org is an online platform, collecting, describing, presenting and generating documents of all sorts. It documents documents.

Your path through the collection lead along Starry sky, long exposure, Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt), 14 April 2023, Interviews with residents of Sandersleben, no specific location, 2023 [2], Interviews with residents of Sandersleben, no specific location, 2023 [1], Detail of a wall, Salzmünde (Saxony-Anhalt), June 2023, Huang Baomei, A String of Pearls, Collaborators (portraits), 2023, Beyond the Sky’s Limits, Lemon, Index, Debatably graded, Neptune in opposition [20/20] – A constellation, Tipp-Ex, A Transparent Forest, Directory, I64.762/EDK/YDW, Neptune in opposition [13/20] – A foraging fox

What constitutes a 'document' and how does it function?

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the etymological origin is the Latin 'documentum', meaning 'lesson, proof, instance, specimen'. As a verb, it is 'to prove or support (something) by documentary evidence', and 'to provide with documents'. The online version of the *OED* includes a draft addition, whereby a document (as a noun) is 'a collection of data in digital form that is considered a single item and typically has a unique filename by which it can be stored, retrieved, or transmitted (as a file, a spreadsheet, or a graphic)'. The current use of the noun 'document' is defined as '*something* written, inscribed, *etc*., which furnishes evidence or information upon any subject, as a manuscript, title-deed, tomb-stone, coin, picture, etc.' (emphasis added).

Both 'something' and that first 'etc.' leave ample room for discussion. A document doubts whether it functions as something unique, or as something reproducible. A passport is a document, but a flyer equally so. Moreover, there is a circular reasoning: to document is 'to provide with documents'. Defining (the functioning of) a document most likely involves ideas of communication, information, evidence, inscriptions, and implies notions of objectivity and neutrality – but the document is neither reducible to one of them, nor is it equal to their sum. It is hard to pinpoint it, as it disperses into and is affected by other fields: it is intrinsically tied to the history of media and to important currents in literature, photography and art; it is linked to epistemic and power structures. However ubiquitous it is, as an often tangible thing in our environment, and as a concept, a document *deranges*.

the-documents.org continuously gathers documents and provides them with a short textual description, explanation, or digression, written by multiple authors. In *Paper Knowledge*, Lisa Gitelman paraphrases 'documentalist' Suzanne Briet, stating that 'an antelope running wild would not be a document, but an antelope taken into a zoo would be one, presumably because it would then be framed – or reframed – as an example, specimen, or instance'.
The gathered files are all documents – if they weren't before publication, they now are. That is what the-documents.org, irreversibly, *does*. It is a zoo turning an antelope into an 'antelope'.

As you made your way through the collection, the-documents.org tracked the entries you viewed. It documented your path through the website. As such, the time spent on the-documents.org turned into this – a new document.

This document was compiled by ____ on 30.10.2024 21:11, printed on ____ and contains 17 documents on 37 pages. (https://the-documents.org/log/30-10-2024-6443/)

the-documents.org is a project created and edited by De Cleene De Cleene; design & development by atelier Haegeman Temmerman.

the-documents.org has been online since 23.05.2021.

Notes

- De Cleene De Cleene is Michiel De Cleene and Arnout De Cleene. Together they form a research group that focusses on novel ways of approaching the everyday, by artistic means and from a cultural and critical perspective.
  www.decleenedecleene.be / info@decleenedecleene.be
- This project was made possible with the support of the Flemish Government and KASK & Conservatorium, the school of arts of HOGENT and Howest. It is part of the research project *Documenting Objects*, financed by the HOGENT Arts Research Fund.

Sources

- Briet, S. *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?* Paris: Edit, 1951.
- Gitelman, L. *Paper Knowledge. Toward a Media History of Documents.* Durham/ London: Duke University Press, 2014.
- *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Accessed on 13.05.2021.



A constant, dependable presence. With the camera focused on the North Star for an extended period, the rotation of the Earth becomes visible. Nearby, in the municipality of Wiederstedt, the geologist, poet and philosopher Friedrich von Hardenberg (better known by his pen name Novalis) spent his childhood years between 1772 and 1784. A quote of his is engraved on a stone bench in the park surrounding the chateau where he was raised: “The human being does not speak alone – the universe also speaks – everything speaks – infinite languages.”

Notes

- From *S. Anders Leben. Eine Handlung in Gesprächen/S. Anders Leben – Living Differently: An Act in Conversations*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

Starry sky, long exposure, Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt), 14 April 2023



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	14.06.2024	Bild 003_mk.jpg	73 MB	Stephanie Kiwitt

category
astronomy, literature, Trigger

20:52:20

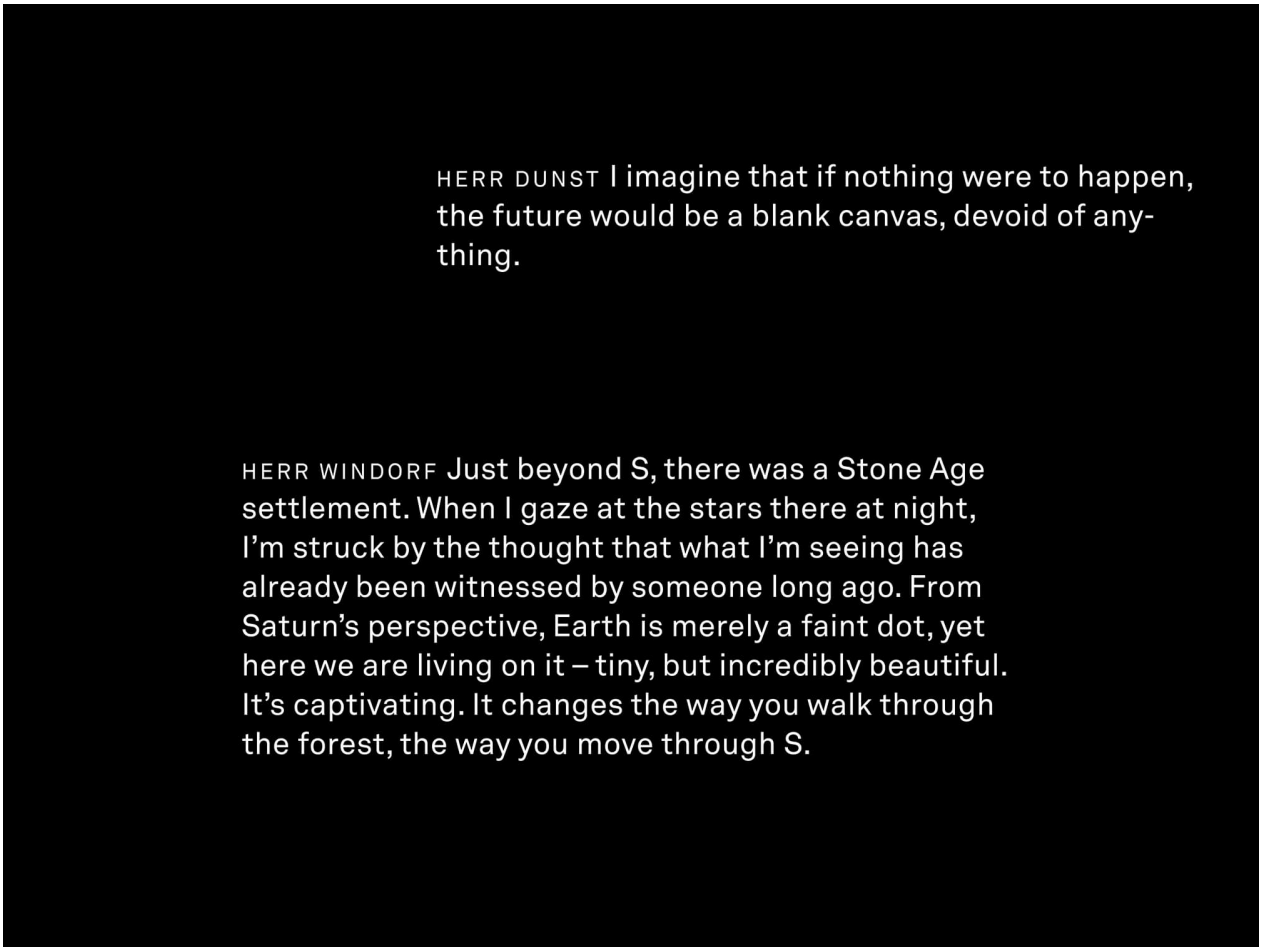
Freely adapted from interviews with residents of Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt). Three-act play. The first two acts take place in the present day; the third is set in the future.

