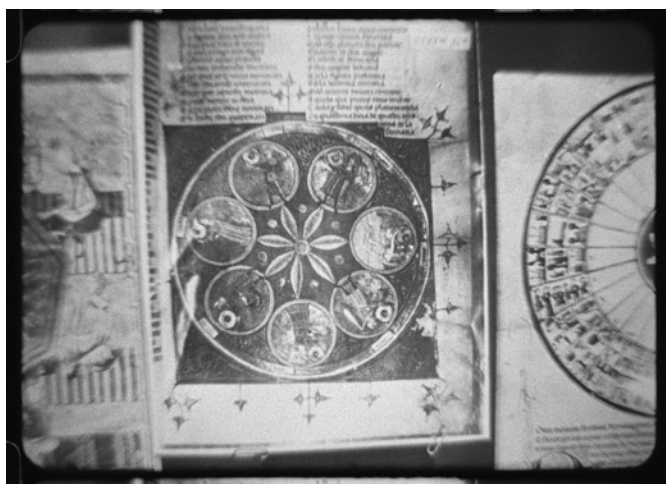


Elke Marhöfer

NOBODY KNOWS, WHEN IT WAS MADE AND WHY



PRELUDE: *NOBODY KNOWS, WHEN IT WAS MADE AND WHY*

by Elke Marhöfer

The *Mnemosyne Atlas* by the art historian Aby Warburg vividly reminds that all research and exploration, be it art or science based, is a historical and anthropological procedure, closely related to colonialism. Thus, almost every European and North American archive, museum, and scientific inquiry radiates thievery and colonial violence. The *Atlas*, too, outlines and forms knowledge from and about various cultures and practices. However, unlike many historical sciences, it doesn't split the world in two, separating ancient and current, northern and southern empires, and 'their' objects and cultures, instead it searches for continuations of one within the other. In this sense the *Atlas* can be read as a critical and an affective cartography of heterogeneous encounters and practices, drawn from a manifold of origins.

The tableaux, to which Warburg attached photographic images, were made from wooden frames covered with black linen. They were a suggestion by Fritz Saxl and used for lectures in the reading room of the Hamburg library. The original *Mnemosyne Atlas* plates no longer exist. They are only preserved as photographs. The film *Nobody knows, when it was made and why*, was shot on black & white 16mm film in the Aby Warburg Archive in London and shows the first version of photographic reproductions in the format of 18 × 24 cm, dating from 1928. For the *Atlas* Warburg did not confine himself to traditional research objects, he improvised in response to the given form and included everyday items, such as advertisement posters, newspaper clippings and press photos. Unusual for both anthropological and art historical procedures, the image panels contain hardly any captions. As a consequence of Warburg's refusal to assign descriptions, neither offering a reading direction from left-to-right, nor allowing a numbering system into the individual ensemble, it appears as if the *Atlas* does not have a specific research subject.

The film *Nobody knows, when it was made and why* works with a collection of images stemming from distant and uncertain geographies, where the human is not taking a centralized position, but an entangled one. The film features images that disclose the intimacy of human and animal bodies often corresponding to the rays and gravitational forces of the sun, the moon, and other planets.¹

It is difficult to draw any definite conclusions or to derive an unequivocal way of thinking for the *Atlas*. The montage of images, the linkages created between panels, the various depicted practices, stemming from expansive geographies, the events of the macro and the micro cosmos and different temporalities create a fluid territory. It is precisely this openness, the rhizomatic spreading of thematic fields across the panels, the creolization of so called modern and traditional topics that makes a continuous actualization of the *Atlas* possible. Warburg's analytical mode of application does not override, but builds on understandings of resemblances, interrelations, impulses and forces shared between things. By this the *Atlas* provokes similarities and differences, be they of cosmological, astrological, biological, zoological or anthropological nature, revealing and enhancing the intertwining of the earthly and the planetary, the micro and the macro, the local and the nonlocal. Not only are the spatial and temporal coordinates of the images diverse and manifold, they are also filled to the brim, or even better, enlivened by things, minerals, animals, people, amulets and dices, solar

and lunar eclipses, intestines, magic stones and starry heavens, suggesting to think of the *Atlas* as blocks of affects.

It is easy to see a connection between Aby Warburg and Henri Bergson who worked around the same time. Both questioned conservative taxonomies and periodizations commonly used in disciplines such as art history, philosophy or evolutionary sociobiology. They understood the capacity of images and things to reach far beyond the human and her category of representation. For Bergson images are not yet but very close to objects and best understood as durable forces stemming from experience and matter. Martha Blassnigg's insight is very helpful to understand the connection between Warburg's intentions and Bergson's philosophy on images and its full impact. Blassnigg underlines, that Warburg's method to create the *Atlas* led him to understand sensation as a back and forth movement between object and perceiver, between interior and exterior. She demonstrates how this corresponds with Bergson's understanding of perception "that takes place in the object to be perceived"² by what he calls a "reciprocal interpenetration,"³ a relation that goes far beyond the perception of phenomena. Images are not just passive (objects) to be perceived or studied by an observer — they act, they do things with us. This affective approach rather asks what is it that images can do, than what do images represent or signify? For Bergson matter and images are not separated, but interconnected, mutually

interwoven, producing an "endlessly continued creation,"⁴ a proper creative evolution.

Images, uncoupled from their narrowed role of representation, "organise, uphold, cross, transgress, affirm, or undermine boundaries,"⁵ as Anselm Franke addresses their capacities. Images themselves become producers of differences and relations. The images of the *Atlas*, by relating to innumerable points in time and space, produce endless differentiations, so that their temporal and territorial points add up and become virtual lines on which they collectively animate themselves. Images and shapes, be they human or nonhuman, of organic or inorganic origin, are aggregated mnemonic storages. Affected by traces of their histories, images generate highly virtual movements, they themselves produce a creative evolution. It might be in this sense that Warburg saw himself as a "seismograph [...], to be placed along the dividing lines between different cultural atmospheres and systems,"⁶ resonating the rhythms of life, in its versatile and most extended meanings.

Warburg not only collected durable images but also persisting practices and unfamiliar techniques of transformation. Traveling to New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado in 1896 he visited the territory of American Pueblo Indians in order to attend a performance of the Hopi snake dance which was already well known at the time. In the end Warburg did not

succeed to see the dance. Yet, about thirty years later, while being under psychiatric surveillance himself, he imaginatively constructed it from anthropological observations.⁷ In *Memories of a Journey through Pueblo Region* Warburg connects the practices and encounters he had experienced with Nietzsche's concept of becoming and transformation. Possibly due to his schizophrenic capacities, he understood that human and nonhuman are shaped by complex relations that might also change the human significantly, and honored the practices for upholding "fluid borders between human, animal, plant, and mineral, such that man can influence becoming by means of a voluntary connection with the organically foreign being."⁸ Acknowledging the Pueblo Indian's transformative ontologies and their skillfulness in traversing binaries, Warburg nevertheless ignored their objection to be photographed. Later he explained that the journey had made him realize the intermediate position of images.

