# Photographs and History. Interpreting Past and Present Through Photographs

# PHOTOGRAPHS AND HISTORY

Interpreting Past and Present Through Photographs

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# Photographs and the Construction of Past and Present

Olli Kleemola & Silja Pitkänen

## Approaches to the Research of Historical and Contemporary Photographs

This book concerns photographs as sources in the research of history and social sciences. The idea is to present various approaches to analysing both past and present through photographs. The intended target audience is students and researchers interested in historical or contemporary photographs and their meanings. The emphasis of the chapters is on history and social sciences, yet the book also includes perspectives of art history and cultural studies. The focus is on qualitative analysis; however, quantitative approaches are also taken into account.

During the 20th and 21st century, the world has become more and more visual. Indeed, as historian Gerhard Paul states, we are living in a "pictory cosmos" [1]. The philosopher Gottfried Boehm uses the concept "homo pictor" to describe modern people, whose attention is caught much more effectively by photographs than textual information.[2] For these reasons, research into images – historical and contemporary – is

[1] Paul 2009, 125; 2017, 15.

[2] Boehm 2007, 84–116.

crucial. The pictures of our pictory cosmos are, very often, photographs. Therefore, it is essential to ponder how photographs can be analysed, what questions they can answer, and what kind of knowledge they can produce.[3]

Photographs have had a remarkable role in our culture almost since the invention of photography in the 1830s. The earliest photographs analysed in this collection are from colonial Rhodesia from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, and the most recent images are social media photographs of the Syrian war, taken after the Ghouta chemical attacks in 2013. Images from the Second World War era are at the centre of this book, and the closing chapters of the volume explore the dimensions of digital humanities and reach towards the future possibilities in the research of large corpora of images. Overall, the emphasis of the photographs analysed in this compilation is on wars, conflicts and crisis. As Paul states, in addition to deadly weapons, contemporary wars are fought with cameras. The photos and videos form our *image* of conflicts and may even have an effect upon their outcomes.[4]

The media has an important role in news reporting – in other words, in producing and delivering photographs and videos. Therefore, to explore photographs is in most cases to explore media, and gain a better understanding of how visual media produces information and how this kind of information affects us and our actions. Ideally, this helps us to read media critically. This does not necessarily mean that one should criticise the media[5], yet understanding the media can be considered an essential skill in our pictory cosmos.

The visualisation of culture means that our historical perception, too, tends to rely on images. Indeed, German social psychologist Harald Welzer has stated that current historical memory is solely anchored to photographs and other images. He even argues that there may be pictures without history but no history without pictures.[6] This underlines how

[3] See, for example, Oakley 2000. See also Ronkainen 2002, 129; 133.

[4] Paul 2009, 134–135.

[5] At the time of writing, August 2018, Donald Trump is again in the headlines for his open criticism on the press and other media.

[6] Hamann 2011, 24.

crucial it is to analyse how photographs create meanings and how they are used in constructing history.

Essentially, photographs can help us to understand the past, both on the personal and communal levels. Family photos and private photo albums offer viewpoints on everyday lives before and now, and can be of use in researching the experiences of individuals.[7] On the level of nations, photographs have been and are important aids in imagining nations and constructing national identities. Thus, in addition to reflecting past and present, photographs also take part in constructing them. Illustrations are used abundantly, for example, in history textbooks. Through these books, photographs visualise history and are used in building the historical image of nations. In this way, photographs are also a crucial part of socialisation processes in many countries.[8]

Some photographs have become symbols of certain events in the past; in other words, they have become *iconic*. Images that are considered iconic are important for our understandings of the past and, moreover, might have had an effect upon the depictions of later events.[9] From *Migrant Mother* (1936) to *Raising a Flag over the Reichstag* (1945), and from the photograph from the Vietnam War, *The Terror of War* (1972)[10], to the image of the dead Syrian child Alan Kurdi (2015), photographs have coloured our *view* of the past and present. This underlines the importance of the research of historical and contemporary photographs.[11]

In the chapters of this compilation, iconic images are not at the forefront, although several chapters touch photographs that could be considered iconic. Instead, the importance of photographs in the processes of constructing past and present is one of the leading ideas in

[7] On research of private images, see, for example, Autti 2011; Mathys 2013; Mäkiranta 2008; Tinkler 2015 and Ulkuniemi 2005.

[8] On the relationship of textbooks and national myths, see, for example, Ahonen 2017.

[9] See, for example, Dreier; Fuchs; Radkau & Utz (eds.), 2008.

[10] For more examples on iconic photographs, see, for example, *TIME*: 100 Photos. The Most Influential Images of All Time; http://100photos.time.com/, last visited on 10 August 2018.

[11] Media often declares contemporary photographs as iconic. It is to be seen, how well contemporary photographs considered as iconic are known after 20 or 30 years.

this book. The emphasis is on less known photographs which, however, have and have had a role in national understandings, as well as in representations and understandings of crises and conflicts. In addition to visualising every day practices, as well as politics and international relations, photographs can also illuminate phenomena less known, almost hidden.[12]

Every chapter includes several photographs, yet presenting photographs *per se* is not the aim of this book. Instead, this volume explores the meaning of photographs, and presents several approaches to the research of photographs. Thus, the photographs in this collection do not *illustrate* the chapters; they are the research *sources* and *subjects*, and, in most cases, examples of larger corpora of images. Moreover, publishing photographs is a complex field, both technically and with regard to copyright and ownership. Especially in the case of photographs taken during conflicts and wars, publishing involves complex ethical questions. How photographs should be cited is also an important question. Several of the chapters touch upon these themes, especially in the context of contemporary media images.

We believe that these approaches offer a wide analytical spectrum to the research of historical and contemporary photographs. In addition, our focus is photocentric, and we pay less attention to the barriers of academic disciplines. In this manner – we hope – we are able to offer wider perspectives on the research of photographs. At the end, to widen the horizon still more, we also present a selected bibliography for further reading on the subject.

## Photographs as Research Subjects: Milestones

Since the invention of photography, the relationship between photographs and the past has fascinated people – can photographs "freeze time", as the saying goes, and even restore the past? Despite the relatively long

[12] For examples of uncommon and rare photographs, see, for example, Donat 2016; Kalha (ed.) 2016; Kalha & Tahvanainen 2014 and 2017; Ostman 1996.

history of photography, the history of photographs as research subjects can be traced back only several decades.

In Europe, mostly in French speaking countries, the movements of the Annales, Nouvelle Histoire and Histoire Culturelle, turned their attention from the 1960s onwards to other than textual sources in the research of history, as well as to research subjects perceived as marginal at the time. Furthermore, the role of visuality in culture was recognised. In the United States, the first steps towards researching photographs were taken in the 1970s, as the visual studies workshop collective was established. In the United States, too, photographs were mostly analysed in such contexts as minorities and marginal groups.[13] From the 1980s onwards, cultural studies, or visual (cultural) studies, became popular in Britain and in the United States. Researchers among the cultural studies movement were interested in all kinds of visual materials and in the role of images in societies, and they utilised pictorial sources extensively.[14]

The interest towards the visual flowed from France, Britain and the United States, and received special attention in German-speaking countries. In the field of German historical research, the debates on the importance of pictures as sources for the history of mentalities and for the history of everyday lives[15], as well as for the cultural studies, were extensive.[16] This led to the birth of Historische Bildkunde, or Visual History.[17] While visual history first focused solely on photographs, its scope was later widened to various kinds of images.[18] One of the

[13] Seppänen 2001, 10.

[14] Arnold 2009, 35–41; Paul 2009, 131; Rimmele et. al. 2014, 149–151; Rogoff 2014, 155–157; Seppänen 2001, 10.

[15] These can be considered to belong to the wider Marxian historical movement, "history from below".

[16] Jäger & Knauer 2009, 13. During the 1980s, the ideas from Britain and United States flowed to Finland, too, and many classics on photography research theory were translated to Finnish. See Seppänen 2001, 10.

[17] Paul 2006, 7–18.

[18] Visual History school has organised many conferences and established a book series (*Visual History. Bilder und Bildpraxen in der Geschichte*, see https://www.wallstein-verlag.de/buchreihen/visual-history-bilder-und-bildpraxen-in-der-geschichte-1.html, last visited on 15 August 2018) and a research portal (*Visual History Online-Nachschlagewerk für die historische Bildforschung*; https://www.visual-history.de, last visited on 15 August 2018).

main questions for visual historians is how the images from the past create images within our minds – that is, how pictures "make history".[19] With this compilation, we wish to take part in discussions in the field of visual studies from the perspective of photographs and their role in constructing past and present.

Currently, it seems that the German visual history movement is the most vital research trend focusing on historical photographs. Consequently, many chapters within the volume are related to the German trend of visual history, yet, several chapters are also connected to the French and British–American traditions. Our focus is on photographs as sources in the research of history and social sciences, as well as art history and cultural studies. Ethnology and anthropology also utilise photographs both as sources and as research instruments, but due to the constraints of the book form, we pay less attention to these aspects. The perspectives of ethnology and anthropology have been comprehensively presented in various methodological books.[20]

## Approaches to and Aspects of Photographs as Sources

In addition to different approaches, this compilation highlights the variety of research questions that can be asked when analysing photographs. Moreover, our purpose is to offer examples and tools for those who use photographs as research sources. Some of the chapters highlight more technical and quantitative approaches, for example, by presenting grouping and categorising tools that can be used when examining large amounts of photographs. Other chapters present more abstract and qualitative techniques of reading and analysing the images in their historical or contemporary contexts.

We have arranged the chapters into four sections. The first part is centred on photojournalistic images that are crucial in communicating

[19] Paul 2004; Paul 2009, 125; Paul 2017, 23–24. See also Seppänen 2001, 11, and Vovinckel 2017.

[20] See, for example, Rose 2012.

and interpreting critical events. The chapters of the second section concern propaganda photographs from the Second World War. These topics are supplemented by the chapters of the third section, which deals with photographs, representations and memory politics. The theme of the fourth and final section is photographs in the age of digitalisation, and it aims to update and continue the discussion that Walter Benjamin began with his essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1936).

The collection includes 11 chapters, and each chapter presents a case study – historical photographs, research questions, means of analysis and results. The contributors to the compilation are historians with various orientations from political history to cultural history, social scientists, and experts in art history and cultural studies.

The photojournalistic section is opened by a chapter from Annette Vowinckel, whose focus is on photojournalism, and who analyses the role of "image agents" in the 20th century. By image agents, she means professionals who, for example, produce, edit, publish, exhibit, censor or destroy images. Vowinckel remarks that historians are not yet trained to analyse visual sources, but are perfectly qualified to understand image action. She draws her pictorial example from the GDR, pointing out various interpretations of Sibylle Bergemann's photo *Das Denkmal*. Moreover, she indicates that the photographs of the Vietnam War produced by the United States Information Agency (USIA) and the photographs produced by the East German state-owned photo agency Zentralbild were not that different from each other.

Heike Kanter analyses journalistic photographs of contemporary politicians. Her perspective is visual sociology, utilising the documentary method and assuming that photographs are shaped by their producers. Kanter presents a case study of photos published in five German-language newspapers between 2009 and 2013, demonstrating how photojournalism has a great impact on ways that photographs are received and interpreted. She considers the perspective of how image agents *imagine* and represent society. Furthermore, Kanter's chapter demonstrates how archetypal images are circulated through different eras and contexts – an issue that any researcher interested in photographs and other kinds of images will likely often encounter.

The chapter of Laura Todd discusses the role of photography and photojournalism during the Yugoslav Wars, and the role of photographs as evidence of war crimes. Todd reminds us that the televisual history of the wars has been well discussed in academic literature, but less attention has been paid to the history of photography and its role during and after the wars. She outlines how photography had two interlinking, but distinct roles in the Bosnian War – as evidence and as *aide-mémoire* for both the international community and the domestic population.

The Finnish-German collaborative exhibition War in Pictures that was held in the Ateneum Art Museum in Helsinki, Finland, in 1942, is at the centre of the chapter by Marika Honkaniemi, which opens the Photographs and Propaganda section of the book. Honkaniemi asks what kind of methods are applicable in the research of war art exhibitions and their photographs, and contemplates that researching photographs is often a multi-method as well as multi-source undertaking, as it most likely involves a significant amount of contextual research. This is the case in Honkaniemi's study. She also includes into her analysis the organisational viewpoint: how and why organisations take and use photographs and what is meant by these practices.

The subject of Olli Kleemola's chapter are photographs from the Finnish Continuation War (1941–1945), published in several photobooks. Kleemola focuses to the question how the Finnish Army and soldiers' lives at the front were represented. In the analysis, Kleemola utilises the serial-iconographic model, based on that developed by the art historian Erwin Panofsky. Kleemola analyses the use of propaganda images in various publishing contexts, as well as the narratives told via the photographs.

The first chapter of the section *Photographs, Representations and Memory Politics* is by Timo Särkkä. In his contribution, Särkkä discusses the intersection of photography and colonialism, taking part in a wider conversation on how colonisers have used photography and photographs to analyse the visual aspects of human bodies and constructed colonial identities, as well as racial and national histories. Särkkä's case study revolves around photographs attributed to Carl Theodor Eriksson (1874–1940), a Finnish-born settler who migrated to Rhodesia in the late 1890s. Särkkä suggests that the close reading of Eriksson's pho-

tographs provides new analytical possibilities through which one can reappraise photographs from Rhodesia of the early colonial era.

Silja Pitkänen analyses the representations of children with military technology in photographs taken at schools of the Leningrad region in the 1930s. Starting from microhistorical perspective, she pays attention to such details as the locations where the photos were taken and to the expressions, postures and clothing of the students. The archival data attached to the photographs is scarce, and the chapter also ponders upon the value of photographs without extensive contextual information. Pitkänen also briefly scrutinises the history of the photographs as archival objects.

Andrea Průchová Hrůzová analyses Czech modern history through visual representations of the Nazi occupation of 1938 and the Soviet occupation of 1968. She focuses on the ways these occupations have been represented visually in history textbooks, a museum exhibition, and television news broadcasting. She categorises four repetitive visual figures of memory related to the both events and maintains that these figures manifest the dynamics of cultural memory. Furthermore, Průchová Hrůzová states that these figures are highlighted by their presence in various official media of contemporary Czech society. She underlines that images actively construct the past in the individual as well as collective experience.

The final section of the book is entitled *Photographs in the Age of Digitalisation*. Kimmo Elo regards the visual side of the East German opposition movement, especially the Jena peace movement, from the viewpoint of visual history and digital humanities. His primary source is a photograph corpus of the GDR opposition maintained by the Robert Havemann Society in Berlin as part of its archive of the East German Opposition. The method Elo applies, historical network analysis (HNA), is a sub-field of digital humanities. Elo maintains that the GDR opposition aimed to protect its networks and, thus, members of the movement avoided being photographed. However, at the same time, the movement documented its political actions and support via photographs, and photos were also used as illustrations in the movement's underground magazines such as *die andere*. Elo additionally ponders

upon the metadata of photographs, and considers photographs as material, archival objects.

In her chapter, *Investigating and Understanding Social Media Image Flows*, Noora Kotilainen discusses the role of social media imagery in mainstream media news production and international politics. She notes that amateur imagery has become a vital source of material for traditional media and that social-media-originating images are utilised as proof of dramatic events and suffering in global crisis zones, as well as in governmental reports. In her contribution, Kotilainen points out how images of the Syrian Civil War, especially social media images of the Ghouta gas attacks (2013), were used in legitimising drastic political acts, such as the planned military intervention. In the case of the Ghouta attack, the origin of the images on social media, interpreted as local and amateur, was seen to guarantee their objectivity and authenticity. Kotilainen also notes how U.S. President Barack Obama compared these images to historical iconic images, such as images from the Holocaust, as well as to photographs of poison gas attacks during of the First World War.

The chapter by Kimmo Elo and Olli Kleemola, *Bridging from Close Reading to Distant Reading. A Methodological Note to "Computational Visual History"*, is the closing chapter of the book and reaches out to the future of using photographs as research sources for history and the social sciences. Elo and Kleemola note how visual history as a research paradigm heavily leans on the close reading of images. They propose a model designed to serve as a system to store results from visual close reading, in other words, a standardised method of describing the essential content of visual material. They remark that this kind of visual vocabulary is crucial for the effective processing of large corpora of visual materials. Furthermore, they envisage how the evolution of visual history research requires a crucial shift from close to distant reading.

We hope that these texts offer inspiration, encouragement, new perspectives and methodological tools for researchers interested in using photographs as sources. We look forward to taking part in further discussions and seeing forthcoming publications on this emerging and innovative field.

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# I PHOTOJOURNALISM

# Image Agents. Photographic Action in the 20th Century

Annette Vowinckel

The history of photojournalism is a history of images, yet it is also a history of those who produce, edit, publish, sell, buy, censor, store, or destroy pictures. These "image agents", as I have termed them elsewhere, run photo agencies, galleries, and museums, they are functionaries in political parties, businessmen and -women, employees in public relations firms, and civil servants in state departments.[1] We cannot understand the visual world of the 19th and 20th centuries unless we understand what image agents do.

The word "agent", admittedly, is a tricky one, for it has at least two connotations: one related to business (as in "sales agent") and one related to the realm of secret services (as in "undercover agent"). On the face of it, neither has anything to do with visual culture. However, in addition to their meaning as images, pictures are also commodities on a globalised market, and the image economy is, in fact, a crucial part of 19th- and 20th-century visual history.[2] The link between secret agents and the visual world is less straightforward, though spy agencies do have a history of using images to substantiate or manipulate intelligence. (The satellite imagery that Colin Powell presented at the U.N. Security

[1] Vowinckel 2016, 18–19.

[2] See Bruhn 2003 and Frosh 2004.

Council in 2003 to drum up support for the invasion of Iraq is surely a case in point.[3]) Nevertheless, in describing the specific role of image agents in photojournalism and other forms of public photography, I wish to propose a different understanding of the word "agent".

My concept of the image agent is based on notions of action developed by political theorists, most notably Hannah Arendt. In *The Human Condition* (1958), Arendt equates human action with public communication:

> Without the accompaniment of speech, at any rate, action would not only lose its revelatory character, but, and by the same token, it would lose its subject, as it were; not acting men but performing robots would achieve what, humanly speaking, would remain incomprehensible. Speechless action would no longer be action because there would no longer be an actor, and the actor, the doer of deeds is possible only if he is at the same time the speaker of words.[4]

Similarly to Arendt's actors, image agents are communicators in the political realm. They ensure that certain images attract public notice while others remain hidden, they introduce images as arguments in political debates, and they instrumentalise images for public relations and propaganda. This is not to say that images themselves have no power or impact; quite the opposite. However, it takes the joint effort of the picture as an aesthetic object and the image agent as a communicator to make a difference in history. The image agent – often nameless and forgotten – is the one who renders pictures capable of providing evidence, stirring emotions, exhibiting violence, or changing opinion.

In this chapter, I describe the work of examining the role played by the image agents in visual history. First, I outline the kind of sources historians should study. I then make some suggestions about how to weave the actions of image agents into historical narratives. Next, in order to flesh out my argument, I provide a short comparative case

[3] See http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB88/index2.htm, last visited on 10 August 2018.

[4] Arendt 2013, 178–179.

study of image agents in the United States and East Germany during the Cold War. I conclude by arguing that image agents are stakeholders in the visual public sphere and thus constitutive parts of the modern *res publica*.

## Visual History as Textual History: Looking for Sources

Writing the history of photography from the image agents' perspective forces us to start with texts. This may sound paradoxical, but because images do not speak we need written sources in order to find out when, how, for whom, why, and for which purpose a picture – in our case, a photograph – was produced.

Written sources encompass roughly three categories of documents. The first sort consists of ego documents produced by image agents, such as letters, diaries, interviews, and memoirs. The main repository of these documents are photographers themselves, who, as professional communicators, like to talk (and write) about their life and work, ensuring an abundance of material. In addition, while ego documents may not exist for every single photographer or picture editor, there are enough to provide insight into the practice of photography in general. Letters to friends and family sometimes contain information about how an assignment was made and whether it was accepted or turned down. Memoirs can inform us about work schedules and ideas, about the success or failure of a project, about the larger network of individuals involved in the process, about who cooperated with whom, and about negotiations over fees and expenses.

Naturally, such documents are subjective and require verification. No one is immune to the tricks of memory and perception. We also need to remember that first-person accounts usually aim at creating a certain image of the writer or the other persons they portray and thus tend to be partial or biased. First and foremost, ego documents provide evidence of how image agents see themselves, which can often differ from how others see them.

The collected papers of John Godfrey Morris are a good example of what we can learn from studying texts produced by image agents. Morris was a photo editor for *Life* during the World War II era, for *Ladies' Home Journal*, for Magnum, for *The New York Times*, for *The Washington Post,* and for *National Geographic*, and he corresponded with virtually all of the world's distinguished photographers and picture editors. Before he died, in July of 2017, he passed on more than a hundred boxes of letters and documents to the Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago.[5] The collection includes letters to friends and family as well as professional correspondence, which covers, among other activities, his work as a juror for World Press Photo, his time teaching at the Missouri Workshop (a legendary program for photography and photojournalism), and his efforts to establish the (ultimately short-lived) Independent Picture Service (IPS). A systematic examination of Morris's correspondence helps us to understand how he worked and allows us to construct a sociogram of American photojournalism after World War II.

Other examples of documents from image agents are the papers of Swiss photographer Walter Bosshard stored by the Archiv für Zeitgeschichte at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETH) and the papers of more than one hundred photographers, including celebrities such as Ansel Adams, Lee Friedlander, and Edward Weston, at the Center for Creative Photography in Tucson, Arizona. National libraries, the archives of colleges and universities, and photo museums typically contain troves of materials from photographers' collections.

The second group of written sources that tells us about photographs encompasses classical archival material such as work files, memos, bills, professional correspondence, and the like. The first place to look for these sources are a country's national archives. For my book on image agents, I consulted the German Federal Archives in Koblenz and Berlin, the British National Archives in Kew, the National Archives in Washington, D.C., and College Park, and the National Archive of the Nether-

[5] See https://catalog.lib.uchicago.edu/vufind/Record/7360397, last visited on 28 November 2017.

lands in Den Haag, among other sources.[6] These institutions hold a variety of collections, ranging from those of government photography offices and combat photography units to those of state censorship agencies. The British National Archives, for example, contain files specifying the rules for photo censorship in World War I and records documenting the work of photographers for the Metropolitan Police of London. The holdings of the German Federal Archives include files from the Wehrmacht's propaganda units and the materials of the Bundesbildstelle, which was responsible for the visual politics and representation of the Federal Republic of Germany. Needless to say, national archives also collect photographs, which means that written sources will often be complemented by visual ones. Unfortunately, texts and images are normally stored separately, and only in rare cases do we get the chance to see both in the context of their production and distribution.

While this separation may be desirable from a conservator's standpoint, it keeps us from grasping the larger context. This became particularly clear to me while looking through the file of a photographer who served as an unofficial informant for the East German State Security Service, or Stasi. Among his documents was a photograph of his peers with their names handwritten on the backside. Were it stored in the photo section, I would have no inkling that this seemingly private photo, taken in a leisurely setting, had been used to denounce ordinary citizens. On this note, I should add that the Stasi files of professional photographers who were either monitored by the state or who helped monitor others as informants do not provide "neutral" information on how photographers worked or what their political views were. (This is especially true of the suspected dissidents among them.) But the files do tell us why the Stasi was eager to monitor the photographers and how its employees interpreted their work. In this respect, they serve as a kind of inverse companion piece to ego documents.

The third group of written sources for understanding image agents is the private archives of photo services, news agencies, museums, galleries, and publishing houses. Often these sources are more difficult to access because they are not open to the public, and it is up to the institution or

[6] For a complete list of archival material used in this study, see Vowinckel 2016, 29–30 and 437–438.

enterprise to grant researchers access. One institution that I have visited is the Associated Press Corporate Archives in New York City.[7] Among many other documents, the archives contain the correspondence of AP staff photographers and photo editors, and provide information about the early history of the Wirephoto service, one of the first networks for the long-distance transmission of photographs via telephone lines. In the 1990s, the AP began to collect oral histories including interviews with many of those who ran the agency's photo branch. Although there are rumours that the AP limits researcher access, especially for investigations of the agency's activities during World War II, I was able to work there freely and found the archivists very supportive.[8]

The famous Bettmann Archive is another example of a private collection that helps to understand the work of image agents.[9] Unfortunately, it seems that the AP and the Bettmann Archive are the exceptions. Many photo agencies, especially the earliest ones, did not store their records, and a fair number of the archives of those who did have either been lost or destroyed. For instance, the photo collection of Black Star, an American agency founded by three German Jewish *emigrés* in the 1930s, is now part of the Ryerson Image Centre in Toronto, but the accompanying text files are nowhere to be found.[10] Another example is Ullsteinbild, the photo branch of the German Ullstein publishing house, which was "Aryanised" after 1933 and lost the better part of its files when bombed in World War II.[11]

In sum, the search for textual sources in the field of visual history demands a certain amount of creative perseverance, requiring researchers to comb local, regional, and private collections along with traditional institutions such as national archives. Moreover, those pursuing a project in this field would do well to note that many important 20th-

[7] For more information, see https://www.ap.org/about/our-story/corporate-archives, last visited on 23 November 2017.

[8] See Domeier 2017, 199–230.

[9] Estelle Blaschke has explored the history of the Bettmann Archive in her book *Banking on Images*. See Blaschke 2016.

[10] For details, see http://ryersonimagecentre.ca/, last visited on 23 November 2017.

[11] For the history of Ullsteinbild, see Weise 2015, 259–285.

century image agents are still alive and can be used directly as sources. One of my graduate students, writing on the visual politics of the Kádár era in Hungary, interviewed more than a dozen photographers and photo functionaries, many of whom produced previously unknown documents.[12] Frequently, the combination of multiple sources will create a nuanced picture of how individual agents, professional groups, and public and private institutions have shaped the past visual world.

## Image Agents as Protagonists of Historical Narratives

Naturally, historical narratives centring on image agents differ substantially from art historical narratives focussing on images. Drawing on the written sources we have already discussed, these historical narratives address individual and collective biographies, the formation and dissolution of networks, and the rise and fall of professional groups, enterprises, and public and private institutions. Nevertheless, even when concentrating on image agents and their activities, visual historians need to take images seriously – as sources, as objects of investigation, and as parts of historical narratives. While I do not believe that images themselves are agents, they are nevertheless, what cause and validate our interest in image agents in the first place.[13] Understanding images as images is therefore crucial if we are to grasp the intrinsic motivations of those who work with them.

The simplest way to include photographs in the study of image agents is to use them for the purpose of illustration, an approach that over the past decade has become quite popular in the field of visual history. Photographs used in this way may prompt mental associations, trigger personal memories, and exemplify or help visualise ideas, but they also threaten to degrade the image to a mere eye-catcher, bereft of specific visual content and quality. A better option is to interweave text and image, particularly when working with formats that present them

[12] See Kiss 2018.

[13] For a view that does regard images as agents, see Latour 2007.

side by side (such as photo reportages and photo books). Often, the text or caption indicates how we should read the images. For instance, tabloids tell us that a celebrity in a photograph *is* sad because he or she *looks* sad (or angry, or happy). However, it is also crucial that we challenge the relationship between text and image in order to restore the image's communicative autonomy and to reflect on why a given text seems to promote a particular interpretation.

Art historians often seek to explain images by way of the life circumstances of those who produce them. A prominent example would be the various phases in Pablo Picasso's work and life. For text-trained historians, telling a story this way would require a radical paradigm shift. Taking an image as a starting point is anything but common in historiography, though some scholars have experimented with images as starting points in otherwise text-focussed narratives.[14] A more image-centric approach can be particularly useful when a photograph needs to be "freed" from a long-standing interpretation. One example is Sibylle Bergemann's photo *Das Denkmal*. The picture is part of a series produced between 1975 and 1986, and from the perspective of post-1989 society it appears to be a critique of socialism in general and the GDR in particular. It is often believed to show the deconstruction of the Marx and Engels monument – a view that has been fuelled by photographs from Eastern Europe and, most prominently, by the scene from the film *Good-Bye Lenin* (2003) where a helicopter carries off the statue of Lenin from Berlin's Alexanderplatz. Yet, in truth, Bergemann's photo shows the *construction* of the Marx and Engels monument, which was created by Bergemann's friend, sculptor Ludwig Engelhardt.

We may take this photo as a starting point for telling the story of subversive photography in the GDR in the 1970s and 1980s, but we will not be able to grasp the whole story without relating it to Bergemann's own biography. Far from being a dissident, she was a member of several of the working teams of the East German Kulturbund. Even though the Stasi sporadically placed her under surveillance, she was never classified as an opponent of the system, let alone an active dissident. Only a close reading of both image and written sources allow us to tell the story of a work whose creator has often been mistaken for a rebel. Indeed, it was in

[14] See, for instance, Föllmer 2016.

Image 1: Sibylle Bergemann: *Das Denkmal* (1975–1986). Ostkreuz Agency.

spite or even because of Bergemann's membership in the cultural establishment of the GDR that she could show the fathers of Communism as headless, chained, and darkened by a thick layer of rainclouds. At any rate, we can fully come to terms with the visual history of the GDR only if we look at a variety of image agents, from photographers and picture editors who were loyal to the Party to silent objectors and outspoken dissidents such as Harald Hauswald, who illegally sold his pictures to Western magazines.

What does all this mean for history as an academic discipline? If our claim is that the writing of visual history requires close readings of images and texts, we should start training students to do both. While text reading builds on skills that children learn at school, image reading usually needs to be taught from the scratch. From my own experience, many students find it difficult to describe a picture without falling back on preconceived notions that push them in a particular direction. Yet, when properly trained, students are capable of developing astonishingly thought-through interpretations. For example, in 2016 I presented a photograph of my own family to a group of master students at Humboldt University, who proceeded to accurately describe the social background, the context, and the relations between family members.

It is obvious that a new form of narration will require a new kind of training in history departments. To illustrate how that training might look like, I will present a miniature case study comparing image agents in the United States with those in the German Democratic Republic during the Cold War.

## Cold War Image Agents in the United States and in the German Democratic Republic

Two major players in the field of image production and distribution on the decades following World War II show how certain kinds of knowledge can change our visual understanding of an era. The first is the United States Information Agency (USIA), which Dwight D. Eisenhower founded in 1953. Its task was to support national political interests by promoting cultural activities in the United States and abroad. Part of this cultural diplomacy was the establishment of Voice of America, a radio station designed to spread free information in Europe's Eastern Bloc countries. Another part was the production of illustrated magazines, information brochures, and exhibitions. (A 1961 exhibition featured photography of the Berlin Wall.[15]) In order to provide a sufficient amount of visual material, the USIA hired several staff photographers who cooperated with editors and curators inside the organisation. Their aim was to present a positive image of America and communicate its core values to foreign countries, especially those under communist rule. The East German equivalent of the USIA was the state-owned photo agency Zentralbild, the picture branch of the news agency Allgemeiner Deutscher Nachrichtendienst (ADN). Zentralbild staffers, like their counterparts at the USIA, were expected to portray their country in an exalted light. As a result, the images produced by these agencies are at times strikingly similar: hand-shaking politicians at summits, crowd-waving leaders on state visits, events celebrating the opening of new buildings and other official occasions.

[15] See Cull 2008.

While similarities between official photographs of state events in the Cold War era may hardly be surprising, what is remarkable is that the U.S. and East Germany took a congruent approach to the visual representation of the Vietnam War as well. Both countries were eager to document the well-being of the civilian population, albeit for very different reasons. The United States focused on the South to highlight the purported benefits of American support and protection. The GDR wanted to show that the spirit of the pro-communist population in the North remained unshaken by war. Each side circulated pictures that emphasised social cohesion, technical progress, leisure, and education. For instance, the USIA published *The View Beyond the Battle*, a brochure on social, economic, and political progress in Vietnam accompanied by pictures of school children, happy peasants, and U.S. aid projects. It concludes on a resoundingly optimistic note:

> The Vietnamese are talented and resourceful in commerce and trade. The wartime influx of men, money and supplies has made boom towns of Saigon, Danang and other cities. New buildings rise in every neighborhood. It is the din of construction, rather than the noise of war, which creates the decibels in business-districts.[16]

The East German view of Vietnam was similar in effect if not in motivation. In 1968, the *Vietnam Foto Report*, a joint exhibition by the ADN-Zentralbild and the Vietnamese News Agency (VNA), took place in East Berlin, featuring photographs by Zentralbild staffer Hubert Link, among others. Viewed alone, the images are practically indistinguishable from photographs of the South Vietnamese released by the USIA. Both tend to romanticise conditions in the war-torn country, both stress their own role as supporters of the civilian population, both predict a golden future. As a result, we cannot decipher the specific messages that these images contain without carefully scrutinising their respective processes of production, editing, and public display.

[16] *Vietnam – The View Beyond the Battle*, no pagination [63].


Image 2: *Vietnam – The View Beyond the Battle*, page 71. Caption: "An American girl, of the International Volunteer Service, teaches in a delta orphanage operated by Irish nuns: The Vietnamese, staunchly supported by foreign friends, are determined that their children will grow in a land of freedom."

## Conclusions

My aim in this essay has neither been to equate different cases of photo politics nor to turn historians into art historians nor to claim that interdisciplinary work should supplant certain academic fields. Rather, I have argued that historians can and should help to understand the visual world by investigating what they are best trained for: human action, institutions, processes of professionalisation and commercialisation, the formation of networks, and the way media shapes the social and political realms. This part of visual history should become part of academic training and practice, for there is no reason to limit our attention to text and exclude visual (or sonic or haptic or gustatory and olfactory) phenomena from our understanding of the past.

Vietnams Jugend lernt (Bild links). Patrouillengang am Meer (rechts). Diese beiden Bilddokumente sind im Vietnam-Fotoreport zu sehen

Fotos: ND/Schmidtke; ZB/Link

**250 Dokumente von Leben und Kampf**

**Eindrucksvolle Bilderschau im Ausstellungszentrum**

Von Hannelore Kauffelt

**VIETNAM FOTO REPORT**

der vietnamesischen Nachrichtenagentur VNA und des Allgemeinen Deutschen Nachrichtendienstes in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Vietnam-Ausschuss beim Afro-Asiatischen Solidaritätskomitee der DDR

Image 3: 250 Dokumente von Leben und Kampf: Vietnam Foto Report. *Neues Deutschland*, 4 December 1968. Photo: Leon Schmidtke, *Neues Deutschland*; Hubert Link, Zentralbild.

The focus on human action is particularly important, for image agents are stakeholders in the visual world. They act on behalf of governments and ministries, political parties, armies, NGOs, newspapers and magazines, photo and news agencies, public relations companies, and scientific institutions, and they act on their own behalf as public communicators. They have shaped our visual environment for centuries and their impact is greater than ever in the digital age.

Nevertheless, we lack even the most basic historical knowledge of important photo agencies. There are no studies of AP Images, Keystone,

Black Star, or Zentralbild, to name just a few.[17] Moreover, no books exist on military photography in any country at any point in time. There is no comprehensive study of the U.S. Army Signal Corps and its photographic units other than those produced by the army itself. There are no studies on the photographers of the Red Army or the French military in World War II, although some very good books on individual Russian photographers are available.[18] There is no monograph on the photographic programs of NGOs, even large ones, such as the United Nations, UNWRA and UNESCO.[19] We do know that organisations such as Médecins Sans Frontières closely cooperated with various Magnum photographers, and it would definitely be worth investigating the effects of such cooperation – the way it shaped public response to humanitarian crises, say. Most publications about important photography awards stem from the organisations doing the rewarding or from members of the competition juries.[20] More independent research would help understand the emergence of "iconic" photos, which often come from news agencies such as AP and UPI or, in some cases, public photo projects such as that of the Farm Security Association. Such research could help identify, and serve as a counterbalance to, the dominance of U.S. institutions – both public and private – in the production of a common visual memory.

[17] There is a single volume on the history of the AP, by former AP employees. And it contains only one chapter – by Hal Buell, a one-time head of the AP's picture desk – that addresses the photo business. See Buell 2007. Furthermore, C. Zoe Smith wrote an important article about Black Star more than 30 years ago. A more recent publication was commissioned by the agency. See Smith 1984 and Neubauer 1997. There is virtually no research on Keystone. Bernd Weise has investigated the early formation of photo agencies in Germany. See, for example, Weise 1990.

[18] The best-researched armies from a photographic perspective are the German Wehrmacht and the British Army. See McGlade 2010; Uziel 2008; Museum Berlin-Karlshorst 2014.

[19] An edited volume has appeared recently on humanitarian photography that includes single chapters on some of these NGOs. See Fehrenbach & Rodogno 2015.

[20] See, for example, Buell 2010. A noteworthy exception is Alexander Godulla's book on the World Press Photo Award, though it is available only in German. See Godulla 2009.

I do not wish to suggest that we need to address every single lacuna in the history of image production. I do wish to encourage historians to start exploring various visual dimensions of the past, from documentary sources to techniques of representation and illustration. At the same time, we should concentrate on what distinguishes us from art historians. The first and most important task in this regard will be to acquire a basic understanding of the most important image agents of the 19th and 20th centuries, in particular those operating in the field of photography.

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# Analysing Press Pictures with the Documentary Method. Methodological Aspects and Steps of Interpretation

Heike Kanter

One possible approach to examining photographs is to consider them as documents of an era in which they have been taken and used. This means, to understand photographs as made by image agents[1] at a certain time. Image agents shape pictures by their way of thinking and perception within their everyday practices and in specific social relations. The documentary method focuses on these producers' perspectives expressed in images. It is based on the sociology of knowledge; understanding knowledge as socially and historically anchored. In addition, it refers to analytical tools from art history and, therefore, is an adequate method to analyse how aesthetics and society relate in specific historical contexts.

When introducing the documentary method, it is necessary to mention that the term "documentary" does not refer to documenting aspects of photography. Rather, within this framework, the purpose is to reconstruct the *documentary sense* of cultural phenomena, which means

[1] I use the terms "image agents" and "picture producers" as synonyms; see also Vowinckel 2016 and in the first chapter in this volume.

the deeper social meaning of a made object.[2] Concerning photographs, they are shaped by their producers in terms of composition, editing and publishing. As image agents are influenced by historic constellations, the social milieu and private or professional aspects of photography, they have distinct *pictorial routines*. These are expressed in photographs – or following the terminology of the documentary method: they are being "documented".

As mentioned, the documentary method of picture interpretation[3] investigates the picture producers' perspectives. I will demonstrate this by presenting central results of a case study on published press images of politicians. In this research, I focus on the relationship between press and politics in selected published photographs of five German newspapers between 2009 and 2013. Concerning the methodological premise that photographs and other pictures are shaped by their producers, I also take into account the context of publication. Therefore, my principle research question is: Which social relation of the politicians/politics and the newspapers/media is being expressed in published press images? With this approach, I treat photographs as a special form of materialised images. My findings widen the understanding of photography beyond its depicting function and as imagining technology. Photographical images are powerful human products of our past and contemporary society expressing the world views[4] of their producers. Analysing world views through images might also enrich research in the field of visual (culture) studies.

[2] Mannheim 1936.

[3] Bohnsack 2008. In my opinion, the term "documentary image interpretation" would be the better one to express how photographs are shaped within the image production process, but I follow here the established term.

[4] Considering the history of the term "worldview" I prefer the spelling "world view" to mark that our world is full of different world views, which are fundamentally variable.

## Photographs as a Source of the World Views of Image Agents

As visual sociologist, my general research interest is the construction of society by mental images and physical pictures.[5] There are diverse approaches to analyse the different kinds of pictures in the field of qualitative social research. The documentary method[6] focuses on people's routinised practices: how they think, act, speak or, for example, take photos is influenced by historical-societal aspects such as the era and the generation to which they belong to, their social background (family, milieu, friends), education level and gender, etc. We are shaped each day by our practical experience in different social situations, by social structures and other humans, equally. Bourdieu's term *habitus* strives to understand the profound effects society has on our everyday life.[7] Our practices are socially characterised and based on routines, which are habitually implicit patterns. Following Bourdieu, Bohnsack calls the entity of these routines *frames of orientation*[8], which function as guiding rules of practices of perception and of action. The methodical core is to grasp those implicit perspectives of the actors.

As an example, let us have a look at the publishing of photographs in newspapers. The process of choosing them for publication is rarely a strategic decision for which the selecting persons (such as photographers, picture editors, editors and layout artists) have a long time to consider or reflect: usually, the selection procedure follows a fast, professionalised routine.[9] Similarly, Pierre Bourdieu and colleagues observed already in the 1960s that the style of shooting photos, such as the topic and the

[5] I made the analytical distinction of physical and mental images, which are two sides of the same coin, in the process of image making.

[6] The documentary method is based on Karl Mannheim's draft of the documentary method of interpretation as part of his sociology of knowledge; see Mannheim 1936. It is also influenced by ethnomethodology, see Garfinkel 1967. German sociologist Ralf Bohnsack has extended the documentary method since the 1980s as a method for qualitative, text and visual data analysis, see Bohnsack 2008, 2014.

[7] Bourdieu 1972.

[8] Bohnsack, 2014, 221.

[9] These observations I made during my employment as photo editor for two German Newspapers in 2007–2011. See also Gürsel 2012.

composition, depends on the photographers' habitus, on their embodied dispositions and their tastes.[10] The way they design and frame an image, is based on implicit patterns. In this sense, it is a kind of a specific iconic *tacit knowledge*[11], which orients the actions of picture producers. Furthermore, in contrast to other forms of knowledge, this "know how" of doing things is more particularly historically and socially characterised – if we think about, for example, the changing of photographical styles. This implicit handling of photos is connected with the specific technical role of photography. Philosopher Patrick Maynard describes photographic technology as one of the "imagining technologies": "They would therefore channel not only *what* we imagine but also *how* we imagine [– –]".[12] The depicting function of photography is embedded in its technology, which enables the picture producers to imagine the situation at all. Therefore, a photograph refers not only to reality, but it is also an image expressing a certain perspective on the scenario. As readers, we do not only see press photographs, but image(s) selected by the editors as relevant image(s) to corresponding topic(s).

When analysing photographs especially, the documentary method differs between the actors in front of the camera and those who frame the image from behind it. It terms the persons and beings in front of the camera the *represented picture producers*[13] as they are the subjects of the photograph. They influence the composition by ways of behaving in front of the camera, or with it, as in *selfies*. The *representing picture producers* are the photographers or artists, who take the photo, but also the (other) persons such as photo editors, designers, artists or social media

[10] Bourdieu et al. 1990.

[11] They are to be understood as incorporated and, therefore, implicit patterns, which are formed by tacit knowledge; see Polanyi 1966. Tacit knowledge is not to be understood as reflexive knowledge when making a rational decision of how to further proceed. It is much easier to make a knot and to show it to others, than to verbally explain how to do it. Much of our everyday life consists of actions that rely on this type of knowledge. Bohnsack points out that tacit knowledge is "imparted by the medium of iconicity, for instance in the medium of pictures or images about social settings, and by incorporated practices of actions", Bohnsack 2008, 11.

[12] Maynard 1997, 85; emphasis on the original.

[13] Bohnsack 2008.

influencers, who choose them for publication or edit images technically. They frame images at later stages of the production process. The research on images is still lacking investigating the difference of the image agents having an influence on the final product.[14]

The documentary method does not ask *what* cultural objects are as such, but rather *how* these objects are shaped by the producers' habitual patterns. Based on this assumption, the method follows the approach of Erwin Panofsky. He analyses historical works of art as cultural products embedded in their "historical time".[15] In intellectual exchange with Aby Warburg and Ernst Cassirer,[16] Panofsky developed the concept *iconology*[17]. It is a method that examines the historical-societal contexts of visual themes and subjects. Common iconographical analyses during the first third of the 20th century focused on the year of manufacture and provenance to analyse art history classes. In contrast to that, iconology looks at deeper historical, social and cultural meanings, which are expressed aesthetically. Panofsky also uses the term *habitus*[18] to explain the close correlation between the practices of artists and the particular epoch they are living in. Panofsky was a contemporary of Karl Mannheim, who was one of the co-founders of the sociology of knowledge and who took over central premises and analytical steps of Panfosky's iconological concept for his *documentary interpretation* (relating it to cultural products and the acting of actors in general). Artists are "children of their time" and hence in their artwork, typical mental habits are being expressed. Later art historian Baxandall calls this *visual habits*.[19] The documentary method's challenge is to reconstruct those concealed habitual views.

[14] See also Rose 2014; Pauwels 2015.