From Act 2 ‘The Inhabitants’, Scene 5, ‘Living Differently’.
Characters: MR DUNST club member I, MR WINDORF amateur astronomer

Notes

- Stills from text animation *S. Anders Leben. Eine Handlung in Gesprächen/S. Anders Leben – Living Differently: An Act in Conversations*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

Interviews with residents of Sandersleben, no specific location, 2023 [2]



type	date	filename	size	author
collage	14.06.2024	2-Stone Age.jpg	108 KB	Stephanie Kiwitt

category
archaeology, astronomy, encounter, landscape, Trigger

20:53:52

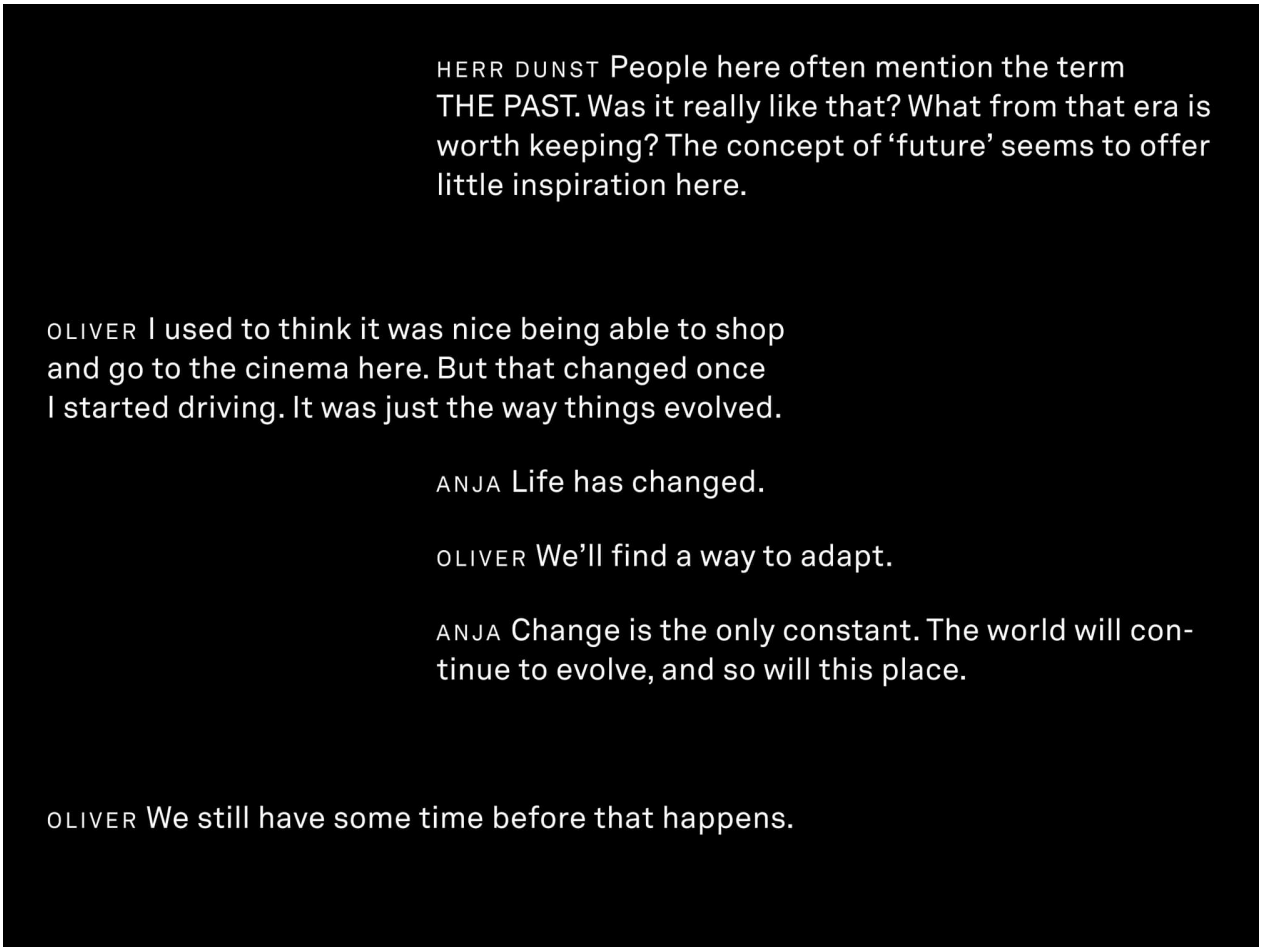
Freely adapted from interviews with residents of Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt). Three-act play. The first two acts take place in the present day; the third is set in the future.

From Act 1 ‘The Town of S’, Scene 2 ‘The Past’. Characters: MR DUNST club member I, OLIVER club member II, ANJA young mother

Notes

- Stills from text animation *S. Anders Leben. Eine Handlung in Gesprächen/S. Anders Leben – Living Differently: An Act in Conversations*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

Interviews with residents of Sandersleben, no specific location, 2023 [1]



type	date	filename	size	author
collage	13.06.2024	1-The PAST.jpg	301 KB	Stephanie Kiwitt

category
economy, encounter, rural area, Trigger

20:53:54

Bricks and stones of various origin (aerated concrete blocks, clinker bricks, quarry stones).

Notes

- From *Fortlaufend/Ongoing*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

Detail of a wall, Salzmünde (Saxony-Anhalt), June 2023



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	11.06.2024	CF015874.jpeg	54 MB	Stephanie Kiwitt

