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Borders Cuts Images

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edited by
Linda Bertelli and Maria Luisa Catoni

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Sommario

Borders Cuts Images. History and Theory

Engramma n. 179 Editorial

Linda Bertelli, Maria Luisa Catoni*

The cover image we have chosen for this issue of Engramma was shot by photographer Laura Lezza:

"Una fotografia realizzata nei primissimi giorni della pandemia, quando si stava formando una nuova estetica, nuovi spazi, un nuovo sguardo e nuovi perimetri. Sono dunque contenta che quei primi segni con lo scotch su un pavimento possano dare un seppur piccolo contributo visivo alla vostra riflessione sul tema dei confini, dei tagli, delle immagini" (Laura Lezza, personal correspondence, 16/02/2021).

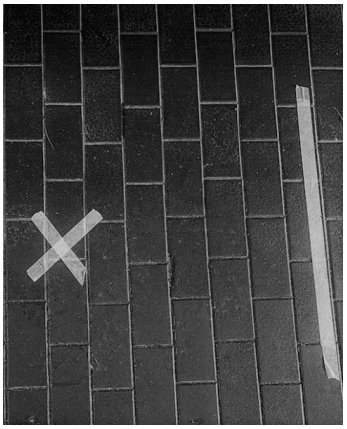

Foto di Laura Lezza | Photo by Laura Lezza

Even a cursory glance at artistic practices and techniques, as well as aesthetic reflections on them, cannot fail to notice that the notion of cut in its different meanings and valences is a constant and recurring element. From case to case, it corresponds not only to gestures of rupture, experimentation, and new codifications, but also to ordinary, but no less powerful, working tools and devices. It therefore seemed to us that practices of cutting and theoretical analyses of them, as they involve the human and social sciences, required special attention.Indeed, such practices and analyses represent an opportunity to identify some of the vital ganglia of a large number of artistic practices and media processes while at the same time opening up new ramifications of research and allowing us to look at classical problems in a new way or identify new objects and spaces of analysis. Scrutinized in a historical perspective in terms of the way it is practiced and interpreted, we consider the cut to be, in extreme synthesis, one of the most relevant

conceptual and technical operators. As a first step, therefore, we have dedicated an international Winter School to the plethora of topics that rotate around the notion of cut. Organizing this school in November 2019 as part of the Research Unit "LYNX. Center for the Interdisciplinary Analysis of Images" at the IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca, we invited scholars to delve into the multiple aspects involved in the notion of cut, the various practices that use it, the tools that concretize it, and the different historical moments and cases in which it has become particularly evident. The analyses presented and discussed during the Winter School have thus provided an opportunity to begin fine-tuning our understanding of the meanings of cutting practices, both in theoretical and historical terms and in terms of artistic and media techniques, generating further questions and reflections that are still to investigate and leading to the further scrutiny proposed in this issue of "Engramma".

The essays collected here reflect on some of the multiple areas of intersection between different ways of approaching the notion of cut: this is, of course, still a partial picture that we hope might serve as a point of departure. It is composed of specific case studies shedding light on the many aspects, complexity and wealth of ramifications produced by the notion of cut as a recurring exercise in modeling. The cut thus emerges in its many and various functions, incarnations and statutes: as an obligatory instrument of analysis and representation; as a means of production identifying an artistic genre; as an operator to visually affirm an awareness of the power of art-making processes; as a method of rupture and innovation, each time producing new approaches to the primary elements of artistic making (matter, space, forms), new affirmations of the artist's status, and new forms of mediation and re-mediation. The research question from which we began was not so much if and how much of avant-garde there still is in the cut, although we are aware of the relevance of this aspect. Indeed, in constructing this issue we have taken into account the premise that the cut seems to take on an emblematic role in the avant-garde, and even ends up becoming the image of a way of accessing visibility. For instance, this occurs in the well-known sequence of the cut of the eye in Buñuel's *Un Chien Andalou*, a work that condenses a metaphor of art in the violence of the blade that rescues, and therefore subverts, the very condition of seeing. However, the core interest that gradually

