

Archives of the Arctic. Ice, Entropy and Memory
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Norske polarheltebilder. Photographic archives of the arctic

The lecture deals with the difficulty of the photographic archives that have been left behind from the world famous polar expeditions of Roald Amundsen (1888-1928). Within the overall problem of the »arctic as archive«, to think the arctic as a geological archive with its tension of the claim of the durability and continuity of the archive and the fluidity it is surrounded by, lies the much more specific difficulty of the photographic archives of this situation: On the one hand, this photographic evidence often is accounted as the only witness of the »race to the north pole« – hence its enormous power. But on the other hand, recent research into these photographic archives – notably done by Harald A. Østgaard Lund and Siv Froydis Berg in their »Norske polarheltebilder« – show the photographic evidence as belated, after the fact and retroactive. The photographic evidence don't necessarily *document* the »race to the north pole« but has a logic of its own worth looking at. It turns out to be a *monument* in the sense of Foucault: a post production, a new coding of what happened.