[15] Panofsky 2004.

[16] Levine 2013.

[17] Panofsky 1939. Since his emigration, Panofsky published in English.

[18] As is well known, Bourdieu adopts this concept from Panofsky, as he was also intrigued in these deep mental social structures influencing the habitus of actors generally. This habitus is expressed in facial expressions, gestures or modes of dressing, language use, etc.

[19] Baxandall 1972, 152.

The iconological method of interpretation was criticised for neglecting formal aspects or rather, the iconic dimension of art. In the 1960s, German Art historian Max Imdahl transformed the iconology to the method(ology) of "*the iconic*".[20] According to him, an artwork should be interpreted through its inner structure to comprehend its inherent meaning. The composition of a piece of art is given *simultaneously* and therefore, the analytical steps ought to make explicit this implicit iconic form. It is important to keep in mind that iconic meanings are always ambiguous. As a rule, an image contains several dimensions. They are interpretatively grasped by metaphors, associative interpretations or by comparative references to other photographs. In this aspect, the documentary method follows Imdahl and interprets not only the visible content, but also the relation of pictorial elements and compositional aspects. To describe the unique, visual structure and its equivocal sense, one important analytical step is to compare different compositions with each other. The photographs or other pictures to be selected for comparison is dependent on the research focus. Since iconic comparison is the primary instrument that will be used to analyse the visual material[21] presented along with the similarities and differences between picture producers, I will return to this topic in more depth with the next subsection.

A final question concerning the volume's focal point of photographs as historical sources is: why is their examination as documents of actors made in a specific period fruitful? The documentary method does not examine the intentions of picture producers; indeed, one of the guiding premises is that we cannot explore the inner mind of others.[22] What we can do, however, is to explore how the picture producers gesture and act in front of the camera or how their shooting or publishing is implicitly influenced by their attitude. These frames of orientation could also be understood as a representation of the picture producer's perspectives in the images in the form of aesthetical habits. In this way, analysing photographs could lead to new insights about a certain period that is

[20] Imdahl 1996.

[21] See also Mietzner & Pilarczyk 2005.

[22] Furthermore, if we could, the found strategies would be something different to routinised practices leading our everyday actions at a non-cognitive level.

sedimented in content *and* composition of images. As it is "proposed" via the picture producer's lenses, aspects of the historical constellation or the *zeitgeist* becomes explorable as they might be relevant for the image agents. At this point, researchers have to think about the "hurdles" of scholarly analysis of historical phenomena, which means that they can reconstruct only certain aspects of an object. One way out of the dilemma dealing with one's own blind spots, might be the comparative analysis. It has already been a core strategy in grounded theory as a basis method of qualitative social research.[23] Investigating photographs and other pictures should take into account that the corpus – or following the concepts of interpretative methods, the case – is a complex product of the photographed persons *and* of the photographers/artists, photo editors, print media or other institutions selecting/publishing them.

## Contemporary Press Images Published in German Newspapers

I will describe the procedure of the documentary method of picture interpretation[24] by presenting a case study of press photographs. I compare photos of politicians as they were published in five German-language newspapers between 2009 and 2013.[25] In the following, I will interpret two images published in 2013. These are different versions of a

[23] Glaser & Strauss 1967.

[24] The documentary method of picture interpretation focuses on visual data. Mainly on analysing photographs, see Nentwig-Gesemann 2006; Bohnsack 2008; Hurmaci 2017; Kanter 2016. However, it applies also to other visual forms like protest material, see Philipps 2012; cartoons, see Liebel 2015; street art, see Philipps 2015 and children's drawings, see Wopfner 2012. Furthermore, it is used to examine visual communication; see Przyborski 2017, and in the process of exploration social media considering visual practices, see Schreiber 2017. Moreover, it is used triangulated with group discussion, see Hoffmann 2016; and interviews, see Hurmaci 2017. See other German publications related to the documentary method: https://www.hsu-hh.de/systpaed/wp-content/uploads/sites/755/2017/12/LitdokMeth16-03-17.pdf, last visited on 18 Ocotober 2018.

[25] In total, I analyse 15 pictures, 3 pictures per newspapers which present politicians in different social situations.

news photograph depicting two German politicians. In order to reconstruct the editors' habitus, I draw comparisons in several dimensions. I am looking at the presentation of their bodies *within* the photograph and *as* an image[26] to reconstruct the specific iconic structure of the photograph. This becomes apparent with comparison. Bourdieu names the specific posture of a human body as its *hexis*.[27] The hexis on images is the product of both the represented person and of those who participated in making the photograph. As already mentioned, a photograph is the joint work of the image agents in front of the camera and behind it.[28] Therefore, the pictured hexis of a politician is, on one hand, formed by the politician him/herself. On the other hand, the hexis is formed by the photographers and all other post producers, such as photo editors or designers[29] by way of their subsequent *selection* and *cropping*. In any case, the hexis represented in the printed image depends on the pictorial practices of all the participating image agents. These practices can be worked out by analysing the iconic structure of the body images.

## Steps of Interpreting Documentary Pictures[30]

In the following, I will explain the analytical steps of the formulating and reflecting interpretation by analysing the visual content of the press images *and* their formal structure in several stages. Due to the interest of the documentary method in the deeper meanings of social understanding and the frame of orientations of the actors, the interpretations' working steps differentiate between the reconstruction of *what* is seen (*formulating interpretation*) and *how* this content is designed (*reflecting*

[26] See also Bredekamp 2010; Belting 2014.

[27] Bourdieu 1984.

[28] Bohnsack 2008.

[29] In this chapter, I focus solely on the production side and do not consider reception processes.

[30] In German discourse of qualitative social research, the analytical distinction of methodological frameworks and the steps of interpretation are discussed *in extenso*; see Flick 2013.

*interpretation*). Accordingly, the first methodical step is the *formulating interpretation*.[31] To begin with, one describes what is visible in the photograph such as person(s), object(s), fore-/middle-/background, atmosphere (light, colour...) etc., which is called the *pre-iconographic level*.[32] In older publications, the gender and the age of persons was also labelled at this step. I would suggest to grasp at first aspects corresponding to gender, for example "longer, grey hair" or "wrinkles", and to explicate later in the analysis what "body aspects" are responsible for making the person seem to be an "old woman". In this way, the analysis is being aware of capturing social attributions of bodily aspects. Furthermore, it is recommended to take a close look at the relations of elements to get an initial understanding of their combination within the pictorial structure. The step of the formulating interpretation is very important to avoid missing important elements. In most cases, the pre-iconographical step is not published, as it can be cumbersome to read and, furthermore, takes a lot of space.

## Formulating Interpretation

In both versions on above, on image 1, you see a person in a blue blazer with medium-length hair on the left; the face is visible with a clear smile, and her gaze falls downward to the person next to her. The two individuals lean towards each other with their heads positioned close together occupied in their own space, which is separated from the background made up of unrecognisable persons dressed in black. While on the left image the persons seem to be closer, on the right photograph the person dressed in blue has even more space.

This description could be more explicit with focusing on the right person's appearance, but to summarise the interpreting process, I will move on to the second step of the formulating interpretation, the *icono-*

[31] Bohnsack 2014, 225.

[32] Panofsky 1939, 14.

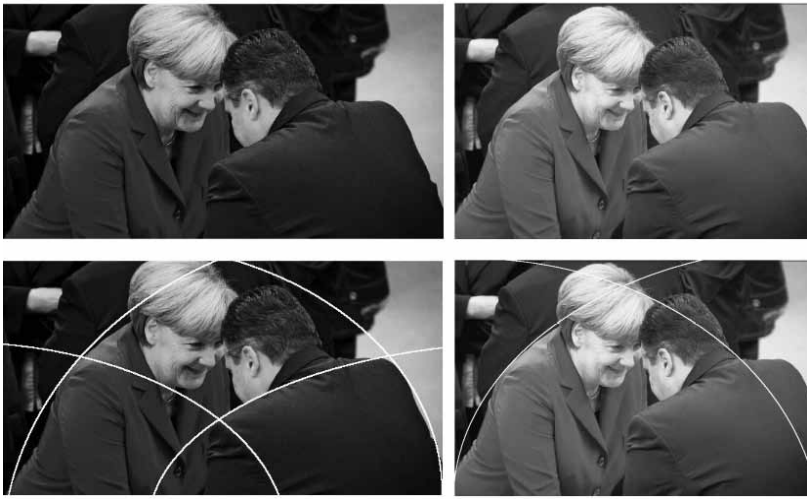

Image 1. Sources, left: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 23 October 2013, and right: *Die Welt*, 23 October 2013. Both images by Michael Kappeler / Deutsche Presse-Agentur GmbH (DPA). The lower photographs' lines added by the author.

*graphical analysis*.[33] Here, information regarding context and class is provided. German chancellor Angela Merkel (left), leader of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the largest political party of Germany, is seen with Sigmar Gabriel (right), leader of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), which is the second largest party. The press photo was shot at the first meeting of parliament after the German federal elections in 2013, and both versions were published a day later. The version on the left was published as a cover by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, the version on the right was on the cover of *Die Welt*. After describing the content and clarifying the photos' context, the interpretation reaches its core by reflecting upon the formal structure.

[33] Panofsky 1939, 14.

## Reflecting Interpretation

On the level of *reflecting interpretation*[34], the *iconological-iconic interpretation*[35] is a synthesis of the *iconographical interpretation*[36], which focuses on the iconological meaning, and the *iconic analysis* of the inner structure of the image, which is gathered in three dimensions as proposed by Max Imdahl.[37]

A) The *scenic choreography:* this means to interpret the constellation of persons and objects. For example, in an advertisement for a beer brand, the bottle could take the main role in the scenic choreography.

B) The *perspectivity:* it helps us to understand the perspective of the picture producers expressed in the camera angle used, thus whether the photo was shot from bird's eye or worm's eye view. The frame of orientation appears in a certain perspectivity.

C) The *planimetric composition:* it helps us to access the image as a self-referential system as Imdahl points out. The planimetric composition is mostly worked out by visualising the inner structure of the pictorial elements with the help of lines. Reconstructing "the picture's formal structure as a plane leads us to the principles of design and to the inherent laws of the picture itself".[38]

The marked lines can be seen in the photographs below (see also image 1). Remarkable here is the visible closeness of both bodies that is created by the composition. It is closely cropped and the perspectivity of the photograph, a light bird's eye view, causes the heads to seemingly touch each other. The lines also mark the differences between the two ways of cropping in representing the politicians' bodies. On the photograph above left, Merkel's head is cropped and there is less space between both,

[34] Bohnsack 2014, 225.
[35] Bohnsack 2008, 54.
[36] Panofsky 1939, 14.
[37] Imdahl 1996; Bohnsack 2008.
[38] Imdahl 1996, 41.

which leads to a stronger interpersonal dynamic (see the crossing of the lines in the shoulders of both) in the cover of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Contrasting this, in the right cropped photograph there is more space at the top and at the bottom. Furthermore, Merkel has more territory (see above right the planimetric lines cross at her head). At the lower edge, a gap opens between both persons and her arm is longer, her head is not cropped and Gabriel's back has been cropped. Both politicians seem to keep their distance. Gabriel gives the impression of being less dynamic. Merkel is presented as the more dominant person on this cover image of the newspaper *Die Welt*.

## Internal Comparison

What we see – or are compelled to see – is an indication of intimate mutual understanding. In addition to the direct comparisons of the newspapers' motifs, as well as to work out the characteristics of the cropping, I will now compare them with photographs that are of a similar composition; that is, they are shot in the same place and at almost the same moment, but from different viewpoints (image 2). This *internal comparison* is part of the reflecting interpretation that focuses on the other motifs that photographers have taken from this same situation.

In the news agency's "original" photograph (image 2 top left), Merkel is leaning forward supporting herself on her outstretched arm. In both images published, middle left and right, this support is not visible because of the cropping. It appears as if her arm is outstretched forward. These versions are cropped exactly at the point where her arm moves down. Her support as well as her distance are even more salient in another photograph, top right, representing the same situation. Here, little closeness and no subservience can be seen.

The construction of this scene becomes obvious as soon as these images are compared with a photograph of the official government press service, at bottom right. Here, the distance between the politicians is considerable, while Gabriel is looking down but with less submissiveness toward Merkel. The scene suggests little intimacy. Technically, the

Image 2. Sources from the top left to the bottom right: a) Das Nachrichtenportal für Brandenburg, Moz.de, 4 December 2013; Michael Kappeler / DPA, b) Kanter 2016, 157; Michael Kappeler / DPA, c) *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 23 October 2013; Michael Kappeler / DPA, d) *Die Welt*, 23 October 2013; Michael Kappeler / DPA, e) Kanter 2016, 159; Axel Schmidt / Common Lens, f) *Atlantic Sentinel. The View from across the Atlantic*, 23 October 2013.

specific closeness of both and the superior position of Merkel is reached by shooting from the side and from above, as well as by the way the photograph is cropped. This construction becomes even more evident in the photograph from another press agency, in the image 2, bottom left, taken shortly before or after this moment where both politicians look into each other's eyes.

To sum up, in the photograph of the news agency, image 2 top left, a certain proximity of the politicians is visible, although it is less prominent. The two images published suggest and stress a specific interpretation of the relationship between the politicians by the way of cropping. Both newspapers insist on different nuances in presenting the relationship between Merkel and Gabriel. Their relation is characterised by the *contrast of an against and with each other* which is shaped differently. The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* suggests a kind of balance between both politicians, where as *Die Welt* presents Merkel as more dominant.

## External Comparison

The specific character of the closeness between the two actors has to be further elaborated: What does this close relation of the party leaders express? Contrasting the two images with photographs produced in other social contexts may be helpful to relate aspects of the motif with compositional ones as part of the reflecting interpretation. Therefore, the external comparison is the last step before the different dimensions of the analysis are brought together in the *iconological-iconic interpretation*.

In our case, the selected photographs are similar in terms of composition and of relationship between the bodies on the one hand, and regarding light and colour on the other hand. However, they refer to completely different social contexts. Comparisons with photographs, which are not photo journalistic representations of politicians, help to grasp what the press images present and what they omit.[39] In this way, special selective and representative criteria of press photographs will become apparent through "*negative*"*-comparison*.

In order to arrange the first cluster (image 3), I looked for other photographs in professional databases with keywords, such as "two persons close", or "heads together".

[39] See also Vowinckel in this book.

Image 3. *Alliances*. Sources from the top left to the bottom right: a) Bettmann Corbis Stock Photos and Pictures / Getty Images, b) Flick, *Lance Corporal Johnson Beharry VC and Leader of the Conservative Party David Cameron today at The O2 to launch Tickets for Troops*, c) *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 23 October 2013; Michael Kappeler / DPA, d) *Die Welt*, 23 October 2013; Michael Kappeler / DPA, e) still from The Sopranos, *Metro News* 20 June 2013, f) still from GoodFellas – Drei Jahrzehnte in der Mafia, *Movie Pilot*. Cluster published in Kanter 2016, 162.

The photographs of this first cluster share the mood with those in the newspapers. The atmosphere seems to be professional: the individuals presented are wearing discreet and dark business clothing. One person appears to dominate in all the images. These individuals have "the upper hand" – not just metaphorically. One can see dominant active hands, especially in the stills of "mob movies", below. Merkel's hand was not

visible, only a small part of her arm. In all images, the central bodies are shown at a distance from the environment that excludes the public as well. They suggest an alliance in different ways, which includes a difference in personal power. At the top, you can see two people at press conferences and below, stills of films: a mafioso clutches another's neck, a gesture of absolute and menacing personal power, but disguised as friendly, personal intimacy. All four of the other photographs share a mood of conspiracy: the closeness of the noses and ears implies a personal alliance, but one that is not shared between equals. Conversely, the images of Merkel and Gabriel present no existing alliance but due to the distance of their bodies a moment of negotiation and the sealing of a pact. Thus, a tension between closeness and distance is visible. This contrast between closeness and distance characterises not only the relationship between Gabriel and Merkel, but also the relationship between politics and newspapers. The photographers and the anticipated readership are given insight into a seemingly private situation and, at the same time, they are remain outside as spectators. Therefore, their proximity is rendered conspiratorial by means of iconic representation.

At the same time, Merkel is shown as the more active protagonist while Gabriel is more passive. In addition, this difference, again, is stressed by cropping, the sidelong shot, the body directed downward and the head pushed forward. This attitude could, like the following cluster shows, be interpreted as *deference* (image 4).

A similar position can be seen in a reception of the British Queen or in a public ceremony conferring honorary medals or orders (image 4, images at the top left and right). A similar body referential position is shown in the act of kissing the hand (image 4, images left and right below). This gesture has a long and complex history of feudal submission. In modern Western society the complex history and meaning of kissing the hand is mostly referred to in an ironic and playful way, which, nevertheless, can in this way acquire a specific social meaning. In its classical form, the powerful person extends his hand toward the subordinate person showing in this way his or her grace. The subordinate person is expected to bow and to kiss the extended hand, in this way showing his or her deference. Again, in this cluster (image 4), the role of the hands – as "upper hand" – is important. The higher-ranking

person shows his individual friendliness, while by the same act keeping a haughty social distance. Gabriel's *hexis* shows these aspects of *deference.* It is also visible that Merkel is approaching Gabriel in a friendly way and is keeping him at subordinate distance.

Merkel and Gabriel are simultaneously positioned at a distance and in close proximity. However, as another cluster of my analysis brings to

Image 4. *Deferences*. Sources from the top left to the bottom right: a) Tim Graham Photo Library / Getty Images, b) Maxim Shemetov, AFP / Getty Images, c) *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 23 October 2013; Michael Kappeler / DPA, d) *Die Welt*, 23 October 2013; Michael Kappeler / DPA, e) Keystone Press Awards, f) Daniele Venturelli, Wire Image / Getty Images. Cluster published in Kanter 2016, 166.

Image 5. *Playful-ritualised Fighting*. Sources from the top left to the bottom right: a) relief with wrestlers, Berliner Festspiele, Martin-Gropius-Bau; *Kult und Spiele: In Berlin gibt es eine spektakuläre Ausstellung über das antike Heiligtum Olympia. Am Ende entschied das Ringen*, Hessische / Niedersächsische Allgemeine (HNA) Portal, b) Christoph Herwig / fotocommunity.de, c) *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 23 October 2013; Michael Kappeler / DPA, d) *Die Welt*, 23 October 2013; Michael Kappeler / DPA, e) Manoj Shah, The Image Bank / Getty Images; f) Ylva Verlag blog, entry *Konflikte*, 9 January 2013. Cluster published in Kanter 2016, 171.

light, they do not socialise in intimate terms.[40] This can be observed by comparing their photographs with wedding photos. Merkel and Gabriel do not touch each other. This kind of erotic physical personal proximity visible in photos of kissing pairs is lacking in the press images. They are

[40] Kanter 2016, 168.

characterised by the typical routine of professional politicians. This routine I described earlier as an against and with each other, now becomes a playful battle for power positions in the last cluster (image 5).

The political struggle is also represented at a bodily level (image 5). For instance, consider the way of wrestling; again, the hands become significant, which may refer to the negotiation of power relations also the other animals – "only" struggling with their heads or antlers against each other. Thus, even antlers can, in a rather ironic way, be used to interpret political power struggles as they may follow the "law of the strongest".

As we have seen in the clusters, the interaction between Merkel and Gabriel was designed to show the formation of an alliance: a negotiation or a routinised playful-combative wrestling for political positions. Important in all clusters are the positioning and actions of the actors' hands. Although Merkel's hand is not visible, a significant part of her arm is. Therefore, she has the upper hand in the situation, but, at the same time, she depends on Gabriel: both politicians need each other. This alliance is designed differently. While the political alliance is more balanced in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Merkel dominates Gabriel in *Die Welt*.

## Editing Photographs, Creating Images and the Different (World) Views of Newspapers

The documentary method of picture interpretation is a fruitful tool to analyse how images are framed. The reconstruction of the planimetrical composition of each image and the comparisons make it clear that the newspapers do not merely depict politicians. In spite of the bodily physical distance, they bring the heads together. With close-ups, snapshotting and further cropping, the image agents strive for iconic closeness connoting that they were present at this *tête-à-tête*. It is important in photojournalism to represent place and time of an event and, thus, shooting closely refers to a contrariness of distance and closeness, which characters political coverage. Many political events can only be observed

from a distance like here in German parliament,[41] but with their framing, the newspapers suggest that they were at close proximity.

*Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Die Welt* orient themselves on the referential, denotative character of photography.[42] Merkel's offensive gaze, Gabriel's defensive stance took place on site, otherwise they could not have been represented so. Difficult coalition negotiations that later resulted in a grand coalition were held at a time the photos were taken. This is shown as the leaders struggling for a deal. However, this kind of struggling for positions refers above all to the editors' selection. Their tacit relationship to politics is being expressed in specific iconic design. Therefore, they are not only using documentary photographs, but also showing closeness and distance at the same time. This common orientation on the denotative character of photography and its closeness-distance-relation is habitually shared by both newspapers. A last comparison,[43] with another cropping made by the German *Bildzeitung*, the biggest tabloid outlet in Germany, shows that this newspaper has a completely different way of handling photos. They function no longer as news coverage, but as raw material to design an interpretation of the politicians' social relationship.[44] The location in the background has been obscured by the *Bildzeitung*. As the newspapers layout weaves text and pictorial elements context information, such as the background of the photo, are of less relevance than its own visual creation of politics.

The shared orientation of the premium daily *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and the *Die Welt* differs in the way designing the politicians' social relationship. Thus, they define society differently. In the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, there is a more balanced relationship between the politicians, whereas *Die Welt's* focus is on Merkel's dominance. The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* ori-

[41] The photographers are seated above the plenary hall in the visitors place.

[42] Barthes 1981.

[43] For the image, see http://heikekanter.de/files/kanter-taz-vom-25-6-2016-sc5a65bf9c2a985.pdf, last visited on 15 August 2018. The picture at the bottom is the one mentioned here.

[44] My sample includes five German newspapers, which I divided in two ways of handling images at an iconic level. *The Bildzeitung* forms one type with the newspaper *Die tageszeitung*. This is an interesting result, because their political attitudes are very different. See Kanter 2016, chapter 6.

ents itself on *autonomy* and *Die Welt* on *flexible hierarchy*. However, on a more abstract level, these different societal orientations have something in common: negotiating social interspace and positioning is relevant in both styles of iconic practices. These newspapers are creating or constituting a dynamic social order, while in the tabloid *Bildzeitung* the social order is not negotiable; Merkel dominates the entire newspaper page in every detail (for example the headline is written in the same blue as her blazer).[45]

## Images as Powerful Products of Expressing World Views

My approach concerns the social production of aesthetical structures. Further use of the documentary method of picture interpretation could enrich current findings of visual (culture) studies.[46] It explores photographic images – among others – as iconic *and* social products shaped by the societal-historical backgrounds of the image-agents focusing on perspectives or *frames of orientation*.

As we have seen, the newspapers vary the situation in German parliament after the 2013 federal elections aesthetically by framing the social relationship between the politicians differently. Depending on their editorial habitus, the newspapers share a common practice in using a denotative style of photography, though the "duties" of reporting are pronounced diversely. With these image practices, the papers not only formulate their own views on politics, but also present different understandings of the media's role in society.

As my case study illuminates, political coverage is the documentation of what politicians are doing as well as the performance of *iconic politics*.[47] The media's numerous ways of editing not only express their political bias and variant world views, but could also be understood as a permanent negotiation process of the relationship between press and

[45] For a more extensive interpretation, see Kanter 2016, chapter 6.

[46] Mitchell 1994; Mirzoeff 2002; Rose 2012; Schade & Wenk 2011.

[47] Kanter 2016, 260.

politics. Since the very beginning, photojournalists have tried to get as close as possible to political events from behind the scenes, while being excluded from the back rooms at the same time. Therefore, the closeness-distance-relationship is bargained daily, which can be linked to current understandings of the media as the fourth power in democratic societies[48]. On the one hand, the media has political power, on the other, it is one out of several photographical genres in the public sphere and constructs social reality differently to commercial or private social media photography.[49]

Referring to my research findings, the various ways of cropping might be seen as different impressions or, even more so, imaginations of politics made visible through photographical technique. That coalition building is made up of playful-combative struggle *or* as overpowering struggle referring to different imaginations of politics *and* social orders. In two of the newspapers investigated (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Die Welt*), parliamentary politics is imagined as the playful act of democratic negotiation: the actors are principally at eye-level and, therefore, society is created as dynamic. Whereas, politics in the other newspaper (*Bildzeitung*) is displayed as more hierarchical performance; that is, closer in terms of feudalistic behaviour, in which each subject looks up or down at the other respectively, referring to a stricter understanding of social order.

The analysis of the iconic differences reveal, that image agents not only perceive the world in various manners, but they create or imagine[50] society differently as well. Those imaginations could refer to "real situations", but they do not have to. It is a human capacity to imagine how a situation *could* have been. Therefore, photography is also imagining

[48] Very worrisome for democratic societies all over the world, within the right-wing populist parties the credibility of the press is being questioned, as loudest expressed by the current American President Donald Trump.

[49] Future research might concentrate on different functions of press photography in contrast to commercial or private photography. Regarding social media research, "public" and "private" are no longer opposites. Using different platforms, such as snapchat, instagram and facebook, means addressing different audiences. See Schreiber 2017.

[50] Sartre 2004 (1940).

the image being produced. A photograph catches reality, and, at the same time, is the imagined visualisation of it. The physical picture is linked to the imagined image and, therefore, it is a product of the image agents' imagination. Far from remaining in the abstract, this is being materialised and spread to the public sphere. To look closer at those imaginations via the help of picture interpretation means to discover a rich visual world behind the pictures.

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# Document, Evidence or Memory? Photography During and After the Bosnian War

Laura Todd

On August 5, 1992, the British television channel *ITN*, aired a report compiled by one of their foreign correspondents in Bosnia-Hercegovina, Penny Marshall, in the evening news programme. Images of the Bosnian War had begun to filter through more frequently as the scale and intensity of the conflict became apparent in the first half of 1992. However, Marshall's report footage added a new layer of documentary meaning to the war, by providing visual evidence of the existence of Serb detention camps, or, as some have labelled them in the years since, "concentration camps" in the Bosnian War.[1] One of the most famous shots from the footage showed a man named Fikret Alić, standing at the wire fencing surrounding one site in Omarska. His rib cage painfully visible with an incongruous smile on his face, Alić "unwittingly became *the* defining symbol of the war in Bosnia", as one British journalist suggested.[2] As Susan Sontag has argued: "Non-stop imagery (television, streaming video, movies) surrounds us, but, when it comes to remembering, the photograph has the deeper bite".[3] While Marshall's report ori-

[1] For discussion on the controversy of Marshall's reports, see Campbell 2002a and 2002b.

[2] Harding 1997, 2.

[3] Sontag 2002, 113.

ginated as moving images, the newsreel soon took on a more powerful static photo-life. Stills were reproduced in newspapers, starting with an article in the British newspaper, *The Guardian*, accompanying a report by journalist Ed Vuillamy, who had joined Penny Marshall in Bosnia.[4]

Eventually, the static images became more iconic, and controversial, than the original newsreel, as they appeared time and again as an example of the politicised history of photographs from the Bosnian War. The static images were added to a number of "themed units" used to encapsulate the conflict into a series of iconic moments.[5] And the photographs and stills-turned-photographs soon joined the referential history of iconic war photography in the twentieth-century.[6] Perhaps more importantly, however, such photographs were used specifically to serve as evidence of war crimes in Bosnia from the earliest stages of the war. The sheer volume of photographs that appeared during the Bosnian War is a testament to the importance that this medium has had in (re)constructing the war's historical events. They became both evidence and *aide-memoire*, having the function of providing proof that events were taking place (evidence) and documents for future memory construction (*aide-memoire*).[7] I see them as falling into these two (often overlapping) categories, as many of the photographs from the War had fundamentally different functions. The position of photographs is especially important in the Yugoslav Wars as the issues of memory, guilt, and responsibility, as well as evidence of the three, were and remain heavily contested in all spheres up to the present day. Photography in the Bosnian War thus provides fertile examples of the complex reasons for which photographs are made and distributed.

As in other instances, the use of photographs as evidence and *aides-memoire* is fundamentally controversial. Peter Burke has written: "Needless to say, the use of testimony of images raises many awkward problems. Images are mute witnesses and it is difficult to translate their

[4] Vuillamy 1992; see also *The Guardian* 2000, 7.

[5] Caple 2013, 176.

[6] Sudetic in Haviv, 2000.

[7] For discussion on photographs as *aide-memoire*/mnemonic devices, see, for example, Bate 2010.

testimony into words."[8] The eye is presented with immovable images, but they often need context, translation, and explanation. In the case of Bosnia's photojournalism, photographs as evidence were actively ascribed their testimonial function multiple times – first, by the photographers, then by media editors or producers, being re-produced by other journalists and politicians, before finally being used by lawyers as legal evidence. The life cycle of these photographs is thus hugely complex. How can historians go about examining the narratives between the mute image and the ascribed testimonial, to find an alternative translation into words? Photographs as mnemonic devices frequently have different functions. Yes, they provide evidence that events have taken place, but they also actively contribute to the concept of enduring memory of a war. They contribute to more than the immediate need for evidentiary material. They can be actively used to construct memories of events for future posterity, and emerge time-and-again as a way of re-affirming the memory of certain events.

In this chapter, I present some examples of visual and verbal testimonies: the words of photographers, the framing of war photographs in collections, the use of captions in newspapers, and the roles of photographs as evidence in trials. I discuss the following questions: how were photographs used as evidence of the Bosnian War and in what forms did they appear? How were photographs used in the wider media landscape and what kinds of moral questions did they pose as "mute witnesses"? How did photographs fit into memory constructions during and after the events that took place? What role did photographs play as evidence of injustice and criminality in legal proceedings? And, what kind of photographs appeared as legal proof? Ultimately, I examine the choices of framing and collecting in: the works of two prominent photojournalists, Ron Haviv and Paul Lowe; collections of photographs that focused on cultural destruction, as a part of human destruction; and photographic exhibits used in court cases from the ICTY. This chapter sees photography as evidence and *aide-memoire*, which concludes that, in the case of Bosnia, images cannot be separated from the context of their production and specific purpose. The memories of photographers

[8] Burke 2001, 14.

demonstrate that many took photographs specifically to serve as evidence, to try to shame the international community into action. Yet the works of photojournalists and non-photojournalists also served to provide posterity, and memory. My analyses describe both the images themselves and the contexts in which they were produced, demonstrating that they cannot be separated from one another.

## The Origins of Photographs as Evidence in the Bosnian War

The Bosnian War is defined as having started between March 28 and April 6, 1992, lasting until the signing of the Dayton Agreement on 14 December 1995. It was photography and photojournalism that provided concrete evidence that aggressions had begun before the start of the primary event of the war, the siege of Sarajevo.[9] And that aggressions would likely impact the civilian population, the first victims, most of all. The images of the photojournalist, Ron Haviv, captured visual evidence of one Serb paramilitary group, led by Željko "Arkan" Ražnatović, in the act of the ethnic cleansing of Muslim inhabitants of the Bosnian town of Bijeljina. Haviv's photographs, "A Muslim in Bijeljina, Bosnia, begs for his life after capture by Arkan's Tigers in the spring of 1992" and "Arkan's Tigers kill and kick Bosnian Muslim civilians during the first battle for Bosnia in Bijeljina, Bosnia", provided proof that the war had not only begun, but that it was already being waged largely on civilians.[10] The photographs appeared in *TIME* a week afterwards and sparked a trend for wide scale photographic documentation of the war crimes that were taking place in Bosnia.[11]

Considering the wealth of source material for historians, the televisual history of the Bosnian War has been well discussed in academic literature since the war began, but considerably less attention has been paid to the history of photography, and its role both during and after

[9] The siege of Sarajevo lasted from 5 April 1992 to 29 February 1996.

[10] For full collection of photographs, see Haviv 2000. Images are also available on the photographer's website.

[11] See, for example, *TIME* 2017.

the war.[12] This is perhaps an enduring effect of the tendency for some to see images as "mere illustrations" in the narratives of history in previous decades.[13] As with many modern conflicts that followed the invention and expansion of photography and moving pictures in the twentieth century, the Bosnian War has been constructed in memory as "the first" media war to be conducted in a period of expanding and cheapening technology.[14] The Bosnian War was famous for its moving visual output, as well as its static one, with visual representations appearing not just in newsreel, but also in feature films across the world.[15] James Gow, Richard Paterson and Alison Preston argue that,

> [– –] it was the reality of the satellite dish in a war theatre [– –] and the universal presence of the hand-held camcorder, which gave the Yugoslav conflict its status as the most-comprehensively media-documented war ever. This made it the first true television war.[16]

The availability of hand-held highly-portable video camcorders did allow for more footage to be created in "home video" style and added to the volume of photographs from Bosnia, as these moving images were cut as stills.[17] The presence of camcorders allowed foreign journalists to record material without an extensive entourage of technicians, but they also allowed Bosnians to capture their own version of the war as they were experiencing it.[18] As Gow, Paterson and Preston add, "[– –] the camcorder was the instrument by which many Yugoslav witnesses to disintegration and destruction could keep their own record and attempt

[12] See, for example, Gow, Paterson and Preston 1996; Kent 2005.

[13] Burke 2001, 10. It is important to note this situation has drastically changed since the time of writing, as predicted by Burke in the same volume, as the world moves further into the digital age.

[14] This epithet is most often given to the Vietnam War. See Sontag 2002, 113.

[15] See Iordanova 2001.

[16] Gow, Paterson and Preston 1996, 3.

[17] See, for example, Leslie Woodward's documentary, *Srebrenica: A Cry from the Grave*, which intersperses different types of filming techniques.

[18] Iordanova 2001, 14. See also Spaic 2017.

to tell their own story."[19] Many Bosnians indeed used camcorders to record testimonies of their experiences, which have provided visual evidence (both still and moving) and oral histories of the conflict.[20] The images from these camcorders are markedly different from the works of professional photojournalists; the pictures are grainy, un-focused and distorted, but their lack of framing adds to their authenticity. Some of the photographic evidence from the ICTY database is stills from camcorder or video footage, made clear by their trademark date and time stamp in the corner.[21] Yet, it was not the personalised, home-video-style footage of Yugoslavs experiencing the warfare that grabbed and held the attention of international viewers and policy makers. It is the images of media professionals that have remained the focus of history in the international community.

As much as the Bosnian War was famous for its moving images, technology did not dampen the impact that static images could have as documentary evidence for viewers across the world. One reason for this was the extensive presence of foreign journalists operating in the field during the conflicts. Many of these journalists later wrote emotively about their experiences and these texts became core histories of the conflicts.[22] The number of journalists able to operate in Bosnia was fuelled not only by cheapening technology, but also by the location of the war, in Southern Europe. Vladimir Petrović notes that:

> A small army of war correspondents and photojournalists cruised through this war zone located a few hours' drive away from Vienna, Budapest and Milan. One of the outcomes, typical of contemporary conflicts, was a flood of visuals striving to represent the facets of destruction – the suffering of victims as well as the cruelty of perpetrators.[23]

[19] Gow, Paterson and Preston 1996, 3.

[20] Gow, Paterson and Preston 1996, 3.

[21] See, for example, Exhibit D00220 from the trial of Goran Hadžić.

[22] See Nicholson 1993; Glenny 1996; Little and Silber 1996; Bell 2012; Vulliamy 1994; Vulliamy 2013; Demick 2012; Rohde 2012 and Borger 2016.

[23] Petrović 2015, 367–368.

Several prominent photojournalists were drawn to the Yugoslav Wars, including, but not limited to: James Nachtwey, Ron Haviv, Paul Lowe, Christopher Morris, Darko Bandić, Roger Hutchings, Garry Knight, Annie Leibovitz, and Alexandra Boulat. The war appeared almost daily in national newspapers, particularly in Europe, and were nearly always accompanied by an image to visualise these "facets of destruction".

What was it that made Bosnia such an attraction for war photographers? In the early stages of the war, many believed the war would not last very long and that it was simultaneously incomprehensible; nonetheless, photographers arrived from around the world. Perhaps it was the proximity to "Western" Europe, as Petrović suggests. Or, because Yugoslavia had been so well-known in the West for both friendly socialism and, previously, perceived barbarity, with a historical penchant for violence.[24] After all, early photography had allowed the world to see the aftermath of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1913. Many of the photographs of the Bosnian War moved far away from the depiction of formal warfare, in large part because the acts of war taking place were so informal. Yet, they remained recognisable in the referential canon of war photography. In international photojournalism, there was considerable focus on the street-to-street fighting in towns across Bosnia-Hercegovina, as well as images of the impact of war on civilians. From the war's early stages, photojournalists provided key visual evidence of a systematic programme of ethnic cleansing, developing eventually into acts of genocide, and a rapidly-building humanitarian crisis, rather than a formal war between distinct sides on distinct fronts. This extensive documentation would later be essential for war crimes prosecutors at the ICTY. Photography was used to document the unfolding war and also to provide testimonies of war crimes in place of, and to support, the testimonials of witnesses.

The beginnings of the War in Bosnia were covered by some with a mixture of exasperation, but also bemusement at the actions of the seceding nations of Yugoslavia. There was a plethora of photographs depicting soldiers in strange combinations of modern uniforms and historical headwear, particularly the traditional Serb šajkača (a military hat worn

[24] Bakić-Hayden 1995, 918.

by the nationalist Chetnik movement). The outcome was a widespread Orientalisation of the image's subjects. One image from *The Economist* newspaper in 1991 depicted an elderly woman, dressed for travel, with a suitcase at her feet and a rifle in her hand.[25] The caption accompanying the image read "Yugoslav National Dress", a comment meant to amuse British readers by inferring both backwardness and savagery, but which evidences some of the gross derision accompanying photographs from the time. The caption does not question why an elderly woman would need to carry a rifle in the first place, it is the result of her Balkan-ness not the immediate danger threatening her.

Later, the attention of the media turned serious when the scale of destruction outlined the severity of the events taking place on "European soil", as stories and images of massacres, concentration and rape camps, and widespread physical and psychological torture began to break down the narrative that there was little the West could do. Journalists felt that the conflict was taken less seriously than those simultaneously taking place in the Global South, despite the images emerging from the conflict and its proximity within Europe.[26] There was an overwhelming sense that the international community, including non-governmental organisations, were not paying close enough attention to the photographs being produced. The apparent solution for many documenting the War was to produce more images and more evidence to support their voices. As photojournalist Paul Lowe put it, "[– –] many of us in the media believed that if we told the story loudly enough – that one side was clearly the aggressor and the other the victim – the world would take notice and intervention to stop the carnage would ensue".[27] Photographic documentation-evidence, particularly that published in international media, largely focused on this divide of singular victimhood and villainy throughout the War.

The use of photography as documentary historical evidence was thus compromised by the firmly set positions taken by media outlets and journalists during the entirety of the conflict, and in the years since.

[25] Balkans Correspondent for *The Economist* 1992, 46.

[26] See, for example, Nicholson 1993, 33.

[27] Lowe 2015, 135.

International journalism openly interpreted and depicted the war in a certain historical frame from an early point in the war. This was driven in large part by the complexities of the situation, the ethnic nature of the conflict, and a widespread lack of understanding of the history between the warring groups. Rather than being a mute witness, photography was ascribed a testimonial role as the visual voice of those suffering in the war. Much of the photojournalism from the time focused on the crimes being committed by Serbs in Bosnia towards the Muslim community. With hindsight, this position proved to be based on fact; the war crimes committed in Bosnia were indeed largely committed by Serbs. However, this focus has arguably led to the creation of alternative history narratives in this gap, which have positioned Serbs as unacknowledged equal victims in the conflict. Simultaneously, images of Serb suffering are largely sidelined, furthering alienation and complicating efforts for reconciliation. Photography rightly served as evidence of the war crimes that occurred, but photography can never be omnipresent. Other groups felt there was a lack of focus on the crimes that befell them.

The most famous photographs of the war, like others before it, showed explicit instances of violence and suffering. They were designed to stir people into action, but photographic evidence is often unable to meet this target. The immediate impact of the photograph as evidence is more complex than we assume from our retrospective, historical analysis of these images. In the aftermath of the publication of his photographs from Bijeljina, Haviv noted that:

> What's interesting about these photographs is that this was a week before the war officially began in Sarajevo. And these pictures were published by American magazines and seen by American politicians, as well as German politicians and French politicians. I was always quite sad that there was no reaction by the politicians to these photographs. They had seen that this ethnic cleansing had started and they still had an opportunity to stop actually what was going to happen three weeks later in Sarajevo.[28]

[28] Ron Haviv quoted in Moeller 2000, 56.

The event in Sarajevo that occurred three weeks later referred to by the photographer is presumably the start of the Serb blockade of the city that intensified and worsened the siege. Here, Haviv is expressing the frequent fate of war photography and photojournalism: photographs from wars can be considered iconic in memory, but these war photographs often have little immediate impact to change the course of warfare. The photographer's comment on the lack of power of his own photographs helps contextualise the limitations of iconography and the influence that retrospect has on making these images exemplary.

## Evidence and Memory in Ron Haviv's Photography

Of all the photographers and photojournalists active in the field during the Bosnian War, the images of Haviv are arguably the most well-known amongst the thousands of images used by the media and others during the conflict. His work is repeatedly cited and revived to provide visual testimony of the horrors committed in Bosnia, recommending him as an ideal example for discussing the history of photography in the Bosnian War.[29] In 2000, these photographs from Bosnia were published in a volume entitled *Blood & Honey: Balkan War Journal*.[30] Even after the Yugoslav Wars had (mostly) ended, journalists continued to employ Haviv's photographs as key evidence, with one writing in 2001: "The image is stark, one of the most enduring of the Balkan wars: a Serb militiaman casually kicking a dying Muslim woman in the head. It tells you everything you need to know."[31] The photograph referred to here is Haviv's photograph taken nearly a decade earlier, "Arkan's Tigers kill and kick Bosnian Muslim civilians during the first battle for Bosnia in Bijeljina, Bosnia". It depicts a man in military uniform with his leg drawn back to kick a civilian lying on the ground. It is not immediately

[29] For example, Haviv's photograph is discussed in Sontag's seminal work on conflict and photography, *Regarding the Pain of Others* 2003, 80–81, and regularly accompanies retrospective discussions of the conflict.

[30] Haviv 2000.

[31] Kifner 2001, E1.

obvious that all the civilians in the picture are dead. The woman who is the main target seems to have her hands folded on her head to protect herself, but the man lying next to her is awkwardly crumpled, suggesting he has fallen suddenly and lifelessly. When the picture was published, Bosnian Serb forces claimed the soldier was checking to see if the three were alive, but the force behind the soldier's lifted foot and bodily position suggests otherwise. It was fortunately a moment where the photograph does speak loudly of crimes, first and foremost that these bodies would need to be checked for life in the first place. What makes the image more shocking is the sunglasses perched on the soldier's head and the cigarette held nonchalantly in his raised left hand, the two other soldiers passing the incident by without a second look. As Kifner suggests, it is the casual nature of the attack that makes the picture so disturbing. The image suggests extreme lack of respect for those caught in the crossfire – a trait that was seen time and again in Bosnian war photography.

The other photographs in *Blood and Honey* suggest that the image is not "all you need to know" about the conflict and I have consistently wondered why it is that certain examples of Haviv's photographs (that is, the most violent ones) are so popular. The collected images are remarkable for their nonchalance and borderline voyeuristic perspectives, as well as for their range of subjects and frequent depictions of brutality. Most of the images focus on Bosnia for obvious reasons. However, Haviv's photographs also offer a range of perspectives from different sides and temporal positions in the conflict, from the War in Croatia in 1991, through to the Kosovan War of 1999. They constitute evidence in less explicit ways than soldiers kicking the dead, or deep-red blood soaked into snow.

