, gleich wie sich ihm die Dinge darbieten. Seine Arbeit ist Zweck, ist Dokument. Er wird die Dinge nehmen müssen, wie sie vor ihm stehen”. Wolff 1938 (nota 8), p. 25 (traduzione dell'autrice).

¹¹ Una delle prime macchine usate da Hutzel era una macchina stereoscopica, forse una Verascope, che lavorava con lastre di 2 x 5 cm. Alcuni negativi fatti da Hutzel in Italia con questa macchina si trovano nel suo archivio privato a Roma. Più avanti Hutzel lavorava con una serie di macchine di medio formato come la Mamya RB 67 e la Mamya Professional 330, la Horseman 6 x 9, trasformato con l'obiettivo Schneider super angulon 47 mm, la Pentacon 6 x 6, la Fujica 6 x 9 (comunicazione di Roberto Sigismondi).



1 Max Hutzet, Milano, Fontana alla stazione, settembre 1934

te evidente sia quanto fosse valida una macchina piccola e leggera per servizi fotografici in viaggio, sia quanto fosse utile la sua capacità di scatti veloci per catturare il momento giusto.

Meno tracce ha lasciato invece la lezione sulla fotografia artistica, che Hutzet solo inizialmente seguì. Nelle sue fotografie degli anni Trenta regnavano ancora i canoni estetici del decennio precedente, come dimostrano composizioni con forti prospettive, riprese di dettagli monumentalizzati e una particolare attenzione per le strutture (fig. 1). Ma lungo il suo percorso professionale finirà per ridursi la sua propensione per la fotografia artistica in favore della fotografia documentaria-cronistica.

Agli inizi degli anni Quaranta, probabilmente già nel 1940, Hutzet ebbe dal regime nazista l'incarico da fotoreporter che lo doveva ricondurre in Italia.¹² Da quell'anno in poi risiedette a Roma, e forse già a quel periodo risale la sua conoscenza con Luis Trenker, dal quale potrebbe aver appreso l'uso della cinepresa.¹³ Dopo la fine della guerra Hutzet si avvicinò all'ambiente cinematografico, dove lavorò da fotografo di scena sui set di vari

film fino a metà degli anni Cinquanta.¹⁴ Nel medesimo tempo era attivo pure presso varie case di moda in Italia, Germania e Svizzera.¹⁵ È da collocare a metà degli anni cinquanta anche la sua collaborazione con riviste come *Archeo*.¹⁶ Quest'ultima sembra essere il primo riscontro a livello professionale della attrazione – da sempre presente – che esercitavano su di lui l'arte e l'architettura. Le prime riprese da inserire nel catalogo della *Foto Arte Minore*, che probabilmente all'epoca non aveva ancora questo nome, risalgono al 1956 (L'Aquila, Capua; fig. 2).¹⁷ La formazione di Hutzet è ancora visibile in molte sue riprese, per esempio nelle composizioni equilibrate tra ortogonali e diagonali (fig. 3). Tuttavia, come si vedrà più avanti, Hutzet è diventato a questo punto definitivamente il fotografo che subordina l'estetica al valore documentario della fotografia, fortemente convinto dell'autenticità di questo mezzo, atteggiamento radicato proprio negli anni della sua formazione.

¹² Questo e i successivi dati biografici si basano su racconti fatti da Hutzet a Roberto Sigismondi.

¹³ Intorno al 1950 Hutzet avrebbe realizzato alcuni documentari, di cui non è stato possibile trovare traccia. Era in contatto con Luis Trenker (1892–1990) sicuramente dopo la guerra, come testimonia una fotografia dello stesso Trenker, scattata da Hutzet (archivio Hutzet-Canale, Roma).

¹⁴ Nell'archivio Hutzet-Canale si trovano riprese di Alida Valli, Ingrid Bergmann con Roberto Rossellini, Virna Lisi, Gina Lollobrigida, Sophia Loren e molte altre. Una

foto della giovanissima Loren, ripresa da Hutzet nel 1951, è stata pubblicata nella rivista *Gente* il 12 febbraio 1958; cfr. Aurelio Magistà, *Dolce Vita Gossip*, Milano 2007, p. 100.

¹⁵ Sulle relative fotografie nell'archivio privato si trovano i nomi di case di moda come Fidelio, Barkley, Barelli Ferrero, Maria Mode, Maria Frau, Schubert ed altri.

¹⁶ Secondo Roberto Sigismondi, Hutzet ha lavorato anche per la rivista svizzera *Hobby*.

¹⁷ Hutzet riporta queste date nelle lettere di accompagnamento conservate nel GMH.



2 Max Hutzel, Capua, San Salvatore a Corte, 1956



3 Max Hutzl, Tagliacozzo, Palazzo Ducale, 1983

Le motivazioni storiche dello studio *Foto Arte Minore*



4 Max Hutzel, Capua, scultura, Museo Campano, prima del 1971

ti immediati ed economici – che impediva la percezione del patrimonio culturale come un'eredità da salvaguardare in quanto essenziale per l'identità culturale nazionale.¹⁸ È stato molto probabilmente Guglielmo Matthiae, dal 1958 soprintendente alle Gallerie e ai Monumenti dell'Abruzzo e dal 1966 al 1974 anche alle Gallerie di Roma e del Lazio, a incoraggiare Hutzel ad iniziare un sistematico lavoro nel campo della fotografia di opere d'arte e di architettura,¹⁹ poiché, nella situazione descritta, le strutture della tutela dei beni culturali non bastavano a soddisfare le necessità di un'ampia e aggiornata documentazione delle opere e del loro stato – condizione particolarmente precaria per quei monumenti

¹⁸ Una prima importante reazione a questa situazione fu la fondazione dell'associazione *Italia Nostra* nel 1955. Dieci anni dopo, nel 1965, verrà istituita la *Commissione d'indagine per la tutela e la valorizzazione di cose d'interesse storico, archeologico, artistico e del paesaggio*, che sarà

L'inizio della attività di Max Hutzel, che si svilupperà nello studio *Foto Arte Minore*, va visto nel contesto della specifica situazione storica italiana della salvaguardia dei beni artistici, architettonici ed ambientali nel secondo dopoguerra, caratterizzata da una forte proiezione verso il futuro – con interventi di ricostruzione o semplici rimedi mirati a risulta-



5 Max Hutzel, Ponzano Romano, Sant'Andrea al Fiume, 1974

fondamentale per il futuro dei beni culturali in Italia (cfr. Roberto Della Seta, *La difesa dell'ambiente in Italia*, Milano 2000, pp. 12–14; Maurizio Carta, *L'armatura culturale del territorio*, Milano 2002³, pp. 68–75).

¹⁹ Comunicazione di Roberto Sigismondi.

che, per la loro scarsa notorietà, non erano nemmeno stati compresi, in precedenza, in archivi fotografici come Alinari e Anderson.

Matthiae era specializzato sull'arte medievale, in particolare su mosaici e pittura a Roma e in Abruzzo, e aveva non solo un'amplissima conoscenza dei monumenti ma era anche coinvolto direttamente in molti restauri.²⁰ Grazie a queste qualità ha potuto dare al fotografo indicazioni sull'importanza storico-artistica delle opere e sullo stato di conservazione. Il raggio degli interessi di Matthiae combaciava perfettamente con le preferenze di Hutzel, che era attirato in particolar modo da arte e architettura del medioevo, in cui lui, autodidatta di storia dell'arte, vedeva piuttosto il legame con quello che per lui era la culla dell'arte, l'artigianato, valutazione dovuta molto probabilmente all'influsso del *Bauhaus* sulla sua iniziale formazione (figg. 4–5).²¹ Le indicazioni di Matthiae lo portavano sia alle chiese piccole, meno famose a Roma (per esempio Santa Maria in Cosmedin, San Crisogono), che Hutzel ha documentato sistematicamente tra il 1958 e il 1970, sia ai tesori nascosti nei paesi remoti in Italia centrale (per esempio Bominaco). Come riferisce Hutzel in una lettera di accompagnamento alle fotografie di Palazzo Lante, entravano in questa ottica anche i palazzi privati a Roma, non solo perché erano meno noti di chiese e palazzi pubblici, ma anche perché, data la scarsità di fondi privati, molti di essi erano in forte degrado. Ciò nonostante, nel catalogo della *Foto Arte Minore* non ci sono molte riprese di palazzi privati romani, probabilmente per le difficoltà di ottenere i permessi necessari.

Il fotografo e il suo mercato: Hutzel, le soprintendenze e gli istituti tedeschi di cultura

Non è chiaro per conto di chi Hutzel eseguisse questa documentazione fotografica. Probabilmente per mancanza di fondi delle istituzioni, ma anche perché il fotografo amava la sua indipendenza, non si stabilì un regolare rapporto lavorativo con le soprintendenze, ma soltanto una occasionale collaborazione a fronte di singole commissioni.²²

La situazione cambiò nel 1963, quando Hutzel entrò in contatto con la Fototeca della Bibliotheca Hertziana iniziando una collaborazione che sarebbe durata per oltre vent'anni. Nei primi dieci anni il rapporto fu molto intenso, poiché coincise con una fase di forte espansione della collezione. Gli interessi di Hutzel trovavano corrispondenza negli orientamenti della Fototeca, che accanto ad altri progetti, mirava anche a completare la documentazione delle regioni del centro-sud dell'Italia, in quel momento ancora prevalentemente costituita da fotografie sia dei grandi archivi privati come Alinari, Anderson e Brogi – che avevano comunque da sempre trascurato i piccoli centri meno noti – sia dalle raccolte fotografiche delle soprintendenze. In entrambi i casi si trattava di riprese molto vecchie. Più attuale era solo una piccolissima parte della documentazione, realizzata per le ricerche specifiche degli storici dell'arte presso la Bibliotheca Hertziana oppure addirittura dai ricercatori stessi. La figura del fotografo indipendente – *freelance* – impegnato nella documentazione di arte e architettura non era invece ancora molto diffusa.

²⁰ Su Guglielmo Matthiae cfr. il necrologio in: *L'Urbe*, 41/4 (1978), p. 30.

²¹ Nei suoi commenti sul Museo Campano, Hutzel rileva in alcune sculture custodite nel museo un'affinità stili-

stica con il "Bauhaus" e il cubismo, in: GMH, lettera di accompagnamento "Museo Campano di Capua".

²² Hutzel ha lavorato soprattutto per le soprintendenze dell'Umbria e dell'Abruzzo.

La fase di intensa collaborazione con la Bibliotheca Hertziana continuò fino alla metà degli anni Settanta, per poi attenuarsi. Dal 1974 in poi Hutzel offriva le sue fotografie anche al Kunsthistorisches Institut di Firenze e all'Istituto Archeologico Germanico di Roma (cfr. appendice), collaborazione durata fino agli anni Ottanta.

Reportage fotografici

Il fotografo lavorava quasi sempre da indipendente, anche nella assidua collaborazione con la Bibliotheca Hertziana, generalmente non riceveva precise commissioni ma soltanto indicazioni sui luoghi di interesse e liste di *desiderata*.²³ Hildegard Giess, che guidava in quel periodo la fototeca, cercò però inizialmente di influire sulla struttura dei servizi, richiedendo a Hutzel più sistematicità nella documentazione.²⁴ Il fotografo non volle però corrispondere che in parte a questa richiesta poiché, in fondo, essa non riguardava tanto il metodo quanto le sue preferenze personali. Hutzel, con la sua pur modesta esperienza nei film documentari, realizzava anche nella fotografia documentazioni esaurienti, nei quali cercava di condurre lo spettatore passo a passo intorno e attraverso luoghi e monumenti. Ma quando seguiva i propri interessi tendeva a perdere di vista la completezza della presentazione di un monumento.

Il coinvolgimento personale di Hutzel emerge molto chiaramente dalle lettere di accompagnamento inviate tra il 1982 e il 1988 alla *Photo Study Collection* della *Getty Research Library*. In esse si esprime la sua posizione, fortemente critica, di fronte a una storia dell'arte che era troppo poco indirizzata verso quelle opere, da lui definite arte minore e ritenute particolarmente importanti. Non meno critico era verso le soprintendenze che spesso non sarebbero state abbastanza interessate a salvare tali opere, che così rischiavano di andare perdute (fig. 6).²⁵ Era guidato dall'obiettivo di salvare visivamente le opere nel tempo, ma altrettanto dalla forte speranza di contribuire ad avviare ricerche e restauri.

Definendo le sue documentazioni d'arte 'reportage fotografici', Hutzel conferiva ad esse una qualità di cronaca.²⁶ Le intendeva come viaggi alla scoperta delle opere d'arte raccontati attraverso le fotografie, e quindi non documentava solo l'opera d'arte, ma anche le condizioni e il contesto in cui si trovava. Questa concezione dei servizi fotografici era basata sulla sua convinzione del plusvalore di una fotografia rispetto a un testo, che Hutzel esprime spesso nelle lettere, ricorrendo al *topos* "una buona fotografia dice più di mille parole".²⁷ Il fotografo di fatto preferiva non essere limitato da commissioni che, da principio, avrebbero assegnato alle sue fotografie solo un ruolo meramente aggiuntivo.²⁸ Questa particolarità, che distingue il suo studio fotografico da altri, ha portato a non poche incomprensioni con il pubblico a cui erano destinate le sue fotografie, gli storici d'arte, poiché la concezione di Hutzel, in fondo, corrisponde piuttosto alla fotografia artistica e non alla fotografia documentaria. Tuttavia Hutzel subordinava il valore artistico al contenuto documentario della fotografia, sacrificando talvolta le possibilità di realizzare una buona fotografia, in quanto spazio e luce insufficienti lo im-

²³ In questo senso si esprime anche Otto Lehmann-Brockhaus. Cfr. Otto Lehmann-Brockhaus, *Abruzzo und Molise*, München 1983, pp. 8-9.

²⁴ Comunicazione di Ursel Grohn, collaboratrice della Fototeca in quel periodo.

²⁵ Vedi anche la citazione sopra (nota 4).

²⁶ Comunicazione di Roberto Sigismondi, che trova conferma nello stile itinerante delle lettere inviate da Hutzel con le sue fotografie alla *Photo Study Library*.

²⁷ "Unendlich viel wurde über diese Stadt publiziert, un-

endlich viel geschrieben und gerade aus diesem Grunde fotografierte ich nochmals und nochmals, denn ein gutes Foto sagt immer mehr als tausend Worte" (cfr. GMH, lettera di accompagnamento "Tarquinia - die Stadt", novembre 1985). Questo *topos* sembra essersi diffuso proprio negli anni Venti.

²⁸ Hutzel, infatti, ha raramente ricevuto commissioni per il corredo fotografico relativo a specifiche pubblicazioni (p.e. Mellito Papi, *Il volto di Gesù*, Casamari 1967).



6 Max Hutzel, Anguillara Sabazia, San Francesco, 1968

pedivano.²⁹ Inoltre nei luoghi difficilmente raggiungibili, poteva disporre solo di un equipaggiamento molto leggero – piuttosto modesto nelle possibilità tecniche – che si era creato per poterlo portare sulla moto, con cui si muoveva abitualmente.³⁰ Naturalmente non disponeva di impalcature e poteva portare al massimo una lampada che, durante i lunghi tempi di esposizione, doveva muovere in continuazione per creare un ampio campo di illuminazione. Della sua preferenza per le macchine fotografiche di medio formato si è già parlato. Per rimediare ai limiti di questi formati nelle riprese di architettura, Hutzel aveva trovato una soluzione tutta sua, una sorta di fotografia panoramica che si componeva di due riprese divergenti realizzate dallo stesso punto di vista in modo tale da creare, accostandole, un' unica immagine (fig. 6).

Lavorando nel modo qui descritto, Hutzel ha creato un tesoro inestimabile di immagini. I suoi obiettivi purtroppo non sono stati sempre compresi dagli storici d'arte che, però, avevano e hanno sempre più necessità di avvalersi delle fotografie della sua *Arte Minore*.³¹

²⁹ Dalle sue lettere emerge quanto il fotografo fosse convinto dell'insuperabile obiettività della fotografia; l'obiettivo, a differenza dell'occhio umano, non nasconde niente. Cfr. la lettera di accompagnamento su Sulmona: "Dass wir uns im 20. Jahrhundert befinden, daß vieles verhandelt und verunstaltet wurde, oftmals vandalisch auch, kann leider das Auge der Fotokamera nicht verbergen, denn selbst das menschliche Auge wird vom Objektiv des Fotoapparates weit übertroffen, gerade in der 'Objektivität'". In: GMH, lettera di accompagnamento "Sulmona – Wiegenstadt des handwerklichen Kunstschaffens der Abruzzen".

³⁰ Fino al 1977 Hutzel non aveva assistenti nel suo studio. Sulle difficoltà di muoversi in Abruzzo in quel tempo vedi anche le considerazioni di Lehmann-Brockhaus 1983 (nota 23), pp. 7, 10.

³¹ Osservazione della scrivente in base a colloqui con storici dell'arte che hanno conosciuto personalmente Hutzel. Le fototeche non compravano quasi mai i servizi completi, ma solo singole fotografie – a parte la Bibliotheca Hertziana nei primi anni della collaborazione. La *Photo Study Collection* oggi è quindi l'unica a disporre delle serie fotografiche complete.

Appendice

Le fotografie di Max Hutzel nelle fototeche di storia dell'arte

- Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, *Photo Study Collection*, 86.400 negativi b/n, formati 10 x 13 cm e più piccoli, 67.275 stampe b/n, 24 x 18 cm, catalogo in forma scritta prevalentemente senza illustrazioni consultabile attraverso la banca dati della *Photo Study Collection* sotto la voce *Max Hutzel (art and architecture in Italy)*.
- Marburg, Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, 4.500 negativi b/n.
- Roma, Bibliotheca Hertziana (Istituto Max Planck per la storia dell'arte), alcune centinaia di negativi b/n, formati 6 x 6 cm e 35 mm, circa 10.000 stampe.
- Roma, Istituto Archeologico Germanico, circa 2.000 stampe b/n.
- Washington, National Library, circa 15.000 stampe b/n.
- Firenze, Kunsthistorisches Institut (Max-Planck-Institut), 8.880 stampe b/n.
- Roma, ICCD, Fototeca Nazionale, circa 50.000 stampe b/n (donazione della vedova Elvira Canale Hutzel).
- Fondi sconosciuti: fotografie eseguite da Hutzel per le soprintendenze e – in piccola parte – per la Bibliotheca Hertziana, per le quali non è stato memorizzato il nome del fotografo e che risultano oggi opera di anonimo.

Angela Matyssek

Memory and the Archive: Photography, Conservation and Restoration *

In 1993, the Canadian photographer Jeff Wall spent three months working on “Restoration”, one of his large-scale transparencies in a lightbox. In this picture, Wall placed a number of female conservators into a scene which shows an (imaginary) restoration of the Bourbaki panorama (fig. 1). The left half of the picture, which consists of several digitally assembled photographs, is dominated by the seemingly neglected and dirty-looking viewing platform. The contemplative gaze of one of the conservators, in white gowns, directs the viewer’s eye towards and beyond the right edge of the photograph. The right half of “Restoration” shows two female conservators, on a scaffolding placed closer to the foreground, one of whom is working on the painting, covering the cracks in the damaged coating with pieces of paper; the other is leaning against the balustrade and looking thoughtfully across the room, towards the non-visible half of the panorama. The “interesting tension in the picture for me”, Wall mentioned, was between the curved nature of the panorama and the flatness of the photograph:

“The fact that the panorama can be seen escaping from view is one of the things which most interested me in making the work. The idea that there is something in every picture, no matter how well-structured the picture is, that escapes from being shown.”¹

Thus, “Restoration” is about a withdrawal from the pictures, and according to Wall, it is the stillness and the reserved balance of his composition that creates the elusiveness of the scene. “There might be associations of that massiveness [the task of restoration] with the futility of ever bringing the past into the ‘now’” (Wall).²

* For their comments and help—among others with the English language and photo-restoration expert knowledge—I would like to thank Ruben Bieker, Horst Fenchel and Dietmar Rübel.

¹ “I am not necessarily interested in different subject mat-

ter, but rather in different types of picture.’ Jeff Wall interviewed by Martin Schwander”, in: Martin Schwander / Jürgen Harten (eds.), *Jeff Wall. Restoration*, Basel 1994, pp. 22–30, here p. 25.

² *Ibid.*, p. 24.



1 Jeff Wall, *Restoration*, 1993, transparency in a lightbox, 119 x 489,5 cm

This is true in a similar way for Wall's own pictures. That is, what withdraws from being viewed and resists, to some extent, being brought "into the now" are first of all the light-sensitive colours of the transparency, which are almost impossible to preserve. However, limited durability is ultimately a characteristic feature of every photograph and, in a peculiar fashion, contradicts the classic function of photographs as a medium of documentation and storage. In the light of these observations, the questions I want to raise here are: firstly, how is photographic memory organised for long-term purposes? And secondly—closely related—what type of photographic memory is preserved in a photo archive?

The Archives and Photography as a Trace

The most lasting among the attempts to describe the characteristics of photography is the paradigm of the trace.³ Already William Henry Fox Talbot identified the photographs in his book *The Pencil of Nature* (1844–1846) as "self-representations" of objects through light. He described for example his house, Lacock Abbey, as being the first "that was ever yet known to have drawn its own picture".⁴ In doing so, he was among the first in a tradition of "material continuity" which coined such lucent terms as 'template', 'imprint', 'vera icon', or 'index of reality'. Apart from the breaks, the inanities, the historicisations, and negations of this concept, what remains is the struggle to describe the image-like in relation to the process of its creation.⁵ "The photographic image", Roland Barthes wrote about the fixation of details in photography "is full, crammed: no room, nothing can be added to it".⁶ This richness reveals itself even more in the photo archive and increases exponentially due to the countless number of photographs collected. As a rule, specification of the exact number of photographs kept in a given archive is impossible.

The characteristics of the photographic image—which is considered to be so precise and detailed as evident and "full"—helped the medium to be perceived as a suitable replacement for the actual object. As a consequence, it provided the basis for Oliver Wendell Holmes' famous sharp distinction between photographically generated form and the substance which it renders obsolete. For Holmes, as he wrote in 1859, a photograph was not only "absolutely inexhaustible",⁷ but at the same time the "greatest of

³ See Peter Geimer, *Theorien der Fotografie*, Hamburg 2009, pp. 13–69.

⁴ William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, London 1844 (facsimile-reproduction by Hogyf Editio, Budapest 1998), pl. 15.

⁵ See Geimer 2009 (note 3), pp. 14, 59.

⁶ Roland Barthes, *Camera lucida: reflections on photography*, London 1982, p. 89.

⁷ Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph", in: Alan Trachtenberg (ed.), *Classical Essays on Photography*, New Haven/CT 1980, pp. 71–82, here p. 77.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

human triumphs over earthly conditions, the divorce of form and substance”.⁸ His highly ironic, exaggerated conclusion is one of the most famous passages in nineteenth century photography theory:

“Give us a few negatives of a thing worth seeing, taken from different points of view, and that is all we want of it. Pull it down or burn it up, if you please. [...] Matter in large masses must always be fixed and dear; form is cheap and transportable. We have got the fruit of creation now, and need not trouble ourselves with the core”.⁹

Holmes thus called for the introduction of extensive image libraries “classified and arranged [...] as books are now”, using a “comprehensive system of exchanges” to transfer items from one library to another.¹⁰ Quite in this latter sense, documentation centres were established.