category
architecture, brick, fissure, repair, rural area, Trigger

20:53:57

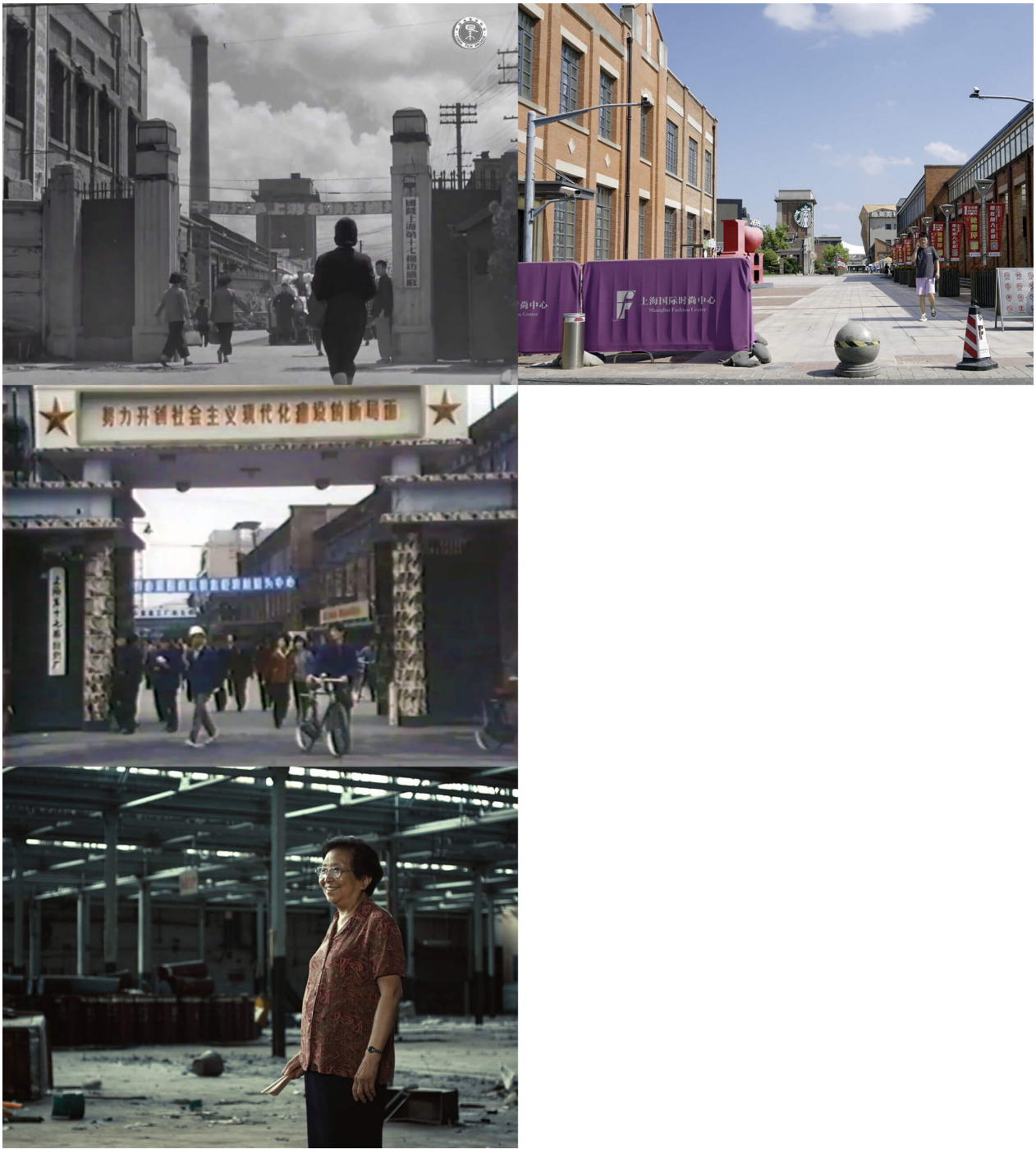
Directed by Xie Jin, *Huang Baomei* (1958) is a docudrama based on the real-life experiences of the national model worker of the same name, who also plays herself in the film. Reflecting the economic priorities of the day following the launch of the Great Leap Forward—a far-reaching and ultimately devastating campaign that sought to replace the prevailing Soviet-style expert-managerial system with workers' self-organisation and mass mobilisation—the film focuses on the challenges faced by machine operators as they strive for a technical breakthrough while working with their aging machines.

Located at No. 2866, Yangshupu Road, Shanghai No. 17 Cotton Mill, which had its origins in the Japanese-owned Yuho Spinning Company, was one of Shanghai's best known cotton mills. The launch of China's economic reforms opened a new era for the mill, as reflected cinematically in *No. 17 Cotton Mill Shanghai Blues* (1984), a British documentary that attests to the vibrant workers' music scene blossoming within the factory walls. In 1992, the state-owned enterprise was restructured as one of the first batch of joint-stock companies in the Reform era and renamed as Longtou Company after the brand name of a fabric manufactured by the mill. Following the relocation of the mill's original machinery to Jiangsu in 2007, work commenced to redesign the entire complex and relaunch it as the Shanghai International Fashion Center. In Jia Zhangke's *I Wish I Knew* (2010), an elderly Huang Baomei is seen walking amidst the ruins that are all that remain of the cotton mill as it awaits refurbishment.

Notes

- Ho Rui An is an artist and writer working in the intersections of contemporary art, cinema, performance and theory. Through lectures, essays and films, his research examines the relations between labour, technology and capital across different systems of governance in a global age.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

Huang Baomei



type	date	filename	size	author
collage	05.06.2024	huangbaomei.jpg	2,44 MB	Ho Rui An

category
architecture, economy, factory, government, Trigger

20:53:58

A classic of Republican-era cinema, the 1926 silent film *A String of Pearls* follows the trials and tribulations of a middle-class Shanghai couple after a pearl necklace borrowed by the husband to please his materialistic wife is stolen. In order to pay for a replacement, the protagonist resorts to embezzling public funds and consequently ends up in prison. After working as a weaver during his sentence, he becomes a worker at Zhenhua Cotton Mill following his release. In an obvious homage to the Lumières' seminal film, a scene in the film shows workers, including children, entering the factory to begin a day's work.

Even though the precise location of the factory gate in the film cannot be determined, it happens that the first enterprise that attracted the investment of Rong Ruixin—a relative of cotton magnates Rong Zongjing and Rong Desheng—was called Zhenhua Cotton Mill. Established in 1905, Zhenhua Cotton Mill was not fully mechanised, which would correspond with the appearance of a hand-operated loom in the film. Today, a residential community sits on the original site of the cotton mill.

Notes

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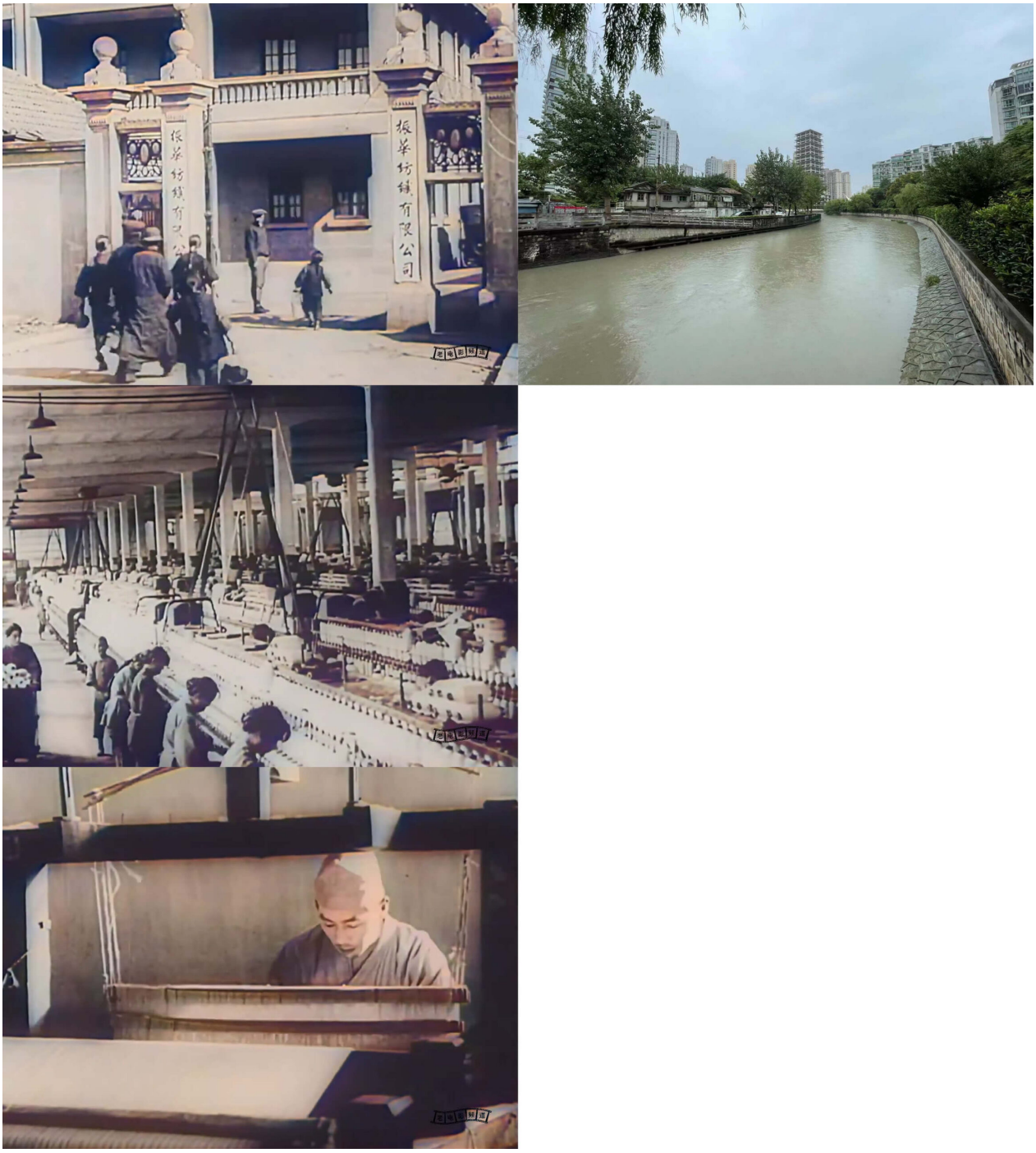
A String of Pearls