One particular image that stands out is "A scorecard from a Serb snipers' nest. Winter 1996", which depicts a tally scratched into a wall by two snipers, "Lemi" and "Ivek". The tally has been captioned by unknown persons with the words, "never to be forgotten/so as not to forget" ("da se ne zaboravi").[32] The inscription leads the photograph to occupy the middle ground of photograph and *aide-memoire*. The words

[32] N.B. This phrase is translated in multiple ways in English, which reflects the complex vocabulary of remembrance in English-speaking countries. I use the translation in Lowe 2005, 15, for consistency.

are poignant, referring not just to the soldiers' competition (the carving into the wall presents a less fallible form of memory than paper or that kept in the individual's mind). They also reference a refrain (or verbal mnemonic device) found in war commemoration across Bosnia-Hercegovina and the region. As it is unclear when these words were added to the tally inscription or who added them, they thus can be interpreted by viewers in two ways. They can be read as brutally ironic, with the soldiers knowing that Bosnian Muslims were carving these words on graves and makeshift memorials to victims of snipers across the country. Or, the words were added by Bosnians after the snipers had been flushed out after the Dayton Peace Accords in 1996. The former is more likely, but either way, the presence of the inscription presents a challenge to historical interpreters of such photographs. Contextual knowledge of both the language of the region and the use of the term is needed to draw the full extent of the impact from this particular example. To a non-speaker of Bosnian, the words mean nothing, they are connected to the photographer's caption. To a speaker of Bosnian, they encompass the complex issues of memory that have faced Bosnia from 1995 onwards. After the NATO bombardment of Yugoslavia (then Serbia and Montenegro) in 1999, they went on to feature regularly on Serb commemoration of the event.

## The Aftermath in Lowe's Photography

The words "never to be forgotten" re-surface in Lowe's collection of photographs, *Bosnians/Bosanci*, published in 2005.[33] The phrase features in the text as a re-production of handwritten comments made by visitors to an exhibition of his photographs held in Sarajevo in 2000, and are one of many such examples in *Bosnians*.[34] This distinguishes the collection from others of the time; *Bosnians* is not simply evidence of what took place, but also serve as an *aide-memoire* for those who experienced the

[33] Lowe 2005, 15.
[34] Lowe 2005, 169.

events and survived. They are not just intended to stir the international community into action. The text, captions and excerpts from various sources in *Bosnians* appear both in English and Bosnian language. Being published later than *Blood and Honey* in 2005, Lowe's collection fulfils a different role than Haviv's collection of images.[35] The difference in publishing dates is significant. Haviv's work was published immediately after the Yugoslav Wars had largely concluded, whereas Lowe's collection took extra time (almost a decade) to include visual documentation of the aftermath of the Bosnian War.[36] The composition of Lowe's text emphasises that his photography was to be part of a passage of war, an *aide-memoire* rather than evidence alone. The photographs are arranged into different parts: "the siege", "the dead", "the living", "the missing", "the return", and "the survivors". The images are collected as part of an ongoing process, rather than being moments frozen in time.

Some of Lowe's most interesting photographs chronicle public spaces, and the destruction of these spaces, during the siege. This provides a different insight into people's experience of the siege itself, as close-up images of human suffering largely took precedence over cultural destruction. He writes, "I began to try to document another facet of life under siege, the texture and fabric of the city itself", taking panoramic format photographs to literally and figuratively provide a wider lens on the forms of the Bosnian War.[37] Lowe outlines the advantages of deviating from the norm of war photojournalism: "The panoramic format opened up the scene, opening up the usual media coverage of the intense moment into a more expansive view that showed the scale of the city and its texture."[38] His photographs depicted the Bosnian War away from the fear on people's faces; he took images of factories, the burnt-out interior of the National Library of Bosnia, the makeshift barricades that protected civilians from sniper fire in Sarajevo. Many of these panoramas are unpopulated by human figures – proof that war photography need not rely on images of the dying to be powerful.

[35] Lowe 2005.

[36] I state "largely" here as there was a subsequent, shorter conflict in Macedonia in 2001.

[37] Lowe 2015, 135.

[38] Lowe 2015, 135–136.

One of Lowe's panoramic photographs shows the aftermath of the shelling and fire that destroyed the National Library of Bosnia-Hercegovina and most of its collections in 1992.[39] The destruction of the National Library of Bosnia, which was deliberately targeted by Serb forces, and which contained irreplaceable documents of Bosnian Muslim history, is considered one of the most violent acts of the whole war.[40] Lowe's stark black-and-white photograph shows the Library as an abandoned shell; its famous Moorish archways are scorched, revealing exposed brickwork and cables, floors are missing, presumed burnt. In the foreground, the pillars closest to the photographer reveal that years have passed since its destruction in 1992; graffiti with the date '95 is carved into the stone, along with names and incomplete dedications that are strewn with profanities. Further graffiti is just visible in the dark background. Such a photograph is important because it represents an image of a type of destruction that was perceived as being deeply personal to the Sarajevan experience of the war. It represented the destruction not just of valuable items, but also part of the collective memory of a nation. It is not designed to serve as evidence, photographs of the building burning in 1992 did this perfectly well. It signifies a memory stripped down to its core.

Lowe's photography is separated from Haviv's in one other major way. The former photographs in monochrome, and the latter in colour. The distinction is one that several reportage photographers choose to make for different reasons. On a basic level, this is perhaps demonstrative of the intended destination for their photographs. While Lowe's photography did appear in journalism from the time, Haviv's photographs were primarily destined for publication in the media. The colour photographs are more urgent; they show roads and snow soaked in blood, fire pouring from the windows of torched homes. They feel more like evidence from real-time. Monochrome images automatically evoke different visual responses. Tones of black, white and grey might not offer the same shock as seeing a puddle of blood, but they are stark images nonetheless. Hair and skin colour, clothing, all becomes the same. Perhaps more importantly for the present chapter, the use of monochrome

[39] Lowe 2005, 33. See Zećo 1996 for account of events and losses.

[40] See Riedlmayer 1995, 7-11.

in reportage photography becomes tied with the past. The monochrome photographs of Bosnia join a referential memory of previous black-and-white wartime photography, linking present with past.

## Evidencing Cultural Destruction

The photographic chronicling of war is more often associated with images of human suffering than cultural destruction. The examples of Haviv's photography as evidence demonstrate the central function that photojournalism has. Lowe's collection of photographs from Bosnia, however, suggests that cultural destruction has a different, but equally important role to play in evidence. Photographs that are considered iconic usually contain overt messages, or at least messages that people can more easily decide for themselves. Yet there is a significant historical trail to follow outside of these well-known images, the smaller lesser-known photographic stories reveal a more complex visual landscape for historians to explore.

This is particularly important when considering the photographic works of domestic photographers, who, by and large, could not (or would not) seek to escape from the conflict. They also had a greater interest in portraying the aftermath of war, when most photojournalists would have moved on to other subjects. The relationship between these domestic photographers and the conflict in their homeland was different to that of international photojournalists. Domestic photography provides alternative perspectives on what visuals encompass the suffering and destruction of the war. Sometimes, these images would deviate from the popular subjects of war photography: death and corpses, soldiers and weapons. Like Lowe, they would often focus instead on the destruction of culture and identity, which accompanied the ethnic cleansing of Bosnia's territory. In this sense, they too are a contribution to creating photography as mnemonic device.

One example can be seen in a collection of photographs, exhibited and then published in Sarajevo in April 1995, the *Exhibition of Documentary Photography of Destroyed and Damaged Mosques* (*Izložba doku-*

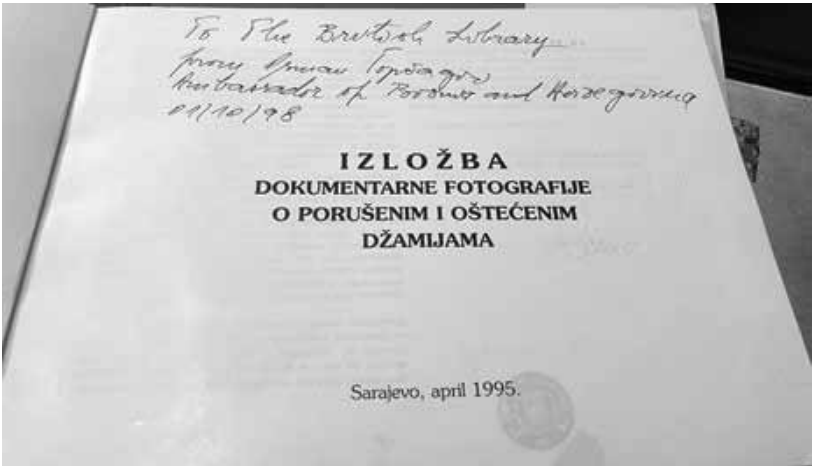


Image 1. Title page to photographic collection showing dedication from Bosnian Ambassador. Photograph by author.

*mentarne fotografije o porušenim i oštećenim džamijama*).[41] This slim collection was commissioned and published with the Islamic Community of the Republic of Bosnia-Hercegovina to "[– –] bear witness to crimes of this kind [cleansing through the destruction of religious sites]", by the State Commission for Gathering Facts on War Crimes in the Territory of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Državna komisija za prikupljanje činjenica o ratnim zločinama na području Republike Bosne i Hercegovine*).[42] It has a specific religious-political function and the copy held by the British Library has a dedication from the then Bosnian Ambassador to the UK, Osman Topčagić (image 1).

The collection demonstrates that in the case of photographs as evidence and memory in war, the destruction of culture plays a considerable role as testimony. The images contained in the volume offer photographic proof of the systematic programme of destruction that took place as part of the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia. The gifting of this

[41] *Državna komisija za prikupljanje činjenica o ratnim zločinama na području Republike Bosne i Hercegovine* 1995.

[42] *Državna komisija za prikupljanje činjenica o ratnim zločinama na području Republike Bosne i Hercegovine* 1995, 2.

volume to another national cultural institution serves to make this photographic evidence part of collective memory, particularly poignant when Bosnia's own cultural memory was mostly destroyed.

Such publications also demonstrate the many ways that photography was used during and after the war internally as a testimony of crimes as they were experienced by Bosnians themselves. For the Islamic religious community in Bosnia, the systematic destruction of Islamic holy sites and mosques by Serbs and Croats was itself evidence of war crimes from a different perspective. The existence of these photographs serves as an important means of the community expressing their claim to evidence of these specific crimes. Indeed, a similar collection of photographs of destroyed mosques and Catholic churches (image 2), compiled by Kemal Zukić, was used in the trial of Ratko Mladić in 2016, demonstrating how destruction of culture is as part of ethnic cleansing as mass killings.[43] The collection of photographs frequently used older photographs to construct a polyphonic narrative of exploring the before and the after, the past and the present. Some of the images also show these sites after their re-construction; the photographic images, like Lowe's, present evidence as a life cycle.

Yet the collection also presents some of reoccurring problems with memory and testimony in case of photographic evidence from the Yugoslav Wars. The collection is compiled for the court case of the leader of the Bosnian Serb Army, so it rightly details the destruction of Croat and Muslim holy sites during the Bosnian War. It does not detail the destruction of Orthodox churches, but none of the collections in the ICTY court records do. This leads photography into controversial territory as a mute witness and also a primary testimony in war. If no photographs are produced as visual evidence, did events take place? What does the historian do when there are gaps in the photographic narrative of war? And how reliable can the photographic image thus be as evidence? It is impossible to see photography as all the observer needs to know.

[43] See Exhibit D01483.


Image 2. Photographs from the collection of Kemal Zukic. Courtesy of the ICTY.

## Photographs as Legal Proof

One of the most fascinating aspects of photographs from Bosnia has been their afterlives as legal evidence in the ICTY – Europe's modern-day equivalent of the Nuremberg Trials. A simple search of the ICTY Court Records database using the term "photograph" in the titles of Exhibits returns a total of 4154 items across the indictments of all the accused.[44] Some of these photographs were taken by photojournalists, including Ron Haviv, some were images from regional newspapers and magazines, some were stills from videos recorded by handheld video cameras (image 3), others were aerial photographs depicting camps and frontlines, others still were taken by war crimes investigators from the scenes of alleged crimes to provide forensic evidence.[45] One chapter

[44] Search performed by the author on 5 November 2017. These results include indictments in all the conflicts constituting the Yugoslav Wars.

[45] See, for example, exhibits from the trial of Goran Hadžić: D00239.234; P02134; P03230; and D04412.


Image 3. Still from camcorder footage of the accused celebrating with Arkan Raznatovic. Note the distortion at the top of the image. Courtesy of the ICTY.

could never cover the number of photographs that were used as visual evidence in the trials of war criminals, who operated during the Yugoslav Wars, but I will provide some brief overarching remarks of what position they took in justice and their relationship with memory.

Photographs as evidence provide opportunities for justice to be served to victims and their families, and Haviv in particular was very proud that his photographs found their way into trials as legal proof of atrocities. He allowed his photographs to be used as evidence of war crimes committed by Arkan and his paramilitaries in the ICTY. The photographs were used, uncaptioned and unidentified, by the Prosecution to ascertain who witnesses had or had not seen in Bijeljina around the time of Arkan's ethnic cleansing of the town.[46] However, Haviv stopped short of testifying as a witness in person. His refusal to testify did not reflect

[46] "Public redacted version of 92bis Witness Package of KDZ023", Exhibit P02919.

his belief that the crimes were not committed, but rather reflected his belief that photojournalists should remain impartial in legal procedures. James Estin notes that "being thought of as a potential witness in a war crimes trial would make it even more difficult to photograph conflict".[47] Thus, Haviv also confirms the belief that photographers in conflict situations should serve as observers; their photographs are intended to speak for themselves.

The differing use of photographs as evidence in the judicial proceeding demonstrates some interesting trends. It is clear from the ICTY Court Records that, in terms of using photographs as evidence, they were used more frequently by the Prosecution (that is, by the ICTY teams) than they were by Defence counsels and individuals (Radovan Karadžić, for example, famously represented himself). There can be two reasons for this. First and foremost, in many of the trials, prosecutors used photographic evidence of the forensic investigation from the sites of mass graves or from other locations of war crimes. These primarily served as proof that mass murders had taken place, and that many of these murders were accompanied by other war crimes, including unlawful detainment, ethnic cleansing, and, in the case of Srebrenica, genocide.

Secondly, they also served as a means for the court to present these actions as "Joint Criminal Enterprises", where photographs and stills from video footage provided evidence that certain figures were in close contact in the period being investigated. Image 3 is significant for its role as moving image turned static (video clips were also played in court and are part of the evidence files). However, it is also interesting as an example of one of the many personal photographs that went into the court proceedings. It is not only evidence of warfare, but also evidence of association that photographs can bring. For example, in many of the trials, photographs from the personal albums of family and friends went into the collections as evidence. Personal photographs are usually associated with their role in memory constructions of people's lives, "[– –] not only as repositories of memory, but also as aids to remembering a

[47] Estin 2013.

personal or shared past".[48] While usually repositories, Annette Kuhn also notes their role as evidence in her work. In the ICTY archives, these personal repositories of memory, of friendship, of attendance at weddings, of drinking sessions and dinners, and of parenting, all add to a repository of legal evidence.

The scale of the different types of photographs used as evidence demonstrates that the Prosecution frequently had greater access to damning evidence than the Defence teams did. One exception to this reliance on photography as documentary evidence is in the case of Radovan Karadžić, who presented numerous photographs as evidence that detention camps in particular were not as de-humanising as the photographs from Omarska and similar locations suggest. Karadžić, always a proficient self-promoter, has clearly understood the importance of photographic evidence, and has tried to gain examples for himself. While the prosecutors widely relied on the photojournalism of foreign journalists, the Defence teams relied on photographic sources from closer to home. The Defence for Goran Hadžić (on trial for actions in Croatia), for example, used photographs from Serbian-language sources – made evident by their captions being written in Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, but, more importantly, using the Cyrillic alphabet.[49] These photographs presented what can be traced as the official line in Belgrade, Slavonija, the Serb-minority areas of Croatia, and Banja Luka, the capital of Republika Srpska in Bosnia. This line often focused on the narrative that Serb paramilitaries were performing acts of humanitarian aid, rather than murder. One photograph is captioned, "Finally free, exchanged Serbs – Zemunik 25 May", and accompanies a photograph that shows several deflated-looking people sitting on a bus.[50] Such altruistic photographs mimic the news reports of regime-backed media sources in Belgrade during the war.[51] The caption once again guides

[48] Kuhn 2010, 304.

[49] Exhibit D00235.234, "Photograph showing a woman at the point of exchange 23 February 1993" and D00236.234, "Photograph of negotiations on exchange of prisoners in Gacko Polje, near Otocac" (undated).

[50] Exhibit D00239.234, "Photograph of civilians sitting on a bus crossing the confrontation line, Zemunik, 25 May".

[51] See Gordy 2000.

the interpretation, but offers no proof as to whether these are in fact ethnic Serbs being saved or not. The difference represents one of the central issues of using photographic evidence to support legal narratives. Photographs can be used to provide evidence of entirely different circumstances, because they are always taken from a certain position, with a certain viewpoint. Rather than making photography one of the most reliable opportunities for documenting incidences in war, they are one of the most subjective as well. One photograph can be used to prove one incident, or disclaim another.

The photographs used in the ICTY as evidence and topics of discussion are endlessly fascinating for any scholar looking at photographic history. But their use is as controversial as the act of taking these photographs was in the first place. As Petrović notes, "[– –] given that transitional justice measures scratch only the surface of the tremendous amount of suffering brought about by the war, the limited rectification for shattered lives comes too late, if at all. Visuals of unpunished crimes are a haunting testimony of this injustice."[52] Photographers are unlikely to be present at all, if any, acts of war crimes and thus photographic evidence can only go so far from a legal perspective, which brings us back to one of the central arguments about the proportional coverage of photojournalists such as Haviv, or even Lowe. There are controversial events and potential criminal acts that were never documented photographically, and therefore there is little to use as such potent evidence. This is particularly the case in the Croatian War, when a widespread episode of ethnic cleansing took place in Serb-majority areas, particularly the Krajina during the Croatian Army's Operation Storm. Photographs have provided evidence for justice in places that has left injustices feeling particularly sore in others.

Some of this controversy also takes us back to the question of whose narrative the photographs tell: do photographs offer a voice to victims or silence them? Frank Möller's discussion of the role of photography in legal processes surrounding the genocide in Rwanda has important echoes in the processes that took place in Bosnia and in the ICTY. He writes, "[– –] the few photographers who were actually in Rwanda

[52] Petrović 2015, 385.

during the genocide hardly ever took photos of massacres at the moment they took place. [Rather,] what they got were pictures of corpses."[53] This also happened in Bosnia, where photojournalists were not present at the act of genocide that took place at Srebrenica in 1995. They were only able to document corpses. Once again, a gap occurs in the kinds of evidence that photographs can provide and the weak points that opposing voices can manipulate. As with oral testimonies and witnesses, they offer only brief snapshots of the violence that took place, but they promote an over-arching referential web about the Bosnian War. This presents a distinct problem for the Bosnian War, which concerns the unwillingness of Serbs, particularly in Serbia proper, to believe that the Srebrenica genocide took place. Photographic evidence is both a blessing and a curse; when photographic evidence is available it can be used as proof, when it is absent it can be used to suggest something never took place. Even when photographic evidence exists, the problematic nature of photography's interpretations allows viewers to argue the images are manufactured or manipulated in some way.

## Conclusions

This chapter has offered a brief discussion of the role that photographs can take in contemporary wars, through examples of collections from the Bosnian War and the collapse of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. I have discussed how photographs fitted into the wider sphere of the extensive media coverage that took place during the war and how the aims of photographers coincided with the aims of journalists to bring a narrative of truth to reporting on the wars. The Bosnian War was extensively documented and narrated, which has resulted in a wealth of images to discuss. Some of these images were from the more traditional genre of war photography, other images were video stills. Photographers chronicled both the human and the cultural destruction. The movement of collections beyond images of human suffering positions photography both as evidence and *aide-memoire*.

[53] Möller 2010, 115.

As with all war photography, and perhaps also with the documentary photography more generally, there was controversy both during and after the conflict as to how the photographers were operating. The photographers themselves, along with journalists, were desperate to try and communicate the tragedy that was unfolding in Bosnia, and which was largely being ignored by Western politicians. Photographs, from the very beginning of the war, were taken specifically to document the widespread war crimes that were taking place. Later, these photographs and those who took them came under fire for relativising the suffering that was taking place. While I do not go so far in drawing responsibility between photographers and the scenes they portray, I have suggested that there are elements of selection in the process that inevitably present questions for historians. In many ways, the images were intended to be sensational, to incite action amongst war-weary watchers, but they also ran the risk of highlighting areas at the expense of others.

The prominence of Bosnia in narratives on war photography can be considered particularly iconic for other reasons. It is perhaps the one of the last major conflicts to be covered by traditional media using traditional war photography methods before the Internet age, which demonstrably widened the spectrum in terms of war representations. As technology has cheapened and become more available in the unique age of self-publication that accompanied access to the Internet, more and more people have the ability and the means to become war photographers. Photographs from conflicts in media sources frequently originate as photographs taken on personal cameras and transmitted via the Internet, particularly on social media websites. This availability is accompanied by the spread of compassion fatigue; the overwhelming number of images of suffering that reach the average viewer in the past two decades has desensitised viewers to the suffering of others. This trend had clearly begun in the Bosnian War, particularly witnessed through the words of Haviv and other journalists, who were mortified by the lack of political impact that their reportage had. However, these trends also begin a turn towards the further complication of questions of objectivity, subjectivity, factuality and fictionality. Undoubtedly, the uses of photographs and their accompanying controversies will continue to appear in wars to come.

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# II PHOTOGRAPHS AND PROPAGANDA

# Analysing Ambiguous War Art. Photographs of the 1942 Finnish-German Exhibition *War in Pictures*

Marika Honkaniemi

Perceptions regarding the analysis of museum exhibitions and photographs do not seem to differ greatly from one another. In 2013, experts in the field of Museum Studies Alexandra Bounia and Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert published an article *War Museums and Photography*, in which they state that authentic pieces of the past exhibited in museums are organised, arranged, and also set in place "as a result of a complex network of personal, social, political and economic circumstances and decisions". Furthermore, they state that photographers make similar choices on what to include and exclude from their photographic frame – just as academics and museum professionals make complex choices on what to include and exclude from an exhibition.[1]

The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how an art historical perspective can be applied when analysing photographic exhibitions which, in the case example, showcased war photographs. These photographs present the controlled and official view of the war from the point of view of the armed forces' photographers in 1941–1944. The analysis is based on the Finnish photographic works of the Finnish-German exhi-

[1] Bounia & Stylianou-Lambert 2013, 155.

bition *War in Pictures* that was arranged in the Ateneum Art Museum[2] in Helsinki, Finland in 1942. The exhibition was open from the 15th until the 31st of June 1942 during which it had approximately 20 500 visitors; thus surpassing all the museum's former visitor records.[3] Interestingly, the exhibition was the largest war art exhibition of the Second World War that Finland has ever arranged and was organised only with the cooperation of their co-belligerents, (or brother-in-arms), Germany. Therefore, it is also one of the most revealing cases through which war photographs and war art exhibitions can be analysed.

The exhibition consisted in all of 480 artworks including photographs, paintings and drawings from the armed forces' official photography organisations of both countries, the Finnish Information Companies (TKs)[4] and German Propaganda Companies (PKs).[5] The focus of this chapter is on the exhibition as a whole but also on examples drawn from the Finnish section's 137 war photographs. As stated above, the war photographs exhibited in the museum are, in the context of this chapter, discussed through the notions of *art* and *artwork*. Starting from the early 1960s, photographs were already being integrated into the institutions of the Finnish art scene. From the 1970s onwards, photographs and photography shifted towards being a serious art form in the art field instead of being merely a form of expression outside the

[2] The building of the Ateneum Art Museum was finished in 1887 and it is one of the oldest museum institutions in Finland. The Ateneum still today serves a model for the country's other art museums and exhibitions. Rönkkö 1999, 12; 66.

[3] Overall, the popularity of the exhibition was apt to increase the visibility and circulation of the exhibited propagandist art. Furthermore, the photographs' documentary value but also "truth-value" were emphasised. The Finnish and foreign visitors' curiosity and thirst for knowledge therefore helped the objectives of the Finnish and German propaganda organisations. For example, during the years 1941–1944 the Finns did not only understand but also exploited war photographs systematically in their propaganda both in homeland and abroad. Kleemola 2015, 123.

[4] The number of the photographers in the eight or nine Finnish Information Companies that functioned from 1941untill 1944 was a bit under 40. Porkka 1983, 53–54.

[5] See more about the Finnish Information Companies and German Propaganda Companies in e.g. Kleemola 2016; Porkka 1983; Uziel 2008.

category of "high art".[6] While the *War in Pictures* exhibition was held two decades before photographs were "officially" valued as high art, it is therefore expedient to emphasise that the *War in Pictures* -photographs were already perceived as art and artworks during their own time. For example, the chairman of the Finnish defence organisation Propaganda-Aseveljet[7], General Lauri Leander, stated in his opening words, printed in the exhibition catalogue, that one must consider the photographs of the Finnish TKs and German PKs to also have "the significance of artistic performance" and also that "the photographers have proven through their actions that art is not condemned in the midst of war". Moreover, the Finnish Minister of Defence at the time, Rudolf Walden also expressed during the exhibition's opening ceremony that "the pictures must be quite highly appreciated also as artistic performances".[8] With this context in mind, perceiving the *War in Pictures* -photographs as art seems to be quite a natural approach and therefore a part of the photographs' and also the exhibition's analysis.

The case study's photo material is on file in the Finnish Wartime Photograph Archive of the Finnish Defence Force's Photographic Centre.[9] The four images in this chapter are photographs that were either exhibited in the *War in Pictures* exhibition and were taken during the

[6] Lintonen 1988, 28–32; 40–51.

[7] The exhibition was promoted by the Finnish defence organisation Propaganda-Aseveljet, which was established mainly by advertising executives and reporters in 1940 and organised several entertaining events for the soldiers during the Continuation War. Pilke 2015, 175. The nature of the organisation changed especially in 1942 when after uniting with Propaganda Union (Propagandaliitto ry) it started to direct its propaganda increasingly towards civilians in Finland and abroad. Melgin & Nurmilaakso 2012, 45.

[8] The exhibition catalogue of the Finnish-German exhibition *War in Pictures*. The Finnish National Gallery Archive, Ateneum Art Museum Research Library, Helsinki. Quotes and captions of the images translated from Finnish by the author.

[9] See the Finnish Wartime Photograph Archive's database in http://sa-kuva.fi/. The Finnish Wartime Photograph Archive holds in all about 160 000 photographs from which the majority were taken during the Continuation War.

Continuation War[10] by the photographers of the Finnish Information Companies, or that were taken during the opening ceremony from inside the Ateneum Art Museum. Narrowing down the scope of the exhibition's artworks by focusing on the photographs in the Finnish section, allows the photograph material of this particular case study to be coherently exemplified and analysed. Furthermore, it is possible to concentrate on the time, conditions, and the overall background of these photographs that have been exhibited in the same context and taken by the same organisation during a specific period of time.

By considering the Finnish photography organisation and the material it produced in relation to the exhibition and also by utilising the artworks of the exhibition to direct the methodological analysis, the questions addressed are: What kind of methods are applicable in the research of war art exhibitions and their war photographs? Furthermore, what details should be taken into consideration when analysing war photographs in the context of war art exhibitions? The second subchapter of this chapter contemplates the photographs as sources that require multiple methods for their research. It also outlines, as well as problematises the methodological field where the photographs of the *War in Pictures* exhibition and the exhibition itself are being analysed. The third subchapter retains the previously presented methodologies in the background while the photographs are analysed through their context with the help of written sources and research literature. In this section, the characteristics of TK-photographs are also contemplated through the notions of *documentary*, *subjectivity*, *staging,* and *conveyed messages*. Finally, the fourth subchapter draws conclusions between analysing photographs and exhibitions by pointing out the complementary nature of both research subjects: they are part of each other's contexts.

[10] Continuation War was fought between the Soviet Union and Finland from the 25th of June 1941 untill the 19th of September 1944. During the war, Finland was co-belligerent with National Socialist Germany; first in 1941 to conquer back the lost territories of the Winter War (1939–1940) and to take Soviet Eastern Karelia, and then in the summer of 1944 to prevent the Red Army from occupying the country. Kivimäki 2012, 1; Meinander 2012, 71–86. For further information see e.g. Kinnunen & Kivimäki 2012.

## A Multi-method Undertaking

According to historians Jennifer Tucker and Tina Campt, it is crucial to consider the photograph in relation to the complexities of the historical use of any document. In this context, photographs are neither more or less transparent compared to other documentary sources.[11] For example, historian Eva Blomberg points out that pictures should be thought of as a source using the same kind of methods that we apply to texts.[12] While many of the same questions must be asked of photographs as of any other type of historical sources, photographs are, amongst other things, unique in how they are produced. Therefore, analysing war photographs as primary sources in the context of war art exhibitions implies that rigidly following strictly art historical methods could leave considerable gaps in the overall results of the research. Consequently, researcher in sociology, Penny Tinkler, also states that using photographs in research is often a multi-method undertaking. As in this case study, one reason why researching photographs is not only a multi-method but is also a multi-source undertaking is that it involves contextual research: it includes research on aspects of photographic practices such as how and why organisations take and use photographs and what these practices mean.[13]

While this research has its art historical basis it is, amongst other fields of study, also linked inseparably to military history. While there is a quite sufficient amount of information available concerning the TKs, a microhistorical approach is necessary for research into several of the war art exhibitions concerning the Second World War. Even though the *War in Pictures* was the largest Finnish-German war art exhibition of its time, there is a surprising lack of documentation. Fortunately, the so-called approach of new art history has recognised and introduced the critical reading of pictures as a method of interpretation, and this method allows the pictures to be looked at differently and also unravels

[11] Tucker & Campt 2009, 5.
[12] Blomberg 2005, 264.
[13] Tinkler 2014, 17.

emotional conclusions.[14] One branch of new art history is the historical approach, which can be characterised as art historical research that is based on historical source materials that has been especially influenced, for example, by microhistory.[15] Microhistory is based on the careful analysis of the research subject through which theoretical conclusions are produced. Therefore, the starting point for the analysis of the exhibition *War in Pictures* is to closely examine the details of the original material and based on that examination to produce theoretical interpretations. This is where conclusions at the microhistorical level form larger entities and interpretations. The strength of the microhistorical approach in the field of research is to make, by close reading, those sources meaningful that former research has neglected.[16] This strength is also significant in analysing the exhibition *War in Pictures*.

Because historical research and microhistory strive to generate conclusions about the past based on knowledge of the present,[17] a method of critical historical contextualisation has been applied to this analyse of *War in Pictures* and its photographs. The notion of contextualisation means that the researched phenomenon is put into a context that can historically, thematically or otherwise further its understanding.[18] Traditionally, context refers to the contemporary or original context of the culture or the system of ideas in which the researched work of art was created.[19] The *War in Pictures* exhibition is therefore also connected to this research tradition, because it was arranged as a unique result of the conditions of the Second World War. This is the context where the exhibited works of art must be considered since they have been created by the actions of multiple authors and in the reference framework of the military-political circumstances of their time.

While war photographs and fairly undocumented war art exhibitions such as *War in Pictures* are a combination of cultures and systems of ideas of historic importance, the approach of contextualisation is not suf-

[14] Pirinen 2012, 281.

[15] Pirinen 2012, 282.

[16] Ginzburg 1996, 167–194; see also 181–182.

[17] Niiniluoto 2003, 30.

[18] Palin 1998, 115.

[19] Palin 1998, 115.

ficient to coherently analyse the war photographs. The classic contextualising research approach as presented by art historian Erwin Panofsky's three levels of iconological analysis,[20] is an excellent presentation of the way, in which a fruitful approach can be made to war photographs. At the first level, before the actual interpretation of the photographs, various elements of the picture are recognised and formally analysed in a pre-iconographic analysis. The first level of the analysis does not require the support of research literature since the analysis already begins when the war photograph is viewed for the first time. At the second level, an iconographic analysis is made by interpreting the picture's meaning and the background of the motif by basing an explanation on written or pictorial sources. At this stage, contemplating the exhibition titles and original captions of the war photographs is quite important, while additional clues from the texts may give further material for analysing the titles' influence on the interpretation of the photographs. Finally, the third level of the iconological analysis answers the research questions through information provided by secondary sources. While the research cannot be considered as complete without fulfilling the third level of Panofsky's model, the iconological analysis of the photograph should also explain how the picture manifests the ideologies, values, and schemes of its time.[21] As demonstrated in this chapter, Panofsky's approach is often quite invisible, since it naturally stays in the background leading from one step of the analysis to another.

Even though Panofsky's method is fundamentally applicable in the analysis of the *War in Pictures*, it is not completely problem-free. For example, historian Peter Burke has criticised the method's second level, the iconographic analysis, for being too intuitive and speculative to be considered reliable.[22] In addition, the iconographic analysis also lacks a dimension which considers the social context, in other words, where the work of art has been viewed. As proof against methodological weaknesses, it is necessary to combine the researcher's own analysis, research literature, and contemporary references of the research subject, in order

[20] Panofsky 1987, 51–67.
[21] Panofsky 1987, 51–67.
[22] Burke 2001, 40–42.

to produce as integrated a whole as possible between the conclusions made in the present and the complex politico-cultural discussions of the time of the exhibition *War in Pictures*. According to Burke, to avoid gaps in the research, one should also pay attention to the diversity of the photographs since not all pictures are necessarily allegorical. In addition, the ambition of some of the photographs may only be aesthetical.[23] Therefore, it is not practical to only look for metaphors or allegories, but also necessary to concentrate on the photographs' aesthetic qualities or how the different details have been presented in the photograph.

An important question is: How can historical events that combine both museum exhibitions and photographs be analysed? While the purpose of this chapter is to take part in the constantly growing number of academic discussions concerning war photographs and to demonstrate how they can be used as primary sources in research, the application method used for the Finnish TK-photographs in this chapter is interpretative. Because the method is, in accordance with its name, interpretative, it is also possible to produce "wrong" interpretations. In this connection the notion of "wrong" interpretations implies that the potential meanings of any photograph, as perceived by the viewers, very likely exceed or even contradict the photographer's intentions.[24] It is therefore inevitable that we also interpret photographs differently from the exhibition contemporaries, for example.[25] It should also be stated that today, as a result of digitalisation and of technological developments in photography, researchers can digitally magnify photographs and pay attention to all their details that the photographer did not notice.[26] Through the application of different research methods it is, however, possible to outline the context, as in this case of the Finnish TK-photographs exhibited in the Ateneum Art Museum, and by these means create a substantiated outline of the possible meaning of the photographs and the exhibited unity.

[23] Burke 2001, 40–42.
[24] Salkeld 2014, 64.
[25] Autti 2011, 212.
[26] Autti 2011, 223–224.

## Finnish War Photographs: Interpreting Context and Meanings

### *Subjective documentary*

It should be taken into consideration that the contents of a photograph can offer only two-dimensional information about the past. In addition, their focus is selective and their opinions always subjective.[27] The Finnish TKs were special units established in June 1941 to produce propaganda subordinated to the high command.[28] When going into military service the TK-photographers were equipped with verbal instructions, which clarified in detail the outlines of TK-activity.[29] The Headquarters also compiled standing orders in writing.[30] The essential contents of the standing orders could be described to follow the characterisation of photographer Reijo Porkka, who argues that TK-photography operations were meant to provide political-propagandist material for the press and to perform military, military historical, and ethnologic photography.[31] It is noteworthy that the Headquarters had compiled a list of all the subjects that were expected to be photographed.[32] In other words, the TK-photographers were only given directions as to preferable subjects; they were not very restricted in their way of depicting different pictorial motifs of war. This further emphasises the meaning of the photographers' opinions and decisions concerning the focus of the photographs.

The Finnish TK-photographers often took several photographs in the same situation and therefore recorded different events and also certain moments from those events by choosing different angular fields. According to historian Jouni Keskinen, it is important from the historian's

[27] Brothers 1997, 15.

[28] Porkka 1983, 37.

[29] Porkka 1983, 58.

[30] TK-Photographers' standing orders – photographing and portraying the enemy, folder T20680/13, KA. There were 103 standing orders given from 1941 until 1944.

[31] Porkka 1983, 67–68. One objective was also to photograph scenes of war for the press at home and abroad. Kleemola 2016, 40; Porkka 1983, 67–68.

[32] Porkka 1983, 52.


Image 1. Unknown photographer: From the Finnish-German exhibition in the Ateneum. SA-kuva 86334.

point of view to search for other photographs that were taken during the same event. What he means is that the cumulative effect and reference value of sequences of photographs is much greater compared to a single photograph.[33] The exhibition *War in Pictures* did not exhibit any sequences of photographs, because the exhibition consisted of different pictorial motifs, by different photographers and taken from different moments in a seemingly unchronological and un-narrated order (for reference, see image 1). However, with the help of digital archives and especially the Finnish Wartime Photograph Archive, it is possible to find the original sequence of the photographs, of which the exhibited photograph is a part. For example, if we look at the photograph by Erik Paavilainen *East Karelian scenery* in the *War in Pictures* (image 2) and compare it to a reference photograph from the same sequence (image 2), it is easier, for example, to recognise the model of the seaplane that has

[33] Keskinen 2003/2004, 4.

been captured on the top left corner of Paavilainen's exhibition photograph – the plane is a Junkers K-43fa. In general terms, it would be easy to be content with the statement that Paavilainen's photograph expresses Finland's success in war through depicting a plane flying in tranquillity through the skies of Karelia. However, it was actually quite common to photograph the Karelia scenery in order to wake viewers' interests towards the new territory but also to emphasise the Finnishness of Karelian culture.[34] As a result, when a group of photographs is being analysed, the other photographs can explain or widen the single picture's view or even help to identify different details in the photograph.

The characteristics of war photographs depend on their context. Firstly, war photographs – as photographs in general – can be perceived as documents. A document is something that has been created. There are of course photographs that are fake, staged or altered, but they are also, in fact, documents. As researcher Ilona Hongisto defines *documentary* as a flexible concept that exceeds boundaries between genre and media; in this chapter, it is also perceived according to this definition. Documentary is not just a concept that describes and classifies already existing structures of recording, but it strongly participates in how the structures of recording are being perceived and how they can be changed and altered.[35] In documentary constructivism, recording reality is perceived as a field of different rhetorical choices, as a means of expression and as demonstrating positions of power, rather than stating that artworks reflect structures already existing in the society.[36] Therefore war photographs can be connected with Hongisto's concept of documentary constructivism. The view that recording reality is a field of rhetorical choices comes closer to the fact that several parties indirectly took part in the Finnish war photographing process, and that together with the photographer they ultimately produced a certain kind of material. The structures of recording were altered by such practices as staging, however, the main positions of power affecting the final outcome of the pho-

[34] Kleemola 2015, 117–118.
[35] Hongisto 2006, 48.
[36] Hongisto 2006, 50.


Image 2. Both photographs by Paavilainen, Erik. Above: *East Karelian scenery*. SA-kuva 47746. Below: *The village of Muujärvi on the Russkis' side of the border*. SA-kuva 47747.

tograph were the Headquarters with their standing orders, censorship, and the photographers' own goals and subjective views.

Black and white two-dimensional images do not simply register history, however, because they are also reliant upon the photographer's choices, and often the wishes of the people in the photograph.[37] This is just a starting point for Finnish war photographs, since besides the photographer's choices and the wishes of those being photographed, the Headquarters also participated indirectly in photographing through their standing orders. According to art historian and researcher of photography Johanna Frigård, photographic representation can produce idealistic images, which have their connection to reality. The "lifelikeness" is what creates photography's reality effect offering one version of the truth. The idealistic images work on conceptions concerning what is appreciated, good, and desirable.[38] In this case, the good and desirable photographs were the ones that were chosen from a large quantity of TK-photographs and accepted into the *War in Pictures* and thus shown to a wide audience. These photographs represented the official definition of what the acceptable Finnish TK-photograph had to look like, which was mainly based on the guidelines or standing orders ordained by the Headquarters.

## "False" Truths and Conveyed Messages

In the beginning of the 1900s especially, photography was viewed as a simple recording and truth-revealing mechanism.[39] This conception originates from the fact that what we see, are usually the photographs' topmost messages – nevertheless, they can be "false".[40] When researching the photographs of a war art exhibition such as *War in Pictures*, or any other war art exhibition for that matter, one should remember

[37] Autti 2011, 211.
[38] Frigård 2008a, 27.
[39] Autti 2011, 212.
[40] Autti 2011, 220.

the fact that many war photographs – especially the ones depicting different fighting scenes – have often been staged. It has been estimated that about 10–15% of all the Finnish war photographs and, in fact, almost every fighting scene photographed has been staged.[41] Usually these pictures are different kinds of "battle poses" and you can often identify the staged photographs based on the angle of view chosen by the photographer.[42]

One of these photographs exhibited in the *War in Pictures* was taken by the TK-photographer Tauno Norjavirta, whose photograph *The flame is aimed towards the machine gun nest* was taken on the 27 July 1941 (image 3). Most of the TK-photographs have been archived with captions that consist of more or less precise information of the photographer's name, the time and place of photographing and a short description of the moment that has been captured on film which functions as the photographs' name. The incident Norjavirta captured was presented to the viewers as a real fighting scene, which is explained just by looking at the photograph's exhibition name mentioned earlier. However, the exhibition names used in the *War in Pictures* differed from the original captions that the TKs were ordered to formulate after taking the photographs. The original caption for Norjavirta's photograph states that "The photograph was taken from the engineers' rehearsals". That is, this particular scene taken of a rehearsed fighting situation and was exhibited as if it were a real fighting incident, and is therefore staged.[43]

As previously stated, it is possible to assess whether the scene in the photograph is "real" or not. The photographer also makes decisions con-

[41] Paulaharju & Uosukainen 2000, 67; Kleemola 2011, 31.

[42] There were many reasons, why the TKs produced staged photographs. Firstly, the press required interesting and dynamic photographs throughout the war, which was sometimes quite challenging for the photographers because of the uneventfulness of the war. Secondly, photographing during a real conflict situation was both too difficult but also life-threateningly dangerous. Nevertheless, the risks the TK-photographers took was up to their own judgement. Thirdly, in addition to the fact that the hectic situations were technically hard to capture, the thick coniferous forest terrain created its own challenges. See e.g. Porkka 1983.

[43] See more about staged fighting scenes in war photographs in e.g. Honkaniemi 2017, 39–40 and Korhonen 2015, 143–177.


Image 3. Norjavirta, Tauno: *The flame is aimed towards the machine gun nest*. SA-kuva 29242.

cerning the cropping of the picture. This is why only the information that the photographer finds essential appears in the photograph.[44] The personal choices made by the Finnish photographers were primarily characterised by the fact that they did not receive orders to photograph directly at the front lines: the risks taken while photographing depended exclusively on the decisions of the TK-soldiers.[45] It was often too risky to actually stand up or to raise one's head in the middle of a real fight without immediately becoming a target. Therefore, if we look at Tauno Norjavirta's photograph, it is obvious that his position in the rehearsed situation would have exposed him to danger in a real situation.

Through contemplating the meaning of Norjavirta's photograph, the main difference between analysing photographs and texts becomes evident: according to Keskinen, the photographs' context does not function only through the author, as with textual sources. A photograph

[44] Keskinen 2003/2004, 4.

[45] Porkka 1983, 74.

also has the ability to preserve all the details that the photographer's eyes do not perceive or what the photographer did not intend to include in the photograph – as Norjavirta probably did not mean to disguise the rehearsed fighting scene as "real". In this regard, a photograph is not only an author's interpretation of the subject, but like texts or an imitation of the subject photographs are traces of their subject, "quotations of the past".[46] For the purposes of the *War in Pictures,* this documented moment from rehearsals has therefore been transformed into a "quotation of fighting".

According to Brothers, the evidence photographs contain bears only tangential relation to the content of the image itself; rather the historian must look to the way the image communicates, the means by which it seeks to convey its message, the devices it employs, the appeals it makes, the conventions it reinforces or transgresses.[47] There are of course as many ways, for example, of conveying messages and appealing as there are photographs. However, the question then is: How do these means of photographic communication manifest in the exhibition *War in Pictures*? Cinematographer and photographer Eino Mäkinen worked as an exhibition manager during the *War in Pictures* and also took five of the Finnish TK-photographs in the exhibition. Mäkinen's role in the exhibition is quite interesting since he had a central role in introducing the functionalist style of photography to the Finnish photographing community in the 1920s.[48] It was amongst other things typical for the functionalist style to honestly emphasise realism and to make formalist experimentations.[49] However, for Mäkinen the most significant part of photography was not to depict reality, but to communicate through tones, shapes, and different surfaces.[50] It is therefore quite apparent that Mäkinen controlled his camera impeccably, and knew how to communicate through conveyed messages by utilising photographs.

Mäkinen's style is seen representatively in his graphic and functionalist cityscapes that were a part of the exhibits in the *War in Pictures*.

[46] Keskinen 2003/2004, 3.

[47] Brothers 1997, 22.

[48] Uimonen 1992, 385.

[49] Uimonen 1992, 384.