emerged from the discussions carried out first during the Winter School at the IMT School and then during preparatory work for this issue of "Engramma" concentrated instead on the elements of the ordinariness of the cut as an artistic and media practice. To analyze these elements, we have not proceeded by reconstructing an (art) history of the cut, strictly speaking. In other words, what we intend to do with this issue of "Engramma" is not to formulate a homogeneous and exhaustive chronological framework of the different operations involving the cut in its different versions and applications, in the humanities and social sciences. Rather, in a broader sense (which does not, of course, deny or neglect what a multi- and interdisciplinary history of cutting practices should or could be) what we hold up as a distinctive aspect of this collection of essays is the act of taking charge of the very dimension of history or, more precisely, of some of its moments and their intelligibility when read through the notion of cut, taken as much as a practice as an operator of analysis and methodological tool. From this particular point of view, interrogating specific histories of cuts is tantamount to interrogating the event (its analysis and understanding) as a cut or an effect of the cut.

Characterizing the cut as a multifaceted figure (concept, analytical and methodological tool, artistic practice, and media modality, to mention only the elements most recurrent in our collection) makes it possible to read each contribution in this volume as a focus on a single facet of the figure of the cut, one facet that necessarily recalls and presupposes the others. Considered in its entirety, therefore, the volume intends to establish links and points of resonance between case studies that may appear very distant and distinct from each other, even while recognizing that this does not exhaust all the faces of the figure of the cut. It is thus clear that the gesture of cutting must be thought of in its characteristic of not belonging either to the sole list of concepts or to the simple plan of an action positioned exclusively in the sphere of empirical art and media-making processes. That is, it should not be considered an execution that requires no further questioning, being sufficient to itself and finding in itself its own justification. Here, the cut is instead analyzed as a theoretical-practical complex.

Concerning its execution, we can assume an attitude of distance and detachment; we can move away from it in order to focus on it, identifying

those traits that allow us to constitute it as a concept and methodological and analytical tool through which to investigate the objects of our research. It is a concept that operates, however, and as such it must be considered first and foremost as an operator in a given context (including material contexts). It is necessary to describe the multiple forms in which the cut is carried out, the conditions in which it takes place, the meanings it intends to communicate, the style with which it is performed and, last but not least, what it seeks to bring to light. No theory can plan, or anticipate, this event in its scope of operational gesture. The article by Maria Luisa Catoni, who is also co-editor of the issue, analyzes this character of the cut as a 'device' by focusing on what is perhaps one of the most relevant figures incorporating the cut, that is, the frame or, more specifically, the border, and conducting a comparative study of the different and ambiguous ways this figure operates and its communicative potentialities (including meta-artistic). Catoni explores this topic by studying first the very famous case of the *Portrait of a Carthusian* by Petrus Christus and then four attic red figure wine cups from the 6th and 5th century BCE. The hybrid instrument of the frame, by now a classic topos in investigations into the techniques and dynamics of the cut (Ferrari and Pinotti 2018, to cite a recent publication), is also the subject of Maja-Lisa Müller's essay. Focusing on a certainly non-traditional medium such as wood inlay between the 15th and 16th centuries, she analytically browses several examples of the kinds of transgression that this divisive and defining element allows and, at the same time, limits. By paying attention to the immediate effects of the gesture of cutting and above all what is entailed in its execution, we can say that this act always involves determining the edges of what was previously united: the separation introduced by the cut is also, always, delimitation. In this sense, the cut delimits and determines. It draws separating lines that grant form to what previously had none. It could also be argued that cutting involves a process of individuation from which the work is generated, since division is the generator of form and sense. Every operation aimed at creating separation, division, delimitation may thus imply, in some cases, the reconfiguration of what was indistinct (as well as the margin and what is excluded) through a transition, from indistinct to distinct, from external to internal, with all the variety of illusionistic games and levels of ambiguity that such a transition not only tolerates but also contributes to creating. In artistic practices, the cut also corresponds to carve material surfaces that

will take shape, thus making itself visible. Form-taking is also an exit from obscurity, a process of becoming perceptible and being identified as separate. This process concerns not only the various media (whether artistic or not) understood as practices of image production, but also a much more comprehensive range of elements including both the ways in which we perceive and receive these images as well as the cultural, social and economic dynamics through which these images circulate and are (or are not) conserved, managed and archived.