type	date	filename	size	author
collage	05.06.2024	astringofpearls.jpg	2,59 MB	Ho Rui An

category
architecture, economy, factory, hand, Trigger

20:54:05

When discussing the sensitivities around viewing British propaganda photographs from the 1950s with Mau Mau veterans in Kenya, it became clear that it was not the graphic photographs of atrocities that would trigger the veterans emotionally, but a series of straightforward portraits of men who had pledged allegiance to the British colonial administration. These portraits were catalogued along with the men’s names and another photograph of each one of them signing a declaration of collaboration. I was advised by the representative of the veterans’ association that it would be too dangerous to share these photographs with the veterans.

Notes

- 22 superimposed portraits from the file *CO 1066/7: Kikuyu Loyalists* at The National Archives (UK) depicting Kikuyu loyalists after signing a declaration of collaboration with the British on 27 January 1954.
- From the series *State of Emergency*, Max Pinckers et al. (2024)
- Max Pinckers (°1988, BE) and Victoria Gonzalez-Figueras (°1988, CA) are based in Brussels, Belgium. They have been working together for the past ten years on documentary photography projects. Victoria works in the cultural field as a researcher and producer. Max is a speculative documentarian, teacher and occasional writer on photography. They are married, in love, and have a son. Victoria has consistently assisted Max in his projects as a production manager, but they have recently been making new work together as co-authors. “Double Reward” is the first such project.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

Collaborators (portraits), 2023



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	28.05.2024	Collaborators Fade #1 (portraits).jpg	3,4 MB	Max Pinckers

category
archive, government, Trigger

20:54:06

‘In the human design and use of weapons, natural elements are harnessed and deployed as a destructive technology. In this engineering, there is a break, fissure, and crack whereby the human and non-human entity, having been elastic, on impact becomes plastic, and forever changed from its original self.’

Screenshot from the film showing the calm shoreline situated close to the International Criminal Court (ICJ) in the Netherlands.
Frame of Accountability, 01:00:00, Helene Kazan, 2024.

Film chapter *Beyond the Sky’s Limits* narrates law as a consciousness coming to terms with its own failings: the speculative voice of a feminist, queered, decolonial international law. Unravelling this complex non-human subjectivity, it narrates the drafting of the Rules of Air Warfare in 1923. A filmic study of the legal archival document reveals how these international laws of war become corrupted by the self-interests of the strong states and colonial powers involved in their making: their ambitions fail quickly and critically.

Notes

- Helene Kazan is an artist, writer and educator. Her work investigates ‘risk’ as a lived condition produced through the conjoined violent effects of capitalism and conflict. This is observed in the colonial roots of international law and its material formation of the lived-built environment. In response, she uses decolonial, feminist, poetic and critical-legal approaches in her work, which explores ways of dismantling the ongoing effects of neo-colonial violence towards wider frameworks of accountability and justice.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

Beyond the Sky’s Limits



type	date	filename	size	author
screenshot	26.05.2024	BSL_001.jpf, BSL_002.jpf	59 KB	Helene Kazan

category
architecture, fissure, landscape, sea, technology, Trigger

20:54:07

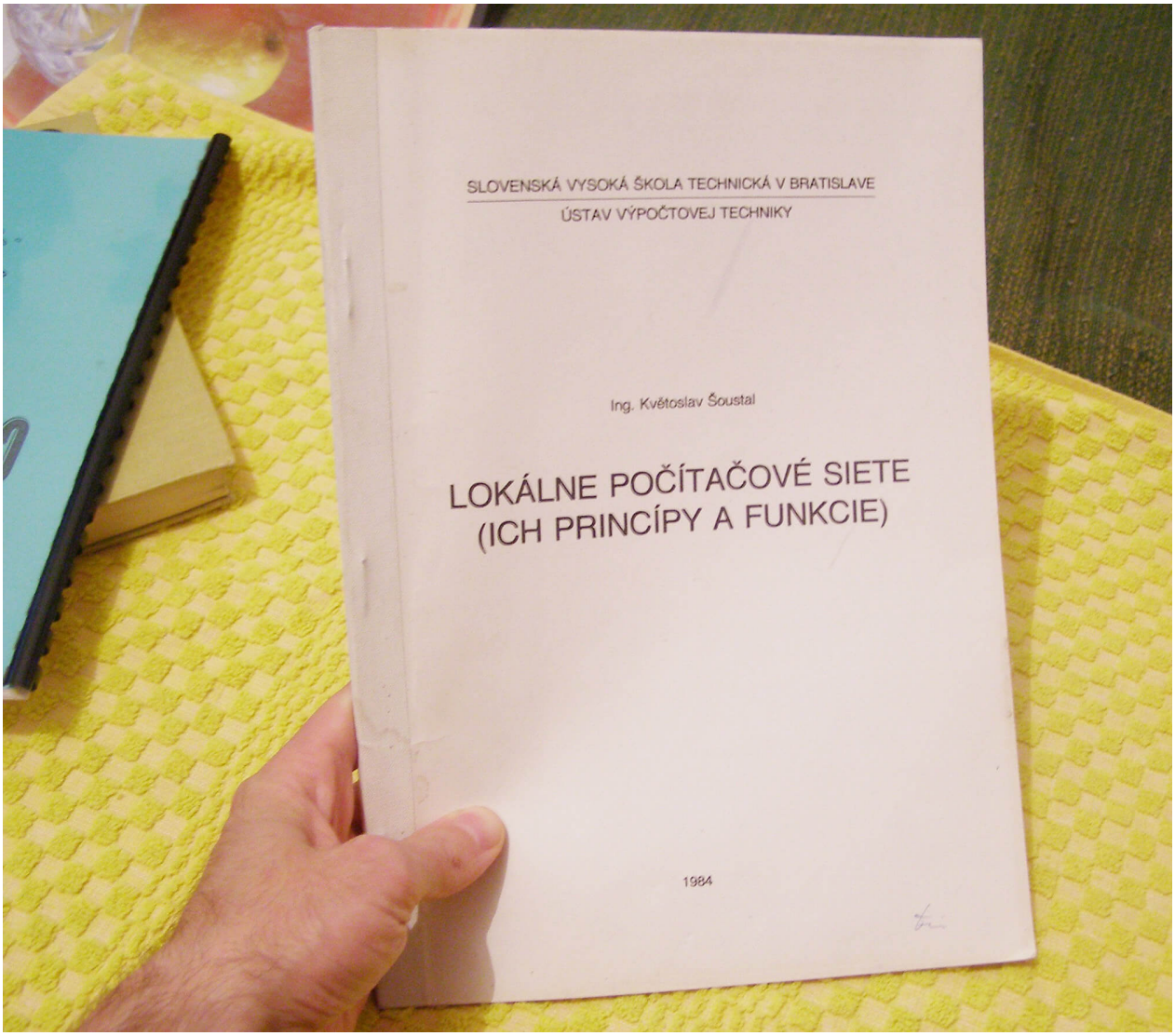
Depending on the language one chooses, the Wikipedia entry for ‘document’ shows a different picture. The French-language page shows what appears to be a Slovenian thesis written in 1984. The caption states it is a ‘book of Czechoslovak computer science author Květoslav Šoustal about computer networks’. The image was uploaded by Kelovy, a Slovakian mushroom-picker.

