

International Journal of Studies on Art and Humanities

Volume:1
Number:1
September-October 2016

Visual Arts
and Identity



International Journal of Studies on Art and Humanities
Bimonthly Journal by DAKAM

Volume: 1

Number: 1

September-October 2016

journals@dakam.org

www.dakam.org/ijaus

+90 212 244 23 03

Firuzaga Mahallesi, Bogazkesen Caddesi No:76/ 8, Beyoglu, Istanbul, Turkiye

Owner: Özgür Öztürk

Managing Editor: Barış Öztürk

CONTENTS

IDENTITY THROUGH VIOLENCE AESTHETICIZATION: MURALS IN DERRY AND BELFAST <i>SVETLANA STRINYUK</i>	4
VIOLENCE ON CHILDHOOD: VISUAL LEGACIES OF THE VIETNAM WAR PERIOD <i>LAURA RAMIREZ</i>	5
NATIONAL IDENTITY’S INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY <i>MONIKA FISCHBEIN</i>	6
THE ROLE OF PHOTOGRAPHS IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROJECTS THEMED “STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN” <i>DOÇ DR. IŞIK SEZER</i>	15
THE OBJECT-PHOTOGRAPH: MATERIALITY, IDENTITY AND GESTURE PICTURING CHANGE: PHOTOGRAPHIC DISCOURSES AND URBAN TRANSFORMATION <i>JOHN VAN AITKEN, JANE BRAKE</i>	32

IDENTITY THROUGH VIOLENCE AESTHETICIZATION: MURALS IN DERRY AND BELFAST

SVETLANA STRINYUK

ABSTRACT

The paper examines how ethnic, political and religious identity is built by murals in Belfast and Derry - cities most associated with political and religious conflict in Northern Ireland. Ideological narratives represented by murals were a constituent part of political and religious turmoil which Northern Ireland suffered for decades.

Earlier research recognized the political role played by murals in the Troubles time, but few studies have attempted to investigate the ways murals create social and political identities and manifest them in urban space. Aestheticization of violence in European Arts has been a controversial and much disputed subject for a long time. From depicting violence in religious paintings of previous centuries to focusing suffering during wars, civil unrest, poverty and hunger in contemporary mass media, aestheticization of violence in different forms has always been a significant part of socially tolerable forms of aggression. Northern Ireland has a long history of aestheticization of violence in murals; they have become a recognizable part of urban landscape in Derry and Belfast since the beginning of the XXth century. Murals are a “polysemic weapons” (Santino) sending political messages from inside antagonistic communities and might be concerned as an essential part of group identity in public discourse articulated in urban space.

Political murals in Northern Ireland represent ideologies of both sides of the conflict in contested urban areas, mainly republican and loyalist – most radical actors of the conflict. Murals in Derry and Belfast are a serious part of public discourse to the extent they parade group ideology of conflicting communities. Discourse construction of identity is based on a number of meaningful categories (Wodak, 2003): common culture, shared space, national past are most significant ones through which identity is manifested. Interestingly, murals represent core ideological symbols signifying identity of both conflicting groups: national flags (state and national symbols); political figures; major historical events are only a few identity signifiers through which murals narrate group identity.

Public discourse is constructed via personal or collective stance of elites, since they are influential representatives of the nation, having authority and being in the position of trust. Murals in Northern Ireland represent a “vox populi” – a significant part of the political discourse, represented by “people”; murals are usually placed in working areas of cities and what is more important, they are associated with places in Derry and Belfast traditionally identified as “protestant” or “catholic”. This tight connection with the place makes them an integral part of social, political and religious identity (Proshansky place-identity theory).

Within the urban context murals function in a variety of ways: apart from their obvious political and social purposes they clearly identify urban space shared by divided communities, but what is more, murals struggle to legitimize violence by artistic means and gain communal support to policies of most radical actors in the conflict.

VIOLENCE ON CHILDHOOD: VISUAL LEGACIES OF THE VIETNAM WAR PERIOD

LAURA RAMIREZ

ABSTRACT

The Vietnam War was the first war transmitted through television. The circulation of its images had a scope never seen before. This project questions the implications that such broad circulation and the visuality generated by the war, had on the consolidation of a certain perception of the child and its rights, which became an algid discussion throughout the 60's and 70's. To that extent, this research aims to analyze posters of the period that use photographic testimonies of the violence on children, taking in consideration from the photographic act, to the appropriation of the image, and the use of the poster itself. It will attempt to identify the use of the visuality of the violence on childhood as a connecting vessel and an empathy bridge with the viewer, capable of transforming not only the photographic testimony into an anti-war discourse, but also capable of stating a new position of the western society in relation to childhood.

NATIONAL IDENTITY'S INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY

MONIKA FISCHBEIN

ABSTRACT

We have less freedom of movement today, then in the beginning of the last century. The main motivation behind migration itself is economic, however the dislocation of a person deals with so much more other than economic aspects. The question of immigration/emigration is disparate – it really cannot be defined in one single theory. Karl Marx states: *“Migration is greatly influenced by economic and political issues, and it is the abysmal consequences of capitalism”*. (Marx cited in Hernandez, 2015, online) Personal aspects play a role in Everett Lee’s theorisation of migration: *“people will react differently to various combinations of push (internal) and pull (external) factors, according to their economic status, life-stage and personality”*. (Lee cited in King, 2012, online) Dislocation illustrates one’s deprivation of culture, equally it means new and exciting, a brand new version of one’s identity amongst a whole new set of social and cultural codes. John Berger (1984) writes: *“Without a home at the centre of the real, one was only shelterless, but also lost in non-being, in unreality. Without a home, everything was fragmentation. [...] Emigration does not only involve leaving behind, crossing water, living amongst strangers, but also undoing the very meaning of the world and – at its most extreme – abandoning oneself to the unreal which is the absurd.”* (p56-57) What are the issues around one’s identity changing? Diminishing sense of nationality, therefore identity. A brand new life can mean the re-invention of identity. How does it affect self-perception, when people relocate? *“No single culture to identify as my own. [...] Between feelings and worlds. [...] I don’t belong anywhere.”* (Demjanenko, 2011, p56) Feelings of confusion, ambivalence, sense of otherness and being the outsider within – all based on acceptance or rejection. This paper is an exploration of where the artist comes from and how this affects the work produced? I am ultimately interested in the phenomenon of artists’ migration. How can one maintain their own identity and culture? Whether a person’s art practice can survive and develop with a geographical shift? Artists living abroad embark on a journey that would irrevocably shape their vision and intellect. Is this an integral part that is inspired by their lives’ transitional nature? Are any ventures triggered and influenced by nostalgic childhood memories relating to the motherland? This paper is focusing upon how the artistic identity is transformed by the sense of distance and isolation or freedom and approval. Through this investigation, I would pose a question and challenge the notion of the importance of the above matter. I believe that this would genuinely not only endeavour to represent, but also unveil the different planes of artists’ national identifications. I would like to expand on this topic and uncover these rarely seen facets to the outside world.

INTRODUCTION

This paper endeavours to define the concept of what it is to be utilising one’s national identity in the world of contemporary photography. It further explores the theories and perspectives of humans’ necessity to leave, the differences between the external and internal motives of migrating. It also contributes to the discussion of how do positive or negative emotions connected to the internal theorisation of displacement and how do these link to the artist’s intellect. I question and challenge the importance of this matter. It examines a range of recognised works based on national heritage; how these themes lend themselves to contemporary photography.

I shall be considering the practices of different artists from various backgrounds, where the notion of national identity filter into their work practices. Aesthetically varied, these bodies of works can be used as examples, which help re-examining and re-analysing the contemporary model of producing work stemming from such thinking. Be it celebration or suppression, a template for processing socio cultural issues. In this paper, the ideas of how one’s culture and identity be maintained, their impact on the work produced, and how it may differ depending on social circumstances and the reason for leaving are considered.

Additionally, this paper draws upon other sources of information from research as well as empirical examples, in order to offer understanding for the subject matter. It aids the investigation of the creative process and the identity of the creator; essentially where does the work come from and how identity is shaped by dislocation? I believe that there is an inherent curiosity in all people to seek more knowledge as to where they

come from. This paper depicts concepts and strategies such as *autoethnography* and *collaborative autoethnography*, which are potential approaches of developing emotions raised by displacement. The paper is a reflection upon modern socio-cultural questions, such as finding sense of belonging, finding a new identity and their effects on contemporary national identification. Its further intention is to encourage the improvement of national and international cultural awareness, interest and knowledge of immigration issues and the effects of globalisation. Ultimately, this paper concludes with considerations of national identity and attempts to recognise the prospects of using it in a positive and constructive manner.

DISLOCATION

Migration is not a recent phenomenon. What is a recent phenomenon being however that modern media would like us to believe this. People leave their homeland for a myriad of reasons, either because they are driven by economic, social or political reasons. In the early 1900s, worldwide migration stood at 42 million (Frank, 2015). Since the 1960s, the yearly migrant numbers rose from 80 million people to 240 million in total worldwide. (Migration Policy Institute, 2013) Overpopulation, climate change, political and economic crises are undoubtedly the cause.

“At present, the dominant theory in explaining causes of migration is the neoclassical theory with its underlying assumption that migration is stimulated primarily by rational economic considerations.” (Todaro and Smith 2006, p342 cited in Kurekova, 2011, p4) There are also psychological as well as personal aspects play a role in his theorisation of migration: people will react differently to various combinations of push (external) and pull (internal) factors, according to their economic status, life-stage and personality. (King, 2012) Lee writes: *“Migration is defined broadly as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence. No restriction is placed upon the distance of the move or the voluntary or involuntary nature of the act and no distinction is made between external or internal migration.”* (1966, p49)

There should be however a distinction to be made between forced or voluntary dislocation. There are many examples of migration, such as the *brain-drain* of East Germany to the West in the 1950s, to the Central and Eastern European countries joining the European Union 2004, or the recent mass migration of Syrians from their war-torn country, just to reference certain contemporary models. It is certainly not a new paradox, that the various push/pull circumstances describe the nature of displacement. Migration experience isn't the same for all people. The motives have been highly, criticised, theorised, and analysed. (Polemique, 2012) We all know of examples of refugees of genocide or environmental disasters are distinctively different from highly skilled economic migrants' experience. However, the reaction to these external and internal issues does affect the displaced identity. The assessment of economical origins and psychological impact aspects is an entirely different approach to migration. Essentially, apart from the classic causes of push and pull factors, personal factors need an entirely different examination, and besides a more holistic view, an appropriate examination of dislocation's influences the inner (lyrical) self.

The book titled *and our Faces, my Heart, brief as Photos* by English writer John Berger provides us a much more wholesome kind of evaluation, a philosophical analysis of displacement. An exploration into the context of the 'home', what it meant to our ancestors and also a historical view to the millions of dislocated people today. He states that *“Emigration, forced or chosen, across national frontiers [...] is the quintessential experience of our time. He goes onto write: “Originally, ‘home’ meant the centre of the world, not geographically, but in an ontological sense. Home was the place where the world could be founded. A home was established at the heart of the real.”* (p36)

Berger (1984) further describes this state as the fragmented state of non-being living in unreality. *“Emigration does not only involve leaving behind, crossing water, living amongst strangers, but also undoing the very meaning of the world and – at its most extreme – abandoning oneself to the unreal which is the absurd.”* (p43) Dislocation as an emotion is in itself ambivalent. It means hope and desperation at the same time. It illustrates one's deprivation of culture, and on the other hand it equally means the opportunity of re-invention of the self: A brand new version of ourselves, amongst a whole new set of social and cultural circumstances.

CHANGES IN IDENTITY

One's national identity means the different facets of the individual's relationship towards its nation. It is often used to describe a subjectively positive attitude towards one's nation. (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) According to Tajfel & Turner, national identity therefore proposes national pride. Although, one doesn't necessarily need to have a strong present national consciousness, in order to have a national self-image and nation-related emotions.

Different patterns of dealing with the past however can have consequences on one's national identity. Is national identification diminishing or intensifying when living away from one's homeland? The following factors can be additionally examined:

The circumstances of leaving – 'being brought' or 'had left'?

Economic circumstances of the home country and the destination country

What are the issues around one's identity changing?

Diminishing sense of nationality → therefore identity

How does this affect confidence and achievement?

When people relocate it affects their self-perception. Various migration theories say that psychological aspects also influence the displaced identity, and can often suggest confusion, sense of otherness, or represent the outsider within:

"I don't belong anywhere" or to any one place; feeling "like I ha[ve] no home"

"Between feelings and worlds, unhappy and happy in either and none"

"I was less than these people."

These above sentences are from case studies, from Tanja Demjanenko's (2011) PhD thesis about 6 immigrant women graduate students. These quotes read that the identity is indeed in crisis, even though a brand new life can mean the 're-invention of identity'. Is the artistic identity transformed by the sense of detachment and segregation? In line to identify the issue and formulate a solution, our understanding of national individuality of the artist will lead to a better understanding of the influences that affect their photography. Applying the finding of these case studies to artistic practice, you might ask that displacement doesn't just have an impact on the outer self, but the inner self. How are these feelings manifesting themselves in the photographic work? The main characteristic of art fed by the lyrical self, that the artist's primary theme of the individual, his or her world. It answers and explores the answers to specific challenges of reality, the inner spiritual world. *"The 'lyric' displays the world in his/her work, but not the external world itself, as you may encounter the reality of the things, but he/she expresses all the emotions and thoughts that arose in the soul during this encounter."* (Harang, 2010) This system of working displays an insight into the psyche of the artist, and certain pieces of works can illuminate highly existent national identification.

DISPLACEMENT – EXAMPLES FROM THE WORLD OF CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY

The phenomenon of the 20th century's migration of Hungarian artists between the two World Wars enables me to obtain an understanding of photographers such as Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Andre Kertesz, Brassai, Robert & Cornell Capa and Martin Munkacs (to name a few). Polcin writes about the Eyewitness – Hungarian Photography in the 20th century exhibition at the Royal Academy: *"Their language, unique and distinct from any other European language, fostered an isolation for many of these émigrés. For the photographers, the visual language of the camera filled the silence."* (2011, online) By gaining knowledge of the historical developments of artists, their origins and dislocations the viewer acquires a deeper appreciation of the subject matter and attain an insight into the effects of this on an individual's art. Vocalising feelings relating to the homeland through this medium is becoming increasingly essential. One's personality is embedded in their creativity; moreover, even more works exemplify this in modern photography, where the concept is based on the displaced lyrical self.