An effort to achieve this goal was made by Albrecht Meydenbauer a few decades later with his plan to create an “archive of monuments”.¹¹ What Meydenbauer had in mind was an “International Monuments Authority”, responsible for the “selection of historical monuments for their survival as pictures”.¹² Meydenbauer, being a photographer and an archivist, was convinced that the photogrammetric technique he had developed would allow the reconstruction of an edifice “after 100 years [...] in its plan and front views and with all its details” even if the architecture itself had “vanished off the face of the earth.” “The undertakings of the Meydenbauer Institute”, as Herta Wolf wrote, “primarily served the purpose of prospective restoration of ruinous monuments or potential reconstructions of those monuments that were subject to deterioration”.¹³

Almost since the very beginnings of the history of photography, there had been a connection between photography as a medium and the preservation and restoration of art as an end in itself. In the nineteenth century, both imaging techniques and preservation purposes experienced parallel and intersecting boosts in development. Capturing monuments in photographs prior to and for later restoration had already been one of the functions of the *Mission héliographique*, the first major photo campaign launched in 1851 by the French authorities. During this project, five of the most prominent French photographers of that time travelled the entire country. Being fast, detailed, and plausible records of a present condition, photographs, with virtually no delay, were seen as desirable aids for monument preservation and restoration as well a medium of visual preservation in themselves.

It was only several years before this, however, that William Henry Fox Talbot, in his *Pencil of Nature*, had dreamed that it would be very charming “if it were possible to cause these natural images to imprint themselves durably, and remain fixed upon the paper”.¹⁴ This instability of photography remained one of the major challenges of the medium throughout the nineteenth century. Icons in the history of photography, such as Daguerre’s *Boulevard du Temple* (1838) in the Münchner Stadtmuseum as well as the images in Talbot’s *Pencil of Nature* in the New York Public Library, were found again by photo historians only as substance, but not as pictures.¹⁵

The function of preservation—as well as the struggle for durability, which will be discussed further on—is also visible in another extensive collection of photographs with ‘global’ claims, the Bildarchiv Foto Marburg founded in 1913 by Richard Hamann. Supplied with photographs by students and staff members, and acquisitions of (parts of) other archives, Foto Marburg, since the 1920s, has been among the largest art history photo archives in Europe. The plans pursued in the mid 1920s to gradually be-

⁹ Ibid., pp. 80–81.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 81.

¹¹ Herta Wolf, “Das Denkmälerarchiv Fotografie”, in: id. (ed.), *Paradigma Fotografie. Fotokritik am Ende des fotografischen Zeitalters*, vol. 1, Frankfurt/M. 2001, pp. 349–375.

¹² Ibid., p. 356.

¹³ Ibid., p. 366.

¹⁴ Talbot 1844 (note 4), n.p. (“Brief Historical Sketch”).

¹⁵ See Peter Geimer, *Bilder aus Versehen. Eine Geschichte fotografischer Erscheinungen*, Hamburg 2010, pp. 57–58.



2 *Soldiers and prisoners of war clearing the chairs from the nave of the Notre-Dame Cathedral in Chartres, 1941*

come a worldwide central archive, just like Meydenbauer's, never took shape. However, the idea of testifying to the fact "*that the thing has been there*"¹⁶—Barthes' terms again—is exactly the meeting point of the two visions. In doing so, according to Barthes, it "adds to it [the photograph] that rather terrible thing which is there in every photograph", that of a "return of the dead".¹⁷ For Barthes, belonging to a certain time is an essential element of photographs: they always show the unchangeable, that which is already past.

Many of the photographs in the archives of Foto Marburg are among the only remaining testimonies of now destroyed pieces of art, or they show states of objects prior to later alterations such as restorations. Other photographs have been used to reconstruct destroyed architectures.¹⁸ One of the pieces lost during the Second World War, now only remaining in photographs, is Gustave Courbet's *Les casseurs de pierres* from 1851, which was part of the Dresden collection of paintings.¹⁹ Richard Hamann,

¹⁶ Barthes 1982 (note 6), p. 76.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁸ According to Brigitte Walbe: "the destruction of pieces of art was massive—especially in our century—in times of peace little less than in times of war. This gave art historical documenting photography an unexpected significance. It turned into the foundation of insight into art and cultural history and an essential part of tradition, whose ability to resist and survive is increasingly owed

to the possibility of technical reproduction". In: Brigitte Walbe, "Das Bildarchiv Foto Marburg im Kunstgeschichtlichen Institut der Philipps-Universität Marburg und die Erfassung von Baudenkmälern in der ehemaligen DDR", in: *Fotogeschichte*, 5 (1994), pp. 47–53, here p. 47 (all transl. into English by Ruben Bieker).

¹⁹ See Brigitte Walbe, "Das Bildarchiv Foto Marburg", in: *Der Fotorestaurator*, 4 (1995), pp. 7–16, here fig. 12.

for instance, took probably the last photographs of Notre-Dame de Reims only a few days before the shelling by German troops began.²⁰ In 1917, he took pictures of the Laon Cathedral, moving between the frontlines, as part of the art protection activities in the First World War. During the Second World War as well, the so-called “art protection office” (*Kunstschutz*)—a military project—provided a major opportunity to (re-)collect threatened and desirable photographic objects for archive use (fig. 2).²¹ The Royal Castle in Warsaw, destroyed by the German Wehrmacht was rebuilt with the help of photographs, a number of which were photographs from the Marburg archives; the same is true for the Orangery in Kassel. “For the selection of objects to be photographed”, Brigitte Walbe, longtime head of the Foto Marburg archives, wrote in 1994: “there are the following criteria: In the first place, pictures are taken of what is in immediate danger”.²² This is still true.²³

Holmes’ and Meydenbauer’s conceptions of replacing the original substance with photographs tacitly relied on the durability of the assumed duplicates, which at that point in time, was not in the least ensured. Such assuredness was typical of the visionary character of their writings. Their archives, for them—as probably for all archivists—were the final destination, the ultimate repository. The archive, however, is not only a place of memory, tradition, and preservation, it is “also a place of oblivion, of making things forgotten, of making things disappear”.²⁴ A number of complementary features and methods determine its work procedures: historical tradition and the gaps therein, storing and sorting, search tools and objects sought, use and non-use, preservation of objects and impossibility to preserve.

Preservation through Transformation

An approach to the question as to what kind of photographic memory is preserved in a photo archive depends strongly on the area within which the archive is active. Art, science, and commerce differ greatly in their treatment of photographs. According to a 2007 self-positioning, Foto Marburg—as “a memory institution responsible for mediating art-historical documentary photography into the present and preserving it for posterity”²⁵—is positioned as a service provider between scholarly, administrative, and commercial areas. Since the beginning, only negatives and the respective copyrights have been purchased, but it has never been an aim in itself to establish a collection of vintage prints.²⁶ This is because the image archive, which is affiliated with the University of Marburg, works with a national mandate as a “German Documentation Centre for Art History” (*Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte*). It is a collection as well as a service institution for researchers and publishers, and it oper-

²⁰ Walbe 1994 (note 18), p. 48.

²¹ See Angela Matyssek, *Kunstgeschichte als fotografische Praxis. Richard Hamann und Foto Marburg*, Berlin 2009, pp. 171–208.

²² Walbe 1994 (note 18), p. 49.

²³ Walbe 1995 (note 19), p. 10, explicitly mentions the “experience of the irreplaceable nature of Foto Marburg photos for the reconstruction and maintenance of cultural tradition”.

²⁴ Bernhard Stiegler, “Archiv”, in: id., *Bilder der Fotografie. Ein Album fotografischer Metaphern*, Frankfurt/ M. 2006, pp. 21–25, here p. 21.

²⁵ Exhibition “Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte – Bildarchiv Foto Marburg” in the Rep-

resentation of the State of Hesse, Berlin, 17 September to 3 October 2007, section panel *Bewahren*.

²⁶ In the archive, prints were kept for two purposes, firstly and generally to make visible the negative’s picture, or secondly, when photographs came to Foto Marburg as positives, they were used as masters for reproductions and thus were transferred to new negatives for the stock. Critical research on these approximately 20,000 historic prints in the collection has begun recently in the Marburg photo archives, under the supervision of its director Hubert Locher and conducted in the research department founded in 2008 as well as in research seminars in the Art History Department of Philipps-Universität Marburg.

ates partly like a commercial photo agency with the need to finance itself at least partially. Another challenge for the institution has always been the large number of photographs it has to manage. The number of negatives to be preserved amounted to 300,000 when Hamann died in 1961. Today, the stock is estimated at 1.7 m images. These numbers are an important factor in the discussion about the forms, logic, and premises of preservation and restoration.

Individual staff members have been dedicated to preservation and restoration since 1975—i.e. after sixty years of collecting, organising, and distributing photographs, the negatives of which were, in parts, already historical objects when they were acquired.²⁷ Only as photographs and photography history



3 Deteriorated nitrate sheet negative, stuck together with its glassine envelope, 2005

were established within the academy and the art market, were the first methods of photographic restoration developed in Germany and first manuals written—in 1977 also by Foto Marburg staff.²⁸ The material examined in them is very heterogeneous. The archives contain a variety of reproducible negatives common since the middle of the nineteenth century: glass plates, acetate, nitrate sheet, and polyester films. While, in theory, glass plates are considered to be subject to almost no change if optimal storage and climate conditions—in practice, unachievable ideals—can be guaranteed, acetate film, on the other hand, disintegrates after approximately 50 years. Nitrate sheets are believed to be slightly more durable, but—once the process is initiated—disintegrate more rapidly. However, none of the not always

concurring estimates provides more than guidelines, and no preservation method can prevent the material's natural processes of ageing and disintegration.²⁹ "Deterioration," Jan Gloc, as the first photographer entrusted with the task of restoration, wrote in a report in 1994, "is the same as in other negative image archives: silver sulphide stains, various colour stains, lifted emulsion layers, broken glass, bacterial contamination, fungus growth, etc. And then there is the difficulty with nitrate sheet film", which liquefies and thus affects other negatives (fig. 3).³⁰

In the process of negative editing, a basic distinction is made between manual, chemical, and digital methods of restoration and editing, which can be used to 'mend' damage, and slow deterioration.³¹ An example of manual restoration is a negative of the Wendelin Altar in Rothenburg from 1920. The gelatine-film layer of the negative was re-attached to the glass, and the fissures were retouched (fig. 4). By use of chemical methods, discoloured glass plates can be bleached. To demonstrate this, only one half of a photograph was treated in a potassium dichromate bleaching solution, and redeveloped (fig. 5). Digital image editing software was used to create approximate reconstructions of discoloured positives of colour transparencies, which were very common when introduced around 1960. In addition, opti-

²⁷ See Jan Gloc, "Negativrestaurierung im Bildarchiv Foto Marburg", in: *Der Foto restaurator*, 4 (1995), pp. 4–6, here p. 4.

²⁸ Jan Gloc / Rita Vogel / Walter Strauch, *Handbuch der Negativrestaurierung*, Marburg 1977 [typescript].

²⁹ See Klaus Pollmeier, "Die Haltbarkeit moderner foto-

grafischer Materialien", in: Ulrich Pohlmann (ed.), *Bewahren, was noch zu retten ist... Möglichkeiten der Archivierung, Konservierung und Restaurierung von Fotografiesammlungen*, München 1993, pp. 20–32, here p. 20.

³⁰ Gloc 1995 (note 27), p. 5.



4 Before and after manual restoration: Separation of the gelatin-film layer from a glass plate of the Wendelin Altar, St. Wolfgang, Rotenburg, 1505, taken in 1920

cal methods are used during the duplication of negatives to remove stains and discolorations with the help of colour filters.

A major supporting argument for the development of these techniques was that they could be used “economically even for larger quantities of negatives that needed restoration”.³² An even more cost-efficient option was to duplicate the negative, which was therefore often preferred to restoring historic negatives. “Old negatives”, Lutz Heusinger, longstanding director of Foto Marburg (between 1975 and 2004), wrote in 1980 in accordance with the convictions of his time,

“should not indiscriminately be treated as art works and therefore, their physical existence should not necessarily be considered worthy of preservation, because the preservation of this physical existence is disproportionally expensive compared to its ideal existence, i. e. the image’s [information]. The reproductive techniques developed up until today, in almost any case, allow the transference of what is the historic-cultural value of a negative, its documentary information, without loss to a repro-negative.”³³

³² The methods were developed in the 1970s in cooperation with, among others, Edith Weyde of the imaging company Agfa and the Rhenish Photographic Archive in Cologne.

³³ Bildarchiv Foto Marburg im Forschungsinstitut für Kunstgeschichte der Philipps-Universität Marburg,

Bericht zur Entwicklung in den Jahren 1977 und 1978, Perspektivplan 1979–1981, Marburg 1978 [typescript], p. 16.

³³ Lutz Heusinger, “Die Erhaltung und Pflege fotografischer Negative”, in: *Der Archivar*, 33 (1980), col. 273–275, here 274. See Gloc 1995 (note 27), p. 6.

For sure, this attitude towards the materiality of photographs and its history has changed fundamentally in the last years. But still, the documented subject matter of the archive is the portrayed object, not the photograph.³⁴

Duplicating the image as a way of capturing the ‘visual information’ in a modern format also forms the beginning of each restoration process. Thus, even if the attempt fails and worsens the state of the negative, a copy of the representation remains. Duplication is therefore both a method of (‘optical’) restoration and at the same time a basic step of every editing process, wherefore it is the widely-preferred solution. The holdings of Foto Marburg, like every photo archive, are the result of such techniques of repetition and homogenisation. For most photographs, there is a negative and a print



5 Chemical restoration for *Demonstration*: Discoloured glass plate of a 14th century bust, museum, Narbonne, taken 1928; bleached and redeveloped

and a print filed in an image folder (fig. 6). This doubling is constantly reproduced and multiplied in countless redundancies of new photographic techniques and formats; in the 1970s, it was microfiche, since the 1990s, it has been digitalisation.³⁵

In some cases, the duplicates differ significantly from the models used. Evidently, the far-reaching possibilities of modification and correction—such as e.g. removing scratches, balancing density and contrast—are used and considered to be “improvement” (“Aufbesserung”). This term is still used today, highlighting the economic character of this context. Principles as formulated in *Rules for Photo Archiving*, to “[u]se old photographs in their unique, complex materiality and not only in their visual information as multilayered historical sources”³⁶ are broadly agreed upon. However, due to unpreservable material or for financial reasons, these have largely remained no more than theoretical ideals. Damaged negatives, broken glass, and harmful materials like nitrate sheet film, which produces toxic gas in its deterioration process and is likely to self-ignite, are disposed of after the duplication.

An archive with such a large amount of images—that are not seen as ‘art’—does not preserve the complex materiality or the (partly visible) object history. Rather, it maintains the availability of the ‘visual information’ contained in an image. Therefore, clean, unstained pictures with clear contrasts and without scratches (in short: new, fresh images) are more valuable than old images. Since 2004, there have been gradually progressing efforts

³⁴ See Christian Bracht, “Bildarchiv Foto Marburg. Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte”, in: *Rundbrief Fotografie*, 14/1 (2007), pp. 15–19, here pp. 15–16.

³⁵ “In Marburg, there is, firstly, the classic technique of one-to-one duplication of negatives, secondly (since 1977),

there has been mass multiplication of negatives on microfiche, thirdly a mass digitalisation of the microfiche, and fourthly new, step-by-step digitalisation of original photographs. This image data is stored on tape drives and simultaneously on magnetic storage devices (hard drives)” (ibid., p. 17).



6 Example for a glass plate and a picture file, views of Château de Chambord, detail of an Exhibition view, 2009

to digitalise the images and save them on tape drives. This procedure, in which colour restorations are carried out, creates “new, digital originals”, as a 2007 exhibition claimed.³⁷

The Original in Photography and the History of Photography

The ‘original’ has a rather precarious status in the history of photography. There is even a certain ambiguity as to what this frequently used term actually refers to. In image archive usage, it usually refers to a negative, the advantage being that the meaning of *origo* (origin) implies that the object in question is unique. The drawback is that a negative is not a ‘completed’ image, but rather a not yet developed basic source of an image. Publications about photograph restoration treat both negatives and positives as originals; but virtually anything can be considered as such, depending on what the subject of the discussion is. Art photography usage, on the other hand, regards almost only prints as originals. Here, the degrees of originality are defined by the proximity to the hand of the artist: signed vintage prints, period, modern, or posthumous prints, and limited editions. Guided by the customs of the print image, this view attempts to make photographs compatible with the art market and art collections.³⁸ Jeff Wall’s “Restoration” exists in only one edition of two copies and one artist print. Wall is among the most high-priced photograph artists of the present.

In art terminology, the equivalent of a duplicate is a doublet. It is customary to create exhibition copies of artistic photographs and destroy them after the exhibition. Furthermore, people in charge of

³⁶ Sebastian Dobrusskin et al., *Faustregeln für die Fotoarchivierung (Rundbrief Fotografie, Sonderheft 1)*, 4th extended and updated edition, Esslingen 2001, p. 6 (Art. 1 in “Basics”).

³⁷ Exhibition “Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte – Bildarchiv Foto Marburg” in the Re-

presentation of the State of Hesse, Berlin, 17 September to 3 October 2007, section panel *Bewahren*.

³⁸ See Walter Koschatzky, *Die Kunst der Photographie*, München 1987, pp. 23–33.

collections are advised, if possible, to acquire two prints in order to reserve one solely for documentation purposes. Projects for the digital storage of image data are also recommended,³⁹ and contracts can be made to oblige artists to replace bleached out prints. If archive images are apparently less frequently restored than duplicated, this seems to be similarly true for artistic photographs. If all of Wall's prints should bleach out, the only possibility would be to replace the old prints with new ones. Gelatin-image layers of photographs or digital prints that have been destroyed by light are impossible to restore just as many other types of damages are irremovable. Not only is Jeff Wall willing to replace the prints—it is also possible to modernise the work's frame, the light fitting, and so on in accordance with the current state of the art. As a result of this method, however, the natural ageing process of "Restoration" would be partly disrupted. Only the artistic concept would remain as a token of a certain time. The idea, the style, and even the dresses of the protagonists would be subject to the normal ageing-process, whereas print and hardware would continue to be modernised. As a consequence, "Restoration" would lose its integrity as a work.⁴⁰

Even conservators, who are most frequently confronted with duplications, remain undecided about questions concerning the status of old and new prints.⁴¹ In the flexible use of the original—both the term and the object—there are, just as in the discussion of the status of duplicates, fewer rules than data conversions.

The status of being a piece of art, and thus a part of art history, eventually facilitates the process of preserving an intelligible history of an object. On the other hand, interpreting and describing the photographs collected in archives such as Foto Marburg not only as documents, but also as "monuments" (Wolfgang Ernst) creates a number of difficulties, especially for older items in the Marburg collection. For example, no distinction was made until the late 1940s between negatives received through the archives' photography activity and negatives received through incorporation of other archives. Newly-received items were not properly documented, but simply embedded in the archives' topographical organisation. There were no lists of Marburg photographers, no evidence of the numerous small or large excursions and the images they produced, no provenances for the holdings of other archives, and sometimes there was not even a continuously-kept log of image acquisition.⁴² In the mid 1970s, Ruth Hoevel—staff member since 1947 and first historian at the archives—created the Archive of Archives to collect historical information on incorporated archives (or parts thereof), legacies, and staff members. More evidence of the object history was lost in the process of exchanging or re-numbering negatives in the archives—for instance, if their envelopes had been made of harmful material. The entire stock was organised into a homogeneous system of uniform envelopes and continuous numeration, blurring historical traces.

However, if large portions of the materiality, data, names of originators, and the production context cannot be reconstructed, source criticism of individual images, for the most part, loses ground. Such photographs become "images with no identity", as Timm Starl put it:

"Such pictures without identity are arbitrary and they do not transcend those who take possession of them and use them for their [own] arguments."⁴³

³⁹ See Angelika Beckmann, "Tagung im Fotozentrum Winterthur. Das Original – ein fotografischer Begriff in Auflösung", in: *Photonews* (May 2005), p. 4.

⁴⁰ Hiltrud Schinzel, "Die Bedeutung des Materials für die Restaurierung", in: *Restaurio*, 2 (2004), pp. 86–91, here pp. 89, 91.

⁴¹ Wolfgang Seidel, "CH-Winterthur. Der Begriff des Ori-

ginals", in: *Rundbrief Fotografie*, 12/3 (2005), pp. 36–38, here p. 36.

⁴² See Ruth Hoevel, *Ein Versuch, die Geschichte der ersten Negative Foto Marburgs aus der Zeit von 1913 bis 1930 zu rekonstruieren*, Marburg 1979–1984 [typescript].

⁴³ Timm Starl, "Editorial", in: *Fotogeschichte*, 99 (2006), p. 3.

Foto Marburg, with its efforts to organise the negatives into a homogeneous system, wholly followed the logic of the service sector. Rolf Sachsse once pointed out that professional photographers have always seen negatives as the most valuable result of their work.

“The ‘natural’ thing in negatives was their constant disposability as a pre-product, even as a score, that initiated with every processing in the laboratory a new interpretation of the actual picture or at least evoked a later look at the ‘good neighbours’ [...] the big ateliers of the 1860s [...] cultivated the negative archive as a base for all kind of practices [...] [It had an] almost magical quality as an inexhaustible pool of motives and means”.⁴⁴

The collection of negatives, being an image pool for duplicates, backup copies, and digitalisations, still offers a range of possibilities of image editing, especially for preservation efforts. The question formulated by a conservator asking his colleagues as to “why preserve photographs” resulted in an urgent appeal to understand what a photograph is in the first place.⁴⁵ But if neither conservators nor image archives know exactly what they mean when they talk about photographs, historians themselves—unable, on the one hand, to define a clear concept of the photograph or, on the other hand, not always able to fall back on the image source and its production context—are at a loss to trace the photograph’s history beyond use and transference.

The preservation history of an image as the history of its transformations is the major theme in “Restoration”, in which Wall combined layers of different images and media.⁴⁶ One element is a panorama painting—an anachronistic image technique. In addition, the object appears to have been neglected for a longer period of time. The painting itself was clipped twice in the course of its history, and time as well as usage for other than the intended purposes have left visible traces on it.⁴⁷ The motif portrayed in it strongly suggests the idea of restoration: the Swiss welcoming defeated, fleeing French soldiers into their country and nursing the wounded. The other element is a theatre or film set captured in separate photographs of individual scenes and assembled in a large-scale transparency. However, Wall shows only about one half of the panorama, and even this depicted part is less visible than the conservators in front of it. He portrays how they carry out their operations—visible in the small, white pieces of paper attached to the painting—and thus partially renew it. Since after fifteen years, the colours will begin to fade, the transparency, at intervals of the same length, will need replacement with a new copy. The thoughtful conservators appear to demonstrate the slow progression of time. Wall conserves a moment of conservation.

⁴⁴ Rolf Sachsse, “Halbzeug Negativ und Ausschluß Vintage. Anmerkungen zum Wert eines archivalischen Problemberichts”, in: *Rundbrief Fotografie*, 15/2 (2008), pp. 10–13, here p. 10.

⁴⁵ Grant B. Romer, “Warum Fotografien erhalten?”, in: *Rundbrief Fotografie*, 12/1 (2005), pp. 10–12, here p. 12.

⁴⁶ See Nicole Gingras, “On The Invisible and Other Pho-

tographic Concerns”, in: Réal Lussier (ed.), *Jeff Wall. Œuvres 1990–1998*, Montreal 1999, pp. 86–91, here p. 90.

