Film history in the making

Film historiography, digitised archives and digital research dispositifs

Olesen, C.G.

Link to publication

Citation for published version (APA):
Olesen, C. G. (2017). Film history in the making: Film historiography, digitised archives and digital research dispositifs.

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.
Film History in the Making
Film Historiography, Digitised Archives and Digital Research *Dispositifs*

Christian Gosvig Olesen
Doctoral thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2017
Film History in the Making: Film Historiography, Digitised Archives and Digital Research

Dispositifs

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor

aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam

op gezag van de Rector Magnificus

prof. dr. ir. K.I.J. Maex

ten overstaan van een door het College voor Promoties ingestelde

commissie, in het openbaar te verdedigen in de Agnietenkapel

op woensdag 10 mei 2017, te 14.00 uur

doctor Christian Gosvig Olesen

egeboren te Odense, Denemarken
Promotiecommissie:

Promotor(es): Prof. dr. J.J. Noordegraaf Universiteit van Amsterdam

Overige leden: Prof. dr. V. Hediger Goethe-Universität Frankfurt
Prof. dr. B. Flückiger Universität Zurich
Prof. dr. F.E. Kessler Universiteit Utrecht
Dr. E.L. Masson Universiteit van Amsterdam
Prof. dr. P.P.R.W. Pisters Universiteit van Amsterdam
Prof. dr. K.J.P.F.M. Jeurgens Universiteit van Amsterdam
Prof. dr. G. Fossati Universiteit van Amsterdam

Faculteit: Faculteit der Geesteswetenschappen
## Table of Contents

0.0 Film Historiography, Digitised Archives and Digital Research *Dispositifs* ................................................................. 7

0.1 Theoretical Framework: Film History ‘in the Making’ .......................... 14

  * Developing A Metahistorical Approach to Digital Film Historiography 14
  * Digital Film Historiography's Places of Production 22
  * Practices and Techniques 26
  * Writings – *Dispositifs* 28

0.2 Structure of Research, Key Examples and Case Studies ......................... 32

### Part I – Sources, Repertories and Theories of Film History

1.0 Film Archives and Film Historiography ........................................... 40

  1.1 Film as Historical *Document* .................................................... 42

    * Boleslas Matuszewski and Public Sovereignty in 19th Century Archives 43
    * The ‘First Wave’ of Historical Film Archives 46

  1.2 Film as *Art* ........................................................................... 50

    * Cinephilia and the Historical View of the First French Film Avant-Garde 52
    * Léon Moussinac’s Film Historiography and Cinema’s Patrimonialisation 55
    * International Film Club Culture and the Foundation of Film Archives in the 1930s 58
    * General Film Histories and Early Film Scholarship 62

  1.3 (Re)Visions of Early Cinema: Academic Film Historiography and its Mediations .......................................................... 66

    * Apparatus Theory and Film Historiography 68
    * Early Cinema Studies and New Film History 71
    * Archival Film Festivals and Restoration Theory 76
    * Audiovisual Film Histories 79
    * Contemporary Dialogues of Filmic Appropriation, Archiving and Historiography 87

  1.4 Conclusion ............................................................................. 89

1.4 Conclusion ............................................................................. 89

2.0 Film Heritage Digitisation in Europe Between Europeanisation and Cinephile, Curatorial Agendas .......................... 93

  2.1 Film Heritage Digitisation in Europe: Agendas, Debates, Platforms ................................................................. 95

    * The Expansion and Professionalisation of Film Archiving in Europe 99

    * Digital Access to Cultural Heritage and Europeanisation 104

    * The European Film Gateway as Repertory of (Film) History 108

    * Controversies of Access and Digital Realities in European Film Archives 112

  2.2 Taste-Making and the DVD Repertory of European Film Heritage Institutions .......................................................... 116

    * The Repertoires of Video Distribution Formats and Taste-Making 116

    * The Shared DVD Repertory 123

    * Local Traditions and the Shared Repertory of European Film Heritage Institutions 126

    * Periodising the DVD Repertory 134

    * The Rise and Fall of a Format? 135

    * Archival Hardware Aesthetics and the Digital Image’s Historicity 138

  2.3 Conclusion ............................................................................. 143
### Part II – Data-driven Film History: Techniques and Dispositives

#### 3.0 Microscopic Visions of the Film-Text: Stylometry, Archival DVD Editions and Film Philology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsection</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Cinemetric Techniques for Digital Video Analysis</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical Style Analysis and Representation of Filmic Structure</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinemetrics as Technique of Tradition</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cinemetrics Graph as ‘oppositional device’: Negotiating Statistical Representation</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Analytics and ACTION – Towards Humanistic Cinemetrics?</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion: From the Editing Table to the Microscope</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Navigating Film History’s Philological Complex on DVD</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philological DVD Editions and Cinemetric Concerns</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Visualising Film History's Philological Complex: Digital Formalism and Odinnadcatyj (1928)</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagining Vertov Historiography and the Vienna Vertov Collection</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merging Cinemetric Analysis and Film-Philology with Vertov</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Montage Visualisation and the Philological Research Dispositif</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Conclusion: A Philological Dispositif</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.0 Writing Film History from Below and Seeing it from Above: Data Mining, GIS and Socio-Economic History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsection</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 From New Film History to New Cinema History</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Cinema History and Annales Historiography</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Annales' Serial History to Computer-Based New Cinema History</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Negotiating the Map as Evidence in New Cinema History</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS in New Cinema History: Epistemologies, Maps and Representation of Historical Time</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Desmet Collection's Business Archive as Source for New Cinema History</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapping Desmet</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Back to New Film History? Analysing Chromatic Patterns in Desmet's Programs</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Desmet Collection as Site for Silent Cinema Colour Historiography</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualising the Chromatic Patterns of Desmet's Distribution</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Conclusion: A Cartographic Dispositif</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Part III – Further Perspectives and Conclusion

#### 5.0 From Figures to Figurations – The Subjective Projections of Cinephilia and Data Art

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsection</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Cinephilia's Anecdotal Data Analysis</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Anecdotal Videosyncrasy of Scholarly Audiovisual Essays</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixing Quantitative and Anecdotal Data Analysis from a Cinephile Perspective</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Data Visualisation as Artistic Research on Film Historiography</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 6.0 Conclusion and Further Perspectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsection</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scarcity of Source Material and the Need for Source Criticism</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Scientism to Methodological Pluralism</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towards Increased Reflexivity in Digital Film Historiography</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Research Directions</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Film History Writers to Image Makers</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bibliography                                                                | 311  |
Filmography

Appendix

1. Use of previously published work in the dissertation
2. List of DVD releasing European film heritage institutions
3. Occurrences of National (co-)Productions in Titles Released by European Film Heritage Institutions - breakdown
4. Numbers of film titles released per decade on DVD – breakdown 1
5. Numbers of film titles released per decade on DVD – breakdown 2
6. Number of DVD releases by European film heritage institutions per year - breakdown

Film History in the Making: Film Historiography, Digitised Archives and Digital Research Dispositifs

Film History in the Making: Film Historiography, Digitised Archives and Digital Research Dispositifs

Acknowledgements
Moi, je fais de la peinture abstraite, mais j'ai une ambition concrète...

- Maxence in Jacques Demy's Les Demoiselles de Rochefort (France, 1960)