Renata Hegyi



Figure 1. Wrong Side, 2008, collage, silver gelatin print

The Southern part of Slovakia, namely *Felvidék* was originally a part of Hungary, however after the Trianon Treaty in 1920 got annexed to Slovakia. Hungary lost 2/3rd of its territory as well as *magyar* inhabitants to all its neighbouring countries in this highly unfair and later criticised decision. This rule was a source of much sorrow and resentment, where millions of Hungarians were transferred without moving, overnight. Renata Hegyi is a Hungarian born in Slovakia. She writes: “

“My current work is concerned with the notions of history; [...] the journeys of the past and those of the future which shape our individual identity. I am interested in the way in which identity is informed and created by our recollection of experience and imagination. This personal imagination, which provides meaning to our experiences and assists us in the understanding the world we live in. My history helps me explore the meaning of cultural and personal identity through the use of photography [...].” (Hegy, 2008, online)

Sylvia Plachy



Figure 2. Self Portrait with Cows Going Home (2004)

Another compelling example of national identity's evidence in photography is Sylvia Plachy and her visits to her native Hungary. *“A personal history of central Europe in photographs and text, Plachy has returned to Eastern Europe numerous times to photograph her homeland and the images are compiled in her most recent monograph.”* (Aperture, 2004, online) Plachy's parents were active participants of the revolution of 1956, whereas intellectuals, who backed the uprising, suddenly became fugitives. The 14 years old Sylvia hid at the back of a truck under hay bales and was driven to Austria. After a year spent in Vienna, the family emigrated to the United States. Her work depicts 40 years of returns to her country. The work is personal and complex, full of intensity and mystery of memory. (Amazon, 2004)

Tamas Dezso



Figure 3. Abandoned Room (Soviet Base, West Hungary, 2012)

Tamas Dezso grew up in (then) Communist Hungary, but from his early teenage years he had witnessed the collapse of the Soviet Union and the loss of its iron grip over the satellite Eastern Bloc countries. Growing up in such a transitional period had a major effect on his life and later his photography. His work is concerned with dismissed people living in the fringes of society as well as long forgotten places in capsules of time. (Dezso, 2014, online) Visually, he follows in the footsteps of the bleak and bold aesthetic, a remnant of the symbolic Social Realism. *“During the political transformation twenty-five years ago, as the country experienced change it simply forgot about certain places – streets, blocks of flats, vacant sites and whole districts became self-defined enclosures, where today a certain out-dated, awkward, longed-to-be-forgotten Eastern Europeanness still lingers. [...] Having experienced the influence of Soviet power, felt directly in everyday life until the political changes as a child, and having comprehended and interpreted its intellectual and social after-effects as an adult, I decided to record the hidden realities, which are essential in order to understand the country as it hovers on the borderline between the eastern and western worlds.”* (Dezso, 2014, online)

The exploration of the above three artists' work, although diverse in style, they are very similar in subject matter. The comprehensive idea is that, what can be learnt from this, is a collaborative memory of a nation. There is also a certain poignant element, history's influence on all these works, laced with longing, combined with quiet despair. As it is in the mind of Arthur Koestler, Hungarian writer: *“Hungarians are the only people in Europe without racial or linguistic relatives, therefore they are the loneliest on this continent ...Hopeless solitude feeds their creativity, their desire for achieving. To be Hungarian is a collective neurosis.”* (Koestler cited in Polcin, 2011, online)

METHODOLOGY – AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Artists' epitomize their interpretations and assessments of their memories and emotions linked to their countries, or migrating from it. The works represent a collection of non-sentimental remembrance with contributions ranging from responses illustrating the journey of the inner self, affected by migration. Alain de Botton's book *Art as Therapy* promotes similar notions *“art can help us with our most intimate and ordinary dilemmas”*. (Amazon, 2012, online) The lyrical self is studied through the method of autoethnography. It focuses on the artist's subjective experience rather than, or in interaction with, the beliefs and practices of others. Speaking from their own points of view: *“Autoethnography is a form of self-reflection [...] that explores [...] personal experience and connects this autobiographical story to wider cultural, political, and social meanings and understandings.”* (Bochner & Ellis, 2011) Examining the conditions and possibilities of human depth and emotions, the application of the autoethnographic method opens up ideas about creativity and identity, nostalgia and hopefulness, torment and tribute.

The undertaking of autoethnography is pursuing feelings, consequently shining light on the lyrical self, thus quietly encouraging the deconstruction and reconstruction of identity. Possible solution for greater understanding is that the application of autoethnographic methods within can lead to *“changes in self-perception and to new representation of self”* (Souminen, 2013, online) Finding the way of working through emotions attached to the past, the leaving one's homeland? Using autoethnography as a method: one is *“first and foremost a communicator and a storyteller.”* In other words, autoethnography *“depicts people struggling to overcome adversity”* and shows

"people in the process of figuring out what to do, how to live, and the meaning of their struggles". (Bochner & Ellis, 2006, p. 111)

Autoethnography nonetheless is both process and product. (Bochner & Ellis, 2006) It serves general as well as specific purposes, as it is a reflective account of the artist's internal and external reality. It ultimately reveals the intense and deep experiences and beliefs of the narrator, but furthermore stipulate understanding of issues usually unnoticed within society. Self-exploration and reflection can encourage positive self-image; can support an individual in the quest for sense of belonging. It also discusses questions around openness as well as celebrating diversity and global discussion.

Another recent extension of autoethnographic method involves the use of collaborative approaches to writing, sharing, and analyzing personal stories of experience. This approach is also labeled *"collaborative autobiography"* (Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2001; Lapadat, 2009) Collaborative autoethnography means constructing meaning together about the notion of transnationality. Artists together can unveil the different planes of their characters and how these related to their photography practices, *"writing with photographs, writing self"*. (Suominen, 2003, online) The central question of applying the method collaborative autoethnography on a group of immigrant artists is that how can we understand the link between our national identification and the work produced? Exploring this approach with artists from the same country also able to benefit from a collaborative consciousness: *"Through music and dance, poetry and folk ballads, the call of the nation could be heard; through the visual arts, painting, sculpture and architecture, [...], the nation, its character, history and destiny, could be paraded before people's eyes, and made to seem vivid, palpable, and tangible."* (Smith, 2013, p9)

CONCLUSION

The core aim of this paper is to demonstrate a current topic in contemporary photography relating to the self. I have concentrated on this subject matter, because it stems from a personal angle. The line of reasoning is established though the dominant theme of migration, and its translation into photographic works. Memories of migration will vary depending on the circumstances of the individual, and can vary greatly amongst artists. In particular aspects of photographic practice, I am largely concerned with the effects of globalisation, namely migration on the artist's inner self, the work produced and its influence on the work created.

These respond to particular needs of contemporary photographic community. In order to see where are we heading, we need to examine where we had come from. Therefore, this paper has also introduced methods relating to the exploration of national identification. The autoethnographic method allows the artist's lyrical self to re-examine the past. Although this method can be highly criticised as full of bias or being too personal, nevertheless this introspective technique gives us a first-hand understanding of re-construction of identify can be based around personal experiences, and therefore it ultimately can be explored through narrative. Moreover, collaborative autoethnography provides us with a variety of responses, what traditional values are we preserving and passing on?

The meaning of this idea is to consider and illustrate the importance of a person's background without being hypercritical or judgmental. Exploring the many different value systems, which determine the artisans' working methods, and focus upon the artistic identity transformed by the sense of distance and isolation or freedom and approval? Expanding on this topic and uncover these rarely seen facets to the outside world genuinely not only endeavour to represent, but also unveil the different planes of an artist's character and practice. Investigating the national identity of the artist will lead to a better understanding of the influences that affect their lives, ultimately leading to a better understanding of contemporary photography. Deeper appreciation of the above techniques allows to obtain an understanding of contributing to the further development of 'where the artist comes from and how does it affect the work produced' in a global context. *"We form an understanding of who we are by reflecting on our memories. The audiences' self-understanding and acceptance can be learnt through reading others' personal narratives."* (Suominen, 2003, online)

I make no apologies for the topic being important to me on a very personal level and I firmly believe this truly helps me to examine and reflect on my own art practice. However, this research goes beyond an individual's autobiographical self (vanity) and potentially resonate with a larger audience, where other artists can appear to recognize themselves in it. The impact of other of visual cultures on contemporary art, especially the new emerging centers of creativity and innovation in the twenty-first century. The phenomenon of intersecting cultures and cultural fusion on the one hand, and increasing cultural particularity on the other. (Plymouth College of Art, 2014)

I conclude that because of the dynamic nature of contemporary photography, methods of exploring the self must be engaging and non-judgmental in order to suit positive self-development. It however must embrace the impact of this on contemporary photography. We now have an approach that adopts a culture of understanding of artists more broadly, including the complexities of one's background and appreciation of the role of dialogue with others.

REFERENCES:

- Berger, J. (2005) *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos*. Bloomsbury Publishing
- Botton, de A. & Armstrong, J. (2013) *Art as Therapy*. London: Phaidon Press
- Edensor, T. (2002) *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life*. Oxford: Berg 3PL
- Frank, A.G. & Denmark, A.R. (2015) *Reorienting the 19th Century: Global Economy in the Continuing Asian Age*. Paradigm Publishers
- Frizot, M. (1998) *A New History of Photography*. London: Konemann UK Ltd.
- Lord, P. (2009) *The Meaning of Pictures: Personal, Social and National Identity*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press
- Nadj Abonji, M. (2012) *Galambok röppenek föl*. Budapest: Magvető Kiadó
- Smith, A.D. (1997) *A National Identity*. Lisbon: Gradiva
- Smith, A.D. (2013) *A Nation Made Real: Art and National Identity in Western Europe, 1600-1850*. Oxford University
- Warner Marien, M. (2010) *Photography: A Cultural History*. London: Laurence King
- Alain de Botton (2012) *Art as Therapy* synopsis. [Online] Available at: <http://alaindebotton.com/art/> Accessed: 04.04.14.
- Amazon (2012) Review: *Art as Therapy*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Art-as-Therapy-Alain-Botton/dp/0714865915> Accessed: 07.04.14.
- Amazon (2012) Review: *Self Portrait with Cows Going Home*. [Online] Available at: https://www.amazon.co.uk/Self-Portrait-Going-Aperture-Monograph/dp/193178843X?ie=UTF8&*Version*=1&*entries*=0 Accessed: 07.04.14.
- Aperture (2010) Review: *Self Portrait with Cows Going Home*. [Online] Available at: <http://aperture.org/shop/self-portrait-with-cows-going-home> Accessed: 07.04.14.
- Bloomsbury Publishing (2012) Review: *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/and-our-faces-my-heart-brief-as-photos-9780747576914/> Accessed: 15.04.14
- Bochner, C. & Ellis, A.P. (2006) *Autoethnography: An Overview*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095> Accessed: 09.04.15
- De Haas, H. (2010) *Migration and development: a theoretical perspective*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.heindehaas.com/Publications/de%20Haas%202010%20-%20IMR%20-%20Migration%20and%20development%20theory.pdf> Accessed: 15.03.16
- Demjanenko, T. (2011) *Identity In/Formation: A Visual Autoethnographic Exploration Through The Voices And Images Of Six Immigrant Women Graduate Students*. University of Windsor [Online] Available at: <http://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd/244/> Accessed: 05.06.15.
- Dezso, T. (2014) *Here. Anywhere. (Project synopsis.)* [Online] Available at <http://www.tamas-dezso.com/index.php?page=work&id=4> Accessed: 05.12.14.
- Harang, P. (2014) *Definitions in Literature* [Online] Available at: <http://mek.oszk.hu/01300/01371/01371.htm#L> Accessed: 10.04.14.
- Hegyi, R. (2008) *Biography*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.re-title.com/artists/renata-hegyi.asp> Accessed: 06.06.14.
- Hernandez, M. (2015) *A MARXIST ANALYSIS OF IMMIGRATION AS A "SPATIAL FIX"* [Online] Available at: <https://sites.la.utexas.edu/utaustinsoc/2015/02/04/a-marxist-analysis-of-immigration-as-a-spatial-fix/> Accessed: 09.09.15.
- Illés, A. (2014) *A Psychological Analysis of Visual Art – Call for Proposals*. [Online] Available at: http://www.doktori.hu/index.php?menuid=195&tk_ID=74728 Accessed: 23.04.14.
- International Migration Statistics (2013) *International Migrant Population by Country of Destination, 1960-2013*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/international-migration-statistics> Accessed: 23.05.15.
- King, R. (2012) *Theories and Typologies of Migration*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.mah.se/upload/Forskningscentrum/MIM/WB/WB%203.12.pdf> Accessed: 12.06.15.
- Kurekova, L. (2011) *Theories of migration: Conceptual review and empirical testing in the context of the EU East- West flows*. [Online] Available at: https://cream.conference-services.net/resources/952/2371/pdf/MECSC2011_0139_paper.pdf Accessed: 01.03.16.
- Lee, E. (1966) *Theory of migration*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.students.uni-mainz.de/jkissel/Skripte/Lee.pdf> Accessed: 11.03.15.

