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(Re-)Archiving Flusser

1. Introduction¹

1.1 Becoming an archive

The Vilém Flusser Archive at Berlin University of the Arts holds and looks after the literary remains of the cultural theorist and philosopher Vilém Flusser. The archive identifies itself as an intersection in international research on Vilém Flusser, and endeavours to enhance accessibility of the work of this influential thinker. In addition to its own projects, the Vilém Flusser Archive seeks to promote and support international publications, scholarly and artistic work (e.g. Vilém Flusser Residency Program for Artistic Research in cooperation with transmediale festival for art and digital culture Berlin) and events (book presentations, exhibitions, seminars, lectures, etc.).

The archive was established in 1992 in The Hague and Munich, by Vilém Flusser's wife, Edith Flusser and with the help of Vera Schwamborn, Miguel Gustavo Fusser, and Klaus Sander. In 1998, Siegfried Zielinski was entrusted with the future care of the archive, who was the director of the Academy of Media Arts Cologne at the time. This is the reason why Flusser's original typescripts² can be found in the Historical Archive of the City of Cologne today. In 2007, the archive moved with Prof. Zielinski's chair of archaeology and variantology of media from Cologne to the Berlin University of the Arts. Since February 2016, the current academic director of the archive is Prof. Dr. Maren Hartmann who is professor for communication and media sociology at Berlin University of the Arts.

The archive holds approximately 2500 photocopies and digital copies of typescripts of essays and books by Flusser, most of his publications, as well as documents of his extensive correspondence. The majority of his texts, of which some are still unpublished, is in German or Portuguese; some are in English, French and Czech. In addition to this multi-lingual and heterogeneous body of work, the archive holds Flusser's Traveling Library, numerous image and audio materials, digital artefacts, as well as a growing collection of secondary literature, theses and dissertations on Flusser. In the following sections of the article, the collection of the archive will be described in detail.

¹ Source of the here listed information: <http://www.flusser-archive.org>, accessed on October 23, 2017

² The authors of this paper use consequently "typescripts" instead of "manuscripts" in order to illustrate Flusser's magnificent work on his typewriter(s).

It is important to mention that an agreement consolidated in June 2012 – established between Prof. Norval Baitello of Pontifícia Católica de São Paulo (PUC-SP) and Berlin University of the Arts, its president Prof. Martin Rennert and the director of the Vilém Flusser Archive Prof. Siegfried Zielinski – authorised the creation of a "mirror" collection of Berlin's Flusser Archive in São Paulo, Brazil. The initiative made it possible to entirely digitally copy Flusser's typescripts and correspondences for an archive in São Paulo. The "mirror" archive is hosted by the Center for Interdisciplinary Research in Semiotics of Culture and Media (CISC) founded in 1992, under the directorship of Norval Baitello Jr., who played a pioneering role in publishing Flusser as one of the main theoretical references in media studies. The Brazilian archive was opened in October 2016 and provides free access to all available documents.

As mentioned, the original Flusser typescripts are still in the Historical Archive of the City of Cologne. However, on March 3, 2009, an accident happened in the city archive: its main building collapsed due to the construction work of a new underground railway line of the Cologne Stadtbahn system. Most of the archival records were buried by this collapse, but fortunately the Flusser Collection survived this terrible happening. It was stored in one of the rooms, from which materials could be completely evacuated without any damage. However, the re-cataloguing and reorganising of the evacuated material took several years.

The Historical Archive of the City of Cologne has been pursuing for some years, a strategy for the widest possible free access to its holdings via a digital reading room on the Internet (so called "Digitales Historisches Archiv Köln"³). Here electronic images of archival items are presented free of charge and with open access – of course, only if questions of authors' copyrights are solved. In April 2017, Miguel Gustavo Flusser, son of Vilém Flusser who holds the copyrights of Flusser's texts, and Dr. Max Plassmann, the head of old inventory holds at the Cologne Archive, agreed on the digitisation process and the online release of the Vilém Flusser Collection via the city archive's website. While the Berlin archive only holds the digital copies of the already photocopied manuscripts (black and white), the Cologne archive will then hold digitalisation of the original manuscripts (full colour).

1.2 Context and Relevance

Although the literary remains of Vilém Flusser have been distributed within a geographically as well as medium-dispersive meshwork of originals, photocopies and digital representations, there is an in-depth structure within this accrued archival constellation. To observe this non-linear

³ See more at <http://historischesarchivkoeln.de/en/> accessed on October 6, 2017.

