

A Case Study of the Digital Translation of the Lucy Lloyd and Wilhelm Bleek !Xam and !Kun Notebooks into The Digital Bleek and Lloyd

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Abstract : This paper will examine the digitization process of the !Xam and !Kun notebooks, authored by Lucy Lloyd, Dorothea Bleek and Wilhelm Bleek, and their collaborators |a!kunta, ||kabbo, ≠kasin, Dia!kwain, !kweiten ta ||ken, |han≠kass'o, !nanni, Tamme, |uma, and Da during the 19th century. Detail will be provided about the status of the archive, the creation of the digital archive and selected research projects linked to the archive. The Digital Bleek and Lloyd project is an example of institutional collaboration by the University of Cape Town, University of South Africa, Iziko South African Museum, the National Library of South Africa and the Western Cape Provincial Archives and Records Service. The contemporary value of the archive will be discussed in relation to its current manifestation as a collection of archival and digital objects, each with its own set of properties and archival risk factors. This tension between the two ways to access the archive will be interrogated to shed light on the slippages between the digital object and the archival object. The primary argument is that the process of digitization generates an ontological shift in the status of the archival object. The secondary argument is an engagement with practices to curate the encounters with these ontologically shifted objects and how to relate to each as a contemporary viewer. In conclusion this paper will argue for regarding these archival objects according to the interpretive framework utilized to engage secular relics.

Keywords : archive, curatorship, digitization, museum practice

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