- Polchin, J. (2011) GOING HUNGARY: One hundred years of photography from a very particular corner of Europe. [Online] Available at: <http://thesmartset.com/article09061101/> Accessed: 11.02.16.
- Polemique, R. (2012) Theorizing Migration: Classic Perspectives, Shifting Paradigms. [Online] Available at: <https://redpolemique.wordpress.com/2012/02/08/theorizing-migration-classic-perspectives-shifting-paradigms/> Accessed: 16.03.16.
- Research Practice & Pedagogy Committee (2014) Review of Strategic Agenda for Research & Scholarly Activity – Plymouth College of Art. [pdf] [Online] Available at: <http://moodle.plymouthart.ac.uk/login/index.php> Accessed: 21.03.14.
- Suominen, A. (2003) WRITING WITH PHOTOGRAPHS, RE-CONSTRUCTING SELF: AN ARTS-BASED AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC INQUIRY [Online] Available at: https://etd.ohiolink.edu/!etd.send_file?accession=osu1061236352&disposition=inline Accessed: 08.04.14.
- Tajfel, H. & Turner, J.C. (1986) The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behaviour. [Online] Available at: http://web.mit.edu/curhan/www/docs/Articles/15341_Readings/Intergroup_Conflict/Tajfel_%26_Turner_Psycho_of_Intergroup_Relations_CH1_Social_Identity_Theory.pdf Accessed: 01.06.15
- West, L. (2013) Context & Identity in Contemporary Hungarian Art / National identity in the visual arts (5): current situation. [Online] Available at: <http://contextandidentity.wordpress.com/2013/01/21/national-identity-in-the-visual-arts-5-current-situation/> Accessed: 09.05.14.
- Notebooks on Cities and Clothes. (1989) [Film] directed by Wim Wenders. UK: Axiom Films
- Figure 1. Hegyi, R. (2008) The Wrong Side. [Online] Available at: <http://www.re-title.com/artists/renata-hegyi.asp> Accessed: 06.06.14.
- Figure 2. Plachy, S. (2004) Self Portrait with Cows Going Home. [Online] Available at: <http://www.wnyc.org/story/95105-plachy/> Accessed: 02.06.14.
- Figure 3. Dezso, T. (2014) Abandoned Room (Soviet Base, West Hungary, 2012) from the series titled 'Here. Anywhere.' [Online] Available at <http://www.tamas-dezso.com/index.php?page=work&id=4> Accessed: 05.12.14.

THE ROLE OF PHOTOGRAPHS IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROJECTS THEMED “STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN”

DOÇ DR. IŞIK SEZER

Dokuz Eylül Un. Fine Arts Fac.
Part of Photography

ABSTRACT

Violence is a phenomenon that shows itself as an extension of human nature in our individual and social lives from time to time. Applied physically and emotionally, violence is by its very nature a conscious deed. Acts of violence, which mainly result from conflict of interests and aim at intimidating the counterpart, are multi-dimensional. Violence is, in fact, a topic of interdisciplinary studies because it can be examined considering its causes and results within a wide range including domestic violence and violence in governments' policies. A great many studies and social responsibility projects have been carried out to prevent the harm caused by violence in society and produce solutions. Such projects are undertaken by non-governmental organizations and private sector supported by the country representatives of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Conscious-raising meetings, campaigns, banners, public service announcements, photograph exhibitions and similar activities have been organized in an attempt to draw attention to the theme, and agenda is, thus, set.

The issues concerning the place of women in society have been kept on the agenda and solutions have been provided through projects like “Haydi Kızlar Okula” (The Girls' Education Campaign) and “Çocuk Gelinler” (Child Marriages) with the support of UNFPA. Since 2010, many activities have been going on to call attention to “violence against women”, raise awareness and create solution-oriented social consciousness. The objective of social responsibility projects started with the motto “Stop Violence Against Women” is to raise social awareness and consciousness against violence via meetings, public service announcements, banners and photograph exhibitions.

In this communiqué, the “Every Voice One Breath” photograph exhibitions supported by Polisan Boya and regularly opened between 2011 and 2015, the photograph exhibitions of the hotline of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, “Alo 183 Stop Violence Against Women” and solo exhibitions on the same topic will be analysed in terms of their technique, aesthetics and functions.

Key Words; Violence, Social Responsibility Projects, Photograph Exhibitions

WHAT IS VIOLENCE?

An inseparable part of human history, violence has maintained itself through many individual and social interactions. Though it takes different forms in different cultures, violence is a problem that negatively affects individual and public health in all societies. Violence develops and evolves through bilateral or multilateral interactions of biological, sociological, political, economic, cultural and psychological factors. Therefore, violence has been defined differently in many different disciplines. In Turkish, the word “şiddet”, which means “violence” in English, etymologically comes from Arabic. It means the “degree” of a force, “firmness” and “stiffness”. It also means power, speed and excessiveness (www.tdk.gov.tr). World Health Organization (WHO) defines violence as follows: “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation” (World Health Organization, 2002;4) ". In other words, violence is a behavioural pattern resulting from abuse of power, force and authority. At individual level, violence could be a momentary loss of control whereas in its essence and at social level it is a “conscious, planned, controlled and systematic deed and choice” (Alptekin, 2013). Violence could be applied physically, psychologically, sexually and economically with the purpose of taking the individual and society under control. (www.kadinininsanhalari.org)

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

“Violence and discrimination against women”, which is one of the violence types, is a widespread problem all over the world. Domestic violence and violence against women is, in fact, a serious social problem not only in underdeveloped countries but also in developed countries with a high economic and education level. The conflicts basically arise from the male-dominated mentality and social structure marked by direct or indirect gender discrimination along with the attempts to make women passive agents of society.

According to Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) violence against women shall mean “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field (www.unicef.org/turkey/cedaw).

Though Turkish constitution treats women and men equally, Turkish women are kept in the background in social life in Turkey, which has a traditional society. Women are being prevented from becoming individuals, defending their rights and resisting against the restrictive traditional structure through violence applied by their families in the first place.

CEDAW, which was signed by Turkey in 1985, stipulates that all countries that signed the convention take actions to eliminate violence against women and report and present their actions to CEDAW committee. As a result of the studies conducted by the state, there have been some updates and amendments regarding the elimination of violence against women in the constitution, civil code and penal code. The Ministry of Family and Social Policies leads trainings aimed at raising social awareness and consciousness and also carries out projects to expand the influence area of non-governmental organizations (www.aile.gov.tr).

UNFPA started its operations in Turkey in 1971. So far, it has carried out many projects to improve reproductive health and gender equality within the framework of population policies and millennial development plans that all support sustainable developments. Within the framework of 2011-2015 Fifth Country Program, it continues its projects so as to reduce poverty, improve maternal health, empower women in society, promote gender equality, offer equal opportunities to women and reduce gender-based violence. It contributes to the realization of various social responsibility projects by establishing partnership with public institutions of Turkish Republic and providing nongovernmental organizations with technical support (www.unfpa.org.tr).

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROJECTS

Led by institutions in charge, social responsibility projects are carried out by volunteers to the benefit of the society. Such projects aim to raise awareness about the issue in question, create social consciousness, offer concrete solutions to solve the problem with the ultimate aim of improving the quality of life in society (Kantarçı,2010). When it comes to corporate social responsibility, not only is it an important element for the private sector that seeks to be more competitive in the international market, encourage its employees to participate in business processes more proactively, protect the environment and strengthen the cooperation between civil society and private sector but it also has a significant role in ensuring sustainable development and achieving success in social sphere (<http://kssd.org>). It is through social responsibility projects that institutions earn recognition, respect and trust.

The principles of UNFPA are shared with the public via different media tools such as photograph exhibitions, public service announcements, banners and informative videos which are all prepared within the scope of social responsibility projects supported by public and private sector. Indeed, the main framework that shapes all these efforts is the “Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women” of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies.

Of these projects, the one called “Every Voice One Breath” is funded by Polisan Boya. Polisan Boya states that the objective of the project is to “raise the consciousness of the public by putting social issues, such as gender inequality, children brides, lack of education, health problems, sexual harassment, violence in the family, and economic dependency, into words in a brave manner” (www.polisan.com.tr). The project contributes to boosting the capacity of women shelters, solidarity centres and advice centres managed by Mor Çatı and similar associations and presenting the play of the Theatre Group of TEKSEM.

Since 2011, Kenan Bahadır Derre has been the art director and Zuhâl Ceran has been the producer/general coordinator of exhibitions opened with the motto “Every Voice One Breath”. Photograph exhibitions included the photos of celebrities from the world of cinema, theatre, music and television, who all posed voluntarily. The exhibitions were opened in shopping malls in big cities like İstanbul, İzmir, Adana, Antalya and Diyarbakır on

March 8, International Women's Day and on November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women every year. Photographs were exhibited on easels in the communal areas of shopping malls.

"Every Voice One Breath 1" (2011) was organized in 2 separate exhibitions. Exhibition 1 was called "34 Women 34 Portraits" (Photo 1). The women were naked and they posed in front of a grey background in the studio looking sternly right at the camera. They were all close-up photographs, covering the subjects' shoulders. Exhibition 2 was titled "34 Women Held Their Breath Under Water" and women were photographed trying to scream under water (Photo 2) (www.sabah.com.tr). These compositions portrayed how women remained silent against violence.

"Every Voice One Breath 2" (2012) photograph exhibitions have brought together 58 famous women. The photos were taken by Serhat Hayri (Stüdyo Plus) and Tayfun Çetinkaya (Bird Office) (<http://www.haberler.com>). In the first concept, the artists' faces were covered with stretch film and their portraits were taken visualizing the theme of "inability to make one's voice heard" (Photo3). In the second exhibition, the subjects were photographed in front of a white background screaming against violence. These were also close-up photos showing breasts (Photo 4) (<http://www.radikal.com.tr/hayat/66-ism>).

In 2013, 3 different "Every Voice One Breath" exhibitions were organized. The photos were taken by Hakan Yüksel and the first two exhibitions were opened in İstanbul on March 8, International Women's Day (<http://www.kadikoygazetesi.com>). In the first concept, 59 women were photographed trying to get rid of a web covering them. They were photographed in front of a grey background with naked shoulders (Photo.5). In the second concept, the purpose was to portray women's pessimism and lack of communication through their black clothes and looks behind a dirty window. (Photo 6). In the 3rd exhibition opened on November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 66 women show their reaction against the word "violence" in front of the camera (Photo 7). 'The preparation process of this exhibition was shared on YouTube on 07.03.2012 with a video of 4.15 minutes (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_rmn9-TPxU).

'Every Voice One Breath 4' brought together 55 women who are all successful in their jobs. The theme was "Cage", and the photos were taken by Hakan Yüksel. The women were photographed with a cage surrounding their heads symbolizing the captivity and suppression (Photo 8). The photos were exhibited between March 6 and April 7, 2015 in İstanbul and then in diverse cities (<http://kelebekgaleri.hurriyet.com.tr>).

"Every Voice One Breath 5" gave place to men for the first time between March 4 and March 22, 2015. 55 artists from the world of music, cinema and theatre voluntarily posed for the exhibition. There were two different images in the same frame (Photo 9). Based on the fact that it is common that women hang themselves in barns and stables in rural areas in Turkey, rope and timber were used as a symbol. In the left frame, the subjects are posing in front of the black background in black clothes. They have angry or sad looks. In the right, they were photographed laughing in white clothes (<http://www.beyazperde.com>).

"Every Voice One Breath 6" was opened in İstanbul on November 21, 2015 in İstanbul. The performing artists were dressed in dark clothes and they posed in front of black backgrounds. They had white and red roses in their mouths to protest "violence against women" (Photo10) (<http://www.cnnturk.com>).

The exhibitions that were handled within the framework of social responsibility projects funded by Polisan Boya had no visual reference emphasizing violence or evoking it directly. The concept of "remaining silent" was, for example, symbolized through screams in plastic bags underwater while the concept of "captivity" was indirectly symbolized with cage and web. Models had make-up and were well-groomed when photographed.

In the same period, some theoretical and visual studies were carried out in different educational institutions adopting the slogan "Stop Violence Against Women". The photos were more courageous in terms of visualizing violence. The most striking exhibition was that of Derya Kılıç, a faculty member in the Department of Photograph in the Faculty of Fine Arts at Mimar Sinan University. The exhibition was opened in Maçka Sanat on December 17, 2012 and its title was "To Know, to See..." In this exhibition, the iconic paintings of some famous painters were reinterpreted and transformed (<http://www.milliyetsanat.com>). The woman portraits by Salvador Dali, Edward Munch, Leonardo Da Vinci and Gustav Klimt were reinterpreted with models that posed as victims of violence. The issue of violence was, thus, brought up to the agenda (Photo 11). The project won the 1st award in the 2012 Photokina World of Imaging Fair in Germany.

The exhibition, which was the dissertation of Ümit Karalar, a student in the department of Photograph at Marmara University, was opened in a luxurious shopping mall in İstanbul and remained opened from January 5 to January 22, 2011. The subjects were dressed in white and they wore a make-up pretending to be victims of violence. They posed in front of a broken white background (Photo12). Karalar made a reference to the physical

violence applied to women and the violence they apply to themselves as a result of the psychological trauma they live (Photo13).

In 2007, the hot line “Alo 183 Social Support and Solidarity Line” was established under Social Services and Child Protection Agency. It is a line that informs and guides families, women, disabled people, old people, veterans and families of martyrs. It cooperates with the police and law-enforcement officers to prevent neglect, abuse, violence and honour crimes (www.alo183.aile.gov.tr). In 2011, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies started to be in charge of the “Alo 183” line and it organized 3 exhibitions in 2013, 2014 and 2015 in order to increase its recognition by the public. Women and men posed together in the studio, and silence was symbolized through the sticky tapes on their mouths. The logo of “Alo 183” was shown next to the frames and on the artists’ hands (Photo 14-15).

Between 2011 and 2015, there was no study that examined these photograph exhibitions to understand to what extent they reached their initial target, raised social awareness and created consciousness against violence. Examining the exhibitions considering the photographs, it is possible to say that the topic of “violence against women” was indirectly and softly visualized in all these social responsibility projects. In the first two-concept exhibition, women were photographed with angry or sad looks on their faces. In the second one, some symbols such as water, stretch film, web and dirty windows were used. In all these photographs, subjects wore a nice make-up and they looked beautiful with the effect of photographic lighting. In the fifth exhibition opened in 2015, men modelled for the first time. Again in this exhibition, dramatic lighting was used and suicide, which is a type of violence, was directly reflected with symbols like rope and timber. None of the photos had any slogan or writing on them. The themes “gender inequality, child marriages, lack of education, health problems, harassment, domestic violence and economic dependence” that Polisan Boya determined as the objectives of the project were not directly, symbolically or associatively portrayed in the photos.

In the solo exhibitions opened in the same period, the degree of violence against women was strongly emphasized with the special make-up and posing of the models.

The photos of “Alo 183” covered both women and men. It was written “Alo 183” on the photos and logos were used to raise awareness.

The photos used in the exhibitions “Stop Violence Against Women” followed no visual criteria of any art movement and some template images were repeatedly used.

The exhibitions were generally opened in big and luxurious shopping malls and they were represented in printed and visual media within small news.