[50] Frigård 2008b, 24.


Image 4. All photographs by Mäkinen, Eino. Above left: *Destruction by aerial bombardment in Turku*. SA-kuva 33157. Above right: *Traces of aerial bombardment in Turku*. SA-kuva 33104. Below: *Destruction by aerial bombardment in Turku*. SA-kuva 33139.

There are three photographs where Mäkinen depicts the destructions of Turku, a city in the southwest coast of Finland (image 4), all taken on the 12th of August 1941, a few months after the Soviet Union bombed the working-class quarters of the city. All that was left were the buildings' stone foundations, fireproof walls and chimneys[51]. The destruction caused by the bombing is also there in Mäkinen's photographs for the viewer to see, but with a distinct functionalist style: all of the photographs have captured the rhythm of the ruins and chimneys so compellingly, that it is almost difficult to notice the two young blonde girls crouching on the steps of a destroyed house (image 4, above left). The issue here is in what way was it practical in the propagandist sense to show photographs of defeat to thousands of exhibition visitors. While emphasising their own defeats was not an option, the Finnish propaganda did not hesitate to make good use of the fact that the Soviets' aerial bombardment devastated the working-class quarters: these kinds of photographs can be perceived as propaganda which aims to demonise the enemy. Therefore, as Brothers states, evidence of great historical interest lies less in what the photograph literally depicts than in the way it relates to and makes visible the culture of which it is a part.[52]

## Exhibition as the Photographs' Frame

During the years 1939–1944, the usual exhibition activity in the Ateneum Art Museum was adjusted to the exceptional conditions of the Continuation War.[53] This meant that the use of the museum space continued through different kinds of cooperation and collecting exhibitions that were arranged without exhibiting the museum's own collections. Nevertheless, the exhibition *War in Pictures* was arranged without the input of the museum's personnel. During the opening ceremonies of the exhibition, the museum was decorated with equal numbers of both Fin-

[51] Laakso 2014, 28.
[52] Brothers 1997, 22.
[53] Melgin 2014, 97.

nish and German national attributes, for example the lion of the Finnish Coat of Arms and the eagle emblem (*Parteiadler*) of the National Socialist German Worker's Party.[54] What is interesting here is that a museum space can never be perceived in its entirety and with photographic accuracy. On the contrary: the experience of space is fragmentary, random and layered, influenced by all our senses.[55] The photographs of the *War in Pictures* were viewed and assessed in the exhibition environment, which itself remoulds the meanings of the artworks and the messages they send.[56] In this sense, just as with the TK- photographs, the context creates a background for their analysis: the museum and its space form a framework for the interpretation of the photographs and the whole exhibition.

As stated in the beginning of this chapter, it seems that museum exhibitions retain same kind of qualities as photographs. Like photographs, exhibitions also have the ability to function as manipulators of memories, originators of ideas, and as instruments of invention.[57] The artworks placed in the exhibition *War in Pictures* and the exhibition itself had the power to steer the audience's conceptions and attitudes as regards understanding the current war-time situation. It is also obvious that an exhibition of 137 official Finnish Second World War photographs that were chosen from all of the photographs taken between June 1941 and March 1942, offers a quite limited and deliberately chosen view of the actual war.

The concept of a "deliberately chosen view" is an interesting one, since it is a fixed part of both constructing an exhibition and also taking a photograph. To phrase the concept in other words, sociologist and researcher of photography Peter Hamilton has analysed a body of images which deal with French society and how the role of such representations offer a redefinition of "Frenchness" in the era of post-war reconstruction to people who had suffered the agonies and divisions of war. He terms the illustrative reportage photography of that era as a "dominant repre-

[54] For further information on the exhibition's decorations and opening ceremonies, see Honkaniemi 2017, 47–60.

[55] Kekarainen 2007, 37.

[56] Lammi 2004, 336.

[57] Keskinen 2003/2004, 5.

sentational paradigm". With the concept of a dominant representational paradigm and a constructionist approach to a representation he indicates that the photographic approach offers a certain vision of the people and events that it documents, a construction which rests on how they were represented by the choices of both the photographers and the press. Hamilton also adds that like all forms of photographic representation it is not simply a "record" of a given moment, for it cannot be innocent of the values and ethics of those who worked within it.[58] In this sense, the dominant representational paradigm in connection with *War in Pictures* is the Headquarters, which was ultimately responsible for choosing the photographs in the Finnish exhibition section, giving the standing orders to the TKs, and also using its power behind the scenes and the exhibition's planning committee.[59] However, many of the TK-soldiers were, in fact, photographers or artists by profession and their subjective view is therefore inevitably part of the representational paradigm.

Even the very notion of a "museum exhibition" conveys authority; images and interpretations presented are often assumed to be true and incontestable because museums are seen as important educational institutions.[60] That is also why, when connected to wartime exhibitions, the museums can, in fact, be considered to serve as "weapons of national defence".[61] For example, from May until October 1942 The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) presented a propagandistic photograph exhibition *Road to Victory*, which featured a cross-section of American life,

[58] Hamilton 1997, 76.

[59] See more about the exhibitions' planning committee in Honkaniemi 2017, 82–87.

[60] Kratz 2002, 92.

[61] The Museum of Modern Art's president of the board, John Hay Whitney discussed "the museum as a weapon in national defence" in a Museum of Modern Art's press release given on the 28th in 1941. MoMA, https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press_archives/676/releases/MOMA_1941_0015_1941-02-28_41228-14.pdf?2010, last visited on 31 August 2018. As was the case with most museums in the United States (and elsewhere) during World War II, the Museum of Modern Art responded to the national crisis with a series of wartime exhibitions and programs. Staniszewski 2001, 210.

from rural panoramas to scenes of preparation for war.[62] Some fifty years later, the *Road to Victory* looks like a romantic and obvious exercise in wartime propaganda. At the time, however, it was seen as an inspiring portrait of America, and it typified the kind of imagery that was so prevalent and popular in the United States during the years of the war.[63] Therefore it is also understandable, why the *War in Pictures* has been overlooked in present-day research as a purely propagandist manifestation of war and propaganda. However, it is quite easy to imagine that the Finnish photographs in the exhibition *War in Pictures* were seen, and still can be seen, as an inspiring portrait of Finland's wartime – particularly through the eyes of the TKs.

## Ambiguous Body of Exhibited Photographs

What this chapter emphasises is that by extensively analysing the exhibitions of the Second World War, the art historical approach inevitably transforms into a multidisciplinary one. This is because of the ambiguous character and frame of reference which all of the war photographs separately form. There are no such things as "identical war photographs", since the superficial similarity of context is a vague concept: if we look at photographs taken by the same photographer, like Eino Mäkinen (image 4), the photographs have all been taken from different angles and places in the districts of Turku. In contrast, if other photographs taken after the bombings of Turku were to be studied, the photographers would have different backgrounds and basis for their photography in comparison with Mäkinen. Therefore, the overall expression would surely refer to different details within the motif.

Referring to the film director Asen Balikci's conclusions on the camera's subjectivity,[64] it is possible to separate three subjective factors that have had an effect on TK-photographing: the photographer him-

[62] See MoMA, https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/3038, last visited on 31 August 2018.

[63] Staniszewski 2001, 215.

[64] Balikci 1975, 183–184.

self, the camera and its settings, and the censorship by which the photographs have been chosen and sequenced on the walls of the Ateneum Art Museum for the viewer to interpret and value. The actions of subjective selection by censorship are best seen in the exhibition *War in Pictures* in a comparison between the photographs' original captions and their exhibition titles. When a photograph was chosen to be a part of the exhibition, it was not displayed as such – as a finished artwork – but its caption was edited or even rewritten to fit the exhibition's objectives. By analysing the captions and exhibition titles, it is possible to conclude how the overall effect of the photograph and its title have been consciously remoulded to fit the context of the exhibition *War in Pictures*.

In this chapter, utilising microhistorical and contextual research of photographs, the Finnish TK-photographs displayed in the Finnish-German exhibition *War in Pictures* were analysed together with their museum context. Recognising the context not only provided a powerful tool for the analysis but also helped to define the multi-method approach appropriate for the body of TK-photographs examined in this chapter. The ambiguity of Finnish TK-photographs is emphasised by the fact that their strong propagandist status cannot be denied. However, TK-photographs are not usually mere documents driven by their propagandist purposes. Depending on the context, they can also have informational, political, and artistic objectives. Consequently, it would also be quite restrictive to perceive war photographs only as art when analysing wartime exhibitions. Taken together, the TK-photographs and the *War in Pictures* were a culmination of various objectives, authors, equipment, situations, events and also the exceptional time of their creation. That is also why the Finnish TK-photographs portrayed a neutral view – not necessarily of Finland itself, but its survival during a time of war – through Karelian sceneries, pictures of convoys, the women's auxiliary services, war dogs, advance of the troops, field hospitals, and so on. After all, *War in Pictures* was an exhibition organised under the Headquarters' control and therefore only exhibited photographs that represented the official and accepted view of the war.

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## Abbreviations

TK Information Company (Finnish)
PK Propaganda Company (German)
SA-kuva Finnish Armed Forces photograph

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# From Propaganda Instruments to Memory Aids: Propaganda Photographs from the First Year of the Continuation War (1941–1944) in Finnish Photobooks

Olli Kleemola

In this chapter, I study the Finnish propaganda photographs from the first year of the Continuation War used in two photobooks presenting the war.[1] I analyse how the images produced by the Finnish propaganda units were used after the war as instruments for constructing the national memory of the Continuation War and the kind of impact that the use of the pictures had for the canonisation process of the images.

In the contemporary world, we encounter a flood of images every day, and we are only able to remember some of them. Those pictures we remember are most likely still images, because moving images do not have a similar impact on our memory. Susan Sontag has once stated that "memory is a still".[2] This means that still images are of great importance when constructing a national memory of some specific historical event. Sontag has also stated that "[t]he understanding of war among people

[1] This chapter is part of my postdoctoral research project "The Key Images of the Finnish History" at the University of Turku, currently funded by the Alfred Kordelin Foundation.

[2] Sontag 2011, 64.

who have not experienced war is now chiefly a product of the impact of these images [of wartime photographs]".[3]

One of the most typical uses of historical photographs is as an illustration for photobooks that tell a story about a historical event. According to Christoph Parr and Gerry Badger, a photobook can be defined as a book "where the work's primary message is carried by photographs".[4] Photobooks are often meant for the public, and they play a more important role in the development of the historical understanding of the people than one might think. They often play a decisive role in the canonisation process, during which some specific image becomes more and more widespread, gains great attention and, gradually, becomes a symbol representing some complete historical event, in brief, an iconic picture.[5] The potential of photobooks has been described as follows: "From the beginning the photobook serves in creating an image of history. The big potential of the photobook medium lies in the fact that it is capable of not only showing us one single image, the one and only moment captured by photographic means, but also of combining numerous fragments of captured reality."[6]

In this chapter, I study the photographic images produced by the propaganda troops of the Finnish Army[7] during the first year of the Continuation War (1941–1944), during the so-called assault phase[8] and published in the *Viisi sodan vuotta* ("Five Years of War") photobook, published by Werner Söderström Ltd. in 1958. This photobook is one of the most popular and long-lived post-war photobooks which deal with the history of the Continuation War: the first edition appeared back in 1958 and the last, the 5th edition, was published as late as 1973. It can be claimed that *Viisi sodan vuotta* played a significant role in the canoni-

[3] Cited from Tucker 2002, 2.

[4] Parr & Badger 2014, 6.

[5] About the canonisation process, see Hamann 2007, 39–72.

[6] Dogramaci et al. 2016, 14–15. All translations by the author.

[7] On the history and service of the Finnish propaganda troops (*tiedotuskomppania*, TK, translates literally as "Information company"), see Kleemola 2016, 38–40.

[8] On the operational history of the Continuation War, see Tuunainen 2011, 153–158.

sation process of the war photos of the Continuation War. The editor of the book, Finnish historian Arvi Korhonen, states as follows:

> [the photographs used in this book] had to fulfil the following requirements: they must give a representative picture of the war and the life of the soldiers as seen by the soldiers. They must further show the everyday war, not some exceptions. They were also to avoid all kinds of propaganda, which could be understood as insulting for the former enemy.[9]

Because of the comparative viewpoint of my chapter, I also use the *Voittojemme päivät* ("The Days of our Victories") photobook, edited by Maija Suova and published by Werner Söderström Ltd. in five separate volumes in 1941–1942, during the war. The book can be considered to have been produced solely for propaganda purposes, and as the top-of-the-line of all Finnish photographic propaganda books provides a good comparison for a book that explicitly claims to avoid all kinds of propaganda.[10]

I analyse the pictorial story told by the two photobooks from a comparative viewpoint and discuss how the visual narratives of the photobooks on the first year of the Continuation War differ from each other and why. By analysing the pictorial representation, I also analyse the role the photobooks played in the canonisation process of the images. Although the focus of my chapter lies on differences between the two photobooks, I also discuss similarities between them. In general, my chapter aims to identify general tendencies in the pictorial representation of the war by utilising a comparative perspective.

In this chapter, I focus on the representation of the Finnish army, its soldiers and their life at the front as well as the images of the enemy – all as constructed through pictures. Measured by the number of pictures, these two topics are, understandably, of great importance, because one of the main tasks of the propaganda troops was to document the actions

[9] Korhonen 1973, 3. Arvi Korhonen was a known Finnish military historian who had been serving in the Headquarters of the Finnish army during the war.

[10] For background information on *Voittojemme päivät*, see Pilke 2009, 201–206.

of their own troops. Enemy images were crucial, too, as their creation and strengthening has always been one of the key features of war propaganda. My hypothesis is that the narratives of the books differ considerably, given their different aims and the different political atmospheres during the dates of publishing.

The analysis of the photobooks happens on two levels. On the first, more general level, I analyse the visual themes that the photographic narrative consists of. Here I scrutinise which themes were included in the photobooks and which were excluded. I also analyse the reasons for the exclusion and inclusion of some specific topics. On the other level, I focus on analysing some of the photographs included in the photobooks.

In analysing the photographs, I use the serial-iconographic implication of what is known as the "PWD model", which has been developed by the German historian Rainer Wohlfeil and the American philosopher Arthur C. Danto. This method is based on the iconographic model developed by art historian Erwin Panofsky. It consists of four steps. The first step includes the description of the key features of the picture(s) analysed as well as the information evaluation needed. Careful textual description of the key features of the image is of great importance here, because the reader must be able to identify which features are considered to be the key ones.[11]

The second step focuses on the role the picture(s) analysed play as part of a specific historical continuum.[12] In my study, this means the background information about the framework in which the photographer and – later on – the editors worked.

The third step of the analysis method focuses on the role and importance of the analysed picture(s) as a historical document. The critical question here is, why was the picture taken and why does it depict its topic the way it does?[13] The photographs in the books analysed in this chapter were created by state-controlled photographers as propaganda material in order to transfer and promote special meanings. After the war, these pictures were used again, now in a different context: they

[11] Jäger 2009, 87; Wohlfeil 1991, 30–35; Pilarczyk & Mietzner 2005, 137–138; Pilarczyk 2017, 81–83.

[12] Jäger 2009, 87; Wohlfeil 1991, 25–29.

[13] Pandel 2011, 76.

were acting as memory aids, narrating the war. In this respect, captions linked to the pictures play an important role. The captions not only affect the pictures' reception; they also create the mental context that the picture is embedded in.[14] This is of great importance because pictures themselves can be described as empty and at the same time full of different meanings. Each photograph thus gains its meaning only in relation to its context.

The fourth step focuses on the "past" and "future" of the photographs analysed. This means uncloaking the events shown in the picture and making them a part of a historical narrative.[15] It is important to note that the different steps are often so closely connected to each other that it would cause unnecessary duplication to describe the analysation process step by step, which would, in turn, hinder the readability of my chapter. This is why I write a synthesis of the analysation process instead.

As most visual analysis methods used in the field of historical studies, the PWD analysis method has its background in the field of art history. This means that it is originally developed for analysing single pictures. To be able to handle the large quantities of photographs in the books analysed, I am using the serial-iconographic implication of this method. The serial-iconographic method was developed by the German educational scientists Ulrike Mietzner and Ulrike Pilarczyk. Suitable for handling and analysing large quantities of pictures, it is based on categorising the images as "image types". One image type consists of images that have thematic and/or visual similarities to each other, both in the topic they depict and in the way they depict it. From the pictures that a given picture type consists of, a representative sample picture is chosen and analysed according to the steps described above.[16]

According to Jens Jäger, analysing picture types (that is, large quantities of images) can help in avoiding false conclusions. Single images often highlight something that may mislead the researcher to unconvincing conclusions, but when analysing large quantities of pictures,

[14] Sontag 2011, 104; Glasenapp 2012, 5; Pilarczyk & Mietzner 2005, 140; Heikkilä 2006.

[15] Pandel 2011, 72–77; Hamann 2007, 80–84.

[16] Mietzner & Pilarczyk 2005, 119–120.

that risk can be minimised.[17] When analysing large quantities of photographs, it might seem suitable to apply quantitative methods on the corpus; however, Jäger warns about too extensive use of quantitative methods. According to Jäger, it might lead to an "illusion of completeness". The term is used by Jäger to describe the situation where the calculated exact relations of different image types mislead the researcher to false conclusions. Instead, Jäger suggests using narrative descriptions of the number of pictures in different image types.[18] German visual historian Miriam Arani describes statistical methods as too labour-intensive and time-consuming relative to the results they produce.[19] At the same time, quantitative methods do not take into account other factors, such as the layout of the book: if the editor has, for example, devoted a whole page of pictures to one topic, it can be argued that the topic the page presents is of importance even though the page might not contain many pictures. Thus, I am abandoning statistical methods here and instead using verbal descriptions to illustrate the number of pictures in different image types.

Theoretically, my chapter draws from the field of visual history research, a field that has been formed in Germany during the last ten years, and is now one of the most active and innovative fields of historical research in Germany. Visual history considers pictures to be an independent category of sources, capable of transferring meanings and ideological viewpoints. Photography and photos have, until recently, been relatively rarely studied in the field of history. Maybe it is because of the independence of the medium of photography: seemingly neutral, it captures moments and sights, but in reality, the pictures we take are formed in our heads long before the shutter of the camera closes. Thus, photographs can be considered a product of the information, attitudes and prejudices the photographer has collected.[20] Besides the visual history field, my chapter is also a contribution to the field of new military

[17] Jäger 2009, 89–91.

[18] Statement of Jens Jäger in the workshop Zugänge zur Zeitgeschichte: Bild – Raum – Text at the University of Bremen 27 October 2012.

[19] Arani 2008, 109.

[20] Paul 2014, last visited on 1 June 2017. See also Paul 2017.

history as defined by the British historian Joanna Bourke.[21] One of the central topics and interests of new military history is the memory of the war.

Internationally photographs of the holocaust as well as the expulsion of the German population from the Prussian provinces during and after WWII have been studied extensively as an important part of the German memory culture.[22] Some researchers have also utilised photobooks as sources: Anton Holzer has analysed the images the interwar photobooks created on WWI in Germany, and Maria Schindelegger has analysed the photobooks by Margaret Bourke-White.[23]

While the memory of the Continuation War has already been rigorously studied based on textual material,[24] until now no research whatsoever has been made on the collective memory of the Continuation War based on pictures. In this respect, my chapter is an important contribution to the research on the memory of the war.

## Marching and Shooting

When looking at the book *Viisi sodan vuotta* and its pictorial narrative on the first year of the Continuation War, it becomes clear that there are two dominating image types. The first consists of photographs that show Finnish soldiers marching, walking, biking or otherwise moving from one place to another.

A good example of the image type is shown in image 1, which depicts Finnish soldiers on their bicycles riding in a line towards the photographer, and the first three of them are looking towards the photographer. The bicycles are loaded with equipment. Image 1 stands here for numerous thematically similar pictures showing Finnish soldiers on the move. These pictures were most likely taken because the Headquarters

[21] Bourke 2006, passim.

[22] Knoch 2001; Röger 2011, 254–303.

[23] Holzer 2003; Schindelegger 2016.

[24] Kinnunen & Jokisipilä 2011.


Image 1. Finnish propaganda photograph showing Finnish bicycle troops in Laamala. Taken by Kauko Kivi on 2 August 1941. Viisi sodan vuotta / SA-kuva 31222.

had ordered the propaganda units to document every aspect of the life of the Finnish soldiers to keep the interest of the public high.[25] Because the beginning of the Continuation War to a great extent consisted of the movement of the Finnish troops, these pictures were also used to a great extent in the propagandistic photobook *Voittojemme päivät*, where these images stood for the rapid advance of the Finnish army, even though the photo analysed here was taken on the Finnish side of the border, in Laamala, and the troops in it are most likely not "advancing" anywhere, just heading for the front.[26] It must also be noted that, unlike their German counterparts, the propaganda units were not only assigned with the task of taking propaganda photographs but also "docu-

[25] Headquarters' instructions for the Information companies: Instruction no 1. Folder T20680/13. National Archives of Finland (NA).

[26] E.g. the cover illustration of the first volume.


Image 2. Finnish propaganda photograph showing a machine gun being operated in the Taipale area in the Karelian Isthmus, on the Soviet side of the border. Taken by Holger Harrivirta on 24 August 1941. Viisi sodan vuotta / SA-kuva 42510.

mentary photographs", for example, for military-historical use. In the Headquarters' instructions to the propaganda troops, it was highlighted at least once that the propaganda troops were not only to document the life of the Finnish army units under ideal conditions, but also in less than good conditions.[27] Thus, it can be claimed that the importance of photographs as historical documents was already recognised during the war.

For contemporary readers, the pictures do not transfer a strong propagandistic message, instead they just depict the huge logistic operation during the "assault phase" of the Continuation War, which explains why they form a dominating picture type in the book *Viisi sodan vuotta*.

The other dominating picture type in the *Viisi sodan vuotta* photobook are pictures that show Finnish soldiers with different types of

[27] Headquarters' instructions for the Information companies: Instruction no 58. Folder T20680/13. NA.

guns. A good example is image 2, which presents Finnish soldiers shooting with a machine gun in the area of Taipale.

The picture shows three Finnish soldiers with their backs turned towards the photographer. Two of the soldiers are using a Maxim machine gun shooting towards an unseen enemy. The third soldier stands behind the other two, looking away from the photographer, either at his fellows using the machine gun or at the enemy side of the front line, which can be seen in the background, partially covered with smoke.

The pictures presenting Finnish soldiers shooting were one of the most typical picture types produced by the propaganda units of the Finnish army during the Continuation War, and these pictures were also regularly used in the propagandistic photo book *Voittojemme päivät*. The main reason for the large number of such pictures is to be found in the instructions the Finnish headquarters gave to the propaganda units. In several orders, they were asked to deliver pictures of Finnish soldiers shooting with different types of guns.[28]

While some of these pictures are most likely taken in authentic situations, most of them may also have been taken during training or were staged.[29] Often, the staged photos can be identified as such because of an angle that would be impossible during real fights. Due to the lack of zoom lenses and other photographic equipment necessary for taking dramatic shots during real battles, "genuine" photos were often out of focus or of insignificant content. The magazine of the Finnish Civic Guard, *Hakkapeliitta*, published an article about Finnish war photography in a wartime issue, where the need for staged photos was stated as follows:

> During our war, both real and staged war photos have been taken. The few [propaganda] photographers in our army cannot make it every-

[28] E.g. Headquarters' instructions for the Information companies: Instruction no 17, and Instruction no 20. Folder T20680/13. NA.

[29] E.g. the photo of a shooting submachine gun in *Viisi sodan vuotta* on page 289.

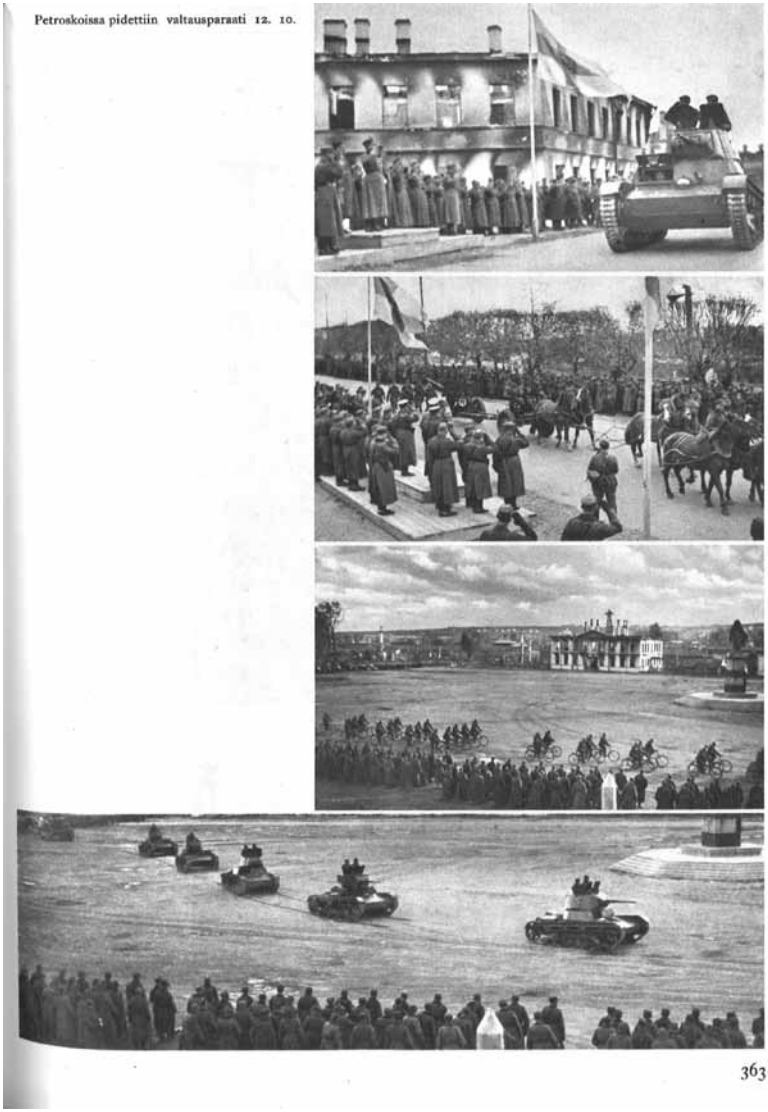


Image 3. One page of the book Viisi sodan vuotta featuring five pictures of the victory parade of Petrozavodsk on 12 October 1941. The pictures shown have a common caption: "A conquest parade was organised in Petrozavodsk on 12th of October."

> where on time, and risking taking a photograph would in some situations mean the death of a photographer.[30]

The extensive use of pictures showing Finnish soldiers shooting highlights the importance of the image type both for propaganda and memory use. Here, it is useful to differentiate between the photographs showing Finnish soldiers shooting with light infantry weapons as in image 1, and those showing Finnish soldiers with heavier armament, artillery pieces etc. While the former were most likely taken mainly to document the activities of the Finnish troops, which was one of the main tasks of the Finnish propaganda troops, the latter may have been taken to highlight the firepower of the Finnish army, which had been greatly extended after the Winter War (1939–1940).[31]

While the pictures of Finnish soldiers marching and shooting – at least part of them – can be considered "documentary" images, and thus far the aim of the author can be considered fulfilled, it is surprising that the author has chosen to devote a whole page to images of the victory parade at Petrozavodsk.

The images on the page show Finnish armoured troops, artillery and light infantry in a parade on a street decorated with the Finnish military flag and on a parade field in the middle of the city marching straight past the commander of the Karelian army, General of Infantry Erik Heinrichs, who salutes the soldiers with his fellow officers. The photographs have been taken by the photographers of the Finnish propaganda troops to demostrate the victory of the Finnish army as well as its power. These pictures may have reminded the contemporary spectator of the photographs depicting the parading German Wehrmacht in Paris in 1940.[32]

As such, these pictures could be described as archetypes of propaganda photographs. The German art historian Petra Bopp has described

[30] Anonymous 1944.

[31] Palokangas 2005.

[32] See e.g. the photo "Paris, Avenue Foch, Siegesparade" by Folkerts in German Federal Archive (Bundesarchiv Bild 183-L05487): https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_183-L05487,_Paris,_Avenue_Foch,_Siegesparade.jpg, last visited on 25 October 2017.

this kind of propaganda photograph as "visual occupying", that is, the occupiers seize a city or place and symbolically strengthen their grip on it by documenting their power with photographs.[33]

While the wide usage of such photos in photobooks made for war propaganda, such as *Voittojemme päivät*[34], is completely reasonable, it is difficult to argue that such pictures could, at least with such a caption, be used in a photobook which specifically aims to "avoid all propaganda". Regarding German propaganda images, German photo historian Cristoph Hamann has stated that they are not only illustrations, but one of the weapons with which the war was fought, and "[as long as] the audience does not have enough understanding about the systems the photographs use to influence their spectators, they still function as propaganda"; every photobook is thus renewing their propagandistic messages.[35]

The author of *Viisi sodan vuotta*, Arvi Korhonen, has not only chosen to grant good visibility to the pictures of the victory parade of Petrozavodsk, he has also devoted an entire page to the photos of the victory parade in Viipuri, which was held on 30 August 1941. The pictures showing the parade in the former Finnish city of Viipuri, retaken by the Finns in August 1941, are in no way as offensive as in the city of Petrozavodsk, which never had been part of Finland. Only one of the photos of the victory parade in Viipuri shows parading troops, the other two photos show the troops attending a sermon.

One could thus argue that Arvi Korhonen, among other photobook editors who have since used the pictures, has – despite his goal to produce a pictorial narrative free of all propaganda – not been able to completely detach himself from the wartime pictorial narrative. It is, however, impossible to justify this claim, as there is no material whatsoever about the editorial process of the book, which could give some information about the choice of pictures. It is thus much more likely that Korhonen, like many others, has only seen pictures as proof of "something that has happened", and thus greatly underestimated their ability to influence

[33] Bopp 2009, 28.

[34] See *Voittojemme päivät* vol. 5, chapter "Valtausparaati".

[35] Hamann 2007, 28.

the reader, even though he, as the only one of several editors of military history photobooks, does pay attention to the fact that the pictures really can be a form of propaganda. In this topic area, the book which claimed to be free of all propaganda does adopt a propagandistic point of view after all.

## The Missing Pictures

While analysing pictorial narratives of historical events, it is also of great importance which topics were not shown. In the book *Viisi sodan vuotta* there are three such topics, among them the Finnish army's losses, the heroic individual fighters, as well as the enemy, its actions and losses.

Concerning the topic of losses on the Finnish side, it is surprising that while the propaganda book *Voittojemme päivät* indeed devotes a whole fold to the topic "Caring for the injured" and another fold to the fallen and the burial ceremonies[36], in the book *Viisi sodan vuotta* there are but a couple of images which show the injured and the fallen even barely.[37] Both of them were important topics – the Finnish army suffered heavy losses during the assault phase of the Continuation War – and the military deaths and the burial ceremonies formed a central part of the propaganda holding up the nationalistic spirit.[38] The photographers of the propaganda troops were instructed to make photographs which would show how the injured were taken good care of and how the military graves were cared for.[39] These pictures were to be used in two kinds of propaganda: to soothe the suffering and fear of those who had lost their loved ones in the war by showing that their losses were not forgotten, and, on the other hand, to demonstrate how many lives the nation had already sacrificed. The latter type of propaganda was meant

[36] See *Voittojemme päivät* vol. 4, chapters "Pro Patria", and "Haavoittuneiden huoltoa".

[37] See e.g. Korhonen 1973, 290; 397; 427.

[38] Kemppainen 2006, passim.

[39] Headquarters' instructions for the Information companies: Instructions no 11, 38 and 42. Folder T20680/13. NA.

to motivate the people to keep fighting. The editor of the book, Arvi Korhonen, may have considered this topic to be of too strong propagandistic spirit and thus decided to leave it out. This results in a pictorial narration whereby the Finnish army merely marches and shoots without suffering practically any losses.

More understandable is the decision of the editor to leave out the (portrait) pictures that had been taken to create and strengthen personality cults around some specific military leaders and ordinary soldiers of the Finnish army. The Finnish propaganda photographers were instructed to take portrait photographs of all Knights of the Mannerheim Cross[40], as well as otherwise distinguished soldiers during the war.[41] These photographs were then published among others in the *Voittojemme päivät* book, where several folds were devoted to the presentation of these heroes.[42] This form of propaganda created some personal heroes and idols the people could look up to.

This form of personal cult was also suitable for the image of the Finnish army during wartime because the Finnish ideal of a soldier during the war was a single brave fighter. The achievements of the distinguished strengthened the morale of the people and their will to keep fighting.[43] In *Viisi sodan vuotta*, there is not a single portrait picture to be found. This is most likely because the author had aimed not to depict any exceptions but the normal everyday life of the Finnish soldiers instead. He may, however, also have considered the topic as too propagandistic and thus avoided it. Either way, here the author has succeeded in distancing himself from the wartime propagandistic narrative.

The third and last image type which was – surprisingly – effectively absent from both of the books, are images showing the enemy as prisoners of the war. During the war, the Finnish army took a total of

[40] The Mannerheim Cross was awarded to soldiers for extraordinary bravery, for the achievement of extraordinarily important objectives by combat, or for especially well-conducted operations. http://www.mannerheim.fi/10_ylip/e_manris.htm, last visited on 10 October 2017.

[41] E.g. Headquarters' instructions for the Information companies: Instructions no 1 and 47. Folder T20680/13. NA.

[42] E.g. Vol. 4, Chapter "Ritareita"; Vol. 2, chapter "Miehiä, jotka sen tekevät".

[43] Kleemola 2011, 25–26.

63 000 prisoners of war (POWs), most of them during the assault phase.[44] While the enemy was still fighting, they were practically impossible to photograph. Thus, the POWs were a popular photographic topic among the photographers of the Finnish propaganda units. The photographers took approximately 1 000–1 500 pictures showing Soviet POWs in Finnish custody. These pictures can, based on their visual contents and the way they present their topic, be divided into several subcategories, of which the one showing marching POWs in a line was by far the most common.[45]

This picture type had a long history and was widely used. For example, historian Hamann, who has studied the use of photos showing POWs in German propaganda, states in his article that in Germany old prejudices had created a central enemy image of "Asian masses" ready to occupy Germany. Hamann states further that photos of great numbers of Soviet POWs were deliberately used to visualise the German triumph over these masses.[46] When the Finnish propaganda troops were asked to document the massive losses the enemy had suffered[47], they understandably took these kind of photos.

Surprisingly, these kind of photos were not used widely in the propaganda photobook *Voittojemme päivät*. In all five volumes, in total only four photos show Soviet POWs.[48] The surprisingly small number of POW photographs indicates that the topic was not regarded as important, even though one of these pictures, which shows marching prisoner masses, has been enlarged to cover a whole fold.[49] Compared to the number of photographs showing advancing Finnish troops, the POW topic is practically non-existent. The same goes for the book *Viisi sodan vuotta* – even though the author devotes several pages to photos sho-

[44] Westerlund 2008, 17.

[45] Kleemola 2015, 162–164.

[46] Hamann 2003, 16–22.

[47] Major Gunnar Waselius's travel report from Germany, 1942. Folder T20681/26. NA.

[48] Vol. 2, chapter "Sortavala, fold 3. Vol 3, "Vankiarmeija vaeltaa etulinjoilta"; Vol. 4, chapter "Aunuksen kaupunki"; Vol. 4, chapter "Haavoittuneen huoltoa" fold 2.

[49] Vol. 3, "Vankiarmeija vaeltaa etulinjoilta".

wing the Finnish army's spoils of war[50], there are just five photographs showing Soviet POWs.[51] There are two main reasons for why the photographs of the POWs may not have been used in the book *Viisi sodan vuotta*. The first reason is the volatility of the topic. During the war, the Soviet leadership expected the soldiers not to be captured, and the freed POWs were treated as enemies of the state after the war.[52] Since, as Arvi Korhonen states at the beginning of the book, those subjects considered offensive to the former enemy were to be omitted, this likely explains the absence of POW photographs.[53]

The other possible reason for the absence of the photographs showing POWs is closely connected to the first one. It is also one of the most typical reasons for the fact that we usually see the same pictures published again and again in different photobooks. I am, of course, talking here about the accessibility of the photographs. Even though the war censorship had ended with the war, not all of the photographs the propaganda units had taken were accessible at the time the photobook *Viisi sodan vuotta* was published.

Otso Pietinen, one of the photographers in the propaganda units of the Finnish army has revealed that the leader of the picture department of the Finnish army after the war removed some 20 000 negatives, mostly considered unsuitable for the new political direction, from the archives and hid them. This material was officially unveiled again in 2006.[54] Even if the hidden 20 000 negatives are factored out, there is still the question of which photographs were shown to the editor.

While there was officially no censorship, the picture department of the army, which also housed the wartime photo archives, was still led by the same person as during the wartime, Major Heikki Parkkonen.[55] It can be assumed that he had no interest in letting incendiary photographs be published, which may have led to some pictures never being shown to the editor. A similar process had taken place in the interwar

[50] See e.g. Korhonen 1973, 281.

[51] See Korhonen 1973, 321; 345; 356; 423.

[52] Overmans et al. 2012, 34–37.

[53] Korhonen 1973, 3.

[54] Kleemola 2011, 12.

[55] Paulaharju & Uosukainen 2000, 73–75.

Austria, where the former officers of the Austrian army worked in the military archives and supplied the editors of the numerous photobooks about the First World War only with those photographs they considered to be suitable to dramatise the war. This resulted in dramatic photobooks which openly glamorised the war. Holzer describes the actions of the former officers as a kind of "second censorship".[56] While such second censorship also may have happened in Finland after the Second World War, the results here were completely different, as shown above.

## From Propaganda Instruments to Instruments of the Collective Memory

In this chapter I have shown, on the one hand, how popular historical photobooks can use wartime propaganda photographs to form a pictorial narrative about the Continuation War, and, on the other hand, how many different reasons can affect the choice of photos for a photobook. Compared with the propaganda photobook *Voittojemme päivät*, the photobook *Viisi sodan vuotta* presents a surprisingly narrow image about the assault phase of the Continuation War. This results mainly from the usage of only a few image types. The author describes his goals as providing a representative sample of the life of the soldiers at the front and, at the same time, avoiding all kinds of propaganda. One could argue that neither the first nor the second goal are completely achieved, as the absence of the pictures of for example wounded and fallen Finnish soldiers results in practice in the complete invisibility of a topic which certainly played a central role in the life of the soldiers at the front during the assault phase of the Continuation War. The avoiding of all kinds of propaganda was also not achieved, as the strong usage of the visual occupation picture type shows. The outcome is a photobook which presumably was mainly meant for the former soldiers, with a narrow picture of the war.

[56] Holzer 2003, 61–63; see also Hüppauf 1993, 40.

When it comes to the canonisation process, the photos dominating the album *Viisi sodan vuotta*, photos of Finnish soldiers marching and shooting, are of too little memorial value that they could become iconic photos of the Continuation War.[57] They are not emotionally loaded, nor do they show anything so special that they are easily remembered. On the contrary, these photos are interchangeable, one as good as another. The Finnish propaganda troops did of course take photographs that would have been suitable as iconic photographs. One of them is the photo where Finnish soldiers are removing the border poles at the beginning of an attack during the summer of 1941.[58] Had the war been won, this photo would surely have been one of the best to depict the power of the Finnish Army. As the Finns, however, were not on the winning side of the war, it was impossible to use such pictures widely.

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# III PHOTOGRAPHS, REPRESENTATIONS AND MEMORY POLITICS

# Picturing Colonialism in Rhodesia. C. T. Eriksson's Pictorial Rhetoric and Colonial Reality, 1901–1906

Timo Särkkä

In recent studies in the field of visual culture which have a specific focus on the intersection of photography and colonialism, photography has become the subject of analysis of and debate about how colonisers have used photographic practices to construct not merely individual selves, but racial and national histories. The display, circulation, use – and, finally, the discarding – of Rhodesian pictorial rhetoric has been analysed as part of British colonial discourse, while the study of photographers from other European nations, with their own individual relations to non-European societies, has gained significantly lesser attention. This chapter maintains that first-generation immigrants from various European countries were no less involved in the production of Rhodesian pictorial rhetoric than their British counterparts. Using as a case study one particular photographer, Carl Theodor Eriksson (1874–1940), a Finnish-born settler who migrated to Rhodesia in the late 1890s, the chapter analyses photographs attributed to Eriksson, featuring a collection of glass plates taken in North Western Rhodesia and adjoining Katanga between 1901 and 1906. It details what aspects of the colonising process Eriksson's photographs emphasise and how that process shapes the meanings of photographic images. Close reading of Eriksson's photographs shows the potential which a photograph has to

drive forward an analysis, especially when it can be embedded in and supported by travel writing.

From the very beginning of the foundation of the colonial polity called "Rhodesia"[1], the photographic process was an arena where the colonisers and the colonised engaged, negotiated and interlinked through their cultural understandings of their encounter in front of the camera. The first imagery of Rhodesia was created by William Ellerton Fry (1846–1930), Official Photographer of the British South Africa Company's expeditionary force (the Pioneer Column) that crossed the Limpopo River and trekked into the Mashonaland in 1890. Fry's commissioned photography portrayed some of the usual hazards of veldt life: waggons stuck in drifts, overturned waggons and the loss of oxen.[2] It was also implicitly imperial by nature: it involved the surveying of seemingly empty lands for railways and mining and for the promotion of colonial settlement schemes.

Much of the early Rhodesian pictorial rhetoric was based on photographic postcards aimed at public consumption.[3] The first commercial photographers were expert white men who lugged their cumbrous equipment "around the battlefields of the 1896 Ndebele war", "to the monumental landscapes of the Mapotos" and "to the banks of the Victoria Falls" "in search of photographic spoil".[4] Percy Missen Clark (1874–1937) is an illustrious example of an early Rhodesian commercial photographer. Clark had been a manager of a photographic studio in Norwich when he received an offer from a firm of chemists to open

[1] Following common usage, "Rhodesia" refers here to the territories administrated by the British South Africa Company (incorporated 29 October 1889) in the interior of South-Central Africa, initially called "South Zambesia" and "North Zambesia" (until the name Rhodesia came into use in 1895). Rhodesia was formally divided into the protectorates of Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia in 1911.

[2] Fry's *The Occupation of Mashonaland* comprises 150 145mm x 195 mm prints. Fry 1891; see also Hannavy 2008, 563–564; Haney 2010, 41.

[3] Postcard printing boomed in South African cities such as Durban until it ceased before the First World War because of shortages of paper and ink. See Smith 2012, 111–112.

[4] Sykes 1897; Quotations from Ranger 2001, 210, note 20.

a photographic department in Rhodesia.[5] In 1903, Clark established a photographic studio in a simple mud hut on the south bank of the Zambesi River, Livingstone Drift, where his income was drawn out from sales of photographic postcards. The business of selling "Souvenirs from the Victoria Falls" was boosted by the construction of a North-Western direction extension line from Bulawayo to the Falls. The railway brought ever-increasing number of hunters, missionaries, prospectors, labour recruiters and casual visitors to marvel at pristine African nature controlled by and for Europeans.[6]

A less known aspect of the early Rhodesian pictorial rhetoric is the work of amateur photographers, who adopted the new technology, often alongside travel writing, for recording their experiences in the new colony.7 Whilst the impetus of the present chapter emerges from a need to examine the work of a long-neglected photographer and his thus far little consulted photographs, the purpose is to study what aspects of the colonising process Eriksson's photographs emphasise and how they shape new meanings in understanding the process of colonisation. The main focus of attention will be the circumstances of production, physical form and aesthetic appearance, as well as the circulation and reception by audiences past and present.

## Eriksson's African Diaries and Photographs

Before discussing the varieties of concerns which Eriksson's photographs address, it is useful first to unpack the historical context in which the photographic collection was produced. The glass plates stand apart from what constitutes Eriksson's broader assemblage of photographs, some of which took on another documentary function in 1932 in his published diaries *Mitt Afrika* (in Swedish, hereafter cited as *African diary*).[8] The photographically illustrated book contains ninety-seven prints, which

[5] Clark 1936, 31–32; 38–39; 41.

[6] See, for instance, Heath and Clark 1907.

[7] See Smith 2012, 33.

[8] Eriksson 1932. All translations by the author.

can be mostly attributed to Eriksson but it also includes reproductions from commercial photographers and even hand-drawn pictures when suitable photographs have not been available.

