

Between the personal and the collective: The formation of visual Heritage through knowledge production process in "Israel reveals to the eye" project

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The purpose of this thesis is to explore the emergence of digital archive for visual heritage that is taking place in twenty towns and municipal councils at the state of Israel. This project which is titled " Israel Revealed to the Eye" is initiative of Yad Ben Zvi Institution with the purpose of recording and scanning of materials to create a depository of family photo albums belonging to local residents and recruitment of voluntary documenters from among local residents .and creation of a homepage and digital archive as part of a internet documentation center.

This research examines the effect of knowledge production process on cultural heritage and memory formation that involve different scales: the personal the local and the national scale. The theoretical framework of this research involve three bodies of knowledge: archival theory and practices, namely the value of archives. The evaluation of archives is a core activity for archivists and effects how they choose to arrange and describe archives. The second body of knowledge is the corpus of Actor-network theory. I found ANT non deterministic approach to the mutual relationship between technology and the social most valuable in describing the relation between different actors, humans and non-humans which are mutually constitute the archive. The third corpus is cultural heritage and memory studies.

The methodology deployed to addressed this line of inquiry based on the qualitative research tradition and use two methods: semi structured observations that were performed during the formation of new documentation center at the Sharon plain and semi structured face- to- face interviews.

The contribution of this study is to understand the impact of vast cultural digitization project on cultural heritage in the state of Israel in the 21st Century while applying non deterministic approach to these issues.