25th-26th September 2013
International conference and workshop
THE COIXTLAHUACA VALLEY, OAXACA, MEXICO
Current Research in Archaeology, History, Ethnology and Document Analysis

27th-28th September 2013
2nd Forum on Iconography in Mesoamerica
TIME AND SPACE IN MESOAMERICA

Meeting Place
Ethnologisches Museum - Staatliche Museen Berlin | Dahlem Museen | Larsstraße 8 | 14195 Berlin
U-Bhf. Dahlem Dorf (U3) | Bus M11, X 83, 101, 110

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International conference and workshop. September 25 and 26, 2013
Ethnologisches Museum, Lansstraße 8, 14195 Berlin

THE COIXTLAHUACA VALLEY, OAXACA, MEXICO
Current Research in Archaeology, History, Ethnology and Document Analysis

Wednesday, September 25, 2013

7.30pm
Foyer 1st floor
Welcome and Opening

Hermann Parzinger
President Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin
Linking Excellence Cluster Topoi with Humboldt-Forum

Michael Meyer
Spokesperson for the Excellence Cluster Topoi, Berlin
Presentation of Topoi

Viola König
Director Ethnologisches Museum, Berlin
The Representation of Space and Place in Mesoamerica and Topoi

8pm
Opening Presentation

John M.D. Pohl, Ph.D.
Department of Art History, University of California, Los Angeles UCLA
John Pohl is an authority on American Indian civilizations and has directed numerous archaeological excavations and surveys in Canada, the United States, Mexico, and Central America as well as Europe. In addition to teaching and publishing his research, Dr. Pohl is noted for bringing the ancient past to life using a wide variety of innovative skills and techniques. His unusual background in archaeology, art history, and media production have taken him from museum exhibition design and development with the Walt Disney Company’s Department of Cultural Affairs to Princeton University where he served as the first Peter Jay Sharp Curator and Lecturer in the Art of the Ancient Americas. Most recently, John Pohl curated the exhibition “The Aztec Pantheon and the Art of Empire” for the Getty Villa Museum and is currently developing “Children of the Plumed Serpent: The Legacy of Quetzalcoatl in Ancient Mexico” for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Dallas Museum of Art. He is the author of the FAMSI website ‘John Pohl’s Mesoamerica’, and was co-author of Kevin Costner’s ‘500 Nations’.

Out of Mesoamerica. Bringing the History of the Coixtlahuaca Valley to Life

Between A.D. 1300 and 1460, much of Mesoamerica witnessed an unprecedented era of prosperity as trade extending between Central America and the American Southwest introduced new forms of wealth as well as the invention of an international communication system called “Nahua-Mixteca” after the two civilizations primarily responsible for its design. Vividly colored ceramics together with intricately painted codices detailed creation stories and heroic sagas, but even more importantly the royal marriages that bound city-states into systems of reciprocity. Regarded as one of the richest trading centers in southern Mexico, Coixtlahuaca became an axis of cultural interchange until it was subjugated by the Aztec empire. After the Spanish Conquest, the kingdom regained its prominence under indigenous nobles called caciques who continued to produce highly detailed pictographic maps. The documents are masterpieces in conception and unparalleled in the amount of information they contain for reconstructing the pre-Columbian history of the Mixtecs as well as neighboring peoples with whom they were confederated. This presentation will discuss the challenges in presenting these remarkable works of art in a museum exhibition setting in ways that not only reflect the complexities of the information they contain, but the means by which they are interpreted by art historians, archaeologists,
ethnohistorians, and the indigenous peoples of the Coixtlahuaca Valley themselves.

Thursday, September 26, 2013

10am
Mesoamerica Hall
Viola König
Welcome and Introduction

10.15am
Stephen A. Kowalewski
Department of Anthropology, University of Georgia, Athens
Coixtlahuaca Valley Archaeology
Recent archaeological investigations in the Coixtlahuaca valley provide a structural context for the sixteenth-century lienzos. The recent archaeological work gives an overview of the Preclassic, Classic, and Postclassic history. The archaeology of the Postclassic shows that the important places depicted on the lienzos were not just regal palaces but towns and cities of great size—a hundred thousand inhabitants or more—demographically and economically in the top tier in Mesoamerica. The foundation of this large population was intensive and diversified agriculture and a highly specialized market economy. Interestingly, neither the demographic scale nor the economy were subjects for the lienzos. The recent archaeological discoveries have broadened understanding of Chocho-Mixteco society, but the Early Postclassic era and the Toltec origins claimed in the lienzos remain poorly known.

11.15am
Conference Room Takustraße 40, Museum für Asiatische Kunst
Coffee break

11.30am
Sebastián van Doesburg
Coordinación de Humanidades UNAM, Centro Académico y Cultural San Pablo, FAHIO, Oaxaca
The origins of the Popoloca speaking population of southern Puebla. An interdisciplinary argument for a late Postclassic mass migration from the Coixtlahuaca Basin.
The lienzos of the Coixtlahuaca group represent migrations of lordly lineages from the Coixtlahuaca Basin into the highlands of southern Puebla as early as the 12th or 13th century. Sources from the Puebla area confirm the arrival of these new lords and their successful establishment in the area. This process has been commented by several scholars as a political process, unrelated to possible social processes. In this presentation, I argue that these migrations were probably due to overpopulation and land-pressure in the Coixtlahuaca Basin and involved the movement of large populations of peasant and artisans. Linguistic and archaeological evidence suggests that the current speakers of Popoloca in southern Puebla are the descendants of these migrants. This would suggest a much more recent presence of Popoloca speakers in the area than is traditionally assumed.