Violence against women has been continuing without slowing down in spite of the concerted efforts of international institutions, public institutions of Turkish Republic, private sector and non-governmental organizations.



Photo 1. ‘34 Women 34 Portraits’,2011



Photo 2. ‘34 Women Held Their Breath Underwater’,2011



Photo 3. Every Voice One Breath 2", 2012
2012



Photo 4. Every Voice One Breath 2",



Photo 5. Every Voice One Breath' 3, 2013



Photo 6. Every Voice One Breath' 3, 2013



Photo7. Every Voice One Breath' 3, 2013



Photo 8. 'Every Voice One Breath 4',2014
5',2015



Photo 9. 'Every Voice One Breath



Photo 10. 'Every Voice One Breath 6', 2015
2012



Photo 11. Derya Kılıç, To Know, To See,



Photo 12. Ümit Karalar, 2011



Photo 13. Ümit Karalar, 2011



Photo 14. Alo 183, 2013



Photo 15. Alo 183, 2015

REFERENCE

- Page Ayten Zara, İnce Merve, 'Aile İçi Şiddet Konusunda Bir Derleme', Türk Psikoloji Yazıları, Aralık 2008, 11 (22), 81-94.
- Kantarıcı Esra, Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk,
https://www.academia.edu/8826985/Kurumsal_Sosyal_Sorumluluk_Tan%C4%B1mlar%C4%B1
- Altekin Serap, Şiddet Nedir, serapaltekin.net/serap-altekin-makale-siddet-ve-siddetin-farkli-turleri.php
- Palomo Alessandro, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-3341485/Kim-Kardashian-Kendall-Jenner-Emma-Watson-given-black-eyes-bruises-shocking-domestic-violence-campaign.html>
- <http://kssd.org/kss/kss-nedir/>
- www.kadinininsanhaklari.org
- www.tdk.gov.tr
- www.unicef.org/turkey/cedaw
- www.aile.gov.tr
- www.polisan.com.tr
- [http://www.sabah.com.tr/galeri/magazin/unluler_8_mart_icin_su_altinda_nefesini_tuttu\(01-03-2015\)](http://www.sabah.com.tr/galeri/magazin/unluler_8_mart_icin_su_altinda_nefesini_tuttu(01-03-2015))
- [http://www.haberler.com/kadin-sorunlarina-karsi-her-ses-bir-nefes-3425268-haberi/\(10-03-2015\)](http://www.haberler.com/kadin-sorunlarina-karsi-her-ses-bir-nefes-3425268-haberi/(10-03-2015))
- <http://www.radikal.com.tr/hayat/66-isim-kadina-siddete-karsi-bir-oldu-1161695/>
- <http://kelebekgaleri.hurriyet.com.tr/galeridetay/79997/2368/1/her-ses-bir-nefes-4>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_rmn9-TPxU
- <http://www.beyazperde.com/galerileri/diziler/galerileri-65376/>
- <http://www.cnnturk.com/fotogaleri/magazin/her-ses-bir-nefes?page=28> 03.03.2015
- <http://www.kadikoygazetesi.com/32996-her-ses-bir-nefes-sergisi-citys-nisantasında-acildi/>
- <http://www.milliyetsanat.com/haberler/plastik-sanatlar/unlu-tablolarla-kadina-yonelik-siddet/886>
- www.alo183.aile.gov.tr

THE OBJECT-PHOTOGRAPH: MATERIALITY, IDENTITY AND GESTURE

ANA TERESA VICENTE

Ana Teresa Vicente, Master in Fine Arts – Painting, FCT Research Fellow and PhD Candidate, Artistic Studies Research Centre, Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon

ABSTRACT

In this paper we will briefly analyse the use of discarded domestic photographs subjected to a remaking under the visual studies field.

There is a connection between what we photograph and the memories we want to keep; the moments we want to save not only in our memories but as images as well. As memory can be regarded as intrinsic to the medium, can photography be seen as being a memory in itself? Can we compare, to a certain extent, the fragility of the photographic object with the fragility of our lives and our personal histories? Does the materiality of old photographs retain certain properties of the captured reality or does a veil between these two distant times arise, especially when the photograph becomes scratched, damaged, or torn? The inherent duality of domestic photographs (they are trivial but can trigger powerful personal memories) is a point of departure to study the connection between photography, materiality, identity and gesture.

INTRODUCTION

As photography moves away from the photochemical and is substituted by its digital counterpart, the traditional object-based view is transformed, not only by becoming increasingly screen-based but also because of its adaptability. With digital photography we can affirm that this idea that a photograph as an object *per se* disappears, becomes dematerialised and, as Blaufuks states:

“The photograph, as a physical object, is disappearing; it is becoming virtual. The only photos that are actually printed today are for official ID cards or art photography. All the others live on hard discs. It’s a bit like a mirage. It changes our entire relationship to memory.” (Blaufuks, 2014, p.198)

An idea of an object-photograph, existent in printed photographs, seems to be linked with questions of materiality and memory. The fact here is not that digital photographs have lost their connection with memory, but that there is an apparent difference in our relationship with printed object-photographs – its weight in our hands, its texture, malleability and grain, its frailty, that is, they are real objects and not a mirage, as Blaufuks alludes.

This way, in the first section of his paper we are going to analyse the use of vernacular photography with this idea of object-photograph, followed by its relation with materiality and touch, as mediated memories and objects of recorded experiences. Identity and gesture will be another prism to investigate the visual properties of this imagery.

Finally, we will explore the practice-based research we have been conducting, where these photographs-objects are subjected to a rereading through the questioning of the role of those objects in the present, especially in a time when the printed photograph is no longer the norm.

DOMESTIC PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE OBJECT-PHOTOGRAPH

In this paper we will focus on vernacular photographs, subjected to a dislocation and a dialogue around its fragmented visual cues as a way to interrogate the construction of meaning, identity and visual opacity of the images.

Photography has several roles, practices, and functions. As such, the way a photograph is used and identified defines the way it operates. As Tagg (1993, p.187) says: *“The meaning of an image is built up by an interaction of such schemas or codes (...). The image is therefore to be seen as a composite of signs, more to be compared with a complex sentence than a single word. Its meanings are multiple, concrete, and most important, constructed.”*

In recent years, we have begun to refer to the kinds of photography which fall outside the traditionally ‘authored’ as ‘vernacular’. Vernacular or domestic photography can be defined as the images produced and used in an

informal way, usually by non-professional photographers. They are ordinary, non-artistic, and operate within a social and cultural role that invades everyday life.

Domestic photography is, then, a product of construction, of social normative conventions. That does not mean that other types of photography are not subjected to construction, but specifically in this practice it is very rare to see photographs of distressful or painful moments. Except with the practice of photographing deceased members of the family, usual between the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, now the most common emotion conveyed in vernacular photos is usually of happiness: *"Home photographers (i.e., snapshooters) hardly ever take photographs of friends or family members arguing, painful experiences, or unhappy people, and if relations and situations change after a photograph has been taken, the unwanted photographs are removed from frames or albums"*. (Sarvas and Frohlich, 2011, p.6)

As such, an idealized and subjective past is formed by the selection of moments to photograph and keep, usually of cheerful and significant social moments like weddings, birthdays, travel and vacation photos, and so on. These images operate within a particular social context (of the family, close friends, etc.) and make up our personal and collective memories.

In the domestic photograph field, text and image perform as inseparable instances, where visual and textual practices are conjoined and mutually dependent (Rubinstein and Sluis, 2008). From family albums to tagging practices, this relationship is still present and performed, albeit the different results it produces and the narrative order (or subversion of order) obtained.

Throughout the history of photography there were several efforts to make images portable, that is, objects you can hold, trade, offer and share. From the Victorian *cartes-de-visite* to Instagram this need to share and distribute is a cultural act that has expanded since the onset of photography.

But this practice of sharing our family albums with relatives and close friends is very different from sharing digital photographs online, as there is an absence of a physical contact with the photograph itself. This raises questions of materiality in photography, especially with the differences that arise with its digital counterpart – as software (and images) are *"embedded in physical data carriers"*, and *"may defy immediate physical contact"* but are not, nonetheless, *"floating in as a metaphysical substance in virtual space"* (Van Den Boomen et al., 2009, p.9). They are no longer easily accessed (as a screen, a computer or similar is needed) and are rarely printed. In fact, today *"it is an act of will to make a photographic print"* (Cotton, 2010 cited in Bell, 2010, p.28).

Before the digital era, photography demanded a surface onto which the image was photochemically inscribed. With the digital image that is no longer necessary, thus making the digital image as potentially immaterial: *"The complexity of digital code is necessarily black boxed in user-friendly interfaces, and this makes assumptions of mysterious immateriality hard to exorcize."* (Van Den Boomen et al., 2009, p.9).

On the other hand, Batchen (2000, p.60) states that in photography theory the actual object, that is, the actual photograph, tends to be left out of the analysis. In the case of domestic photographs, this element is usually present and its various aspects and qualities go beyond the printed image. It is precisely in this physical presence of the object-photograph as *"something that can also have volume, opacity, tactility, and a physical presence in the world."* (Batchen, 2000, p.60), and the porosity between photography and other media, that we want to place our research, approaching the photographs both as images and as objects that can be carried, folded, written on, or kept safe in albums.

Just as the image in a photograph is an imprint of the real world, the resulting material object becomes itself part of the world, as something we can carry, touch, admire or destroy, and therefore many vernacular photographs contain this paradox: they are both images and objects, snippets of the past embodied in a physical, material, and visual form.

MATERIALITY AND TOUCH IN PHOTOGRAPHY

The idea of touch, particularly when we are viewing portraits, is already present in Pliny the Elder. The origins of representation, in the famous story of Butades of Corinth, are based on the relationship between presence and absence, the symbolic character of the line (then filled with clay), and the intrinsic relationship with the passage of time and memory of the representation of something that belongs to the past (Stoichiță, 1997). Such ideas relating to the origin of representation can be transposed to photography, thus exposing the material relationship that photography shares with the portrayed. In a way, the depicted touches the film or sensor, transforming the photograph into a second "skin" frozen in time.

Regarding this notion of materiality, we can relate the temporal connection exercised within photography, particularly in the field of photochemical photography. Benjamin suggests that the captured subjects have the

ability to 'touch' us in the present time, through the relationship and mutual effort of both the subject and the apparatus (Trodd, 2010, p.144). This is certainly true, for example, in the case of daguerreotypes, where long exposures were required in order to obtain a focused image. In a way, *"early portrait photographs preserve a buried layer of past time, or some quintessence of the sitter, in the light seared into the plate."* (Trodd, 2010, p.144), and therefore emphasize the connection between the photographed and the resulting image. The surface of the photograph allows for total visibility, for the production of a prosthetic "skin" that cannot, consequently, distance itself completely from its referent:

"And photography, formerly accused of opposing its mechanical, soulless simulacra to the coloured flesh of painting, sees its image inverted. Compared with pictorial artifices, it is now perceived as the very emanation of a body, as a skin detached from its surface, positively replacing the appearances of resemblance and defeating the efforts of the discourse that would have it express a meaning."(Rancière, 2009, p.9)

This way, the production of meaning is obtained through a game of cooperation between the presented elements, and the emanations of the bodies. As Barthes states (2008, p.91), an umbilical relationship connects the viewer's eyes to the body of the photographed, and an association between the camera and the outside world entangles the connection of the haptic and the visual, as the depicted objects left *"their own visual imprint, as faithful to the contour of the original object as a death mask is to the newly departed"* on the surface of the photograph (Batchen, 2000, p.61). This connection between the haptic and the visual raises another question: the relation of touch and tactility evoked in photography, in the way touch is often conveyed from within the photograph *"a physical linking of bodies that suggests affection, reassurance, solidarity, even control."* (Batchen, 2000, p.64)

The paper and the properties of the media, of the devices and formats used, can also be a deciding factor in the tactility of the image, as these attributes have a profound effect on the way it is perceived, its meaning, function, and historical conventions. Furthermore, the fact that it is possible to convey so many different things by only the different physical attributes of a print reveals the power exercised by the tactile and haptic characteristics chosen when enlarging a print, complexifying and possibly changing each print into a different object that removes itself from the moment of exposure, existing in a continuous state of constant construction.

On the other hand, Sassoon argues that the digitalisation of photographic objects transmutes them, as the main focus of the digitalisation process are the graphic and aesthetic contents of the images (thus transforming the object into a flat representation), concentrating on the visual nature of the image in a visualisation through an *"intermediate and universalizing technology"* (Sassoon, 2005, p.201).

Consequently, there are aspects of these objects that are simply left out, whether they are the material characteristics, cues about the processes used, or even additional information written on the back of the photographs. In the words of Sassoon:

"Three important features of the photograph are central to many debates about the complexity of photographs: the materiality of the photographic object, the concept of the original photograph and the origin of photographic meaning. It is therefore appropriate to consider a photograph as a multi-layered laminated object in which meaning is derived from a symbiotic relationship between materiality, content and context. From this foundation it is possible to investigate how these aspects of the photograph are altered during the digitisation process." (Sassoon, 2005, p.199).

To amputate any of those aspects transforms and displaces the materiality of these photographic objects, thereby reducing the complexity of what they are, as objects with opacity, bringing forward their function as a transparent window. This way, the translation of these object-photographs into the digital realm will always be incomplete, due to the compression of their layers and the discontinuous structure of the pixels (unlike photochemical photographs, where the tones that create the images are continuous).

It is in this tension between photochemical and digital photography, in the impossibility of translation from one medium into the other that we intend to bring forward, by unfolding possible ramifications, derivations, and the interstitial *space between* that characterises the photographic medium today.

IDENTITY AND GESTURE IN PHOTOGRAPHY

A common belief is that pictures cannot lie, especially when we refer to snapshots, vernacular, and documental photographs. Photographs are thus often perceived as mirrors, objectively and faithfully capturing the reality by fixating it. However, mirrors invert the reality that lies in front of them, and in many cases can even distort or skew the reflection. Photographs can present a distorted reality as well, but what we will be focusing on is the

idea of capturing the identity of the portrayed, as well as both the gesture of taking a photograph, and the capture of movement that allows us to see certain gestures in a novel way.

