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Pictorial. Remain(s). Hidden. Archives. On the Personal Picture Archive of the German Historian Reinhart Koselleck (1923-2006)

Adriana Markantonatos, Philipps-Universität Marburg

Reinhart Koselleck (1923-2006) was the first chairholder for the theory of history in Germany and he is still considered one of the most important international conceptual historians. The name Koselleck often seems to be equivalent to the standard work “Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache”(edited by Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck, 1972-1997). Not quite as well-known as this is that already since the early 1960s – so before the actual renaissance of what today is associated with “iconology” connected to the names of Aby Warburg and Erwin Panofsky - Koselleck had been intensely dealing with “visual artifacts”, in particular with memorials. Apart from language Koselleck considered pictures to be an indispensable and important factor concerning historical understanding and political communication.

Since 2009 Koselleck’s picture archive is now being stored by the German Documentation Centre for Art History – Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, whereas his actual scholarly bequest has been acquired by the German Literature Archive. In cooperation, both institutions are going to make Koselleck’s remains available for research and initiate their own research projects. By the scientific inventory of both written and pictorial bequest in its medial entirety the cooperating institutions aim to establish integrative text- and picture-based research.

Reinhart Koselleck’s remains at the German Documentation Centre for Art History – Bildarchiv Foto Marburg consist of a comprehensive picture collection which is supplemented by thematically corresponding text material and a library. The complex stock of about thirty thousand pictures, which Koselleck had been collecting rather “hidden” at the basement of his private home since the early 1960s till his death, primarily includes photographs, drawings and notes taken by Koselleck himself, mainly dealing with the history of European war memorials and equestrian monuments. By this rather idiosyncratic collection of snap shots, press-cuttings and picture postcards Koselleck underlined his manifold interdisciplinary interest in the political power of pictures, even reaching into everyday culture. Though some of Koselleck’s investigations on political iconology have been published and several conferences have taken place, his pictorial remains indicate that most of his theoretical considerations and photographic reflections have “remained hidden” and are now waiting to be revealed.

Biographical Note

Adriana Markantonatos M.A.; Focus of Research: Cultural Theory, Visual Culture, Body Discourse, FashionTheory, Visual History. Born in 1982 in Korbach, Germany.

- 2003 - 2008 Studies in European Ethnology / Cultural Sciences, History of Art and English Literature at the Philipps-University Marburg, Germany.
- 2006 – 2008 Assistant at the Museum of Art and Cultural History in Marburg, Germany.
- 2008 *Magister Artium* in European Ethnology / Cultural Sciences; Thesis: “Body Sculpturing in the German Fashion Magazine Vogue (1979-2008).
- Since 2009 Research Assistant at the German Documentation Centre for Art History – Bildarchiv Foto Marburg; currently in charge of the personal picture archive of Reinhart Koselleck in cooperation with the German Literature Archive Marbach.
- Since 2010 Dissertation-Project: “Body Fragments – A Visual Anatomy”.