The essay by Costanza Caraffa and the one by Laura Forti and Francesca Leonardi deal more specifically with this last aspect, albeit on the basis of two different cases and using different methodologies. Caraffa's essay concentrates in particular on the remarkable archive of the Photo Library of the Kunsthistorisches Institute-Max Planck Institute in Florence, a photo library of which she has been the director since 2006. She offers a detailed, theoretically oriented and careful overview of the different practices involving cutting operations in the organization and management of a photographic archive designed for documentation and art-historical research, and the multiple meanings, both historical and theoretical, that these operations can assume. Forti and Leonardi's article addresses the relationship between cut and space, a topic also mentioned by Caraffa. It makes this relationship the central theme of inquiry, however, analyzing it through the case of project space as one of the organizational typologies of the contemporary art system. The essay studies project space both in terms of its morphology, setting out to identify and define this structure, and in terms of the relationships each individual space has with other spaces of the same type, read through network analysis and focusing on the Milanese context. If we consider the relationship between space and cut, especially from a cognitive point of view, perception offers a unique condensation point. Indeed, the condition of possibility of perception is located in the rhythmic interruption of the sensory continuum, just as the very act of blinking marks the rhythm of perception.

When analyzed in terms of its link to perception, the cut seems to function as that which establishes the possibility of relating to the perceived and its meanings. The cut gives order and direction to what we perceive, determining the contours of objects and allowing edges and borders to

delineate what remains excluded from that which is perceived. The essay by Linda Bertelli (co-editor of the collection together with Maria Luisa Catoni) follows this line of interpretation, offering a detailed and historically circumstantiated study of selected pages from a fundamental text by the well-known French physiologist Etienne-Jules Marey, *Le Mouvement* (1894). In this particular text, Marey outlines what he sees as the potential function that chronophotography, as a photographic technique designed to represent the selection and re-composition of bodily movement in the scientific field, could play if it were practiced at the service of artists. As an operation of separation but also composition and re-composition, the cut has always been linked both to the operations of drawing and defining the contours, and to those of editing (Marey's research also proceeded in this vein) which, considered in their interrelation, establish the play of the inside and outside of the image. Camilla Pietrabissa's essay is mainly dedicated to analyzing this aspect, focusing on the different types of cuts to which the technique of drawing has been subjected historically. By selecting specific examples and considering the period between the 16th and 18th centuries, Pietrabissa identifies the gesture of the cut as involving a tool used for both analysis and preservation over time. Studying this tool, we can conduct a historical investigation of the effect of interpretation this selective practice has had on the image as well as the role it has played in classifying both represented subjects and artistic genres.

It cannot be stressed enough that these cutting operations are inextricably linked to the history of media and processes of remediation as a history, first and foremost, of techniques and technologies (and, therefore, the inseparability of a history of technique and technology from understandings of cutting practices). The analysis of these relationships lies at the center of Sara Romani's essay dedicated to the work of Swiss photographer and lithographer Carl Durheim (1810-1890). By studying the relationship between graphics and photography in the mid-19th century through the lens of some of Durheim's images, Romani investigates the operation of the cut understood as framing and selecting. The meanings of this operation, and therefore its impact on the interpretation of these photographs, are analyzed through a contextual study focused mainly on charting the circulation of these images over time.

In general terms, the same lines of Western thought that have taken processes of image production, reception and circulation as their chosen object of study (from the history of art to aesthetics and visual studies) have also evolved through an examination of the ways in which concepts and techniques are intertwined, substantiating themselves in the above-mentioned notions of style, composition, detail, montage, interval, frame, selection, framing, inclusion and exclusion; these notions form the lemmas of a vocabulary whose recto and verso are knowledge and practice. Thanks to this vocabulary, a long history of media practices and, on the reflexive level, the formulation of aesthetic and social hypotheses, has been able to constitute itself as a discourse. The essays by Agnese Ghezzi and Laura di Fede focus in particular on these aspects. Ghezzi's essay, moving through the history of anthropology in late 19th-century Italy and referring to both textual and iconographic sources, analyzes the historical construction of the ethnographer's gaze and the role that guidebooks and travel manuals played in defining of this practice of observation. Such texts served to give instructions for the reliability and, therefore, the objectivity of information collection, including information obtained through photographic documentation. The construction of ethnographic observation at the end of the 19th century is thus linked to the use of photography as a technology possessed of hybrid meanings and always occupying the borderline between art and science. Di Fede's article also returns to the cultural and social history of the "techniques of the observer" (Crary 1990), choosing as its specific field of investigation the photographic representation of Sicily by foreign travelers in the second half of the 19th century. The author lays out an intermedia comparison with the engravings and drawings of the previous century in terms of framing, styles and dynamics of the gaze. In the complex of discourses on the arts and their praxis, the cut thus constitutes one of the essential tools of a visual argumentation that implies both the action of the one using cutting to produce a new form of the visible and of the one receiving it. As we have seen, this two-fold access is particularly evident in the example of how elements such as framing, delimiting, and editing operate. Such elements play a powerful role in organizing the visual, as they are able to guide and position the attention of the viewer by directing it towards specific loci of the image. We also analyze this role with regard to the status and scope of norms designed to regulate access to the visible, to what is or is not considered permissible to look at (Baer, et al. 2019).