Warburg did notice that many cliff dwellings were abandoned and that the railway tracks penetrating Pueblo Indian lands brought tourist flows with them, however, he failed to acknowledge the very concrete political struggle the people were involved in. Warburg's guide was the missionary Heinrich C. Voth, an infamous intruder and photographer of ceremonies. While Warburg recognized Voth's methods of exploitation of knowledge and thievery of Pueblo Indian objects, he didn't oppose Voth's authority.

1 Today these images simultaneously trace their migration into colonial and scientific systematics, into archives such as the Biblioteca Vaticana Rom, British Museum London, Bibliothèque Nationale Paris, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and others.

2 Martha Blassnigg, "Ekphrasis and a Dynamic Mysticism in Art: Reflections on Henri Bergson's Philosophy and Aby Warburg's Mnemosyne Atlas," in *Transtechology Research Reader* (Plymouth: Plymouth University, 2011), 3.

3 Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1911). 178.

4 Ibid., 107.

5 Anselm Franke, "Much Trouble in the Transportation of Souls, or: The Sudden Disorganization of Boundaries," in *Animism* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2010), 26.

6 Aby Warburg cited in Blassnigg, "Ekphrasis and a Dynamic Mysticism in Art: Reflections on Henri Bergson's Philosophy and Aby Warburg's Mnemosyne Atlas," 3.

7 He had seen the antelope dance in San Ildefonso and the *humiskachina* or corn dance in Oraibi, but was relying on Paul Ehrenreichs observation of the snake dance and drawings he asked Hopi children to draw during his visit.

8 Philippe-Alain Michaud, *Aby Warburg and the Image in Motion* (New York: Zone Books, 2004), 325.

Warburg exploited various objects himself, but after his return to Germany immediately gave them away to the *Museum für Völkerkunde* in Hamburg. It remains unclear if this was a gesture of turning the objects over to the museum for ‘research purposes’ and public access (quite common at the time), or whether the displacement of the objects loaded them with a fundamental tension, causing Warburg’s wish to distance himself from them. As an excuse for Warburg’s complicity, Fritz Saxl later wrote that his travel to America initiated the idea to look at European history with the eyes of an anthropologist, thus to start an ethnography of Europe.⁹ This event can certainly be considered a reflection upon what went wrong with anthropology, research and knowledge production.

The film *Nobody knows, when it was made and why* shows the first version of photographic reproductions of *Mnemosyne Atlas* from 1928. The captions (theme of the image, author, time of origin and current storage location) partly derive von Martin Warnke, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2012), who used the third version. In case original captions by Warburg are preserved they will appear in italics.

IN ORDER OF (DIS)APPEARANCE:

Fig. 1: Gnostic Sun Amulets (Early Christian Time)

Illustrations by Johannes Chifletius, Joannes Macarius Canonicus Ariensis Abraxas seu Apistopistus (...), Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus, 1657, pl. xxviii

Fig. 2: Astrological Divination Panel with Zodiacs and Decans
Redrawing of the so-called Tabula Bianchini, fragmented marble slab, Late Egyptian, 2nd century AD; Paris, Musée du Louvre

Fig. 3: The Zodiac Sign of Scorpio and 30 Fantastic Heavenly Bodies Assigned to its 30 Degrees as the Basis for the Prognostications for Each Day of the Month
(Spanish manuscript, XIV century) im. 7v

Fig. 4: Virgo with Decan Images
From a Spanish manuscript
14th century
Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, Cod. Vat. Reg. lat. 1283, im. 9v

Fig. 5: Virgo with Decan Images,
im. 10v

Fig. 6: The Moon Riding on a Hare. The 28 Sectors represent the 28 Stations of the Moon. In each station the astrologically corresponding professions.
From a Spanish manuscript of the XIV century, im. 23v

Fig. 7: The Planets of the Seven Days of the Week
From a southern French manuscript of the „Breviari d’Amor“ of the Matfre Ermengaud de Béziers, mid 14th century
Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, Cod 2583, im. 51r

Fig. 8: Spanish Planet Dice Game of the 8th Century
Planet game
From Libro de Acedrex (Eng.: Book of the customs of men and the duties of nobles or the Book of Chess; Ger.: Schachzabelbuch) of the Spanish King Alfonso X. el Sabio, 1283
Escorial, Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo el Real, Panel I. 6., im. 97v

Fig. 9: Planet Mars and his Angel Spirits (from a Spanish manuscript of the XIV century) im. 29r

Fig. 10: The, with Zodiac “Leo,” simultaneously rising constellations, in the opinion of 1. The Indians 2. The Persians, Egyptians and Chaldeans, 3. Of Ptolemy. From a Spanish manuscript of the XIV century, im. 10v

Fig. 11: Zodiac Signs (based on the Book of Marvels)
From a manuscript „Marvels of Creatures and the Strange Things Existing“ of Abu Yahya Zakariya’ ibn Muhammad al-Qazwīnī, presumably Tabriz or Baghdad, 1388
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cod. pers. 332, im. 27r and 28v

Fig. 12: Zodiac Sign of the Fool, on him the Sun, whose „house“ is Leo. In the lower strip Mars, Jupiter, Saturn as the ruler of 10° of the Zodiac sign (from an Arabic manuscript of the 15th century, in Oxford), im. 9r

Fig. 13: Zodiac Sign of Aries, Thereon Mars, whose house is the Aries. In the lower strip Venus, Sun, Mars, as rulers of 10° of each Zodiac sign (from an Arabic manuscript of the 15th century in Oxford), im. 2v

Fig. 14: Diana of Ephesus
Bronze and alabaster statue, around 120–140 BC
Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale
Head and breast plate with zodiac signs, section

Fig. 15: Complete view of Diana of Ephesus

Fig. 16: Round Zodiac of Dendera – Constellations of the 10 Degree Heavenly Bodies (Decans) – The Twelve Zodiacs with Planets (according to the Teaching of the Arising) – Fixed Star Images of the Egyptians
Ceiling relief from the Hathor temple (historically, called the Temple of Tentyra) from Dendera, Egypt, Roman
Paris, Musée du Louvre
Reversed copperplate engraving from: Description de l’Egypte ou recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Egypte pendant l’expédition de l’armée française, Paris 1809–1828, Vol. 4, Panel 21

⁹ Fritz Saxl, *Warburg’s Besuch in Neu-Mexico* (London : Warburg Institute, University of London, 1957), 317.