⁴⁷ Olaf Simon / Carsten Wintermann, “Restoration”, in: Ulrich Bischoff / Mathias Wagner (eds.), *Jeff Wall. Transit*, Dresden / Munich 2010, p. 49.

Mary Bergstein

Italian Painting in Proust's Imaginary Archive

Marcel Proust looked at photographs of art with the same focus and delectation as he did portraits of actresses, aristocrats, and *cocottes*. Decades before the publication of Kenneth Clark's *One Hundred Details from Pictures in the National Gallery* (1938) or André Malraux's *Le Musée imaginaire* (1947), Proust took photographic details out of context to juxtapose selectively in his mind's eye. And he brought these images into the imaginary realm of his novel, *In Search of Lost Time*.¹ Sometimes Proust or a character looked 'through' the photograph to a primary work of art. But in most cases he described these photos as physical objects with their own proper ontological status and function—and their own truly *photographic* aesthetic and agency. Photographic representations of art occupied an important place in Proust's visual universe, in the novel, and in his writings on art. Figuratively speaking, these images, as interpreted by Proust, constellated a networked archive of visual culture in the reader's imagination. Proust's writing on Italian Renaissance painting in terms of photographic surrogates tells about the historiography and reception of Italian Renaissance art from about 1870 to 1920 in France.² I shall illustrate this phenomenon with several examples.

Giotto

In his role as mentor, the character Charles Swann provides the young narrator of *Swann's Way* with reproductions of old master paintings to be posted in the family study at Combray for the boy's education every time he returns from a trip to Italy. Most salient among these images were photographs

¹ *In Search of Lost Time* (formerly known in English as *Remembrance of Things Past*) consists of seven volumes. The first volume, *Swann's Way*, was published in 1913, and the second, *Within a Budding Grove*, followed in 1919. The other volumes are *The Guermantes Way* (1920–

1921), *Sodom and Gomorrah* (1921), *The Captive* (1923), *The Fugitive* (1925) and *Time Regained* (1928). As Proust died in 1922 the last three volumes were published posthumously. Here the Charles K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin translation revised by Dennis J. En-



1 Carlo Naya, Giotto Invidia, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. Collection Armand. 39:8



2 Carlo Naya, Giotto Caritas, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. Collection Armand. 39:7

of Giotto's grisaille *Virtues and Vices* from the Arena Chapel at Padua. The *Virtues and Vices* in the novel conform to photographs by the Venetian photographer Carlo Naya (1816–1882), which were known to Proust from several books as well as from the Armand collection at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (fig. 1–2).³

As monochromatic versions of grisaille paintings, these photographic *Virtues and Vices* have agency of their own that recurs throughout the novel. The pregnant kitchen maid at Combray was an “abstract personality,” or an allegorical personage to the narrator, like Giotto's personification of *Charity* at Padua, who herself was configured as a “powerfully built housewife.”⁴ When Swann would inquire after the kitchen maid he would refer to her as “Giotto's *Charity*.” These Naya reproductions of Giotto's allegories provided Proust with visual subjects for a meditation on the meaning of physiognomy and the relationship of the general to the particular. As the narrator states:

“There must have been a strong element of reality in those Virtues and Vices of Padua, since they appeared to me to be as alive as the pregnant servant-girl, while she herself seemed scarcely less allegorical than they. And, quite possibly, this lack (or seeming lack) of participation by a person's soul in the virtue of which he or she is the agent has, apart from its aesthetic meaning, a reality which, if not strictly psychological, may at least be called physiognomical.”⁵

right, 7 vols. in 6, New York 1998 has been used: following citations are abbreviated as ISLT, followed by volume number and pages. The abbreviation *Corr.* followed by volume and page numbers refers to Philip Kolb (ed.), *Correspondance de Marcel Proust*, 21 vols., Paris 1971–1993.

² See Alberto Beretta Anguissola, “Proust et les peintres italiens”, in: Jean-Yves Tadié / Florence Callu (eds.), *Marcel Proust: l'écriture et les arts*, exh. cat., Paris 1999, pp. 33–41.

³ *Collection Armand. Bibliothèque Nationale. Inventaire des Dessins, Photographies, et Gravures relatifs a l'histoire générale de l'art, Légués au département des Éстамpes de la Bibliothèque Nationale par M.A. Armand, Rédigé par M. François Courboin, Sous-Bibliothécaire au Département des Éстамpes*, 231 vols., vol. 39, Lille 1895, chapters 7, 8.

⁴ ISLT 1, pp. 110–111.

⁵ ISLT 1, p. 113.

On the other hand, crossing the gender barrier, the “grayish and meanly regular features” of Giotto’s *Justice* resembled “the faces of certain pious, desiccated ladies of Combray, whom I used to see at mass and many of whom had long been enrolled in the reserve forces of Injustice.”⁶ And much as Monsieur Swann spoke of the greatness of Giotto, the narrator admits that only much later, after years of staring at photographic reproductions, was he able to appreciate the correspondence between content and form that created the intensely symbolic nature of these figures:

“[A]nd the fact that this was represented not as a symbol (for the thought symbolized was nowhere expressed) but as a reality, actually felt or materially handled, added something more precise and more literal to the meaning of the work, something more concrete and more striking to the lesson it imparted.”⁷

A particularly touching detail about reproductive photography appears in one of Proust’s early drafts, or “sketches”. This sketch (Esquisse XVIII) corresponds to the narrator’s excursion to Padua from Venice in *The Fugitive*.⁸ In the early draft, the narrator travels to Padua and it is there that he finally sees Mme de Putbus’s maid after lusting so long for this voluptuous, “wildly Giorgionesque” blonde in his imagination.⁹ In the garden of the Arena Chapel, where he has arranged to meet the woman, he sees her coming, notices burn scars on her face, and says,

“I saw her complexion scarified just as Charity’s face is cracked in the reproduction, so that I had always wondered whether the crack was a blemish in the photograph or in the original, until Swann told me it was a crack in the fresco wall.”¹⁰

Here time is conflated in the photograph of Giotto’s *Charity* across the distance of several volumes, the narrator revealing that as a youngster he believed that the crack was from a broken glass plate negative until Swann explained that it was actually a fissure in the Arena Chapel wall. In Proust’s sketch, then, the photograph of Giotto’s *Charity* is recollected in the physical realm of the garden outside the Arena Chapel, now in the person, not of the family’s innocent kitchen maid, but of Mme de Putbus’s voluptuous and corrupted servant, who is thereby rendered impure and unattractive



3 Photographic illustration from André Moulouguet, *Les Grands Syndromes Oto-Rhino-Laryngologiques* (Paris: Gaston Doin et cie, ed. 1926)

⁶ ISLT 1, p. 112.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ ISLT 5, pp. 878–879.

⁹ It was the narrator’s dashing friend Saint-Loup who first recommended this woman as “wildly Giorgionesque”, ISLT 4, pp. 127–129.

¹⁰ Jérôme Picon, “Un degré d’art de plus”, in: Tadié / Callu 1999 (note 2), pp. 81–87; see p. 83, Esquisse XVIII, 725; Gabrielle Townsend, *Proust’s Imaginary Museum: Reproductions and Reproduction. À la recherche du temps perdu*, Oxford 2008, p. 50. The translation used here is from Townsend.

to the narrator. This scene illustrates the “lack of participation by a person’s soul” in the virtue of which he or she is the embodiment, as introduced five volumes earlier in *Swann’s Way*.

At long last in the published version of *The Fugitive*, the narrator and his mother visit the Arena Chapel at Padua and experience all of Giotto’s frescoes, not only the grisaille figures he had studied from black and white reproductions, but the colourful scenes from the lives of Christ and the Virgin Mary that fill the main walls of the chapel.¹¹ Since these images, too, had been studied from photographs, Giotto’s vivid colour must have been astounding. Meanwhile, as with the kitchen maid, Mme Putbus’s maid, and Giotto’s *Charity*, life imitated art in the narrator’s further realizations. Monsieur de Plancy, for example, wearing his monocle like a synecdoche for an imaginary aquarium, “with his huge carp’s head and goggling eyes”, looked like Giotto’s *Injustice*; and Albertine playing “diabolo” on the beach, tossing up the weird object at the end of a string and catching it again, looked as symbolic and arcane as Giotto’s strangely tethered *Infidelity*.¹²

The photograph of Giotto’s *Envy* reminds the narrator of a medical photograph. He compares it with “a plate in some medical book, illustrating the compression of the glottis or the uvula by a tumour of the tongue or by the introduction of the operator’s instrument.”¹³ Early in his career, Dr Adrien Proust worked in otolaryngology, and the young Marcel would have known medical illustrations from books in his father’s library.¹⁴ The compression of the glottis had some expressive illustrations in French textbooks by authors such as Alfred Fournier and André Moulonguet that resonate with the choking feeling of Giotto’s *Envy*. A photograph of a young boy undergoing an examination of the pharynx, which joins the nasal cavity and the oral cavity to the larynx (respiratory system) and the oesophagus (digestive system), was published in Moulonguet’s *Grands Syndromes Oto-Rhino-Laryngologiques* (fig. 3). This image calls to mind the fact that Proust himself, as a life-long asthmatic, would have been particularly sensitive to feelings of suffocation provoked by intrusive medical exams, like the one illustrated.

Proust alluded to the Arena Chapel frescos in his personal life as well: in an affectionate letter of August 1907 to Georges de Lauris, he imagines “a thousand little Georges de Lauris” like the angels who surround Christ and the Virgin in Giotto’s paintings such as the *Crucifixion* scene at Padua.¹⁵

Botticelli

Connoisseurs at the end of the nineteenth century rediscovered the Quattrocento ‘primitives’ and were particularly attracted to the mannered, linear elegance of Sandro Botticelli’s figures.¹⁶ Proust seemed to envision the displayed photograph of Botticelli’s *Primavera* as an emblem of the over-striving bourgeoisie and an object overburdened with the status of beauty. In defence of some “low-art” images he had enjoyed as a child, Proust stated that:

“I leave it to people of taste to decorate their homes with the reproductions of masterpieces which they admire, and to relieve their memories of the trouble of preserving a precious image for them by entrusting it to a carved wooden frame.”¹⁷

¹¹ ISLT 5, pp. 878–879.

¹² ISLT 1, p. 465; ISLT 2, p. 637.

¹³ ISLT 1, p. 112.

¹⁴ Picon 1999 (note 10), p. 87, note 25.

¹⁵ *Corr.* 7, pp. 263–266.

¹⁶ Maurice Chernowitz, *Proust and Painting*, New York 1945, p. 12; Henri Focillon, *La peinture aux XIX et XX siècles*, Paris 1928, p. 262.



4 Anderson, Zipporah from Botticelli's *Story of Moses*, Sistine Chapel, Rome. Fototeca Berenson, Villa I Tatti, Settignano

Clearly, a photographic reproduction of Botticelli's *Primavera* was a badge of good taste for those who aspired to a certain state of cultivation. The characters Bouvard and Pécuchet in Flaubert's eponymous novel, were the most insipid of all bourgeois, and thrived on nothing but mediocrity and platitudes. And in his own essay on *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, the "Social Ambitions and Musical Tastes of Bouvard and Pécuchet" of 1896 (published in *Pleasures and Days*), Proust placed a photograph of Botticelli's *Primavera* on the music stand of Bouvard's piano: "the prelude to Parsifal lay permanently open on the music stand of his piano, between the photographs of César Franck's penholder and the *Primavera* of Botticelli."¹⁸ Photographs of Botticelli's paintings must have been ubiquitous in upper-middle-class French homes.

Proust's own personal view of tastefully decorated households with framed reproductions of Botticelli's paintings may have been subject to a mordant critique. But in the *Search*, the protagonist Swann—an aesthete with tastes typical of Proust's milieu—is only able to transform his feelings for Odette from obsessive sexual desire into love when he can associate her with women in Botticelli's paintings: Zipporah from the *Life of Moses* cycle in the Sistine Chapel; Venus from the *Birth of Venus*; figures from the *Primavera*; or various Botticelli's Virgins including the *Madonna of the Pomegranate* and the *Madonna of the Magnificat*.

The difference between desire and aesthetics was an important distinction in Proust's worldview. Swann, as the ultimate Proustian persona, typically perceives beauty from art rather than directly from life. Swann uses reproductions of Botticelli's paintings as a key to turn his obsession with Odette into a love affair of a higher order, to bridge the gap between sexual desire and romantic love.

A splitting of feelings like those exhibited by Swann (beauty versus desire) may have been common in hyper-cultivated men of the period. The connoisseur Bernard Berenson, for instance, declared that he encountered beautiful paintings in the same spirit that he approached a woman with whom he was in love.

"Once I was in love, the thing furthest from my mind was to go to bed with the woman; unfortunately she herself or circumstances finally demanded the consummation of that act. Herein lies the superiority of art, which inspires the same sense as love at the beginning but does not lead one on to any act parallel to that of 'going to bed.' It remains holy forever."¹⁹

When Swann nurtured his art-historical rationalization for his obsession with Odette, he used a photographic reproduction of the Vatican Zipporah as the medium of exchange. Therefore, the transformation from sexual desire to aesthetic beauty is accomplished in Swann's life by a detail of Zipporah from Botticelli's *Life of Moses* in the Sistine Chapel in Rome. This detail conforms to the Anderson series of photographs of Botticelli's frescos in the Sistine Chapel, photographs that were also collected, incidentally, by Bernard Berenson for his personal photo-archive.²⁰ Although the passage in Botticelli's fresco is described as the "daughters of Jethro" (plural) it speaks to the viewer, especially when excerpted from pictorial context in a photograph, as if it were a single woman moving or dancing in space, seen front and back, rather than Zipporah and her sister. This impression is reinforced by the conceptual structure of Botticelli's painting. Like the other frescos in the *Moses* cycle at the Sistine, it is composed according to a system of "continuous narrative," where various episodes happen in a single uni-

¹⁷ Marcel Proust, *Against Sainte-Beuve and Other Essays*, London / New York 1988, p. 201.

¹⁸ Marcel Proust, *Pleasures and Days*, London 2004, p. 65.

¹⁹ Umberto Morra, *Conversations with Berenson*, Boston 1965, p. 100, 16 February 1932.

²⁰ Cynthia J. Gamble, "Zipporah: A Ruskinian Enigma Ap-

propriated by Marcel Proust", in: *Word and Image*, 15 (October–December 1999), pp. 381–394, 389, sees the photograph on Swann's desk as a reproduction of Ruskin's painted copy of Zipporah that was reproduced in black and white in *The Complete Works of John Ruskin* of 1906.

fied picture space, and single protagonists are repeated in various poses.²¹ Envisioned as a graceful dancing girl, seen front and back as she moves in three-dimensional space, there is much of Zipporah to know anatomically, since the back of her neck and her face are shown simultaneously. Proust knew from the Laurens *Villes d'art célèbres* series that Émile Bertaux described her as “a nymph in the desert,” whose smile was at once shy and ravishing, her body “accompanying the rhythms of a slow music.”²² The photographic reproduction of a detail of a fresco painting assumes the efficacy and numinous quality of a photographic portrait of his mistress.²³ The passage from *Swann in Love* is significant enough to be quoted at length:

“He placed on his study table, as if it were a photograph of Odette, a reproduction of Jethro’s daughter. He would gaze in admiration at the large eyes, the delicate features in which the imperfection of the skin might be surmised, the marvelous locks of hair that fell along the tired cheeks; and adapting to the idea of a living woman what he had until then felt to be beautiful on aesthetic grounds, he converted it into a series of physical merits which he was grateful to find assembled in the person of one whom he might ultimately possess. The vague feeling of sympathy which attracts one to a work of art, now that he knew the original in flesh and blood of Jethro’s daughter, became a desire which more than compensated, thenceforward, for the desire which Odette’s physical charms had at first failed to inspire in him. When he had sat for a long time gazing at the Botticelli, he would think of his own living Botticelli, who seemed even lovelier still, and as he drew towards him the photograph of Zipporah he would imagine that he was holding Odette against his heart.”²⁴

Botticelli’s *Zipporah* was an alter-ego for the temperamental courtesan Odette de Crécy. Already on his second visit to her home, Swann was struck by Odette’s “slightly balletic pose” and her “resemblance to the figure of Zipporah, Jethro’s daughter, which is to be seen in one of the Sistine frescoes.”²⁵ When Odette sulked,

“[Swann] would see once again a face worthy to figure in Botticelli’s *Life of Moses*; he would place it there, giving to Odette’s neck the necessary inclination; and when he had finished [pondering] her portrait in tempera [sic] in the fifteenth century, on the wall of the Sistine, the idea that she was none the less in the room with him still, by the piano, at that very moment, ready to be kissed and enjoyed, the idea of her material existence, would sweep over him with so violent an intoxication that, with eyes starting from his head and jaws tensed as though to devour her, he would fling himself upon this Botticelli maiden and kiss and bite her cheeks.”²⁶

The close-view photograph of Zipporah appears in the mind of the author, the narrator, the character (Swann), and the reader—as a highly concentrated portable image invested with great meaning.

²¹ See Lew Andrews, *Story and Space in Renaissance Art: The Rebirth of Continuous Narrative*, New York 1995, pp. 100–103.

²² Émile Bertaux, *Rome II. De l'ère des catacombes à l'avènement de Jules II (Les Villes d'art célèbres)*, Paris 1905, p. 143.

²³ Julia Kristeva, *Time and Sense: Proust and the Experience*

of Literature, New York 1996, pp. 212–218, speaks of this phenomenon as a transposition from metaphor to metamorphosis.

²⁴ ISLT 1, p. 318.

²⁵ ISLT 1, p. 314.

²⁶ ISLT 1, pp. 337–338.

Gentile Bellini

Proust used a variety of visual resources to envision ethnic, primarily Orientalist, physiognomy. His ethnographic inquiry included the identification of Semitic features in people of Jewish descent, such as his mother (née Jeanne Weil) or himself, as well as characters in his novel. These atavistic traits could

be visible or latent in individuals to any degree: for instance, Swann looked more Jewish as he aged and fell ill. In *Swann's Way* Proust turned to a photographic reproduction of Gentile Bellini's portrait of Sultan Mahmet II (published in Pierre Gusman's Laurens book on Venice of 1902) in order to configure the antiquity and distinctiveness of the Semitic features of the narrator's young friend, Albert Bloch (fig. 5).²⁷ He puts the words in the mouth of Charles Swann, a Jewish connoisseur of art, and purveyor of photographic reproductions:

"Oh, yes, that boy I saw here once, who looks so like the Bellini portrait of Mahomet II. It's an astonishing likeness; he has the same arched eyebrows and hooked nose and prominent cheekbones. When he has a little beard he'll be Mahomet himself."²⁸



Gentile Bellini. Portrait de Mahomet II (galerie Layard).
Clôture Alinari.

5 Gentile Bellini, Sultan Mahmet II, from Pierre Gusman, *Venise. "Les Villes d'art célèbres"* (Paris: Laurens, 1902) after an Alinari negative

Here Swann functions as a stand-in for the author, who studied photographs of paintings as well as photographs of living people to establish the revealing physiognomies of his characters. The advantage of using frequently reproduced paintings to design a certain character was that readers should already have the image in their mental archives ready to be applied to the fictive personality in question. Swann envisions Albert Bloch (himself a stand-in for the young Marcel Proust) as a Venetian portrait of a Middle-Eastern sultan, in a passionate conflation of Quattrocentism, Orientalism, and Jewishness. In the wake of *l'affaire Dreyfus* the idea

was current that Jews such as the fictional Albert Bloch and his family were never really French, and would always involuntarily disclose their otherness if observed carefully enough.

Leonardo da Vinci

Proust collected photographs of art for pleasure as well as research, and we know of three such reproductions that hung in his bedroom: Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*, the *Golden Virgin* from Amiens, and Whistler's *Portrait of Carlyle: Arrangement in Gray and Black*. Proust made his first visit to Amiens Cathedral in September 1901 having already published an article entitled "Ruskin à Notre-Dame d'Amiens" in the *Mercure de France* in April of 1900. Therefore, his descriptions of the *Vierge dorée* in that essay, in which she is given the identity of a smiling and celestial "hostess" ("son sourire de maîtresse

²⁷ Pierre Gusman, *Venise (Les Villes d'art célèbres)*, Paris 1902, p. 99. ²⁸ ISLT 1, p. 134.

de maison céleste”), seem to have been informed entirely by Ruskin's writing and by published photographic reproductions. In this same article of 1900, Proust wrote that

“In my bedroom, a photograph of the *Gioconda* [Mona Lisa] retains merely the beauty of a masterpiece. Nearby, there is a photograph of the *Viège Dorée* [of Amiens] that takes on the melancholy of a memory.”²⁹

In his introduction to the *Bible d'Amiens*, Proust indicated that the two photographs created a dialogue, and that the *Amiens Virgin* was a smiling sculptured sister to the *Mona Lisa*. Here then, we may imagine that the photograph of the *Mona Lisa*, like the one by Adolphe Braun sold at the Louvre (fig. 6), ‘speaks to’ the *Virgin of Amiens*, cropped as a portrait. Whereas the *Virgin of Amiens*, with her smile of a maternal soubrette (Ruskin's idea), is one of the oldest and most local women in France, the worldly, enigmatic *Gioconda*, says Proust, is a “naturalized” French woman.³⁰ They find a common denominator in Proust's room by way of their photographic chiaroscuro. Braun's photograph of the *Mona Lisa* dissolves Leonardo's masterpiece of chiaroscuro into a monochromatic version, which then reflexively refers to the language of photography itself. This was technically possible thanks to the carbon print technique developed by Adolphe Braun in the 1860s, which produced the soft, velvety surface of the *Mona Lisa* photo print, and to the isochromatic procedure developed in the 1880s, which allowed for the first time a plausible transposition of colours in grey scale.³¹

Chiaroscuro always leads to meaning, and Proust sought to partake of a Leonardesque *sfumato* in perception and representation. Francois Mauriac (1885–1970) elaborated on Proust's Leonardesque techniques in a review of 1921, where he explained that Proust dragged even the most unmentionable emotions out from the shadows into the light, but not in a harsh or drastic manner. Everything was infused by a “warm and melancholy sympathy.” This melancholic infusion created an ambience, like Leonardo's chiaroscuro, a warm, gentle atmosphere. And in an article of January 1922 in *Le Mercure de France*, René Rousseau spoke of the chiaroscuro quality of Proust's writing: the read-



6 Adolphe Braun, *Mona Lisa*, c. 1900, Private Collection, France

²⁹ Quoted from Valérie Sueur, in: Jean-Yves Tadié / Florence Callu (eds.), *Marcel Proust: l'écriture et les arts*, exh. cat., Paris 1999, p. 164, cat. no. 86.

³⁰ Marcel Proust, *La Bible d'Amiens*, Paris 1947, p. 27.

³¹ While early photographs like the *Nayas* from Padua were not able to reproduce colors in grey tones in a credible

way. See Dorothea Peters, “Fotografie als ‘Technisches Hilfsmittel’ der Kunstwissenschaft. Wilhelm Bode und die Photographische Kunstanstalt Adolphe Braun”, in: *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 44 (2002), pp. 167–206, here pp. 172–174.

er had to develop a “special supplementary sense,” in order to see in the darkness of such dense atmosphere.³²

Light penetrating shadow and a lingering atmospheric *sfumatura* characterize Proust’s evocations of social life in *fin-de-siècle* Paris. What was hidden by shadow, illusion, or darkness is brought to light over the course of time. In this respect, Proust’s writing strategy in the twentieth century follows Leonardo’s painting method in the Renaissance. Such an agile transposition of ideas was facilitated by the photography of art.