“archival skeleton”, it seems necessary to reconsider and reconstruct some historical events as well as conceived tasks of the archive. As time went on, the strategic and tactical schemes for the “dynamic” Vilém Flusser Archive experienced adjustments not only due to internal decisions but also because of external circumstances. As the current situation of archives per se is changing in view of the transforming circumstances of telematic societies, the digital storage of information, and the rising relevance of metadata and accessibility, we should keep in mind that also more non-linear expiring transformations have a vast influence on the definition of archives.

The collapse of the Historical Archive of the City of Cologne in 2009 might be one of the most tremendous accidents in the recent history of Germany-based archives. By a fortunate coincidence, the original archival material of Vilém Flusser escaped the damage and the digitisation process of the archival material already started in Cologne is well underway. In the eyes of various thinkers, the effects of digitisation might have an intense influence on the future of archiving, mostly concerning how we will deal with archival materials and which methods and theories⁴ can be elaborated on to derive an epistemological benefit from this re-mediation.

Therefore, the aim of this article is to give a general overview on the individual collection of the Vilém Flusser Archive in Berlin and to describe its connections to the two other institutions in Cologne and São Paulo. Among other topics, we will also report on the current situation of the above-mentioned digitisation process in Cologne and through this, reflect on future questions.

2. Three archives, three collections

Cologne, São Paulo, and Berlin: the three archival centers of Vilém Flusser’s work. In this chapter, we would like to give an overview on the collections of the three institutes in order to inform the reader about their actual inventories – with a main focus on Berlin – and highlight their connections.

2.1 Materials of the Vilém Flusser Archive, Berlin

2.1.1 Traveling Library

The name “Traveling Library” (in German “Reisebibliothek”) was given by Edith Flusser to symbolise the continuous travels of Vilém Flusser’s personal library. Although it is most likely that the library didn’t contain all of Flusser’s books when it was given to the archive, it consists of 1368 items. Flusser must have read more than that, because some basic authors’ works such as

⁴ See more in Zielinski 2010.

Walter Benjamin's are missing and many pieces could have been lost in between the different stations of Flusser's life.

Therefore, the Traveling Library has also become a symbolic token of Flusser's nonexistent footnotes: It helps us to understand where his thoughts came from. If we take a closer look at the list of books in this private library, we recognise that the selection is widely ranged: one can find not only basic philosophical masterpieces (e.g. Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, or Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*), or secondary literature on philosophy, but also important pieces of classical literature (e.g. *Doktor Faustus* by Thomas Mann, or the poetry collection, *Blanco* by Octavio Paz) and even informative literature such as Sokolski's textbook about playing chess, *Lehrbuch der Schacheröffnungen* (1965). Therefore, this personal collection, which can be found in the Berlin archive only, is an important source of Flusser's personal interests in different fields.



Image 1: Traveling Library of the Vilém Flusser Archive Berlin at Berlin University of the Arts⁵

⁵ Image source: form magazine, <https://www.form.de/news/3-fragen-an-rainer-guldin-flusser-studies>, accessed on December 1, 2017. Photo by Antonio Castles

2.1.2 Typescripts, Correspondences, and Keywords

As mentioned before, the Berlin archive holds all the photocopies of Flusser's original typescripts (essays, monographs, course and project drafts, project documentations, and other documents) and correspondence materials.

The archival system of the collection follows the original categorisation system, built up by Edith Flusser and her team in 1992 and refined in the following years. They differentiated nine archival categories: published essays (marked with the archival address "M"), unpublished essays ("X"), book typescripts ("1"), course typescripts ("2"), contributions to São Paulo Biennial and Casa da Cor ("3"), interviews ("4"), secondary literature about Flusser ("5"), correspondence ("6"), and transcripts of lectures ("7").

Miguel Gustavo Flusser developed an MS-DOS-based database software in order to have an overview of the archival material. Inspired by the Flusserian idea of using computer technologies for a new way to represent text, a keyword system as basis for searching within the Flusserian text corpus had to be developed too. Vera Schwamborn, the assistant for the setup of the archival beginnings in The Hague, mentioned in an interview (Schwamborn 2014) that the "Flusser Hypertext" designed and programmed by Bernd Wingert⁶ had a strong effect on the structuring ideas. By reading and cross reading the texts, 197 keywords had been defined in about five months. As an iterative process, the selected keywords as representations of the general thoughts of Flusser had been divided into seven categories: names; culture, society, politics; arts; philosophy and philosophical/religious terms and concepts; time, periods of time, history, epochs; nature, natural science, technique, apparatuses; and language(s), images, codes, communication, media. Because the keywords had been assigned manually to the entire content of each text, the search function not only respected terms in the titles, which – as usual for Flusser – are kept short. Through combining up to eight different keywords within one search request, it was possible to focus on specific contexts and limit the search results. Some of the keywords also contain the opposite of the first mentioned term. Some of the keywords also contain the antonym of a particular term, as explained in the keyword system manual accrued from Flusser's dialectic method, in order to also reflect on terms and concepts through a contradictory process.⁷ One speciality of the system can be understood as symptomatic for Flusser's thinking: the abbreviation "*FICT" links only to documents with fictional character, such as fables, Sci-Fi stories or fabricated (*fingierte*) correspondence.