The anonymous hand rests on a lemon-yellow tablecloth, on which a yellow book and a blue binded file lie. The top left corner is the most intriguing, however: the tablecloth seems to be draped over a lemon, alongside a drinking glass. The cloth, however, does not get shaped by the lemon. Nor does the shadow-side of the lemon coincide with the shadow the other documents throw on the tablecloth. A closer look seems to indicate that the lemon is in fact an image of a lemon, printed on a plastic napkin.

The Russian wikipedia shows the image of a lease agreement. The German wikipedia for ‘document’ is text only.

Sources

https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Document#/media/Fichier:KVETOSLAV_SOUSTAL_BOOK.JPG, created October 3, 2006 / original in original: paper, 1984



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	23.12.2020	KVETOSLAV_SOUSTAL_BOOK.JPG	956KB	Arnout De Cleene

category
book, encyclopaedia, fruit, food, trompe l'oeil, cloth, manual, technology

20:54:41

In John Berger and Jean Mohr's groundbreaking book *Another Way of Telling*, the index at the end gives information on the images printed throughout the book. Most of them are Jean Mohr's. In the section 'If each time…' – a wordless sequence of images which aims to develop an alternative way of telling a story – some images are referenced as 'documents'. The information is sparse. On page 138, the index states, there is a 'Document, detail'. It features a closeup of a knitted piece of fabric. It appears to be the same picture as seen on the first page of the section (p. 135), where it is printed beneath another image – a photo by Mohr of hands knitting. On this occasion, the image is indexed as 'Document'.

Sources

Berger, J. & J. Mohr. *Another Way of Telling*. London / New York: Writers and Readers, 1982.

113 Baby at breast (photo: Saul Landau)
123 Boy sleeping, May 25, 1912, Budapest (photo: André Kertesz)
125 Friends, September 3, 1917, Esztergan (photo: André Kertesz)
127 Lovers, May 15, 1915, Budapest (photo: André Kertesz)

If each time . . .
(All photos are by Jean Mohr unless otherwise indicated.)

135 J.'s hands
135 Document
136 A spring, Haute-Savoie
137 A spring in the *alpage*, Haute-Savoie
138 Document, detail
139 In a meadow, Val d'Aoste
139 Document, Russian painting
140 Village in the Tatry Mountains, Poland
141 Poland
142 Mother and child's hand, Great Britain
143 Poland
144 Document
145 A spring
146 J.'s hands
147 Paris
148 Tunisia
149 Geneva, bird tracks
150 School in the Township of Mieussy
151 Rabbit skeletons, Haute-Savoie
152 *Ibid*
153 Katya (photo: John Berger)
154 School
156 Foundation of a chalet, Norway
157 Document
158 Children going to the dairy, Fribourg, Switzerland
158 On the road to Sommand, Haute-Savoie
159 *Ibid*
160 Six in the morning at the dairy, Haute-Savoie

type scan
date 18.02.2021
filename Document_2021-02-18_092842.jpg
size 541KB
author Arnout De Cleene
category book, cloth
21:10:29

The two photographs arrived in Belgium inside a used hardback[1] in spring 2016, though it is unclear how long before that time they were actually taken.[2]

Photograph #1 measures 151 x 100 mm and shows two young people who appear to be mountain climbing and captured while clearing a ridge. Behind the two subjects a bluish mountainous landscape is vaguely visible, suggesting a vantage point of some considerable elevation. The person on the left is wearing a white T-shirt and a bracelet, and has several earrings. The person on the right is carrying a backpack. What appears to be a black tank-top may in fact also be the straps of the pack. On their head they wear what appears to be a grey T-shirt or other garment, presumably to protect the subject from the sun; this person also has earrings and is wearing a necklace and sunglasses. The weather appears nice, both subjects are smiling and appear relaxed. The effort may well have been staged.

Photograph #2 measures (approximately) 43 x 62 mm with the left, bottom and right sides appearing to be cut, rather unevenly, with scissors. It has the typical appearance of an American high school yearbook photo and shows a young person wearing a shiny black blouse and a necklace. They have blue eyes and below-shoulder length auburn hair. The red lips appear painted. On the back of this photograph is written in a clearly legible hand:

Clay, I can't
wait until next
year when we're
in grade 12![3]
Have a great
Summer and
call me [XXX XXXX][4]
by the way, I haven't
forgot about how big UR

The only assumptions to be made somewhat safely from these two items are that (a) the book has once belonged to 'Clay', and, (b) a relationship of a close, friendly, perhaps even intimate, nature has at one time existed between 'Clay' and the person in the second photograph (assuming also that (c) the note on the back of the second photograph was indeed written by the person in that photograph). The circumstances surrounding, and/or motivations ('Clay''s or any third parties') behind the book's ending up in a used-book shop[5] must necessarily remain a matter of speculation. There are no reasons to assume that the book was gifted to 'Clay' by the note-writer (or by anyone else) as no dedication appears in it.[6] It must also remain inconclusive whether there are either two or three different persons appearing across the two photographs, and whether any of those is in fact 'Clay'.

Notes

1 The book is a first edition, first printing hardback copy of *Word Virus: The William S. Burroughs Reader*, edited by James Grauerholz and Ira Silverberg, with an introduction by Ann Douglas, published by Grove Press (New York) in 1998 (160mm x 235mm, 532pp.). On the used book aggregator webstore, the book was graded 'Very Good' (or, VG),* which proved a realistic assessment as it appeared (in fact, still does) largely unread with a dust jacket in equally good condition and no markings inside whatsoever. In fact, the book's condition might well have warranted a 'Fine' (F) grading were it not for the only notable (yet not noted) defect, which was that the 'Spoken Word CD' that was originally included — as indicated by a 32mm diameter round sticker in the top right corner of the front of the dust jacket, and the glued-in envelope in the back of the book — was no longer present. This defect may well have accounted for the apparent disparity between the state and grading of the book and the low price of $4.53 (shipping not included) it was sold at, although the fact remains that this incomplete state ought to have been mentioned in the listing. Since the time of purchase, however, markings were added to the book, presumably with an additional adverse effect on its market value: appearing on the half-title page, they are in dark green crayon and of an abstract nature and were made by the current owner's infant son.
* According to the terminology of the grading scale proposed in 1949 by *AB Bookman's Weekly* and still widely, if not universally, in use in the online used book market today, albeit with some additions or modifications by individual platforms. See Wikipedia for a brief overview.