³² These essays are quoted from Leighton Hodson (ed.), *Marcel Proust: The Critical Heritage*, London / New York 1989, pp. 152–153, 164.

Kelley Wilder

Locating the Photographic Archive of Science

Contrary to claims made by enthusiastic technophiles, photography and its digital offspring do not simplify archives—they complicate them. Not only do photographs often shift the location of archives away from material objects, they also exist in many places at once, and this can be a root cause of diverging opinions about what exactly to collect and about where the primary sources reside. This paper is not an attempt to endorse one or the other of these opinions, but to address what we as researchers might do to consider these diverging opinions as a field of research in and of itself that can tell us something about our archives, and even more about the photographic material lurking in them.

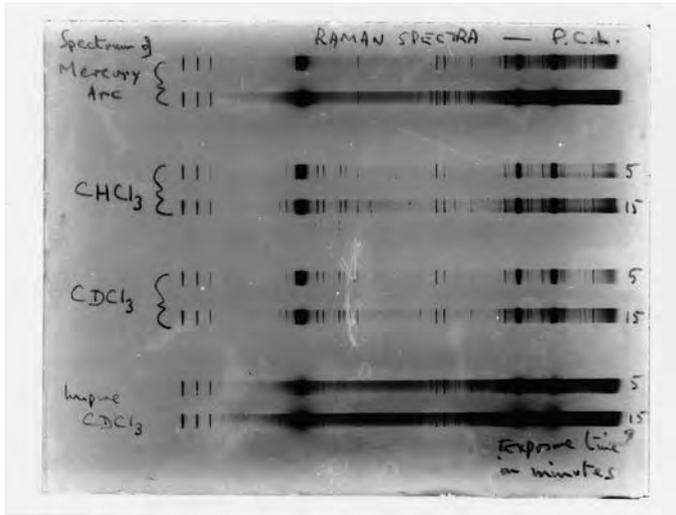
Individually, the subjects of photography, science and the archive form three categories of thing that appear to be compatible in a number of ways. Elizabeth Edwards, Peter Geimer, Lorraine Daston, Peter Galison, Jennifer Tucker and Joel Snyder among others have already made very clear the scientific connotations accompanying the use of photography in scientific and anthropological archiving.¹ This oft-discussed connection between photography and science is one of the driving forces behind the encyclopaedic style of photographic archives. It is also central to the notion of photographs as records.² Many of these authors address the thorny issues of style, or as it may be called pictorialism, or artist's license in the making of record photographs specifically for archival purposes.³ The clear consensus seems to be that record photography (used here in the broadest possible sense) has a certain sort of special authority in the archive situation, and that authority usually has something to do with a connection to scientific principles, even if it is purely imagined on the part of the archive progenitors. The kinds of scientific photographs I commonly seek were, I thought, part of this matrix of science, record

¹ Jennifer Tucker, "The Social Photographic Eye", in: Corey Keller (ed.), *Brought to Light: Photography and the Invisible, 1840–1900*, New Haven/CT / London 2008, pp. 37–49; Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology and Museums*, Oxford 2001; Lorraine Daston / Peter Galison, "The Image of Objectivity", in: *Representations*, 40 (1992), pp. 81–128; Joel Snyder, "Nineteenth-Century Photography of Sculpture and the Rhetoric of Substitution", in: Geraldine A. Johnson (ed.), *Sculpture*

and Photography, Envisioning the Third Dimension, Cambridge 1998, pp. 21–34; Peter Geimer (ed.), *Ordnungen der Sichtbarkeit: Fotografie in Wissenschaft, Kunst und Technologie*, Frankfurt/M. 2002.

² This is not to discount the role of indexicality and mimesis, which are also contributing factors but will not be addressed here.

³ Robin Kelsey, *Archive Style: Photographs and Illustrations for U.S. Surveys, 1850–1890*, Berkeley 2007.



1 Dr Michael J. Taylor, *Raman Spectra of Some Liquids*, made using Hilger equipment in the chemistry department, University of Auckland, 1968, glass plate

and photography. In hindsight this looks to have been a foolish assumption, as many of the images do not seem to have the same currency in the archive as record photographs, and this short paper sets out to raise some questions about it. As a conclusion, it seems that there might be some merit in turning aside from our investigation of the authority of the record photograph, although that too plays a role, and spending more time on the *identification* of these photographs as not only photographs but as record photographs. Three case studies highlight what I mean.

The first case is that of the archiving of Raman spectroscopy.⁴ When I first researched the glass plates made in the Raman process, there were almost none to be found (fig. 1). It seemed odd that amongst the implements, papers, collected journals and books archived to tell the story of Raman spectroscopy, one of the principal methods of spectroscopic analysis of the twentieth century, the photographic plates have been discarded. A conversation with Dr Mike Ware, a spectroscopist by training and well-known photographer and photographic historian, did shed some light on possible reasons for this. He remarked that he had never thought about “the implications of these objects as photographs”.⁵ Many of us have, after all, been primarily trained by the standard photographic histories to see photographs by way of particular groupings or key figures, causing us very often to overlook the way photographic values were and are created.⁶ This seems true for values in science photography as much as any other branch of photography. In this instance of the Raman spectrographic photographs, there appears to be a direct correlation between perceptions about a certain type of photography (or in this case, photographic non-photography) and its suitability for the archive of science. Photographic plates have not been archived with all the rest of the paraphernalia of Raman spectroscopy, which tells us something about

⁴ Complete descriptions of this process are given in Kelley Wilder, “Photography absorbed”, in: *Bildwelten des Wissens*, 4/2 (2006), pp. 43–53; Kelley Wilder, *Photography and Science*, London 2009, pp. 35–38.

⁵ Extract of email correspondence with Dr Mike Ware, 22 March 2006.

⁶ Elizabeth Edwards, “Unblushing Realism and the Threat of the Pictorial: Photographic Survey and the Production of Evidence 1885–1918”, in: *History of Photography*, 33/1 (February 2009), p. 9.

⁷ Edwards 2001 (note 1), p. 27.

their perceived value as primary source material, or indeed as record photographs. It might very well be that the Raman photographic material, because it exists in a raw state and needs interpretation and a bit of number crunching to render it scientifically meaningful, is pre-evidential photographic material. It exists in limbo, considered to be neither photographic nor evidential, and so photographic material never becomes a record of Raman spectroscopy as do the results generated from it, and does not enter into the story of science as told in scientific archives.

The second case arose in the course of researching the photographic work of Henri Becquerel. The manuscript collection of the University of Goettingen contains the letters of one of Becquerel's correspondents, Woldemar Voigt. Becquerel sent a letter to Voigt on 21 January 1899, including a small gelatin silver print showing a Zeeman's curve (fig. 2). This had never been entered into the catalogue, however, which showed only that the collection contained manuscript material. Photographs in this archive, as in many, are not considered to be the same thing as manuscript material although they build archives in the same sorts of ways. As Elizabeth Edwards has so powerfully written, it is the flow of images between scholars and into archives that creates networks and establishes authority.⁷

The third instance occurs in the Science Museum, London. The only way to find photographs that might have been made in the prosecution of science is to search the cataloguing computer, where a very complex sort of catalogue exists within which a field exists that might describe the material, like glass plate, that would lead to finding more photographs. This complicated procedure is necessitated because all items in this catalogue have the word 'photograph' in their metadata if they have been photographed at any time for any reason. Sadly, there is no time to go into the implications of this classificatory aside, but it should be the subject of another discussion as it has implications for this essay as well. What is very interesting in this case is that it is quite impossible to distinguish the photographic illustrations of objects from photographs made in the course of executing scientific experiments or observations, what many would consider the primary source material. On coming across a slightly ambiguous entry relating to William Crookes, the curators and I decided to have a look at the object. Much to our surprise, it was housed in the same room, in a filing cabinet of the basement office. Not only was the glass plate present, the piece of pitchblende that exposed it was also still in the plate box (figs. 3–4). This is symptomatic of a divide in the practices of the NMSI, a body incorporating the Science Museum, the National Railway Museum and the National Media Museum (formerly the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television). Many but not all photographs have been relocated to the Na-



2 Henri Becquerel, Zeeman Curve, 1899, sent to Woldemar Voigt in a letter, silver gelatin print



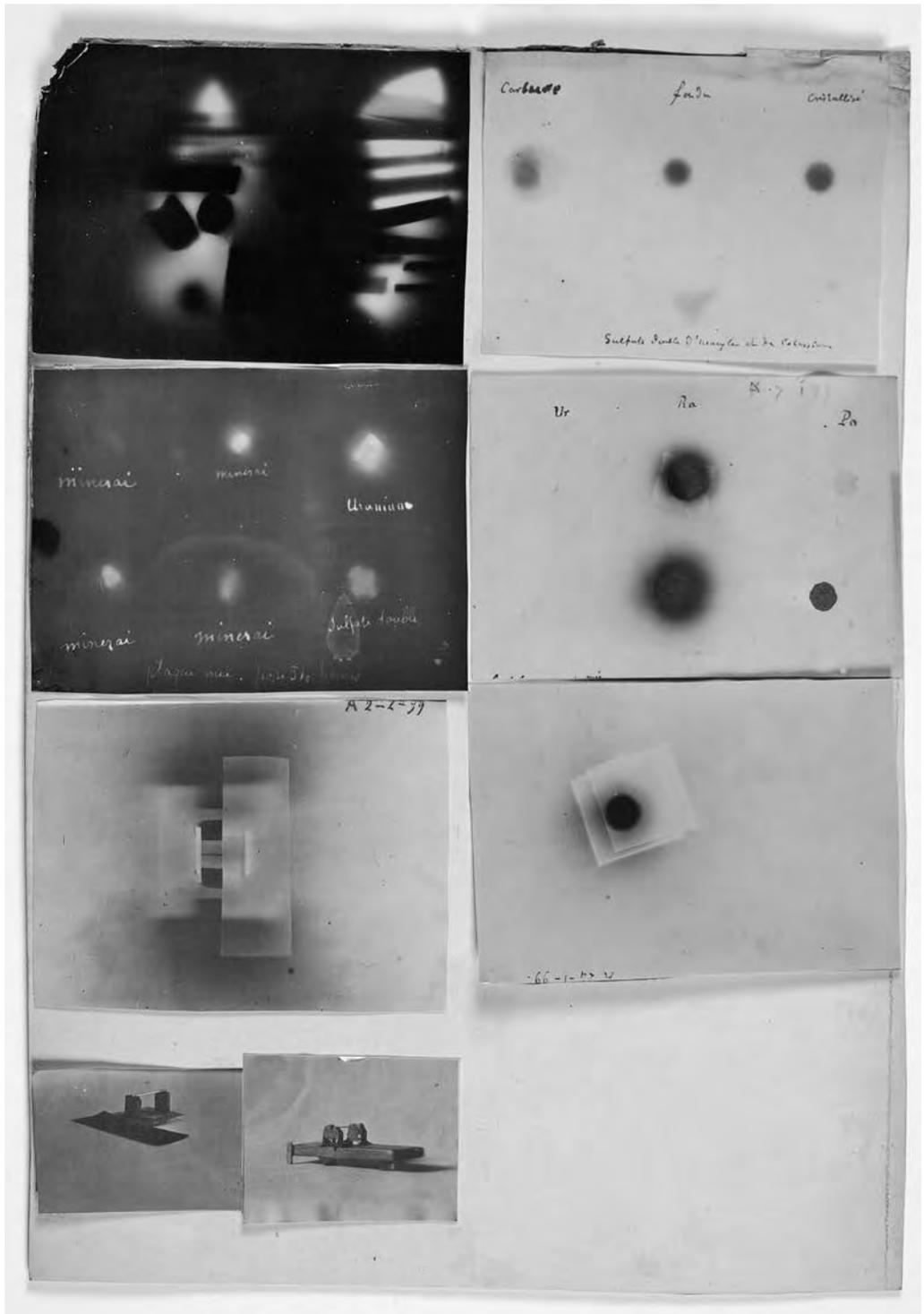
3 William Crookes, K₂ Pate autoradiograph 2 days, c. 1900, silver gelatin glass plate negative, National Science Museum, London. 1915–312 Pt2, made for the paper entitled *Radio-activity of Uranium*, read before the Royal Society, 10 May 1900



4 Pitchblende used to make fig. 3, National Science Museum, London

tional Media Museum (NMeM), including a large repository of the scientific photographs made by William Crookes. Still this object, although published, was so ambiguous that it ended in no collection at all, but was given temporary storage that had turned semi-permanent.⁸

Taken individually, none of these incidents did more than rouse some nervous laughter at the time. Many of the images are now published in *Photography and Science*.⁹ On thinking about them for the purposes of this colloquium, however, they raise several pressing questions that I never addressed in that book:



5 Proof sheets with gelatin silver photographs attached, Fonds Becquerel, Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle

small study of the patterns of absence in science archives, perhaps it serves to highlight just such a point of change in the thinking about scientific record photographs, signposting it for further research.

Before proceeding further, it might be useful to consider the nature of scientific archives. Some of these archives of science, are photographic archives, and some are archives with photographic material in them, notwithstanding what the metadata in the catalogue says. There is, however, a larger photographic archive of science, if the images disseminating science are considered to be part of an ‘archive’—albeit one with more loose physical boundaries. This collection of images has accrued around scientific activities and it is used in several types of network creation. There are at least two distinctive networks, one between scientists and the lay public, and the other between scientists and other scientists. These networks do not always confine the images, as some are used in both places. Occasionally,



7 *Museum of Zoology, University College Dundee, c. 1895–1900. St Andrews University Library, ms42841-5*

they appear in all their physical and material glory, resident in national collections and sometimes in specifically dedicated science museums. But many of these images do not. Their circulation, consumption, and recirculation comprise a different sort of photographic archive of science. Its boundaries are fluid, but heavily influenced by the idea that grounded so many national science museums—that the images and objects of a science archive “fall short of the category of works of art”.¹¹ Now that so many of these images are also transgressing that sacrosanct boundary between art and science, what are we to do with them? And how do we mitigate the ‘art’ effect, in which makers of images that can transgress the art/science divide, and consequently the images they produce, are lifted to a dangerous and deceptive prominence, skewing not only historical writing but also

collection practice? Perhaps we can begin by widening our scope away from the all elusive ‘original’, the paragon of collectibility in the art world. My own research was perhaps far too intent on following and finding ‘the original’.

Daston and Galison for instance concentrate on photographic atlases.¹² The corpus of these atlases forms a bountiful and portable image archive of science that has influenced generations of scientists and lay public. The atlases were intended for broad dissemination, and could and were often used as teaching tools, creating networks of knowledge crucial for the professionalisation of science.¹³ One would presume, then, that the physical archives dealing with science would be repositories of the historical record of these atlases, in the form of maquettes or, even more importantly, rejects that never made it through the editing process (fig. 5). These sorts of photographic material, and perhaps also poster presen-

they appear in all their physical and material glory, resident in national collections and sometimes in specifically dedicated science museums. But many of these images do not. Their circulation, consumption, and recirculation comprise a different sort of photographic archive of science. Its boundaries are fluid, but heavily influenced by the idea that grounded so many national science museums—that the images and objects of a science archive “fall short of the category of works of art”.¹¹ Now that so many of these images are also transgressing that sacrosanct boundary between art and science, what are we to do with them? And how do we mitigate the ‘art’ effect, in which makers of images that can transgress the art/science divide, and consequently the images they produce, are lifted to a dangerous and deceptive prominence, skewing not only historical writing but also



8 *Robert Moyes Adams, Euphyia luctuata (white banded moth), record and specimen from Commander Michael Harper, Newtonmore. H10606, St Andrews University Library Special Collections*

tations of research, appear to me, as a researcher of the photographic practices in science, to be the front line in primary source material (fig. 6). They are exactly what is often missing from physical archives, but as I will discuss in the conclusions, perhaps it is not so much a matter of missing material as it is a matter of looking in the wrong place and for the wrong sort of thing.

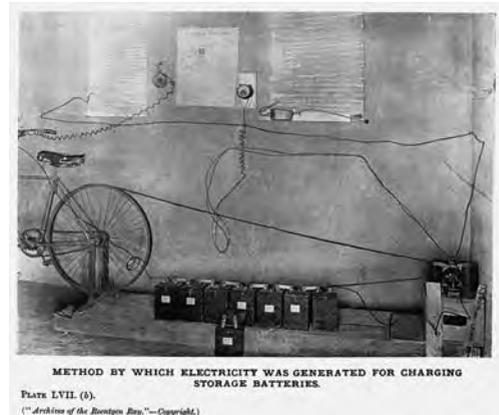
What does turn up in great amounts in archives devoted to science if not the records produced during scientific experiments or the historical record of how science gets into print? Display images are quite common. From the nineteenth century until today, museum displays have proven to be fascinating material for photographers. They contain an illustrative record of the display of science, museum practice and to some extent, the state of science at a particular point in time. They are often extremely pictorially appealing photographic records (fig. 7). Pictorially appealing images ap-



9 A mobile xray unit demonstrated, 'Major Battersby and his orderly taking a radiograph'. *Archives of the Röntgen Ray* 3:3, 1899



9a A mobile xray unit demonstrated, 'Localizing Apparatus'. *Archives of the Röntgen Ray* 3:3, 1899



9b A mobile xray unit demonstrated, 'Method by which electricity was generated for charging storage batteries'. *Archives of the Röntgen Ray*, 3:3, 1899

pear to be not only more collectible, but more importantly they are more often catalogued in archives. Because cataloguing of photographic material in many if not most archives is a rather hit and miss affair, large quantities of photographs never see the light of the study room merely because they are not represented in the finding aids. In all three of the examples, but especially in the case of the Raman spectroscopy and the Becquerel, the non-pictorial quality of the images directly contributed to their being overlooked as photographs. They are a sort of photographic non-photography. What one finds in scientific archives is overwhelmingly pictorial compared to the kind of photographic material science actually produces in great masses.



10 Comparison of radiographs made by radium and xray, *Le Radium*, 1905:108

great quantities; part publicity photo, part catalogue, part visual record. The photograph however has to negotiate a very tricky balance among the many types of ‘records’ found in a science museum. The example of the photograph of a white banded moth in the St Andrews University Library notes first the name Commander Michael Harper, who supplied the ‘record and specimen’ on the 14 September 1953 (fig. 8). In this case, the photograph is neither a record (the written information about date and location of this find), nor is it a specimen (the moth). It is a secondary record, but one that also supplies additional information like size via the rule at the bottom, and the photographer’s name. It is not clear that the authority of photographic records is of primary importance in cases like this.

The other type of photographic record that one finds in large amounts in scientific archives is photographs of machinery, or of experimental setups. These primarily show science in action. They vary

There is another large class of images that is generally biographical in nature. These include both specimen photographs of things and photographs of scientists and laboratories. Both types of photographs are biographical, one concerned with the biography of people, the other of things. Specimen photographs of objects are particularly interesting because they perform so many functions. Their flatness and uniform size relieve the strains of scientific collections that house everything from botanical specimens to moon landers, bringing various parts of the collection together into cupboards or drawers or catalogues. As records of museum objects, photographs exist in



10b Photography of the pressure distribution on a cog wheel, accomplished by Agfacolor-K film under polarized light. “Gefilmte Vorgänge aus der Metall-Bearbeitung und -Pruefung”, *Photographie und Wissenschaft*, 3:3, 1954

from the quite mundane to the truly strange and often appear in multiples, showing every angle of the activity. For instance, photographs of Major Battersby's mobile x-ray unit in the *Archives of the Röntgen Ray* show not only the major and his orderly taking an x-ray, but also the localizing unit and the bicycle used for charging the batteries (figs. 9–9b). These types of laboratory action photographs far outnumber the quantities of x-rays or other products of the science represented by science museum archives. Although some x-rays from the nineteenth century survive, many of those from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries do not, except in the archives of art, where conservators and historians continue to utilize them.

All this is not to say that primary photographic material does not exist in scientific archives; it certainly does. There is the entire collection of Ernst Mach's ballistics experiments, countless tests made by Harold Edgerton and his colleague Arthur von Hippel at MIT, atlases full of medical imagery. You might then ask, why the anxious tone of this essay? Well, the material that one finds in science archives is primarily that of the success story. The fabric of everyday science is much different, and it is here that we should turn back to the third question posed by this paper. Where is the photographic archive of science to be found? Here I will hazard a guess; it is found in printer's ink (and increasingly in digital form), in journals and scientific posters, where images are more frequently deployed. Several pages, one from *Le Radium*, the popular journal for radioactivity studies in the first decades of the twentieth century, and one from *Photographie und Wissenschaft* from the 1950s, show typical images (figs. 10–10b). Vast quantities of photographs that no longer exist in silver gelatin exist in the pages of these journals. The photographic archive of science can to a large extent be found here, and is supplemented by some archival holdings.

The patterns of absence demarcated by the three examples are, then, not so much patterns of absence as they are patterns of an unusual material presence. Science archives are filled with images, but not the images photohistorians might expect to find. This points toward a particular attitude about 'original' material in photographic history. For many photohistorians, 'original' images are made of silver salts (or sometimes salts of gold, iron, platinum, palladium or even uranium). Printer's ink is often a poor cousin, except in some rarefied circumstances. One has only to consider the billing of Joseph Nicéphore Niépce's 'View from a Window' of 1827 as the 'first photograph' in numerous histories, in contrast to his paper trials, made in the preceding year(s).¹⁴ The bias is built in to the telling of photographic history from the origin stories onwards. Printing and photography receives scant attention compared to its enormous volume, and the bias is carried through into research questions, PhD theses, and books published. In researching photographic history in other disciplines, however, the printed record often contains a different historical overview than the archival holdings. It remains in further research to examine exactly how these differ, and what implications it has for considering the role of photographic collections within archives.

¹⁴ Helmut Gernsheim / Alison Gernsheim, *The History of Photography from the Camera Obscura to the Beginning of the Modern Era*, London 1969.

In A Photo Archive

Inge Reist

Photograph Archives and Scholarship: Past, Present, and Future*

As the organizers of the dual conferences in London and Florence brilliantly recognized, we stand at a watershed moment in the use of image resources for the study of art history. They saw that an examination of the origins of photograph archives can help guide and shape their future and, at the same time, convey to the uninitiated how image resources continue to be used as essential elements for art-historical research.

Many of the essays in this volume are rightly dedicated to those men and women who founded important photograph archives, following the power of their convictions and believing that works of art cannot be meaningfully studied without deep and broad knowledge of visual records. It was only because of the infectious passion of a handful of individuals—Richard Hamann, Aby Warburg, Bernard Berenson, Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, Robert Witt, William Martin Conway, and Helen Frick, among them—that we have the great image resources of today. The determination of these pioneers was contagious in the best way: they saw the potential of technology as a means to expand our understanding of art and, in many cases, they learned from one another—as we still strive to do today. For them, the wonder of technology resided in the camera. For us it resides in the computer or even in cloud computing, but we face similar challenges. Regardless of the technology, the goal has always been to provide researchers with materials that strengthen the documentation and interpretation of works of art. Few doubt that if Helen Frick, Robert Witt, or W.M. Conway had lived to see the potential of digitizing the photograph archives they established in the 1920s, they would have dedicated enormous resources and careful thought to realizing the digital future. Today, image collections remain as relevant as in the last century, as they continue to deepen our understanding of specific objects as well as patterns of collecting, marketplace fluctuations, and the changeable, even fickle, nature of public opinion.