⁶ See more in Böhle, Riehm & Wingert 1997.

⁷ See more in Keyword System Manual, Vilém Flusser Archive, Berlin.

Today this keyword system is still in use, but due to technical and practical reasons it is currently only available as a printed index catalogue enclosed in the folders at the Vilém Flusser Archive.

As mentioned earlier, the typescript and correspondence collections follow the original 1992 archival system. However, the layer of the archive (the order of the folders, their labelings, the number of the files, etc.) was changed during Claudia Becker's academic supervision between 2010 and 2013. At this time, Rodrigo Maltez Novaes was a guest researcher at the archive and helped Claudia to implement this new layer. We asked Rodrigo about these changes in the form of an email interview.

He informed us that they decided to reorganise the folders of the archive, due to the fact that for someone who was arriving at the archive for the first time, it was very difficult to access the material and find her/his way around. Therefore, Claudia and Rodrigo's aim, under the supervision and direction of Prof. Zielinski, was to make the archive more user-friendly and accessible for the visitors. They decided to check through the places of the documents within the folders and where there was any wrong ordering, to return them to their original places. A new folder numbering system was added to help identify folders and to place them back in their correct place. The original indexing system by Edith and Miguel Gustavo Flusser was not changed in respect, but with the new folder numbers it became easier to find the exact content of the files. So the folder spines contain the same information that was in the original spines, but now with these added folder numbers. Moreover, all the folders that were too full and too heavy, Rodrigo separated into subfolders, which is indicated by the numbering system "1 of 5" "2 of 5", etc.

Rodrigo also told us that Edith Flusser had not completed the indexing system of correspondence material when the archive was handed over in 1998. The work had to be stopped because the family was leaving to Barbados and Edith did not think it was a good idea to take the archive with them. This is the reason why one can find some correspondence materials with the old numbering system, but others without it. However, the indexing of the material did not continue after the handover.

Therefore, the above-explained index system has not been applied to the correspondence material. However, the archive team continues to work on adding keywords to each correspondence folder with a short summary on each letter.

We also asked Rodrigo what he would still change in the archival system. He answered, "Today, now that I have more in-depth knowledge of all the material, I would reorganise everything, keeping the main categories: Books, Courses, Essays, Correspondence, and Conferences/Symposia organised by language group but also in chronological order of

production. The series of books⁸ that I am organizing here in Brazil is being thought as an ‘archival’ collection following this chronological logic in terms of when the material was produced. This is one of the best ways of charting the progress of Flusser’s working concepts, which is obscured by the erratic publishing chronology of the work. The publishing dates are almost all different from the production dates, and this generates a huge problem in the charting of Flusser’s methodology and intellectual development. So this is how I would reorganize the material today, and hopefully this will be possible through the eventual online archive. Once the material is reorganized into its main production periods: 50s, 60s, 70s, and 80/90s, the vision of Flusser’s methodology and intellectual progress becomes easy to see and study.”

One should definitely take Rodrigo’s ideas into consideration, as they could be useful for the next steps in archiving Flusser’s literary remains.

2.1.3 “Nebenarchive” (“side archives”)

The 1992 archive team named the archive records which do not belong to typescripts and correspondences “Nebenarchive” (“side archives”). They listed here the 1) published essays; 2) separated original typescripts; 3) video, audio, photo materials and transcripts of lectures; 4) texts from third persons sent to Flusser; 5) materials of meetings (posters, invitations, etc.); and 6) index and control folders about the documentation of the work of the archive, and user instructions and manuals. From these archival records, we would like to highlight only the collection of video and audio materials, a continuously growing content of our archive.

At the moment, the video collection of the Vilém Flusser Archive contains 89 videos. Most of them are digitised versions of videotape, but one can also find newer materials (e.g. panel discussions, event trailers, Flusser-related videos and animation works) within the collection. The original audio collection of the archive contains 135 compact cassettes, which has been partly digitised. The team of the archive is continuously working on finishing the digitisation process of these tapes. The archive visitors have, of course, access to both collections.