Although this theme emerges in many of the essays collected here (e.g., Catoni, Caraffa, and Ghezzi, among others), we have selected two additional, specific examples that point to an inquiry about the process of defining the conditions of what can be shown. The first is one of the most relevant examples through which such conditions can be analyzed, since it investigates the process of institutionalization: the film censorship carried out at the ministerial level in Italy since 1913 (and subjected to a radical reform that substantially eliminated it in 2017), the subject of Maria Giusti's insightful paper employing a legal perspective. The second example—Sonia Colavita's essay—reflects on the historical stratification of the dynamics of visibility, exploring how they unfold in the decomposition of the matter of which each image is composed. Focusing on the practices of found footage experimental cinema and, more specifically, Bill Morrison's *Decasia* (2002), the essay shows how not even the person producing the image can exercise full control over what is framed and its meaning. Such control is impossible because the cut gives shape to an excess that escapes compositional choice and leaks, filtering into the image itself. In this sense, cut practices are located in a plexus in which control, style, technique, habitus, cultural filters, norms and prohibitions converge. From this perspective, the gesture of cutting also points us toward an analysis of the processes of interdiction of images and, conversely, freedom to images, an issue that still represents a delicate and challenging aspect of media practices in their relationship with historical, cultural and political terrain.

*The authors assume equal responsibility for the conceptual, scientific, and editorial aspects of the essay. Paragraphs 1, 3, 4 and 8 are edited by Maria Luisa Catoni; paragraphs 2, 5, 6, 7 and 9 are edited by Linda Bertelli. The editors would like to thank Angelina Zontine for the accurate proofreading.

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English abstract

This issue analyzes the different practices, uses and meaning of the cut in the humanities and social sciences. Through a careful selection of specific case studies and methodological perspectives, this collection of essays intends to offer an overview of some of the multiple areas of intersection between different ways of approaching the notion of cut: as a tool of analysis and representation, as a means of production identifying an artistic genre, as an operator to visually affirm an awareness of the power of art-making processes, and as a method of rupture and innovation, each time producing new approaches to the primary elements of artistic making (matter, space, forms), new affirmations of the artist's status, and new forms of mediation and re-mediation. It includes contributions by Maria Luisa Catoni, Camilla Pietrabissa, Maja-Lisa Müller, Costanza Caraffa, Sara Romani, Laura Di Fede, Agnese Ghezzi, Linda Bertelli, Sonia Colavita, Maria Giusti, Laura Forti and Francesca Leonardi.