* I wish to express my gratitude to Kerry Sullivan, Head of Photoarchive Records, and Louisa Wood Ruby, Head of Photoarchive Research, at the Frick Art Reference Library

for their exceptionally helpful advice during the preparation of this essay.

In addition to papers about the founders of photograph archives, the London and Florence conferences included investigations into the work of photographers. These included Mario Sansoni, Clarence Kennedy, and the Fratelli Alinari, all of whom also became obsessed with the indispensability of images for the study of art history and at times worked hand in hand with Witt, Hamann, Frick, and the others. Here again, we find parallels in image archives today, where information managers—librarians, photo archivists, and administrators—have formed symbiotic relationships with imaging and systems professionals to explore new frontiers for building, documenting, and delivering image collections to the scholarly community.

In his welcoming remarks for the conference in Florence, Gerhard Wolf observed that a photograph archive is a “laboratory for art history”; while Angela Matyssek described it in comparable terms as a “service center” for discovery. This is in every way consistent with Elizabeth Edwards’s comment that “The digital environment is just the next stage in the interaction of people with images [...] another socio-technical assembly.” These words inspire us to recognize the irrepressible tendency among curious people to harness the latest technology in order to maximize the potential for expanding knowledge of a chosen area of research. At the same time, they invite us to take stock of the unique potential photograph archives hold for first-class research that cannot be carried out using only the bibliographic and electronic research tools available at conventional libraries—impressive as they certainly are. For those researchers intent on discovery and exhaustive investigations, photograph archives remain indispensable, even as we contemplate the transition from analog to digital, from card file to database.

Photograph archives remain essential tools for effective research for a myriad of reasons:

- Photograph archives have strength in numbers. Why? (a) Because the more material on a given artist is made available—and this includes copies, forgeries and pastiches—the more researchers can hone connoisseurship skills. (b) Multiple images of a single work of art help scholars trace the physical changes that have affected the object through time, damage, and conservation. (c) Photograph archives can hold the full visual record about a given work of art, a record that is unlikely to be published unless the work warrants a monograph unto itself.
- The works of art recorded in photograph archives are, more often than not, unpublished or all but inaccessible as they reside in private collections or public institution storerooms.
- Photograph archives collect images of works without regard to trends or the popular reception of any given artist’s work. They thus retain files for artists not held in high esteem, but whose reputations among scholars may change in years to come.
- Photograph archives enable the serendipity of discovery for researchers browsing within and across artist files.
- Photograph archives provide a forum for scholarly dialogue across the decades, affording art historians the opportunity to record opinions on or knowledge of attribution and current ownership of works they know well. This healthy dialogue prompted by the examination of surrogates of works of art located in far-flung collections grows organically and offers an open-ended case file for every work of art recorded in the repository.
- Historically, photograph archives have built their collections and the documentation of works of art they record through active gathering of unpublished images, through photography campaigns, and through solicitation of information about ownership, condition, attribution, and subject identification.

What follows is a case study detailing the variety of research problems that are solved every day at the repositories of photograph archives, using the Frick Art Reference Library as typical of many other photograph archives in Europe and America.

The Frick Art Reference Library: A case study for art-historical discovery through photograph archives

The Frick Art Reference Library Photoarchive (fig. 1 and <http://www.frick.org/photoarchive/index.htm>), like its counterparts, looks back to an honourable and visionary past as it anticipates an exciting and vibrant future at the heart of groundbreaking scholarly research. Since its founding in 1920, the Frick has welcomed researchers regardless of institutional affiliation. Thus, independent scholars and those engaged in the commerce of art are as welcome to consult the Frick's research materials as scholars affiliated with museums and universities. Because of the diversity inherent in the Library's research community, the methods and motivations of those who use the Photoarchive vary tremendously.

A scholar interested in compiling information for a *catalogue raisonné* may be intent on discovering the existence and whereabouts of preparatory studies, versions, and copies for each work in an artist's oeuvre. For this researcher, the ability to browse through files that are organized by general subject and visual commonalities (e.g., religious subjects; allegorical subjects; portraits of men) rather than by location or by a hierarchy of authenticity is of vital importance. Moreover, the researcher's browsing will most likely bring forth for examination images that remain unpublished and untraceable through conventional bibliographic investigations. This is largely due to the means used to build photograph archive collections over the decades: harvesting visual materials obtained during campaigns to photograph otherwise unpublished works, and by clipping and filing with the artist's work numerous documented images from auction catalogues and other time-sensitive publications that recorded an image of a work when it was only fleetingly available for public scrutiny at the moment of transfer of ownership.



1 Frick Art Reference Library, Main Reading Room © The Frick Collection



2 Photomontage of Frick Art Reference Library photographs of Hans Holbein the Younger, *Sir Thomas More*, 1529, *The Frick Collection*, New York (photograph, *The Frick Collection*, New York); Peter Paul Rubens, after Holbein, *Sir Thomas More*, 1625–1630, *Museo del Prado*, Madrid (photograph Anderson, Rome, 16246); Unknown artist, after Holbein, *Sir Thomas More*, private collection (Photographic Survey, *The Courtauld Institute*, B 60/406)

The added value that consultation of a photograph archive file brings to research about copies, versions, and preparatory studies is by no means confined to investigations of obscure works of art, as the following two examples make clear. The first relates to a well-known painting by Hans Holbein the Younger, the portrait of *Sir Thomas More* in *The Frick Collection*, and the second relates to Edgar Degas's *The Rehearsal* in the *Musée d'Orsay*.

Scholars have long been aware that Holbein's portrait of his friend and London host Thomas More is one of the most copied works of the Northern Renaissance (fig. 2). Indeed, Stanley Morison's volume *The Likeness of Sir Thomas More: An Iconographical Survey of Three Centuries* (London, 1963) makes clear that this iconic image was deemed worthy of replicating by an artist as esteemed as Peter Paul Rubens. Most copies are, however, by unknown hands and of far inferior quality to Rubens' painterly, stylistically unfaithful copy in the Prado. For the most part, these lesser variations on Holbein's theme were acquired for British private collections such as Althorp, Holkham Hall, Knole, Loseley Park, and Badminton House and were photographed over the course of the many decades when the Courtauld Institute conducted its Photographic Survey to capture images of works of art in English private collections. With one exception, a painting in the Villa Albani in Rome, Morison's book admirably lists the copies held in the Holbein file at the Frick. For the most part, it does not illustrate these copies, however, and a researcher—or in a commercial context, a potential buyer—cannot have any idea of the appearance of the copy without consulting the files of the Photoarchive.

In the case of Edgar Degas's *Rehearsal*, the exemplary 1987 catalogue that accompanied the exhibition at the Grand Palais, Paris, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, identifies twenty preparatory studies made by the artist, but only illustrates two. Thus, a researcher intent on carrying out an in-depth investigation of the fascinating grisaille that is the artist's primary version of the composition (one that he reprised in pictures now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Courtauld Institute) must visit the Frick and other photograph archives to gather the visual evidence. The Frick files on Degas drawings (which number twenty-five boxes) contain twelve drawings that relate to the *Musée d'Orsay* painting. While visual records for the other eight drawings

may exist in other photograph archives in Europe and the United States, researchers will have to wait for large-scale digitization of the collections to be able to view all our collective holdings by means of a single search across all collections. At the Frick, our hypothetical researcher will uncover something unexpected: a photograph of a drawing, formerly in a private collection in New Orleans, that clearly corresponds to the Musée d'Orsay composition, but which is not mentioned in recent literature on the painting and which was only published once, in a 1959 exhibition catalogue at the New Orleans museum then called the Isaac Delgado Museum of Art. The drawing may or may not be autograph, may or may not be a copy or a forgery, but the fact that the Frick's photography campaign to New Orleans in 1933 captured this image when the drawing was owned by the Henderson family invites conjecture as to how this drawing found its way to a collection in the only American city that Degas visited.

Another researcher may suspect that a work of art under investigation has undergone radical physical alteration. Because photographic archives collect multiple images of a single work of art, changes over time are evidenced through visual records that enhance condition notes (if available) in catalogue entries. A case in point is the enchanting *Holy Family* by Jan Gossaert, called *Mabuse*, in the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston (fig. 3). The Library first obtained an image of this painting in 1946 through Mme Clothilde Brière-Misme, wife of the Louvre curator Gaston Brière and herself a scholar-librarian of great accomplishment. The photograph Mme Brière sent was taken considerably earlier, as is attested by the notation by Max Friedländer, dated Berlin, 13 June 1929, in which he asserts that "Das



3 Photomontage of Frick Art Reference Library photographs of three states of *The Holy Family* by a follower of Jan Gossaert van *Mabuse*, early 16th century, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. The Robert Lee Blaffer memorial collection, gift of Sarah Campbell Blaffer (Museum of Fine Arts Houston photograph); unidentified photographer (Van Diemen-Lilienfeld Galleries, Inc., photograph)

umstehend fotografierte Bild ist ein gut erhaltenes, sehr charakteristisches Werk von Jan Gossaert". Fortunately, the Library continued to acquire images of this typical work attributed to the artist. Two of them record the appearance of the work when the figure of St. Joseph had been painted over by a Berlin dealer, Dr. Kurt Benedict, who more than likely regarded the picture as more saleable without the gap-toothed Joseph glowering at Mary and the Child. The latest photograph in the Frick file shows

the appearance of Mabuse's painting today, with Joseph literally a shadow of his former self, smiling benignly. The museum in Houston bought the picture in this state, and it is not known when, or by whom, the face of Joseph was brought back to the surface. What is clear is that the conservator who noticed that a Joseph lay beneath the surface was either unaware of or uninterested in using the pre-1929 photograph as a guide.

As art history and art connoisseurship have matured, photographic archives have played a key role, the fruits of which are most obvious in publications such as Bernard Berenson's lists and Richard Offner's *Corpus of Florentine Painting* (today continued by Miklos Boskovits). The refinement of attributions of works of art recorded in a photograph archive leads to two superficially opposing results: an artist's file may be significantly reduced as works previously recognized as by unknown followers are identified as by a specific hand; or, alternatively, a newly discovered artist's work may establish a substantial file of photographs drawn from many different artists' files that held works now attributed to the "new" master. For example, at the Frick, as scholars rendered more granular the study of unsigned, undocumented works in the manner of a well-known artist such as Filippino Lippi, numerous photographs have been removed to the artist files for Lippi's lesser-known contemporaries, such as the Master of the Stratonice Panels, the Master of the Lathrop Tondo, and the Master of Marradi. At the same time, when Bernardo Rosselli was identified by Everett Fahy as the artist whose works had previously been identified with no less than seventeen other masters, including Pier Francesco Fiorentino, the Master of Brucianesi, and the Master of San Miniato, Rosselli's file became a substantial entity in the Library's holdings of images of fifteenth-century Florentine painting. The Library has always encouraged scholars and connoisseurs to convey information of this kind to the reference desk, so that new files could be created in alignment with new scholarship. In this way, a photograph archive functions in much the same way as the curatorial records of museum drawings departments, where initialled annotations by scholars of several generations record the various attributions ascribed to the work over time.

Photograph archives are also essential to the study of works of art that have been destroyed or lost as a result of war, fire, or natural disaster. Again, the Frick Library's examples are typical: a family portrait by Johann Zoffany, destroyed during the London Blitz but still available for study through its photographic surrogate taken by A. C. Cooper; a grand Spanish *retablo* by Blasco de Grañén, formerly known as the Master of Lanaja, that did not survive a 1936 bombing raid during the Spanish Civil War but can be examined in its fully assembled state and in countless details in the Archivo Mas photographs sent to the Frick in late 1934 by W.W.S. Cook (Institute of Fine Arts professor of Spanish art and agent in Spain for the Library during the 1930s and 1940s); an appealing portrait of a Tennessee bride by the mid-nineteenth-century itinerant portrait artist C. Mygand (fig. 4), hardly a famous work by a famous artist, but an invaluable document for anyone interested in Hungarian immigrant artists working in the South, and the only surviving image of a work that burned to ashes in a house fire in 1953. Occasionally, there are happy rediscoveries of long-lost works of art, such as Caravaggio's *Betrayal of Christ* in the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, found in a Jesuit monastery in 1993 (the subject of Jonathan Harr's *The Lost Painting: The Quest for a Caravaggio Masterpiece*, 2005). Here too, before the rediscovery, the Photoarchive amplified the knowledge of researchers with the only available photograph of one of the better copies known.

Most recently, the preparation for two major exhibition catalogues on under-studied artists, Thomas Chambers and Charles Deas, led their authors to the Frick Library. They were pleased to find unique visual records of works by those artists—as well as comparative material that would place their work effectively in context. The author of the book *Charles Deas and 1840s America*, Carol Clark, commented, "The Library's documentation of the history of ownership of several works that were in private hands

enriched the story I tell of Deas's life and career" adding that, thanks to the Library's Photoarchive, she was also able to "publish a comparative photograph of a now-lost painting by Seth Eastman known only in the photograph the Frick Art Reference library shot and maintains for scholarly use". Kathleen Foster, director of the Center for American Art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, described her research for *Thomas Chambers: American Marine and Landscape Painter, 1808–1869* as follows: "The



4 Frick Art Reference Library, photograph of C. Mygand, Mrs. James Erwin Yeatman (*Angelica Charlotte Thompson*), 1838/1840, destroyed by fire, 1955 (FARL negative 38473)

Frick's image base helped me examine many paintings now unlocated, and note the earlier condition of pictures that had been unwisely cleaned in the intervening decades. [...] A key illustration [in the publication] from a Frick negative, recording a signed and dated painting that has since fallen out of sight [...] was the cornerstone of my analysis, because Chambers signed and dated only a handful of paintings."

The study of the history of collecting has gained notable momentum during recent years, not only as a result of the darker side of provenance research, brought on by the need to trace the true owners of works looted during World War II, but also because of the growing interest among art and cultural historians in studying art collecting as a reflection of the temper of the times during different moments in history. As Barbara Luck, curator at Colonial Williamsburg, noted, "Provenance is not a matter of recorded history for its own sake; it is a vital foundation for accurately and fully understanding the object's cultural significance. [The Frick has] information that, very often, can be gleaned from no other source". Even in analog form, the Frick Library has offered access through its card index to works known to have been in specific private and public collec-

tions. As more and more of the documentation of the Photoarchive holdings is converted to electronic form, searching and updating ownership information will improve by leaps and bounds. Similarly, the identification of portrait subjects has historically been recorded by Frick photoarchivists, together with genealogical information gleaned from family member-owners and from published reference books, and this kind of information, too, will be refined and expanded once database records become available to researchers far from the boundaries of New York.

The Frick's digital present and digital future

Using the Frick Art Reference Library as a case study is above all intended to signal that photograph archives do not stand still and never have. Just as our forebears marshalled colleagues to build the collections during times of strife, sponsored photography in private collections, and enlisted agents in for-

eign capitals to supply our libraries with otherwise unobtainable ephemeral materials, we strive to carry on that tradition within the context of new models suitable to the electronic age.

Like many of its counterparts, the Frick Art Reference Library has a state-of-the-art digital lab and relationships with outside contractors that allow successful completion of targeted digitization projects. That being said, the Library is typical of all scholarly image repositories in not having the wherewithal to digitize all the million-plus images in its Photoarchive collection. To date, the Library offers access to 25,000 images and documentation about the works of art they record through ARTstor, and, as a result of funding received from the National Endowment for the Humanities, soon all 60,000 Library negatives will be made available through ARTstor and the Frick Web site. Additional projected contributions of works by American artists will enhance the online collections of the Smithsonian Institution's *Inventory of American Paintings and Sculpture* and the *Catalog of American Portraits*. These are images to which the Frick holds the rights and whose underlying works of art are in the public domain, making it easy for the Frick to provide access to them. More challenging will be other images, such as the 15,000 photographs of works filed as by anonymous artists of various Italian schools—e.g., “Sienese School, 14th Century”—to which the Frick has no copyright claim. This problem beleaguers photoarchivists worldwide, and we all hope that the day will soon come when access for study and consultation without intention to profit will be problem free. When that day arrives, the Frick and its counterparts will once again be in the position of their founders, affording unrestricted access to as many images as possible so as to maximize the benefit of image study within a discipline that depends on visual analysis.

As Griselda Pollock observed in her paper presented at the conference in Florence, Aby Warburg used his photo collection as a vehicle for developing an imaginative way of combining and developing concepts, and it is this creative approach to finding new juxtapositions and new combinations of images that makes photograph archives, whether analog or digital, the fertile fields for stimulation of new ideas that they are. Moreover, this creative combination and recombination of images can only be enriched as electronic access improves.

It is now our task, standing at a watershed moment as our forebears did almost a century ago, to develop and promote a new model for access and use of this gold mine of information that maximizes the opportunities of current and future technical advances in a way that suits the demands of today's scholars. Researchers are increasingly accustomed to instant gratification through successful searches for full-text access to publications and have come to expect similarly instant and comprehensive results from queries sent to image repositories. Satisfying those expectations is perforce a long-term goal; but just as Google Books and Art Full Text are faced with prioritizing what is digitized and when, much of that depending on copyright clearances, photograph archives must plan with restrictions in mind. This selection process, which is implicit in digitization projects and will inevitably exclude some images, renders the analog archive as indispensable as ever in the digital era. Whatever the method of delivery, whether the photograph itself or its digital surrogate, the relevance of photograph archives to the study of art history remains inestimably high.

It is fair to say that all who participated and contributed to the conferences in London and Florence agreed that our goals for ever-broader access must be achieved through collaboration with and promotion to the research community, so that image libraries can find and justify the economic and technical demands of transitioning to a new delivery model, however incremental that process may be. If we recover the contagion of enthusiasm that drove our institutes' founders, we will be able to involve people—heretofore oblivious to the merits of research of this kind—to forge a new and valuable case for the use of photograph archives to deepen and strengthen our understanding and appreciation of our art-historical and cultural past.

Valentina Branchini

The Photograph Study Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art: A Change of Reference

The Photograph Reference Collection built at the Metropolitan Museum of Art shares a common history with the many collections of the same type in museums and universities worldwide.¹ Developed over decades as an encyclopaedic resource for art-historical studies by the acquisition, at great expense, of many monochrome photographic and photomechanical prints, it was of vital importance to the function of the museum's staff. With the introduction of colour photographic transparencies in the 1950s, consultation of the collection diminished and its institutional value declined. Ultimately replaced in function by the new form of photographic technology, the collection increasingly became an impediment, was moved to dead storage and was de-accessioned. Such a progression has been a worldwide trend. Institutions have been, and still are, divesting themselves of once important resources built upon imaging technologies now judged obsolete. Tragically, the dispersion of these older photograph study collections means the loss of primary sources for understanding the evolution of art history scholarship and teaching, as well as the history of visual archives and libraries.

Fortunately, unlike most others of its kind, the Photograph Reference Collection has escaped—at least for the moment—total destruction. It is currently serving an institution that has found different value, function and meaning for its content.

The origins of the Photograph Reference Collection date back to the years immediately following the foundation of the Metropolitan Museum, in 1870, when a library was established for encouraging and developing the study of fine arts. Named in 1965 after the president of IBM, a long-time museum

¹ I acquainted myself with this photograph collection at the Image Permanence Institute in 2007–2009, during my Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship in the Advance Residency Program in Photograph Conservation at George Eastman House, Rochester NY. What struck me about it was its transition from an art-historical and archival science

context to that of a resource for studying reproduction processes, reflecting the shift of my own professional interests. I want to thank James Reilly and Julie Zefel for sharing information and materials that were essential for reconstructing the history of the Photograph Reference Collection, and Grant Romer for his insightful guidance.



1 *The Photograph Reference Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1960s–1970s, Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art*

trustee, the Thomas J. Watson Library is today one of the most comprehensive art history libraries in the world. Its scope reflects the museum's permanent collection, which focuses mainly on European and American art, including architecture and the decorative arts, and has significant holdings in Ancient Near Eastern, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Asian, and Islamic art.

At the turn of the century, in order to support the research activities of its staff and of visiting scholars, the museum started acquiring photographs as a complement to the growing resources of the library.² In 1907, this reference collection totalled 14,000 photographs. In those early years, purchases were limited to Italian and Dutch Renaissance painting. Many photographic process types (platinum, albumen, gelatin silver, collodion, and carbon prints) as well as photomechanical prints (photogravures and collotypes) were acquired from Alinari and other publishers specialized in the documentation of Italian art and architecture. Gradually, the breadth and depth of the

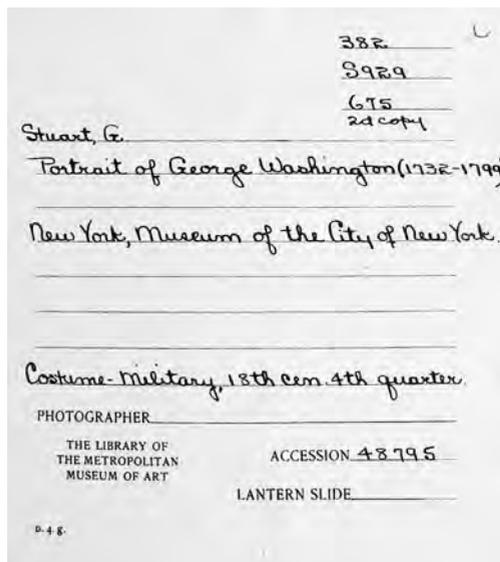
collection developed, responding to the museum's encyclopaedic aim to cover the entire history of painting, sculpture, architecture and the decorative arts throughout the world.

As was usual for those collections, in order to prepare the unmounted photographs for reference access, each print was adhered to heavy cardstock and labelled with information pertaining to its subject, classification, and the author of the photograph, along with its identification and accession numbers. This data found correspondence in accession books meticulously recording additional information for each individual print, such as imaging process, size and cost of both the prints and the mount, provenance, and remarks on the condition, re-mounting and de-accessioning. Covering a period from January 1907 through January 1971, this process produced seventy-one accession books, providing details for some 250,000 photographic and photomechanical prints, and informing us on the care given to those objects. From these records, we know that, from the 1910s to the 1940s, purchases were mainly of photographs of American and Latin American architecture and painting, whereas in the 1930s, photographs of European architecture were acquired in great number. In the 1970s, acquisitions enhanced the sections of sculpture, from antique to contemporary, and of American architecture.

In addition to photographs and photomechanical prints, a glass lantern slide collection had been growing since 1907. This had originated as a lending resource developed to supplement the slender visual materials of nearby schools and independent lecturers. Its scope followed the path of the Photograph Reference Collection and was increased in the 1930s by selections made in collaboration with

² See Margaret P. Nolan / Emma N. Papert, "The Metropolitan Museum of Art—The Photograph and Slide Library", in: Allen Kent / Harold Lancour / Jay E. Daily (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, vol. 17, New York 1976, pp. 483–491.

³ See Margaret P. Nolan, "The Metropolitan Museum of Art Slide Library", in: Ellis Mount (ed.), *Special Libraries Association. Planning the Special Library*, New York 1972, pp. 101–103.