Photography, especially in its vernacular use, can be closely associated with the representation of an identity, whether in the unfolding of our personal identities over time, or within the relationships portrayed, as well as within our personal and collective narratives: *"Family albums or, more recently, blogs, journalistic or archival photographs, as well as online image archives, document our relationship with time"* (Cristofovici, 2009, p.20). Given the option of what to document and what to remember without records, people are *"commonly aware of the cultural frameworks that both consciously and unconsciously inform their intentions and prefigure their decisions. Cultural acts of memory thus imply common knowledge of social conventions, like the norms of family photography, as well as habitual knowledge of technological aids, such as pencils or cameras."* (Van Dijck, 2004, p.263).

This relationship between the images that inform our sense of self, and compose our personal narrative bring to question, therefore, in what way the constant use of photography to document our lives change the way we perceive, and shape, how we remember certain moments. Is Fontcuberta right when he states that we exist because we photograph (ourselves and the world around us): *"imago, ergo sum"*? (2012, p.19)

The gesture of taking a photograph of a significant moment (thus marking it from the passage of time) is related to a set of actions that have remained unchanged, although the practice of photographing and, especially, sharing has changed the way people engage with photographs. Sutton refers to three elements that build our sense of identity through time: *"duration as the ongoing change, memory as our awareness of duration (the image of duration) and time, and the sense of past, present, and future from which our awareness is created. These are in constant motion and interaction, even though we depend heavily on time as reliable and our identities as unchanging."* (Sutton, 2009, p.34). This means that although we have a sense of continuum when thinking about our own identity, there is a potential within photography that unfolds, for example, when we are confronted with pictures of ourselves we never knew existed.

A remarkable series by Helmar Lerski, *"Metamorphosis through Light"* points out the impossibility of capturing the identity of a subject through a particular photograph, thus questioning the validity of the photographic objectiveness, and placing identity as something mutable and complex. In this photographic work, through changes in lighting we can see a myriad of different faces of an individual, exploring *"the belief that human identity will always elude the single, static image"*. (Campany, 2008, p.32)

On the other hand, particularly popular during the 18th and 19th centuries, were the explorations of the physiognomy studies, a pseudo-scientific theory that studied the relationship between personality traits and facial and bodily expression, extrapolating certain features through the observation of a person's physical features. This way, emotion is appointed as interlinked with appearance and even objects of generalisation of such emotions, of both humans and animals, as Darwin suggested in his 1872 study *"The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals"*.

Furthermore, several studies of the individual body as a subject of study have been conducted, particularly in the speculative link between appearance of an individual and, for instance, its criminal propensity. Isolating the facial and bodily characteristics was a way of structuring the information, following a classification system and conjoining scientific and visual practices. This was used in the *Bertillonage* system, for example, where all the anthropometric measurements of a person's body and face were systematised into a detailed and complex record, in order to identify individuals. Asserting the view in the photographic medium as objective as visual evidence of the body, Bertillon *"used the camera to isolate, make visible, and study the various 'signs' of the body. (...)To this end, he isolated and studied the various features of the face and head, ultimately producing a synoptic table of 'typical' facial features"*(Finn, 2009, p.26).

Likewise, face, hands and body position are forms of non-verbal communication on which we rely and interpret automatically. Here we do not mean to address gesture from the perspective of motricity, but intend to analyse the embodied perception of external movement and actions (even if subtle) as a kind of interface connecting the outer and the inner, the conscious and unconscious expression in the movements and poses we found by exploring the photographs.

We can refer here to photography as a medium that opens up the possibility of capturing things that may escape our vision or something that was not intended by the operator, and as such, photographs have the ability to surprise the eye with the unexpected (Flores, 2012, p.109). These unexpected occurrences captured in the photographs, as Wall states, *"the contracted little actions, the involuntary expressive body movements which lend themselves so well to photography, are what remain of everyday life of the older idea of gesture as bodily,*

pictorial form of historical consciousness." (2007, p.85) This way, by isolating and dismembering the gestures, they become both familiar and unsettling. Products of either compulsive, automatic, mechanical gestures, or deliberate, conscious gestures, they intersect individuality and social convention.

THE PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH

The images used come from two distinct backgrounds: some were found when an apartment in Lisbon was emptied, after its sole owner died and someone else bought the apartment, throwing away furniture, books, letters, photographs, and negatives; other photographs and negatives were borrowed from a friend and colleague and are part of a larger collection of photographs taken by her late grandfather.

My visual research is based on this set of negatives, photographs, books, letters, and several other objects. I first began extracting typical situations or gestures, revealed by enlarging portions of selected negatives in the darkroom, thus changing their meaning by altering the scale, context, and relationship between images.

Working with different sets of images brings forward different sets of questions regarding the images, even though I have no personal connection with any of the people depicted. Particularly with the found photographs and objects, there is something touching about the discovery of such discarded images, considering the care and the fact that someone cherished those images. Devoid of their original context within the social or familiar settings they were created in, there is an absence of personal significance, opening up their unpredictable behaviour as images.

With this rather large set of images, I began by organising them, to gain awareness of the contents, types of images, and to establish some relationships between the homogeneous yet diverse materials. Looking at the photographs over time, it was possible to encounter relationships between the portrayed subjects and soon some of the faces that appeared in several images became recognisable. In a way, they became *familiar strangers* that accompanied me throughout my research.

Working with found imagery is not something new, and especially since the 80's and 90's this has been common practice, however, due to the fact that addressing these kinds of images is usually considered unworthy from a historical perspective, it has been relegated to artistic or institutional practices.

I started by enlarging portions of the negatives in the darkroom, increasing each fragment size several times, and centring my attention on areas of the images that depicted unintended objects or people, small gestures and the faces captured in each negative. This series, *Loci Memoriae*, allowed me to photochemically bring to light what was imprisoned in the negatives, where the grain of matrix became visible and blurred the isolated inscriptions on the paper.

Some of these enlargements of faces were subjected to scraping of the photographic surface, after I presented one piece in a collective exhibition in Paris (June 2014). In this piece, several wire brushes covered part of an image, and people were invited to push a lever in order to see the rest of the image. In doing so, the image became scratched, thus damaging the print, a playful jest on the proverb "curiosity killed the cat" (in this case the print) to physically embody our curiosity awoken by partially secluded images. The subsequent series *Lingchi* is composed of several enlargements of faces, in which the surface of the print was scratched out. The title refers to "death by a thousand cuts", the process of slicing someone's skin or body in order to slowly torture them, a method of execution used in ancient China.

Our focus on faces was due to the fact that it relates not only to the identity of the people present in the enlargements, but also the fact that the face is our primary means of expression, in fact our brains are experts in recognising faces, even doing so with different stimuli, a psychological phenomenon called *pareidolia*.

Afterwards, my attention shifted to the obsolescence of the photochemical photographs, and how, just like memory, they decay and fade away. By submerging enlargements of the family's smiling faces in acrylic boxes (filled with a bleaching chemical solution) I explored the deterioration of the image and its relation with time, as well as the relationship between photography and the ability to fix and image. This question of fixation of the image onto a surface is crucial to photography, as it is this that opened up its reproducibility and finally materialised the image obtained in the *camera obscura*. What I tried to explore in the series *Whitewash* was a back and forward movement between the revealing of the image and its disappearance, rendering temporality as something expansive within the photographic medium, far beyond the moment of capture or development of the image.

In line with this question of the fixation of the image onto the medium, other possibilities were tried out. For example, using a generic brand paper that has very little stability, printing an image and then submerging it in a

solvent, it was possible to remove the thin film where the ink particles had been deposited and transfer this film onto another support, leaving the image as some kind of vestige of the original image.

In another series, *Golden and Defaced*, a selection of several prints of studio portraits was digitised and industrially printed. A layer of golden ink and solvent was applied over the images, concealing some parts and leaving other portions visible. An interplay between obstruction and unobstruction of the portrayed faces is achieved by the accumulation and dissemination of the ink, which reacts with the solvent leaving some parts unhidden. The golden ink adheres to the industrial pigments used to print the reproductions, disfiguring the image and defacing the identity of the depicted faces.

There is an allusion to the uniqueness of each print, as it is impossible to reproduce the ink effects achieved as well as printing copies of the altered images with the gold tones, creating an image-object that is both a smooth surface and a tactile object. As Cristofovici states: "*Releasing the photographed subjects from detailed identity markers or abstracting them from references to the quotidian liberates space in the photographic representation for other dimensions of the real*" (2009, p.125). In this case, power and control are at stake in the selection of which images to conceal and which portions of each image to leave visible, presenting the bodies as sculptural inscriptions and effacing their singularity in the process. With these enlargements, whether they are photochemically or industrially printed, I also explore directly the polished and fragile photographic surface, by piercing, cutting, sanding, painting, dissolving the layer where the image is attached, or by experimenting with bleaching and toning where the image disappears and reappears, changed by the chemical reactions it was exposed to.



Figure 1. *Failure is a given*, digital print of digitised vintage print with post-processing, 20,5 x 15 cm, 2015

As we have seen in the section *Materiality and Touch in Photography*, and following the line of thought of Sassoon (2005, p.198), the transfer of a photograph from the photochemical materiality to its digital duplicate can be seen as a cultural process of translation, and thus the technological dimension of this translation is overcome. The object's appearance, whether physical or digital, conforms to a certain discourse of a particular period of time, to which certain devices, processes and methods may correspond.

By scanning the negatives and the photographic objects that accompanied them, transforming their materiality into images on a screen, the material object is condensed onto a surface, becoming more *immaterial*, that is, its material features are reduced (we cannot touch the photograph, read the notes on the back, feel the smoothness or roughness of the paper, for example). The materiality of the object-photograph is transformed into a digital substitute and becomes one-dimensional. On the other hand, remaking, restructuring and manipulating the pixels of the image opens up an extra layer of interpretation of the image. In the series *Failure is a given* (Figure

1) those digital enlargements of the images were digitally altered, whether by duplicating, distorting, cutting, painting, and exploring digital inaccuracies and interferences, further transforming the original image. Additionally, I explored the malleability of digital images using Processing, a programming language that allows exploring code within a visual context.



Figure 2. *Untitled (Compendiums)*, twelve digital prints of digitised negatives, 20 x 20 cm each, 2016

Going back to the several digital enlargements produced directly from the negatives, stripping them from references to time or place, a series of thematic clusters were condensed into grid-like structures of gestures. Having as references the *Bertillonage* system or the images produced by Edward Steichen, Alfred Stieglitz and Talbot's *The Hand*, we focussed on the immobilised gestures. Enlarged many times their original size, the hands appear like prosthetic limbs, static and devoid of intention. What I was looking for in *Untitled (Compendiums)* (Figure 2) was the creation of small compilations of bare gestures or emotions. Searching through the images we found fragments in which something quintessential seemed to emerge and was amplified by the combination, repetition and dialogue between the fragments.

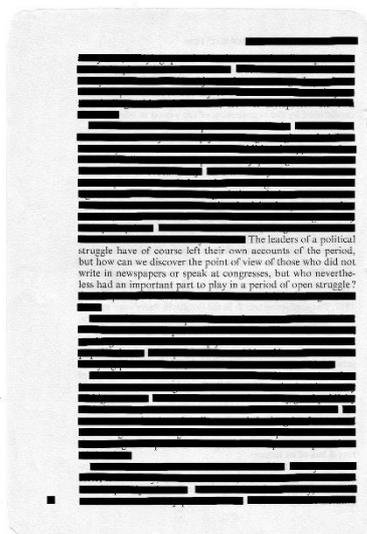
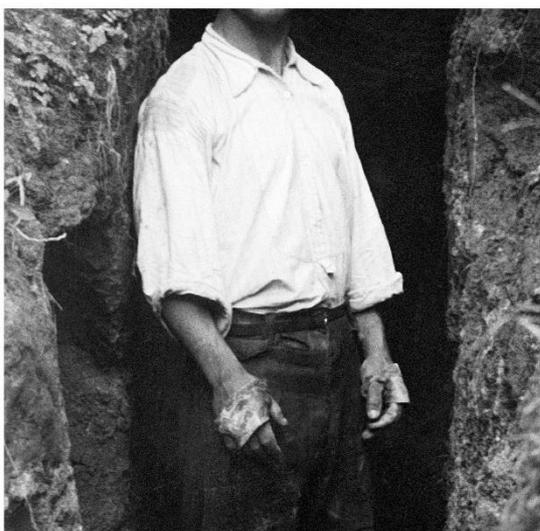


Figure 3. *Untitled (after Sorlin)*, digital print of digitised negative and blacked out page of Sorlin's book *The Film in History*, 40 x 50 cm, 2016. The visible text is the following: *"The leaders of a political struggle have of course left their own accounts of the period, but how can we discover the point of view of those who did not write in newspapers or speak at congresses, but who nevertheless had an important part to play in a period of open struggle?"*

Another field that I was very interested in exploring was the relationship between text and image. In the series *Untitled (after Sorlin)* (Figure 3 and 4), using the scanned portions of the original negatives and pairing them with selectively blacked out pages of *The Film in History* by Pierre Sorlin, I attempted to open up new interpretations through the displacement of both image and text. Here, text performs very differently from the usual practices within the domestic photographic field, thus exercising a tension between what is depicted and the phrases that accompany each image. Proposing image and text juxtapositions and reorienting the images besides their visual evidence and subject matter, unexpected alignments were forged. Like a distant fading memory, and the correspondent snippets of text went through a transfiguration brought about by the interplay between text and image. Enriching each other by these crossings, ambiguous readings between the intimate and the mundane were wrought.

Living in a time where all these kinds of image making possibilities are available, used, and examined seems a wonderful opportunity to discuss not only the differences in the materiality of digital and photochemical photography, but also how the transformation of one into another can become a playful method of questioning photography itself.



Figure 4. *Untitled (after Sorlin)*, digital print of digitised negative and blacked out page of Sorlin's book *The Film in History*, 40 x 50 cm, 2016. The excerpt reads as follows: *"So why embark on an unsatisfactory study that will be out of date in twenty or thirty years? For the moment, we have no alternative: we must begin somewhere, and we can argue that getting used to pictures no doubt begins with getting used to reading."*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author thanks the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), for the Ph.D. grant SFRH/BD/91327/2012.