keywords | cut; borders; image; art history; visual studies; aesthetics

Cut as a device

An example from Classical Antiquity

Maria Luisa Catoni*

I

Of the numerous and diverse figurative contexts, including Classical Antiquity, in which the notion of cut can be observed at work, I will concentrate on a small number of figurative cases that allow me to reflect on one specific issue, i.e. the explicit interaction between represented subject and borders, in which these latter, either fictional or material, are treated as ideally falling outside of the narrative field and belonging to the decorated object rather than the subject being depicted. Although the question of the relationship between narrative, images and movement is closely related to the notion of cut and speaks to the relationship between borders and represented subject, the question of movement necessarily remains outside the scope of this article. The notion, nature and comprehension of movement has attracted a great deal of theoretical and figurative attention since Antiquity, and important modern scholarly publications have been devoted to investigating the rules and devices used to represent movement in various western figurative contexts (Arnheim 1954; Gombrich 1960; Gombrich 1964; Arnheim 1966; Gombrich 1969; Gombrich 1980; Arnheim 1982; Landsberg 1982 with Le Poidevin 1997 and Nyiri 2009; Deuleuze 1983; Deuleuze 1985; Boehm 1987; Naerebout 1997, with relevant literature on ancient dance; Gombrich 1999; Doane 2002; Bol 2003; Wannagat 2003; Wagner 2008; Catoni 2008 on ancient dance; Mullarkey 2009; Bredekamp 2010; Lauschke, Bredekamp, Arteaga 2012; Leyssen, Rathgeber 2013; Catoni 2013; Giuliani, Catoni 2016). Space limitations prevent me from even touching on a related key notion in Classical Antiquity, that of rhythm, even though this notion is of paramount importance for understanding the relationship between static schemata and the implicit or explicit movement they may express (Petersen 1917; Panofsky 1926; Benveniste [1951] 1966; Sandoz 1971; Pollitt 1974; Naerebout 1997; Mesturini 2001; Pucci 2003; Pucci

2004-2005; Tosaki 2007; Catoni 2008; Giuliani, Catoni 2016; Michon 2018). In this article, a small selection of figurative examples serves the specific aim of analyzing the technical tools used by ancient vase painters to produce artificial cuts and borders as well as to artfully violate, manipulate and play with them.

1 | Petrus Christus, *Portrait of a Carthusian*. Oil on canvas. Signed and dated 1446. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 49.7.19.

II

The Portrait of a Carthusian painted by the Flemish painter Petrus Christus in 1446 [Fig. 1] is a very famous example of "playing with borders" and may serve as an icastic introduction to the reflection proposed here (Petrus Christus, *Portrait of a Carthusian*. Oil on canvas. Signed and dated 1446. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 49.7.19; Panofsky 1953, I, 308 ff.; Upton 1990, in particular 22ff., 65 ff.; Ainsworth 1994, 30, 49-53, 93-95).

The painter famously uses precise illusionistic cuts (Panofsky 1953, 310) and two different light sources positioned opposite each other – one inside and one outside of the painted frame (Upton 1990, 25-26) – to construct different levels of unreality (Sandström 1963), thus engaging the viewer in a continuous movement between them. Proportions, sitter placement, light, borders and cuts are the technical tools used by the painter to draw the viewer into this game. The trompe l'oeil marbleized frame with its illusionistic painting of a carved signature of the painter and the date 1446 on the red sill (see Ainsworth 1994, 94-95 regarding the signature, the subsequently-added date and the results of X-radiography and infrared reflectography showing that the painted frame was added after the painting of the portrait), separates the viewer from the sitter; at the same time, however, it functions as a bridge and threshold between the two, a threshold that the light coming from the right hand side actually trespasses (Upton 1990, 25-26). Real frames normally belong to the real world, the one of the beholder; they frame the

object in its materiality (while also contributing to defining its status) and perform the unambiguous function of delimiting the space of the narrative being represented (on the painted frames in ancient mural painting see Salvo 2018; regarding marbleized frames and backs, see Ainsworth 1994, 94; see also Panofsky 1953, 180 ff.; Cämmerer-George 1967; Gludovatz 2005; Platt, Squire 2017).

