

WORKING ON THINGS

ON THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC HISTORY OF COLLECTED OBJECTS

CONFERENCE IN BERLIN: NOVEMBER 21–22 2016

Monday, November 21, 2016

- From 9:00 REGISTRATION
- 9:30–11:00 **INTRODUCTION**
- 9:30 Welcome Address
Ina Heumann, Holger Stoecker, Marco Tamborini, Mareike Vennen, Joint Research Project "Dinosaurs in Berlin"
- 10:00 Keynote Lecture I
Objects in Transit: Commodities and Communication
Jim Secord, University of Cambridge
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30–12:50 **HIERARCHIES**
Chair: Gerd Spittler, Universität Bayreuth
- 11:30 Hunting, Investigating, and Exhibiting Great Apes. On Working Conditions in Colonial Cameroon and the German Reich, 1890–1926
Britta Lange, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
- 12:10 Collecting Fossils in Colonial German East Africa. Work and Workers at the Tendaguru Excavation, 1909–1913
Holger Stoecker, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
- 12:50 Lunch Break
- 14:00–16:00 **GLOBALIZATION**
Chair: Anke te Heesen, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
- 14:00 The Journey of a Man with a Fish: The Life of a Han Dynasty Object in a South Africa Museum, *Nicola Kritzinger, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg*
- 14:40 'A noble instrument for instruction': Assembling International Collections in the Cambridge Zoological Museum, 1866–1910, *Boris Jardine, University of Cambridge*
- 15:20 Excavating at Kuumbi Limestone Cave: Regional and Global Links in East African Prehistory, *Felix Chami, University of Dar es Salaam*
- 16:00 Break
- 16:30–18:00 **COMPETITION**
Chair: Bärbel Küster, Technische Universität zu Berlin
- 16:30 Building Dioramas as Socialist Work: Cuban Corals at the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, 1965–1975
Manuela Bauche, Museum für Naturkunde Berlin
- 17:10 The Epistemology of Authenticity: Plaster Cast Reproductions in 19th Century Museums, *Lukas Rieppel, Brown University, Providence*
- 17:50 Catering at the Grimm-Zentrum
- 19:30–22:00 **FILMWELTEN DER WISSENSCHAFT**
Knochenarbeit. Oder: *Dinosauria museologica*, **Museum für Naturkunde Berlin**, Sauriersaal, Invalidenstr. 43, 10115 Berlin

Tuesday, November 22, 2016

- 9:00 **INTRODUCTION**
Irina Podgorny, Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, Tahani Nadim, Museum für Naturkunde Berlin
- 9:30 Keynote Lecture II
My Sloane Museum, *James Delbourgo, Rutgers University*
- 10:30 Break
- 11:00–13:00 **MANAGEMENT**
Chair: Jochen Hennig, Scientific Collections of the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
- 11:00 Working on Photo-Objects: Photographs as Mobile Actors in Archeology, Ethnology, and Art History, *Stefanie Klamm, Kunstbibliothek, Petra Wodtke, Antikensammlung, both Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz*
- 11:40 Reconstructing the Puzzle: Argentine Theater and Literary Periodicals of the Early 20th Century – Piece by Piece
Peter Altekruiger, Christoph Müller, Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut
- 12:20 Belabouring the Catalogue: Classification Work in the British Museum, *Sebastian Felten, Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte Berlin, Rebecca Kahn, King's College London*
- 13:00 Break
- 14:00–16:30 **VALUATION**
Chair: Anja Schwarz, Universität Potsdam
- 14:00 Transporting the Tropics: Collecting and Preserving the Victorian Botanical Empire, *Elaine Ayers, Princeton University*
- 14:40 The Rhino Horn in the 21st Century: Collecting, Storing, and (not) Displaying, *Nicky Reeves, University of Glasgow*
- 15:20 Break
- 15:40 Economies of Collecting, Transporting, Conserving and Exhibiting Natural History Objects in the Ottoman Natural History Museum 1835–1850, *Semih Çelik, European University Institute, Florence*
- 16:20–17:00 **FINAL DISCUSSION**
Comments: Irina Podgorny, Museum für Naturkunde Berlin

VENUE: Jacob-und-Wilhelm-Grimm-Zentrum, Geschwister-Scholl-Straße 1/3, 10117 Berlin

Various kinds of work have to be invested in objects before they become worthy of collection, before they can be researched, preserved, and exhibited. Work on the dinosaur skeleton of *Brachiosaurus brancai* in Berlin's Museum für Naturkunde, for example, extended far beyond the decades of the fossil's preparation in the Museum. This object's history also includes the colonial forced labour on cotton plantations in German East Africa at the beginning of the twentieth century that produced the packing material necessary for transporting the findings to Europe. Such figurations of work across time and space form the focus of the conference: Which materials and what kinds of immaterial labour were necessary to acquire or produce a given object, in order to transport it, examine it, exhibit it, or value it? What existing knowledge, and which social, political, and legal conditions characterized this work? What types of materials, tools, or techniques were used?

The conference is part of the research project „Dinosaurs in Berlin. *Brachiosaurus brancai* as political, scientific and popular icon“. It is conceptualised and organised in cooperation with the base project Mobile Objects, Cluster of Excellence Image Knowledge Gestaltung of the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

Funded by the Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung.
Further information: <http://naturkundemuseum.berlin/en/dinosaurs-in-berlin>

REGISTRATION (closing date November 13, 2016): <https://hu.berlin/workingonthings> **CONTACT:** pan@mfn-berlin.de