Fig. 17: FROM THE COPY OF A PTOLEMY MANUSCRIPT (2ND CENTURY)
9th century
Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, Cod. Vat. gr. 1291
TB 139, 176
Southern hemisphere of the sky, im. 4v

Fig. 18: CLAY LIVER FOR THE TEACHING OF THE SEERS
Babylonian
London, The British Museum
From: Alfred Jeremias, *Handbuch des altorientalischen Geistes*, Leipzig 1913, Sp. 144, Ill. 103
TB 69, 94

Fig. 19.–21: CLAY LIVER MODELS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROPHECY FROM BOĞAZKALE
With Akkadian inscriptions
Hittite-Babylonian, 1st half 14th century BC
From: Ernst F. Weidner, *Keilschriftkulturen aus Boghazköy*, Bd. 4, Berlin 1922, No. 71, 72, 73
Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Vorderasiatisches Museum

Fig. 22: CLAY LIVER FOR THE TEACHING OF THE SEERS
With Etruscan inscriptions
Mid-2nd century BC
Piacenza, Museo Civico

Fig. 23.–24: BABYLONIAN LAW CODE STONE WITH CONSTELLATIONS
Marduk-zakir-shumi I Kuduru.
(851–828 BC)
Paris, Musée du Louvre

Fig. 25: MIDDLE EASTERN DEITY FROM THE ROMAN PERIOD (JUPITER DOLICHENUS) ON THE GARMENT 7 PLANETS
Jupiter Heliopolitanus
Bronze statuette, 2./3. Century AC
Paris, Musée du Louvre

Fig. 26: CLASSIFICATION OF THE BODY ACCORDING TO ZODIAC SIGNS FOR THE PURPOSE OF BLOODLETTING (*German manuscript of the 15th century*)
Zodiac man
From a manuscript collection, 13th century
Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 19414, im. 188v

Fig. 27: HERACLES AS UNIVERSAL RULER, HIS BODY PARTS ASSIGNED TO ZODIAC SIGNS
Zodiac man
From a manuscript, 15th century
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. gr. 2419, im. 1r

Fig. 28: ZODIAC MAN
Jean and Paul Limbourg
From the „Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry,“ after 1417
Chantilly, Musée Condé, Ms. 65, im. 14v
TB 183

Fig. 29: BLOODLETTING AT GOOD AND BAD TIMES AND ITS CONSEQUENCES (*Calender, Basel 1499*)
Zodiac man (Ger.: Aderlaßmännchen)
Lienhart Ysenhut
Woodcarving, 1499
Basel, Universitätsbibliothek

Fig. 30: ORPHEUS CALMS DOWN THE ANIMALS
Workshop of Michele da Verona
Painting, End-15th / Early-16th century
Krakow, Wawel Castle, collection Lanckoronski
(formerly Vienna)

Fig. 31: Panel B
VARYING DEGREES OF TRANSMISSION OF THE COSMIC SYSTEM ON THE HUMAN. HARMONIC EQUIVALENCE. LATER REDUCTION OF HARMONY TO THE ABSTRACT GEOMETRY INSTEAD OF THE COSMIC (*Lionardo*)
cf. TB 46

Fig. 32: Panel 1
TRANSMISSION OF THE COSMOS ON A PART OF THE BODY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROPHECY. BABYLONIAN STATE COSMOLOGY. ORIGINAL ORIENTAL PRACTICE.
cf. TB 140

Fig. 33: Panel 2
GREEK CONCEPT OF COSMOS. MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES IN THE SKY. APOLLO. MUSES AS COMPANIONS OF APOLLO.

Fig. 34: Panel 3
„ORIENTALIZATION“ OF ANCIENT IMAGES. GOD AS A MONSTROSITY. ENRICHMENT OF SPHAERA. (ZODIAC + DECANS). TRANSFER OF THE GLOBUS ONTO THE FLAT SURFACE. COSMOLOGICAL DICE BOARD. PERSEUS MYTHOLOGY.

Fig. 35: Panel 20
DEVELOPMENT OF GREEK COSMOLOGY INTO ARABIC PRACTICE. ABŪ MA'SHAR. PLANET PRACTICES

Fig. 36: Panel 21
ORIENTAL ANTIQUITY. ANCIENT GODS IN ORIENTAL VERSION
(beforehand should come: *Farnese Atlas, Denderah, unwinding and enrichment*)

Fig. 37: Panel 22
SPANISH-ARABIC PRACTICE. (ALFONSO). HANDLING. COSMIC SYSTEM AS DICE BOARD. PROPHECY. SORCERY. STONE MAGIC.

Fig. 38: Panel 25
Without caption.

Fig. 39: Panel 26
OVERALL SYSTEMATIC COSMOLOGICAL CALENDAR (TYCHO BRAHE) A TRANSITION BETWEEN RIMINI AND SCHIFANOJA
TB 510, 552

Fig. 40: Panel 35
Without caption.

Fig. 41. Panel 23a (invisible)
REGULAR SOLIDS AS MICRO-UNIVERSE FOR A THROUGH OF DICE. TURNING BOOK PAGES AS READING OF THE UNIVERSE. (*Divination book; Ger.: Losbuch, Lorenzo Spirito*) [missing divination books] LORENZO SPIRITO = PASSAGE TO THE NORTH. CONCEPTION OF THE WHEEL OF FORTUNA AS INESCAPABLE FATE.