In a number of daringly illusionistic frames painted by Jan van Eyck, and even more so in Christus' extreme deployment of this device in the *Portrait of a Carthusian*, the trompe l'oeil frame ambiguously retains this function of delimiting the world of the sitter and pretends to locate itself at the level of the material art object. And yet it does not entirely belong to either the sitter's fictional world or the beholder's one. In the *Portrait of a Carthusian*, moreover, the painted frame comes to operate as a sort of window that defines not only the fictional space of the sitter but also a further in-between space – the space in which the light source is located and out of which it shines – located between the cell occupied by the sitter and the space occupied by the beholder: this deceptive counterpoint emphasizes the ambiguity of the different spaces involved in the relationship between the beholder and the painting. At the same time, the painted frame, together with its figurative consequences, constraints and freedoms, underlines the painter's self-aware role in artfully creating, at his will, spaces, objects, barriers and bridges as well as effects of perceived distance and/or closeness (see Sandström 1963; Bann 1989; Bryson 1990; Krüger 2001, 60-79; Degler 2015; Stoichita 2015 (1998)). This frame/window thus bridges, albeit within the painting, different levels of unreality and reality. The "corner space" (Panofsky 1953, 310) occupied by the monk, a space that becomes visible through – and is defined by – the window/frame, is again obtained using cuts and light: the light from the left softly reveals the borders of a shallow cell which unambiguously belongs to the world of the sitter. This frame/window has been the focus of much scholarly attention, all the more so as Petrus Christus asserted its ambiguity to an extreme degree by placing a fly on the painted red sill (Degler 2015, 71-75; see also 77- 114; Thürlemann 1992, 542-543; Kühnel 1989; Chastel 1986; Chastel 1984; Panofsky 1953, 310 n. 5, 319 and 470; Land 1996; Pigler 1964).

The size of the insect [Fig. 1] places it in the world of the viewer; its position on the frame/window's red sill and just above the painter's signature (between PETRUS and XPI), however, locates it within the system of bridges devised by the painter to induce the viewer to move, startled and doubtful, between different levels of unreality, thus simultaneously reinforcing the meta-artistic indicators of the painter's self-awareness. As widely acknowledged in the scholarly literature on the subject, apart from the symbolic meanings embodied by the fly, Petrus Christus' ingenious figurative device has a significant parallel in a long tradition of literary anecdotes from Classical Antiquity that were also reused or reworked in theoretical reflections on art of the early Renaissance: think for instance of the anecdote narrated by Giorgio Vasari about Giotto, who would have deceived Cimabue by adding a fly perched on the nose of a figure previously painted by the master (Vasari, *Vita di Giotto* (Giuntina), Bettarini, Barocchi 1966-1987, vol. II, 124-125, quoted from https://www.memofonte.it/ricerche/giorgio-vasari/; the anecdote was recorded by Filarete as well, Finoli, Grassi 1972, book XXIII).

The story about Giotto belongs to a tradition of similar anecdotes recorded by ancient authors, mainly featuring painters from the late Classical times and their technical ability to perfectly imitate nature. One of the most famous examples concerns the contest between Zeuxis and Parrhasios: the former deceived birds with his painted grapes but conceded the victory to his rival Parrhasios because he succeeded in deceiving Zeuxis himself, rather than mindless animals, with a painted curtain made to look as if it was hanging across his painting (Pliny the Elder, NH, 35.65). Even the comment recorded by Philostratus (Philostratus Maior, *Imagines*, I.23.30) on a painting showing a bee on flowers is wholly focused on deception, and the comment is made, moreover, in the context of a story entirely centered on deceptive images, in particular the image produced by nature that led Narcissus to death:

> τιμῶσα δὲ ἡ γραφὴ τὴν ἀλήθειαν καὶ δρόσου τι λείβει ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθέων, οἷς καὶ μέλιττα ἐφιζάνει τις, οὐκ οἶδα εἴτ᾽ ἐξαπατηθεῖσα ὑπὸ τῆς γραφῆς, εἴτε ἡμᾶς ἐξηπατῆσθαι χρὴ εἶναι αὐτήν. ἀλλ᾽ ἔστω. Σὲ μέντοι, μειράκιον, οὐ γραφή τις ἐξηπάτησεν, οὐδὲ χρώμασιν ἢ κηρῷ προστέτηκας, ἀλλ᾽ ἐκτυπῶσαν σὲ τὸ ὕδωρ, οἷον εἶδες αὐτό, οὐκ οἶσθα οὔτε τὸ τῆς πηγῆς ἐλέγχεις σόφισμα [...]

> The painting has such regard for the truth that it even shows drops of dew dripping from the flowers and a bee settling on the flowers – whether a real bee has been deceived by the painted flowers or whether we are to be deceived into thinking that a painted bee is real, I do not know. But let that pass. As for you, however, Narcissus, it is no painting that has deceived you, nor are you engrossed in a thing of pigments or wax; but you do not realize that the water represents you exactly as you are when you gaze upon it, nor do you see through the artifice of the pool [...] (Translation, slightly modified, by A. Fairbanks (ed.), Philostratus the Elder, Imagines. Philostratus the Younger, Imagines. Callistratus, Descriptions, Cambridge, MA 1931).

