

dis:connected objects

hybrid workshop*

Speakers:

Hannah Baader, Friedrich von Bose,
Burcu Dogramaci, Hanni Geiger,
Petra Löffler, Nadia von Maltzahn, Änne Söll

Concept and organisation:

Änne Söll (Fellow at KHK)
Burcu Dogramaci (KHK)
Hanni Geiger (KHK)
Sophie Eisenried (KHK)

Registration:

sophie.eisenried@campus.lmu.de

15
June
2022

Käte Hamburger Research Centre
global dis:connect
Maria-Theresia-Straße 21
81675 Munich



LUDWIG-
MAXIMILIANS-
UNIVERSITÄT
MÜNCHEN



Bundesministerium
für Bildung
und Forschung

*The workshop will be held in German

dis:connected objects

hybrid workshop

In the process of globalisation, which develops not only as a form of intensifying networks and a compression of geographical connection but equally as a site of missing or missed connections and disentanglement, objects play an ambivalent role. On the one hand, they are viewed as symbols and metaphors for a world seemingly shrinking in size (such as the computer and technologies connected with it that facilitate connections worldwide). On the other, they can stand for the severe breaks, absences, detours and interruptions that are intrinsically linked to processes of globalisation, migration and exile (such as beloved family photographs that are brought into exile but also lost, dispersed and destroyed on migration routes).

Building on and expanding research on the provenance and restitution of objects, which has discussed ethical and legal issues connected to objects that were (illegally) transferred and sold under conditions of political dominance and exploitation, we would like to focus on the objects themselves. How are they dealt with in the context of museums? How do they reflect, change, challenge and deconstruct our understanding of globalisation?

Our workshop would like to shift attention to the processes of dis:connectivities in globalisation and how they impress themselves onto individual objects, their uses (or non-use) and functions in aesthetic and/or social as well as historical domains. How do objects stand in for the absences and detours that are also the result of globalisation? How are (art) objects dealt with in museum contexts that feature discourses about globalisation, migration and exile? What functions do objects have in debates about the political, historical and contemporary 'dangers' of globalisation, migration and exile? Taking individual objects as our starting point, we would like to discuss how objects and the discourses connected to them negotiate the reciprocal, but also tension-laden, relationships of global dis:entanglements? How do objects provide a complex, ambivalent or even controversial interface for the complex processes of globalisation?

Programme:



Wednesday, 15 June 2022

09:30–09:45	Welcome	14:30–15:15	Änne Söll: <i>Der Vogelkäfig der Kunsthistorikerin Yvonne Hackenbroch. Jüdische Exilerfahrung und die Rückkehr als Objekt</i>
09:45–10:30	Friedrich von Bose: <i>MAf 00853: Kopfbedeckung/ Kriegermütze. Ein „Objekt“ zwischen Forschung, Ausstellung und Restitution</i>	15:15–16:00	Burcu Dogramaci: <i>Eine Frau erlebt den roten Alltag von Lili Körber und John Heartfield (Cover): Verbrannte Bücher, re/emigriert Autor*innen und dis:konnektive Erinnerungen</i>
10:30–11:15	Petra Löffler: <i>Haeckels Korallen. Naturkunde im Zeichen des Kolonialismus</i>	16:00–16:15	Coffee
11:15–11:30	Coffee break	16:15–17:00	Hannah Baader: <i>Caspar David Friedrich, Der Watzmann. Ökologie, disconnected</i>
11:30–12:15	Hanni Geiger: <i>Hanna Charag-Zuntz' Keramik-Design: Levantinische Dis:konnektivitäten im Zeichen von Trennung, Transfer und Transformation</i>	17:00–17:30	Comment and discussion
12:15–13:00	Nadia von Maltzahn: <i>Ein Brief des Künstlers Vladimir Tamari. Exil, Freundschaft und die Rolle von Ephemera in der Kunstgeschichtsschreibung</i>		
13:00–14:30	Lunch		



Abstracts:

Friedrich von Bose: *MAf 00853: Kopfbedeckung/Kriegermütze. Ein „Objekt“ zwischen Forschung, Ausstellung und Restitution*

For 123 years, a headdress has been inside a box in the museum storage at Leipzig's GRASSI Museum of Ethnology. According to the current state of research, the headdress was looted in the course of a military expedition of the German colonial forces against the Dagbon Kingdom in the east of today's Ghana in 1896. It is said to have belonged to the commander and Na of Gbungbaliga, known as Kanbon-nakpem Ziblim. The museum bought the headdress from the estate of Valentin von Massow, the lieutenant who led the war against the Dagbon, in the course of which Kanbon-nakpem Ziblim was killed. By way of its looting and subsequent acquisition by the museum, the headdress was made into an ethnographic object. It stands for the entanglement of ethno-graphic museums with the violent history of German colonial rule. It also stands for the importance of challenging colonial object narratives and categorisations, and to work with and against the various disconnections in the object's itinerary in search for possibilities of restitution and repair.