NOBODY KNOWS, WHEN IT WAS MADE AND WHY

16 mm

10 minutes 22 seconds

black & white

no sound

England

2012/15



Fig. 4



Fig. 9



Fig. 5

القول على الأول

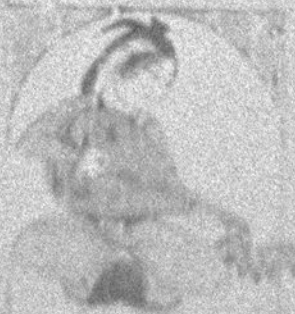


Fig. 13



Fig. 14

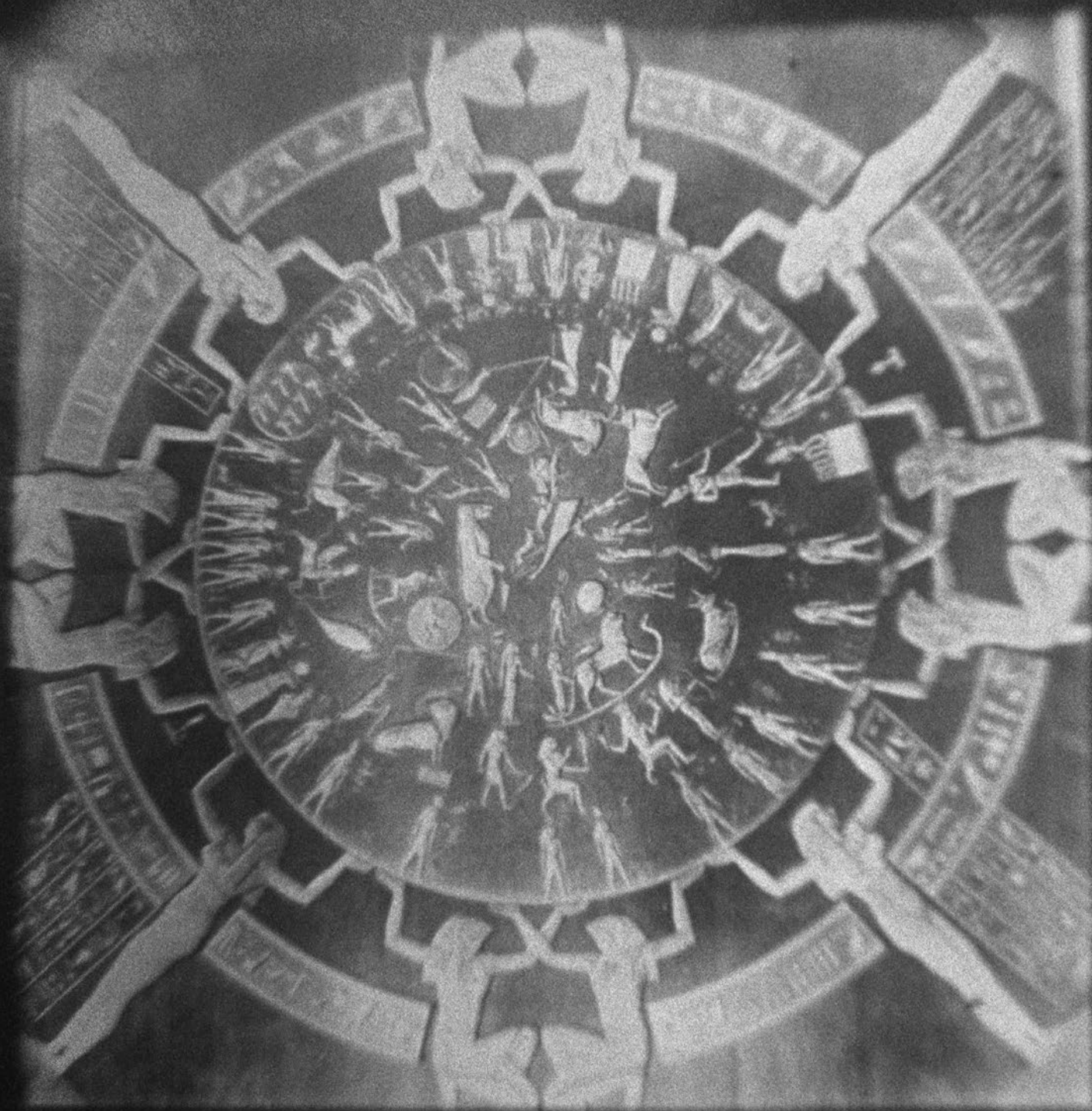


Fig. 16



Fig. 3

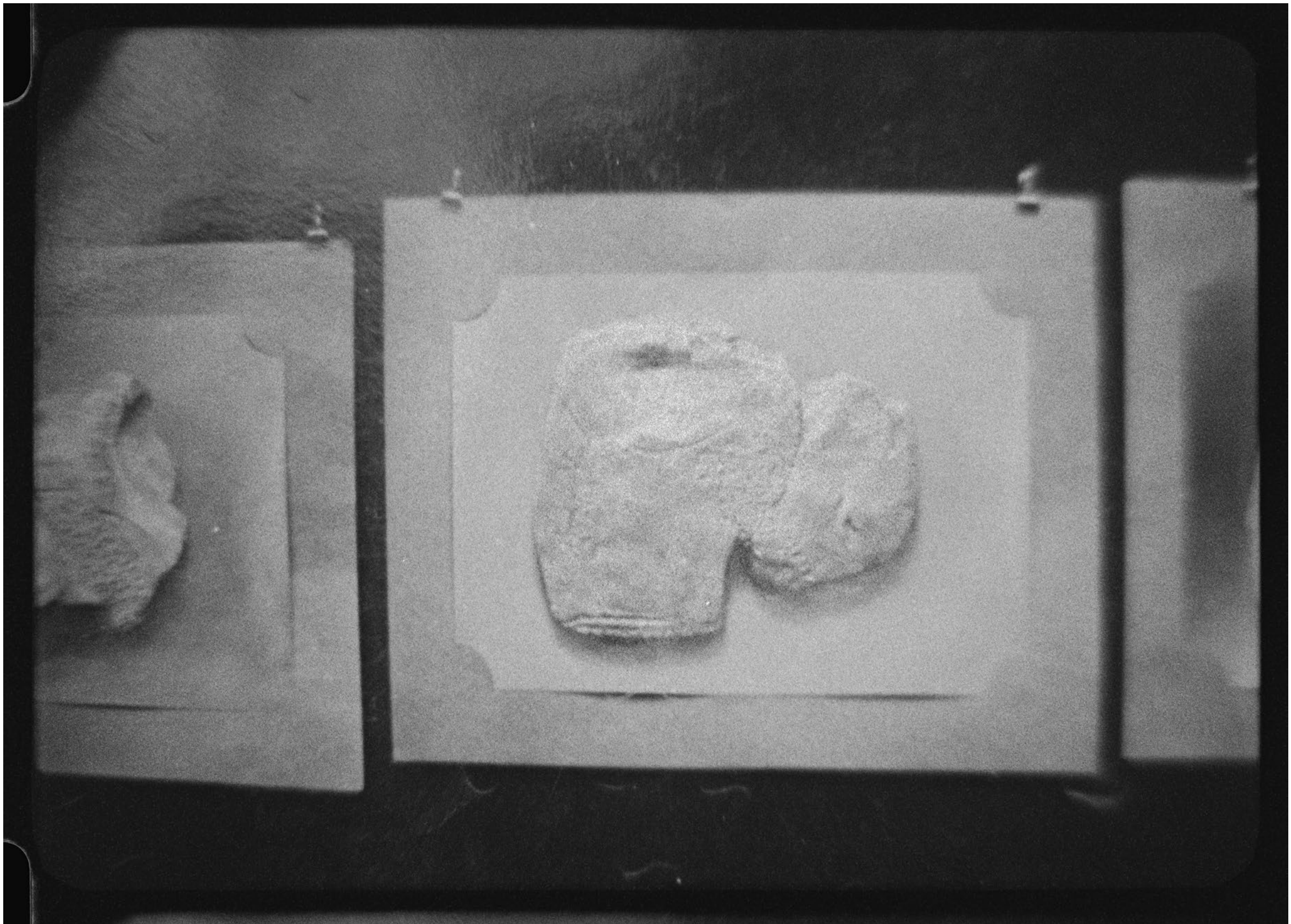


Fig. 20

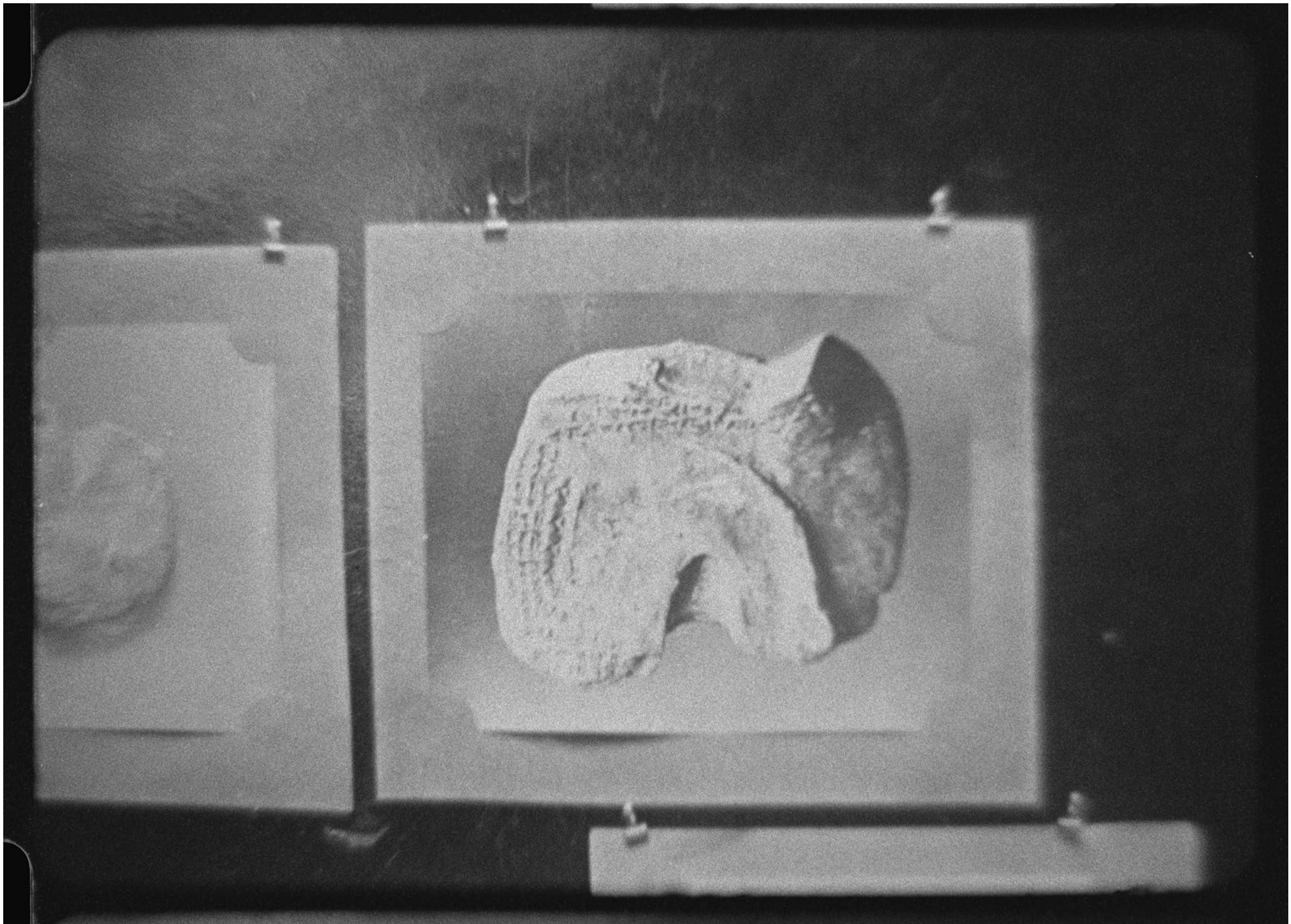


Fig. 21



Fig. 23

Quoniam sunt septem. C. arce. Tauri
 Luna. Luna. Leo. Virgo. Libra. Scorpius.
 per. arce. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna.

Et in septima mundi. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna.
 Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna.
 Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna.
 Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna.
 Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna.
 Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna.
 Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna.
 Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna. Luna.

Septem orientalia
 Septem septentrionalia
 Septem occidentalia
 Septem meridionalia