2.1.4 Vilém Flusser Archive Library

The original 1992 manual separates a third type of material, the library. It contains the magazines/journals and the books of the archive – that is not the Traveling Library.

⁸ Flusser, V. (2017). *Box O Último Juízo: Gerações*. São Paulo: É Realizações. See more at <http://www.erealizacoes.com.br/produto/box-o-ultimo-juizo-geracoes> accessed on November 20, 2017

This collection is also continuously growing: the archive tries to collect all Flusser-related literature. Some years ago, under the academic supervision of Daniel Irrgang and with the help of Martina Špidlová, the Flusser Archive Library was also reorganised by separating six classification categories: 1. “Flusser’s Publications” (in different languages, from different publishing houses); 2. “With Flusser” (anthologies including Flusser’s essays); 3. “Mentioning Flusser” (publications mentioning, quoting or using Flusser’s thoughts); 4. “On Flusser” (secondary literature on Flusser); 5. “International Flusser Lectures” (specified for this series of lectures, published by Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Cologne); and 6. “Miscellaneous” (all books that the archive receives from authors and publishing houses but do not have any direct connection with Flusser, or simply cannot be categorised into any of the other five categories). Furthermore, within these six categories, the publications are organised by languages and in alphabetical order. Our library also has a separate collection for the unpublished papers: bachelor, master and PhD theses, essays and other papers. The archive is always grateful for receiving any Flusser-related published or unpublished works. Therefore, we encourage everyone to send us her/his own work to widen our growing collection.

2.1.5 Artefacts

Among the above-mentioned publications and theoretical contributions, the archive holds many artefacts that are related to Flusser’s oeuvre. This includes some results of his connections and cooperations with different artists. Many of these artefacts were given to the archive by Edith Flusser in 1998. For example, three pieces of Samson Flexor’s paintings which were dedicated to Vilém Flusser; a photo series about Edith and Vilém Flusser by the photographer, Ed Sommer. We could also add to this list, the growing poster collection (about events, book publications, etc.); Bernd Wingert’s original Apple Performa 630 with the Flusser Hypertext software on it which was entrusted to the Vilém Flusser Archive in 2007; or one of Flusser’s last typewriters that symbolises his lifelong work, etc.

2.2 “Mirror” Archive in São Paulo⁹

The Vilém Flusser Archive in São Paulo was born from the desire to make accessible the rich and innovative ideas of Flusser to the Brazilian and Latin American public, constituting itself as a space for reflection and interlocution on his work.

⁹ See more at <http://www.arquivovilemflusser.com.br/vilemflusser/> accessed on November 15, 2017

As mentioned, the São Paulo archive's collection is based on the Berlin typescripts. Between 2012 and 2013, Norval Baitello Jr., director of the São Paulo archive, together with Jorge Miklos, Nádia Lebedev and Diogo Andrade Bornhausen, were in Berlin in order to dedicate themselves to the research and organisation of the future archive in São Paulo. Norval Baitello's team had been working on the full digitisation of all archival materials for two years and once the digitisation was completed, in addition to the dozens of hours of Flusser videos and audio, the typescripts were printed, ordered and opened to the public in October 2016.

The São Paulo archive has become an important research platform in Latin America and it continuously expands its network of national and international exchanges and dialogues around Flusser. Just to mention one example, they recently organised the exhibition "Flusser e as Dores do Espaço" at Sesc Ipiranga in São Paulo.

The Berlin and São Paulo archives are in close partnership: as part of our cooperative work, new findings and archival materials are sent to the other institute. For example, the Berlin archive is now working on the digitisation of some important audio material about Casa da Cor, which will be delivered to the archive in São Paulo.

2.3 Historical Archive of the City of Cologne

Before rebuilding the historical archive at the new location "Eifelwall" in the city centre of Cologne, the archive team is working meticulously on the complete reconstruction and virtual representation of all archival stocks. The common tendency for digitisation had become a necessity for the Cologne archive, conditioned by the incredible damage to the archival material in 2009. According to estimates, 35% of the archival material was damaged heavily, 50% moderate heavily and 15% lightly¹⁰. Right after the collapse the salvaged material was transported from the place of accident at Severinstraße to the temporary first aid centre in Cologne-Porz. From there, the roughly cleaned, dried, and anew catalogued archival cartons were distributed to twenty "asylum archives" in Germany.