12.30am
Araceli Rojas Martinez Gracida
Faculteit Archeologie, Mesoamerican and Andean, Universiteit Leiden
The story behind the Lienzo: The life and historical context of Manuel Martinez Gracida
At the end of the XIX century, historian and office holder Manuel Martínez Gracida worked arduously to recover the history and culture of the indigenous peoples of the state of Oaxaca. He had the ideal of inspiring a sentiment of pride and hoped to educate about the magnificent antiquity and heritage of Oaxaca. This effort led him to gather an important collection of archaeological artefacts such as ceramics, stone sculptures,
textiles, pictorial manuscripts and lienzos. Among them, there was the Coixtlahuaca Lienzo II, now in the Ethnology Museum of Berlin. This paper will speak about the life of Manuel Martínez Gracida as well as the historical context and the events that motivated him to research and write about the past and the traditions of the indigenous civilizations of Oaxaca.

1pm
Lunch break

2pm
Conference Room Takustraße 40, Museum für Asiatische Kunst
Monica Pacheco Silva, Topoi Berlin
Introduction and moderation

2.15pm
Manuel Hermann Lejarazu
Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social CIESAS, México DF

The Pictorial Documents from the Coixtlahuaca Valley and the Codex Baranda Origin Myths.

The Codex Baranda and the Lienzos of Coixtlahuaca Valley (large pictorial records of landholdings and local history that were painted on canvas) show us a type of ritual scene that seems to be linked with the foundation or beginning of a ruler lineage. I propose that through analysis of ethnohistorical sources and modern Mixtec accounts, it is possible to approach the deep symbolic meaning of the rain serpent ritual represented in several images depicted in the Codex Baranda, Selden Roll, Lienzo of Tlapiltepec or in the Lienzo Seler II. The pictorial documents from the Coixtlahuaca Valley share an aspect that has to do with the mythical origins and the first accounts about the foundation of some towns that created diverse historical manuscripts.

3.15pm
Coffee break

3.30pm
Sebastian van Doesburg, Manuel Hermann, Viola König, Stephen Kowalewski, John Pohl
Discussion Integrating Coixtlahuaca Archaeology, History, Ethnology and Document Analysis

4.30pm
Conclusions and announcements

5pm
Maria Gaida, curator Mesoamerica Ethnologisches Museum, Berlin
Guided tour to the Mesoamerican research collection

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Program

Friday, September 27, 2013
WORKSHOPS

9.15 – 9.30am
Conference Room Takustraße 40, Museum für Asiatische Kunst
Viola König
Welcome
Christian Brückner, Universität Hamburg, Mesoamerika-Gesellschaft Hamburg e.V., Annette Kern, Universität Hamburg, Roswitha Koenitz, Berlin
Moderation
WORKSHOP
9.30 – 12.30am
Araceli Rojas Martinez Gracida, Universiteit Leiden

Reading maize seeds. An approach to the study of divinatory language in the Teoamoxtli (Borgia group) codices

One of the distinctive features of the calendrical and mantic books known as the Teoamoxtli or Borgia group codices was its pictorial writing full of metaphors and images open for multiple expressions and interpretations. The present workshop will explore some of these divinatory images by bringing forward recent documentary data on reading maize seeds, a divinatory technique used among the Ayöök (Mixe) people of Oaxaca. The analysis of this oracular practice, with the aid of narrativity and psychological notions, attempts a closer look at the arcane language in the Mesoamerican pictorial manuscripts.

12.30 – 2pm
Lunch break

WORKSHOP
2 – 5pm
Gordon Whittaker, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen

Aztec toponyms and their hieroglyphic correspondences: The international nature of Nahuatl naming

In this workshop we will discuss the way in which Nahuatl place names are constructed, how they are represented in writing, and how this compares with other Mesoamerican systems. In particular, we will look at the international nature of the script and how the Aztecs adapted their system to the requirements of empire. An examination of toponyms in Nahuatl and Mixtec for the same places will help us ascertain the extent to which names were simply translated or adapted from one language into the next and the extent to which they were replaced.

5 – 6pm
Mesoamerica Hall
Guided tour with Maria Gaida

Saturday, September 28, 2013

9.30 – 10am
Conference Room Takustrasse 40, Museum für Asiatische Kunst
Maria Gaida
Welcome

Das Tlotzin Fragment in Berlin

In the depot of the Ethnologisches Museum heavily soiled pieces of convolved parchment have been found in 1998. After planning and cleaning them they turned out to be a copy of a continuous part of the Mapa Tlotzin which is kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Most probably the document fragments in Berlin once belonged to the Carl Uhde collection that was brought together in Mexico before 1835. The provenance of this pictorial manuscript will be followed up and I will focus on some iconographic details that deviate from the original manuscript in Paris. However, there might be some reasons for discussion.