The diary commences with Eriksson's arrival at Cape Town as a deck boy on the barque *Record* in October 1895. Like many tenderfoots of the time, Eriksson first settled in Johannesburg. Two years later, in 1897, drawn by a combination of popularised myths of easy riches, hopes and imprecise information, Eriksson had made his way to Bulawayo, which had been declared open to settlers three years earlier. Eriksson, born on 19 March 1874 in Helsinki into a Swedish-speaking working-class family[9], was by background and outlook largely undistinguishable from representative Rhodesian settlers. The country's new immigrants were predominantly young bachelors, who made precarious livings from raiding, prospecting, trading and dealing in mining stocks. Beyond little differences between them in age, marital status and gender, it was the contrast between black and white interactions that most defined them. These interactions were governed by a strict racial division coupled with the conventional bourgeois taboos about race, class and gender that settlers brought with them.[10]

In April 1901, Eriksson undertook a position as a prospector in a mine-exploring expedition organised by a London-based company Tanganyika Concessions Limited. The Tanganyika Concessions' expedition had a dramatic impact on the human and physical environments in parts of North Western Rhodesia and Katanga. It was responsible for the first successful effort to set up a mining industry in the mineral-rich region that later became popularly and loosely known as the Copperbelt.[11] In Rhodesia, the prospectors of the expedition were cherished for their part in the location and pegging of copper workings, especially at Kansanshi, which has been known since 1901 as the centre for non-ferrous metal mining in Rhodesia. In this context, Eriksson was

[9] The National Archives of Finland, Helsinki Evangelical-Lutheran Church Records, Records of Baptisms.

[10] On the-late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century settler society in Bulawayo, see Ranger 2010; on Eriksson's early years in Bulawayo, see Särkkä 2015, 75–99.

[11] Särkkä 2016, 318–341; see also Katzenellenbogen 1973.

nostalgically referred as "the pioneer smelter man" for his experiments in smelting copper ore.[12] The present approach highlights the need to break with this colonial logic and reframes Eriksson's photographs in the light of changed discourses over identity and power.

How, then, did photography shape Eriksson's practice of travel and observation? The only written references to Eriksson's photographic activities come from his diary, which contains occasional entries on taking photographs and developing pictures. His first camera, bought at auction in Bulawayo in the late 1890s, was "a second-hand troublesome gadget which stood on a tripod". During the first two years of his service with Tanganyika Concessions (1901–1902), Eriksson carried a Kodak box camera, the benefits of which included reliability and portability, but it also had the advantage of separating the taking of photographs from the laborious task of processing the negatives. A real improvement in the quality of his images took place around 1903 when he purchased a 4" x 5" Sanderson field camera from George Houghton & Son at 89 High Holborn, London (following his visit to the Tanganyika Concessions' headquarters at 30-31 Clements Lane, off Lombard Street in the City).[13] This Sanderson, the original model of which appeared in 1895, was considered at the time a first-rate piece of equipment among photographers in Africa. Its features included a brass-reinforced mahogany frame, which was much better suited to tropical conditions than the frames of Eriksson's earlier cameras. The double extension model was especially useful. With its long-focus objective lens and the use of struts, it was effectively possible to achieve a triple extension, allowing wide-angle shots that had not been possible before. To the best of our knowledge, most of the surviving pictures in Eriksson's collection were taken with the Sanderson, including a number of reproductions of pre-1903 images (originally shot by Eriksson with his earlier cameras or by unknown photographers).

Instead of the boxes of worn and dog-eared photographs that one would expect to find in discussing the early colonial photography in Rhodesia, Eriksson's photographs are in good condition, though some

[12] Charles Eriksson – Pioneer smelter man 1959, 24–26.

[13] Eriksson 1932, 76–77. Quotation from page 76.

glass plates show deterioration as a result of the chemical process of photographic emulsion of silver halides suspended in gelatine. They are in stark contrast with narratives of decay and loss that accompany the presence of colonial photographs in many archives. There is no commentary accompanying them, and only few photographs are captioned by the photographer. The plates are stored in Kodak-boxes in what appears to be random order. At first sight it seems that besides a bundle number and few keywords assigned to the collection by the archival depository[14], there is not much information to work with. However, the history of colonial encounters revealed here by reading these photographs minutely shows the potential which a photograph has to drive forward an analysis, especially when it can be analysed in conjunction with travel writing.

There is a wide range of subject matter depicted in Eriksson's collection, ranging from various aspects of the early colonial economy (including the organisation and processes of the early mining work, modes of communication and relations between the mining company's white management and the African labour) to scenes of daily life in the colony, to documentation of "natives" and "wildlife" to portraiture and to hunting scenes. The pictures are taken from different distances, including either expansive, close-up or full-length views now made possible by the newly available photographic technology combined with the photographer's skills. The five photographs selected for this chapter cannot represent the full range of the entire collection, but their particularity in style and subject matter, as well as the engagement with photographic practice that they demonstrate, nonetheless allow us to draw conclusions about what the generic categories of "pioneer" and "natives" represented to Eriksson in Rhodesia. They also provide the means by which to analyse theoretical and conceptual definitions of the categories "coloniser" and "colonised" more generally.

[14] The Finnish Heritage Agency (hereafter FHA), The Picture Collections (hereafter PC), VKK871. The examples in this chapter are reproduced, where possible, with their original Swedish captions followed by English translations in brackets. All translations by the author.

## Eriksson's Pictorial Rhetoric…

In the wake of theories of race, photography established itself as a tool with which to analyse the visual aspects of human bodies. The presumed relationship between outward facial characteristics or expressions and mental capacity relied on the notion of photography as an objective and transparent record of the real.[15] Collecting and documenting of ethnographic information for personal and academic purposes was a part of the expected behaviour of learned white men. Some pictured "progress", attributable to missionary activity, while others used ethnographic information as a means of advocating colonial expansion. For instance, Harry Hamilton Johnston (1858–1927), Commissioner for the British Central Africa Protectorate (1891–1896), used photography extensively as a tool of scientific research and as a means of advocating colonial expansion.[16] The problems related to the use of photography as a scientific medium were however evident: the photograph portrays individuals and not general categories. It also captures all aspects of the picture on the same level of significance. Furthermore, there was no generally agreed understanding of what features to focus on when explaining racial or national characteristics: physiognomy, such as, for instance, face, hair and skin colour, skull shape, or body length, or perhaps contextualising factors such as habitats?[17]

There are several photographs in Eriksson's collection that, seen in their apparent attempt to document ethnographic "types", emulate the theme of ethnographic photography.[18] They appear similar to images that reflect the more perceived scientific gaze: the practice of portraying the subject *en face*, full-frontally or in profile or contextualising the subjects portrayed in various ways. It has not been possible, however, to attribute these portraits to Eriksson himself by direct evidence. Judging from their style and arrangement, they may be studio portraits taken by commercial photographers. Some of these portraits took on a new docu-

[15] du Plessis 2014, 18; 23.

[16] See Johnston 1897; see also Ryan 2013, 122; 124.

[17] See Kjellman 2014, 594–596; 605.

[18] See, for example, Ryan 1997, 146–182.

Image 1. Unknown photographer, *En negerdoktor med sitt hela aptek* (*A medicine man wearing his dispensary*), gelatine dry plate negative, 1913, FHA, PC, VKK871:235.

mentary function in Eriksson's published diary, as they could accommodate the stereotype of the "noble savage", which was consistent with the ideal colonial relations of the colonised submitting to the coloniser. The "noble savage" acted in manageable and respectful ways. In contrast, the "ignoble savage's" resistance to colonial rule was reflected in the trepidations of colonial society.[19]

Image 1 is an illustrative example. It portrays a man, captured full-frontally, decorated and dressed, and set in front of the camera. The man poses as a passive object at the bidding of the photographer in the way he faces the camera. He is not disapproving of the photographic session: the photographer could not have captured the man in a close-up photograph had he been entirely reluctant to cooperate. It is perfectly possible that the subject appropriates the performance of a colonial stereotype in order to achieve his own ends (as for example to earn material inducements of some kind). The title of the image is *a medicine man wearing his dispensary* that might be prompts for a discussion of the content of the photograph. This additional information reveals the problematic role of finding the intended manner in which a photograph can or should be read. In fact, it does not help to identify the individual, other than that he is said to be "a medicine man", represented in the image. Captions are written in ink and only in Swedish, providing indication of the audience for which the information was intended. This image is one of the pictures that were later pasted on a sheet of cardboard. On the back, there is a year "1913", perhaps indicating a cataloguing or inventory date.

Portraiture and self-portraiture deal with Eriksson's photography in two aspects, as an example of the "ethnographic record" and as expressions of colonial dreams and colonial reality. They are not "scientific" accounts as such, but illustrate the props, poses and aesthetic models adopted from the visual conventions of the colonial world. Image 2 depicts Eriksson himself in Kasempa, North Western Rhodesia, in 1901. It has not been possible to identify the photographer by direct evidence. The photograph may have been taken by Eriksson himself using a shutter releasing device or by an unknown assistant. Instead of facing the camera in a carefully composed formal pose wearing gentleman-like

[19] du Plessis 2014, 22.

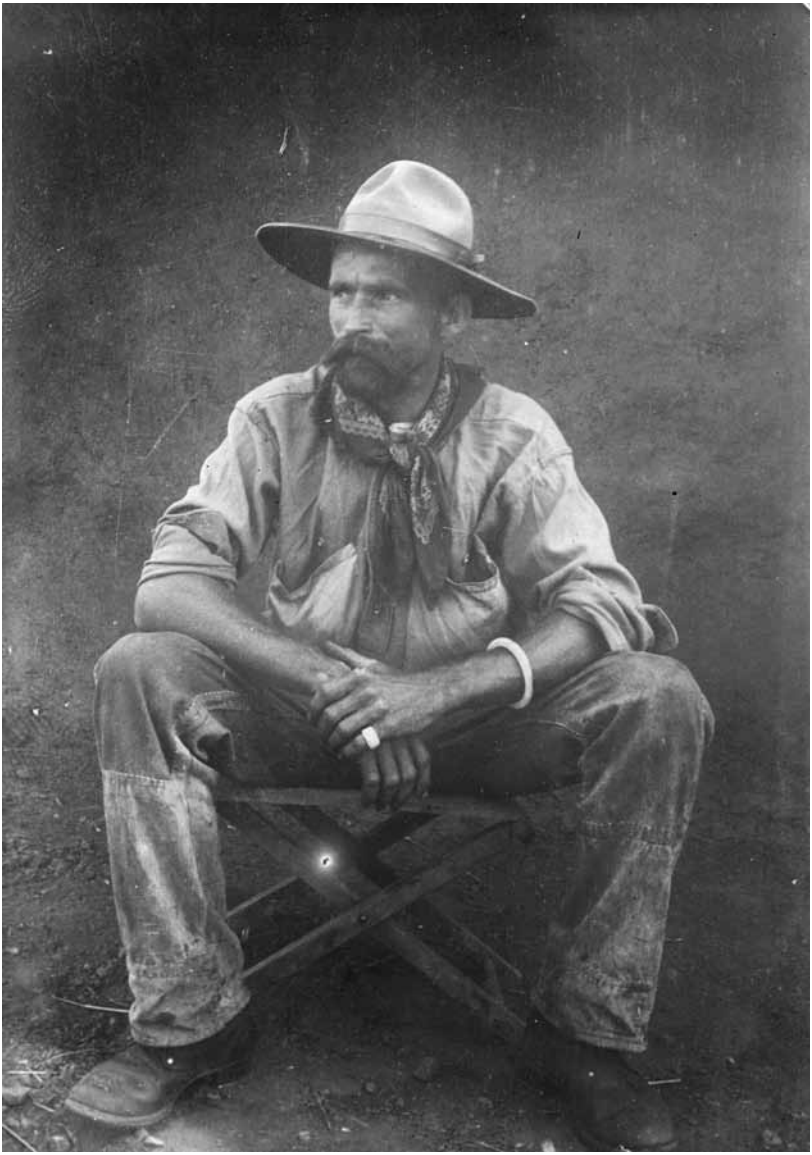

Image 2. Unknown photographer, *Fundi-Wa-Kali själv, i Kazempa 1901* (*Fundi-Wa-Kali himself, Kasempa 1901*), gelatine dry plate negative, 1901. FHA, PC, VKK871:48.

clothing, Eriksson seems to have chosen to present himself as a paragon of the turn-of-the-century Southern African pioneer-settler. He takes an informal seated pose on a folding camp chair, appears soberly serious-minded and wears a battered prospector's hat with a wide brim and a sturdy pair of veldt boots. Despite having immigrated only in the mid-1890s, he anchors himself to a much longer line of European migrants that had been subsumed into Southern Africa since the late-seventeenth century.

Great care has been bestowed upon the photograph. Besides being elaborate aesthetically, the photograph is interesting from a historical and documentary standpoint: it gives us information about Eriksson's perceptions and understandings of the colonial world. The photograph is similar to portraits of the eminent colonialists of the-turn-of-the-century, which suggests that its visual arrangement is not accidental. In 1932, the image took on another documentary function in Eriksson's African diary, where it was reproduced as the frontispiece and captioned "Fundi-Wa-Kali" ("he who commands with a firm hand").[20] The caption had a purposefully ideological function: it fixes the meaning of the photograph in advance and excludes the reader drawing his or her own conclusion. The caption also provides further indication of the audience for which the photograph was intended. References to behaving like masters and frustration towards black workmen and personal servants are to be found in a wide range of travel accounts situated in early colonial Rhodesia.[21] Eriksson's travelogue diverges little in this respect: it aims to gratify audiences living the days of imperialism and pioneering. The caption suggests that this image was not primarily a private portrait, an ethnographic illustration or a snapshot taken by a friend. It appears to have been produced for a wider audience, and perhaps planned to illustrate Eriksson's diary.

On 15 April 1901, the Tanganyika Concessions' expedition party for the Kansanshi mine in North Western Rhodesia (some 850 miles north of Bulawayo) commenced its journey. The expedition party comprised

[20] Eriksson 1932, frontispiece.

[21] See, for instance, Clark 1936: "I learned lot about natives on that trip, or at least about handling them. They are as inconsistent as monkeys, and a firm hand is always wanted" (158).

Image 3. Unknown photographer, untitled, gelatine dry plate negative, 1901. FHA, PC, VKK871:47.

Eriksson himself, three other European members of the expedition, and a group of African escorts together with wagon drivers, *voorloopers*, scouts, translators, escorts, messengers, carriers, "houseboys" and casual labourers. After spending 32 days out in the open, the expedition party arrived at the Victoria Falls on 17 May 1901. Image 3 records their accomplishment. Eriksson (first left) has either entrusted his camera to an unknown assistant or used a shutter releasing device to make a group photograph.

Most of the information invested in expeditionary photographs stems from cultural assumptions that they are visual records of the explorers' achievements. Since the "discovery" (or first recorded visit by a European) of the Falls by British missionary-explorer David Livingstone in 1857, several expeditions had struggled to photograph them. A number of early explorers had disappointments with their photography, especially in the developing process. Lacking experience in photography, and beset by malarial fevers and exhausting conditions, Char-

les Livingstone's struggle with his cumbersome collodion apparatus to document his brother's missionary travels is a notorious example.[22] But soon experience showed that it was possible to obtain negatives in the field that could be as delicately developed there as anywhere else.

The expedition party's equipment was transported by 200 oxen and the same number of donkeys and a few horses and mules. The equipment were taken across the Zambesi at the Old Drift and then to Kalomo, where a further six spans of Barotse oxen (some 120 animals) were ready for transport purposes. The route from Nkala Mission to Kasempa, however, was filled with hardships due to the prevalence of tsetse fly, and by the time they reached Kasempa, the expedition had lost nearly all of its oxen and pack animals. The expedition almost entirely depended upon carriers who were recruited locally as they progressed. While the reception at some villages was seemingly friendly, it was not so elsewhere. In his travelogue Eriksson details an incident with the Ba-Ila, who refused to carry loads on their tall head-dress, *impande*. The problem was resolved with the stereotypical calm rational superiority of the European explorer: the perceived excuse for laziness, *impande*, was cut off.[23]

Image 4 titled *Some of the forced Ba-Ila carriers whose hair-dresses were cut off* records the incident. The photograph depicts a group of Ila carriers, whose loads are put in the ground. The Ba-Ila who wears *impande* and the birds' feathers are easily recognisable. These features are perceived as what makes him a representative "type" of the Ila man. The photograph does not document the ethnographic type as such, however, but presents the carriers as self-conscious individuals. Eriksson does not discuss the circumstances in which he came to photograph them. We therefore cannot determine whether he asked them to be in his photographs or they asked him to photograph them. This raises important questions about issues of representation.

Like many other amateur photographers, Eriksson seems to have preferred to take photographs that were meaningful to him rather than adopting a more systematic approach.

[22] For further examples, see Ryan 2013, 80; 99; 127–129; 152.

[23] Eriksson 1932, 172–173.

Image 4. C. T. Eriksson, *Några av de tvångsrekvirerade Ba-ilabärarna, på vilka håruppsättningen opererades bort* (*Some of the forced Ba-Ila carriers whose hair-dresses were cut off*), gelatine dry plate negative, 1902. FHA, PC, VKK871:176.

The contrast between the images of Eriksson and the more scientific gaze by Edwin Smith (1876–1957), a missionary of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, who arrived among the Ila a year after Eriksson (in 1902), could not be greater. In Smith's and Andrew Murray Dale's (an Ila district officer in the employ of the British South Africa Company from 1904) formative work on Northern Rhodesian ethnography, *The Ila-Speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia* (1920), the Ila appropriates the performance of a colonial stereotype. In Smith's carefully composed image the subject is decorated and dressed, and set in front of the camera in profile. The stereotypic view is present in the photograph and is even more pronounced in the accompanying title: "The superior Ila type".[24]

[24] Smith and Dale 1920, frontispiece; 59.

## … and Colonial Reality in Rhodesia

In most of the works on Rhodesia, photographs have typically served as a form of eye witness account: "the photographs finish [the] argument more conclusively than any other form of contemporary data can do".[25] Photographs have been analysed as any other historical records to extract historical information that offers insight into the context, time, and place of the original production and distribution of images.[26] Photographic evidence has been used to provide support for already drawn conclusions rather for asking such questions as: Who was the photographer? Under what circumstances was the photograph produced? What is the photograph's material and aesthetic appearance like? In what way was the photograph circulated? What was the photograph's original title? How was the photograph received? What meanings have been associated with the photograph?[27] These simple questions are difficult to answer. Photographs can push their interpreters to the limits of historical analysis.

In Rhodesia the camera, "a triumph of Euro-American technology", played many roles in the process of colonialism: it was able to capture and at the same time to rearrange environments and peoples; it created "landscapes"; it constructed the idea of "wildlife"; it produced stereotypical illustrations of "tribe" and "race"; and it gratified colonial desire with soft pornographic postcards of naked African women.[28] This cultural exchange flowed in both directions (from coloniser to colonised and *vice versa*). But the ways in which the subjects of colonisers' photographs were able to use photography for their own ends (for example through

[25] Prins 1990, 105.

[26] Hunt and Schwartz 2010, 265.

[27] Burke 2001; Thomas 2009, 156–157; Ryan 2013, 16–17.

[28] Quotations from Ranger 2001, 203–204. The body of the black woman was perhaps the most stereotypical white male construct of colonial photography of the time. A large number of images devoted primarily to the aesthetic pleasure of the viewer, while others supposedly devoted to the documentation of the fact and objective recording of physical data. For further information, see Haney 2010, 20; see also Doy 1998, 305–319.

poses and other choices relating to self-representation) have gained significantly lesser attention.[29]

The question of self-representation is closely related to the hybrid character of truth and identity. The emotive power of photographs, especially when they are aimed at public consumption, is perhaps most telling when disseminated through a museum, "a flagship institution of knowledge dissemination".[30] Yet there is nothing inevitable about depictions of the colonial world becoming objects of treasured national heritage. In small states such as Finland (unable to attempt to compete in the race for territorial aggrandisement), Eriksson's photographs may be considered as "just some old photographs", things of the past, which are not necessarily expressions of colonial power. Nevertheless, since pictorial rhetoric was central to the regulation of truth in the colonial world, our encounters with that world, via the photographic medium, continue to work at shaping colonial relations. Such encounters can take the form of colonial nostalgia, romanticise the thrill of colonial conquest or look back at the scenes of first contact as "love at first sight".[31]

Carefully composed image 5 captioned *The Victoria Falls as I re-saw them in October 1902. In the forefront is my boy Kenamwata* is a case in point. Eriksson uses a distant and slightly elevated vantage point to capture the vast scale of the Falls. Kenamwata, the gun-bearer or Eriksson's "houseboy", is said to be a gift from the Ba-Kaonde Chief Mujivanzovu. The rifle entrusted to Kenamwata is Eriksson's treasured hunting rifle.[32] The photograph could be as easily being titled "A Souvenir from Rhodesia". It combines two important elements of Eriksson's photography: pristine African nature, and asymmetrical power relations.

[29] Gwyn Prins has asserted that the Lozi rulers of the Barotseland in North Western Rhodesia were able to win "the battle for control of the camera" already in the late nineteenth century. See Prins 1990, 97–105; see also Ranger 2001, 206–207.

[30] Hoenig 2014, 343–366; see also Cornelis, Moreno & Peffer 2014, 126–134.

[31] Quotations from Buckley 2005, 251; 255–256; 265.

[32] Eriksson 1932, 80; 319. On the Kaonde, see the seminal ethnographic study by a Magistrate for the Kasempa District, Northern Rhodesia, 1911–1922, Frank H. Melland, *In Witch-Bound Africa* 1923; see also Jaeger 1981.

Image 5. C. T. Eriksson, *Victoriafallen, sådana jag återsåg dem i oktober 1902. I förgrunden min negerboy Kenamwata* (*The Victoria Falls as I re-saw them in October 1902. In the forefront is my negro-boy Kenamwata*), gelatine dry plate negative, 1902. FHA, PC, VKK871:134.

## Conclusions

This chapter has sought to examine Eriksson's migrant identity in Rhodesia as well as to detail what aspects of the colonising process Eriksson's photographs emphasise and how such process shapes the meanings of photographic images. To achieve such an approach, one particular mode of research has been detailed. In works done in the field of visual studies with a specific focus on the intersection of photography and colonialism, photography has become the site of analysis of how colonisers have used photographic practices to construct not merely individual selves, but racial and national histories.[33]

[33] See, for example, Thomas 1996.

For a researcher of colonial identities, questions of definition form a perplexing problem. While individuals might define their identities in particular ways, researchers may impose on them different social variables such as nationality, gender, class, race or occupation.[34] Finns formed a defined nationality group that has been a neglected social variable in the study of colonial identities in general and in Rhodesia in particular.[35] In most works white settlers in Rhodesia have been categorised as "Europeans" partly because of their sense of representing a generalised idea of Western civilisation and partly in order to underline contrasts between black and white experiences in the history of colonialism. In a colonial context, place-based identities tend to blur existing national identities, and place-based identity-building was very much intertwined with empire-building. Eriksson, too, in his various capacities as a prospector and an explorer adapted ideas and identities that cannot easily be disentangled from those of other colonisers.

Yet it is equally important to note that while European settlers in colonial Southern Africa represented a number of nationalities and ethnic minorities, this ethnic diversity is not reflected in the field of scholarly research. The study of colonial photography has frequently centred on photographers of colonial powers, mainly Britain and France, and by and large neglected accounts of the colonial experience by less studied group of nationals. This chapter has addressed a call for historians of visual culture to study photographers and archives from less studied European nations with their own distinctive relations to non-European societies.[36] By focusing on a smaller and less studied group of nationals, we can discover new sources that have as yet rarely been seen or heard in accounts of the colonial experience.

[34] For further, see Hall 1996, 4–5.

[35] Until today, no such study exists that would distinguish Finnish "colonial identities" from the more typical trajectories of colonialism (such as British colonialism). The term "Nordic colonialism", from which this concern partly stems, has been employed as a pragmatic analytical tool rather than as a theoretical term *per se*, and as such it provides a descriptive framework of the various economic motives of Nordic migrants in various colonial contexts. On Norwegians in particular, see Bertelsen 2015, 1–22.

[36] On this concern, see Gartlan 2013, 130–131.

From this perspective, the photographs taken by Eriksson during his stay in North Western Rhodesia and Katanga are particularly unique in the history of colonial photography owing to the specific individual experiences and the personal relationships he formed there. However, rather than these photographs being considered simply as an exception that provides unusual information about photography in early colonial societies, they in fact yield a particular insight into colonial photography precisely because they are the result of a unique historical situation. The study of Eriksson's photographs therefore provides new analytical perspectives that include a wider field of actors, meanings and possibilities through which one can reappraise other photographs from the early colonial era.

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# Kids, Guns and Gas Masks. Military Technology as Part of the Photographs Taken at the Schools of the Leningrad Province in the 1930s

Silja Pitkänen

## An Image of Childhood in Stalin's Russia

On the wall of the reading room of the Central State Archive of Documentary Films, Photographs, and Sound Recordings of St. Petersburg (*Tsentral'nyi gocudarctvennyi arkhiv kinofotofonodokumentov Sankt-Peterburga*[1]; TsGAKFFD SPb), there is a print of a photograph taken by the well-known photographer Victor Bulla. The photo depicts dozens of children wearing gas masks. The caption reads: "Group of participants of the pioneer campaign in gas masks. 1935, Leningrad province[2]. Pho-

[1] In transliterations, I follow the Library of Congress Romanization Table, Russia 20012; https://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/romanization/russian.pdf, last visited on 27 August 2018, except for names, such as Kuybyshev, in which I use the customary transliteration practices.

[2] I have translated *raĭon* (raion) to district, *uchastok* to area and *oblast'* (oblast) to province; see, for example, Bernstein 2017, xi.

Image 1. Victor Bulla: Group of participants of the pioneer campaign in gas masks. 1935, Leningrad province. TsGAKFFD SPb, image number Gr 43561.

tographer V. Bulla." The same image is on display in the Sergei Kirov Museum in St. Petersburg as part of an exhibition on Soviet childhood. In this exhibition the photo is placed in the context of the school reforms of the early Soviet Union. This photograph, and similar photos, have also been used as cover images of books.[3]

It seems that this photograph has become widely associated with childhood in the Soviet Union in the 1930s and one wonders why this has been the case. The answer is quite obvious: the image is striking, as it combines two very different themes, childhood, which is usually perceived as innocent[4], and gas masks, which have connotations of

[3] See Bernstein 2017; Neumaier 2004.

[4] According to art historian Anne Higonnet, childhood has been seen as innocent since the 17th century, and pictures have represented children accordingly. Higonnet 1998, 8. See also Vänskä 2012, especially pages 79–109. However, there has been also differing representations; see, for example, Robson 2003; Vänskä 2012, especially pages 161.

violence, threat of serious injury and death, and also refer to international military conflict and defence against "enemies".

Gas attacks of the First World War had been traumatic for many countries, including Russia, and in the 1930s there was a threat of a new war and the Soviet Union reacted to the tightening international atmosphere. Consequently, children were taught to wear gas masks, for example. Victor Bulla's photograph was taken sometime between 1935 and 1937, depending on the source[5]. Thus, it can also be seen as an icon of pre-war Stalin's Soviet Union, where, as Sheila Fitzpatrick states, "the fear of war was ever-present".[6] The militarisation of the Soviet Youth in the 1930s[7] is exemplified by this photograph.

In the Western tradition, it is not very common for art to present children and childhood in connection with direct violence and war. Morover, the gas masks make the children look somewhat bizarre, like small robots. Bulla's photograph reminds one of the dystopic imaginings of early 20th century science fiction popular in early Soviet Russia.[8]

Children in receipt of military training, even if defensive in nature, is a striking subject – especially because, as I argue elsewhere[9], the child-

[5] This image can also be found on Wikimedia Commons, which dates it to 1937.

[6] Fitzpatrick 1999, 71. The sentence as a whole: "The fear of war was ever-present in the Soviet Union throughout 1930s; it was the shadow that dimmed the prospect of the radiant future." In the contexts of building the Soviet nation and the New Soviet Person, the prospect of war "dimming the radiant future" is interesting.

[7] See Bernstein 2007, 2.

[8] See Stites 1989, 172.

[9] This self-contained article stems from my ongoing PhD research, in which I analyse why and how children were depicted and represented in the propaganda photographs published in the Soviet magazine *USSR in Construction* and in the National Socialist women's magazine *N. S. Frauen-Warte*. The focus of the analysis is in nation-building – how feelings of "nationness" were increased via propaganda images of children. The archival images analysed in this chapter are separate to those analysed in my PhD dissertation. Furthermore, my approaches in this chapter are more on the microhistorical level, with nation-building as an important background idea. The Soviet Union did not consider itself as a nation in the Western sense, yet nation-building process can be seen taking place in the early Soviet Union. See, for example, Martin and Sunny (eds.) 2001; Smith 2013; Slezkine 1994.

related propaganda imagery of the 1930s Soviet Union was mostly quite different in both its content and aesthetic, creating visions of happy childhoods and bright futures[10].

Historian Seth Bernstein has studied the first Soviet generations in relation to militarisation and defence. According to him, these generations were deemed as crucial and a lot of attention was paid to them because they were to maintain socialism and, if needed, defend it. Moreover, the new generations were to be "New Soviet Persons" and their life and future in the first socialist country was to be beautiful and bright.[11]

In this chapter, I analyse four photographs taken in the schools of the Leningrad province and housed at the aforementioned TsGAKFFD SPb. The chosen images represent the themes prevalent in the archival collection connected to military education in schools. I concentrate on photographs of children attending lessons on "antiaircraft defence and defence against chemical attacks", as well as photos of children studying a gas mask and learning how to shoot. I approach the photos from a microhistorical perspective and, after that, apply the representation theory to the results of my preliminary analysis.

## On the Archival Sources

As I mapped material for my PhD research, I visited the TsGAKFFD SPb archive and browsed collections of photographs depicting schools of the Leningrad province from the 1920s to the 1950s. I soon noticed that many documentary photographs taken at schools had visible "political" motifs. They featured, for example, images of Lenin and Stalin, political posters, and other symbols, as well as gas masks and guns. I began to

[10] Jeffrey Brooks has analysed "the economy of the gift". He maintains that as recipients of "gifts", Soviet citizens were permanently in debt. "The performers' expressions of appreciation confirmed their indebtedness and the shortfall of their efforts, as in the slogan, 'Thank You, Comrade Stalin, for a Happy Childhood'." Brooks 2001, 84.

[11] Bernstein 20017, 2–3.

pay special attention to these themes, and finally, to militaristic imagery in particular. The Leningrad schools are quite extensively photographed and documented, and there is substantial visual material on this theme in the archives. For this reason, I have chosen four sample photographs, representative of the overall collection, for closer analysis.

One important aspect to consider when analysing the archival photographs is that it may not always be possible to fulfil all the requirements of source criticism. For instance, it would be too time-consuming (or even impossible) to find out the identities of all the children photographed or who took the photographs as the information attached to the images is often insufficient. The photographers, for example, are often referred to only by initials, or, at best, by their surnames. Moreover, publishing records of these photographs do not exist.[12] The photos may have been printed in such media as the daily tabloid of the Central Committee of the Komsomol, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*[13], or at least taken for publishing purposes. However, when researching the images *as such*, it may not be necessary to have the publishing details of the images.

Even if some concrete details of the photographs are lacking, can the photographs themselves still offer valuable information about the era in which they were created? Can they tell us something interesting or important about wider social and historical issues? In other words, can they be deployed as sources for historical knowledge, or is their only value in their use as illustrations in publications dealing with Soviet schools?

In my view, these historical photographs can be significant sources in aiding our understanding of the ethos of the era. They can reveal issues that other sources – such as administrative or political records, novels, or diaries – may not cover. One aspect of photographs as sources is that in them fact and fiction overlap – they are taken in "real" circumstances, yet they often include elements of fantasy.[14]

[12] However, it is possible that there is non-written information and knowledge on these issues that is challenging for a foreign researcher to reach.

[13] I wish to thank Seth Bernstein for this notice.

[14] For the relationship between a photograph and "reality", see, for example, Michaels 2007.

## From Microhistory to Representation

In her article on photographs as sources for microhistorical research, cultural historian Mervi Autti maintains, in the spirit of Carlo Ginzburg, that

> The small can open the way into vast scenes. Especially in the interpretation of photographs, dialogue between micro- and macro history demands contextualization in terms of the epoch, and clarifying the point of view which is deployed.[15]

Thus, relatively minor details in photographs can, after contextualisation, reveal something more general about the reality behind the photo.

To begin with, I will examine microhistorical details such as the locations where the photos were taken and the expressions, postures and clothing of the students. As my argument here is related to military technology in photographs, I will concentrate especially on these details. As stated by Autti, such details in historical photographs – intentional or unintentional – can also tell us about the macrohistorical ethos of the era.

It would be possible, in addition to studying the aforementioned details, to research such concrete facts as what types of guns and gas masks were used and how military training in schools was organised overall. However, there are other kinds of sources and research literature available on these subjects. My research interests lie rather in the issue of *how* the students were photographed with gas masks and guns, and, secondly, *why* such images were taken so extensively in this period.

After the microhistorical analysis, I will analyse the *meaning* of the photos. I shift the focus to historical representation and consider the underlying ideas behind these photographs. Ultimately, I address how

[15] Autti 2011, 211.

such images served to construct the ideal of Soviet childhood and youth, and by extension of the Soviet Union.[16]

In her article on photographs as sources, Autti also notes that "To perform or being performed speaks of ideals, values, goals and aims of the era".[17] This idea bears similarities to cultural theorist Stuart Hall's theory of representation. Hall states:

> In language, we use signs and symbols [– –] to stand for or represent to other people our concepts, ideas and feelings. Language is one of the 'media' through which thoughts, ideas and feelings are represented in a culture. Representation through language is therefore central to the processes by which meaning is produced.[18]

I analyse the representations of visual language, which produces meanings similarly as spoken language. Aptly, Hall mentions that he uses "language in a very broad and inclusive way", including in this definition images "[– –] whether produced by hand, mechanical, electronic, digital or some other means, when they are used to express meaning." For Hall, languages (in the sense of systems of words, sounds, gestures, images, etc.) work through representation and are systems of representation; they *signify* and *symbolise* – they construct meaning and transmit it.[19]

According to Hall, there are two ways to study representation: the first is the *semiotic approach*, which concentrates on how language produces meaning, and the second is the *discursive approach*, which is con-

[16] In the 1930s Soviet Union, things were often to be *imagined* in their splendid future state. Sheila Fitzpatrick summarises the mentality, "the socialist-realist view of the world", as she calls it: "In the socialist-realist view of the world, a dry, half-dug ditch signified a future canal full of loaded barges, a ruined church was a potential kolkhoz clubhouse, and the inscription of a project in the Five-Year Plan was a magical act of creation that might almost obviate the need for more concrete exertions." Fitzpatrick 1992, 217. In photographs, it was, to some extent, possible to show things not as they currently were but as they would be in the future.

[17] Autti 2011, 229.

[18] Hall 1997, 1.

[19] Hall 1997, 18.

cerned with the effects and consequences of representation. The semiotic approach analyses the material itself, while the discursive approach examines how the information produced by representation, is connected with power, and how it constructs identities at particular times and in particular places.[20] In this chapter, following a microhistorical analysis, I will apply a semiotic approach to the photographs in question. Finally, I will briefly apply the discursive approach and consider the (intended) consequences of these representations in the context of propaganda and nation-building.

Art historian Anne Higonnet has analysed the connection between images of children and the future – in other words, the process of forming and valuing the collective future on a national level.[21] This, at least to some extent, could also be described as nation-building[22]. The process of nation-building seems to be an important mechanism behind the production of extensive amounts of school-related photographs involving military imagery.

## Propaganda, Nation-building, Myth

The photographs analysed can be interpreted as propaganda images to some extent. Historian David Welch, who specialises in the subject of propaganda, states that in the 20th century the development of mass

[20] Hall 1997, 6.

[21] Higonnet 1998, 14.

[22] By nation-building I mean the deliberate and purposeful construction of national identity, and I understand "nation" as an intentionally created entity, as anthropologist Benedict Anderson sees it. Moreover, Anderson argues that "[– –] often in the 'nation-building' policies of the new states one sees both a genuine, popular nationalist enthusiasm and the systematic, even Machiavellian, instilling of nationalist ideology through the mass media, the educational system, administrative regulations, and so forth." Anderson 2006, 113–114. Thus, for Anderson, nation-building of new states, such as the Soviet Union of the 1930s, is a combination of general enthusiasm and promulgating the nationalist ideology. According to Anderson, the mass media and the educational process have an essential role in nation-building.

media enabled the spreading of propaganda to larger audiences. Furthermore, Welch argues that propaganda had a prominent role during the First World War "as an organized weapon of modern warfare" and was "a significant weapon" in the Second World War.[23] This chapter concerns photographs in the interwar period. As Bernstein maintains, "the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany appeared to make war in Europe inevitable" while Soviet officials fought supposed domestic enemies.[24] The 1930s in the Soviet Union was an especially "turbulent period of mass violence".[25] It could be claimed that the propaganda war started during that decade, and art and mass media played an important role in it. Photography – both as a form of art and a mass medium – was consequently a vital propaganda medium of the era.

In addition to being a period of mass violence, the 1930s was also "a time when people believed in a brighter future", as stated by Bernstein.[26] Historian James J. Sheehan maintains that violence was important for both fascism and communism as a means of acquiring power, but also "as a transformative instrument, essential to forging a new social and political order."[27] It was the idea of forging a new order that made people believe in a better future during the insecure and violent times, and militaristic visual propaganda took advantage of this belief – especially when featuring children.

The archival photographs depicting Soviet schools can, to some extent, be read in the context of the rising and colliding of Stalinism and Nazism. They can be interpreted as propaganda images intended for propagating feelings of security for citizens by indicating the Soviet Union's capability for defence – even small children were taught to protect themselves, and, on the other hand, defence was so easy that even children were able to handle it; it was really a child's play. Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, researchers specialising in propaganda, note

[23] Welch 2013, 2; 15; 20. On the relationship between mass media and propaganda, see also Jowett & O'Donnell 2006, 79; 84.

[24] Bernstein 2017, 5.

[25] Bernstein 2017, 2. See also Fitzpatrick 1999, 71; Bernstein 2017, 2.

[26] Bernstein 2017, 2.

[27] Sheehan 2008, 99.

that war propaganda usually begins well before war itself.[28] Thus, the guns and gas masks in these images can be seen as preliminary preparations for a possible war.

Furthermore, Jowett and O'Donnell maintain that our understanding of images is constructed via associations with images we have seen before.[29] Anne Higonnet, as mentioned, explains how childhood and children have been represented as innocent since the 17th century.[30] Subsequent images of children are easily associated to angelic pictures of innocent children. In images where children are represented with war technology, the gas masks and guns do not necessarily challenge the innocence of the children – it might also be that the presence of children, deemed as innocent, transfers the meaning of military paraphernalia into sacred objects of defending the first socialist country and motherland (*rodina*).

Mythology, too, often has a role in both propaganda and nation-building. Jowett and O'Donnell define the relationship of propaganda and myth in the following way:

> A myth is a story in which meaning is embodied in recurrent symbols and events, but it is also an idea to which people already subscribe; therefore, it is a predisposition to act. It can be used by a propagandist as a mythical representation of an audience's experiences, feelings, and thoughts.[31]

The images of children can be associated with mythical and religious images. In the context of the everyday visual environment of the early Soviet Union, they might be associated to the pre-Revolution Christian images of the Holy Family and the Infant Jesus who bears the promise

[28] Jowett & O'Donnell 2015, 232.
[29] Jowett & O'Donnell 2015, 9.
[30] Higonnet 1998, 8.
[31] Jowett & O'Donnell 2015, 316.

of salvation.[32] In the photographs analysed in this chapter, the Jesus-like saviours are the first socialist generations. They are builders of the new world, equipped with gas masks and rifles. The new world, in order to be further built, had to be protected, too.[33]

## Kids with Gas masks and Guns

The second photograph of this chapter – the first one analysed – is part of a series of eight images taken at the school of factory and plant apprenticeship (*Shkola fabrĭchno-zavodckogo ychenĭchestva*)[34] of Leningrad province's Finland area. On the archival cards of six out of the eight images in this series, it is written that students are attending classes on

[32] Philip M. Taylor maintains that as the masses of the early Soviet Union were mostly illiterate, they were, nevertheless, "historically and culturally receptive to icons". Taylor 1995, 199. "The poster, like the icon, could present symbols in a simple and easily identifiable way, even to barely literate peasants." Taylor 1995, 200. See also Bonnell 1999. My premise is that icons had an impact on all types of Soviet propaganda art – on posters as well as to photographs, for example.

[33] See, for example, the propaganda magazine *USSR in Construction*, which features similar themes in its various volumes. For example, volume 1 from 1934, *The Bobriki Chemical Combinat*, features on its back cover a serial of four photographs depicting young citizens doing sports, with the title "We are ready for labour and defence". In one of the four images, youngsters are walking in gas masks. Furthermore, volume 9 from 1936, *The Chuvash Soviet Republic*, features several photographs of young people wearing gas masks and operating military technology. One of the captions of the photo essay declares: "Andri of the modern Chuvash fable did not secure happiness in order to lose it again. We are all learning to defend our country". The defence, obviously, was targeted towards enemies outside the borders of the Soviet Union. Other volumes of the magazine feature people with guns and give predictions of war, such as volume 1 from 1937, *Red Navy*, which declares in a caption: "War clouds lower over the land of socialism" and "the clouds of war have gathered over the land of socialism."

[34] Schools of factory and plant apprenticeship trained qualified industrial workers and technicians in the Soviet Union in the 1920s–1930s.

Image 2. Factory and plant apprenticeship students from the Leningrad province's Finland area attending practical classes. 1933. TsGAKFFD SPb, image number Vr 35031.

*PVHO*, antiaircraft defence and defence against chemical attacks.[35] The cards in this collection were written in 1991 and thus the information is not very exact.

Image number two, shown above, dates from 1933, and on the archival card it is written that "The school's students are attending practical classes."[36] The practical classes are most likely first aid classes, and possibly related to anti-aircraft defence and defence against chemical

[35] *Glossary of Soviet Military Terminology English–Russian, Russian–English* 1955, 770.

[36] I wish to thank MA Ksenia Venediktova for indispensable help at the archives and with translations. Furthermore, I wish to thank the staff of TsGAKFFD SPb for their friendliness, helpful advices and continuous support. Special thanks to MA Alexandra Generalova, who was an employee at the archives by the time I visited there for the first time. Any possible mistakes in reading and interpreting the data are mine.

attacks, as all the students are wearing gas masks. Furthermore, some of the students have sleeve badges and bags, which may also be related to first aid.

In the photograph, two students lie on the ground in the foreground of the picture. Both of the students playing the part of a victim are helped by other students. On the right side of the victims, two students are bearing stretchers and two are lifting a victim to the stretchers. Behind this group there are two students standing. In the background of the photo, there is a group of students carrying a victim on stretchers. On the right side of them, there are two other groups of students. In both groups, two students have lifted up a victim and are supporting the victim from both sides – the victim is sitting on their arms. It seems that nearly all of the students taking part to the rehearsal are women, as they seem to be wearing skirts. On the left side of the image, there are two figures, looking away from the other students. One is also wearing a skirt and a white armband, and, as she seems older than the other figures on the image, she might be a teacher or educator.

There are no leaves on trees, yet there is no snow either, indicating that the photo was most likely taken either in autumn or spring. The students seem to be practising at an empty lot and the buildings on the right side of the photograph appear unfinished. This might be explained by the fact that during the first decades of the Soviet Union, many new cities, towns and neighbourhoods were built and urban areas grew and expanded rapidly.[37]

It is noteworthy that by 1933 practical, militaristic classes were part of teaching at the School of Factory and Plant Apprenticeship of Leningrad province's Finland area. It is, of course, possible that the students are practising first aid for work-related accidents, but the scene of the rehearsal is more reminiscent of a battlefield than a factory interior. According to Bernstein, in the mid-1930s civil defence became one of the forms of youth activism, and "The main location of youth activism began to shift from workplace to schools, fitness programs, and civil defense as the league [Komsomol] attempted to mold adolescents."[38] Furthermore,

[37] See Stites 1989, 244.

[38] Bernstein 2017, 41.

he mentions the civil defence organisation, a society established in 1927 as the Union of Societies for Aid to Defence and Aviation-Chemical Development of the USSR (OSOAVIAKhIM), and maintains that:

> An amalgamation of several 1920s-era voluntary defense organizations, Osoaviakhim inherited a wide range of functions related to civil defense: preconscription training for young men, civilian firearms training, air and chemical defense. It also was responsible for the production and distribution of defense products (e.g., gas masks) and pest extermination."[39]

All the photographs analysed in this chapter are to be read in this context, especially the images including Komsomol-aged students.