¹⁰ See also "Bergen, Ordnen, Restaurieren. Der Wiederaufbau des Historischen Archivs der Stadt Köln", Cologne, 2017, p. 32



Image 2: Magazine shelves of the restoration and digitisation centre in Cologne¹¹

This decentralisation as well as the danger of consequential damages for the various materials, pushed forward the plan of a complete digitisation of all stocks, not least to conserve digital representations and make them simultaneously accessible to the public. A considerable proportion of the archival material is conserved in a complex manner and the possibility of loss of an indefinite number is currently not predicted. Therefore, in some cases, the digital representations might be essential for the preservation of the historical information.

Understanding history in a Foucauldian sense as the compounded consequence of accidents¹², a new period of Cologne's production of cultural memory had begun with the significant event in 2009. With regards to the archival material of Vilém Flusser's textual legacy, which coincidentally came to no harm and remain in undamaged conditions, we can consider the archival digitisation process under conventional provisions. There are several theoretical and practical aspects in this case, which we discussed with Dr. Max Plassmann, the head of old inventory holds at the Cologne archive. Based on Laermans and Gielens (2007) article "The archive of the digital an-archive", we formed our findings under the prefix-based premise of "(re-

¹¹ Image Source: "Bergen, Ordnen, Restaurieren. Der Wiederaufbau des Historischen Archivs der Stadt Köln", Cologne, 2017, p. 28

¹² See also Foucault 1977, p. 146.

)archiving” to present them in a practice orientated manner. The prefix “re-” is intentionally enclosed in brackets because the archiving of Vilém Flusser’s textual corpus has been all along an ongoing process, for the very reason that the archiving of Flusser’s intellectual remains should be understood as a transformative and dynamic system. Furthermore, “re-archiving” in our case might not be understood as a complete “re-configuration” of the archival stock. It focuses solely on the aspects: re-mediate, re-use, and re-auratisation.

2.3.1 Re-mediate

“[N]etworked databanks profoundly re-mediate the function as well as the practice of both archiving and data (re)search in such a thorough way that the actual outcome is a new medium.” (Laermans & Gielen 2017, p. 2) The “Digitales Historisches Archiv Köln” therefore uses optomechanical devices in various versions to generate digital images of the archival material. To choose the proper scanning technology, it is on the one hand necessary to have specific knowledge about the objects themselves and on the other hand to notice the particular condition of the objects’ materiality. Because the optomechanical process is always related to the preparation of an optimal image reproduction-setup, the scanning device range reaches from digital repro cameras to large format flatbed scanners.