2 Label on the mounting board of a print from the Photograph Reference Collection, Image Permanence Institute

the slide collection led to the establishment of the Photograph and Slide Library, a modern and well-organized visual library within the museum, whose pioneering methods and arrangement were the model for many institutions.³ The library reached its apogee in the mid-1970s, with a twenty person staff and a collection comprised of over 800,000 photographs and slides. At that time, as a consequence of their diminished usage and significance, the monochrome photographs and photomechanical prints were stored in a hallway off the Slide Library, overlapping with areas open to visitors. A few years later, in 1979, Thomas Hoving's first "blockbuster" exhibition, which provoked a dramatic change in the very conception of the museum as such, had an unanticipated impact on the Photograph Reference Collection. Following the run of *Treasures of Tutankhamun*, which drew the unprecedented number of almost 1.3 million visitors, it was decided that the Photograph Reference Collection would be moved off-site in order to gain additional exhibition space. The Slide Collection, instead, would be kept as a highly valued resource, still in use today.

Prior to the move, the Curatorial Departments were encouraged to selectively choose and incorporate materials relevant to their departmental libraries. For instance, it was at that time that the Robert Lehman Collection Library acquired the section of photographs documenting Italian painting. The remainder of the Photograph Reference Collection was first stored in Queens in

the faculty of the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University.

Following World War II, the perfected chromogenic colour transparency film rapidly became the favoured choice for study and lecturing. Thus, acquisitions of paper-based monochromatic photographs slowed down significantly. During the 1950s and 1960s, the format chosen for new acquisitions was the 35mm transparency in the 2 x 2 inch frame binding, in preference to the larger lantern slide format. The key element of colour, the smaller size, and the new magazine style projectors offered obvious advantages to the lecturer. This combination of innovations virtually resulted in a new media and, ultimately, a disruptive one. Collection objects were re-photographed in 35 mm colour, making the monochrome record redundant. The exhibition of borrowed items further allowed the Slide Library to acquire colour slides of many works from foreign and private collections.

In the mid-1960s, the growth in the use of the



3 Accession books of the Photograph Reference Collection, Image Permanence Institute



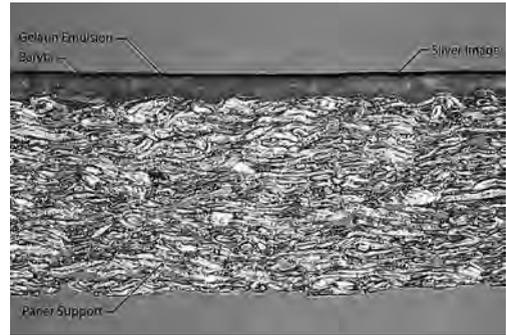
4 Albumen print sampled for cross-section examination, Image Permanence Institute process study collection

1984, but was soon moved back to a Manhattan facility. In 1988, the photograph library was warehoused to a less accessible and costly facility in the Bronx. That material shared its exile in storage with the once highly valued plaster casts, another nineteenth-century Metropolitan Museum collection that

had been used long and fruitfully as a resource for the study of art and was subsequently withdrawn.

The Photograph Reference Collection remained in the Bronx warehouse for seventeen years. Facing the reality of indefinitely paying storage fees for a useless reference resource, the Metropolitan Museum sought another institutional home for the Photograph Reference Library. In 2005, James Reilly, director of the Image Permanence Institute (IPI) and author of *Care and Identification of 19th Century Photographic Prints*, gladly acquired it. In 1985, Reilly had founded the Image Permanence Institute at the Rochester Institute of Technology, a university based, non-profit research laboratory devoted to scientific research in the preservation of visual and other forms of recorded information. The Photograph Reference Collection of the Metropolitan Museum entered IPI because Reilly recognized it as an asset for the study of the history of photographic and photomechanical reproductions of fine arts.

Within IPI, the collection lost the function it had served for over a century. No longer a surrogate resource for the study of original works of art, it has become a process sample collection. The photographs and photomechanical prints, housed in fifty-eight of the collection's original filing cabinets, are still actively used. However, the inquiry and information garnered has shifted from the subject of the reproduction to the reproduction itself. The original arrangement and the classifications of the collection are no longer valued as essential principles to investigate or preserve. The photographs often serve as exemplary materials for educational offerings, such as *Graphics Atlas*, a web-based resource developed for teaching scholars, archivists and conservators on how to understand the physical and technical complexities of particular process types.⁴ Through advanced photo-documentation and comparison exercises, this educational tool aims to train the eye to discern normally overlooked and undervalued features of printed images. For instance, a carbon print by Franz Hanfstaeigl from the Metropolitan Museum Photograph Reference Collection is illustrated in a standardized set of sixteen to eighteen views of recto, verso and cross section, produced with various lighting techniques and increasing magnifications. Each of these photographs and photomicrographs, flanked by written content, videos and diagrams, explore key characteristics of the print,



5 Cross-section of a B&W silver gelatin print (hand colored postcard), Image Permanence Institute, Rochester Institute of Technology, 2010, *Graphics Atlas*, <http://www.graphicsatlas.org>



6 Catalogs from the Photograph Reference Collection, Image Permanence Institute

⁴ Image Permanence Institute, Rochester Institute of Technology, 2010, *Graphics Atlas*, <http://www.graphicsatlas.org>.

such as size, format, colour, surface texture, sheen, and layer structure. These views can be compared with other sets of views representing other printed images in the database. The website, which also includes pages on the history of printing technologies, is a resource for building basic connoisseurship in printed images.

The photographs that composed the Reference Library at the Metropolitan Museum are certainly more than mere copy images or unusual physical objects. They are examples of fine print technology. Many are the highest achievement of the photographic technology and craft at the time of their production. Those who commissioned and made these prints had a highly developed, critical eye and were totally aware of the capacities of the printing media. The challenge to reproduce works of fine art faithfully and usefully within the limits of the medium in which they worked was immense. In addition, long-term image permanence was yet another requisite. Appreciation of the multiple and high achievements of the many photographers and printers that served the interests of art history is not at all what it should be. Similarly, there is quite a lack of understanding of how photography as a technology has served the development of the field.

In addition to photographs and accession books, the Photograph Reference Collection comprised files of correspondence and catalogues representing sources from which photographs had been purchased. This documentation, dating from the 1890s to 1980, is preserved at IPI just as it came from the Metropolitan Museum, arranged in alphabetical order within thirteen boxes. An in-depth study of these materials, attesting to the extraordinary number of photo publishers active from the last decades of the nineteenth century to the 1960s throughout Europe and the United States, provides a resource for the study of the rise and decline of that trade, and the transition of taste, quality, and techniques in fine art reproductions.

The history of the Photograph Reference Collection confirms that photographs lend themselves to new, additional inquiries and purposes that regenerate their value. Collections like this one may survive only by fortuity. With ongoing and rapid changes of information and imaging technology, monochrome photographic print reference collections that were carefully built and maintained for decades are being broken up and dispersed. The lesson is clear and seems to repeat for every supplanted medium. We should now expect to see many colour slide libraries go into storage after digitization, unless an effort is made to avoid their retirement. A number of scholars and archivists are bringing this syndrome to the attention of institutional administrations. Hopefully, this will lead to the preservation of endangered analogue archives.

Today, scholars can access original artworks online through reference surrogates that were once difficult to obtain. The colossal holdings of analogue photograph libraries look like the bone yard of extinct dinosaurs. But the wisdom of time has taught us that those bones are well worth keeping, and, ironically, many of those photographs that were given away as worthless objects now have a substantial art market value.

Bernard Berenson once famously exclaimed: "Photographs! Photographs! In our work one can never have enough!" In the light of these recent developments, would he have been of the same opinion today?

Dorothea Peters

Raphael Revisited: On the Authenticity of the Early Photography of Drawings. A research project in the *Photothek* of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

One goal of this book is to investigate ways of doing research in photo archives, and to analyze how art historians work with photographs. This is not only a matter of historical reconstruction, but is still relevant today, since in addition to traditional research questions, for instance on the work of a specific artist, new issues such as those on photo-historical subjects are arising. As an example, I would like to report on the research strategies and working practices in a project investigating the role of photography in the nineteenth-century discourse on Raphael. I worked on this research project in the *Photothek* of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz.¹

The initial hypothesis of this research project was that the developments of photography and art history are linked very closely. During the nineteenth century, photography developed as an indispensable instrument for art-historical research. Photography led research to the works of art themselves, decontextualising them and, as a result of the technology, concentrating on the drawings.² As a conse-

¹ From April until June 2009 I had a scholarship to work in the *Photothek* of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, whose generosity I gratefully acknowledge. This provided me with the opportunity to develop my studies on the visual foundation of early art-historical discourse on the basis of authentic photographic materials.—This paper is the report of a guided tour given at the Photo Archives conference in Florence. The intention of this experiment was to combine a tour through the photo archive with a small lecture on the research activities connected with a specific subject. This way the photographs of the voluminous collection of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz could be presented not only as isolated

“cimelia”, but also in the context of a research project.— I would like to thank Anna Galeano Araque and Paul Galeano Araque for their help with the English version of the text.

² Dorothea Peters, “Fotografie als ‘technisches Hilfsmittel’ der Kunstwissenschaft. Wilhelm Bode und die Photographische Kunstanstalt Adolphe Braun”, in: *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, N.F. 44 (2002), pp. 167–206; Marjen Schmidt, “Falschfarben. Zur Farbwiedergabe in Gemäldereproduktionen 1839–1905”, in: *Verwandlungen durch Licht. Fotografieren in Museen & Archiven & Bibliotheken*, Esslingen 2001 (*Rundbrief Fotografie*, Sonderheft 6), p. 211–226.

quence, research focused increasingly on the genesis of the works of art. Because of the detailed sharpness of photography, it was possible to compare and to attribute the works in a more differentiated way. That became evident when John Charles Robinson (1824–1913), who had been permitted to make extensive use of the Royal Raphael Collection for his studies, wrote in the introduction to his *Critical Account of the Drawings by Michel Angelo and Raffaello* in 1870: “the invention of photography has in our own time effected an entire revolution: the drawings of the ancient masters may now be multiplied virtually without limit: and thus [...] the actual comparison of the numerous dispersed drawings of any particular master has become quite practicable.” Referring to the “comprehensive work” of Passavant, he concluded that “the art of photography, had it been available in that writer’s time, would have enabled him to avoid [...] a great proportion” of his “abounding errors.”³ On the other hand, ten years later German art historians, like Friedrich Lippmann and August Schmarsow, doubted the ‘objectivity’ of photography and concluded that—in their opinion—Giovanni Morelli would not have made so many mistakes in his attributions to Perugino, Pinturicchio or Raphael, if he had concentrated on the originals instead of the photographs.⁴ These two positions seem to be more contradictory than they are; in fact, they concentrate on different aspects of photography: While Robinson focused on the potential for comparison in the ‘museum without walls’ created by photography, Lippmann and others criticized the technical deficits of early, pre-orthochromatic photography.

However, the idea of the project was to prove the ‘authenticity’ of photography in the nineteenth century: What could art historians see when they looked at photographs of works of art? How suitable was photography for research, could it even be a substitute for the original? What concrete role could photography play in the daily practice of art-historical research? The *Photothek* of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz gives a unique opportunity to enrich theoretical studies with visual studies on the basis of countless authentic art-historical photographs.

The photo archive was officially founded in 1897 as a constitutive part of the Art Historical Institute in Florence (Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz), and started its activities in 1888 with a seminar made up of only 6 or 7 students, among them Aby Warburg.⁵ So the *Photothek* is (and has been from the beginning) an archive meant to be used by art historians. The classification criterion has always been the subject of the photograph, not the photograph itself or its author. Now, in the era of digitalization, the sense for photography as a reproductive medium is growing, and thus these archives offer themselves for photo-historical research as well.⁶

³ John C. Robinson, *Critical Account of the Drawings by Michel Angelo and Raffaello in the University Galleries*, Oxford, Oxford 1870, pp. X–XI.

⁴ Referring to a Berlin drawing with controversial attribution to Raphael, Lippmann wrote: “Morelli [...] urteilt lediglich auf Grund der mittelmäßigen Photographie, die bis dahin als einzige Reproduktion davon existierte. Jeder Kenner von Handzeichnungen wird aber wissen, wie oft feinere Qualitäten des Originals in der Photographie entstellt erscheinen” (Friedrich Lippmann, “Raffaels Entwurf zur Madonna del Duca di Terranuova und zur Madonna Staffa-Connestabile”, in: *Jahrbuch der Königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 2 (1881), pp. 62–66, here: p. 66).

⁵ See Hans W. Hubert, *Das Kunsthistorische Institut in Florenz. Von der Gründung bis zum hundertjährigen Jubiläum (1897–1997)*, Florence 1997; Ingeborg Bähr, “Zum

Aufbau eines Arbeitsapparates für die Italienforschung. Der Erwerb von Büchern und Abbildungen in der Frühzeit des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz”, in: Max Seidel (ed.), *Storia dell’arte e politica culturale intorno al 1900. La fondazione dell’Istituto Germanico di Storia dell’Arte di Firenze*, Venice 1999, pp. 359–376; Birgit Laschke / Anchise Tempestini, “Il Kunsthistorisches Institut di Firenze e la catalogazione informatica della sua Fototeca”, in: Tiziana Serena (ed.), *Indagine sulle raccolte fotografiche* (Quaderni 9, Centro di Ricerche Informatiche per i Beni Culturali, Scuola Normale Superiore), Pisa 1999, pp. 199–203.

⁶ See Costanza Caraffa, “Cimelia Photographica”, in: *Bildwelten des Wissens. Kunsthistorisches Jahrbuch für Bildkritik*, 8/2 (2011), *Graustufen*, ed. Felix Prinz (forthcoming) as well as <http://www.khi.fi.it/en/photothek/projekte/index.html>.

In considering photo-historical aspects, it may be relevant to look at the collection's sources. Because of its use as well as due to limited resources, the stock of the archive developed based on two principles. The directors or members of the institute bought books and photographs by photographers, dealers, and second-hand dealers, and they exchanged the old photographs with new ones when they were obsolete or when they were no longer up to date with the technology of the time. Thus it was an archive in a permanent state of change, in which the eldest photographs were often eliminated. A second source of the collection was bequests of art historians who felt connected to the institute. As a result, many old photos from the middle of the nineteenth century once again entered the collection at a later time. In every case, even if complete gallery works of a few hundred photographs or prints were acquired, they were taken apart and each single item was sorted away according to the respective artist.

It may seem easier to do photo-historical research with a data base as opposed to directly searching through the photographs themselves, one reason being that the structure of such archives can seem to be very complicated. In my experience, the *Photothek* in Florence, where the user has direct access to the photograph boxes kept on open shelves, is quite well arranged and can also be used without regard to its structure. Doing so gives one the great opportunity to accidentally come across pieces that would never have been found through the filtering system of a data base.⁷

Based on the above, I hoped to find, in the *Photothek*, some of the early photographs which had been directly used by nineteenth-century art historians during the discourse on Raphael and his contemporaries. I wished to identify some of the photographs that Morelli had worked with and had quoted in his books. I wanted to see the materiality of the photos that the *Kunstkenner* and



1 "Apostle Paulus", sketch from the so-called "Raphael Sketchbook" in Venice. Photographer Antonio Perini, salt paper print, albumenized with a brush, 1856. Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

⁷ On the necessity of integrating digital and analogue formats in photo archives see <http://www.khi.fi.it/photothek/florencedeclaration/index.html>.

art historians had dealt with. My goal was to learn to look at photographs with the eyes of an art historian from the nineteenth century, in addition to gaining knowledge of the different clusters of photographs of drawings by Raphael and his contemporaries.

First of all, I had to look mainly for photographs of drawings, and in particular focused on photographs of drawings held in the Uffizi in Florence, so that I would have the chance of comparing them to the originals. Concretely, I was searching for various clusters of photographs which had played a key role in the early discourse on Raphael:

- the more than 100 photographs of the *Venice Sketchbook*, held in the Accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia, which Antonio Perini had taken in 1856. I actually found eight of these in the box “Zeichnungen / Raffael / Venedig”, salted paper prints, albumenized with a brush, and mostly signed at the lower margin “A. PERINI fot. Venezia” (see fig. 1);
- the altogether 350 photographs of drawings by Raphael and other Renaissance artists from the Uffizi in Florence, the Academy in Venice, and the Albertina in Vienna, which the Fratelli Alinari had published in three series (albums) in 1858 and one series in 1859. I initially did not find any one of these;
- the more than 2,000 drawings which Giovanni Brampton Philpot photographed in the Uffizi and offered for sale in 1866; Philpot was quoted by Morelli very often, so that one could suppose that his photographs were widely distributed. I only found a few of the Philpot photographs of works by Raphael, so I expanded the basis of my research to all the works by Renaissance artists held in the Uffizi. With these new parameters, I found about 40 photographs (albumen prints) by Philpot, which can be identified by the letter “P” and his publisher’s number (see fig. 2), and
- the nearly 5,000 photographs, or rather carbon prints, which Adolphe Braun from Dornach in Alsace took of drawings in various collections all over Europe between 1867 and 1869 (especially drawings from the Uffizi). I was able to find many in the different colours of the originals, depending on the technique (e. g. chalk, ruddle, silver pen). For the most part, the cardboard was cut to fit the boxes. This made the dating a little bit difficult because it is important to see the lettering: the cardboards of the very old Braun carbon prints are inscribed with an ornamented label made by hand with a stencil (see fig. 3).

At the end, I nearly found everything that I had been looking for, and I had furthermore developed the criteria to identify the different photographers and their strikingly different ‘personal handwriting’. The only exceptions were the early photographs from the Fratelli Alinari of the 1850s, which I had not yet been able to identify. I therefore contacted Alinari in Florence, who themselves have none of these photographs in their museum or archives; they only have some of the corresponding collodion plates, meaning the negatives.⁸ Maren Gröning, too, in a 2001 article on the photographic collection of the Albertina in Vienna, says that there is no photograph from the Alinari series of the *Disegni*, but references the Victoria & Albert Museum as being the only institution that has preserved all the albums of the four series.⁹ Indeed they do have them, but not in their photography collection—rather in the li-

⁸ As Maria Possenti kindly brought to my attention, Florence, 22 April 2009.—See the illustration of such a negative in Alessandro Conti, “Storia di una documentazione”, in: Wladimiro Settlemilli / Filippo Zevi (eds.), *Gli Alinari. Fotografi a Firenze 1852–1920*, Milan 1977, pp. 148–170, here p. 153 (p. 294: “Disegno di Raffaello agli Uffizi. Negativo al collodio”); Arturo Carlo Quintavalle / Monica Maffioli (eds.), *Fratelli Alinari. Fotografi in Firenze. 150 anni che illustrarono il mondo 1852–2002*, Florence 2003, p. 34 (“Leopoldo Alinari, Studio di nudo di Raffaello presso l’Ac-

cademia Albertina di Vienna. 1858, negativo su lastra all’albumina, cm 30 x 24, Archivi Alinari, Firenze”).

⁹ See Maren Gröning, “Schatten des imaginären Museums. Die Albertina und die Fotografie im 19. Jahrhundert”, in: *Fotogeschichte*, 21/81 (2001), pp. 3–20, here note 32: “Leider haben sich diese Fotografien in der Albertina selbst nicht erhalten, sondern konnten bisher nur in der Kunstbibliothek des Victoria & Albert Museums nachgewiesen werden.”



2 „Botticelli“, Two women, drawing in the Uffizi in Florence. Photographer Giovanni Brampton Philpot, albumen, before 1866. Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz



3 “Leonardo da Vinci”, *Madonna with Child, drawing in the Ambrosiana, Milan*. Photographer Adolphe Braun, carbon print, 1868. Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

brary.¹⁰ Within the Alinari book of 2003, Maria Possenti gives a register in which all the early albums of Florence, Venice, and Vienna known worldwide are listed—though there is not a single one listed in Florence. In the meantime an album had been found in the Albertina in Vienna, and also all the four albums in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris, but Possenti did not mention the London albums in the Victoria & Albert museum.¹¹ However confusing, these photographs obviously are very rare, moreover they are very hard to identify.¹²

¹⁰ See: <http://copac.ac.uk/search?rn=5&any=alinari+1858> (Nov. 15, 2010).

¹¹ See Maria Possenti, “Appunti per un primo censimento delle fotografie Alinari”, in: Arturo Carlo Quintavalle / Monica Maffioli (eds.), *Fratelli Alinari. Fotografi in Firenze. 150 anni che illustrarono il mondo 1852–2002*, Florence 2003, pp. 341–372.

¹² On the difficulties of identifying and dating the very early

photographs of the Fratelli Alinari see *ibid.*, pp. 353–356; Giovanni Fanelli, “La fotografia di architettura degli Alinari. 1854–1865. Oltre le convenzioni e gli stereotipi”, in: Arturo Carlo Quintavalle / Monica Maffioli (eds.), *Fratelli Alinari. Fotografi in Firenze. 150 anni che illustrarono il mondo 1852–2002*, Florence 2003, pp. 88–93, here p. 88 (ill. of early blindstamps).

But Possenti included an illustration of a photograph from the Albertina album, and this was very useful, because it gave an idea of what these photographs might look like.¹³ It was remarkable that these photographs have different colour tones, like the early Talbotypes (so they could be salted paper prints, perhaps albumenized). I remembered some curious photos by different artists I had occasionally seen in the Florentine *Photothek*. On the cardboards was written Alinari (as on thousands in this photo archive). Even when looking through the magnifying glass, I was unable to decide if they were prints or original photographs. Most of all I wondered whether the mounting paper was part of the photo, if it was mounted on a cardboard at all, or whether the photos were masked. The structure of the photographs seemed to be the same as that of salted paper, even though they were in astonishingly good condition, since salted paper prints usually fade very quickly; there was no screen or a comparable structure, therefore they could not be prints.

When I found some of those photographs, I noticed the consecutive inventory numbers (60310–60336). The inventory book showed exactly how big the cluster of photos was and gave every single photo with the artist's name, the subject, the holding collection—Vienna and Florence—and the photographer's name.¹⁴ So, I could use the inventory to find the missing items from that group. All the photos had come into the *Photothek* as a gift from the first director, Heinrich Brockhaus (1858–1941), in November 1929. But the inventory did not give any further information regarding the dating of the photographs themselves.

When I had found nearly every one of those photos in the archive, I noticed some little indications which gave step by step hints as to their identity: there was the name of “Fra Antonio da Modena” (Inv. no. 60310), whose photograph I did not find; but when I used “Google” to see if the name of the artist had changed since then—indeed it had and he is now known as “Antonio da Monza”—I only got one single reference (!), and it led to a text of Ulrich Pohlmann on the same Alinari photographs.¹⁵ Some photos were blindstamped with the old stamp, “ALINARI”. All photographs were cut, but at the last photo, which I found under the “anonymous” entries—box “Zeichn. Renaiss. / Zeichnungen Ausland T—Z + wo?”, folder “Wien” –, and which was one out of only two where you could see the cardboard, I saw a cut blindstamp “Terza serie” and the number 85 (inv. no. 60311) (see fig. 4a–b). In *Rudolph Weigel's Kunstlager-Catalog* (Weigel was an art dealer in Leipzig), within the entry “Disegni di Raffaello e d'altri Maestri esistenti nelle Gallerie di Firenze, Venezia e Vienna, riprodotti in Fotografia dai Fratelli Alinari,” all of the Alinari photographs being looked for were listed.¹⁶ There you can find: “Terza Serie. Disegni di Raffaello e d'altri Maestri, della Galleria dell'Arciduca Carlo a Vienna”, and as no. 85: “Ritratto del Savonarola, bel disegno di Leonardo da Vinci, a penna e acquerello, con un contorno del Vasari”.¹⁷

Finally, those famous photographs were found and identified, but I had still not found a single photograph of a drawing by Raphael. So I decided to expand my research to other archives, and visited the

¹³ Possenti 2003 (note 11), p. 342: “Fratelli Alinari, Disegni di Raffaello in *Album de 50 dessins de Raphael de la collection originale de la Galerie de Florence photographiée par Alinari Frères et publiés par Louis Bardi à Florence, 1858*, album contenente 50 stampe originali all'albumina, cm 62 x 48, Albertina, Vienna”. To the subject see Rudolph Weigel, *Die Werke der Maler in ihren Handzeichnungen. Beschreibendes Verzeichniss der in Kupfer gestochenen, lithographirten und photographirten Facsimiles von Originalzeichnungen grosser Meister*, Leipzig 1865, p. 572, no. 6782: “S. Georg zu Pferde bekämpft den Drachen. Entwurf zu dem Bilde im Lou-

vre. Feder. H. 10“, Br. 10“. Alinari, Disegni di Firenze. Serie I. 122”.