Image three is part of the same series as the previous image. On the archival card of the photo it is written "The school's students are attending practical classes of anti-aircraft defence and defence against chemical attacks". In the photo, about 20 students are in a row in front of a two-storey school building. The sign on the wall of the building with the school's name is partly visible, but the text is obscured by the students. Some of the students are on the roof of the vestibule, sweeping it. One person, with his back towards the photographer, holds a hose and is spraying a tree. In the foreground of the picture, there are two barrels labelled with the word *pesok*, sand – most likely used for saturating chemicals in case of an accident or an attack. The season seems to be the same as in the previous image. The composition of the image is somewhat similar to Victor Bulla's photograph, especially in terms of the students standing on the left side of the image. This suggests that even though Bulla's photograph is quite well-known, many similar

[39] Bernstein 2017, 49. Bernstein also notes that a broader expansion of defence education was taking place among the youth, and the Red Army attempted to increase its role in the general curriculum and increasingly sought out schools and higher education as partners in military training. Bernstein mentions that the school system already included compulsory defence education for older students, and that Narkompros sent roughly half of students in grades eight through ten (about 400,000) to some form of military training. The programme included military skills such as marching, shooting, and grenade throwing. Bernstein 2017, 53–55.


Image 3. Students of the school of factory and plant apprenticeship of Leningrad province's Finland area attending classes in anti-aircraft defence and defence against chemical attacks. 1933. TsGAKFFD SPb, image number Vr 35032.

photos on the same subject exist and Bulla's photo is not unique in terms of its subject.

All the students seem to be boys, as they are wearing trousers and caps. Perhaps first aid was considered a female responsibility, whereas defence against chemical attacks was considered an assignment for boys and men. Richard Stites describes how gender roles were redefined in the mid-1930s, and, according to him, "The Stalinist image of woman was patriarchal: the ideal woman was a matronly mother of many children, and not the thin and tough barricade fighter of the revolutionary poster".[40] Stites' statement supports the idea of female students as occupying a "matronly" role taking care of the wounded. Moreover,

[40] Stites 1989, 234.

female students seem to be wearing skirts or dresses – markedly feminine clothing – even when simulating violence and catastrophes.

It is noteworthy that all the photographs analysed in this chapter were taken in the Leningrad province. When preparing for defence, Leningrad was crucial, as it was a very important city in the western part of the Soviet Union. The perceived threat was supposed to come from the west, and thus the schools of the Leningrad province were the most likely to be actively engaged in practising defence.

Military education had also another side. In addition to defence, students were taught how to shoot and attack. Image four is part of a series of 18 images taken at the Model school No 1 in the Leningrad province's Kirovskiy district. The images in the series were taken between the 1920s and the 1950s, with most of them dating from the 1930s. The archive card of the image – most likely completed in the 1930s deducing from the handwriting, the outlook of the card and the detailed information – includes the description: "Members of the Komsomol – students

Image 4. Students of the Model school No 1 of the Leningrad province's Kirovskiy district – members of the Komsomol and the school's first Voroshilov sharpshooters. 1936. TsGAKFFD SPb, image number Ar 31860.

of the Model school no 1 of the Kirovskiy district (under patronage of the 'Red Triangle' plant). The school's first Voroshilov sharpshooters. In the photo, in the upper row: Obraztsov, Kalashnikov, Semenov, Krautner and Garezin. In the lower row: Limnenkov, Rakov, Aleksandrova, Nikolaeva." The image was taken on 20 March 1936.

In this image, a boy is loading a rifle, and a group of eight other students – apparently consisting of six boys and three girls – are watching him while holding their own guns. In the background are two targets. The students seem to be smartly dressed: at least of the two boys in the background (the first and second from the left) wear suits and ties, and the others also wear quite formal clothes. Furthermore, the students appear to be excited and enthusiastic. Perhaps they have dressed up for the photo, and perhaps they are exaggerating their excitement for the important photo session? However, they have a good reason to be excited – they are the first Voroshilov sharpshooters[41] of the Model school no 1 of the Kirovskiy district! In the back row, on the right of the image, one girl seems to be leaning towards the boy. Despite the formal dress, the overall atmosphere of the photo is rather relaxed. This might be because practising shooting was introduced for the Komsomol youth in the contexts of sports and leisure, not in the context of war and death. In addition, this photo is a bit unusual because the family names of the students are mentioned on the archival card.

Shooting can, of course, be considered as a sport, but in the context of this photo it most likely had explicit militaristic aims, as the inclusion of the name of the People's Commissar for Defence, Voroshilov, indicates. As the archival card of the image indicates, shooting was also connected to the free time activities of the students, in other words, to the Komsomol movement. Historian Catriona Kelly notes that great changes took place in the early 1930s in the Pioneer movement, and "To begin with, the [Pioneer] groups were now firmly located in the educational world".[42] Most likely, this also took place with Komsomol activities. Furthermore, it is notable that it is mentioned on the card that the

[41] Voroshilov sharpshooters was an honorary title for marksmanship, introduced in 1932 and named after People's Commissar for Defence, Kliment Voroshilov.

[42] Kelly 2007, 549.

students are members of Komsomol – they are Komsomols, the school's first Voroshilov shooters, and students of the Model school No 1 of the Leningrad province's Kirovskiy district. Thus, they are elite students in many ways and it is thus understandable that they are photographed and mentioned by name on the record of the image, with some of their achievements listed.

As mentioned previously, the students are also very well dressed. Sheila Fitzpatrick notes that school uniforms returned during the second half of 1930s, and this was a very popular move. However, this "was not a matter of social status, since all pupils went to the same state schools and the only differentiation fostered by the uniforms was between boys and girls."[43] However, Catriona Kelly states that "Between 1918 and 1943 there was no centrally imposed, compulsory school uniform, though some ambitious city schools dictated the wearing of one on a local basis".[44] Most likely, the Model school No 1 of the Kirovskiy district was an "ambitious city school". It is also possible, as mentioned previously, that the students have dressed up for the photograph. It is also notable that the girl on the right on the image, who is leaning towards the boy, does not seem to be dressed in a very feminine way, or at least she is not dressed similarly as the other girls in the image, but wearing a plaid shirt, whereas the other girls are wearing plain, collared shirts with slipovers on top. Perhaps the ambitious elite school allowed some freedoms from the differentiation between boys and girls – at least in the context of shooting lessons that can be defined as quite masculine sports. In the context of practising defence, as presented on above, skirts or dresses seemed to be a common attire for girls.

In addition to school uniforms, there were other changes in the Soviet school of the 1930s. Richard Stites states: "The school, embattled during the cultural revolution, was reinvested with familiar components: examinations, uniforms, rigid scheduling, homework, the power of the teacher in the classroom, and pedagogical discipline".[45] It is in accordance with this that defence skills and shooting were also taught.

[43] Fitzpatrick 1999, 107.
[44] Kelly 2007, 508.
[45] Stites 1989, 246.

Moreover, 1936, when the image was taken, was the year the great purges began and the everyday life in the Soviet Union became more and more violent. This also had an impact on everyday life in schools – defence and shooting were actively practised.

The fifth image is part of a collection of 14 photographs taken at 18th School of the Leningrad province's Kuybyshevskiy district. The collection includes posed photographs taken in various locations such as the school cafeteria, as well as photos taken during classes. In the collection, there are three photographs all taken at the same location – most likely a classroom. All three photos feature an adult, most likely a teacher, who is holding a gas mask. The gas mask is very centrally placed in the photograph – it is held by a teacher and is placed on a table. Students have gathered around the table and the teacher. The arrangement of the

Image 5. A group of students of the School no 18 of the Kuybyshevskiy district, Leningrad, studying a gas mask. 1938. TsGAKFFD SPb, image number Gr 52549.

photograph follows the conventions of school photographs. In the collection, there are also three photographs featuring students with rifles.

The archive card of image five, written in 1960, reads: "1938, Leningrad. School no 18 of the Kuybyshevskiy district. A group of schoolchildren studying a gas mask." It is notable that this photo was taken in 1938, when the international political atmosphere was already growing quite tense.

The students gathered around the teacher appear to be approximately six to nine years old – the image features students younger than those in the previous photographs. The majority of the students look serious, reflecting the important occasion of being photographed, but some of the students have playful expressions. The majority of the students seem to be boys. One of the students on the right side of the teacher is staring either at the gas mask or the teacher. The teacher, too, has serious expression, and she does not look straight to the camera but down to her left side. Behind the students there is a world atlas on the wall with the visible letters SSSR (USSR). The wall also features a poster explaining how to use a gas mask, a portrait of Stalin, and a poster showing rifles and tanks.

All the students are dressed in different ways and they do not wear uniforms. The clothes of the students seem thick and warm, and at least one boy, the last one on the left side of the photograph, is wearing traditional Russian felt boots. This indicates that the season is winter. One detail worth paying closer attention to is the dress of a student sitting in the front row, third from the right. The boy is wearing a sailor suit, which had been fashionable children's attire since the latter half of the 19th century.[46] The children of Emperor Nicholas II were often seen and photographed wearing sailor suits.[47] Furthermore, several students seem to be wearing Pioneer scarfs.

In addition to the ostensible theme of the photograph itself – students with a gas mask – the themes of the posters on the wall behind the

[46] See Vänskä 2012, 200–201.

[47] Photographs of the children of Emperor Nicholas II were exhibited at the State Museum and Exhibition Center ROSPHOTO in St. Petersburg, in the exhibition *Emperor Nicholas II. On the 150th Anniversary of Birth*. The exhibition was on display from 6 July 2018 to 9 September 2018.

students are interesting. In the 1930s, the Soviet Union expanded[48], and the state indeed looks very big on the atlas. Maps often tend to be drawn from the perspective of the culture that produces them, and the USSR looks central and wide on the atlas on the wall. Moreover, the other posters also feature militaristic themes and, overall, the atmosphere of the photograph is rather militaristic. Even though the children do not wear gas masks, as in the other photographs analysed in this chapter, the theme of defence is strongly present. Depicting fairly young children with a gas mask gives a slightly unsettling aspect to the photograph, while also implying that the children are the future of the USSR and worth defending and fighting for. In addition to educating children, the task of school is also to protect them. Furthermore, photographing the children in front of the atlas with the USSR in the central position parallels the Soviet Union with its schools with classrooms full of literally New Soviet Persons. The new citizens were taught to defend themselves and their fellow citizens, and women especially were taught to take care of those wounded in attacks or in battles, as in the second image. The portrait of Stalin is, both literally and figuratively, in the middle of everything. He is the father of the nation and, at the same time, the protector of all its children.[49]

## Representations of Children with Military Technology

So far, I have employed semiotic approach to the images, focusing on microhistorical details and drawing preliminary conclusions based on these. I will now take a discursive approach in which I analyse why these images were taken and for what purposes they were used. The answers to these questions are to be found by examining the historical and political contexts of these photos, drawing on representation theory and the theory of nation-building.

[48] See, for example, Martin & Suny 2011.

[49] I have briefly discussed Stalin's role as a father of the nation in my article on photographs of children in the Soviet Socialist Republics (Pitkänen, 2017).

Researchers Yvon van der Pijl and Francio Guadeloupe have analysed belonging and nationness in the Dutch Caribbean, and state that "imagining the nation in the classroom" took place there.[50] The same process can be detected in the Soviet Union in the 1930s. Van der Pijl and Guadeloupe consider schools as "privileged institutions for the transmission of formative beliefs and principles" and, furthermore, they maintain that schools are "ideal ethnographic sites for studying the paradoxical relation between dominant, hegemonic, essentializing ideologies of belonging [– –]".[51] The Soviet photographs combining schools and military technology also convey the "ideologies of belonging". The collective co-operation of students is highlighted, suggesting that the students are building the ideal Soviet state as one big group dedicated to defend the young socialist motherland. Moreover, in the photographs the children have specific roles. For example, in the first aid photo children are performing various first aid tasks simultaneously. This indicates that the cooperation is effective, even machine-like, as if the children were practising to be parts of the Soviet (war) machine.

Furthermore, as Benedict Anderson, in his classic *Imagined Communities* (1983) notes, "[– –] the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship". He continues: "Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings."[52] The ideology of protecting the nation, and if needed, dying for the nation, is introduced to the students of the schools of Leningrad province in the form of lessons in defence and shooting. Thus, in these images the children are connected to mythical stories of comradeship and of defending the sacred motherland. At the same time, images of children are associated with holy images from the Christian past. This association, it could be claimed, sanctifies their represented mission of defence.

Sociologist Siniša Malešević has analysed how the idea of nation was visualised in 19th and 21st-century Serbia and Croatia, showing that

[50] van der Pijl & Guadeloupe 2015.

[51] van der Pijl & Guadeloupe 2015, 91.

[52] Anderson 2006, 7.

Serbia and Croatia were represented in the 19th century through battlefield glory, and in the 21st century through sports glory and through the success of students in international competitions.[53] In my research data, the nation, the Soviet Union, is represented mainly through children ready to defend – and possibly even to fight for – their country. In the photographs, the students are glorified for they readiness to defend the motherland. Moreover, the students are placed before the atlas as if they were "forming" the map of the USSR – the new generations are perceived and represented as the future of the Soviet Union. One could even go as far as claiming that – at least on the level of propagandistic images – a militarised nation was being built.

## Building a Nation – Conclusions

The photographs analysed in this chapter can, with some limitations, tell us about the realities of the schools and student life in the Soviet Union of the 1930s. Details of the dress of the students can be discerned in these photographs. It might also be the case, of course, that children wore their best clothes for the occasion of being photographed. If this is the case, the photos indicate what were considered to be "best clothes", and, at the same time, indicate prevailing practices of dress, and even financial realities of families. Furthermore, the photos reveal that taking photographs was an important occasion. These archival photographs can, to a certain extent be used as a source of historical knowledge even in the absence of further background information.

Moreover, the photos can reflect wider historical phenomena. As historian Caroline Brothers argues: "The evidence of greatest historical interest lies less in what the photograph literally depicts than in the way it relates to and makes visible the culture of which it is a part."[54] These images, for example, tell a story of a nation that is ready to defend itself

[53] Malešević 2017.

[54] Brothers 1997, 22.

and preparing for a war. Therefore, it is possible to see the photographs as propaganda images.

In the context of analysing photographs, Mervi Autti mentions that, historically, the early photographs were faithful to the conventions of portrait-painting, and therefore also people of the lower classes looked like the bourgeoisie.[55] In these photographs of children in militaristic settings certain conventions of portraiture are likewise present: for example in image five the children are arranged in groups, as if they were meant to be photographed formally for a group portrait. At the same time, the images are quite evidently breaking the conventions by combining kids, guns and gas masks. Because of the rather peculiar contents of the photographs, there are certain tensions in the images – they break the conventions of representing children and childhood[56] and break the conventions of portraits.

The most interesting issue indicated by this research data is the connection between school and nation-building. When children are taught to protect the nation at school – a public institution compulsory for all – the nation is, at the same time, powerfully defined and built. This is perhaps especially the case considering that this process is being photographed and represented to other people. The photographs analysed in this chapter indicate this, and, furthermore, they can reveal what kinds of mechanisms of visual representations are used in the nation-building processes. In the images analysed, the link between the proper conduct of schoolchildren and the future of the nation is emphasised. Moreover, as argued by Seth Bernstein, "When the war arrived, there was no shift from building socialism to defending it".[57] In the images analysed in this chapter, the virtues of defending socialism are visible throughout the 1930s.

[55] Autti 2011, 216.
[56] Higonnet 1998, 8.
[57] Bernstein 2017, 2.

# Afterword

At Kubinka, in Moscow province, there is a military theme park called Patriot Park. *The Guardian* newspaper dubs it as "military Disneyland", as it is mainly targeted at children and families. There has been a tank museum in Kubinka since the 1970s, and the military theme park was officially opened in the same area in 2015. According to *The Guardian*, President Vladimir Putin announced that the park will be an important element in the Russian "system of military-patriotic work with young people". Moreover, as *The Guardian* summarises, "The emphasis at Patriot Park is on the glory of war, and the government believes the theme park should help instil a new sense of patriotism in Russia's youth".[58]

Patriot Park is not the only element in the current Russian "system of military-patriotic work with young people". The youth army of Russia, Yunarmiya, has more than 140,000 young members, according to the online newspaper *The Independent Barents Observer*. In Yunarmiya, children can "Learn how to throw a hand grenade, shoot with automatic rifle or use a bayonet".[59] Furthermore, activities such as the Vympel club for children and the My History park support the aims and ideals of patriotic education.[60]

The leading Finnish newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* parallels Yunarmiya with the Soviet Pioneer movement. The same article also mentions that Yunarmiya gathers together various school clubs and associations that relate to military subjects, such as first aid groups, history clubs and sports associations for martial arts. It is worth mentioning that in these clubs about half of the members are girls, and that there are also girls in Yunarmiya.[61] Schools, children's free time, and military/patriotic themes intertwined in the 1930s, and, similarly, intertwine in today's Russia. Militaristic hobbies involve boys as well as girls. Photographs as striking as those taken in the 1930s are published across various media platforms presenting the militaristic hobbies of Russian youth.

[58] *The Guardian* 16 June 2015.

[59] *The Independent Barents Observer* 10 August 2017.

[60] For Vympel, see, for example, the webpage of Finnish Broadcasting Company, YLE, on 4 January 2018. For My History theme park, see, for example, *Helsingin Sanomat* 20 January 2018.

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# Crossing the (Visual) Lines. Conceptualisation of the Notion of *Occupation* in Modern Czech History through Visual Representations

Andrea Průchová Hrůzová

In 2018, the Czech Republic finds itself preoccupied with remembering.[1] The independent state of Czechoslovakia was founded a century ago on the ruins of the once vast Austro-Hungarian Empire. But the Czechs usually do not wait one century to remind themselves of the crucial events of their modern history. Like so many Western countries today, the culture of memory[2] has been fostered intensively here. Discussions on more recent historical shifts – like ways of dealing with the communist past and its physical manifestations in the form of monuments, housing projects or design products – as well as on topics related to more distant events, regularly take place in academia, the arts and popular culture. In these discussions two events are generally regarded as milestones, representing the most important and violent moments of

[1] This chapter represents one of the research outcomes of the HistoryLab Research Project: The Use of Technology for Enhancement of Historical Literacy (TL01000046). The work was supported by the European Regional Development Fund-Project "Creativity and Adaptability as Conditions of the Success of Europe in an Interrelated World" (no CZ.02.1.01/0.0/0.0/16019/0000734).

[2] Huyssen 2003, 15.

transformation in the past hundred years of the country's history: the Nazi occupation (1938) and the Soviet occupation (1968).

This chapter focuses on these two major historical events and on how they have been represented through visual materials in various media of memory. Although both events derive from a very different geopolitical context, they represent the most tragic and violent acts in the historical consciousness of the public. They both involve the word "occupation" and our aim here is to explore whether they share even more than their common title in terms of the signs, motifs and typology of visual material. When we discuss these two acts of occupation, do we use a specific "visual alphabet" for the purpose? Based on the visual research of history textbooks, a museum exhibition, the most recent examples of TV news broadcasting and related online articles, a common framework consisting of the basic elements and principles of iconic communication is explored. In times when memory is no longer imagined as a static monument, but as an ongoing process[3], the chapter is interested in the power of images and in the ways they contribute to the dynamic movement of cultural memory, resulting in the long and vivid life of some particular images of the Nazi and the Soviet occupations which refuse to drown in the deep ocean of collective amnesia.

## Natural Hybridity of Dynamic Cultural Memory

The visual representations of memory are one of the key materials, which interest and challenge the contemporary research practice. In keeping with the dynamic turn in memory studies, this chapter regards visuals (as well as the other media of memory, such as texts, physical objects or even sounds) as social agents, which actively affect our ways of remembering. Today, we fully acknowledge that "[c]ultural memory is produced through objects, images and representations. These are technologies of memory, not vessels of memory in which memory passively resides."[4]

[3] Rigney 2010, 345.

[4] Sturken 1997, 9.

The theoretical conceptualisation of the media of memory examined here – textbooks, an exhibition, TV broadcasting and related online journalism – follows from this premise.

The dynamic approach to the study of cultural memory and its media highlights the hybrid interpretation of the sphere of collective remembering.[5] It puts an emphasis on the natural interconnection between different constitutive layers of memory (collective/individual, public/private). Yet, the examined media of memory manifest their hybridity in another way. They naturally demonstrate the connection of technology and social practices. They actively work in all four dimensions of the integrative concept of media,[6] so we can analyse in them (1) specifics of visual communication (the dimension of communication), (2) technological features (the dimension of technology), (3) the impact of/on social environment in which the media have been used (the dimension of social interaction) and (4) specific conditions of media production (the dimension of production).

The common social framework for such dynamic and hybrid approach to the study of the media of memory can be seen in the life-long process of mnemonic socialisation.[7] Based on this process we learn what and how to remember from the past. Mnemonic socialisation provides us with a certain set of social rules of remembrance, which co-constitute our perception of historical horizons and historical narratives. These mnemonic structures, then, co-create a socio-biographical memory that we share with other members of our community,[8] the imaginary "socio-mental topography of the past".[9] It is interesting to ask what importance images have in constituting such a founding grid of cultural memory? If "[c]ulture rests upon the memory of symbols,"[10] and therefore cultural memory can be understood as a system consisting of media and

[5] Brockmeier 2002.

[6] Schmidt 2000.

[7] Zerubavel 1996.

[8] Compare with the notion of collective-semiotic memory in Manier and Hirst 2008, 183–200.

[9] Zerubavel 2003, 2.

[10] Erll 2011, 19.

symbols,[11] we have to believe that the role of images will be (the) crucial (one).

To apply this thesis to the research presented here, one can assume that a closer look at the visual representations which have been linked with the occupations of 1938 and of 1968 can help us understand how the relationships between Czechs and modern Germany and Russia have been viewed and interpreted in the Czech Republic. On a more abstract level, then, it can reveal to us some significant elements of the frequently used historical visual narrative of "invader/invaded conflict" which represents an important part of modern history in general.

## Visual Bridges

The significant role of images in the work of cultural memory can be seen in their unique capacity for building bridges between the time dimensions of past and present. Zelizer explains this specific power of images by referring to their subjunctive voice, which "refers to the relationship developed between the spectator and the image – involving state of mind, attitude, temporal and sequentional positioning – and those aspects of the image that help the spectator develop that relationship".[12] Although Zelizer is here speaking about the medium of photography specifically, the unique ability of images to create an immersive experience, which has an emotional as well as an ethical impact on a viewer, has been widely recognised in (visual) history, history education and museum studies lately, as the following conceptions demonstrate.

For example, drawing upon Silverman's psychoanalytical concept of heteropathic memory,[13] the one that discusses the process of "identification-at-a-distance",[14] Hirsch formulates her famous concept of inter-

[11] Erll 2011, 104.
[12] Zelizer 2000, 162.
[13] Hirsch 1996.
[14] Hirsch 1999, 9.

generational post-memory.[15] However, the contemporary conceptions of the museum do not pay exclusive attention to photography, but reflect more on the promises of video installations, which they regard as influential platforms for the communication of past events and the suffering related to them. Static as well as moving images are therefore called the media of prosthetic memory,[16] since they allow the appropriation of a distant memory by a current beholder, and thus, as some authors believe, they can even prevent their viewers from contributing to any tragic events in the future.[17]

Contemporary theorists and curators have noticed that "[t]he memory becomes inseparable from its representation"[18] and it has become obvious that today we encounter more visual media in contemporary history exhibitions than ever before. The rapid spread of this trend has already led to the coining of a new umbrella term for those museums which extensively employ the tools of visual communication – intermedial museums.[19] This term, however, reflects not only on the usage of various visual media, but relates to the attempt to transform a history exhibition into an extended multimedia environment that represents a sense-appealing museum and where a spectator is introduced to various media practices (various historical sources, artistic interpretations, interactive installations).

Finally, the idea of the significance of images for remembering is also supported by history didactics. Although there are many examples of educational materials in which images are treated merely as tools for amusement and/or for a quick, though superficial emotional awakening of students, history didactics provides us with more relevant reasons for the employment of images in history education. Visuals can reproduce the social position of particular social, ethnic, religious or gender groups, or they can be used as a powerful means for the reproduction

[15] Hirsch 2000.

[16] Landsberg 2004.

[17] Compare with the notion of secondary witnessing in LaCapra 2001. For criticism of the concept of prosthetic memory see Berger 2007, 597–612.

[18] Ernst in Crane 2000, 26.

[19] Arnold-de Simine 2013, 74.

of norms and values represented by a specific political system.[20] With the same ease, according to how effectively images can communicate the core information to a student, they can contribute to the rooting of ideological and stereotypical patterns in young minds.

## Premediated Visual Signs of Occupation

However, there is one crucial precondition for images having such a dominant impact on our collective mnemonic practices. They have to be transmittable from one visual medium to another in order to be visible in different spheres of our lives – at school, in museums, on TV screens. The life of cultural memory depends upon its movement, or what Bolter and Grusin famously called remediation.[21] They designated this process as the logics of new media and at present it is also considered to be the logics of cultural memory: "Pre- and remediation are basic processes of cultural memory. Their functions are manifold: first and foremost, they make the past intelligible; at the same time, they can endow media representations with the aura of authenticity; and, finally, they play a decisive role in stabilising certain mnemonic contents into powerful sites of memory."[22] If we place the process of remediation at the centre of communication and the circulation of visual representations, we can see more clearly and articulate better what are the main research goals of this chapter.

Firstly, by tracing the visual representations of the Nazi and the Soviet occupations through various media platforms, the chapter pursues the examination of the plurimedial memory network that is enabled by the continuous "'repurposing', that is, taking a 'property' (in our case a memory-matter) from one medium and re-using it in another."[23] Secondly, by revealing this plurimedial memory network, we can recog-

[20] Pingel 2010.
[21] Bolter and Grusin 1999.
[22] Erll 2011, 143.
[23] Erll and Rigney 2012, 5.

nise and distinguish between two basic and antagonistic movements which remediation depends upon. There is immediation which aims to create an immersive environment, in which a beholder is invited to step into the past through its transparent visual representations (for example, installations consisting of enlarged photos, videos displayed on large screens or exhibited within black boxes). We can see now that immediation represents a basic condition for the concept of prosthetic memory. Hypermediation, a counterpart to immediation, reveals the infrastructure of mediation and accentuates the character of any medium as an artificial and technology-based platform. Rather than creating a vivid historical experience, in which different time modes can collapse, hypermediation explicitly demonstrates itself to a beholder in the form of an interface.[24]

The recognition of this dual manner of public presentation of mnemonic content seems to be crucial for a critical interpretation of images in history culture. The acknowledgment of the process of remediation as a central figure of the communication of cultural memory in society enhances our skills of visual and historical literacy, since it reminds us that images, as well as history itself, have the unique character of being "'record' and 'construct'" at one and the same time.[25] This specific disposition allows us to regard images as traces as well as artificial expressions of the past, and so it teaches us to remain critical towards visual sources in history.

Finally, the reflection of remediation as the founding logics of cultural memory leads us towards an interest in the process of pre-mediation. To analyse this process, the repetitive patterns of signs, specific motifs and symbols that can be found in visual representations of a particular

[24] Intermedial museums, therefore, function in their totality as interfaces, though in the way they exhibit the representations of the past, they tend to create a transparent experience. By doing so, they epitomise Bolter's and Grusin's definition of contemporary new media culture, which can also be applied to the contemporary culture of memory: "Our culture wants both to multiply its media and erase all traces of mediation: ideally, it wants to erase its media in the very act of multiplying them." 1995, 5.

[25] van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2001, 5.

topic or event have to be examined.[26] And thus, in the case of this chapter, the repetitive signs, motifs and symbols, so-called visual figures of memory,[27] on the images of the Nazi and the Soviet occupations have to be explored. To ask if there exists a set of visual signs which create the historical notion of "occupation" in the Czech historical consciousness, is to ask about the pre-mediated visual forms, which can be seen in the images travelling through different spheres of local public life.

## How Is the Modern Czech Occupation Depicted by the Official Plurimedial Memory Network?

In order to make the presented visual analysis more precise, the chapter focuses on images produced on the level of official memory, in other words, on the images spread by various media channels, which are produced or circulated by the state apparatus. There are two reasons for this decision. Firstly, the official memory sets out the basic paradigm from which the images produced in different public spheres draw, no matter whether they seek to support this paradigm, or they desire to come up with a counter–visual narrative. It creates a canon, a visual code that is supposed to be implemented in the most profound layers of the national mnemonic topography. Secondly, and subsequently, the analysis of the patterns of official visual memory can be used for drawing a future comparison in which images coming from non-official platforms of media production (for example, comics, TV series) will be discussed and compared with the official visual figures of memory.

The examined data set consists of visual representations coming from three different state-controlled media platforms, which publicly present the official visual narrative of the Nazi and the Soviet occupations after the new millennium, and therefore represent the narrative

[26] In order to investigate premediation and its visual expressions further, see Warburg's concept of Pathosformeln, e.g. as further developed by Didi-Hüberman 2010.

[27] Hirsch 2000, 214–246.

linked with the post-communist era.[28] The first set of data provides a group of history textbooks published by the three most popular publishing houses in 1999–2000, 2009 and 2011, which have been widely used in the Czech primary schools since then. Specifically, the images along with captions and main texts coming from the chapters on the Nazi and the Soviet occupations constitute the main research material here. The second medium to be analysed is the permanent historical exhibition of the National Museum in Prague called *Crossroads of Czech and Czechoslovak Statehood*. The exhibition, which opened in 2009, is located inside the National Memorial on Vítkov Hill in the capital city of Prague. The National Memorial represents the place loaded by the very entangled memories referring to crucial transformative moments of the 20th century in the Czech Republic.[29] The exhibition design shows evidence of a traditional and less progressive way of curating. There are static representations displayed (objects, photos, periodical official and non-official press) accompanied by a few archival videos, so the general design does not evoke the contemporary curatorial practices of intermedial museums. As its third source, the research uses national TV broadcasts and their websites. Specifically, it focuses on the latest content (news reports, photos) aired and published during the 79th anniversary of the Nazi occupation (29 September 2017) and during the 49th anniversary of the Soviet occupation (21 August 2017).

The visual analysis employs an interpretative approach. In the first step, it collects all the visuals representing each occupation which have

[28] For a comparative analysis of visual representations of modern Czech history in communist and post-communist textbooks, exemplified by the figure of the first president of independent Czechoslovakia, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, see Průchová 2017, 53–72.

[29] Originally, the building was constructed to honour the legacy of the Czechoslovak Legion who fought in WWI. During WWII, the Memorial was turned into the seat of German soldiers and after the Communist Putsch in 1948, the place served as a promotional venue of the Communist Party. Between the years 1953 and 1962, a museum of the first Czechoslovak communist president was designed there. The Velvet Revolution of 1989 transformed this venue into a state-run space that was supposed to function as a reminder of the turbulence of modern history and an important tool of public education.

been used in the selected group of popular history textbooks, in the public history exhibition and national TV broadcasts and on the station's online platform. This initial research step leads to a collection of the broadest research data set within which images representing the visual figures of memory are found. Therefore, those visual representations of the Nazi and the Soviet occupations, which are present in all three different official media of memory, are highlighted. These images, which obviously circulated within the official plurimedial memory network at the time of consolidation of the post-communist memory narratives, represent two types of visual. Firstly, there can be found completely identical images, which differ only in terms of cropping, colour adjustment or resolution. Secondly, there are pictures, which – even though they differ in terms of content details – share the same core sign structure and employ the same symbols, and (therefore) can be understood as one official visual figure of memory. This methodological decision seems to be important and relevant as regards the growing amount of visual documentation of the Soviet occupation of 1968. Due to significant progress in the field of media production, an incomparably higher number of pictures exist documenting this event than in the case of the Nazi occupation of 1938.

As its second step, the analysis applies two interpretative methods to the visual figures of memory found in the examined media and relating to both occupations. The first method uses the principles of semiotic analysis.[30] It allows us to concentrate on particular elements, signs and symbols that are visible to us based on a close examination of a picture. The precise description of the visible signs (gender, age, clothing, gestures, facial expressions, body positions, objects, environment), including technical signs (composition, colour spectrum, cropping, perspective, light), covers the visual analysis on a denotative level. Then, the analysis of the socially shared meanings of extensively described signs, the analysis on a connotative level, can begin. The second method of social semiotic analysis, which represents a more developed version of basic semiotic analysis,[31] highlights the position of the viewer. It opens the

[30] Barthes 1977; Rose 2012, 105–148.

[31] Jewitt and Oyama 2011, 134–156.

interpretation of socially shared meanings towards the various cultural, ethnic and educational backgrounds of the spectator as well as towards the reflection of a specific situation of encountering an image (school history lessons, museum visits or TV viewing). It understands signs as resources, which offer a reservoir of potential meanings from which only some will be actualised by the beholder based on the specific context of her experience.

Once the visual figures of memory from both occupations have been analysed in this way, the interpreted meaning of the images, the so-called myth, can be reached. In the last step of the analysis, the myths of visual representations of the Nazi and Soviet occupations are compared in order to reveal if any inner narrative structure which is embedded into a visible sign structure can be observed.

## Warning: Do Not Enter the Picture

The very first glance at the collected visual archive provides us with a more static representation of both events. In the textbooks as well as in the exhibition we encounter the medium of black and white photography most often. Whether the photographs are published in the pages of a textbook or appear in a display case, their presentation follows a specific pattern. In the case of textbooks, the use of this grid results in displaying multiple pictures, which do not relate to each other, on a double page. The pictures follow a repetitive layout which emphasises the quantity of the visual material. However the relationships between images, and therefore the aspect of the quality of visual communication, is not reflected at all. In addition, it is often very difficult to observe any detail in a picture due to its small size, which prevents the student critically examining the picture. Although some interesting visual sources are employed in textbooks, their design usually militates against any analytical and interpretative work with them. A unique opportunity to use the specific ability of images to communicate on emotional, cognitive and ethical levels is thereby squandered. This finding comes as no surprise, since – as the latest new media-oriented development in the

field of history education tools suggests – a textbook that does not work as an interactive interface does not easily fit into contemporary education and could even be seen as an obsolete platform.

Unfortunately, the very same rigid and formal approach can be traced in the curatorial design of the National Museum's exhibition. Although the exhibition space employs more diverse visual material than textbook pages, the display cases contain mostly photographs and prints from periodicals. Almost no artworks can be seen. All the vitrines presented in the exhibition space are of the same two formats and, therefore, the perception of images does not provide the visitor with any significant experience. On the contrary, the visuals, which are on display, merge into one homogenous mass in which the differences between important milestones in 20th century Czech history can easily become blurred. In relation to the Nazi and Soviet occupations, two archival videos are exhibited. One of them is screened on a TV, while the other is adjusted

Image 1: The exhibition *Crossroads of Czechoslovak and Czech Statehood*, National Museum, section 1968. Photo: Andrea Průchová Hrůzová.

to a larger screen which is situated above the head of the visitor. In comparison to illustrations in textbooks or even to the exhibited photographs, the videos feature the highest level of modality. This level of modality expresses how much the mediated content resembles the way we perceive the surrounding world with the naked eye. In this sense, the video installation has the greatest mimetic capacity and thus can, if well curated, create an immersive environment in which the process of immediation can take place. However, such an experience is not offered by the exhibition, so no engagement on the side of visitors can be expected. In the textbooks as well as in the museum exhibition, the images merely serve as illustrations. The hypermediated character of both platforms creates a feeling of distance from the historical events displayed which stands in opposition to contemporary presentational and curatorial practices in modern history education.

The manner of presentation of the visual material on national TV news and its related online platform offers more space to archival videos. However, the strong presence of moving images relates to the Soviet occupation only, owing to the earlier stage of camera technology at the time of the Nazi occupation. In relation to the year 1938, TV news and the associated websites repeatedly display mostly black and white photographs which can be found on the pages of textbooks as well as inside the museum vitrines. Due to the amount of video material of high modality, the viewer will find the visuals of the Soviet occupation more eye-catching. On the other hand, the official websites of Czech Television do not provide any extra footage that would be able to enrich or re-examine the well-known narratives of both occupations. There are only a few picture galleries added, which offer the same sets of pictures we are already familiar with from the textbooks and the exhibition.

## Territory, Dynamics and Living Objects

Overall, amid the very distant representations of both occupations in the official media of memory, we can detect some specific configurations of signs – some visual figures of memory – that seem to be common to


Image 2: The special TV programme *49 Years Since the Occupation of Czechoslovakia*, Czech Television 24 channel, 21 August 2017. Photo: Andrea Průchová Hrůzová.

the pictures of the Nazi and the Soviet occupations. The first common feature – one of the four premediated symbols which represent the findings of this chapter – can be found in the visual motif of a map. The map usually refers to the topic of territorial loss. In some cases, it is used in order to demonstrate the direction from which the foreign armies came to the country. The map is frequently depicted as a diagram that combines a simplified geographical sketch with a legend. It has been used in this format in all three media.

The writings (for example, graffiti) demonstrating the resistance of the occupied population to the foreign forces create the second motif. Signs of this resistance are visible in photos as well as on archival videos. Usually, the captured writings call people to action or encourage them to persist in resistance. A very specific example of how both occupations have been perceived as closely related acts in the local cultural memory is provided by image no 3. It makes a direct comparison between the Nazi and the Soviet occupations. The photograph can be found in several textbooks.

A third common visual feature depicts the relationship between occupier and occupied. It builds on the contrast between the dynamic


Image 3: Picture from the textbook *Dějepis 9* (2009). Pedagogické nakladatelství, a. s.

representation of those who are occupied and a stiff representation of the occupiers. In relation to the Nazi occupation, the dynamics of the occupied population can be observed in pictures of male figures – professional soldiers as well as mobilised citizens – who are usually captured in movement. These men can be seen smiling as they board trains and waving their hands to say goodbye as they head for the Czechoslovak border. If we look at still group photos, the Czechs are immediately recognisable, based on their relaxed postures and smiling faces. On the other hand, the representatives of Nazi Germany are depicted in rigid formations, their faces almost expressionless, as if they are one solid monument. In the case of the Soviet occupation, the dynamic representations are linked with a young generation of students: not only men, but also women, are present. The students are often holding the Czechoslovak national flag while their bodies suggest a lively movement. In many cases the situation of one-sided discussion between an occupied person and an occupying soldier is displayed, as we can see in the case of image no 4. This particular premediated configuration of signs can be found in the textbooks, in the history exhibition, in TV news and on the websites.

Image 4: Picture from the textbook *Dějepis 9* (2009). Pedagogické nakladatelství, a. s.

The final shared motif in the visual narratives of both occupations represents the display of a particular document that triggers the historical events. The object, therefore, becomes a political agent and is turned into a subject which embodies a large group of those who represent the resistance or the enemy. In 1938, the role of this trigger was played by the Munich Agreement signed by Hitler, Mussolini, Daladier and Chamberlain which is currently on permanent display in the National Museum's exhibition. In the textbooks, on TV news and on the websites we can encounter the series of photographs that capture the moment of signing this document. In 1968, it was a document of a non-official, literary character entitled *2000 Words* which was perceived as a manifesto from the period for the liberated form of socialist politics known as the Prague Spring. A reproduction of this article was used in all three examined media.

# Conclusion: It is Time to Remember the Past through Contemporary Media

As the research findings demonstrate, four complementary premediated visual motifs can be found in the collected corpus of representations of the Nazi and the Soviet occupations which circulate through the plurimedial memory network of the official Czech media of memory: (1) the map, (2) politically engaged writing, (3) the opposition between the dynamic representations of the resistance of occupied people and the monumental representations of the foreign forces, and (4) the document acting as a political agent. The existence of these four repetitive figures of memory related to both events manifests the dynamics of cultural memory, which is even amplified by the presence and the extensive use of new media in contemporary society.

If our everyday life experience suggests that history, including its visual representations, has significantly expanded beyond its academic territory via the platforms of the Internet, online journalism, social networks and popular culture, it is very unsatisfactory to reveal what static and distant ways of presenting the visual material have been applied by the very influential official media of memory. Either they use the images as illustrations of past events, or they try to extract a short and non-articulated emotional response from them. Overall, they do not reflect on their complex character and do not encourage the careful analysis of their formal and content features which might enhance our understanding of their dual nature as both traces and constructs of the past.

We can also assume that the revealed premediated motifs might recur in the unofficial media of memory, like TV series, films or comics. It would even be interesting to see if the detected visual figures of modern occupations can be traced in the visual narratives of other European countries, which have also gone through the experience of the Nazi and Soviet occupations. However, what remains of the highest concern here is the overall message that has been sent to the public by the conservative practice of employing visual sources by/in the official media of memory. The message it tells us is that images are merely innocent illustrations transparently documenting past events, while it forgets to

point out their inner capacity actively to form the past in the spheres of individual as well as collective experience.

Moreover, one should add that, in times of the 24/7 global production and circulation of visual communication, the images do so more than ever before.

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# IV PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE AGE OF DIGITALISATION

# Tipping Points in Social Networks and their Visual Impact. The "Jena Opposition" Case in the GDR

Kimmo Elo

The bulk of studies on opposition and resistance in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) have thus far been dominated by studies focusing on certain phenomena or periods from the perspective of historical research. Undoubtedly, these studies have enriched and improved our understanding about this complex phenomenon: complex, because we need to keep in mind the pitfalls hiding in the source material. As for the surveillance reports and assessments of the situation (*Lageberichte*) completed by the Ministry for State Security (*Ministerium für Staatssicherheit*, abbreviated to *Stasi*), it is a well-known fact that the Stasi never really understood the informal logic, thinking or motives behind its most important internal enemy. As a result, the Stasi apparatus produced many false interpretations and incorrect assessments. On the other hand, due to the permanent risk of leaks, opposition and dissident groups were extremely careful when it came to sharing written materials or other documents.[1]

However, although we possess a fairly reliable historical understanding of the dissident movement scene in the GDR and – thanks to several well-prepared reference books and biographies – we also know who

[1] Veen et al. 2000, 13.

was who in the GDR opposition movement, we seem to lack a systematic understanding of the structures and dynamics of the social networks behind and underlying the East German opposition movement. This might be due to the fact that the mainstream of studies focusing on the GDR opposition is interested in events, epochs, developments or single persons from a chronological, historical perspective. To my best knowledge, no single study has thus far made the attempt to obtain *relational* data from the sources and to study complex relational patterns – affiliations, interactions or collocations – behind the scenes.

This chapter exploits an alternative, yet experimental, approach to GDR opposition based on an exploratory analysis of a large photograph corpus providing us (hopefully) not only with valuable data for the reconstruction of social networks, but also with visual content relevant for understanding changes in the visual representation of oppositional activities. We should keep in mind that the East German opposition movement was also a visual movement, with banderols, posters, and – most importantly – photographs, all of them visually documenting its history in the form of social interaction among people. In the current digital age, a growing proportion of these visual documents is available as digitised corpora, thus opening wholly new sources for researchers interested in visual history. Visual history is here understood as a way of learning about the past with our eyes and can, thus, be applied to images or relics of the past such as drawings, graphics and other kinds of non-verbal representations. Hence, there is a strong tendency to focus only on the image and its visuality. Leaning on Gerhard Paul's argument, visual history recognises pictures (or all kinds of visual objects) as both sources and objects of historical research, thus stressing the visuality of history.[2]

Against this background, this chapter has two main objectives. First, the chapter seeks to analyse the structure and dynamics of social networks based on selected key figures in the Jena dissident community. Jena, a midsize university town in the southwestern part of the GDR, is a good choice for a case study, because it was, together with the Berlin region, one of the most important regions in terms of the structure,

[2] Paul 2014.

means, motives and dynamics of opposition groups in the GDR. Hence, Jena can be approached as a "model region", the social activities of which provide generalisable knowledge of the structure and dynamics of East German opposition. Second, the chapter seeks to build a methodological bridge connecting digital history with visual history. The chapter should exemplify how digitised photograph corpora can be "distant read" as containers of information in order to extract a more focused sample for visual analysis. Nowadays, large digital corpora are a valuable source for historians, not only because they remove the geographical distance between a researcher and archives. As "enriched material", they also provide researchers with additional, valuable meta-data suitable for computational processing.[3] Thus, the chapter's principal interest is not in discussing visuality, but in introducing a research technique for creating a sample for a "close reading" based visual analysis by applying digital research methods to the meta-data of a large photographic corpus.