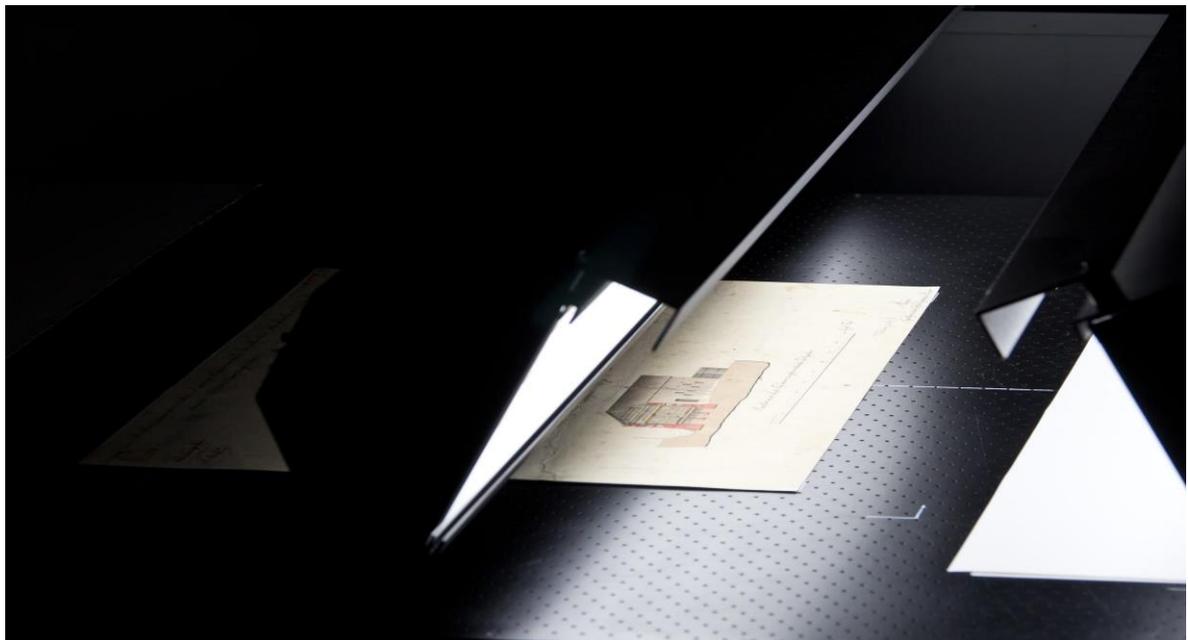
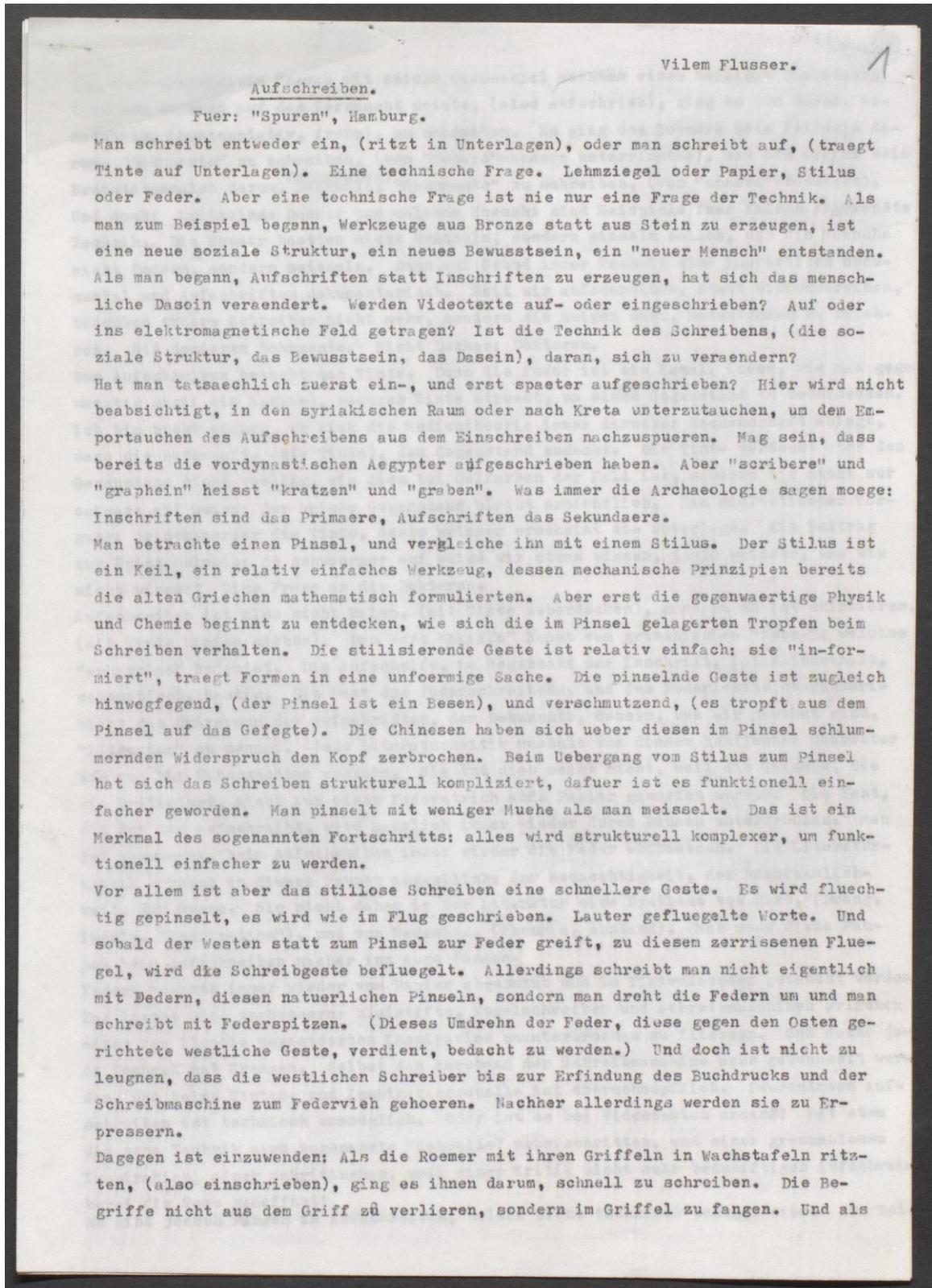