REFERENCES

- Barthes, R. 2008. *A câmara clara*. M. Torres Lisboa: Edições 70.
- Batchen, G. 2000. *Each Wild Idea*. Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press.
- Bell, A. 2010. Photographs about Photographs. In: A. Bell and C.H. Traub, eds., 2015, *Vision Anew*. Oakland: University of California Press, pp.23–35.
- Blaufuks, D. 2014. *Toda a Memória do Mundo*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional - Casa da Moeda.
- Company, D. 2008. *Photography and Cinema*. London: Reaktion Books Ltd, pp.1–161.
- Cristofovici, A. 2009. *Touching Surfaces*. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi.
- Finn, J. 2009. *Capturing the Criminal Image*. University Of Minnesota Press.
- Flores, V. 2012. *A Imagem Técnica e as suas crenças*. Lisboa: Nova Vega.
- Fontcuberta, J. 2012. *A Câmera de Pandora*. Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gili SL.
- Rancière, J. 2009. *The future of the image*. London; New York: Verso.
- Rubinstein, D. and Sluis, K. 2008. A Life More Photographic. *Photographies*, [online] 1(1). Available at: <<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17540760701785842>>.
- Sarvas, R. and Frohlich, D.M. 2011. *From Snapshots to Social Media - The Changing Picture of Domestic Photography*. London: Springer.
- Sassoon, J. 2005. Photographic materiality in the age of digital reproduction. In: J. Hart and E. Edwards, eds., *Photographs Objects Histories*. Routledge London and New York, pp.196–213.
- Stoichiță, V.I. 1997. *A short history of the shadow*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Sutton, D. 2009. Photographic Memory, Photographic Time. In: *Photography, Cinema, Memory: The Crystal Image of Time*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp.33–63.
- Tagg, J. 1993. *The Burden of Representation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Trodd, T. 2010. Thomas Demand, Jeff Wall and Sherrie Levine: Deforming 'Pictures'. In: D. Costello and M. Iversen, eds., *Photography After Conceptual Art*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, pp.130–152.
- Van Den Boomen, M., Lammes, S., Lehmann, A.-S., Raessens, J. and Schafer, M.T. eds., 2009. *Digital Material: Tracing New Media in Everyday Life and Technology*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Van Dijck, J. 2004. Mediated memories: personal cultural memory as object of cultural analysis. *Continuum: Journal of Media Cultural Studies*, 18(2).
- Wall, J. 2007. Gestus. In: P. Galassi, ed., *Selected Essays and Interviews*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art.

PICTURING CHANGE: PHOTOGRAPHIC DISCOURSES AND URBAN TRANSFORMATION

JOHN VAN AITKEN, JANE BRAKE

(University of Central Lancashire), (Manchester Metropolitan University)

ABSTRACT

This paper examines how visual discourses of urban regeneration contribute to the gentrification process. It asks can alternative photographic strategies provide a meaningful counter narrative to combat persuasive corporate discourses on urban regeneration? The paper will explore whether these types of record can counter neo-liberal discourses that mediate the material transformation of city areas. Focusing on the gentrification of social housing in Pendleton, Salford (Greater Manchester) the presentation debates the role of imagery in fostering perceptions about urban change by evaluating fieldwork undertaken by the authors in the site since 2004.

Poverty makes certain global populations vulnerable to displacement by development. In many parts of the world land and homes are appropriated or stolen by governments, corporations or private developers and transformed into lucrative real estate (Harvey, 1989; Nixon, 2011). In this process known as accumulation by dispossession large profits are accumulated in the process of dispossessing people of their land, rights and homes. This paper examines how visual renderings commissioned by developers help legitimate these capital investment strategies. It will examine how corporate imagery works to commodify space by providing a modernizing 'future gaze' (Jones, 2013). Designed to attract mobile investment capital (Jansson and Lagerkvist, 2009) they portray change as embedded in 'socially resonant forms' (Jessop, 2004).

Central to the paper, is an interrogation of contemporary ideas on the photographic representation of urban space. The research questions photography's ability to make legible the key drivers of today's emergent terrains and their connections to networks of power (Sassen, 2011, p.36). Historical precedents will also be discussed. Photographers as far back as Charles Marville in Paris of the 1860's have documented urban reconstruction (Kennel, 2013). Employed by those undertaking the demolition, these photographic practices frequently suppress certain narratives of the unbuilding process, disguising the impact on inhabitants or the economics driving the reconstruction schemes (James, 2004). Reformist documentary has also played its part in justifying large-scale urban reconstruction. State or municipal authorities in the UK have commissioned the work of photographers to help legitimate reconstructing marginal areas, a process that often involved displacing existing communities (Rose, 1997; Blaikie, 2006). Both position the existing urban terrain within a narrative of decline and redemption through extensive reconstruction.

Contrary to such depictions of urban change the paper will examine our own longitudinal documentation of the Pendleton area of Salford. Salford like many provincial English city councils, has sought help with maintenance and reinvestment in its publicly owned housing stock through a PFI scheme. Salford's scheme will see 1,250 social housing properties renovated but will also require large-scale clearance of its existing stock to enable 1,600 new properties to be built most of which will be for private sale. Our own work has recorded the ten-year period of disinvestment, ruination, displacement and more recently gentrification in the area.

The paper will question whether such a longitudinal project can be utilized as a political tool to highlight the wider processes involved in such regimes of disinvestment and accumulation (Smith, Caris and Wyly, 2001). Through the combination of photography and site writing can certain economic and political processes make legible cause and effect? To do this the paper will place the work in relation to other urban photographers of uneven development such as Camilo Jose Vergara (1997) and Sze Tsung Leong (2006). It will question whether this use of photography can effectively provide a counter narrative to the neo-liberal aims hidden in the gentrification process. Can we develop this critical photography into a practice that moves beyond generalisations and helps create a 'radical documentary' (Rosler, 2004b, p. 196)?

INTRODUCTION

This paper examines how visual imagery associated with urban regeneration contributes to the gentrification process. It asks can alternative photographic strategies provide a meaningful counter narrative to combat persuasive corporate discourses on urban regeneration? The paper will explore a practice of critical witnessing and ask whether this type of record can counter the neo-liberal assertions that mediate the material transformation of city areas. Focusing on the gentrification of social housing in Pendleton, Salford (Greater Manchester) the paper creates a debate on the role of visual imagery in fostering perceptions about urban change by reflecting on fieldwork undertaken by the authors in the site since 2004.

ACCUMULATION BY DISPOSSESSION

At the centre of this paper lies the issue of how poverty makes certain global populations vulnerable to displacement by development. In many parts of the world the land and homes of the poor are appropriated or stolen by governments, corporations or private developers and transformed into lucrative real estate for resale to more affluent members of its society (Harvey, 1989; Nixon, 2011; Saseen, 2011b). Sociologist Sakia Sassen comments on these 'sharp shifts' in land tenure from poor to rich noting:

"The current scale of acquisitions amounts to a systematic transformation in the pattern of land ownership in cities, with significant implications on equity, democracy and rights. This is particularly so because what was small and / or public is becoming large and private, often with local government support" (2014a).

Sassen notes how the current economic order is characterized by a 'savage sorting' as the logic of the financial system inflicts forms of 'brutality' on the social order throughout the world (2014b, p. 4). Moves away from a Keynesian economic outlook since the 1980's have lead towards privatization, deregulation and the "financialization of everything," has lead, she argues, to the "immiseration and exclusion of growing numbers of people" in today's global cities (2014b, pp. 9-10). The logic of this system has seen a huge rise in all manner of displacements. The 'radical expulsion' of vulnerable communities, she contends takes, us 'beyond the more familiar idea of growing inequality' (2014b, p. 1).

David Harvey has attempted to examine the role urbanization plays in social change, in particular in relation to 'capitalist social relations and accumulation' (1989, p. 3). Harvey terms this process of land acquisition 'accumulation by dispossession'. Harvey's research outlines how this often-violent process of dispossession of individuals and communities has shaped 'the historical geography of capitalism' from its very beginning (2003, p. 142). He notes that "capitalism internalizes cannibalistic as well as predatory and fraudulent practices" of which this process is one (2003, p.148). The forced displacement of populations, whether they are peasant or proletariat, he argues, has been a recurring feature of capitalist accumulation strategies since its origins. Harvey's research reappraises 'the original sin of simple robbery' that occurred in places like Britain when landowners from the 17th century onwards enclosed commonly owned land in order to exclude the poor from using it (2003, p. 142 - Harvey quoting Marx). He renames the concept of 'primitive' or 'original' accumulation as 'accumulation by dispossession' to emphasize it as an on-going feature, evoked at times to stimulate the financial system in periods of over accumulation. In the neoliberal phase of capitalism, he argues that 'the corporatization, commodification and privatization' of public assets that were 'formerly regarded off-limits to the calculus of profitability' is now a key strategy in this new process of accumulation (Harvey, 2007, p.35).

In the UK the specifics of this process can be currently observed in the stripping of publicly owned assets through the release of social housing to private developers. In the UK this process is evident in the current wave of building on former council properties. Executives at Berkeley Homes, which aims "to establish itself as the pre-eminent name in regeneration... estimate that, of every four houses they build, one is on a former council estate somewhere in London" (Chakraborty & Robinson-Tillet, 2014). The result of this is an untold story of dispossession where many tenants of social housing have lost homes and are displaced from their communities while the companies in question make record profits. Harvey argues that the origin of this situation can be found in the 'erosion of the economic and fiscal base of many large cities in the advanced capitalist world' (1989, p. 4). Since the 1970's this fiscal austerity has meant that local governments have had to become more innovative and 'entrepreneurial minded' in order to attempt to provide for their populations. The centerpiece of this new 'entrepreneurial' survival strategy is the 'public-private partnership' (Harvey, 1989, p.7).

In the UK with an unprecedented demand for new homes and huge financial cuts from central government, many city councils with dwindling budgets have little choice but to make alliances with private developers and undertake public-private partnerships. If councils want to create new houses and fund extensive repairs to their

existing social housing stock this initiative appears to offer a way forward. In this scenario builders put up new “affordable” homes to be sold or rented at below market rates, and cross-subsidizes them by constructing expensive private homes for sale on the open market (Chakraborty and Robinson-Tillet, 2014).

This situation in the UK is not likely to abate. At the start of 2016 Prime Minister David Cameron threatened to ‘bulldoze’ up to 100 of what he termed as the country’s worst ‘sink estates’ (Shipman, 2016). Cameron, who argued that Britain was in the middle of ‘a turnaround decade’, has set up a new advisory panel lead by Lord Heseltine ‘to build a list of post-war estates across the country that are ripe for re-development’ (Cameron, 2016). He has also set aside £140 million that will ‘pump-prime’ the planning process. The money will be used to ‘sweep away the planning blockages’ and ‘reduce political and reputational risk for projects’ key decision-makers and investors’ (Cameron, 2016). This process of accumulation by dispossession through the releasing of publicly owned social housing for private gain is set to continue if not move up a gear in the near future.

THE SALFORD CONTEXT

Salford is one such municipal authority that felt that it had little financial choice but to make such alliances with private developers. In 2013, after Government delays, it was granted a public-private partnership in the form of a Private Finance Initiative (PFI). In terms of housing, Pendleton, which is an area of Salford and the site of our long-term research, is predominately made up of council owned social housing. A modernist inspired housing project from the late 1960’s, Pendleton was an environment of tower blocks and low-rise maisonettes set in communal open spaces. In the 1960’s it was to be a flagship redevelopment whose rational design was part of an attempt to produce what were termed ‘civilized cities’ for working people that stood in opposition to the ugliness, squalor and deprivation left over from the slums of the previous Victorian era (Johnson-Marshall, 1966, p. 349). By the 1980’s the area, once famous for its industry, like many manufacturing centres in the North West of England, saw its factories close or relocate abroad and its docks shut, unable to accommodate the new containerized freight. With growing unemployment, a shrinking population and increasing cuts from central government funding, the fiscal base of the area was dwindling.

By early 2000’s the municipal authority, like many provincial English city councils, needed help with maintenance and reinvestment in its extensive publicly owned housing stock. Without government assistance it had to adopt Harvey’s ‘entrepreneurial’ survival strategy and find a new pathway forward. Like many such partnerships, the public narratives used to promote the changes, emphasized the creation of a better housing stock, in this case 1,250 publicly owned homes would be refurbished and 1,600 new private and ‘affordable homes’ would be built. A planning leaflet declared that the scheme would “change the area back to the thriving community it once was – a neighbourhood of choice” (Creating a New Pendleton Planning Leaflet June, 2012, p. 2). What the public narratives failed to highlight is that the 1,600 new homes would be built on sites where social housing tenants had been evicted, good publicly owned homes demolished, in order to clear the area purposely for the new private residences. These narratives also fail to account for the large number of poor residents who are displaced by the demolitions, the vastly reduced amount of social housing now available or offered in the new builds and the inability of local people to afford any of the new properties tantalising labelled as ‘affordable homes’. The new development also fails to adequately address the extensive long-term poverty characteristic of Pendleton, except by eliminating poor people from the area and encouraging more affluent newcomers in. Statistics highlight that good health; educational attainment and life expectancy are significantly below the national average for many of the original Pendleton residents. On a local authority levels the English Index of Multiple Deprivations in 2015 ranked Salford 16th in the country for having neighbourhoods in the top 10% most deprived nationally. Public Health England in 2015 also found deprivation in the area very high with 26.8% of the localities children growing up in poverty. Our own work has documented Pendleton for a twelve-year period where we have witnessed this disinvestment, ruination, displacement and more recently gentrification of the area.

VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS & GENTRIFICATION

Visual representations of the city play a vital role in the perception and experience of the urban environment. Different types of visualisations such as maps, films, illustrations, postcards and photographs depict a selective range of discourses about the built environment. These practices draw on a wide assortment of cultural constructs about the city.

“The city is more than just a physical entity, more than a place where people live and work. The city is a place symbolic of many things, representative of many things. The city is a work of imagination, a metaphor, a symbol” (Short, 2002, p.414).