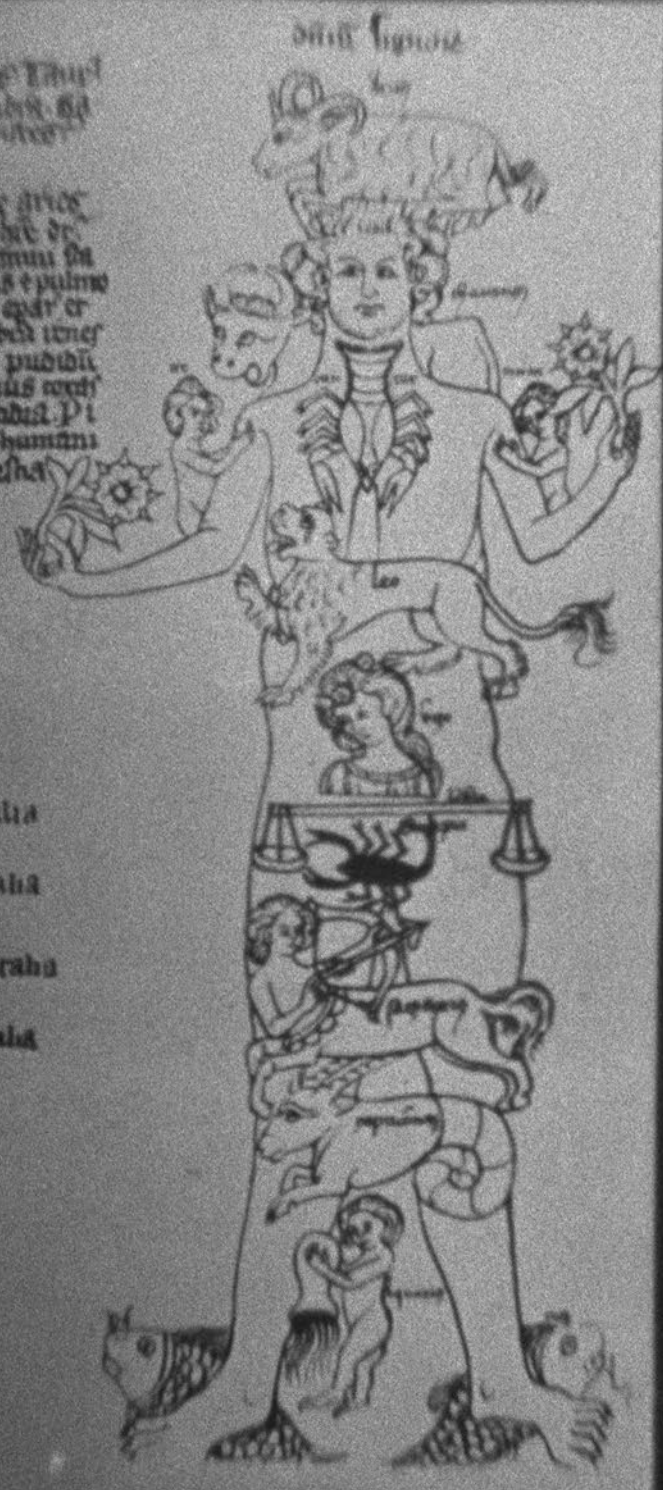




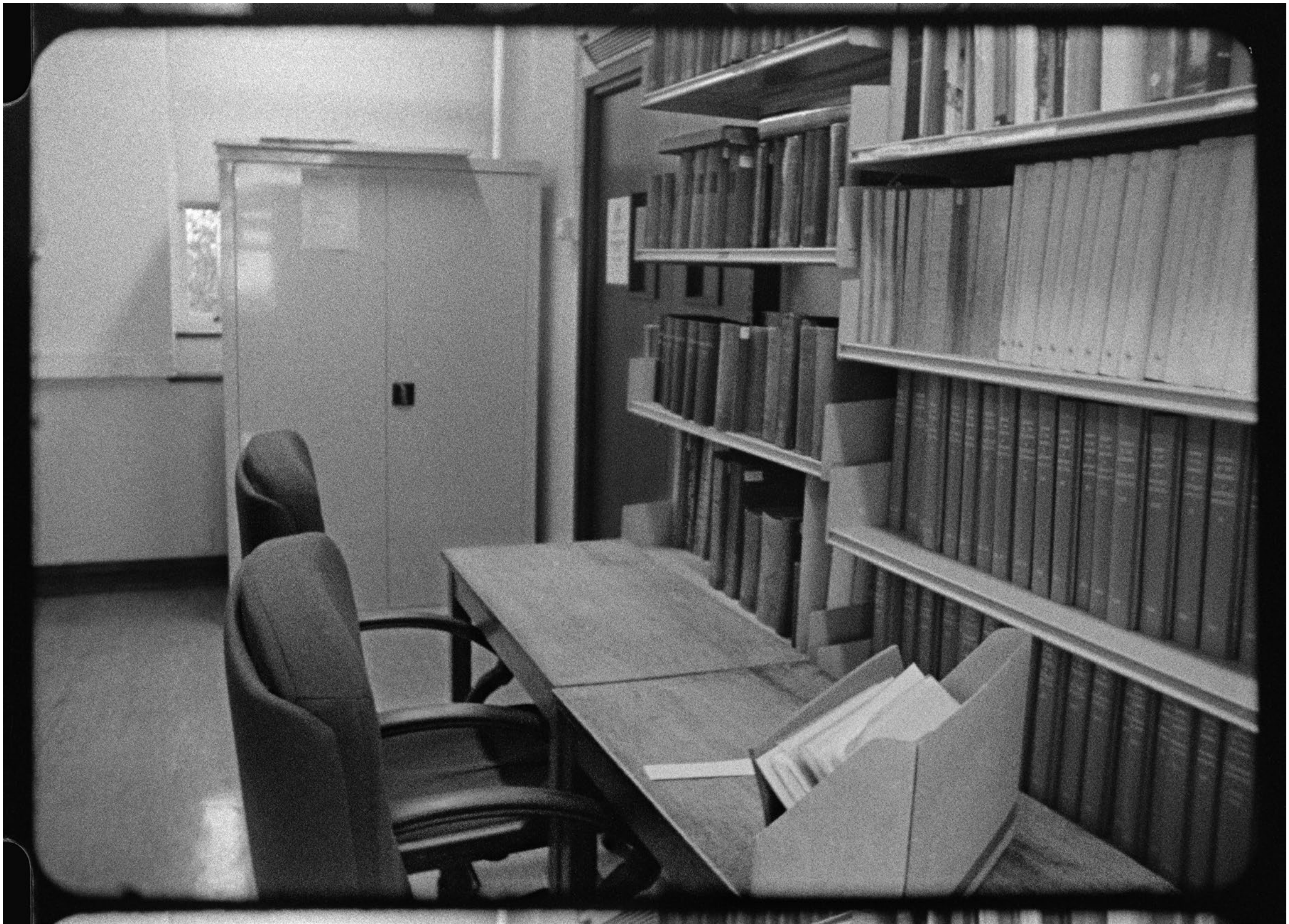
Fig. 32



Fig. 36



Fig. 40





Jiyoung Lee's research has been focused on Deleuzian film philosophy, Digital Cinema in the mobile network age, and some directors whose works show the extremity of cinematic boundaries. Currently she is doing her second doctoral course in Film Aesthetics at the University of Oxford. She is also a research fellow of The Institute of Philosophical Research at Seoul National University where she completed her PhD in Philosophy.

AFTERLIFE OF MNEMOSYNE ATLAS

by Jiyoung Lee

1. *Nobody knows, when it was made and why* begins with a countdown that gives the impression it would be found footage. The film, which is shot on 16 mm film in 4:3 screen ratio shows black and white images without any sound nor titles for a running time of 10 minutes and 22 seconds. The images are parts of a mysterious piece by Aby Warburg called *Mnemosyne Atlas*. Warburg is considered one of the most significant art historians in European culture. For the *Mnemosyne Atlas*, images are gathered and arranged in specific sequences and attached to separate panels, giving the impression that the editing of the panels is somewhat more important than individual images. From this context, one can easily think of a possible proper cinematic way of introducing the Atlas that presents first the panels and then the individual images.

However, the film by Elke Marhöfer that I want to discuss does not follow the predicted way of exposing the *Mnemosyne Atlas*. On the contrary, up until the middle of the film, one sees only individual images one by one, then several panels and a short montage cut of the office furniture and indoor plants in the Warburg Institute, a broken flower vase, a glance out of the window into the moving trees on the other side of the street, to end with a nervous but static shot from the same street on to the façade of the Institute. Considering her way of showing Warburg's work and its current hosting, one could assume that this film is not recorded for the purpose of introducing Warburg's work. Instead, one might consider it as one possible becoming of *Mnemosyne Atlas*. It is difficult to imagine a meaning that both forms have in common; neither Marhöfer's film nor *Mnemosyne Atlas* can be described in definite words or as having a single meaning. However, the film emphasizes certain aspects of the *Mnemosyne Atlas* and performs certain transformations that may be specific to their methodologies.