2 Elements of style and physical nature of the artifacts may be taken to indicate an origin roughly contemporaneous with the book.

3 '[In the United States of America, the] twelfth grade is the twelfth school year after kindergarten. It is also the last year of compulsory secondary education, or high school. Students are often 17–19 years old. Twelfth graders are referred to as Seniors.' (Wikipedia)

4 A 7-digit phone number, without country or area code, redacted here.

5 Located in the state of Nevada, no further identification of the particular shop was provided on the aggregator webstore, and it must be noted that the book was subsequently shipped from 'Auburn', presumably Auburn, CA.

6 Indeed in accordance with its 'Very Good' grading, which is generally understood to explicitly list any defects such as markings (including dedications) but also any missing materials.

7 Quality hardbacks being notably easier to read without damaging the book.

8 Speculations on this, and any potential subsequent extrapolations are, fortunately perhaps, further inhibited by the fact that the book presents a rather generous cross-section of writings spanning the entirety of William S. Burroughs' famously prolific career. The inclusions span the period between 1929 and 1994. Although undertakings of this kind will inevitably meet with criticism, the consensus indeed seems to be that the editors have done an excellent job in selecting and presenting the material. Was 'Clay' mainly drawn by the hard-boiled straightforward prose style of the early novels; the highly experimental and provocative writings of the 'middle period' (traditionally labeled as rather 'hermetic' and 'cold', though they are quite often not without a haunting, perhaps even 'poetic' quality); or the later, one might say 'integrated' style which saw the earlier experiments wedded to a certain 'return to narrative' and, in old age, traces of a much more 'humane' author than ever before (if a point of critique may yet be formulated, one might indeed say that the writings from this later period (roughly 1978–1997) are somewhat favoured (quantitatively) in the *Word Virus* volume; as these have a (still: relatively) greater 'readability' than much of the older material that may indicate a decision of a commercial nature, yet there is also the fact that these texts were written in collaboration with one of the editors of *Word Virus*)?

9 Being in fact a promo sampler for the 4CD Giorno Poetry Systems compilation of William S. Burroughs material also released (by Mouth Almighty Records and Mercury Records) in 1998. See Discogs.

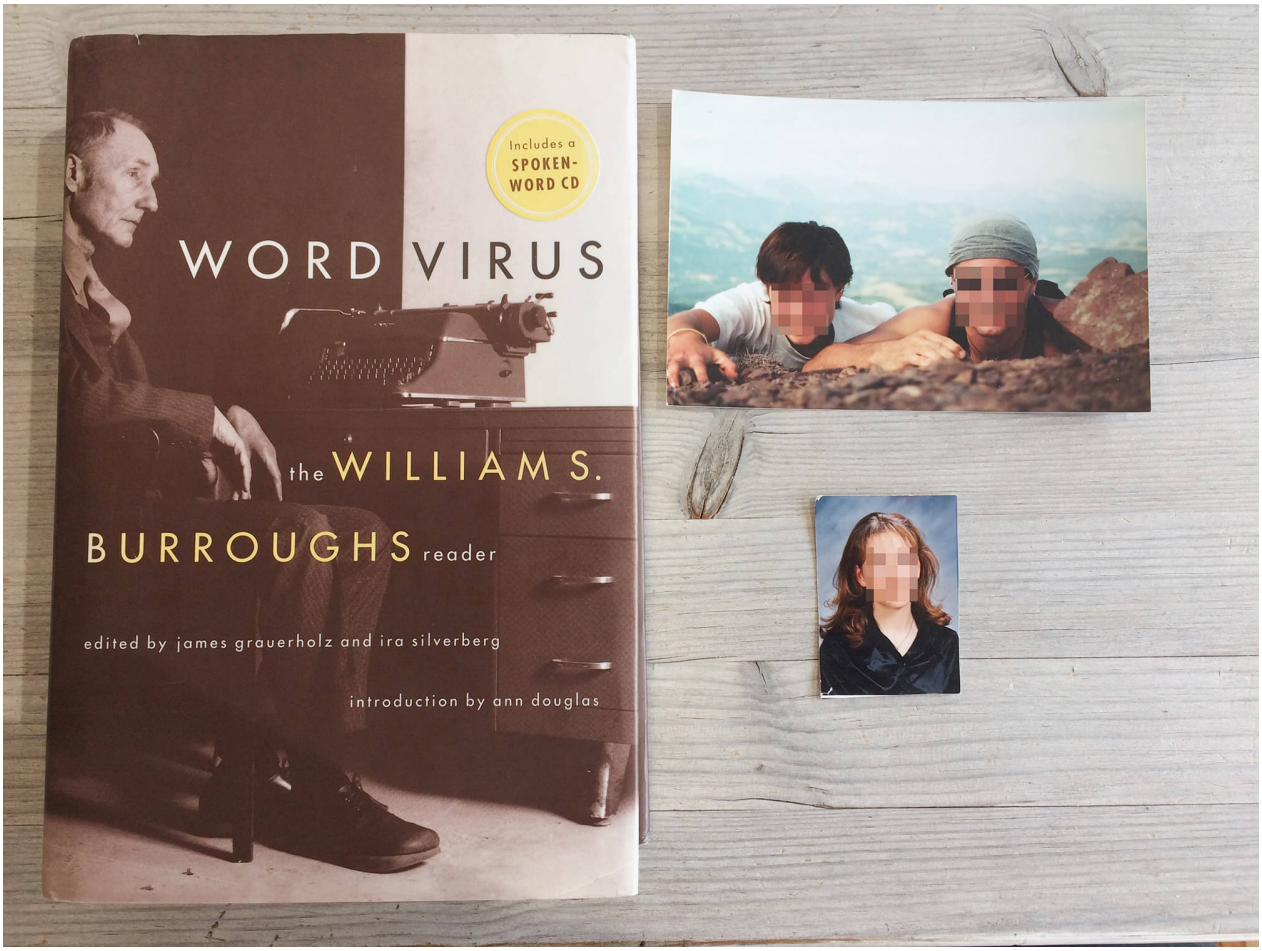
10 Nevada has three area codes (702, 725, and 775), yet quick Google searches of the 7-digit number combined with any one of those yield no easy identification. Considering the overall scarcity of information, however, it seems clear that anyone seeking to reconstruct the biographies of 'Clay' and/or the note-writer should take up this line of investigation.

- David Depestel hesitates in trying to make something of himself; a character, a profession, a fixed mode of being, are for him concepts that already shadow forth the outlines of the skeleton, which is all that will be left of him in the end.

Sources

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_used_book_conditions
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twelfth_grade#United_States
- https://www.discogs.com/Various-Selections-From-The-Best-Of-William-Burroughs-From-Giorno-Poetry-Systems

Debatably graded



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	18.10.2022	IMG_0059.JPG, IMG_058.JPG	2,11 MB, 1,55 MB	David Depestel

category
book, collecting, encounter, landscape, literature

21:10:32

the-documents.c

Indeed, the number of questions raised by these items far exceeds the number of answers they provide. Even leaving aside the nature of the writings in the book, one cannot help but speculate as to:

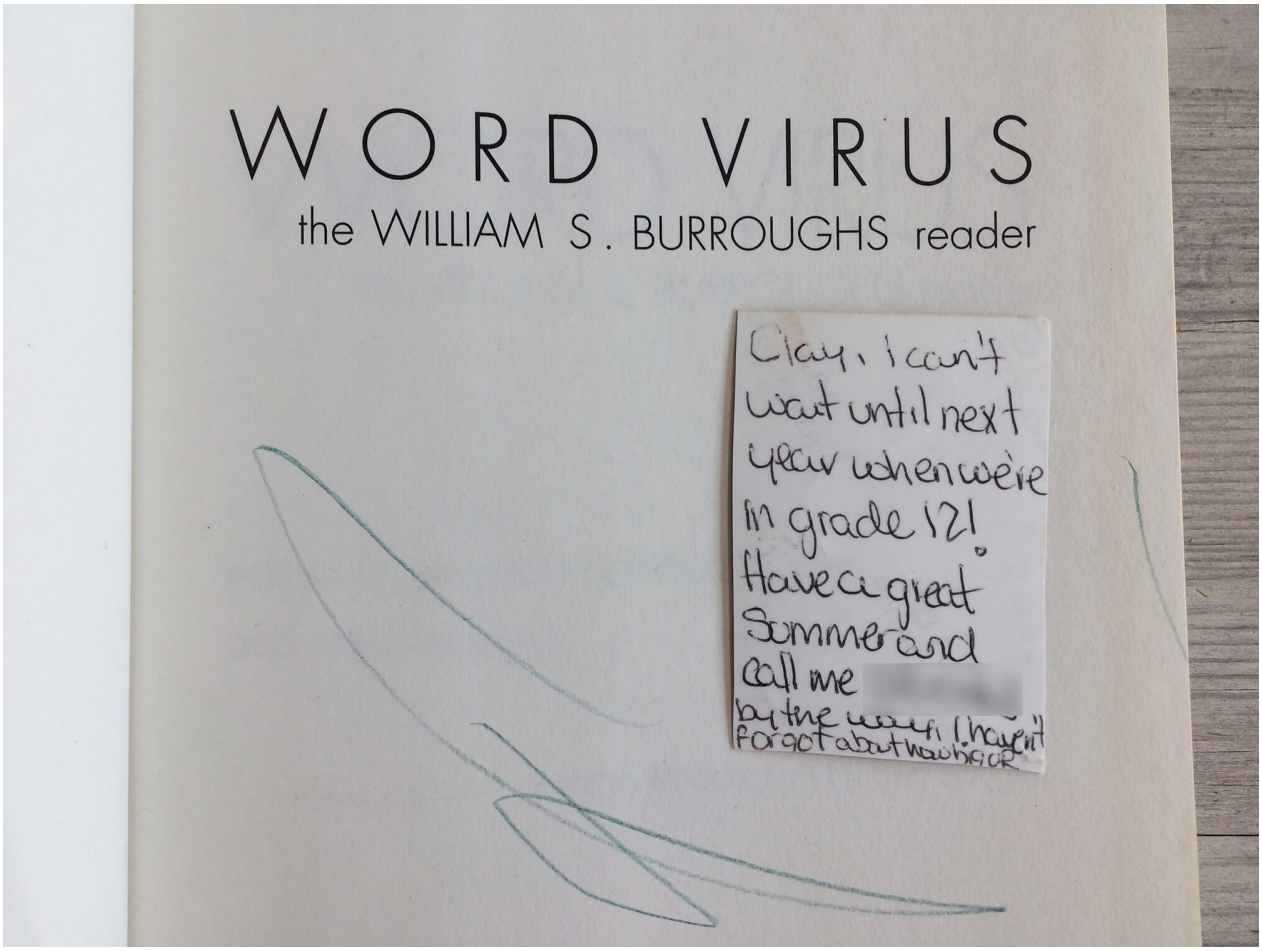
— how much, if any, of the book ‘Clay’ ever read;[7,8]

— what happened to the CD originally included with the book;[9]

— why the unrelated inserted materials were not removed from the book before sale (as opposed to the CD);

— whether ‘Clay’ did in fact ring up the writer of the note over that summer;[10] indeed whether the two ever did meet again, remain close during their ‘senior’ year, perhaps even stay in contact after graduating;

— the meaning of the rather cryptic final line of the note.


WORD VIRUS
the WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS reader
Clay, I can't
wait until next
year when we're
in grade 12!
Have a great
Summer and
call me
by the way, I haven't
forgot about how big OR

As we point the telescope to the sky – cloudy, and filled with chaotic bursts of rain – the dispersion of the city lights accentuates the swirling, frantic raindrops. The roof we are standing on is uneven. A puddle forms underneath the apparatus, around the right leg of the tripod and our feet. The sound of a car on a wet street, below. A kitchen light is flicked on. Temperature is low for a mid-September night, and getting lower by the minute. It seems impossible to tell the depth of field we are documenting, and at what distance from our position these fleeting constellations occur.

Sources

- Excerpt from Towards Civil Dusk (De Cleene De Cleene, 2020)
- Neptune in opposition [1-20] is part of ‘Documenting Objects’, a research project by Arnout De Cleene and Michiel De Cleene at KASK & Conservatorium, the school of arts of HOGENT and Howest. Their research is financed by the HOGENT Arts Research Fund. Previous research into this subject has amongst other things led to the documentary film Towards Civil Dusk and temporary public observatories at 019, Gent and Kunsthal Extra City, Antwerp.
- Thanks to:
  Angelo Van Daele
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  Philippe Molet
  019
  Astropolis (Oostende)
  Cercle Astronomique Mosan (Herbuchenne)
  Koninklijk Observatorium Ukkel
  Observatoire Astronomique Antoine Thomas S.J. (Namur)
  Observatoire Astronomique Centre Ardenne (Grapfontaine)
  Publieke Sterrenwacht van de Westkust (Koksijde)
  Volkssterrenwacht Armand Pien (Gent)
  Volkssterrenwacht AstroLAB IRIS (Zillebeke)
  Volkssterrenwacht Beisbroek (Brugge)
  Volkssterrenwacht Mira (Grimbergen)
  Volkssterrenwacht Urania (Hove)

Neptune in opposition [20/20] – A constellation



type	date	filename	size	author
video	05.10.2022	2020-09-24-1156_0-CapObj.mp4	51,05 MB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
astronomy, Neptune, precipitation

21:10:44

A white Mercedes van inserts in front of me in a traffic jam near Antwerp. The back of the van has been altered in several ways: a latch was added to the door,[1] a footstep was bolted to the bumper, a couple of tie-wraps are holding up the lights on the left side.[2] Traffic is moving slow. There is no Mercedes logo.[3] Some parts have been retouched with white paint that differs slightly from the rest of the bodywork,[4] not unlike a tipp-ex'ed document.

Notes

1 Maybe the original locking mechanism no longer functions, or, perhaps, the owner wants to add a padlock to the doors at night.

2 Maybe a corroded screw caused the lights to come loose, or a slight collision.

3 Someone might have stolen it. Mercedes stars are often stolen, although mostly from the hood.

4 Maybe to counter corrosion, to conceal a mark someone made on the van or to cover up a fixed dent.

• Legislation concerning the publication of someone else's licence plate on the internet and the demand to blur it, is somewhat ambiguous.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	05.07.2021	IMG_7538.HEIC	714 KB	Michiel De Cleene

category
automobile, crash, impact, insurance, sticker

21:10:46

During the second half of April 2018, passers-by complained on Twitter about the massive chopping of trees and bushes in the area of the park site in Ranst, Belgium, along the E313 highway, in close proximity to the city of Antwerp.

Initially, the Department of Road and Highway Maintenance answered on Twitter that no pruning activities had taken place. They wouldn't want to disturb breeding birds. But soon after, they admitted to the pruning. Their argumentation took a turn: 'These are pruning activities in the context of the transmigration-problem on parking lots, as requested by the Police Department and the State Governor, so that transmigrants will no longer be able to hide. In the future, we will take up this discussion in our pruning policy for the upcoming breeding season.'