Image 3: Scanner at the digitisation centre in Cologne

As there are already scanned materials in the form of analogue microfilms, the re-mediation could also proceed through digital microfilm scanners. Compared to handwritten books that are hundreds of years old or large-scale paintings, the digitalisation of Vilém Flusser's text corpus is a less complicated and easier to standardise procedure. It is known that Flusser drafted his texts almost solely as single pages written on his typewriters. The over 2500 existing typescripts consist of different kinds of thin paper – carbon copy paper was always added behind the paper in his typewriter to create a carbon copy to keep at his disposal if the original needed to be sent elsewhere. Flusser tended to fill the whole DIN A4 page with his text, so it is common that the last letter of a text line remains sharply at the end of the page. As shown in Image 4, the electronic images of the typescripts are impressively detailed. By using colour calibration adjustments for every scanned object (see also Image 5) as well as sharpness control, the 300 to 600 dpi (dots per inch) images provide possibilities for closer visual observations. Saved and stored as PDF/A or TIFF files on the mirrored and audit-proofed server “Centera”, a high compatibility for future systems has been provided. As Flusser's scans of the typescripts are full and borderless, the visual appearance and therefore its interpretation of their material condition is also ensured – if only as technical images.

Image 4: Scan of Flussers typscript "Aufschreiben"¹³

¹³Image Source: "Digitales Historisches Archiv Köln", Signature: 2599, Best. 1608, Cologne, accessed on December 1, 2017



Image 5: Calibration via colour bar¹⁴

¹⁴ Image Source: "Digitales Historisches Archiv Köln", Signature: 2599, Best. 1608, Cologne, accessed on December 1, 2017

2.3.2 Re-use

Similarly to Plassmann, Laermans and Gielen (2017) describe the influence of digitisation on the usage of archives as follows: “Usually, strategic as well as tactical data operations transcend the traditional function of the archive, i.e. the stable storing of information in view of proving, witnessing or representing a past event. The classical archive is founded upon the read-only paradigm, whereas the internet and digital databases are radically user-oriented. The traditional notion of the archive therefore implies a thorough split between a document and its interpretation (...). In contrast, digital information anticipates its re-use: it is there to be worked upon; it is stored in view of re-calculations (databases) or re-searches (the internet).” (Laermans & Gielen 2017, p. 3)

As already mentioned and later specified, the telematic infrastructure of digital archives provide new possibilities for the use of visual representations of Vilém Flusser’s typescripts. Not only the visual quality and quantity, but also the autonomy of usage casts a new light on the research process. Plassmann sees a great potential for more collaborative work on archival materials through commenting, linking, evaluating and implementing references via online digital networked reading systems. Formerly isolated archive users might now animate location and time independent discussions about the material and its related contexts. This community-like form of research may lead to a shift in the scientific culture, because in some cases it can be very productive to be able to start a discussion during the research and observation of material, and not only afterwards when the publication has already been released. The follow-up discussion (e.g. via peer reviews) might remain an essential aspect for historical research, nevertheless, real-time advice from other researchers on specific topics seem to be a profound innovation, particularly for the work with archive materials.