Petra Löffler: *Haeckels Korallen. Naturkunde im Zeichen des Kolonialismus*

When natural scientist Ernst Haeckel visited the shores of the Red Sea in March 1873 a dream came true for him – see 'the magical coral reefs' there with his own eyes. But he came not only to admire the beauty of diverse coral species, but to get into their possession by extracting them from the sea. In my presentation I will reconstruct the migration routes and transformations Haeckel's corals had to take from their watery Arabian habitat to the dry showcases, collections, and depots of German natural history museums. I will argue that the appropriation of such natural 'resources' combined with established-'Western' collection practices are at the heart of ideas about scientific as well as aesthetic objects in the Global North. Like other living matter, the corals had first to disconnect from their natural habitat to become a collectible and classifiable scientific object. Today Haeckel's samples are distributed over different science institutions and once more disentangled. In following their many traces in inventory lists, correspondences and publications I will look for 'waves of action' Haeckel's undead corals are nevertheless able to release.

Hanni Geiger: *Hanna Charag-Zuntz' Keramik-Design: Levantinische Dis:konnektivitäten im Zeichen von Trennung, Transfer und Transformation*

Hanna Charag-Zuntz's ceramics reveal the designer's particular migration experiences resulting from her exile in Israel from Germany in 1940, with all the attendant separations, interruptions, and voids, made visible in the use of material, forms and techniques. At the same time the designs created in exile bear witness to restored connections and those that were never severed between the Eastern Mediterranean and the West. These dis:connections are manifest in processes of transfer and transformation or reformulation of the designed objects in-between the vernacular and 'modern', the formal and informal, local craft and industry and even in the (re-)migration of entire items between the designer's new and old homelands. I also trace the seemingly paradoxical social and institutional practices connected to the ceramics, whose functions move between personal use and national representation in museums. Flanked by Levantine cultural philosophy and the 'Mediterranean Option', the objects, ambivalent in their design, narratives and functions, are to be questioned as micro-models of a dis:connective, regionally shaped Mediterranean society, as the result of the complex synthesis of the politicised and isolated Middle East and the "global village".

Nadia von Maltzahn: *Ein Brief des Künstlers Vladimir Tamari. Exil, Freundschaft und die Rolle von Ephemera in der Kunstgeschichte*

This presentation takes a letter by the late, Tokyo-based Palestinian artist Vladimir Tamari to his friend in Normandy as a starting point to discuss questions of globalisation, colonisation, exile and friendship. Writing from a McDonald's that Tamari dubbed 'this dubious oasis of Western civilization', the letter addresses these subjects explicitly. It serves as an example to explore what ephemera such as this correspondence can teach us about networks, relationships, motivations and distances in the frame of artistic production. It will also be investigated how we should deal with such ephemera as objects, and who should be responsible for safeguarding them and making them accessible.

Änne Söll: *Der Vogelkäfig der Kunsthistorikerin Yvonne Hackenbroch. Jüdische Exilerfahrung und die Rückkehr als Objekt*

The Jewish art historian Yvonne Hackenbroch (1912–2012) left Germany in 1937, working in London at the British Museum, then in Toronto and finally at the Metropolitan Museum of art in New York, never to return to her hometown, Frankfurt. After her death, she bequeathed a bird cage built in 1757 to the Historische Museum Frankfurt, intending it to symbolise exile as well as reconciliation. Given to her by her parents, the bird cage accompanied Hackenbroch to all her points of exile. First, this presentation aims to examine the role the bird cage played in remembering Hackenbroch's hometown and her parents. Second, I aim to look at the role of objects within the discourse of Jewish exile and how the topic of exile is represented within museums via objects. How can a bird cage stand for Jewish exile as well as reconciliation, as Hackenbroch intended?

Burcu Dogramaci: *Eine Frau erlebt den roten Alltag von Lili Körber und John Heartfield (Cover): Verbrannte Bücher, re/emigriert Autor*innen und dis:konnektive Erinnerungen*

In her work *Die Bücher* (2019/20), the artist Annette Kelm compiles photographs of book covers that were burned during the Nazi era (*Bücherverbrennung*), under them Lili Körber's *Eine Frau erlebt den roten Alltag* from 1932. In it, Körber wrote about a year-long working stay in Russia, and the artist John Heartfield created a bright red photomontage for the book's cover. In 1938, Körber fled Vienna and went into exile in Switzerland and France. Finally, she emigrated to New York. John Heartfield, in turn, fled via Prague to London. Thus, the book *Eine Frau erlebt den roten Alltag* opens up two exile (hi)stories, but was itself a moving object, as Heartfield took the book with him into exile and also carried it during his remigration to East-Berlin.

Hannah Baader: *Caspar David Friedrich, Der Watzmann. Ökologie, disconnected*

In his later works, Caspar David Friedrich experimented with modes of connection and disconnection. His artistic strategies operate on ruptures and disconnections in space and time; as such, they became signatures of German Romanticism. But the histories of visual disconnect that are part of his painterly work do not end here. One of his paintings titled *Der Watzmann* emerged in a private collection in the 1930s in Berlin and was sold by its owner before leaving Germany into exile. It was restituted to the family in 2004 by the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, then sold by the family, and is now again on display in Berlin's National Gallery. The talk will investigate how the painting is and was connected and disconnected to the geographies of the alps, but also look into the ruptures in the 'making' of the Alps in the first part of the 20th Century.

Venue:
Käte Hamburger Research Centre
global dis:connect
Maria-Theresia-Str. 21
81675 Munich
Germany