Short argues that these cultural constructions or 'urban ideologies' need to place within what he terms 'national environmental ideologies' that define our attitudes to the urban alongside the wilderness and countryside (2002, p. 422). Such socially constructed representations and their interpretation are obviously partial, and historically specific, reflecting deeper cultural ideas, aspirations and myths of an era (Jenks, 1995; Short, 2002). The ideas and forms are not exhaustive in what they make visible as they privilege certain accounts and perspectives over others. As Balshaw and Kennedy caution "the city is inseparable from its representations, but it is neither identical with nor reducible to them" (2000, p. 3). Shield comments that as an object of research, the concept of 'the city' is "always aporetic, a 'crisis-object' that destabilizes our certainty about the real" (1996, p. 227). Representations stabilise the heterogeneous and unfixed nature of urban sites by what they include and exclude. What these cultural productions do articulate however is deeply political. As Shields notes, most people don't bother to speculate about the real nature of the city, as it is more useful to consider 'whose city it is' (Ibid.). The positioning and use of such visualisations as well as what they render as visible and invisible all ask us to consider issues of power and ideology. To evaluate any visual practice, we need to understand its context, uses and the publics it is directed to or used by.

Photography's origins at the end of the industrial revolution coincided with the development of the new industrial city. It is not purely by chance then that the city has been a major subject for photographic depiction. Documenting urban change has been a key theme in this on-going association:

"Since its inception as a profession, photography has had a symbiotic relationship with the symbolic and material transformations of cities. The rapidly-urbanizing environs of the nineteenth century became testing grounds for the capacities of new photographic technologies" (Jones, 2013, p.2.1).

Tagg notes how photography as a medium has no inherent identity or status outside its 'historical specifications'. "Its nature as a practice depends on the institutions and agents which define it and set it to work" (Tagg, 1993, p. 118). In terms of the city we can identify how certain institutions have utilized the work of practitioners and integrated it into discourses that sit with their own agendas. More specifically related to our subject area, photographers as far back the 1860's such as Charles Marville in Paris or Thomas Annan in Glasgow documented urban demolition and reconstruction. Often commissioned by those undertaking the demolition, the uses of these photographic records frequently suppressed certain discourses of the unbuilding process. Marville's photographic work for the municipality of Paris for instance, initially made large format 'views' of areas about to undergo 'percements' or 'piercings'. This entailed the older congested quarters of the city being cut through by wide straight roads (known as arteries) designed 'to promote circulation of people, goods, traffic, air, water, and sunlight" (Kennel, 2013, p. 28). Marville's early documentation of the dank narrow streets of 'Vieux Paris' (Old Paris) contrasted with his later commissioned work of the city's newly built boulevards of 'New Paris'.

Initially Marville was in fact commissioned to make historic records of the areas undergoing change (Kennel, 2013, p.29). This archival reading changed when the pictures were used in such contexts as the Universal Exhibition of 1878. In this exhibition the work was presented as 'before' and 'after' to the public in order to highlight the changes brought about by the Second Empire. This usage contextualized Marville's work 'as part of an official discourse of modernization' (Ibid.). "The photographs presented compelling evidence of rational progress and justification of the modernist urban development envisaged by Haussman" (Tormey, 2013, p. 41). The work now appeared to visualize Haussman's ideas that Old Paris was indeed a sick city that needed 'surgery' in the form of demolitions. For David Harvey this reading suppresses the hidden political and economic motivations behind the changes. Harvey sees this reconstruction of Paris as a political reordering of the city to prevent further uprisings like those witnessed in 1848. By dispossessing the radicalized poor from central sections of Paris it also allowed Emperor Napoleon III to transform the ancient city in line with modern economic needs.

We can see the manipulation of photographic practices in other examples of urban change. Reformist documentary images for instance, have also played their part in justifying large-scale urban reconstruction. State or municipal authorities in the UK in particular have commissioned the work of photographers to help legitimate the need for reconstructing marginal areas, a process that often involved eventually displacing existing communities (Rose, 1997; Blaikie, 2006). This type of practice places images of this terrain within a narrative of decline that consequentially sites redemption through extensive intervention and reconstruction. This framing suppresses the systematic causation of poverty and places it within a different set of cultural discourses. Rose's work for instance, notes how the concept of 'the slum', a term coined in London of the 1880's, was for the Victorian era an 'imagined geography', the "site of the fear of (and fascination with) moral decay, crime, disease, social breakdown, sexual depravity, alien immigrants and degenerate slum-dwellers" (1997, p. 281). To add to

this framing it was believed in the nineteenth century that 'health and virtue' resided in an individual's environment (Driver, 1987, p. 277). At the centre of the reform and sanitary movement was the concept that individuals could be reformed and society rebuilt along scientific principles (Driver, 1987, p. 282). Tagg gives the specific example of Quarry Hill in Leeds of the late 1890's where the camera was taken into the area to provide evidence of the need for clearance. Anxieties about public health and contagion fostered a coherent impetus to clear the tightly packed dwellings. The prints alongside other materials were bound and sent to Parliament where they were used as visual evidence for debates in Parliamentary Select Committees (Tagg, 1993, p. 143).

Today visual imagery is still used to shape our perceptions about urban development, which makes it vital to study, as the discourses such imagery conveys have a deep influence on our responses to proposed changes. Parker and Long, in their work on Birmingham, illustrate this by examining the 'wider narratives' animating the current phase of regeneration taking place in British cities (2004, p. 38). They note:

"The material and the symbolic have always been thoroughly intertwined in cities, yet contemporary urban redevelopment is animated by a particularly intense 'politics of vision'" (2004, p.51).

In their analysis of Birmingham's on-going transformation, it is 'visual markers' that are key to communicating the new narrative of regeneration and the coming 'urban renaissance' (2004: 39). Here, visions of the city are contrasted in the differing skylines and buildings being presented. In this process they are particularly interested in the recent use of new computer-generated imagery to depict yet unconstructed sites for political and commercial ends. These corporate mediations use fantasy and affect to convert the real into a 'sign value', which creates 'emotive geographies' that are seductive to viewers (Jansson and Lagerkust, 2009, p. 26). Images in this process become 'condensed narratives' that make legible the proposed changes. They 'script' the new projected spatial and social configurations turning 'sites' into 'sights' (Gregory, 1999, p. 117). Examining the computer generated imagery of corporate developers, Rose, Degan and Melhuish note how these depictions of a new idealised urban type of living "nothing much happens in these sunny spaces except the leisured and happy strolling, shopping and sipping of coffee by apparently affluent inhabitants" (2016, p.108). Here new place marketing strategies are presented not as profitable investment opportunities but as aspirational locations, selling a desirable type of city living to come. They contribute to a wider 'interpretative frame to shape subjectivities' by adding authority to the claims developers make about the interventions proposed (Jones, 2013, p.2.2). As Parker and Long note, "How a city is comprehended by its inhabitants is an important factor in making sense of change, and in either promoting or resisting it" (2004: 39).

Working as a coherent repertoire with other depictions such as plans, models, newspaper articles, web pages, animations and brochures these images make legible the new spatial configurations of regeneration for their intended publics by creating a new 'urban imaginary'. In their depictions they foreground certain populations in the process of change while erasing existing communities in their engineered topographical imaginings. They stabilize the perception of the contested neighbourhood area and provide a clear teleology through the creation of a new 'space of futurity' or a 'future gaze' of what is to come (Jansson and Lagerkust, 2009, p. 26). In the case of Salford this type of computer generated image has been utilized in its marketing campaign to sell the regeneration plans to the local community.

In terms of its use, the computer-generated visualization was placed on the cover of a number of key marketing pamphlets to publicize the various plans for the regeneration process. As noted above, it was distributed to the existing community and we need to see them as the key public it was created for. The image is an aerial perspective at night looking over the estate illuminated by streetlights (a more panoramic version of it also appears in places). As viewers, we are privileged with an alleged overview that gives us the sense that we can see the realized plan clearly from this angle. In reality this perspective centres our gaze initially at one corner of the estate, primarily on two tower blocks in the foreground. The blocks are not only signature buildings of the area, but also buildings where the properties will remain as social housing. Reclad in new futuristic shells they epitomize the estate reinvigorated once again. In the image the council blocks are portrayed as contemporary apartment blocks literally stripped of their housing estate connotations. The perspective privileges a detailed reading of the end of the estate where residents are to remain in their homes and their properties will be refurbished. In doing this the viewer is denied a detailed perspective on the other end of the estate where extensive social housing is being raised to the ground, its residents dispersed and new private accommodation for sale or rent will predominate. From this view one can be forgiven mistaking the changes as a type of real regeneration where the local community stays put and benefits from the new investment. It is also interesting that, in the image, gating has been removed from an area where in actuality it is all pervasive. Since the 1990's all of the once open modernist spaces around the blocks have been extensively walled or gated. This is not to

protect the rich from the poor but the poor from the very poor. In this rendering the spaces are open again, with a magical profusion of new trees and a discrete airbrushing of McDonalds golden arches to maintain the spell. It has echoes of the utopian designs of the estates former incarnation as a modernist flagship redevelopment. In terms of the reality of the 'regeneration' process, the computer-generated image disguises the accumulation by dispossession process taking place, while giving its public a strong interpretative frame in which to place the extensive changes. The rendering presents a new urban imaginary. It conveys the coming change as possible, desirable and without negative social connotation.

STARTING FROM THE GROUND

Our work involves diverse media and is orientated towards what we might call the post-disciplinary. Amongst other things we create photographs, site writing, films, walking tours, textiles and performances. The pedagogy of montage, and processes of polyvocality have influenced us: ideas and voices that are activated by their peripheral existence, by their 'inbetweenness' (Brake and Aitken, 2012, 198). We are interested in what we have termed the space of words, which is embodied and multidimensional. We are thinking that making texts and photographs are as much spatial practices as they are representational ones, or evidence of something that is located elsewhere, like a landscape, an argument or data set. At the same time the urgency of the spatial conflict on our doorstep, forces us into the role of critical witness and the production of evidence in the form of an intensive archive we have collected and produced.

Our joint project in Salford started in 2004, although our connections with the area go back still further to the late 1980's. Gradually, as we walked, talked and photographed the area, we started to understand more about the transformation of the landscape, observing first-hand the process of disinvestment, which at its lowest point seemed to drag for a dank, rubbish strewn eternity, whilst on the horizon a ballet of cranes was performed. The contrast between the stillness of council waste grounds here and the frenetic building work of private developers over there, was evidence of the unevenness, which fuels the development economy.

When the Salford housing development PFI scheme started to roll out it was accompanied by balloons, badges and photo-opportunities, smiling children and even an urban farm. We participated as much as we could do, in the community consultation events and discussions that are staged to legitimize housing development. We were disappointed that there was little resistance or debate and what there was was subdued by the promise of refurbishment and new kitchens. Many residents just wanted to see some improvements to their run down area and were closed to the wider implications. We began to witness clearances and demolitions. We discussed displacement, informally with residents who were moving to new builds or having to leave the area altogether. In the summer of 2014 we attended the demolition of Pear Tree Court, which is next door to the night shelter. Night shelter guests fetched chairs outside so they could sit and watch the high level digger devour the 11-story tower block. In this way we watched the homeless watching a 100 homes being demolished.



Pear Tree Court demolition – Aitken and Brake (2014)

WALKING ATHOLE STREET

The following passage of site writing synthesizes observations from the Athole Street area of Salford, which we returned to repeatedly during the summer of 2014, as residents vacated homes awaiting demolition.

Athole Street commences at the junction with Liverpool Street, where the TECCO Off Licence pulls off a cheeky tricolour reference to TESCO's, and terminates 300 metres later, when it meets the uncompromisingly grim Hodge Lane wall, which conceals the motorway flowing beneath it. A thin wedge lodged between busy roads, this is a place that could easily be, and frequently is, passed by.

Heading from the TECCO junction we pass a small new development on the right hand side and on the left the showroom and show homes, with a large hoarding concealing the PRIVATE, PRIVATE, PRIVATE parking spaces for people viewing the properties. The developer's logo borrows heavily from the television test card, presumably to appeal to buyers from Media City just over the way. Signs welcome you to "the heart and soul of Salford"; "discover urban innovation surrounded by green open spaces"; and own your own home for £87,000. Continuing down Athole Street, beyond the empty resident's car park, above the fence draped with green mesh, is a view of the new housing development's pointy red roofs. Most of the streets adjoining Athole are through terraces, two up two down, with yards. The ones of the vacant homes contain the parting accumulation of rubbish, things unwanted in the new home, broken toys, drinks can, stacks of mushy magazines, torn clothes. In the absence of gardeners, the small front gardens, which you can still see were once stocked with flowering plants, vines and cypress shrubs are overgrown, running to seed and dank. Between the homes are pedestrianized areas with benches and mature trees, like the tilia with their intoxicating foliage. ALL MATERIALS OF VALUE HAVE BEEN REMOVED is stencilled on the boarded up windows. I listen to Athole Street ventriloquizing the vocabulary of value and worthlessness. I peer through the holes in the board, into the house that shudders.

We are exploring a wall stippled with tiny pebbles, the faint play of a shadow tree, a black plastic number 5 once over painted in yellow, when Rose comes out of her house, walking in our direction. We have previously only ever observed each other from a distance. She is telling us about her immanent move, pointing towards the new flats at the top of the road. She will be moving to a one bedroom flat soon, not far from her daughter, who will move "over there" says Rose, pointing to one of the unfinished houses on the building site.

"I don't know why they wanted to get rid of these houses, there's nothing wrong with them. The council have really let the outside go. All it needs is a bit of work on the outside and this would be great, inside I have everything I want...but they never listened to us."

Rose's shy gaze finds the pavement. She is anxious about her six grand children who frequently stay the night all together in her three bedroomed house. A victim of the bedroom tax, Rose cannot pay for, and will not be allocated more than one bedroom. Rose acknowledges that she is lucky to remain near her family. Some elderly neighbours have not been so fortunate. Re-housed in an unfamiliar place, one of them was robbed and others mourn the loss of neighbourly support and familiarity. These are the unremarkable losses of regeneration: incalculable for the victims, they will never figure in any official reckoning.



Athole Street – Aitken and Brake (2014)

The streets surrounding Athole have already disappeared from the developer's maps, and gradually the residents leave too. Sometimes when we don't have time to walk around the estate we drive, and so we discover that the week Rose moves out a film crew moves in. Unexpected activity alerts us: black clad figures, motorbikes, security guards, a huddle of special police. For a brief moment we believe we are witnessing a police raid on one of the remaining tenants. Then we see large vans spewing out cables, tripods and lighting stands, young people with clip and clapper boards, and an ARMED RESPONSE VEHICLE, faked with the help of oversized vinyl lettering. A small front garden is illuminated by a large silver umbrella, as if an extra-terrestrial abduction is taking place. The drabness, the weedy, flaking, empty grey streets are momentarily spectacular. The boxy pebble-dashed homes are briefly valued as a location for an urban crime series.