The chapter is rooted in the conviction that digitised collections and corpora with meta-data can offer a meaningful and reliable way to extract a representative sample for visual analysis from a larger collection. If we accept the definition of meta-data as structured information about the content – "data about data" – we can make a further assumption, that standardised meta-data can be used to analyse structural properties and to tackle changes in the content.[4] Hence, a further assumption can be made that meta-data of good quality can be used as selection or filtering criteria, helping the researcher to create a representative sample subject of visual analysis.

The structure of the chapter is as follows: The next section will briefly describe the historical framework in which the analysis will be embedded. The second main section will discuss the material used and the methods to be applied in the analysis. The third section is the analysis divided into two parts, the first focusing on social networks in the Jena

[3] Meta-data refers to "structured information that describes, explains, locates, or otherwise makes it easier to retrieve, use, or manage an information resource. Meta-data is often called data about data or information about information". See, for example, http://groups.niso.org/apps/group_public/download.php/17446, last visited on 8 December 2017.

[4] For a more detailed discussion, see e.g. Benson 2009; Sherren et al. 2017.

region, the second dealing with changes in the content and visuality of photographs related to Roland Jahn, one of the key figures of Jena's opposition movement. The latter analysis seeks to evidence how content changes in photographs presenting Jahn correlate with changes in his personal biography. The chapter will be rounded up with concluding remarks summing up the most important results and their implications.

From a more general perspective, especially with regards to methodology, the overall aim of this chapter is to evidence the usability of digitised historical photography corpora as a source for network data creation and visual analysis. In this respect, we will also tackle questions related to the quality of meta-data and to data preparation processes. Since historians and social scientists are benefitting from the growing availability of digitised, non-natively digital materials, we should also pay (more) attention to problems emerging from the digitisation process itself, in other words, problems related to poor image quality, missing or incomplete meta-data, or false positives. Since quantity cannot replace quality, scholars in digital humanities exploiting methods of distant reading should pay specific attention to source criticism and data quality in order to avoid biased interpretations.

## Opposition, Resistance and State Repression in the GDR: A Historical Framework

One of the main tasks of the Stasi was to underpin all attempts to build a system of opposition or resistance against the party dictatorship in the GDR. Accordingly, real or suspected members of political opposition, dissidents and resistance groups were systematically haunted by the state security.[5] However, as in other socialist countries in Eastern Central Europe, the East German opposition was not a monolithic bloc, either. Instead, both its internal structure and setting, goal setting and means underwent a continuous, dynamic evolution during the forty years of

[5] Weber 1999, 130.

existence of the GDR from 1945/49 to 1989/90.[6] This evolution was, at least in retrospect, understandable, even natural, as it followed the general political development in the GDR. During the early years of the GDR (1949–1953), the main goal was rapid German reunification, supported by attempts to foster the creation of a pluralist party system and resistance against the "block policy" of the SED (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, Socialist Unity Party of Germany). Between 1953 and 1961 – that is, the failed uprising in June 1953 and the construction of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 – the history of the opposition is almost identical with the "republic flight" from the GDR to Western Germany. This phase of "voting with the feet" marks a period of mass resistance against the SED regime, abruptly ending with the Berlin Wall, and was followed by a period of economic and political stabilisation, which remarkably undermined the role and status of political resistance and opposition.[7]

As already pointed out, the midsize university town of Jena in the southwestern part of the GDR was one of the key regions of the organised East German opposition movement. During the whole history of the GDR, Jena was one of the cities where the discrepancy between democracy and dictatorship resulted over-proportionally often in open conflicts. As a result of both "1968" in Western Europe and especially the "Prague Spring", Jena rapidly became *the* region for political opposition in the GDR, also called the secret capital of the GDR opposition, reflecting the complex domestic conflict between the state apparatus, church and opposition.[8] For example, a political thesis paper published in December 1970 entitled *Sozialismus in der DDR – Anspruch und Wirklichkeit* ("Socialism in the GDR – Ideal and reality") resulted in the Stasi's countermeasures (operation "Anarchist") against the Jena opposition group around Jochen Anton Friedel and Reinhard Fuhrmann.[9]

[6] Neubert (1998, 29–33) differentiates between three forms of political dissidence: opposition (Opposition), resistance (Widerstand) and political protest (politischer Widerspruch).

[7] Veen et al. 2000, 8–9.

[8] See http://www.bstu.bund.de/DE/InDerRegion/Gera/Regionalgeschichten/Aktion-Gegenschlag/20130507_jena_aktion-gegenschlag-kowalczuk-vortrag.html, last visited on 27 June 2018.

[9] Veen et al., 190–192.

The empirical case discussed on this chapter revolves around the opposition movement in Jena in general, and the *Jenaer Friedensgemeinschaft* (Jena Peace Community) in particular. In the political history of the GDR, the "Jena Peace Community" counts as one of the most important forums in the system-immanent competition between the Jena resistance movement and the SED. The community was also one of the first larger opposition groups established *outside* the "protecting walls" of the Evangelical Church. The members of the Jena Peace Community were disillusioned with the reluctant resistance of the Evangelical Church against the state repression and, hence, sought to establish a new, independent forum under the umbrella of the European Peace Movement. Another reason was the fact that the Jena Peace Community was rooted in the *Junge Gemeinde* (Young Congregation) in Jena, which was heavily infiltrated and observed by the Stasi after the Biermann expulsion in 1976. These circumstances resulted in a growing need for a new political platform residing outside the church.

The years 1981–1983 marked a turning point for the young opposition movement in Jena. On 10 April 1981, one of its key activists, Matthias Domaschk, was arrested in Jüterbog and transported to Gera for pretrial detention under the East German security apparatus, where he died on 12 April 1981 after 13 hours of continuous interrogation. According to the official statement of the Stasi, Domaschk had committed suicide – a statement marked as a "legend" and widely rejected by Domaschk's friends and collaborators. Domaschk's funeral became a public protest against state repression and was one of the key events preceding the establishment of the Jena Peace Community in 1983. Domaschk himself had already in 1977 joined a group supporting Charter 77, a civic initiative in communist Czechoslovakia criticising the government for failing to implement human rights, and later counted as one of the core members of the *Junge Gemeinde* in Jena.[10] Through Domaschk's death, the Jena opposition lost one of its prominent key figures.

Another serious blow came in 1983 as Roland Jahn, one of the key activists and co-founders of the Jena Peace Community, was expel-

[10] https://www.havemann-gesellschaft.de/themen-dossiers/matthias-domaschk/, last visited on 23 November 2017. See also Veen et al. 2000, 106; Scheer 1999, 201; 231.

led from the GDR. Jahn had been on the radar of the almighty Stasi already since the mid-1970s, because as a young university student he had engaged in protest actions against the expulsion of the famous singer-songwriter Wolf Biermann,[11] resulting in Jahn's forced exmatriculation from the University of Jena. In 1980, Jahn engaged with the Polish *Solidarność* movement and was arrested several times by the GDR security authorities. Later, in 1982, Jahn was condemned to 18 months' imprisonment, but was freed in February 1983 thanks to international protests against his imprisonment. Soon thereafter, in March 1983, Jahn was one of the founding fathers of the Jena Peace Community, a short-lived opposition group with a long-lasting impact. It is called short-lived, because as early as in the spring of 1983 the security authorities decided to destroy the Jena Peace Community once and for all. Operation *Gegenschlag* ("Counter-strike") began on 18 May 1983. In a targeted operation, 40 persons, Jahn included, were expelled, causing the almost complete destruction of one of the most active opposition groups in the GDR. It is mentioned as having long-lasting impact because the Stasi's counter-strike did not achieve its main goal. Between 1983 and 1989, Jena remained an unsettled city and one of the most important locations of political opposition.[12] After his forced expulsion to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), Jahn established himself as one of the key mediators between the East German opposition movement and Western politicians and journalists.[13]

The temporal focus of this chapter is on the period between the late 1970s and 1989. This period was preceded by several political events that also shaped the political room for manoeuvre of the opposition and resistance group. First, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), held in Helsinki in August 1975, resulted in growing tensions within the Soviet empire, including the GDR, in the

[11] Reactions on the Biermann expulsion are well documented in the Stasi's assessments of the situation, see Suckut 2009; Bispinck 2012.

[12] Neubert 1998, 488. Operation "Counter-strike" is documented in BStU 2013.

[13] See further, Veen et al. 2000, 189–190; Scheer 1999; Praschl 2011; http://www.bstu.bund.de/DE/BundesbeauftragterUndBehoerde/Bundesbeauftragter/_node.html, last visited on 22 February 2016.

second half of the 1970s. The East German party leadership was increasingly concerned about the destabilising impact of the CSCE on its power and sought to underpin all opposition activities drawing from the CSCE.[14] The numerous repressive actions by the state leadership against dissidents and opposition groups – for example the expulsion of Wolf Biermann – evidence the growing fear among the party leadership of their destabilising effect on the East German dictatorship. The same strategy – targeted actions and sanctions against single but visible members of the opposition – were also used in the 1980s against the peace movement, compromising and questioning the GDR's self-image as a "peace state". Overall, the main aim was to scatter the resistance and opposition by eliminating their leading personalities.[15]

## Data and Method

One of the key objectives of this chapter is to test (and evidence) the usability of digitised photography corpora for historical network research on the one hand, and for visual history on the other. The primary source is a photograph corpus of the GDR opposition maintained by the Robert Havemann Society in Berlin as part of its archive of the East German Opposition. In total, almost 60 000 digitised photographs are currently stored, together with descriptive meta-data, in the database. The database itself consists of several collections, the largest being the photograph archive of the weekly magazine, *die andere* ("the Other") with almost 10 000 photographs taken between 1980 and 1989.[16]

A rather typical example from the dataset used in this chapter is illustrated in image 1. The meta-data attached to each photograph are relatively exhaustive and provide information about the date the photograph was taken, the photographer, a descriptive title, keywords (mostly including regional/geographical information), and about all the (recog-

[14] E.g. Schroeder 1998, 233ff; Gieseke 2008.

[15] Veen et al. 2000, 27–29.

[16] See further: https://www.havemann-gesellschaft.de/archiv-der-ddr-opposition/bildarchiv/, last visited on 29 November 2017.


Foto: Albrecht/Kleindienst, Quelle: Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft
Jena, 19.5.1983, Jenaer Friedensgemeinschaft beteiligt sich mit eigenen Transparenten an offizieller Demonstration anläßlich des Pfingsttreffens der FDJ

Image 1: Example photograph from the material corpus. Bildarchiv Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft, signature RHG_Fo_HAB_11308.

nised) persons appearing in the photograph. For this chapter, photographs related to the Jena region were picked out by filtering our entries with either a Jena-related keyword or the term Jena in the title. The result is a corpus of 586 photographs including 204 unique persons.

The method applied, historical network analysis (HNA), is a subfield of digital humanities[17] and rooted in graph theory, according to which a network is defined as a graphical object consisting of *nodes* (or *vertices*) connected by *edges* and having its own structure (topology).[18] Both nodes and edges can be enriched by adding attributes providing additional information indispensable for presenting and analysing the

[17] Readers interested in digital humanities are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the dedicated academic websites. Readers looking for scholarly introductions might be interested in the following contributions: Lemercier 2011; Rosenzweig 2011; Gold 2012; Vanhoutte et al. 2013.

[18] For a comprehensive introduction to graph theory, see Ruohonen 2013.

complexity of historical or social phenomena. Previous studies have evidenced the power of the analysis of collocation networks when it comes to revealing hidden social patterns and interactions.[19] Promising results have been provided, for example, by intelligence studies or criminal analysis,[20] or by studies focusing on knowledge exchange and the dissemination of ideas among intellectuals.[21]

The primary material was processed into network data in three steps. First, all personal names in the field *Personen* were extracted, references to unknown persons (marked with *unbekannt* in the meta-data) were removed, misspelled names were manually corrected, and different forms of writing were standardised.[22] Second, the purified data was imported into the statistical package *R* for further processing. In the third step, network data was created by making linkages between all the persons listed as appearing in the same photograph. To give an example, consider the image 1 including four people, whose names are known and stored in the meta-data of this photograph: Matthias Domaschk, Renate Groß, Michael Meier von Rouden and Michael Stockelbusch. Based on this information, the following six (6) collocations can be created: (1) Matthias Domaschk – Renate Groß; (2) Matthias Domaschk – Michael Meier von Rouden; (3) Matthias Domaschk – Michael Stockelbusch; (4) Renate Groß – Michael Meier von Rouden; (5) Renate Groß – Michael Stockelbusch; and (6) Michael Meier von Rouden – Michael Stockelbusch. The network data was enriched by adding timestamps indicating the year the photograph was taken. This network data was then imported into Visone for network visualisation and analysis.[23]

[19] E.g. Stuart and Botella 2009; Lee et al. 2010; Brier and Hopp 2011.

[20] Krebs 2002; Raab and Milward 2003; Schwartz and (D.A.) Rouselle 2009; Hutchins and Benham-Hutchins 2010; Morselli 2010; Malm and Bichler 2011; Mainas 2012; Elo 2015.

[21] E.g. Verbruggen and Carlier 2014.

[22] In some entries, names were written using the schema "first name, family name", in others "family name, first name". Further, in some entries surnames were missing or women who had married during the time period were given their maiden names. All these different naming schemata were transformed and standardised to "family name, first name".

[23] Visone is a powerful, yet easy to use open-source software for network analysis and visualisation. See https://visone.org.

## Analysis and Results

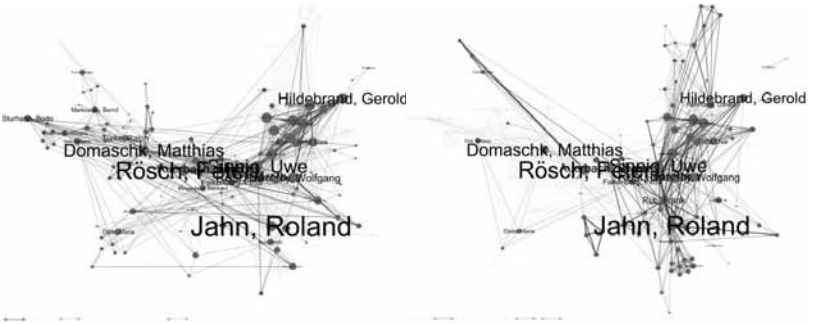
The social network of the 204 identified persons appearing in the photographs of the Jena dissident movement is visualised in image 2. These persons are connected by 827 weighted links[24] so that the average degree, in other words, the absolute number of nodes a single node is connected to, is as high as 8.108. In other words, each person appears on average with eight (8) other persons in the selected photographs. However, the density is as low as 0.038, indicating that the network has a few nodes with a relative high number of connections, whereas the remaining nodes have a rather low number of connections. However, such a structure is rather typical of real-life social networks, thus providing support for the idea that we could – at least to some extent – explore past social realities with the help of network analysis. In addition, the veracity of the reconstructed social network structure is supported by previous studies having shown that the actual hard core of the East German opposition in general,[25] and that of the Jena community in particular,[26] was rather small in number.

The years 1982–1983 formed a major turning point in the history of the Jena opposition. Hence, I decided to create two views of the same network by using visual effects to highlight how this tipping point changed the network structure. In the network on the left-hand side, all the connections and persons *not* appearing on photographs prior to 1982 are greyed out. The same visualisation technique is applied to the network on the right-hand side, but in that network, all connections and persons not appearing after 1982 are greyed out. In addition, the size of a node area is proportional to its degree, in other words, the more connections the node has, the larger it appears in the graph. Second, the thickness of a connection is proportional to its weight, in other words how many times the two persons appear together in photographs.

[24] I created weighted links by merging all links between two persons occurring in the same period of time into one link. The weight of this merged link is the sum of the merged links. For example, if two persons occurred in three photographs before 1983, between them is a link of weight 3.

[25] Neubert 1998; Veen et al. 2000.

[26] Scheer 1999.




Images 2A and 2B: Person-to-person collocations of the Jena community. Left: Until 1982, right: After 1982. Robert Havemann society.

Finally, third, the font size of the node labels is proportional to the node's betweenness centrality. In network theory, centrality, in general, indicates a node's position in the network and can be calculated either as relative to a node's direct neighbours or the whole network. Betweenness, as the term itself indicates, defines centrality by analysing where a node is placed within the network. Consequently, a node's betweenness centrality score is computed by taking into consideration the rest of the network and by looking at how many times a node sits on the shortest path linking two other nodes together. Thus, using betweenness centrality as an attribute for the graph helps us to identify nodes having "a high probability of occurring on a randomly chosen shortest path between two randomly chosen vertices".[27] As regards the empirical data for betweenness, centrality helps us to identify "connecting people", in other words persons occurring frequently but with different persons. Since Visone does not allow us to calculate centrality indices for selected nodes only, both the degree and betweenness values are calculated based on the whole network.

As we can see, there is a remarkable difference between the networks before and after the year 1982. In total 112 persons appear in photographs before 1982, and 105 persons after 1982. Since the underlying network structure remains untouched between the two graphs in image

[27] Hsu and Kao 2013. See also Prell 2012, 103–104.

| *Until 1982* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Name** | **Betweenness** | **Degree** | **# of co-occurrences** |
| Sinnig, Uwe | 278.849 | 31 | 81 |
| Rösch, Peter | 127.573 | 21 | 45 |
| Hildebrand, Gerold | 85.532 | 22 | 43 |
| Sturhann, Bodo | 70.802 | 12 | 14 |
| Hahn, Carsten | 50.7 | 17 | 38 |
| *After 1982* | | | |
| **Name** | **Betweenness** | **Degree** | **# of co-occurrences** |
| Jahn, Roland | 2,606.52 | 30 | 82 |
| Rub, Frank | 2,027.804 | 25 | 70 |
| Sinnig, Uwe | 1,647.478 | 26 | 59 |
| Rost, Dorothea | 1,087.417 | 25 | 63 |
| Albrecht, Bernd | 684.672 | 21 | 60 |

Table 1: Most important persons in Jena opposition networks before and after 1982.

2, the changes in the social structure are also visually evident. This change is also reflected by changes in the socially central actors (Table 1). There is only one person, Uwe Sinnig, who remains a central actor in both temporal networks. Sinnig and Dorothea (Thea) Rost (who gained importance in the post-1982 network) were the co-initiators of the "Plea for disarmament", published in 1982.[28] Peter Rösch, Frank Rub, Dorothea Rost, und Roland Jahn formed the hard core of the Jena opposition. Bodo Sturhann, Gerold Hildebrand and Carsten Hahn were activists in

[28] Scheer 1999, 215.

different opposition groups.[29] Bernd Albrecht was a conscientious objector and was expelled from the GDR in 1983 together with twenty other activists.[30]

The exploratory analysis steps, thus far, have sought to reduce the dataset in order to obtain a reliable sample for visual analysis. We firstly used the meta-data to extract photographs somehow related to the Jena region. In the second step, we created social networks based on persons co-occurring in the photographs. In the third step, network analysis was used to explore both the structure and dynamics of the Jena network prior to and after 1982 in order to identify the most central and influential persons.

According to previous studies, Roland Jahn undoubtedly counts among these core activists. However, as Table 1 indicates, Jahn gained his role as a mediator in the social networks first *after* his forced expulsion in 1983. This is somewhat striking, since his growing role in the network seems to indicate that he first starts to co-appear with other persons in photographs after 1982. Put in numbers, prior to 1982, Jahn appears in 45 photographs, and between 1983 and 1989 on over 120 photographs. Regarding the latter period, half of the photographs were taken in 1983, the year of Jahn's expulsion. Since the available meta-data lacks exact time-stamps, we cannot exclude the possibility that a remarkable share of the photos dated in 1983 were taken before Jahn was expelled.

Another peak is the year 1985 during the transformation period of the GDR opposition into a peace and democracy movement, and, quite logically, 1989. A sample reduced to photographs with a "Jena connection" consists of 70 photographs, 15 of them taken prior to 1982, and 55 taken in 1983 or after. A comparative look on Jahn's social networks before and after his expulsion provides another interesting observation: no single person co-occurring with Jahn in the photographs prior to 1983 appears with him after 1983. This is a remarkable finding. Since Jahn was, as we will see below, also illegally in the GDR after his expul-

[29] Neubert 1998, 432.

[30] http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-14020552.html, last visited on 1 December 2017.


Foto: Roland Jahn/Manfred Hildebrandt, Quelle: Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft
Protestpostkarte gegen das Bildungsverbot in der DDR, das gegen Roland Jahn nach seiner Exmatrikulation verhängt wurde. Die Postkarte wurde 1982 angefertigt und erschien auch im „Spiegel".


Foto: Roland Jahn / Manfred Hildebrandt, Quelle: Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft
Protestpostkarte, die von Jahn und Hildebrandt gestaltet wurde und zum 1. Mai 1982 mit der Post verschickt an wird.

Foto: Rüdiger Rosenthal, Quelle: Matthias-Domaschk-Archiv
Roland Jahn bei seiner illegalen Reise nach Berlin im April 1985
(v.l.n.r.: Ralf Hirsch, Werner Fischer, Roland Jahn, unbekannt, Lutz Rathenow, Reinhard Schult)

Foto: R. Rosenthal, Quelle: Matthias-Domaschk-Archiv
Roland Jahn, im April 1985, illegal in Jena.

Image 3: "Visual turn" in photographs of Roland Jahn (A+B) before expulsion and after (C+D) expulsion. Bildarchiv Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft, signatures RHG_Fo_HAB_11985, RHG_Fo_HAB_11686, RHG_Fo_HAB_12007, and RHG_Fo_HAB_12013.

sion, he may have tried to protect his former collaborators by not showing up with them in situations where the risk of being photographed was real. However, there is also an alternative (or better: complementary) explanation for this lack of an overlap between the two networks. Many of the names appearing together in post-1982 photographs are not directly linked with the Jena region, but merely indicate Jahn's activities as a moderator between Western politicians and journalists and members of the East German opposition in general.

My final argument is related to the question of whether Jahn's expulsion from the GDR and his illegal activities thereafter resulted in changes in the content of photographs of him. As we have already seen, Jahn's social networks changed after his expulsion and he gained a more central position in the reconstructed post-1983 social network structure. This finding seems to indicate that, after his expulsion, Jahn was photographed with other people far more often than in the period preceding his expulsion. Against these general findings, the following hypothesis seems worth testing: There exists a qualitative, content-related difference between photographs of Jahn prior to his expulsion and those taken after his expulsion. In other words, we expect to find visually different photographs after the dividing year of 1982.

In order to test this hypothesis, I manually went through all the photographs of Jahn in the corpus. Although group photographs could be found in both periods, the differences seem to confirm our hypothesis. Prior to his expulsion, the bulk of photographs of Jahn can be described as action/protest/statement photographs, in other words they evidence Jahn's activities as a dissident, or document how he protested against the GDR system. Images 3A and 3B are model examples of this. Both images are clearly provocative, with a strong, political statement. The first picture (image 3A) is made after Jahn's exmatriculation from the University of Jena in 1977 following his engagement in protests and demonstrations against Wolf Biermann's expulsion. The word *Ausbildungsverbot* (exclusion from education) constructs a clear connection between this photograph and Jahn's exmatriculation. Against this background, the photograph can be interpreted as criticism against the attempt to shut one's (critical) mouth through exmatriculation. However, the photograph could also be read the other way round as a general

criticism against the one-truth-policy of the SED regime. According to this interpretation, because the opposition movement has no right to "educate" – in other words, to act as a system-critical voice in the society – the regime has lost its sensors for systemic problems. This latter interpretation is also closely connected with the attempts of the Jena opposition to create political spaces and room for manoeuvre for public protest fostering democracy in the GDR (see also image 1).

The same system-critical undertone is visible in the second photograph from May 1982 (image 3B). The visual collage is intriguing: the two half-masked men in the lower part of the photograph – the one on the left imitating Stalin, the one on the right imitating Hitler – are merged into one in the middle of the photograph. The message: Both systems are nothing but the two sides of the same coin. The linkage to the First of May celebrations (*Es lebe der 1. Mai!* "Long live the First of May!") makes the visual message even more biting. The First of May was one of the biggest celebration days in the GDR but, at the same time, thoroughly politically instrumentalised by the regime.

The expulsion of Jahn clearly changed the content of photographs of him. Quite understandably, photographs documenting Jahn's protest actions are absent from the corpus. Instead, the post-1983 corpus is dominated by photographs documenting Jahn's social actions as a mediator and a collaborator between the East and the West, predominantly during his illegal visits to the GDR. Images 3C and 3D are good examples of this. Image 3C is a rather typical opposition photo showing a group of people in a flat or outside in a park, often lost in debate. These photographs can be categorised as documentary photographs, since they are not constructed to express a certain message, but merely snapped by chance. The last photograph (Image 3D) also documents one of Jahn's illegal visits to the GDR, but has a stronger visual context. First of all, Jahn is standing beside a traffic sign marking the city border of Jena. In the background we can see a tombstone. My assumption, based both on the visual content of this photograph and what we know about Jahn's close relationship with Matthias Domaschk, is that the photograph documents Jahn's visit to Matthias Domaschk's grave in the northern cemetery in Jena. This interpretation is supported by the fact that the

corpus contains a number of other photographs documenting Jahn's visits to Domaschk's grave.[31]

To sum up: the changes as regards the content after Jahn's expulsion document his changing role from being a radical member of the Jena dissident movement towards being a mediator between the politicians and journalists of the West and the East German dissident movement. Prior to his expulsion in 1983, Jahn used visual methods as one form of his political activity, to express his protest and dissatisfaction with the SED regime. After his expulsion, Jahn acted as a networking mediator, creating "weak ties"[32] connecting East and West. By weak ties, we understand connections making the distance between the two networks shorter. Distance can be any real or perceived measure like time, space, or closeness – the more important aspect is the fact that weak links enable communication between two networks otherwise isolated from each other, or reduce the costs of communication between actors belonging to different networks. From this perspective, Jahn's old connections with GDR dissidents made him a bridge-builder between groups of GDR dissidents and their Western supporters.

At the same time, the changes in visuality also seem to explain Jahn's growing role within his social networks as reconstructed from the photograph corpus. In photographs preceding his expulsion, Jahn appears alone in the context of political statements. Consequently, no linkages to other persons can be reconstructed, so from the perspective of network analysis, these photographs are less informative. Instead, the photographs succeeding Jahn's expulsion are politically less loaded and mostly documenting Jahn with other activists, allowing us to analyse Jahn's social interactions and, thus, better reconstruct his social networks.

[31] For example, RHG_Fo_HAB_11891; RHG_Fo_HAB_11892; RHG_Fo_HAB_11895; RHG_Fo_HAB_11900.

[32] See Granovetter 1973.

## Concluding Remarks

This chapter had an experimental design seeking to build bridges between digital history based on distant, in other words computer-aided, reading and visual history. The chapter introduced a methodological approach for how digital methods can be applied to a digitised photograph collection in order to extract content-related patterns. These patterns, in turn, were used as selection criteria to extract a small-size sample for visual analysis based on close reading. Regarding the empirical case study, opposition movements in the Jena region, I decided to use the structure and change in social networks as the main selection criteria. In all communist countries, the GDR included, dissident movements were torn between the search for publicity and visibility and permanent repression. The numerous expulsions of leading persons of the East German opposition movement underline the importance of social networks, also in the eyes of the Stasi. Consequently, the GDR opposition – like opposition movements in other dictatorships as well[33] – tried to protect its social networks. At the same time, however, the movement documented its political actions and support using photographs. Photographs were also used as illustrations in underground magazines such as *die andere*. Focusing on one crucial tipping point of the Jena opposition, the years 1982–1983, I followed the assumption that changes in social networks might reflect wider contextual changes and, thus, could help us to identify photographs documenting these changes. As the case of Roland Jahn evidenced, this data reduction methodology resulted in a sample in which the visual change caused by the historical tipping point was more than evident.

The results presented in this chapter are rather positive as regards the methodology seeking to bridge digital history and visual history. However, the reader should be aware of certain limits. Firstly, like any analysis, the analysis presented above is highly dependent on the data used. Although the photographic corpus used in this paper is quite large in size, neither the corpus itself nor its meta-data can be considered perfect and complete. Consequently, I have tried my best to avoid over-

[33] E.g. Düring and Beer 2011.

interpretation by carefully reflecting my findings against the results of previous studies. Second, the focus has been on person-to-person relations obtained from photographs and, thus, can only be used to explore and analyse personal connections and ties among East German dissidents in the Jena region. The positive result is, however, that those personal networks constructed and analysed in this chapter fit quite well the historical narrative of the East German opposition.

To summarise my argument: Although the results are encouraging and promising both in the empirical and methodological sense, the future of this kind of multi-modal research highly depends on the availability and accessibility of suitable, digitised materials that are also enriched with appropriate meta-data. Even in the digital era, producing and providing masses of native digital materials, the question of data preparation is crucial: Even native digital materials do not always contain appropriate or standardised meta-data, thus limiting the possibilities for analysis and the selection of research tools. The question of meta-data construction is even more crucial for visual materials, as the creation of meta-data describing visuality seems to be a far more complicated process than that of creating summaries of textual data. Thus, the usability of the methodology described in this chapter is highly dependent on how historical visual materials are processed into digital collections. The more time (and money) that is invested in the creation of rich and detailed meta-data, the better we can exploit digital methods for distant reading in order to obtain a reliable sample for close reading in visual analysis. There are promising examples – such as the histoGraph project on the history of European integration[34] and the Finnish War Photography corpus[35] – of how carefully and thoroughly digitised, prepared and enriched historical sources (photographs, documents, etc.) can open up wholly new perspectives and starting points for scientific research.

[34] https://histograph.cvce.eu/#/, last visited on 9 February 2018.

[35] Elo and Kleemola 2016.

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# Investigating and Understanding Social Media Image Flows. Framings of the Ghouta Attack in Mainstream Media and International Politics

Noora Kotilainen

## Doing Research on Social Media Imagery of Crisis[1]

What comes to your mind when you think about photographs and history? Perhaps you recall moments frozen in old black and white photos, shot decades, even centuries before your time. Or maybe you think of well-known iconised images taken by famous photographers, or possibly envision dramatic pictures of past upheavals, crises, famines or wars. In this context, social media imagery is not perhaps the first thing that comes to mind. Nevertheless, it should be. Imagery that first appears on social media channels is a key means by which news audiences encounter the turbulent world around them – especially crises, wars and dramatic events.

[1] This chapter was written while working in a project "Multilayered Borders of Global Security" (GLASE), funded by Strategic Research Council (STN) at the Academy of Finland (decision numbers 303480 and 303529).

For almost two centuries, photographs of crises, wars and violent events have directed – or even dictated – the view of the spectating world on distant human dramas and sea-changes.[2] Images of crisis and especially of bodily vulnerability and suffering are powerful; they halt us, stick with us, haunt us.[3] Although photographs are often seen as (legal) proof of the events they depict, images of death, suffering and the human cost of conflict and catastrophes do not merely neutrally mediate information or illustrate events. Such images are powerful, suggestive and emotive. They induce strong emotions and reactions, invite humanitarian responses and arouse the desire to help, but may also amplify cries for intervention, even serving to legitimise violent retaliation and war.[4]

Social media has undeniably altered the ways in which crises are mediated from topical global crisis zones in visual form. Today we could, in theory, see all the drama of the world in a matter of minutes, through imagery uploaded to social media by people who were there, on the spot as it happened, equipped with their smartphones or digital cameras. Today, imagery originating from local sources and social media platforms forcefully influences how the world is perceived, and has an enormous effect on how sudden, dramatic events are seen, mediated, learned about and given meaning.[5] Therefore, the standing of imagery originating from social media and its scientific analysis is undoubtedly central to understanding recent political events. Social media imagery offers an intriguing – yet challenging – body of source material for the study of politics, social sciences and history.

How can – and how should – social media images then be used as resources in historical and social science research? Different visual methodologies – such as frame analysis[6], content analysis, semiology, or audience studies[7] – have been extensively dealt with in relevant methodological literature. Thus, this chapter does not go into detail on the dif-

[2] Kotilainen 2016.

[3] Sontag 2003.

[4] Sontag 2003, 11–12; Kotilainen 2016, 42–142.

[5] Kotilainen 2016, 364–366.

[6] Shah et al., 2010, Parry 2010.

[7] See, for example, Rose 2016.

ferent methods for interpreting visual social media originating content. Rather the focus is on the special requirements for utilising social media imagery in history and the social sciences.

Dealing with digital, fast-circulating social media imagery poses its own challenges. These differ from iconic historical imagery, archive images or photographs produced and circulated by clearly definable professional actors, such as established regional or international media houses. This chapter tackles the special requirements for making sense of complex and ever-shifting internet-based visual material. It proposes some principles beneficial when scrutinising social media (crisis) imagery as source material in social sciences, digital social research and history. The focus here is on social media images of crisis and sudden violent events, and their meaning in the wider media environment, including political framing and signification processes of such images.

My approach to using and treating social media imagery as source material for research takes cue from a chapter of my doctoral dissertation, *Visual Theaters of Suffering*.[8] That chapter traced how the so-called Western and the Russian mainstream media utilised and framed the imagery originating from social media of the Ghouta chemical weapons attack in Syria on 21 August 2013.[9] The focus here is on the position, circulation, utilisation and political framing of such images and meaning making within the contemporary media environment and politics.

The Ghouta events are a case in point (and a lesson learned about) what needs to be taken into account when analysing social media imagery of dramatic events in the study of social science. I use it here to illustrate global image flows: the circulation of digital imagery originating from social media[10] subsequently spreading to wider publicity

[8] The dissertation (2016) dealt with utilisation, framings and position of images of crisis, wars and human suffering in international political settings. The approach is historical, but the focus is on utilisation and framings of such images in recent years and decades. It investigates the visual branding of the Afghanistan NATO operation, visual framings of terrorism, forced migration and epidemic illness, recent Western enemy imageries, and social media images of the Syrian war. Kotilainen 2016.

[9] Kotilainen 2016, 364–422.

[10] See, for example, Rose 2016, 299–302.

and conventional mainstream media, also utilised and referred to by different (regional) political and governmental actors.[11] The dramatic, widely circulated and much referred to images of the Ghouta attack shed light on recent social-media-driven global crisis reporting[12], topical media logics of social media imagery, and circulation of digital images in the contemporary global hybrid media system.[13] This illuminates the contextual meaning making and various forms of political utilisation of such imagery, offering novel viewpoints on the critical treatment of social media images as source material.

## What Are Social Media Crisis Images and How Can We Make Sense of Them?

Before discussing how to analyse social media crisis images, we need to define what social media images actually are. What sort of notions are linked to social-media-based crisis images, how do they circulate and what media channels does a wide audience prevailingly encounter such images?

At the simplest level, a social media image is an image that has initially surfaced via a social media channel, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or Flickr. These may be published by anyone from private individuals posting selfies or images of their everyday surroundings, children reporting on their life during wartime, terrorist organisations or militaries branding their fight, all the way to governmental actors informing citizens about crises. Similarly, the intentions behind publishing images on social media vary substantially.[14] However, images of sudden instances of violence from crisis areas, are often produced, published and circulated to inform the rest of the world of events witnessed on the spot. The initial motivation is often to get wider recognition for

[11] Kotilainen 2016, 367–368.

[12] Cottle 2009.

[13] Chadwick 2013.

[14] See, for example, Lindgren 2017, 107–126.

an incident that perhaps would otherwise remain unseen. Consequently, the aim may be to impact on the wider world, changing conceptions of and reactions to a particular situation or event.[15]

Nevertheless, social media images are not circulated or encountered solely on social media. Today, they constitute a major material supply for more conventional, so-called mainstream media, local, regional and international. This is particularly the case in reporting on evolving, political, often violent events from global crisis and war zones, where professional reporters and photographers from international media companies are often scarce. Such occasions involve many media outlets and actors on different levels, from the individual to the international, including governmental, military and other political actors. They circulate visual footage that has first emerged through (local) social media accounts, and utilise it in their own communication and news production.[16]

Therefore, while images initially may have surfaced through social media accounts, they may eventually gain significantly wider reach and visibility. Image flows, circulation of images from one platform to another, have accelerated extensively in the social media age.[17] As most people do not actively follow miscellaneous (local) social media channels of global crisis zones, in order to gain recognition, influence and resonance, more conventional media outlets need to harness these images. Still today the visual social media stream has to pass the gatekeeping and "gatechecking" mechanism of the more conventional media.[18] Therefore, although in theory we could see everything happening around the globe today, in reality, we still predominantly encounter the turbulent world beyond our own local context through geographically, culturally and politically segmented mainstream media news.

This is what Andrew Chadwick means by a hybrid media system; the current media environment, shaped by new media technologies, mixing with more traditional ones. In a hybrid media system, the social media

[15] Lynch et al. 2014, 8–10; Kotilainen 2016, 372–373.

[16] Kotilainen 2016, 375–379; Lynch et al. 2012, 7–12; Pantti & Anden-Papadopoulos 2011, 13; Cottle 2009.

[17] Rose 2016, 299–302; Kotilainen 2016, 367–368.

[18] Schwalbe et al. 2015, 465–483; Pantti 2013, 2–4; Kotilainen 2016, 390–392; 400.

actors who are able to tap into the mixed and complex media system, and incorporate their messages and images into the news production of the still prevailing mainstream media, gain more visibility, permeability and perhaps even have more influence on how the news is framed and signified for more extensive, international audiences.[19] Thus, in reality, social media images may originate from social media channels, but are encountered in the news production of more traditional, local, regional and international mainstream media.[20]

Notably, even once they have moved beyond social media, images are often still referred to, framed, labelled and perceived as social media images. When interpreting them, it is crucial to bear in mind this status of some images as social media images, as it may add presumptions about their nature and credibility, and provide them a somewhat special aura, a different glow.[21] Another central presumption particularly linked to social media crisis mediation is an emancipatory postulation that images mediated through social media would have more power to bring something that would not otherwise be known about to a wider global audience, and to reinforce the reactions of the spectating world towards distant freedom fights and atrocities. In recent years crisis mediation enabled by social media has often been hailed as an emblem of free, non-authoritarian and democracy-enhancing communication, making it easier for citizens, rebels and repressed groups to voice their concerns and even to gain worldwide recognition for their stances on political struggles. Therefore, social media images have been often labelled as liberating and democratising.[22] Moreover, the local, non-professional origin of media content – especially images – has been reported to enhance the sense of its authenticity, spontaneity and thus credibility for media audiences.[23]

On the other hand, an opposite view – that such images are untrustworthy and unreliable – is also frequently associated with images sur-

[19] Chadwick 2013.

[20] Kotilainen 2016, 375–379.

[21] Kotilainen 2016, 388–391.

[22] See, for example, Liberation Technology 2012; see also Kotilainen 2016, 367–373.

[23] Williams et al. 2011, 197–202; Campbell 2011.

facing through social media outlets. Social media is an institution-free, cheap to use, easily accessible platform for almost everyone to mediate information. Compared to traditional mainstream media, large news corporations and established media houses, it may be difficult to verify the authenticity of social media images or credibility of stories. The background of social media actors may be unclear, and their material may be subject to obscurity, manipulation, one-sidedness, biased, even propagandist features.[24] Social media crisis and war imagery may thus very well also be – and often is – initially produced and publicised by NGOs or other organised actors on a local level, or by governmental or military actors, rebel groups or insurgents.

Different rebel or military groups acting locally in crisis areas have access to highly sophisticated technology, and the skills to use it. Such groups often have detailed, organised, strategic communications plans to disseminate (visual) information, and external funding for their digital and social media communication agenda.[25] This has been the case in the extremely complex Syrian War (2011–), but also more broadly in contemporary reporting of war, crisis, and contested situations in which different strong political viewpoints and interests are vexed.[26] Moreover, international terrorist organisations – such as ISIS/DAESH –have widely and successfully utilised (visual) social media communication to further their political agenda, distribute information and even to recruit fighters for their cause. Therefore, the aura of innocence, authenticity, spontaneity and neutrality, and apparent coincidental nature of social media or non-professional image mediation is a clearly misleading label, which nevertheless influences the ways in which social media images are understood and given meaning.

Paradoxically, social media representations are concurrently seen as authentic and, thus, more credible than more traditional media. At the same time, social media image mediation is perceived as calculative,

[24] On complexity and validity in digital social research see, for example, Lindberg 2017, 230–242.

[25] Kotilainen 2016, 390; *The Huffington Post* 19 October 2013.

[26] See, for example, *The Huffington Post* 19 October 2013; CBC News 29 August 2013; *The National* 16 May 2013; Reuters 13 June 2011; Media measurement 10 September 2013.

subjective, even propagandist, rapidly changing, blurry, and difficult to verify. This paradox is worth bearing in mind when utilising social media material for research, since both assumptions influence how such images are utilised, conceptualised and understood. Moreover, both of these assumptions are in a sense true. Nevertheless, social media (originating) imagery offers an intriguing body of research material, which may be hard to avoid for researchers of contemporary visual history and especially visual representations of recent crisis and wars. So, how can social media images be utilised and analysed in historical and social science research?

## Social Media Images as Research Material: Methodological Bricolage

Social media images and their framings in the contemporary hybrid media system may seem like a mess of technological, political and rhizomatic hard-to-control qualities, that scream "don't touch me!" at the level-headed researcher, accustomed to handling traditional source material – archive material, perhaps even readily organised and safely buried in files, waiting to be immersed in. However, archives are not the answer if one wishes to investigate the standing of visual imagery in contemporary digital, networked societies, make sense of social media mediation and contemporary images of sudden events, such as wars or crisis. Gathering and analysing social media imagery differs greatly from working with research material in established archives. Selecting the adequate tools may pose challenges, since there are no canonical methodological guidelines for handling (visual) social media data in social science research.

Thus, the researcher of social media imagery is faced with the "inherent multidimensional complexity and unresolved [methodological] questions" of digital social research. This probably means saying good-bye to "disciplinary belonging" and hello to methodological

pragmatism, even embracing research methods as a creative act.[27] This requires the ability to be flexible and creative, to re-evaluate and to look for solutions to questions no one else has perhaps answered before, as there is often no fixed route to follow. This is not only because social media is such a new phenomenon, and methods of analysing it are still being created, but also because of the very nature of social media as a technology-enabled, very rapid form of communication. Thus, the researcher needs to improvise, use and combine multiple, seemingly perhaps incompatible, methods.[28] Such approach may be called methodological bricolage. Bricolage, a term popularised by Claude Levi-Strauss, means improvising and putting together things in new and adaptive ways. Bricolage methods cannot and do not have to be fully settled beforehand, but take shape as the process evolves, in response to the questions, conditions, and perhaps unexpected challenges faced while carrying out the research.[29]

What does all this mean in practice? To illustrate how imagery of crisis originating from social media may be approached as material in historical and social science research, I introduce bricolage of methods used in analysing the images of the 2013 Ghouta chemical weapons attack, their circulation and contextual, political meaning making.

## The Flowing Social Media Images of the Ghouta Attack and Collaging as a Method of Visualising the Media Stream

At about 2:30 am local Syrian time on 21 August 2013, dramatic imagery of what appeared to be a chemical weapons attack started to emerge from the Ghouta suburbs of Damascus through social media. In a matter of hours, there were thousands of graphic images and videos describing the event online, initially posted mainly through local social media sources.[30]

[27] Lindgren 2017, 233–235.

[28] On methods for researching visual global politics, see Bleiker 2015.

[29] Lindgren 2017, 230–236.

[30] Lynch et al. 2014, 8–10; Kotilainen 2016, 375.

At the time of the attack, Ghouta was territory held by "rebels" or anti-Assad forces. The images were most often identified as posted online by local inhabitants, anti-government sources, opposition activists, humanitarian workers and healthcare actors present in the area. As in many cases of social media images of an acute crisis situation, at Ghouta, the images uploaded to social media may be seen to have been published in their primary setting with the intention of documenting the unfolding events, and to inform the local sphere of the attack. However, the purpose of mediating and circulating such images expands beyond the local, to inform the wider world of the atrocity. The opposition activists posting the videos and images online most certainly hoped – in line with the predominant postulation on the effects of images of suffering – that the crude images would rouse international outrage and work to delegitimise the Syrian regime. Their intention was certainly to make the world bear witness to the horrific events and terrible suffering of Syrians, perhaps with a more robust political (even military) response. Because most of the social media accounts were "rebel minded", in their initial contexts the images were seen to imply or even prove that President Assad's regime was responsible for the attacks.[31]

Typical social media imagery that emerged from the area straight after the attack revealed the panic, disorder, shock, and number of casualties on the ground. The (often amateur) images were hasty, sometimes even blurred, taken in the middle of the mayhem of the evolving events. Information on the time, place and account of the events were often added to the images. The technical quality of these images differs from the professional level customarily seen in mainstream media. It was usually more graphic and crude compared to the average visual stream in Western mainstream media. These frequent and recurring framings also formed into recognisable (political) narratives of the situation, that the mostly local, most likely mainly "rebel-minded" presenters of the images wanted to tell about the situation in Syria. [32]

On 21 August 2013, the world woke up to this terrible scene. Opening internet browsers and reading the (digital) morning paper, the world

[31] Lynch et al. 2014, 8–10; Kotilainen 2016, 375.