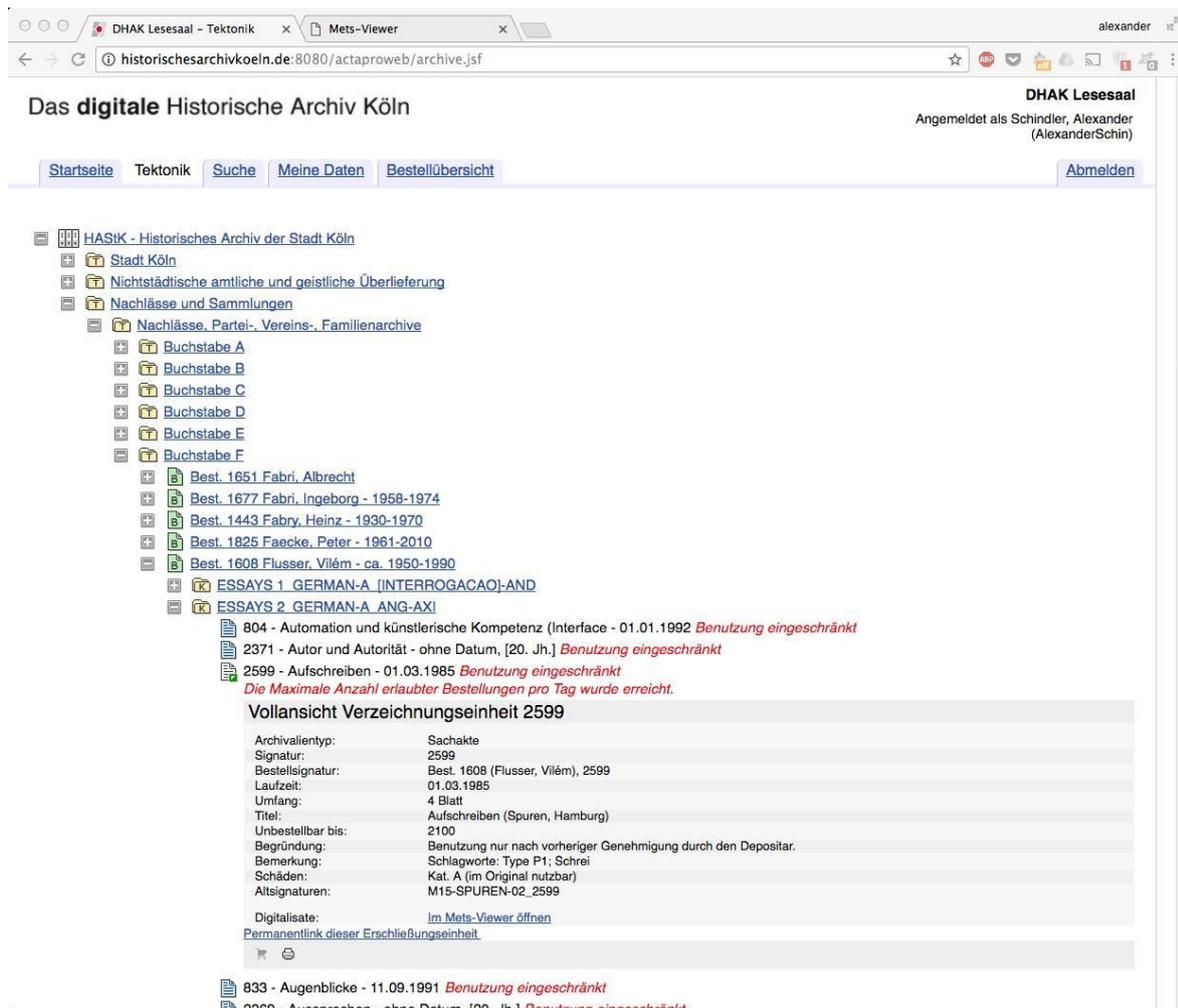


Image 6: Tectonic of the “Digitaler Lesesaal Historisches Archiv Köln”¹⁵

2.3.3 Re-Auratisation

As a conscious side-effect of the re-mediated and then (re-)used archival material, a so called “re-auratisation” of the now digital artefacts might occur. This speculative term is based on Walter Benjamin’s concept of the “Aura” in context of his work, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”¹⁶. Re-auratisation indicates a new form of aesthetic appearance of the re-mediated archival material. In contrast to Benjamin’s observation of the media-technological influence on the artwork, we refocus on the aura as a less fundamental factor for a definition of the “original”. In fact, the unrestricted mobilisation and reproduction of objects also influence the usage of archival materials. For the modern archivist, Plassmann, the consequence of the

¹⁵ Image Source: <http://historischesarchivkoeln.de:8080/actaproweb/>, accessed on November 18, 2017

¹⁶ See more in Zielinski 2011.

unrestricted usage of highly detailed visual representations of archival material via digital databases will be the heightened desire to see the original physically. Considering the widely scattered Flusserian researchers all around the globe, the improvement of image quality as well as the increasing awareness of modern archives for the media technological representation of the archival materials, might have a positive effect on further research on the work of Vilém Flusser.

The aforementioned technically sophisticated optomechanical scanning devices as well as the continuously improving displays of home user-computer gadgets generate a more detailed and immersive visual experience at the “Digitaler Lesesaal”. The idea of virtual archives in cyberspace environments is not a pure utopia anymore. Regarding the already occurring virtual representations of e.g. museums through 3D-imaging, it may only be a question of time until archival objects appear as quasi three-dimensional images on home users’ screens.

3. Future considerations

As it has been mentioned in this article, Vilém Flusser’s literary legacy is available in at least three locations: Berlin, Cologne, and São Paulo. This can also be considered as a decentralisation of the archival material, since the content of the core collection, the actual text materials, are the same at every location – but of course the “originality” is different.

The three archives have a dynamic relationship and work together: exchanging information about the material, helping each others’ working processes, etc. – as a real network in a Flusserian sense, which will help the three institutes to further the work on Flusser’s legacy.

The Berlin archive aims at opening up Flusser’s thoughts to a wider audience by organising events, holding seminars, and cooperating with other related institutions. In this sense, we see our institute as a dynamic research platform, a “living archive” – and therefore as a node with multiple connections within a network that is the Flusser research community.

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