The lots nearest the Hodge Lane wall have already been cleared, levelled and enclosed within the shin high 'prairie' fences. Hardcore reveals the mangled micro-fragments of a life. On this sea of crumbled matter float objects not yet broken down: a child's scooter, takeaway boxes, empty lager cans.

SLOW VIOLENCE

We are considering how our practice might be forged into a counter narrative, one that is against the persuasiveness of gentrifying visuals, which stand on top of and in this sense completely conceal the financial imperative behind spatial development projects. The utopian script of the developers and the government

(housing for all, home ownership for all etc.) is cheaply and shoddily executed in the advertising of the new spaces, but appears nevertheless a cut above the current offer, as it reconstructs the land grab into a social benefit. As well as the spectacle of the gentrified future we must counter the intentional slowness, and stealth of accumulation by dispossession. The concept of slow violence has helped provide a vocabulary appropriate to the gravity of the situation. Rob Nixon makes operative the contradictions within the term, calling for representational and narrative strategies capable of challenging a “violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all” (Nixon, 2011, p.2). Whilst Nixon’s work relates specifically to the violence of environmental contamination, degradation and exploitation in the southern hemisphere, we believe his ideas can usefully be redeployed to the social and environmental landscape of Salford, which can be seen as a war on a social class, an attrition both physical and psychological, which is part of the induction phase of gentrification. David Harvey also connects slowness and violence with the process of creative destruction in the urban environment, and draws attention to the way in which this “perpetual reshaping of the geographical landscape of capitalism is a process of violence and pain” (Harvey, 1985, p. 29).

The photographer Camilo Jose Vergara believes we are witnessing a monumental urban transformation and that people of the future will want to know and see what happened as these sites change and disappear. Since the mid 1970’s he has been making an extensive record of the deteriorating landscapes of America ghettos and areas of deindustrialization. The work is a testament to an urban fabric where the underclass of the society is subject to neglect, segregation and unevenness.

“I have pulled together disconnected ways of seeing, made an inventory of declining neighbourhoods, ‘zones’, wastelands’, and ‘enclaves’, and assessed their significance. I have consistently documented how things end” (Vergara, 1997, Xii).

By revisiting the same cities and streets over many decades Vergara produces photographic sequences and records that articulate simply and with quiet irony the gradual processes of ruinification that precede gentrification. Appreciating the slow nature of urban cycles, he has adapted his practice to fit this distinct temporality. “I knew it was absurd that one picture could tell the whole story. Pictures are like building blocks” (Vergara, 2006). In many ways our work has parallels with Vergara. Like us, he too is making a slow record, an extended archive of the monumental changes that the urban landscape is undergoing that mirror the contemporary ebbs and flow of capital.

The impact of global capital on local landscapes can also be observed in the project entitled *History Images* by the photographer Sze Tsung Leong. We engage in a close encounter with Leong’s work through a heavy book of 80 landscapes. Made between 2002-2005 the images are all landscape format, high angle vistas, desaturated with an emphasis on muted tones beiges, browns, terracotta, under a dense colourless sky. The view is not panoramic, but wide enough to provide a proscenium sense, an expanse upon which something is about to, or already has occurred. Leong’s lens is trained unflinchingly on the destruction of wide swathes of urban fabric in the cities and growing mega cities of mainland China such as Beijing, Chongqing, Nanjing and Shanghai. The transformation of reform era China and its frenetic, destructive urbanisation have been much photographed, although the focus has usually been on building and mega building rather than mega-unbuilding. Leong offers a reading of his own work, which has been highly influential upon its critical reception (for example *Art Forum*) and institutes its central critical theme of erasure. In Leong’s formulation the erasure of successive histories required by state power finds its corollary in the destruction of cities. Whilst his textual erasure of the labour of wrecking and the displacement of unwanted bodies, to the outskirts of cities or new apartments, is far from complete, the main thrust of Leong’s argument serves to give form to what he sees as a dominant mechanism of state power: the ability to erase its wrong doings. Leong’s erasure is already one of meta-narratives of abstractions like history and architecture themselves. The title, *History Images*, makes a connection with history painting and the sterility of the historicized image. What we are looking at here is not erasure but a form of displacement, a more complex, dissipated and diasporic form, displacement is even more difficult to visualise than the absence of buildings and less aesthetically coherent. Ultimately Leong’s is a project of abstraction, which uses the landscape and what is happening to it, as a way to render graphic a process of erasure that is deemed to be sovereign in character. The Chinese states aptitude for erasure may not be in dispute here, but it must be noted that the processes of creative destruction and displacement by development, which are clearly articulated through Leong’s Chinese landscapes proliferate beyond mainland borders, proliferate on a planetary scale. The Pendleton environment has seemed to us to, in and of itself offer a cogent and powerful testimony to the impact of creative destruction. Like Leong we are drawn to the power of landscapes that speak for themselves, but

unlike him we are calling on our less expansive, less historic, more mundane landscapes of Pendleton to articulate the specifics of Salford's urban transformation in the context of readings, walks and texts. We can also make a further critical distinction between us and Leong, in that we do not tend to orientate our work towards its consumption as art, despite some possible advantages of this approach, because we find that (and others find this too, even in the context of a so called political turn) our work wants to talk about what is happening rather than itself.

CONCLUSION

To conclude we will say few words about strategy from the ground. There is an on-going historic discussion on photography and legibility that we have not had the space to fully unpack here. Strategies of construction, abstraction and naturalism have all offered practitioners a tactic in dealing with the enormity of the task of making visible the drivers behind the physical and social terrains we produce and are produced by. We have no illusions that the naturalism of our photographic practice isn't open to all the criticisms that have thwarted social documentary practices in their quest for some type of realism or truth. As Rosler notes, naturalism runs the risk of locking us into an uncritical engagement with learnt cultural narratives and interpretations (Rosler, 2004, p.8). We are susceptible of falling into 'commonsensical interpretations that fail to challenge the 'seamless envelope of ideology' that stitches together everyday life (Rosler, 2004, p.3). This is not being only strategy. By combining different media through montage we begin to disrupt. Strategy is an abstraction; a formula of moves and counter moves that theoretically enable us to achieve our goal. In our own lives our particular search for strategic resolution has been thwarted, over and over again, by neoliberal work practices in academia, by caring and cancer. This is another aspect of the everyday that is our primary material. As opposed to the militarily inflected idea of a representational strategy, a more diverse, pragmatic and fluid set of practices is required. What is to be done? The question is the engine that keeps us going.



All Materials – Aitken and Brake (2013)

REFERENCES

- Balshaw, M. & Kennedy, L., 2000. *Urban Space and Representation*. London: Pluto.
- Blaikie, A., 2006. Photography, childhood and urban poverty: Remembering the forgotten Gorbols. *Visual Culture in Britain*, 7(2) pp. 47-68.
- Brake, J. and Aitken, J.V., 2012. Fragments from a Housing Estate. In Certoma, C., Clewer, N. and Elsey, D., ed. 2012. *The Politics of Space and Place*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars. Ch. 8.
- Cameron, D., 2016. I've put the bulldozing of sink estates at the heart of turnaround Britain. *The Sunday Times* [online] Jan 10, 2016. Available at: <http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/comment/columns/article1654318.ece> [Accessed April 4th 2016].
- Chakraborty, A., and Robinson-Tillet, S., 2014. The truth about gentrification: regeneration or con trick? *The Guardian* [online] May 18, 2014. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/may/18/-sp-truth-about-gentrification-how-woodberry-down-became-woodberry-park> [Accessed April 2, 2016].
- De Caeter, L., 2002. The capsular city. In Leach, N., ed., 2002. *The Hieroglyphics of Space: Reading and Experiencing the Modern Metropolis*. London: Routledge. Ch. 19.
- Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015. *The English Indices of Deprivation 2015 Statistical Release*. [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015> [Accessed April 18, 2016].
- Driver, F., 1988. Moral Geographies: Social Science and the Urban Environment in Mid-Nineteenth Century England. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 13(3), pp. 275-287.
- Glynn, S., 2008. Soft-Selling Gentrification? *Urban Research & Practice*, 1(2) pp. 164- 180.
- Gregory, D., 1999. Scripting Egypt: Orientalism and the cultures of travel. In Duncan, J. and Gregory, D., eds. 1999. *Writes of Passage: Reading Travel Writing*. London: Routledge. Ch. 6.
- Harvey, D., 1985. *Consciousness and the Urban Experience*. Oxford: John Hopkins University Press 1985.
- Harvey, D., 1989. From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: the transformation of urban governance in late capitalism. *Geografiska Annaler, Series B: Human Geography*, 71B (1) pp. 3-17.
- Harvey, D., 2003. *The New Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Harvey, D., 2007. Neoliberalism as Creative Destruction. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 610 pp. 21 – 44. DOI: 10.1177/0002716206296780.
- James, P., 2004. Birmingham, photography and change. In Kennedy, L., ed. 2004. *Remaking Birmingham: The Visual Culture of Urban Regeneration*. London: Routledge. Ch.11.
- Jansson, A. and Lagerkvist, A., 2009. The future gaze: city panoramas as politico-emotive geographies. *Journal of Visual Culture*, 8(1) pp. 22-53.
- Jenks, C., 1995. The centrality of the eye in western culture: an introduction. In Jenks, C., ed., 1995. *Visual Culture*, London: Routledge. Ch.1.
- Jessop, B., 2004. Critical Semiotic Analysis and Cultural Political Economy. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 1(1) pp. 1-16.
- Johnson-Marshall, P., 1966. *Rebuilding Cities*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Jones, P., 2013. Picturing Urban Regeneration: A Study of Photographers in Liverpool, UK. *Sociological Research Online*, 18(3) 5.
- Kennel, S., 2013. *Charles Marville: Photographer of Paris*. London: University of Chicago Press.
- Leong, S., 2006. *History Images*. London: Steidl.
- Nixon, R., 2011. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. London: Harvard University Press.
- Parker, D. and Long, P., 2004. The mistakes of the past? Visual narratives of urban decline and regeneration. *Visual Culture in Britain*, 5(1) pp. 37-58.
- Public Health England, 2015. *Salford Unitary Authority Health Profile 2015*. [online] Available at: http://www.apho.org.uk/default.aspx?QN=P_HEALTH_PROFILES [Accessed April 18, 2016].
- Rose, G., 1997. Engendering the slum: photography in East London in the 1930's. *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 4(3) pp. 277-300.
- Rose, G., Degen, M. and Melhuish, C., 2014. Networks, interfaces, and computer-generated images: learning from digital visualizations of urban redevelopment schemes. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, volume 32, pp. 386-403.

- Rose, G., Degen, M. and Melhuish, C., 2016. Looking at digital visualizations of urban redevelopment projects: dimming the scintillating glow of unwork. In Jordan, S. & Lindner, C., ed. 2016. *Cities Interrupted: Visual Culture and Urban Space*. London: Bloomsbury. Ch. 7.
- Rosler, M., 2004a. For an Art Against the Mythology of Everyday Life. In Rosler, M., *Decoys and Disruptions: Selected Writings, 1975 – 2001*. London: October Books. Ch. 1.
- Rosler, M., 2004b. In, Around, and Afterthoughts (on Documentary Photography). In Rosler, M., *Decoys and Disruptions: Selected Writings, 1975 – 2001*. London: October Books. Ch. 7.
- Sassen, S., 2011a. Strategic Geographies, Challenge of their Visualisation. In *Mutations, Perspectives on Photography*, ed. 2011. Chantal Pontbriand, Steidl, Gottingen, Germany, 2011. [online] Available at: <http://www.saskiasassen.com/PDFs/publications/strategic-geographies-challenge-of-their-visualization.pdf> [Accessed April 3, 2016].
- Sassen, S., 2011b. 'Black and White Photography as Theorizing: Seeing What the Eye Cannot See', *Sociological Forum*, 16 (2). DOI: 10.1111/j.1573-7861.2011.01251. x. [online] Available at: <http://www.saskiasassen.com/PDFs/publications/black-and-white-photography-as-theorizing-seeing-what-the-eye-cannot-see.pdf>. Accessed April 17, 2016.
- Saskia, S., 2014a. Carving Up the City. *India Today* December 1st 2014. [online] Available at: <http://www.saskiasassen.com/> [Accessed April 3, 2016].
- Sassen, S., 2014b. *Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy*. London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Sheller, M., 2008. Infrastructures of the imagined island: software, mobilities, and the architecture of Caribbean paradise. *Environment and Planning A*, Volume 41, pp.1386-1403.
- Shields, R., 1996. A Guide to Urban Representation and What to Do About It: Alternative Traditions of Urban Theory. In King, A., ed., 1996. *Re-Presenting The City*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd. Ch. 11.
- Shipman, T., 2016. Cameron: I will bulldoze sink estates. *The Sunday Times*, January 10, 2016. [online] Available at: <http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/Politics/article1654847.ece?shareToken=af081a620fcf02c37d15c3e4e43d5955> [Accessed April 1, 2016].
- Short, J., 2002. *The Urban Order: An Introduction to Cities, Culture, and Power*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Smith, N., Caris, P. & Wyly, E., 2001. The 'Camden Syndrome' and the Menace of Suburban Decline: Residential Disinvestment and Its Discontents in Camden County, New Jersey. *Urban Affairs Review*, 36(4) pp. 497-531.
- Smith, N., 2002. New Globalism, new urbanism: Gentrification as a global strategy. *Antipode* 34(3), pp.427-450.
- Tagg, J., 1993. *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories*. Minneapolis: Minnesota Press.
- Tormey, J., 2013. *Cities and Photography*. London: Routledge.
- Vergara, C., 1997. *The New American Ghetto*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.
- Vergara, C. and Samuelson, T.J., 2001. *Unexpected Chicagoland*. New York: The New Press.
- Vergara, C., 2006. Sites in Sight: Photography as Enquiry. [video online] Available at: <http://ocw.iti.im/courses/urban-studies-and-planning/11-309j-sensing-place-photography-as-inquiry-fall-2012/lecture-videos/lecture-2-camilo-jose-vergara-march-13-2006/> [Accessed April, 12, 2016].