10 – 10.30am
Martin E. Berger, Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden

The ballplayers of Dainzú? An iconographical deconstruction of the Dainzú ballgame hypothesis

The site of Dainzú, located in the Valley of Oaxaca, is known for its corpus of iconography, generally considered to depict a ballgame. This ballgame hypothesis is largely based on Ignacio Bernal’s early work at the site in the 1960s and his contention that the iconographical corpus represents a pre-Columbian variant of the modern-day hand-ballgame pelota mixteca. Over the past two decades, other authors have expanded on this hypothesis, placing the Dainzú complex inside a broader corpus of
iconography from all over Mesoamerica, postulating the existence of a pre-Columbian type of hand-ballgame. Through a deconstruction of the iconographical analyses that have given rise to the Dainzú ballgame hypothesis, in combination with the use of data from ethnographic fieldwork, I argue that:
1. there is no relationship between pelota mixteca and the Dainzú iconographic corpus
2. the Dainzú corpus does not represent a ballgame
3. no ballgame comparable to the postulated Dainzú hand-ballgame is evidenced in other regions of Mesoamerica.
Consequently, an alternative is proposed, considering the possibility that the figures depicted in the Dainzú corpus represent warriors, rather than ballplayers. This alternative interpretation would strengthen the analysis of the underlying message of the Dainzú corpus, a political-ideological statement that glorifies the rulers of the site and positions it within the Preclassic political landscape of the Valley of Oaxaca.

Motivos y tipos iconográficos representados en los grafitos mayas
El hallazgo de grafitos en los muros interiores de los edificios mayas es un fenómeno muy frecuente, y sin embargo poco estudiado. En muchos casos, estas manifestaciones artísticas espontáneas permanecen intactas en las paredes y bancas de las estructuras y subestructuras en que fueron grabadas -protegidas por el derrumbe o por los rellenos-, lo que las convierte en una fuente iconográfica de primera mano para el estudio de la vida cotidiana y el pensamiento religioso de sus artífices. Su valor histórico, artístico y documental es indiscutible, y su correcta interpretación supondrá una inestimable aportación a la historia del arte y la antropología maya.
En esta comunicación proponemos una clasificación tipológica general de los diferentes motivos y tipos iconográficos identificados al estudiar comparativamente los grafitos documentados en diferentes sitios de las tierras bajas centrales. Para ello hubo que adaptar el método iconográfico a las peculiaridades del arte maya y, como muestra de la metodología diseñada a tal objeto, se presentan asimismo en este trabajo los resultados preliminares obtenidos del estudio del tipo iconográfico antropomorfo.

11 – 11.30am
Lola Kaiser, Freie Universität Berlin

Zoomorphe Fassadengestaltung im Puuc- und Chenes-Gebiet

11.30 – 11.45am
Coffee break

11.45 – 12.15am
Karla Ramírez Rosas, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn

Tlaltecuhtli, la tierra, en los códices
En esta charla se presentará un análisis iconográfico de Tlaltecuhtli “Señora/Señor de la Tierra” en algunas de sus representaciones en algunas escenas en los códices. En particular, de códices del Grupo Borgia y de algunos otros procedentes de la región mixteca. Además, se mostrarán algunas comparaciones y relaciones con esculturas aztecas.
12.15 – 12.45am
Harald Thomaß, Universität Hamburg

Ikonografische Sprache: Gebete der yukatekischen Maya

12.45 – 1.15pm
Mariana Castillo Deball, Berlin

El dónde estoy va desapareciendo: reflexiones sobre la transformación de las imágenes. The where I am is vanishing: reflections on the transformation of images
During the last years Castillo Deball has been researching on the provenance of archaeological objects and manuscripts from the point of view of contemporary art. Often the trajectory of an object and how it arrived at a particular collection is very intense, but this history is hardly integrated into the object’s display at the museum. The object itself can be so complex, and there are so many objects in ethnographic or archaeological museums that it would take too much time and space to actually unfold all these narratives. Through her artistic practice, Deball takes a sociological point of view as to how the object is placed in a historical context and how it has had many different historical contexts, depending on the place where it is and the people who have manipulate it over time. Each project unfolds a biography of a particular object, studying its different interpretations, replicas, copies and transformations. In her presentation, Castillo Deball will present recent works based on the codex Borgia, the codice Tudela and the Nürnberg Map of Tenochtitlan.

1.15 – 2.45pm
Lunch break

WORKSHOP
2.45 – 5.15pm
Manuel Hermann Lejarazu, CIESAS, México D.F.

New findings in the Mixtec toponyms: Analysis and identifications in Mixtec codices
The Mixtec place names are very important elements in the Pre-hispanic Pictorials. Cities, towns or village are represented in toponyms glyphs and the genealogies show us the names of kings. In the Workshop we will learn to recognize new findings to the interpretation of the several Mixtec place names.

5.15pm
Viola König and Christian Brückner
Final conclusions