¹⁴ The inventory says “Alinari” with the numbers 60310, 60311, 60318–60330, 60335, 60336; no. 60326 was “Als Dublette ausgeschieden”.

¹⁵ Ulrich Pohlmann, “Alinari e la fotografia tedesca del XIX secolo”, in: Arturo Carlo Quintavalle / Monica Maffioli (eds.), *Fratelli Alinari. Fotografi in Firenze. 150 anni che illustrarono il mondo 1852–2002*, Florence 2003, pp. 121–135, here p. 126.

¹⁶ *Rudolph Weigel's Kunstlager-Catalog* 29 (1859), p. 42.

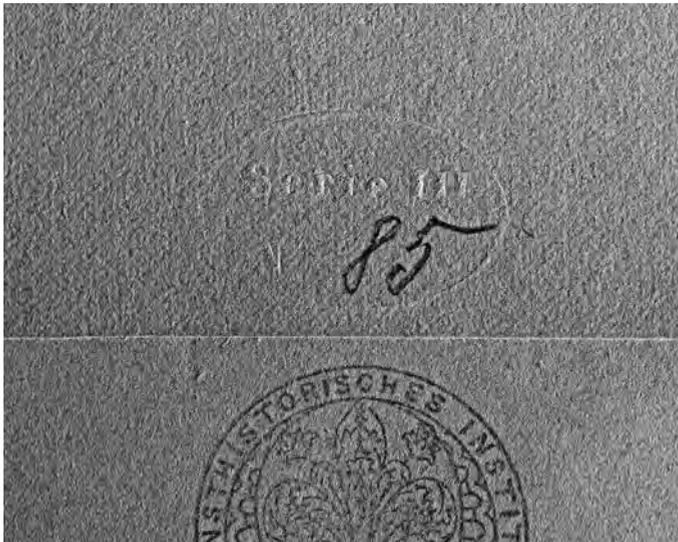
¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 48, 52 (now: Scuola fiorentina, ca. 1480).



4a "Leonardo da Vinci", Savonarola, drawing in the Albertina, Vienna. Photographer Fratelli Alinari, albumen, 1858. Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

photographic collection of Bernard Berenson in the Villa I Tatti.¹⁸ There I actually found four of the old Alinari photographs that were attributed to Raphael drawings from the Albertina in Vienna, two others from the Uffizi in Florence, and one from Venice. Thus, they obviously were not as rare as had been thought.¹⁹ This misjudgement probably had resulted from the difficulties in identifying them, and secondly, from a research strategy that had been too limited: the researchers from Alinari and other museums apparently had searched for photograph albums mainly in libraries and photographic collections. They had not searched for single photos, which are the most common components of large archives such as those in the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, the Bibliotheca Hertziana or the Villa I Tatti. In this case, it was of great advantage to have done the photo-historical research in an art-historical photo archive with focus on the reproduced work of art as a subject.

Once I had found so many of the early photographs, the next (and last) step was to examine their ‘objectivity’. So I took some of the photographs of Philpot and of Alinari, which were done after drawings of Renaissance artists held in the Uffizi, to the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi (GDSU) to compare the old photos with the original drawings.²⁰ As a result, it was not surprising to find out that in general the old photographs do not show all the details in the correct way. The yellow is black, some of the dark parts are completely black, without more differentiated tones of light and shadow.²¹ The contours are generally too hard, as Schmarsow said. This might have interfered with questions of at-



4b Detail: blindstamp “Serie III...”

¹⁸ I would like to thank Giovanni Pagliarulo, who granted me a very effective and successful short stay in the Villa I Tatti in May 2009.

¹⁹ Later on I found some of the old Alinari photographs from 1858/1859 in the Fotothek of the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome, too.

²⁰ I am very grateful to Costanza Caraffa, who gave me the opportunity to take the photographs to the GDSU, and I also appreciated the permission of the director of the

GDSU, Marzia Faietti, to let me see some of the valuable original Renaissance drawings. I owe special thanks to my ‘escort’ Henrike Eibelshäuser, who lent me her good art historical eye and her Italian language skills. And, last but not least, I thank the photographer Roberto Palermo, who took splendid digital photographs of selected drawings within a cooperative project of the GDSU, the KHI in Florence and the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa.



5 Raphael, "Madonna", drawing in the Uffizi, Florence. Photographer Giovanni Brampton Philpot, albumen, printed from a damaged collodion-plate. Fotothek, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome

tribution, in cases which needed to be judged on the basis of fine details. But otherwise the quality of the photographs, especially of the ones done by the Alinari, is amazingly good.

As a result of this research in the *Photothek* of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, there are some unexpected observations: every photographer seems to have his own 'handwriting' that makes it possible to identify him at a glance; this is quite in contradiction to contemporary statements about the camera as a soulless machine. Particularly in the first decades after its invention, photography was extremely dependent on the working methods of its operators, and those differed greatly. As an example one could take G. B. Philpot, whose work was not always of high quality: sometimes the margins are not sharp because of the limited focus of his camera's lens; he obviously used light, which spaced out unevenly; his photographs are not very brilliant, but grey in grey. He also printed the full plate without cutting the margins of the prints afterwards (second choice?); they are also fading because he did not tone them with gold, as was usually done by careful photographers, and even in the 1880s he sold prints after his old more or less damaged collodion plates (see fig. 5). Because of all these uncontrolled

processes, nearly every photo of Philpot is unique.²² Nevertheless, these photographs were very widely distributed, which demonstrates how difficult and expensive such photographic campaigns must have been, and thus no one else took the same photos in the Uffizi again (supposedly Philpot had a mono-poly).²³ On the other hand, Braun, the Photographic Company (Photographische Gesellschaft) from Berlin, Alinari and the like repeated their campaigns after technical innovations had taken place.

To sum up my project, I can say that Florence offers a very good research landscape ("Forschungslandschaft") not only for Renaissance art but also for photography (of Renaissance art). It is important to look at the original photographs with open eyes and an open mind to notice the little details and fine differences that are not visible in a digitalized version of the photograph in a data base. Digitalization can no more substitute the materiality of original photographs than photographs—even when attempting to provide a facsimile—can substitute for the original works of art.

²¹ On pre-orthochromatic photography, see note 9 in the article of Dorothea Peters, "From Prince Albert's Raphael Collection to Giovanni Morelli: Photography and the Scientific Debates on Raphael in the Nineteenth Century" in this volume.

²² Regine Schallert has found lots of prints from damaged

plates of G. B. Philpot in the Fotothek of the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome and kindly gave me the respective references.

²³ See e. g. Júlia Papp, "Artwork Photography in Hungary: The Early Years (1859–1885)", in: *Visual Resources* 25/3 (Sept. 2009), pp. 193–238, here pp. 206–207.

Matthias Bruhn

Bilder außer Dienst? Transformationen der Gebrauchsfotografie

»Das Interesse am Lichtbild ist allgemein.«

Kurt Zentner, 1956

Rettung der Bilder?

Im Jahre 1986 erschien in Berlin eine kleine Publikation in Heftform, auf deren Umschlag eine historische Schwarzweiß-Aufnahme in Postkartengröße abgedruckt war.¹ Sie zeigte einen Obdachlosen im ärmlichen Nachtlager, halb aufgerichtet vor einer Bretterwand posierend, an der aus Kunstdrucken, Fotografien und Reklameschildern eine Art Miniaturausstellung arrangiert worden war (Abb. 1). Der Titel des Heftes darunter lautete bündig: *Das Bildarchiv I*. Er stand mit dem Bild des Obdachlosen in einer seltsamen Spannung, die sich beim Öffnen des Umschlages noch spontan verstärkte. Denn hier nun rief plötzlich eine neue Überschrift das Programm des Heftes aus: *Rettet die Bilder!*

Um welche Bilder sollte es gehen? Um solche, die der Obdachlose aus dem Müll gezogen hatte? Ging es um das Umschlagfoto selbst, das in das wohlsortierte Ullstein-Archiv gelangt war? Welche Rolle blieb dem namenlosen Sammler dabei?

Der Herausgeber Diethart Kerbs, Kunstpädagoge und Fotohistoriker, antwortete mit einem Vorwort, das auf den bleibenden Mangel an historischem Bewusstsein für die Schätze der Fotogeschichte verwies. Um diesem Umstand abzuhelpfen, sollte das Heft eine Reihe eröffnen, die dann aber nicht weitergeführt wurde, dafür folgten weitere Artikel und Themenhefte von Museums- und Archivzeitschriften, von denen eines auch den Titel von 1986 wörtlich aufgriff.² Systematisch wurden seither Archive

¹ Diethart Kerbs, *Das Bildarchiv I. Rettet die Bilder!*, Berlin o.J. [1986].

² *Rettet die Bilder. Fotografie im Museum*, hrsg. von der Landesstelle für Museumsbetreuung Baden-Württemberg in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Museumsverband Baden-Württemberg e.V., Redaktion Axel Burkarth /

Wolfgang Hesse, Stuttgart 1992. Vgl. Diethart Kerbs / Walter Uka / Brigitte Walz-Richter (Hrsg.), *Die Gleichschaltung der Bilder. Zur Geschichte der Pressefotografie 1930–36* (Ausst.-Kat. Berlin 1983), Berlin 1983; Bernd Weises fünfteilige Beitragsserie »Pressefotografie in Deutschland«, in: *Fotogeschichte*, 8/31 (1988), S. 15–40;



DAS BILDARCHIV I

1 »Rettet die Bilder!« Umschlagseite einer Publikation von Diethart Kerbs, Berlin 1986

von Fotografen und Agenturen, Bestände von Hochschulen und Museen gesichtet – Explorationen *ins Innere des Bilderbergs*,³ bei denen Röntgenaufnahmen und Pressebilder, Bewegungsfotografien von Muybridge und Reiseansichten des 19. Jahrhunderts zum Vorschein kamen.

Die langjährigen und mühevollen Recherchen waren keine Initialzündung, die den heutigen Debatten um eine ikonische Wende vorausgearbeitet hätte, sie waren vielmehr die konkrete Einlösung eines politischen Programms der Kunst- und Kulturwissenschaften, sich jenseits der Galeriekunst auch den populären Bildformen und Bildgedächtnissen zuzuwenden. Eine Frucht desselben Engagements war die von Kerbs initiierte Ausstellung *Auf den Straßen von Berlin*, welche nicht nur den Pressefotografen Willy Römer erstmals einem größeren Publikum bekannt machte, sondern auch zu verstehen gab, dass gewaltige fotografische Nachlässe aus der Frühzeit der Reportage dem Vergessen anheimfallen, weil sie von Bibliotheken und Museen nicht übernommen werden.⁴ Die Bestände scheinen zu groß und zu heterogen, die Negative und Abzüge zu unbedeutend, als dass sie konserviert werden müssten, zumal wenn sie womöglich schon zu Zeiten ihrer Entstehung als Über- und Ausschuss behandelt worden sind.

Bewirtschaftung: Überschuss als Prinzip

Damit ist ein historiographisches Problem umrissen, das die gesamte moderne Bilderwelt betrifft, und zwar in einem solchen Maße, dass es Wunder nehmen könnte, wie wenig es interessiert oder irritiert. Denn das moderne Bild ist ein industrielles, Zeichen einer visuellen Produktivität, die mehr Aufnah-

9/33 (1989), S. 27–62; 10/37 (1990), S. 13–36; 14/52 (1994), S. 27–40; 16/59 (1996), S. 33–50; Wolfgang Hesse, »Die Fotografie: Stiefkind der Archive?«, in: Hartmut Weber (Hrsg.), *Bestandserhaltung. Herausforderung und Chancen* (Veröffentlichungen der Staatlichen Archivverwaltung Baden-Württemberg, 47), Stuttgart 1997, S. 79–86; Diethart Kerbs, »Schicksale Deutscher Pressebildarchive«, in: *Rundbrief Fotografie*, 11/3 (2004), S. 23–29. Eine rezente Bibliographie liefert Anton Holzer, »Nachrichten und Sensationen. Pressefotografie in Deutschland

und Österreich 1890 bis 1933. Ein Literaturüberblick«, in: *Fotogeschichte*, 28/107 (2008), S. 61–67.

³ Vgl. den gleichnamigen Titel *Ins Innere des Bilderbergs. Fotografien aus den Bibliotheken der Hochschule der Künste und der Technischen Universität Berlin*, bearb. von Joachim Schmid, Göttingen 1988 (freundlicher Hinweis von Franziska Brons).

⁴ Diethart Kerbs (Hrsg.), *Auf den Straßen von Berlin. Der Fotograf Willy Römer 1887–1979* (Ausst.-Kat. Berlin 2004–2005), Bönen/Westfalen 2004.

men herstellt, als es je Betrachter dafür geben kann. Historisch relevant sind die Nachlässe von Fotografen und Bilderdiensten also nicht nur wegen ihres Alters, ihrer Rarität oder ihres Quellenwertes, sondern auch weil sie für einen tiefgreifenderen Wandel von Wahrnehmung stehen.⁵

Dieser Wandel setzte spätestens in der revolutionären Phase um 1800 ein. Schon der Buch- und Flugblattdruck der Frühen Neuzeit hatte zwar das Bild zu einem Medium der Kommunikation gemacht und die Verbreitung von Nachrichten und Anschauungen befördert, der Industrialisierungsschub brachte hier jedoch auch quantitative Veränderungen mit sich. Seit Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts wurden die Abstände kürzer, in denen neue drucktechnische Verfahren aufkamen. ‚Illustration‘ von Büchern und Zeitschriften wurde zu einem Gewerbe und Berufsfeld, das Publikum wuchs und mit ihm der Ausstoß der Papiermühlen und Dampfpresen. Die Entwicklung der Fotografie, bei der Naturforschung und physikalisch-chemisches Experiment, künstlerisch-graphische Traditionen und technische Innovation eine kausale Verbindungen eingegangen sind, steht in dieser Phase für die Industrialisierung des Bildes und den länderübergreifenden Erfindungs- und Unternehmungsdrang.⁶



2 Walter Gircke, Sportfotografen am Zieleinlauf (Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung, Sportnummer von 1922)

⁵ Der Beitrag greift hier Argumente der Diskussionsrunde »Future of the Photo Archive« im Kunsthistorischen Institut in Florenz 2009 und eines Vortrages auf, der im Rahmen des DGPh-Symposiums *Depot und Plattform. Bildarchive im post-fotografischen Zeitalter* im Juni 2009 in Köln gehalten wurde (Dank an Costanza Caraffa, Herta Wolf und Estelle Blaschke).

⁶ Friedrich Tietjen, »Unternehmen Fotografie. Zur Früh-

geschichte und Ökonomie des Mediums«, in: *Fotogeschichte*, 26/100 (2006), S. 9–16; vgl. Hans Christian Adam, »Zwischen Geschäft und Abenteuer. Fotografieren im 19. Jahrhundert«, in: *Alles Wahrheit! Alles Lüge! Photographie und Wirklichkeit im 19. Jahrhundert* (Ausst.-Kat. Köln 1996–1997), Dresden / Berlin 1996, S. 25–33.

Die optische Sensation, die daraus resultierte, weckte nur umso größere Erwartungen an die Möglichkeit von Bildern, Zeit und Raum zu überwinden. Die Differenz des neuen Mediums zu bisherigen Formen ihrer Wiedergabe machte es denkbar, dass es noch andere Möglichkeiten geben könnte, die Welt zu sehen, zu erobern und auszubeuten.⁷ Obwohl die ersten photogenischen Bilder vergänglich und nicht druckfähig waren, die Apparaturen und Chemikalien intransportabel, die Verschlusszeiten zu lang, blieb die Erwartung groß genug, um selbst in blassesten Aufnahmen sichtbare Dinge vorwegzunehmen. Die Maschinerie der *Cartes de visite*, der illustrierten Presse, der Stereo- und Fotopostkarten ist seither nicht mehr zum Stillstand gekommen.⁸

Parallel dazu wurde die Welt seit Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts im wirtschaftlichen und politischen Wettlauf um Nachrichten von Kabel- und Depechendiensten überzogen. Zeitungsverlage gründeten auf genossenschaftlicher Basis zentrale Versorger wie *Associated Press*. Mit leichteren und schnelleren Kameras erreichte auch das Angebot an Fotografien die kritische Masse. Seit es um das Jahr 1900 gelang, Fotografie direkt auf Zeitungspapier abzudrucken, fand die Bildreportage ein Millionenpublikum im Blätterwald der Großstädte. Der auflagenstarke und weltweite Vertrieb erzeugte einen neuen Typus von Ikone, den gewinnträchtigen *Scoop* oder ›Knüller‹, und einen neuen Indikator von Aufmerksamkeit, die Fotografenmeute (Abb. 2). Aus der Verbindung von Vertriebswegen, Reportagefotografie und Massenreproduktion gingen schließlich, ebenfalls um 1900 und weitgehend synchron in den großen Metropolen, professionelle Makler hervor, die den Kontakt zwischen Fotografen und Redaktionen herstellten, den Versand von Bildern und die Verwaltung von Rechten und Gebühren übernahmen – die Presse-Illustrationsbetriebe, gefolgt von den Bilderdiensten der Presseagenturen.⁹ Für das bewegte Bild entwickelte sich später eine vergleichbare Logistik im Bereich des Wochenschau-Films.

Das Bild wurde in diesem Prozess taylorisiert und fordisiert, Prinzipien der Arbeitsteilung und Betriebsoptimierung auf ein Wirtschaftsgut übertragen, das in Millionenaufgabe reproduzierbar, aber auch alterungsfähig ist. Bilder der Nachrichtenagenturen und Fotoreporter verlieren seither binnen Stunden an Aktualität, nicht zuletzt dank der eigenen permanenten Nachlieferung; Archivbilder werden dagegen zum Geschäftsfeld von Lieferanten, die auf die Akkumulation und Wiederverwendung von Aufnahmen zur zweckdienlichen Illustration von Sachverhalten setzen.¹⁰ Letztere werden auch kreativ tätig, indem sie ›nichtaktuelle‹ Symbolbilder für abstrakte Themen anbieten und ihr vorhandenes Material entsprechend verschlagworten und konfektionieren. Werden Aufnahmen als veraltet angesehen, können sie je nach Sammlungspolitik auch aussortiert oder an ihre Hersteller zurückgegeben werden.

Beide Bildkonzepte verbindet die Aufgabe, wachsende Materialmengen zu verwalten, Quellen nachweise zu pflegen, Rechts- und Honoraransprüche auf globaler Ebene zu sichern. Ihr fotografisches Wissen besteht nicht mehr nur in der Beschaffung von Aufnahmen, sondern in der Sicherstellung, dass sie nicht unkontrolliert reproduziert werden (vgl. Abb. 3). Das Geschäftsmodell ruft private Kapital-

⁷ Das gilt auch für die ersten Ergebnisse, die noch als naturhafte Objekte gehandelt werden, s. dazu Ann Thomas, »The Search for Pattern«, in: dies. (Hrsg.), *Beauty of Another Order. Photography in Science*, New Haven/CT 1997, S. 81.

⁸ Siehe zu ersten Sättigungsphänomenen im 19. Jahrhundert Elizabeth Ann McCauley, *Industrial Madness. Commercial Photography in Paris, 1848–1871*, New Haven/CT 1994.

⁹ Zur Definition des Begriffs Bildagentur vgl. Matthias Bruhn, »Tarife für das Sichtbare. Eine kurze Geschichte

der Bildagenturen«, in: *Fotogeschichte*, 27/105 (2007), S. 12–25.

¹⁰ Vgl. Estelle Blaschkes Beschreibung des Bettmann-Archivs, »Du fonds photographique à la banque d'images. L'exploitation commerciale du visuel via la photographie«, in: *Etudes photographiques*, 24 (2009), S. 150–181; und auch Nina Lager Vestberg, »From the filing cabinet to the internet: digitising photographic libraries«, in: Costanza Caraffa (Hrsg.), *Fotografie als Instrument und Medium der Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin / München 2009, S. 129–144, hier S. 135–137.

Agenturen der Sichtbarkeit

Die Tätigkeit von Bilddiensten und -agenturen bleibt in der Regel eher unbemerkt, von *Credit Lines* und Copyrightnachweisen abgesehen, obwohl sie seit einem Jahrhundert als Knotenpunkte und Monopolisten der globalen Bildversorgung agieren. Sie vermitteln und verstärken die tägliche Produktion zu symbolischen Nachrichten, indem sie Bildangebote filtern. Dies beginnt bei der Tätigkeit von Fotografen, die im Rahmen von Akkreditierungen und Aufträgen operieren, setzt sich fort in der Verschlagwortung und Beschriftung des eingelieferten Materials und führt weiter über die Redaktionen, die aus dem eingelieferten Material zum Zwecke der Illustration von Textnachrichten oder zur Befriedigung mutmaßlicher Seherwartungen eine Auswahl vornehmen (Abb. 4).

Dabei treten auch Rückkopplungen auf: Fotografie, Redaktion, Verlag, Grafiker und andere Gruppen sind Bestandteile einer Dienstleistung namens Bild, bei der Expertenbetrachter (oder ›Profikunden‹) antizipieren müssen, welche Aufnahmen den größten Nachrichtenwert oder die stärkste Symbolkraft besitzen. Fotografen müssen vor Ort individuelle Entscheidungen treffen, mit einem professionellen Gespür für wirksame Aufnahmen. Bildredakteure reagieren auf Textvorgaben, greifen bei der Wahl verständlicher oder ungewöhnlicher Bilder auf eigene Erfahrungen zurück, recherchieren in vorstrukturierten Beständen und Suchsystemen: Entscheidungen, die in kürzester Zeit und innerhalb



4 Hans Dürrwald: Ein Bildredakteur sucht gemeinsam mit dem dpa-Fotografen Manfred Rehm (re.) in der Frankfurter Bildzentrale der Deutschen Presse-Agentur nach dem besten Foto auf einem Negativ-Streifen

bestimmter Systeme getroffen werden.¹³ Dabei können Gründe für den Ausschluss wichtiger sein als jene für die Auswahl.

Wenn unter dem Begriff einer *Visual Culture* angemahnt wurde, auch die Sehregime, die Apparaturen und Aufführungsorte des 18. Jahrhunderts oder den Sensationalismus der Folgezeit unter die Lupe zu nehmen,¹⁴ so müsste die Institution ›Bildagentur‹ zweifellos hierzugehören. Sie hat eine Fotokratie begründet, welche durch ihre Illustrationspraxis zeitgeschichtliche und stereotypische Muster mitprägt, auf gemeinsame Ausdrucksweisen Einfluss nimmt und damit auch Teil des ideologischen Apparates sein kann.