[32] Ibid.

encountered images of the chemical weapons attack killing a substantial number of people (the estimates varied from 300 to several thousand), mostly civilians. I too, as a Finnish follower of the world news, saw these images the morning after the brutal attack. Like the majority of more distant media spectators, I did not encounter the news or the images primarily by following local social media accounts, but through Finnish national and international mainstream media. The Ghouta case is an example of how images circulate on social media and spread to a larger audience on mainstream news broadcasts. The images were reframed in the news production of these more conventional media actors.[33] This happened very fast: within a few hours, the sporadic messages of local actors were transformed into international and regional news stories.[34]

In Western media descriptions of the attack, multiple images of the events were habitually presented in collections, under a single news story. These image galleries were largely based on social media imagery, and the severity of the events in Ghouta was demonstrated by presenting large numbers of images.[35] The collage illustrations (images 1 and 2) bring together typical imagery that was frequently displayed in Western mainstream reporting of the events, aiming to illustrate the visual stream for the reader. The collages are compiled by a profes-

[33] I followed the use of images and the news feed of several news outlets for about two weeks starting from the attack. These included the Finnish newspapers *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Iltasanomat*, the Finnish national broadcasting company, YLE; from the UK *The Guardian*, *Mirror*, *Independent* newspapers, the BBC and Reuters; the French *Le Monde*, and the US *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and CNN.

[34] Examples of the reporting of the Ghouta events in Western mainstream media outlets: *The Mirror* 22 August 2013; *The Independent* 22 August 2013; *The New York Times* 21 August 2013; *The Lede Blog / New York Times* 21 August 2013; *The Guardian* 21 August 2013 (A); *The Guardian* 21 August 2013 (B); The CNN 8 September 2013; *New York Times Project, Watching Syria's War*; *Helsingin Sanomat* 22 August 2013; *The Daily Mail* 22 August 2013; *Helsingin Sanomat* 7 September 2013; *Iltasanomat* 22 August 2013; *World Observer Online* 22 August 2013.

[35] Ibid.

Image 1. Collage illustration

sional graphic designer[36], guided by my instructions. They collate the

[36] Graphic designer Karoliina Isoviita compiled the collages on my instructions. Images and image types visible in the collages were utilised in *The Mirror* 22 August 2013; *The Independent* 22 August 2013; *The New York Times* 21 August 2013; *The Lede Blog / New York Times* 21 August 2013; *The Guardian* 21 August 2013 (A); *The Guardian* 21 August 2013 (B); The CNN 8 September 2013; *New York Times Project, Watching Syria's War*; *Helsingin Sanomat* 22 August 2013; *The Daily Mail* 22 August 2013; *Helsingin Sanomat* 7 September 2013; *Iltasanomat* 22 August 2013; *World observer online* 22 August 2013. See also Kotilainen 2016, 376, 380, 383, 387.


Image 2. Collage illustration

frequently (re)presented images to visualise the main image types and (reframed) narratives into which the Western media reporting shaped the sporadic local social media imagery.

The collages are inspired by the ideas of Jaques Rancière, in his book *The Emancipated Spectator*. Rancière sees viewing as an active process, by which the spectator interprets and composes their own (re)collage of the seen.[37] Therefore, the collages are not only illustrations, but part of the research method. They are composed through mapping out the

[37] Rancière 2009, 12-14. See also Särmä 2014.

visual material, and reading the reoccurring, shared arrangements of the images that form common (Western) narratives of the events. Moreover, these illustrations seek to show the segmented, collage-like and cumulative nature of images of suffering in Ghouta in Western media. In addition, the collages represent my reading (as a researcher) of the ways in which the imagery originating from social media was (re)framed in the Western mainstream media, and further in the contexts of international politics regarding Syria.

In the next subchapter, I show how the process of signifying and politically utilising imagery of crisis originating from social media may be followed in the contemporary hybrid media system. I tell the story of a particular journey, researching the Ghouta images, to illustrate what the bricolage method might mean for investigating visual social media material in social science research.

## The Ghouta Images in Western Media and Politics: Contextual, Cultural and Political Signification

As I began to scrutinise the social media images of the Ghouta chemical attack, my primary research questions were: how did the images circulate, and what signification did they carry when they reached geographically, culturally and politically divergent regional mainstream media? I also set out to find out how the images were used in the international political discussion, plans and conventions regarding the situation in Syria.

Another motivation for the inquiry was to investigate the argument frequently reiterated at the time (2013) that social media could and would somehow change, if not revolutionise, how the world encounters and reacts to – even intervenes in – dramatic cases of distant suffering encountered through catastrophic crisis imagery.[38] This view puzzled me. As a social science historian specialising in visual communication, I associated this belief in the emancipatory power of technological advan-

[38] Kotilainen 2016, 373–375.

cement in the field of (visual) communication with similar historical episodes: the Vietnam War syndrome paradigm[39], the CNN effect[40], and the Al Jazeera effect[41]. This "technology driven causality optimism"[42] is visible elsewhere, in arguments that images circulated by novel technological means change responses to crisis, also in international political settings.[43] Therefore, I also set out to investigate, through the Ghouta case, whether social media imagery really seems to alter contemporary perspectives on the grievances of others.

At this point, my main method was to map out the images, to form an overview of how the events were visualised, how the images were arranged and framed.[44] I observed that the visual representation of the Ghouta events in Western media formed into particular, characteristic types that highlighted certain key features. These recurrent, characteristic types of images are compiled into images 1 and 2. In line with historical and dominant conventions of illustrating violent conflicts[45], these images were framed so that they highlighted the number of causalities (rows of dead bodies, mass graves in image 2, number of hospitalised people in image 1). Both collages also emphasise the victims as civilians (relative high number of children, images of families, older men). The visual framing highlights the gas attack as a brutal and cowardly act and as illegal, even a war crime. Many of the images show victims evidently suffering from exposure to a chemical substance: pictured with running eyes, difficulty breathing and foaming at the mouth. They are shouting in panic, being treated or lying on the floors of crowded hospitals (image 1), or already dead with bluish lips and skin (image 2). The typical visual representation draws attention to the human suffering and death induced, the scale of the events and their nature as an appalling

[39] Hallin 1989 (1986); Chomsky & Herman 2002 (1988).

[40] Robinson 2002; Giboa 2005; Perlmutter 1998.

[41] Seib 2012; Seib 2008.

[42] Kotilainen 2016, 373–374.

[43] See Kotilainen 2016, 373–379; Neuman 1996.

[44] On Frame analysis see, for example, D'Angelo & Kuypers (eds.) 2010; Shah, et al. 2010; Parry 2010.

[45] On historical conventions of picturing victims of atrocity see, for example, Kleemola 2016, 82; Brothers 1997, 161–187.

humanitarian catastrophe (in particular the pictures in image 2 highlight the scale of the attack and its toll). Although at the time there was no legal proof of the perpetrator, almost without exception the al-Assad regime was named in Western new stories and frequently the images were referred to as proving the guilt of the regime.[46]

Many of the images illustrating the news were actually credited to large international media houses such as Reuters or the Associated Press. Nevertheless, the images were often framed in the news stories as taken by "rebels", amateurs, and their origin in local sources and social media was emphasised.[47] In this way, the ethos of social media and amateur images was utilised to add an aura of authenticity, to accentuate their authority as proof of the events taking a certain course and to emphasise the "reality effect" of the news stories.[48]

The Ghouta spectacle was very visible in the Western media; it was hard to escape the scenes in the following few days and weeks. This was not only because of the exceptionally cruel nature of the event and extensive visual record of it, but also because of the Western political stance towards the events, and repeated references made to the dramatic images by high-level political actors. The acts were immediately condemned all over the world, frequently with reference to the horrific images.

Political statements and speeches made by world leaders commenting on the critical situation in Syria made the events and the images of them more visible, especially in Western Europe and North America. For example, in his speech on 26 August 2013, the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), Ban Ki-moon referred to the images picturing the outcomes of the attack, while appealing to the international

[46] See, for example, *Mirror* 22 August 2013; *The Independent* 22 August 2013; CNN 8 September 2013; Kotilainen 2016, 384–385.

[47] Such framing in, for example, *The Guardian* 21 August 2013; *The New York Times* 21 August 2013. Mervi Pantti has shown in relation to the Western media's (visual) mediation of the Syrian War (2012/early 2013 before the chemical attack) that the majority of the images (more than 80% of the imagery with source provided) used to picture the Syrian crisis was actually produced by the big Western news agencies (AP, AFP and Reuters). Pantti 2013, 9.

[48] Kotilainen 2016, 382–389.

community to act on the Syrian situation, saying: "We have all seen the horrifying images on our television screens and through social media. Clearly this was a major and terrible incident. We owe it to the families of the victims to act."[49] Samantha Power, The United States Ambassador to UN tweeted: "Haunting images of entire families dead in their beds. Verdict is clear: Assad has used CWs [chemical weapons] against civilians in violation of int'l [international] norm."[50] Like the mainstream media representations, both these statements assert the status of (social media) images as references conveying the "truth of what really happened." Again, the images are practically presented as legal proof of the terrible event and as pointing to the perpetrator, al-Assad.[51]

The dramatic and terrifying imagery of the Ghouta attacks originating from social media also occupied a central place in governmental reports and accounts compiled by the three key Western powers (USA, Britain and France). These reports all drew on intelligence information, accounts of local medical workers and, significantly, on social media imagery of the events and visual material produced by local amateurs. Only a week after the events, on 29 August, Britain released its report, which concluded that a chemical substance had been used, and adding that President al-Assad was behind the attack.[52] The next day the United States released its report, which used hundreds of videos and amateur images shot in the area at the time as core evidence. The report stated that such a massive amount of coaxial footage in itself proved the course of the events. Again, the regime of al-Assad was blamed.[53] The French government report reiterated much the same and indicated that the severity and scope (including numbers of causalities) was calculated based on locally produced visual footage (47 original videotapes).[54]

[49] *Remarks on Syria, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon,* Seoul (Republic of Korea), 26 August 2013.

[50] Power's tweet accessed on David Campbell's blog *Visual Storytelling: Creative Practice and Criticism*, "Syria and the Power of Images", 27 August 2013.

[51] Kotilainen 2016, 401–402.

[52] Syria: Reposted Chemical Weapons Use, 2013.

[53] Government Assessment of the Syrian Government's Use of Chemical Weapons on 21 August 2013.

[54] Syria/Syrian chemical programme – national executive summary of declassified intelligence, 3 September 2013.

In line with the governmental reports, the statements and speeches by leading Western politicians also focused on the images of the Ghouta attack. In such instances, the images were presented not only as proof of what had happened, but as demanding action from the international community, or "Western coalition". Soon after the event, an international coalition, led by the United States, France and Britain, started to plan a targeted military intervention in Syria, to deter and punish the al-Assad regime, seen as responsible for the massacre.[55] For about two weeks following the attack, until a diplomatic outcome was found[56], the dramatic images of the atrocity remained very visible and much used in the political rhetoric and discussion concerning Syria.

In his speeches, US President Barack Obama made references to historical iconic images of the use of poison gas in the First World War or the Holocaust and Nazi gas chambers in the Second World War. He stated that the al-Assad regime was responsible for immense human suffering and stressed that the world could not turn a blind eye to the images of horror, but needed to act. Obama also showed 13 amateur images from Syria to Congress in an attempt to get their backing for the planned military intervention.[57] He legitimised the planned military operation by referring to the images of children "writhing in pain and going still on a cold hospital floor." In Obama's words, these images show that "sometimes resolutions and statements of condemnation are

[55] *The Guardian* 28 August 2013; *The New York Times* 29 August 2013; *Helsingin Sanomat* 28 August 2013.

[56] A diplomatic solution to the Syrian chemical weapons crisis started to emerge in mid-September. On 14 September, the United States and Russia published a joint proposal framework. This was the basis for a UN Security Council resolution on the disarmament and destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons, signed on 27 September. The planned Western military solution to the Syrian crisis was thus soon replaced with a diplomatic one. See *Framework for Elimination of Syrian Chemical Weapons*, 14 September 2013; *United Nations Security Council Resolution 2118* (2013), 27 September 2013. See also Kotilainen 2016, 411–414.

[57] *Government Assessment of the Syrian Government's Use of Chemical Weapons on August 21, 2013*, 30 August 2013; CNN News 8 September 2013; *The Daily Mail* 7 September 2013.

simply not enough."[58] Many other American and European leaders used similar rhetoric, making emotional and powerful statements, resting on the horrific accounts of the images. US Secretary of State John Kerry aligned in support of military action at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on Syria, 3 September, as he stated that this was: "not the time for armchair isolationism. This is not the time to be spectators to slaughter. Neither our country or our conscience can afford the cost of silence."[59] French President François Hollande and British Prime Minister David Cameron appealed in favour of a targeted military operation, on the grounds of the horrific scenes in the amateur images of the event and its aftermath.[60]Also in these contexts, frequent references were made to the horrific imagery (reiterating the typification and arrangements seen in the collage illustrations) and its origin with locals and amateurs from social media.

## Ghouta in Russian Publicity: Images as Vague Illustrations

The images, of course, were not only seen in the so-called West, where usually the political attitude was critical towards the al-Assad regime. The imagery was also widely circulated in Russian mainstream media when the situation in Syria was reported. As one of the most loyal supporters of the Syrian regime, Russia has had very different position regarding the Syrian War. Therefore, I made a limited observation of the images used in Russian mainstream media, to find out how the Ghouta events were visually represented and given meaning in a different political climate. I examined three central Russian mainstream media outlets: state-operated Ria Novosti, Itar-Tass, a government-owned official main news outlet, and Interfax, a privately owned news agency, which highlights its independent nature and cooperation with Western media

[58] Remarks by the president in Address to the Nation on Syria, 10 September 2013.

[59] *The Washington Post* 3 September 2013.

[60] *France Diplomatie* 30 August 2013; *The Guardian* 29 August 2013; BBC Democracy Live 29 August 2013.

houses such as Bloomberg. I followed their visual reporting of the Syrian situation for about two weeks from the Ghouta attack.

The visual material utilised by Ria Novosti featured much of the same imagery that was used in the Western media outlets (resembling the material collated in images 1 and 2). It included graphic imagery of child victims of the attack and civilians being treated in local hospitals. Unlike the use of similar (and partly even the same) images gathered in the Western media, within the arrangements of Ria Novosti, the images first and foremost appear to be illustrative. The number of images produced of the event, their origin as civilian-created testimonials, the suffering they demonstrate, their status as legal proof, or the moral imperative for intervention and action brought about by witnessing the suffering of the Syrian people is not addressed or highlighted within the Russian news contexts.[61] In covering the Ghouta gas strike, Itar-Tass did not use images of suffering Syrians at all. The news was illustrated using images of well-known and influential international actors, such as Barack Obama, Angela Merkel, Vladimir Putin, Sergei Lavrov, Bashar al-Assad and Ban ki-Moon.[62] This broadcasting approach seems to signify the Ghouta events as crisis in international relations, rather than as a humanitarian catastrophe. In contrast to the government-linked agencies, Interfax widely used the shocking images of pain familiar from the Western news in its reporting of the event.[63]

The comparative glimpse into the Russian media treatment of the Ghouta events shows how the images that created a visible spectacle in Western publications received little or no publicity in the predominantly state-controlled Russian media. This difference demonstrates how even the most atrocious images need to be hoisted into news items and framed as newsworthy to have an impact. The surrounding culture,

[61] Ria Novosti 21 August 2013 (B); Novosti 21 August 2013 (A); Ria Novosti 22 August 2013; Ria Novosti 23 August 2013; Ria Novosti 25 August 2013 (A); Ria Novosti 25 August 2013 (B); Ria Novosti 26 August 2013; Ria Novosti 27 August 2013 (A); Ria Novosti 27 August 2013 (B).

[62] Itar-Tass 31 August 2013; Itar-Tass 29 August 2013; Itar-Tass 26 August 2013; Itar-Tass 28 August 2013.

[63] Interfax 21 August 2013; Interfax 26 August 2013 (B); Interfax 22 August 2013; Interfax 26 August 2013 (A); Interfax 21 August 2013.

politics, ideology, predominant societal ethos and ambiance define what meanings (social media) images acquire in their use by mainstream media.

## Studying Crisis Imagery in the Social Media Age

The collages of characteristic, much-used images discussed above illustrate my reading of the typical way of presenting the events. In their contextual media and political framings, the events formed into narratives of what had happened, its meaning and significance (in the Western cultural and political sphere). Therefore, these collage illustrations represent my method, as they are also a visual way of presenting the media stream to the reader. My approach was to contextually analyse the ways in which the social media images were referred to and used in the mainstream media and in international political settings.

In this subchapter, I conclude by pondering what this analysis of the images of the Ghouta attack can contribute to making sense of social media images in the hybrid media system, and to utilising them as research material.

The Ghouta case illuminates the image flows in the era of social media – the swift transformation of images from social media into mainstream media and their high standing in blatantly political contexts. Moreover, it demonstrates the utilisation of the "authentic aura" of social media imagery within mainstream media news production, as well as within the political utilisation and framing of the imagery in the wider regional, international media. Even though the authentic and emancipatory powers of social media visual mediation have largely been proved a myth, overtly positive and even misleading assumptions about the liberating power of social media technology was at the crux of the Western framing of the images.

In the West, imagery originating from social media came to function as plausible *proof* of not only the course of events and the human toll of the attack, but also the perpetrator. This idea of photographs as proof, embraced in all these contexts, links to an age-old, stubborn

perception of photographic images as transparent records of the real; a belief that has historically hoisted photographic imagery into prominence. The aura of non-professionalism and authenticity and the emancipatory nature of social media images was utilised by the mainstream media to give credibility and newsworthiness to their reporting of an unfolding crisis. This was also detectable in the framing and rhetorical utilisation of the social media images in the proclamations of Western politicians, and exploited in the governmental reports investigating the events.[64] The origin of the images in social media – seen as authentic and unfiltered – was also heavily used to legitimise serious political acts, such as the planned military intervention.

In contrast, in Russian media the aura of authenticity or truth and dramatic power of social media images did not surface. Rather, in the Russian context, a sense of subjectivity and the shady, unclear background of the material was attached to the images. Therefore, the Ghouta case demonstrates how such impressions are contextual, and reminds the researcher to be cautious, aware and critical of assumptions about the authenticity, unfiltered nature or revolutionising abilities of social-media-based mediation of information from crisis zones.

Perhaps even more starkly, the case of the Ghouta images shows how the politics, media and meaning making of dramatic crisis imagery remains strongly determined by the political and culturally contexts of presentation, even in the social media age. The high standing of the images in Western media may be simply explained by the fact that the narratives of the images from Ghouta fitted into the existing, dominant Western conceptions of the Syrian War. The Ghouta case exemplifies how the prevailing political position towards the Syrian War in the West significantly influenced how the news was presented and the images framed and utilised within the Western media.

Therefore, following up and using of social media originating imagery in research of (media) history or social sciences, is more about how the traditional media uses, frames and gives meaning to visual imagery originating from social media. The key to using such material for research is to read the images in their political, cultural and regime-driven

[64] Kotilainen 2016, 382; see also Pantti 2013.

contexts. Therefore, the focus must be on how such images are transformed into visual representations – and accompanying stories – that endlessly flow in the complex contemporary global media sphere. What is still most important is good old source criticism, with added understanding of the contemporary media logic and environment, and consideration of the contextually fluid nature of visual images.

Learning from the Ghouta case, it seems that in the age of rapid (global) flows of images and a fast-paced, hybrid media system, what Roland Barthes wrote about mute images is perhaps more relevant than ever before.[65] Barthes made his claim on the ambivalence and silence of images in the 1970s, in the age of printed newspapers, magazines, (often openly politically orientated and positioned by the left-right dichotomy) regional, national and international mass media and television. Already then, it was clear how (news) images gather their meanings, significations and messages in their multifarious different contextual framings and assemblages, uses and reuses. As he argues, despite of their rich visual language, multiple signifiers and indisputably political nature and potency in political settings, visual images are themselves mute.[66] Without a context, an image remains silent. Barthes described how mute visual images – that, alone, cannot form a solid (political) argument – are given their meaning in their contextual framing, presentation and assembly. Messages are added to images not only by captions, surrounding text and publication layout, but in the political, cultural and ideological frame in which they are shaped and read.[67]

Therefore, to understand images in the age of social media, and especially when using them as research material, it is essential to acknowledge how such images are nearly endlessly shared and re-shared, circulated and re-circulated. Social media images flow in the hybrid media sphere, moving from one medium to another. They may be re-circulated in different cultural surroundings, within different media outlets of diverse political regimes, and along the way they gather new uses, framings, and meanings. Consequently, news media, rather than picturing the truth

[65] Barthes 1977, 15–31.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Barthes 1977, 15–31; see also Butler 2009, 63–65.

of what has happened, always reveal and reflect the dominant political and ideological ethos of their context.[68] Therefore, news images can only be understood in their political and cultural surroundings, also in the social media age.

Since at least the 1980s, media and international relations studies have shown that the media is inclined to "manufacturing consent"[69] or a "rallying around the flag" effect. Mainstream media clearly tends to align itself with the dominant political culture, framing news in politically biased ways, especially when reporting on conflicts.[70] This political framing is very clear for the Ghouta images, both in mainstream media and governmental reports. In social media crisis reporting, the mainstream media still functions as part of the ideological sphere in which it operates.[71] Consequently, images must be interpreted within the political ambiance into which they are placed. The political percolation and framing of the social media images of Ghouta is even clearer in the Russian mainstream media. This study shows how newsworthiness and news photographs are both contextual and ideological.

To summarise, the Ghouta case illustrates the flaws in the argument that social media image mediation is a revolutionising or emancipatory force which changes how contemporary global audiences encounter crisis and political upheavals. As Susan Sontag argues, by themselves photographs do not have a narrative coherence and, thus, they cannot activate us, tell comprehensive political stories or make us understand the suffering of others. As she explains: if images are to move us politically, it is only because they are presented within the context of a relevant political consciousness.[72] Photographs cannot form solid arguments, but reinforce existing political impositions; this seems ever more relevant to reading social media imagery and its framings in wider contexts. Dramatic crisis imagery, perhaps even more so when it originates from social media, may act as a powerful political tool, gathering status and

[68] Barthes 1977, 15–31; Robinson 2004; Hall 1972.

[69] Chomsky and Hermann 1988.

[70] See, for example, Robinson 2004; Cottle 2009; Hallin 1989 (1986); Hall 1972.

[71] Robinson 2004; Cottle 2009; Hallin 1989 (1986); Hall 1972.

[72] Sontag 1977, 17; see also Butler 2009, 67.

meanings in its contexts of presentation. Moreover, such images may be effectively used emotionally to intensify political arguments and, thus, potentially to rationalise and justify even forceful political acts, such as military intervention.

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# Bridging from Close Reading to Distant Reading. A Methodological Note to "Computational Visual History"

Kimmo Elo & Olli Kleemola

Since the beginning of the "digital era", the quantity of visual information has grown exponentially, and today the world is flooded with images. According to a recent estimation, over 1.5 trillion, in other words 1 500 billion pictures are taken annually.[1] In addition to this, there is the growing number of older sources initially not digital but increasingly being digitised.

Today, algorithms developed for text mining, that is computer-aided processing and analysis of large text masses, as well computational text analysis are widely used among historians interested in exploring large, even huge text corpora in order to obtain new knowledge. Optical character recognition (OCR) techniques are indispensable implements when it comes to digitising printed documents and to preparing them for computational analysis. Once transformed into a digital text corpus, these documents, letters etc. can be filtered, queried, and explored with text mining tools.

Despite the exponentially increasing quantity of digitised, visual sources, the methods and tools of what we call here "computational

[1] Boll & Kassel 2018.

visual mining" still lag far behind their counterparts in text mining, especially when it comes to exploring, filtering or querying visual corpora, for example large collections of photographs. A considerable amount of research is also done in this field, but since visual materials differ from traditional text-based materials in many respects, attempts to explore visual corpora face an extensive set of problems ranging from simpler readability problems to complex copyright issues. Here we use the technical term "visual content mining" to describe our objective of sketching out how to bridge close reading, the traditional method used in visual history, to distant reading, that is computer-aided identification of essential content. Although the general tone in this chapter is rather positive, we are wholly aware of those numerous, unsolved problems related to computational image recognition.

The intention of this paper is to outline and discuss our draft of a research environment for computational visual history. The underlying idea of the research environment is an ontological layered model offering a data model to mark, annotate, and store visual elements in a cloud database. The environment itself is a semi-automated learning system. This means that the stored visual elements are used to train the object recognition capabilities of the environment. The purpose of this training is to improve the system's image recognition capabilities. Further, the system should also offer tools to translate the essential visual content to metadata based on a standardised, yet expandable visual vocabulary. According to our vision, in the future researchers should be able to use the research environment to not only pre-process their own visual materials but also to run both visual and textual queries.

## Traditional Visual History as Close Reading

While the lively discussion around visual sources for historical research has undoubtedly helped to widen the perspectives of many historians by bringing new source materials to work with, those studies based on pictorial sources are still in many ways very traditional ones. This is mostly due to the fact that while historians using textual sources nowadays can

utilise many computational aids to handle vast amounts of text, visual historians have to "mine" their sources manually, as computational tools suitable for analysing visual material do not exist.[2] This has led to the fact that while the quantity of textual material that can be utilised as source for any given historical study constantly grows, studies based on visual material seldom use a very large number of sources.[3] This, again, leads to the fact that the studies often are merely focused on some very specific case with no comparative perspectives as this would mean the quantity of source material would grow.[4]

There are few studies like historian Gerhard Paul's *Das visuelle Zeitalter. Punkt und Pixel* (2016) whose goalsetting is impressive: writing the visual history of Germany from the 19th century until today. While Paul's study is most welcome and we wish to see similar studies soon, it can be said that this study also has a major flaw: it does not set out clearly how the pictures in it are chosen, and thus, it does not specify why the choices have been made. Neither does it set out which pictures have been omitted. This is a big setback, because against one picture chosen, there are hundreds of pictures which were left out.

When using pictorial material, it is even more important to utilise comparative perspectives and a large material corpus as pictures are often influenced by earlier ones which function as visual models for depicting some specific topic. This means, a (photographic) image is not a completely independent result of its photographer's choices but, instead, is based on numerous earlier pictures.[5] Accordingly, if it were

[2] Some rudimentary tools that can be described as "picture search engines" indeed do exist; however, currently they only can offer fairly similar picture results to search queries (e.g. https://bildsuche.digitale-sammlungen.de/, last visited on 10 November 2017) or identify the genre of a picture (e.g. landscape or portrait) by rather unelaborated means (colour, brightness). Actually, that does not help research with visual materials sufficiently – especially with respect to mass analysis.

[3] For exceptions, see Arani 2008; Struk 2011.

[4] See e.g. Rother & Prokasky (eds.) 2010; Kleemola 2016, 19.

[5] This is particularly important when it comes to the so-called "Key images" (*Schlüsselbilder*), which are well-known historical images, which form our expectations on how a specific topic should be depicted/presented, and thus influence numerous coming pictures. For more information on these key images, see e.g. Dreier, Fuchs, Radkau & Utz 2008.

possible to conduct comparative studies based on extensive pictorial material, very interesting results could be obtained.[6]

Since the establishing of the Visual History branch of historical study, historians have been looking for possibilities to utilise computers in historical research on images. While there are numerous ways, such as web publishing and easy graphic presentations, which today can be considered standard, to this date there is not a single tool for "mining" vast quantities of photographic materials, as stated earlier. Even though many explanations for this situation can be found, one of the most important reasons is the lack of standardised visual categories. We understand categories here as tools which help us to understand the photographs. In the art history branch, such categories have long been developed. Because the majority of these categories are, however, based on the analysis of paintings, they are only of limited use as tools for the analysis of photographs, since paintings and photographs differ from each other so significantly. Paintings often have strong traditions and conventions on how to depict a certain topic, and though of course photographs that follow the conventions of paintings can be taken, most photographs do not observe the same visual outlines.[7]

## Distant Reading – the Essence of Digital Humanities

During the past couple of decades, a new paradigm, digital humanities, has emerged in the field of the humanities and social sciences. This new paradigm is closely linked with the wider phenomenon, digitalisation. Digitalisation refers to the ways that digitisation structures, shapes, and influences the contemporary world. Hence, digitalisation refers to the (re)structuring of many domains of our societies. Manuel Castells, perhaps the most prominent scholar of digitalisation, views digitalisation as one of the defining characteristics of the contemporary world struc-

[6] See e.g. US Naval Institute Staff 2015.

[7] On the categories and conventions on political art, see Fleckner, Warnke & Ziegler 2014.

ture. According to Castells – and many other scholars – a crucial role is played by the underlying digital media producing a wholly new quantity of digital-born materials, most of them visual by nature. Contrary to digitalisation, digitisation is a more limited concept, mostly used to refer to the technical process of converting analogue or manual stream into digital bits. Thus, digitisation refers to the mechanical and technical process of transforming non-digital material into digital.

Digital humanities is a discipline rooted in computational humanities, which in turn is included in the founding fields of computational linguistics. As a scientific paradigm, digital social sciences is located at the multidisciplinary intersection of social sciences and computational sciences. In more general terms, digital social sciences seeks to foster computational research on analysis and visualisation of digital or digitised materials.[8] Meanwhile, these developments have raised heated pro-and-contra debates, mostly revolving around relationship between digital/computational historians and historians more in favour of traditional methods of historical research. To summarise, the main fault line seems to run between close and distant reading.

Close reading refers to the traditional method, in which the researcher's task is to carefully read, analyse and interpret all source materials.[9] The latter, distant reading, refers to the computational approach where the source material is processed, either automatically or semi-automatically, by computational data mining algorithms. The very idea of distant reading is to process content in a large material corpus without engaging in the reading manually. Actually, the "reading" itself is completed as statistical processing in the form of data mining that allows information in or about the content to be processed and analysed with no (or minimal) human intervention. This kind of approach allows effective processing of materials at a scale that is far beyond the capabilities of human readers. However, its speed is not the main advantage of distant reading. Proponents of this method not only stress the ability of distant reading to "provide new points of departure for research", but also its almost inexhaustible capability to detect new viewpoints,

[8] Kirschenbaum 2012.

[9] Mone 2016.

allowing us to ask about what has been included in and omitted from traditional studies.[10]

To summarise, visual history as a research paradigm leans heavily on close reading. Taking into account the fact that the evolution from "analogue" (or traditional) historical research using textual sources to "digital" (or computational) history required a crucial shift from close to distant reading, there is no need to reinvent the wheel when it comes to laying out a road-map from visual history to computational visual history. Leaning on Kathleen Fitzpatrick's definition of digital humanities "as a nexus of fields within which scholars use computing technologies to investigate the kinds of questions that are traditional to the Humanities"[11], we consider the application of computational methods as *the* core of digital history and, consequently, consider the application of computation methods and tools of distant reading to historical visual materials as the core element of computational visual history.

The requirement to apply computational methods designed for distant reading causes a new problem to emerge. In contrast to distant reading of textual materials, where sophisticated methods of text mining or computational linguistics have a long and successful track record and have been successfully used to identify topics, discourses, and narratives relevant for historical research[12], object recognition – used here as equivalent for word recognition in text mining – from visual sources is a far more complicated challenge. One of the key reasons is large intra-class visual variation in images caused by for example intra-class and inter-class variation, differences in lighting, and distortions from angles, poses and deformations.[13]

This is not the place to discuss technical details related to image recognition and the problems related to this demanding field of rese-

[10] http://dh101.humanities.ucla.edu/?page_id=62, last visited on 19 January 2018. See also Diesner et al. 2012; Holt et al. 2012; Novotny & Cheshire 2012.

[11] Fitzpatrick 2012.

[12] E.g. Brandes & Corman 2002; Schultz-Jones 2009; Brier & Hopp 2011; Diesner et al. 2012; Leetaru 2012; Piotrowski 2012.

[13] See e.g. Wang et al. 2014, 2016.

arch[14], but we wish to highlight the crucial meaning of the interpretative act connecting words to meanings. When working with textual materials, this connection is relatively straightforward, since most words have only a limited number of meanings. Another aspect is that in the most cases words are used to construct statements. Statements, in turn, can be used to identify the context of the text. Previous studies have evidenced that word distribution patterns not only connect to statements, but also strongly correlate with discourse patterns.[15]

Applying this textual logic to visual materials, we can replace words with visual objects and statements with visual patterns. We dare to go even further and argue that visual object distribution can be expected to correlate with visual discourse patterns. The argument here is that visual materials could be used to explore visual discourses and discourse patterns also relevant for historical research. This objective is also one of the key objectives of contemporary visual history.

In contemporary visual history, visual objects are identified, contextualised and interpreted by the researcher during the process of close reading. The crucial point – and the biggest difference to computational text analysis – is identification. In the field of text mining, the most important computational task is the identification of structural characteristics – clusters and patterns – in large text corpora, and robust tools exist to carry out this task. In academic research, interpretation and contextualisation are mostly carried out by the researcher. However, it should be kept in mind that the effectiveness (in terms of speed and accuracy) of text mining methods is not based on content knowledge, but on the fact that digital (or digitised) words based on alphabetical characters are easy to identify (as character strings) and, thus, are comparable and relatively easy to quantify and to tabularise.

In contrast to character-based materials, visual units/objects are far less easy to recognise. In a photograph, it is rather difficult – in many cases almost impossible – to decide where one visual element ends and

[14] For recent discussions, see e.g. Huang et al. 2014; Ries & Lienhart 2014; Sun 2014; Wang et al. 2014; Ko and Lee 2015; Wang et al. 2015; Li et al. 2016; Osadchy et al. 2016; Wang et al. 2016; Zhang et al. 2016; Li et al. 2017; Zhong et al. 2016.

[15] E.g. Aijmer and Stenström, 2004.

another begins, making the distinction between objects by defining their borders very demanding. As a result, we might have two visual sources presenting the same visual object, for example the same cars or the same persons, but due to differences in saturation, lighting, colours or poses the computer cannot decide whether the recognised objects are identical. It is certain that this problem is not unfamiliar to text mining with low-quality digitised text. However, the deviation is significantly smaller, thus helping the algorithm to reduce the number of possibly correct guesses.

The biggest advantage of distant reading of large text corpora is its capability to organise and structure the material in a way that helps the researcher to focus the research, to identify similarities and differences, and to explore trends and dynamics over time. Additionally, text corpora can be queried quite easily. It should be noted, however, that many current text mining systems are blind to changes in language over time. Moreover, a majority of computational text mining systems work well with English, but are rather difficult to apply to other languages or to multilingual materials.

The bridging of close and distant reading in visual history can only be achieved through advances in image recognition techniques, a currently growing field with many promising approaches. Once we can reliably enough recognise and separate different units – people, cars, weapons, or buildings – in a picture, we are a step closer to a common visual vocabulary helping us to classify, categorise, query and quantify visual contents. Although technical development in the near future will most probably increase the computational power of computers, thus reducing the time and resources needed for large-scale image processing, one might question the power of visual historians to determine the course of these developments. More probably, computational visual historians will be forced to implement techniques and tools developed primarily for example for security tasks or commercial purposes.

Although there are some promising works focusing on how to generate caption texts from the results of the image recognition process[16], they do not bridge the recognition–identification gap crucial for his-

[16] E.g. Vinyals et al. 2015.

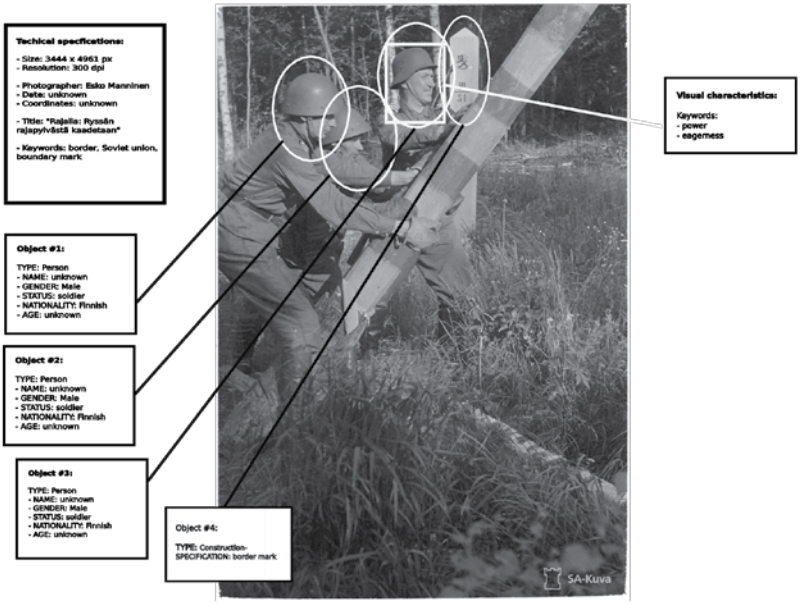


Image 1: Ontological layers exemplified in a photograph from the Finnish War Photography corpus. Original photo: SA-kuva, record number 25239.

torical research. Further, these techniques are still in their early stages and their accuracy is rather low.[17] However, due to the growing use of neural networks techniques, both the efficiency and the accuracy can be expected to increase in the near future. A tool capable of textualising the main object-related content of a visual corpus would offer remarkable help in extracting a sample from the corpus for close reading.

The other side of the coin is that although advances in linking computer vision and natural language processing/creation might help us to reduce our samples through "visual object queries", the problem of object identification remains unsolved. This problem is especially relevant for historians interested in persons, since a query such as "find all photos with faces" might not result in a significantly smaller sample. If a researcher would be able to mine the materials by asking the computer

[17] See e.g Lohr 2018.

to "find all photos with Charles de Gaulle", the benefits are obvious. Another unsolved problem is the visuality itself, as characteristics are not pinned to units or to objects, but on the contrary to the performative and representative. Recent studies have tried to capture visuality, for example, by colour analysis[18], but we seem to lack quantifiable categories for visuality. Generally speaking, current tools do not offer very elaborated means to process large, heterogeneous visual corpora in order to extract complex visual characteristics, to identify objects (for example, a named person), or to translate visuality in textual, written language.

In order to make the idea outlined above more concrete, consider the real-life image presented in image 1 and picked from from the Finnish war photography corpus available as open-access online (www.sa-kuva.fi). We have marked four objects with ellipses: three faces and one construction element. Since the men in the picture cannot be identified, they have been marked "unknown". The fourth object is a construction element, identified as a boundary mark. Further, the yellow rectangle on image 1 is annotated as visual element. In our example, we have marked the face area of one of the men. This visual element is related to this man's countenance expressing – in our opinion – power and eagerness.

To summarise the arguments presented in the section, we have outlined some fundamental elements of a research environment intended to help historians and social scientist interested in visual history to manage and explore large image corpora. This environment should fulfil four main tasks:

1. It should be project-based, which means registered users should be able to store, edit and share their visual materials;

2. It should offer easy-to-use yet standardised tools for applying the ontological model outlined above and for database queries;

3. It should be self-learning, that is the underlying information system should be able to use image data stored in it to learn what we call the "grammar of visuality". In concrete terms, the system should be able

[18] Rantala 2016.

to learn – in a semi-supervised manner – to identify basic categories of visuality;

4. And finally, the system should provide tools for exploratory research, including object recognition and identification, database queries, and processing of new material in order to identify objects and visual elements.

The next section will complete our argument by discussing how, in our opinion, such a research environment should (or could) be realised.

## Research Environment for Computational Visual History: A Way Forward

Based on the arguments presented in the previous section, our roadmap from traditional (close reading based) to computational (distant reading based) visual history concentrates on a digital research environment based on ontological layers enabling users to present and pin visual objects, object identities, and visual characteristics in text-based records.

The environment itself could be realised as an online-system based on a database server responsible for data management, and a user interface providing the user with a rich set of features to maintain their visual history projects. All this can be considered as standard for an online system design, so there is no need to discuss this technical part in detail here. Two core functionalities, however, are crucial. First, the database design and construction, and second, object recognition and identification capabilities.

Considering the former, database design, one fundamental characteristic is flexibility. The database should allow maximal flexibility when it comes to data storing, and also concerning the linking of information. A user should be able to freely store and link information, to add and remove properties, and to managing metadata. Modern graph databases are, thus, our choice, since they provide all the functionalities listed above.

Although flexibility should have a high priority, the system should also ensure information coherence across projects. In other words, all metadata-like information stored in the system should follow standardised guidelines and descriptive standards. Since metadata is "data about data", similar data should be described identically. In our opinion, the best way is to use available standards such as Dublin Core or VRA Core to determine the metadata structure, and another standard, such as AACR2 (Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, Version 2) or CCO (Cataloging Cultural Objects), to determine how data contents are described.[19] This metadata is used to formalise the use of the first layer of our ontological model, the descriptive layer focusing on visual objects.

The second ontological layer, object identities, should link objects to identities, such as recognised faces to persons. Here, the research environment should offer semi-supervised tools for object recognition, for example the system could try to identify faces in an image and offer the user the possibility to tag the recognised face to a person.[20] Also here, existing technical tools and algorithms should be integrated in this system. The system should also be able to use its general database for suggestions, in other words it should query its existing database for similar, identified faces and suggest a name (or two) for the user.[21]

The third layer, visual characteristics, is perhaps the trickiest one, since this layer should capture abstract characteristics like emotions, cultural entities, sentiments, and feelings and translate these to descriptive, standardised metadata. We exclude technical properties (colour, hue, contrast, etc.) from this layer, since these can be easily calculated and stored as part of the image's technical properties. Instead, this layer is expected to conceptualise the rather abstract characteristics of an image.[22]

One of the key advantages of our research environment is expected to be in its capability to utilise a growing, annotated database with rich,

[19] Benson 2009.

[20] This kind of research environment already exists. In our opinion, one of the most developed is *histoGraph*; https://histograph.cvce.eu/, last visited on 9 February 2018.

[21] E.g. Stvilia & Jörgensen 2009; Figueirêdo et al. 2015.

[22] Sherren et al. 2017.

standardised metadata. Although the users can limit the visibility of their data to other users, the system can exploit the complete database for its learning purposes. To give an example, a user importing a new set of photographs could let the system carry out a pre-processing task in order to obtain suggestions for persons in her photographs.

Naturally, there are many technical and practical hurdles to overcome, but we are convinced that a research environment for computational visual history as outlined in this chapter is of vital importance. Existing projects such as HistoGraph or NodeGoat (http://nodegoat.net/) are promising and encouraging examples that show that we do not need to worry about the technical element. What is needed is a pioneering group of visual historians willing to provide the system with enough data in order to test and develop the system's capabilities. Our research team will, for its part, continue working on such an environment.

## Concluding Remarks

This chapter outlined a computational research environment based on a robust, well thought-through ontological model designed to bridge close and distant reading in visual history. Despite a considerable amount of promising progress in visual recognition, this field of research is still lagging far behind text mining, thus making a straightforward distant reading of visual sources a rather complicated process.

The solution presented in this chapter is based on a multi-layered data model designed for translating image content – both with regard to recognised objects and to visual characteristics – into standardised metadata. The ontological model allows – or better, forces – scholars to link the results of close reading to concepts, definitions and categorisations used in the field of visual studies. Our metadata and database model both strongly encourages the use of existing metadata and content description standards developed for use with images and photographs.

Despite our fundamental conviction that visual history needs – simply in order to keep pace with the ongoing digitisation of historical

sources – well thought-through solutions, concepts and tools for applying methods of distant reading to large, even huge visual corpora, we are not entirely convinced that there are simple and easy-to-use solutions to all the technical challenges. The model outlined in this chapter is not the perfect answer, but we consider it to be an important step towards a bridge connecting close reading to distant reading. Some kind of standardised "visual vocabulary" must be developed in order to take a step or two closer to the ultimate goal of being able to explore visual corpora in a similar way to how we can today explore and mine text-based, digitised corpora.

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# Further Reading

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# Journals and Web Ressources

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