2. Before exploring what the film does, or rather does not, it is somewhat necessary for us to look at the *Mnemosyne Atlas* briefly. *Mnemosyne Atlas* (1927–1929), Warburg's last project, is composed of 63 panels and 971 images from diverse resources, such as books, newspapers, advertisements, magazines and artworks. The research itinerary of the art and cultural historian crosses the boundaries between disciplines, times and spaces. In this sense, it seems more appropriate to call him an "image historian" like the Japanese researcher, Tanaka Jun, does in his biography of Aby Warburg, rather than as an art historian.

The *Mnemosyne Atlas* condenses Warburg's lifelong research on the afterlife of ancient history throughout European culture showing constellations of images on black covered panels. Numerous images of *Mnemosyne Atlas* center on the thematic axes of 'forms of pathos,' and 'cosmography.' Warburg's extraordinary project is a massive one, giving rise and encompassing the European artistic, cultural and intellectual history as a whole. Yet the method he uses for this purpose is not closed and chronological, he rather forms constellations of diverse images on the panels. Thereby, the senses produced by the *Mnemosyne Atlas* are not determined in a definite way. Instead it functions as an image map (atlas) that can help us to explore the world of collective memories sustaining European cultural history or its imagination of itself in multiple layers and ways of sensing. *Mnemosyne Atlas* now remains in a form of black and white photographic reproductions of Warburg's three versions since the original panels are missing. Moreover, the 1929 version is as well not a finished and ultimate one, but a provisional in progress that was interrupted by the death of Warburg. This fact, together with the original methodology, necessarily intensifies the open structure of *Mnemosyne Atlas*.

Nobody knows, when it was made and why selects specific images of *Mnemosyne Atlas* that stem from non-European regions and show relationships between human and cosmos, or human and animal. The selection is rather different from most common receptions of Warburg's project that focus primarily on Europe and the Greek-Renaissance continuity as the original forms of pathos, or interpretive executions meanderings through the different images of a single panel. How can we think of the different focus and approach to the *Mnemosyne Atlas*?

The film by Elke Marhöfer seems to consider *Mnemosyne Atlas* as a transformable and expandable work. It acts by selecting certain images and by changing the constellation of Warburg's panels. At first, we watch several individual images and then the panels. In the meantime, we realize that the individual images are not belonging to one single, but originate from several panels. In other words, the encounter of Marhöfer materializes *Mnemosyne Atlas* as a work in progress, not as a past and finalized one. One might feel like witnessing Warburg's ghost acting in the film, changing the selection and arranging a new series or assemblage of specific images.¹

This active intervention is really significant, since the act of re-assemblage of the images by the filmmaker (or Warburg's ghost) creates new meanings. Though the project was never finished, in this specific context the selection and the montage of the images really matter. New relations between images signify something very different, transforming the original panels into new ones and even alter the whole project of the *Mnemosyne Atlas*. However,

¹ Warburg describes his work as "ghost story for the full grown-up" (*Mnemosyne. Grundbegriffe*, II, 2 July 1929)

Nobody knows, when it was made and why does not perform its alternation by applying a transcendental style of critique of *Mnemosyne Atlas*, but engages actively in its multiple cartographies. It creates new maps of images and locates itself inside the act of becoming of the cartography of *Mnemosyne Atlas*. Cartography in such a case means the ever-changing senses of the multiple series of the images, which transform according to the serialization or the editing, a formal feature that enables Marhöfer to significantly deterritorialize the *Mnemosyne Atlas* from its classical reception and reterritorialize it with new relations. The film seems to join into the act of making that went into *Mnemosyne Atlas* itself in order to create new possible maps that do not privilege Europe and the human.

Going back to the contents, the images that contain the cosmology and human-animal relations are stemming from Babylonian and Mesopotamian cultures. They are one of the main themes of *Nobody knows, when it was made and why* and probably of the *Mnemosyne Atlas*. Already in the *Mnemosyne Atlas* these images signified non-geocentric and non-anthropocentric perspectives, where the earth is regarded as one planet among other planets and the human as one animal among other animals. Nowadays these perspectives have become again important, since we experience the disastrous consequences of a culture that reproduces boundaries between humans and the natural world everywhere. Selecting and presenting mainly images from non-European regions can mean a criticism toward Eurocentric perspectives that still remains in a domineering political position even after the colonial period. Though images and things of non-European origin were gathered extensively, they nevertheless have often been considered as of minor importance, compared to that of European culture by most scholars. To challenge this reception, the filmmaker repeats Warburg's method and forms an image map that suggests a non-subordinated relation between European and non-European, human and nonhuman cultures. This is something that might have been Warburg's intention as well but has never reached the surface, even though the free drawing of the cultural and geographic connections is essential for the *Mnemosyne Atlas*. But, in which way does the film perform its methodological amalgamation into the *Mnemosyne Atlas*? In order to answer this question, I will examine a few characteristic features of the film.

3. Marhöfer's work joins the *Mnemosyne Atlas* by the way it uses cartography, and transforms the assemblage of images from a spatial into a temporal montage. The utilization of black and white film stock can be considered as drawing an additional resemblance to the *Atlas*' black and white photographs on black clothed panels. But these filmic transformations are not carried through without any friction. The frictions or interstices show themselves in subtle movements. They appear in several ways, such as shifting in and out of focus, flickers of the film material, minute trembling of the camera and the sudden and fast montage cut in the last part of the film.

We can assume that the film reproduces exactly what exists in front of the camera. Yet, the camera movements produce some kinds of cracks in *Mnemosyne Atlas*. The cracks, or ruptures appear in the liminal spaces between the images, which function as a space for the creation of senses. Though the images in the *Mnemosyne Atlas* are fixed now on the level of the visible, this way of handling can be understood as a visual expression of their openness, where their meaning can be altered infinitely on the invisible level. The in-camera montage of individual images visualizes the indefinite creation of meanings and creates a new series of images, which ‘deconstructs’ the established relationship between them and produces new relationships together with the films movements.