Andererseits wurde dies erst möglich durch eine Bildkommunikation, bei der Bilder auch stetig zirkulieren. Aus einer ikonologischen Perspektive spiegeln sich in den Praktiken von Fotografen, Bildagenturen und Redaktionen kollektive Formwelten, Nachfragestrukturen, semantische Prinzipien, die sich über Jahrhunderte durch diesen Bildertausch ergeben haben und die den visuellen Raum (in Form von Gattungen, Ressorts, ästhetischen Normen, Ikonografien) bis heute vorsortieren. Auf einer solchen Verbindung von Technik und Seherwartungen beruht z. B. die heutige Dominanz rechteckiger und gegenständlicher Bilder, und aus derselben Verbindung resultiert die Möglichkeit, sich auf Knopfdruck in Bildern zu äußern. Es gehört zu dieser Kommunikationsform, dass sie symbolisch arbeitet, und ebenso, dass sie umfangreiche materielle Spuren hinterlässt.

Prozess und Material

Die Vorherrschaft der Fotoreportage wurde seit den 1970er Jahren mit dem Aufstieg des Fernsehens in kürzer werdenden Wellen herausgefordert. Berühmte Printmagazine wurden eingestellt, Kamerahersteller, Multimedia- und Computerunternehmen lieferten sich einen Konkurrenzkampf um den Bildermarkt, später gefolgt von Suchmaschinen und den Tauschbörsen des Web 2.0, welche die etablierten Geschäftsfelder der Agenturen unterspülen, die ihrerseits zu Content-Händlern werden. Mit dem Aufruf, Handyfotos und Videos als Straßenreportage einzureichen, knüpfen Bildredaktionen teilweise unbewusst wieder an ihre Anfänge an, denn der derzeitige Bildermarkt war nicht möglich ohne jene Inflation, die um 1900 mit der fotografischen Illustration von Zeitungen losbrach und dadurch auch neue Unterscheidungen von professioneller und amateurmäßiger Fotografie mit sich brachte.¹⁵

Seit die digitalen Bildaufzeichnungsmedien mit globalen Kommunikationsplattformen kurzgeschlossen sind, geht es bei den elektronischen Geschäftsmodellen aber längst nicht mehr nur um Bilder, ja nicht einmal unbedingt um Nachrichten, sondern um *traffic*, d. h. um Prozesse, um Kundenprofile, die Verwertung komplexer und statistisch begriffener Datenmengen.¹⁶ Die neuen Netze bewirtschaften ihre dynamischen Bestände unter Verzicht auf qualitative Erschließung und liefern in ers-

¹³ Vgl. z. B. die Beschreibungen bei Wilson Hicks, *Words and Pictures. An Introduction to Photo-Journalism*, New York 1952, S. 27; Stefan Hartmann, »Wer macht die Bilder? Die Foto-Agenturen, die Fotografen und die Fotografie«, in: *Photonews* (Februar 2006), S. 3; oder Anne-Celine Jaeger, *Image Makers, Image Takers: The Essential Guide to Photography by Those in the Know*, London 2010².

¹⁴ So bei Jonathan Crary, *Techniken des Betrachters. Sehen und Moderne im 19. Jahrhundert*, Dresden 1996. Vgl.

auch Allan Sekula, »Der Handel mit Fotografien«, in: Herta Wolf (Hrsg.), *Paradigma Fotografie. Fotokritik am Ende des fotografischen Zeitalters*, Bd. 1, Frankfurt/M. 2002, S. 255–290.

¹⁵ Siehe dazu jüngst auch Susanne Regener (Hrsg.), *Amateure. Laien verändern die visuelle Kultur (Fotogeschichte 29/112 [2009])*, S. 111.

¹⁶ André Gunthert, »L'image partagée. Comment internet a changé l'économie des images«, in: *Etudes photographiques*, 24 (2009), S. 182–209.



5 Roland Weihrauch: Fotografen der großen Nachrichtenagenturen bearbeiten ihre Aufnahmen des Mannesmann-Prozesses im Düsseldorfer Landgericht, 29.11.2006

ter Linie einen Technologierahmen, ein Geschäftsmodell, um Kunden in der sozialen Interaktion zu *content providers* zu machen.

Wenn es in einer solchen Umgebung noch den Kollektivsingulär ›Bild‹ gibt, so auch deshalb, weil es Medien, Orte, Professionen gibt, an die es gebunden bleibt, und Ansprüche, die es definieren. Prinzipiell könnten Bilder jedes Phänomen meinen, das eine ›Bildlizenz‹ rechtfertigt oder mit einem ›Bildbearbeitungsprogramm‹ ediert wird, wo sie nicht nur über Motiv und Gestalt definiert werden, sondern auch über Dateiformate, Übertragungsprotokolle, Codecs, Tariflisten und vieles mehr.

Andererseits bleiben Anzeigeflächen für Textspalten, Standbilder und Videos selbst in multimedialen Umgebungen als *asset types* weiterhin unterschieden. Die Geschichte der Reproduktion steht daher nicht für eine ›Entmaterialisierung‹ des Bildes, sondern eher für einen Wandel des Materialbegriffs selbst. Die Fotografie hat ihr Trägermedium mehrfach grundlegend geändert, und der gewerbliche Betrieb des Bildertauschs erzeugt selbst im Digitalen noch ein Material, das als Lizenz, Bildschirmanzeige, Berufspraxis oder Rechtsform seine eigene Substanz und Realität hat (vgl. Abb. 5).¹⁷ Es müssen zwar keine Rücksendungen mehr einsortiert, keine Negative zerschnitten, keine Fahrradkuriere ausgesandt werden, doch hat sich mit neuen Geschäftsmodellen und Technologien auch die Idee des Handelsgutes Bild und seiner Materialität weiterentwickelt.

Schon die Etablierung der Kunstgeschichte als Universitätsfach vor gut 200 Jahren stand unter dem Eindruck neuer Bildermengen und Bildverluste, so wie mit steigender Medienvielfalt ›Reproduktion‹

¹⁷ Marlene Manoff, »The Materiality of Digital Collections: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives«, in: *Libraries and the Academy*, 6/3 (2006), S. 311–325.

ein zentrales Thema ihrer Theoriebildung wurde; schon die fotografischen Archive des 19. Jahrhunderts haben als professionelle Dienstleister stets mehr als nur Fotografien gemakelt. Heute sind sie die Nachfolger der Gemäldegalerien und -depots, Museen einer technischen Wahrnehmung von Welt. Die Masse und Materialität der Bilder, ihre Schubladen und Beschriftungen, Schlagwortlisten, Lieferscheine sind dabei ebenso bildhaft wie die verwelkten Ansichten, die sie der Nachwelt bieten.¹⁸ Und sie waren schon zur Zeit ihrer Entstehung Ausdruck konkurrierender Vorstellungen von Qualität und Originalität, Aktualität und Zweckerfüllung.¹⁹

Bilder des Gebrauchs

Trotz ihrer kunst- und medienhistorischen Bedeutung sind größere Teile dieses visuellen Umsatzes dem Vergessen anheimgefallen, und Ähnliches wird auch der gegenwärtigen digitalen Bildproduktion widerfahren. Der Grund ist nicht mangelnder Speicherplatz, sondern die Facettierung digitaler Information und das Aufgehen von Bildern in einem größeren Kommunikationsgeflecht. Screenshots werden wenig aussagekräftig sein, um Erinnerung zu halten, welche sozialen Prozesse z. B. durch die Kombination von audiovisuellen Medien und Netzwerken via Internet in Gang kommen. Wie schon die Phase um 1900, bei der das filternde Sehen und Vergessen professionalisiert wurde, bietet aber auch dieser neuerliche Umbruch Gelegenheit zu einer Neubewertung historischer Bildprozesse und -sammlungen. Das Internet legt den Zirkulationscharakter von Bildern deutlicher frei, Verkehrswege ändern sich, neue Kontaktzonen entstehen. Kategorien der Anonymität und des Transitorischen erlangen eine eigene Qualität. Und vor allem: Physische Sammlungen können dadurch wertvoller werden.

Es bleibt jedoch unterschiedlichen Interessen und Engagements überlassen, welche Bildermengen und -medien auf welche Weise überliefert werden, neue Festplatten sind jedenfalls genauso erhaltenswert wie alte Kleinbilddias. Wenn private Sammler Fotografien nach Gesichtspunkten ästhetischer oder journalistischer Qualität und Bekanntheit auswählen, so sichern sie ein Kulturerbe, indem sie es zugleich auswählen. Wenn Nachrichtendienste ihre Schätze als »Auge des Jahrhunderts« oder als »Spiegel der Geschichte« feiern (und damit ihre Marktführerschaft), so steht ihren Ikonen der Pressefotografie ein gewaltiger Apparat unbekannter Bilder gegenüber, den auch sie unter hohen Kosten weiterpflegen müssen.²⁰

Agenturen und Bildstellen, Fotoarchive von Universitäten, Museen, Denkmalschutzämtern sind Resultate eines industrialisierten Sehens und seiner Widersprüche. Sie können mit jedem Medienwandel ihre Funktionen verlieren und entsorgt werden, sofern sie nicht neue Aufgaben finden. Diese neuen Aufgaben und Nachfragen werden sich aber nur einstellen, wenn das Ziel nicht allein darin besteht, ein bestimmtes historisches Material zu sichern, sondern es durch die Art der Nutzung über-

¹⁸ Herbert Molderings hat am Beispiel des *Deutschen Photodienstes* (DEPHOT) gezeigt, welche unterschiedlichen Akteure die Aufarbeitung eines einzelnen Agenturbetriebes einschließt, vgl. Herbert Molderings, »Eine Schule der modernen Fotoreportage. Die Fotoagentur Dephot (Deutscher Photodienst) 1928–1933«, in: *Fotogeschichte*, 28 (2008), 107, S. 4–21. Vgl. ders., *Umbo. Otto Umbehr, 1902–1980*, Düsseldorf 1996; sowie Elizabeth Edwards / Janice Hart (Hrsg.), *Photographs Objects Histories. On the Materiality of Images*, London / New York 2004.

¹⁹ Vgl. Eberhard Ortland, »Urheberrecht als Bildregime«, in: Jean-Baptiste Joly / Cornelia Vismann / Thomas Weitin (Hrsg.), *Bildregime des Rechts*, Stuttgart 2007, S. 268–288; Fabian Steinhauer, *Bildregeln. Studien zum juristischen Bilderstreit*, München 2009.

²⁰ Die gewerblich-journalistischen Bildpraktiken sind zugleich ein Beleg dafür, dass es nicht genügt, auf private Bewirtschaftungsmodelle zu setzen, um Ausgaben für den Unterhalt öffentlicher Sammlungen zu senken.

haupt wieder als solches wahrzunehmen, sei es durch Forschung, Ausstellung, Weitergabe, als Bildverlag oder Artothek.

Um »die Bilder zu retten«, müsste also vor allem die Zahl derer vermehrt werden, welche diese Bilder betrachten, erforschen oder besitzen wollen – dabei bleiben Seminare, Exkursionen, Sommerschulen, die den direkten Weg in Bildsammlungen aller Art nehmen, die erste Wahl.

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Authors Biographies

ANN JENSEN ADAMS, Associate Professor in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture, University of California at Santa Barbara, is a specialist in 17th-century Dutch painting, particularly portraiture. Her publications include, *Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community* (Cambridge 2009), an edited volume of essays *Rembrandt's Bathsheba Reading King David's Letter* (Cambridge 1998), and a forthcoming monograph on Thomas de Keyser.

MARY BERGSTEIN is Professor of History of Art and Visual Culture at Rhode Island School of Design. She is the author of *Mirrors of Memory: Freud, Photography, and the History of Art* (2010) and *The Sculpture of Nanni di Banco* (2000). Bergstein was co-editor and co-curator with Maureen C. O'Brien of *Image and Enterprise: The Photography of Adolphe Braun* (1999). She has written numerous articles on topics including Italian sculpture, art historiography, and visual culture.

MATTHIAS BRUHN has a doctorate in Art History. He was member of the research department *Politica Iconography* (Hamburg University, 1997–2001) and coordinator for World Heritage Studies in Cottbus (2004). Since 2005 he heads Humboldt University's research unit *Das Technische Bild*. He was co-founder of arthist.net and had fellowships in the U.S. and Germany. Monographs include *Bildwirtschaft* (2003), *Sichtbarkeit der Geschichte* (ed. with K. Borgmann, 2005), *Das Bild* (2008). He's also co-editor of *Bildwelten des Wissens*.

CONSTANZA CARAFFA is since 2006 Head of the Photothek at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz—Max-Planck-Institut. After studies on European baroque architecture she is now working on documentary photography and photographic archives, another project is devoted to Syracuse/Ortygia as a city-island. Among her publications are *Gaetano Chiaveri (1689–1770) architetto romano della Hofkirche di Dresda* (2006) and, as editor, *Fotografie als Instrument und Medium der Kunstgeschichte* (2009).

ELIZABETH EDWARDS is Professor of Photographic History and Director of the Photographic History Research Centre, De Montfort University, UK. She has previously held posts as Curator of Photographs at Pitt Rivers Museum and lecturer in visual anthropology at the University of Oxford, and at the University of the Arts London. She has worked extensively on the relationships between photography, anthropology and history in cross-cultural environments. Her monographs and edited works include *Anthropology and Photography* (1992), *Raw Histories* (2001), *Photographs Objects Histories* (2004), and *Sensible Objects* (2006). Her next book, on photography and historical imagination in Britain, 1885–1918, appears with Duke University Press in 2012.

PASCAL GRIENER is professor of art history and museology at the university of Neuchâtel (Switzerland). D. Phil. at Oxford under Francis Haskell. Publications on historiography, history of collections, history of perception. Latest publications: *La*

République de l'œil. L'expérience de l'art au siècle des Lumières. Paris: Odile Jacob and Collège de France, 2010; essay in *The art-book at the beginning of the photographic era*, ed. Stephen Bann, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington (2011).

ANTHONY HAMBER is an independent historian of 19th-century photography. He was for more than a decade the photographer and head of visual resources of the Department of History of Art, Birkbeck College, University of London. His publications include "A Higher Branch of the Art": *Photographing the Fine Arts in England 1839–1880* (1996) and *Collecting the American West. The Rise and Fall of William Blackmore* (2010). His current includes an annotated international bibliography of photographically illustrated publications 1839–1880.

MACHTELT ISRAËLS is specialized in Italian Renaissance art. For Harvard University's Villa I Tatti she edited *Sassetta: The Borgo San Sepolcro Altarpiece* (2009) and is currently preparing, with Carl Brandon Strehlke, the catalogue of the paintings in the Berenson Collection. She is a researcher at the University of Amsterdam.

GERALDINE A. JOHNSON is a University Lecturer in History of Art at Oxford University and a College Fellow of Christ Church, Oxford. She is the editor of *Sculpture and Photography: Envisioning the Third Dimension* (1998) and co-editor of *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy* (1997), both published by Cambridge University Press. She is currently completing a book entitled *The Sound of Marble: The Sensory Reception of Art in Renaissance Italy*, which will also be published by Cambridge.

MELISSA BECK LEMKE is the Image Specialist for Italian Art in the National Gallery of Art's Department of Image Collections. In 2007, she curated a NGA library exhibition entitled *Character of Form: Clarence Kennedy and the Sculpture of Desiderio da Settignano*, coinciding with the Gallery's Desiderio exhibition. She has written about Kennedy for *The Burlington Magazine* and has given talks on his biography, photography and relationship with Edwin Land and Ansel Adams at the NGA and Smith College.

HUBERT LOCHER PhD, University of Bern 1992 on Raphael and the Altarpiece of the Renaissance

(publ. 1994). Habilitation University of Bern 1998/99 (*Kunstgeschichte als historische Theorie der Kunst*, publ. 2001, rev. ed. 2010). 1999–2008 Professor for Art History at the State Academy for Art and Design Stuttgart. Since 2008 Professor for the History and Theory of Visual Media and Director of the German Centre for Art Historical Documentation—Picture Archive Photo Marburg at the Philipps-University Marburg.

GIULIO MANIERI ELIA (Rome 1960) worked on the history of restoration, of the protection of historic buildings and monuments and of the scattering of works of art. He taught Theory and history of restoration at Università della Calabria. Since 2000 he is working for the Soprintendenza di Venezia, where he has directed a number of restorations. Furthermore he is the deputy director of the Gallerie dell'Accademia, director of the Ufficio Esportazione di Venezia and responsible for the Archivio fotografico e dei restauri.

EWA MANIKOWSKA is a researcher at the Institute of Art, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, where she is currently working on the database of the photographic collection of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments (1906–1939). She is coeditor and coauthor of the book *Polish Cultural Heritage on the Threshold of Independence* dedicated to the role played by this Society in the establishment of the notion of Polish cultural heritage in the years preceding the recreation of the Polish state in 1918.

ANDREA MATTIELLO is a contemporary art scholar and curator. He received a Master in History of Architecture and a Master in Visual Arts at the Università IUAV of Venice, and a PhD in Theory and History of Art at the School for Advanced Studies in Venice. His interests range from the contribution of photography in the History of Architecture to the development of Twentieth Century American Performance Art. He has conducted his research at the International Centre for Architectural Studies «Andrea Palladio», at the Ratti Foundation, at Harvard University, and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he was exchange scholar and where he collaborated with the SENSEable City Laboratory. He has been lecturing at the Università IUAV of Venice and has recently participated in the realization of an exhibition for the last Venice Biennale focused on the presence of Futurists at the Biennale in the Twentieth century.

- ANGELA MATYSSEK is Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin at the Art History Department of Philipps-Universität Marburg. She has written, among others, on Virchow's pathological preparations, Willi Baumeister's experiments with painting techniques during WW II, photography and the practices of art history. Currently she is working on a monograph about theories and practices of the original in contemporary art. Publications include: *Kunstgeschichte als fotografische Praxis. Richard Hamann und Foto Marburg*, Berlin 2009.
- DOMINIQUE MORELON, library curator, is head of the Special Collections service at the Library and Documentation Department of the Institut national d'histoire de l'art in Paris (rare books, prints, photographs, manuscripts and archival collections). She had previously similar responsibilities in the Bibliothèque d'Art et d'Archéologie Jacques Doucet and prior to that in the Bibliothèque du Musée de l'Homme where she was also associate director.
- GIOVANNI PAGLIARULO graduated in Art History at the University of Florence, Italy. His publications are mainly focused on Tuscan painting and drawing between the end of the 16th and the first half of the 17th centuries. He is curator of the Berenson Collection (2008) and of the Fototeca Berenson (2009) at Villa I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies. He is member of the Editorial Advisory Board of the journal 'Visual Resources'.
- SILVIA PAOLI is Conservatore dei beni culturali and curator of the Civico Archivio Fotografico at the Castello Sforzesco in Milano. She is as well active in museum works as she is teaching history of photography at the Facoltà di Design e Arti dell'Università IUAV in Venice. Her main interest is the history of photography from the 19th to the 20th century. She curated various exhibitions and publications (the last one was *Lo sguardo della fotografia sulla città ottocentesca. Milano 1839–1899*), she is collaborating in national and International projects.
- DOROTHEA PETERS was born in Göttingen, studies in psychology, anthropology, philosophy, pedagogy, education of arts, sociology, art history in Göttingen, Kiel and Berlin (diplomas as psychologist; graduate teacher; art historian). 6 years scientific staff member at the University of Arts (Hochschule der Künste) in Berlin (Faculty of Visual Communication). 2005 Doctoral thesis on photographic reproduction of works of art in the 19th century. Fellowships at the Deutsches Museum in Munich (2006), and at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz (2009, 2010/2011). Main research on the history of photography, printing, book publishing as well as history of science. Lives as independent scholar near Berlin.
- GRISELDA POLLOCK is Professor of Social & Critical Histories of Art and Director of the Centre for Cultural Analysis, Theory & History at the University of Leeds. She has written extensively on modern and contemporary art developing critical methods and theories of international, feminist postcolonial cultural analysis. Her recent publications include *Encounters in the Virtual Feminist Museum: Time, Space and the Archive 2007* and forthcoming is *Afteraffect/Afterimage: Aesthetic Wit(h)nessing in Post-Traumatic Culture* (2011).
- INGE REIST (PhD, Columbia University) is Director of the Center for the History of Collecting in America at The Frick Collection and Art Reference Library, where she is also Chief of Research Collections and Programs and Head of the Photoarchive. Her publications focus on Italian Renaissance art and information science, ranging from research problems concerning restitution of looted art to analyses of turning points in the history of collecting, such as the sale of the Orléans collection.
- PER RUMBERG studied art history at the Humboldt University in Berlin and the Courtauld Institute of Art in London. In 2010, he was Visiting Fellow at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence. He now works at the National Gallery in London.
- ALESSANDRA SARCHI has studied and taken her degree at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa and has subsequently received her PhD in History of Art at the University of Ca' Foscari, Venice, specializing in Renaissance Venetian sculpture. With the Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere e Arti she has published in 2008 the monograph "Antonio Lombardo". She has worked at the photo study collection of the museo Civico Medievale in Bologna, and at the Fondazione Federico Zeri with cataloguing, as well as research project, assignments.
- REGINE SCHALLERT studied history of art, philosophy and psychology at the universities of Freiburg

i. Br. and Perugia. In 1990 she joined the photographic collection of the Bibliotheca Hertziana (Max-Planck-Institute for Art History) in Rome where she also curates the special archives and the collection of historical photographs. Her research interests include photographs as a medium of documentation in the history of art and Italian 16th century sculpture.

TIZIANA SERENA is associate professor for History of Photography at the University of Florence. She is a member of the Scientific Committee of Linea di Confine since 2001, of Museo della Fotografia Contemporanea since 2005, and of Società Italiana di Studi di Fotografia since 2006. She has been working on XIX century's Italian and French photography, her next book is tentatively entitled "*The project L'Italie monumentale of Eugène Piot*". She is editor of several books, three of them published by the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa.

GRAHAM SMITH is Professor Emeritus in Art History at the University of St Andrews and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. His recent publications include: '*Light that Dances in the Mind: Photographs and Memory in the Writings of E. M. Forster and his Contemporaries*' (Peter Lang 2007); 'Talbot's Epigraph to *The Pencil of Nature*', *History of Photography* 34:1 (2010); and 'Photographs without Frontiers: Rauschenberg, Warhol, Hamilton and Photography', *History of Photography* 35:2 (2011).

PEPPER STETLER is Assistant Professor of Art History at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio (USA). A specialist in the art and photography of the early twentieth century, she is currently preparing a book manuscript on photographic books published during Germany's Weimar Republic.

EDITH STRUCHHOLZ, since 1999 research fellow in the Department of General and Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Mainz, member of the academic staff. Study of Art History at Rom, Florence and Münster, Dr. phil., thesis on Siena Cathedral (1995); Study of Journalism at Mainz. Research focus: Art of the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period, History of Art History; Issues of Interdisciplinarity and Interculturality. Co-editor "*Erinnerungen aus Rubens*" (2006), vol. 11 of "*Jacob Burckhardt Werke*", current work on vol. 15 "*Kunst des Mittelalters*".

KELLEY WILDER is Senior Research Fellow at the Photographic History Research Centre, De Montfort University, Leicester and Programme Leader of the MA Photographic History and Practice. She has published extensively on the relationship of photography to scientific practice and is the author of *Photography and Science* (Reaktion, 2009).