Upon closer investigation (an inquiry by Nature Inspection), the scale of the chopping became clear. The trees closest to the highway and the parking lot were chopped, while other trees were pruned at the bottom. Species such as European black elderberry, maple tree, sorbus, hazel, English holly, wild black cherry and breaking buckthorn disappeared. Rare species, only found in ancient forests, such as Solomon's seal, were severely damaged.

These activities resulted in what the investigators described as a 'transparent forest' – a forest without density at lower levels, which is ecologically speaking not valuable. It has no 'forest feeling'.

Notes

- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

A Transparent Forest



type	date	filename	size	author
image	27.05.2024	DCDC_ranst_2_039.psd	1,03 GB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
automobile, botany, conflict, government, landscape, parking, Ranst, tree

21:10:48

In 2020, the print versions of the Flemish telephone books ‘Gouden Gids’ and ‘Witte Gids’ (The Golden Guide and The White Guide), were published for the last time. From that year onwards, the directory could only be accessed and consulted online. The effect of the production of print telephone directories on the environment is considered to be enormous. As yearly updated, ubiquitous books, they were publications that soon turned superfluous. They led to piles of waste.

From the beginning of the 21st century on, both the print version and the online version had been available. This was a period of medium transition. During the last two decades, the print directory increasingly referred to the websites of the companies listed. To search for e.g. someone to inspect the heating installation, it was possible to find such a company’s website via the print directory, and consult the inspector’s services and price online, bypassing search engines such as Google and its complex algorithms. The telephone directory had a thematic and alphabetical order, combined with the possibility to buy additional advertising space.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	02.10.2021	_MG_7415.JPG	8,2MB	Arnout De Cleene

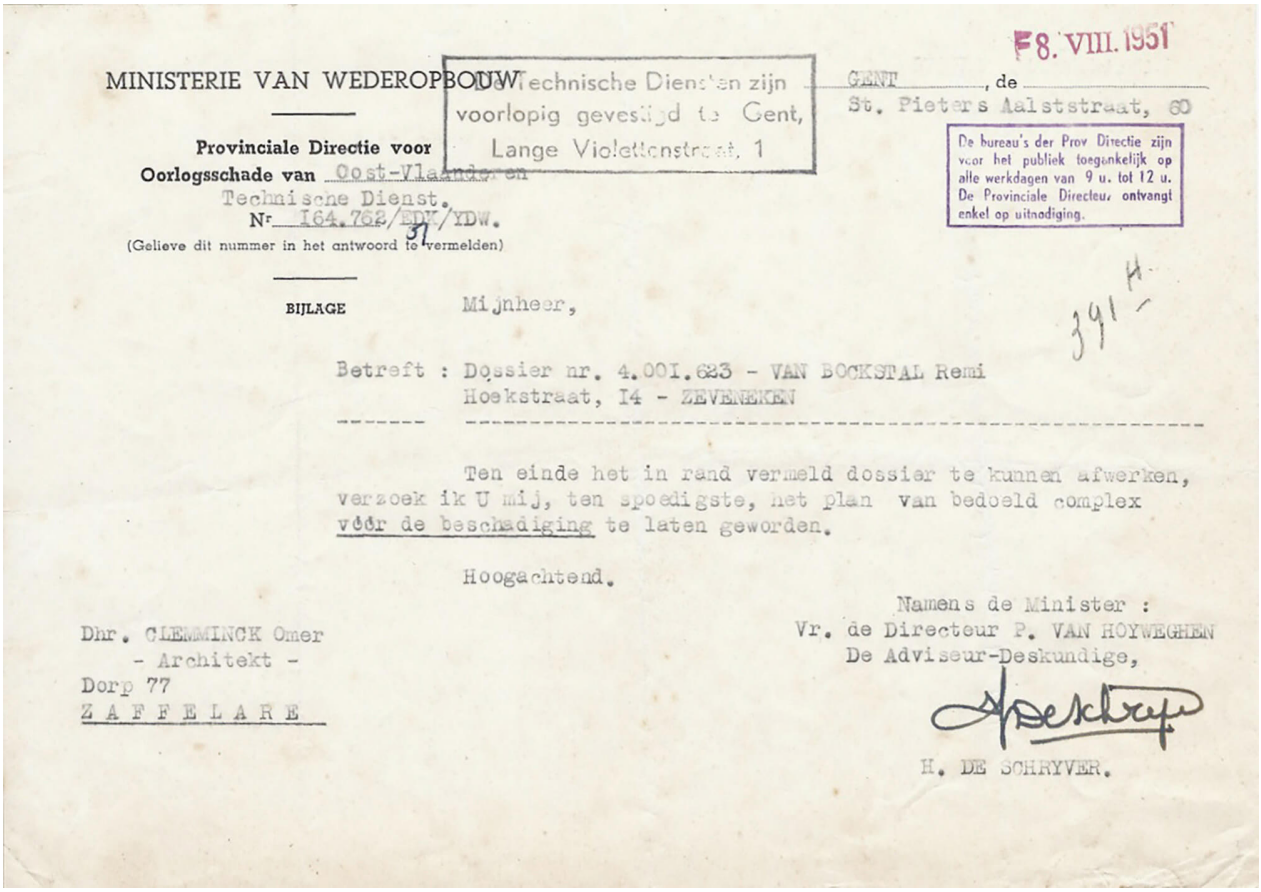
category
book, botany, data storage, technology, waste

21:10:49

An architect in Z. receives a reminder. ‘Please send, as soon as possible, the plans of the construction before the damage.’ The reminder was sent by the Ministry of Reconstruction, in 1951. The architect’s address in Z., as mentioned in this file, is nowadays a house adjacent to Saloon Redbarn, a hall used for activities organized by a club of country and western-aficionados.

Sources

Semi-translucent paper, typoscript, stamps, handwritten notes and signature, from the archive of architect O. Clemminck, file ‘Remi Van Bockstael’



MINISTERIE VAN WEDEROPBOUW

Provinciale Directie voor
Oorlogsschade van Oost-Vlaanderen
Technische Dienst.
Nr. I64.762/EDK/YDW.
(Gelieve dit nummer in het antwoord te vermelden)

De Technische Diensten zijn voorlopig gevestigd te Gent, Lange Violettenstraat, 1

GENT, de 8. VIII. 1951
St. Pieters Aalststraat, 60

De bureau's der Prov Directie zijn voor het publiek toegankelijk op alle werkdagen van 9 u. tot 12 u. De Provinciale Directeur ontvangt enkel op uitnodiging.

BIJLAGE

Mijnheer,

Betreft : Dossier nr. 4.001.623 - VAN BOCKSTAL Remi
Hoekstraat, I4 - ZEVENEKEN

Ten einde het in rand vermeld dossier te kunnen afwerken, verzoek ik U mij, ten spoedigste, het plan van bedoeld complex vóór de beschadiging te laten geworden.

Hoogachtend.

Namens de Minister :
Vr. de Directeur P. VAN HOYWEGHEN
De Adviseur-Deskundige,

H. DE SCHRYVER.

Dhr. CLEMMINCK Omer
- Architekt -
Dorp 77
ZAFFELARE

type	date	filename	size	author
scan	14.12.2020	Ministerie_van_wederopbouw.pdf	1MB	Arnout De Cleene

category
architecture, house, archive, map/plan, O. Clemminck, government, insurance

A first try at using the instrument for making a recording: excitement as we succeed in pointing the telescope at the brownish dot afar we just noticed on the other side of the valley. As it continues scavenging, we wait for night to set in.

the-documents.c

Neptune in opposition [13/20] – A foraging fox



type	date	filename	size	author
video	27.09.2022	2020-05-30-1755_8-CapObj	105,04 MB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
animal, astronomy, encounter, food, landscape, Neptune, technology

21:10:52