Furthermore, it is certain that the person who stands behind the camera is the filmmaker, but she does not seem to want to emphasize her presence. There is no inscribed text in the film. It looks like footage found in attic storage, as if we don’t know when it was made and why. Not even the name of the artist or the title of the film appears, similar to the *Atlas* that hardly had any explanation or caption. We can assume that there must be a specific intention. Perhaps the filmmaker denies, or does not accentuate her self-conscious interpretation, in order to inhabit Warburg’s spirit with new perspectives toward the world. While erasing her presence in the film, Marhöfer seems to summon Warburg’s ghost into the present and share it’s possible view on behalf of revising the next version of *Mnemosyne Atlas* that prematurely ended by Warburg’s death. *Nobody knows when it was made and why* inhabits the ghost and creates a non-centralized perspective on nature or ecology functioning as the 64th panel or an entirely new version of *Mnemosyne Atlas*.

If we compare the manner in which Marhöfer deals with *Mnemosyne Atlas* with that of an art historian and philosopher George Didi-Huberman in his installation work, titled *Mnemosyne 42* in *Nouvelles Histoires de Fantômes* (New Ghost Stories), we can grasp the immanent manner in which Marhöfer’s film proceeds more clearly. Didi-Huberman expands Warburg’s work massively into a multi-media installation including and combining examples from modern and contemporary cinema: such as Eisenstein with Pasolini, Glauber Rocha with Theo Angelopoulos, Paradjanov with Wang Bing, Jean-Luc Godard with Harun Farocki. This expansion into a contemporary media culture, an homage to Warburg, seems to focus on the most influential media, that is cinema, after Warburg’s death in 1929 to date. When we consider Warburg’s attitude toward a kind of qualitative indifference between diverse image media, we can understand why Didi-Huberman expands *Mnemosyne Atlas* with contemporary media. His contemporary interpretation might make sense for contemporary viewers, however, *Nobody knows, when it was made and why* investigates the original work or intention of Warburg closely and suggests a possible new version of *Mnemosyne Atlas* in a different current world, and from his time period,

in terms of the importance of the perception on nonhuman beings and non-European cultures.

In spite of the differences, Marhöfer resonates with Warburg’s work and his affects in the realm of *Mnemosyne Atlas*. She calls into existence the affects of Warburg’s work by the movements of film. With *Nobody knows, when it was made and why*, we can sense a sort of overlapped anxiety and sadness. The affects might be composed of Warburg’s way of thinking that is not separable from pathos and also of the filmmaker’s way of conceiving the archive. The artist might feel that Warburg’s ghost is not happy being locked in a storage and the stopping of his work with the image of the broken vase, which should be transformed according to the changes of the world, or with the view out the window into the moving trees. One can watch the nervous wandering of the ghost in the fast montage cut, and in it’s fixation of the façade of the Institute.

Moreover, “the illustrated psychological history of the interval between impulse and rational action”² is a subject of a scientific study of culture for Warburg, so pathos can be an important methodology for him in terms of conceptual and rational thinking. The camera movements that cause subtly unstable and sad feelings resonate fundamentally with the core methodology of Warburg’s work, or with the memory of Warburg, thus one feels the coexistent affects of the image historian with those of the filmmaker. This sympathetic attitude of the film motivates the spectators to engage with a way of thinking that is rubbed with affects.

4. The affects we gather from the minor camera movements, the fast montage cut and the static view, makes and incarnates some interstices between images where thoughts emerge. In the liminal space, a network of images can always be broken and relinked, so the state is not stable and fixed. From this context, the camera movements are considered as visualization of the unstable senses relational to Warburg’s non-static thinking through pathos. Succession or inheritance to Warburg through affirmation is a very important virtue of the film. It is this attitude through which the spectator enters into the heart of Warburg’s work and, is therefore prompted to think about what the work would be like in the present and still remaining unfixed in terms of its possible interpretations.

But what the film presents is not merely pathos. The film mediates the photographic reproductions of diverse images that are already memories of the past. According to Chris Marker in *Sans Soleil*, recorded images substitute our memories. The narrator of *Sans Soleil* says,

2 Introduction to the *Mnemosyne Atlas* by Aby Warburg from “The *Mnemosyne Atlas*, Aby Warburg—The Absorption of the Expressive Values of the Past”, last modified June 16, 2013, <http://socks-studio.com/2013/06/16/the-mnemosyne-atlas-aby-warburg-the-absorption-of-the-expressive-values-of-the-past/>.

I remember that month of January in Tokyo, or rather I remember the images I filmed of the month of January in Tokyo. They have substituted themselves for my memory. They are my memory. I wonder how people remember things who don't film, don't photograph, don't tape. How has mankind managed to remember? I know: it wrote the Bible. The new Bible will be an eternal magnetic tape of a time that will have to reread itself constantly just to know it existed.

Perhaps we follow Chris Marker's belief that images aid our memories and that people need images in order to remember, or perhaps we do not. However, certainly there exists strata of multiple memories which were recorded, or not and had substituted some people's memories even before being claimed as pictures by Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas*. As Marker puts it in the film, "beneath each of these *images* a memory. And in place of what we were told had been forged into a collective memory, a thousand memories of men who parade their personal laceration in the great wound of history."³ In other words, the images Warburg collected were already collective impersonal pre-individual mnemonic strata stemming from diverse parts of the world.

Thus, when the filmmaker shot *Mnemosyne Atlas* the memory of the artist encounters the multiple layers of the collective strata of memories, which can form series of meanings, of all times and spaces, latitudes and longitudes, horizontals and verticals. For this film, serializations of images or collective memories are not making linear sequences. According to Gilles Deleuze in *The Time-Image*, "The before and the after" in the serialization "are [...] no longer successive determinations of the course of time, but the two sides of the power, or the passage of the power to a higher power. The direct time-image here [...] appear [...] in a becoming as potentialization, as series of powers."⁴ What is important in serialization is that it appears "in a becoming as potentialization." In this way, *Nobody knows, when it was made and why* activates serializations of the multi-layered memories traversing *Mnemosyne Atlas* together with the spectators in the present, transforming it into a tangible and actual ongoing work in progress.

³ I substitute 'faces' with 'images' in this quotation from *Sans Soleil*.

⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2013) 282.

Nobody knows, when it was made and why takes a fresh look at Aby Warburg's prominent *Mnemosyne Atlas*. Reflecting on the fact that research, be it art or science based, is a historical and anthropological procedure that is closely related to colonialism, the film and the two essays rethink how Warburg creates a relational and trans-cultural methodology. Inhuman and animating forces of images, things, animals, people, minerals, amulets and dices, solar and lunar eclipses, intestines, magic stones and starry heavens stemming from Iran, Iraq, Syria and Jordan suggest exploring *Mnemosyne Atlas* outside of European cultural history and the imagination of itself.

NOBODY KNOWS, WHEN IT WAS MADE AND WHY

ELKE MARHÖFER

16 mm

10 MINUTES 22 SECONDS

BLACK & WHITE

NO SOUND

ENGLAND

2012/15

**WITH A TEXT BY
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