Anecdotes of this type bring to the fore (as the main criterion of quality) not only the artists' technical ability in imitating – and rivaling – nature, but also their self-awareness and meta-artistic discourse, carried out with visual tools. In this case, the quality of their art is identified relative to their technical ability to produce perfect and deceptive illusions as well as illusionary breakings of those illusions, devices that successfully drive viewers to pay special attention to the relationship between reality and images. This analysis of some of the iconographical and stylistic devices a painter has used to drive viewers to move in and out of his painted illusions has concentrated so far, exempli gratia, on the well-investigated mid-15th century case of the *Portrait of a Carthusian* by Petrus Christus. This painting is only one of many possible examples, of course: an analysis of the relationship between painted or real architectural settings, figures and parerga in 15th century painting would offer equally fruitful examples (Sandström 1963; Krüger 2001; Degler 2015; Stoichita 2015 (1998)), from Jan Van Eyck's frames to the multiple levels of unreality staged by Masaccio (e.g. in the Fresco of the Holy Trinity in Santa Maria Novella, Florence), Andrea Mantegna (e.g. the St. Mark the Evangelist at the Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt), or Carlo Crivelli (e.g. the Madonna and Child at the Metropolitan Museum of Art).

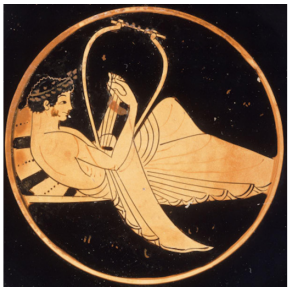
III

Keeping in mind the very famous and extensively investigated cases of Petrus Christus and the surge of interest among 15th century painters in visual devices enabling them to display their technical ability and power to produce artistic illusions, as well as to involve the viewer in the game of

moving among different levels of unreality and reality, it might be interesting to look to Classical Antiquity to examine the ways ancient vase painters treated borders and cuts. The post-antique cases I have analyzed differ substantially from ancient figured pottery: apart from the completely different production techniques, the functions of the objects vase painters produced were very different than those of 15th century paintings; for example, the functions of these objects (and the images they bore) entailed physical interaction with their users at multiple levels and in specific social and/or ritual environments. Unlike painting, moreover, the scenes represented on ancient vases never at any level implied an external frame, even in those cases in which they might have been put on display in special cabinets.

Petrus Christus and the 15th century cases mentioned above do, however, represent a valid point of departure for our reflection on Classical Antiquity insofar as they turn the 'frame' into a border, thus relocating it within the pictorial field and putting it in a different and thoroughly guided relationship with the painted narrative. An element that is normally external to the painter's technique (though not necessarily to the painter's choice and control), the frame, is pulled inside the painter's domain and turned into one of the stylistic and iconographic devices available to the painter. An extremely valuable analysis of the varying treatment of borders in ancient Greek painted pottery has recently been carried out by Clemente Marconi (Marconi 2017) as part of an equally useful and stimulating series of reflections on the frame edited by Verity Platt and Michael Squire (Platt, Squire 2017). These publications allow me to concentrate on a highly specific case and experiment. The experiment will be conducted on four wine cups (Attic red-figure *kylix*. Attr. to Epiktetos. Ca. 510 BCE. Malibu, The J. Paul Getty Museum, 86.AE.279. Beazley Addenda2, 168; The Beazley Archive nr. 352426. Attic red-figure *kylix*. Attr. to the Chairias Painter. Ca. 500 BCE. Paris, Louvre L69 MNB 2040. Beazley, ARV2, 176.1; The Beazley Archive nr. 201605. Attic red-figure *kylix*. Attr. to the Brygos Painter. Ca. 490-480 BCE. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum AN 1967.304. Beazley, ARV2, 378.137; The Beazley Archive nr. 204034; Attic red-figure *kylix*. Attr. to the Brygos Painter. Ca. 490 BCE. Malibu the J. Paul Getty Museum 86.AE.286. Beazley Addenda2, 224; The Beazley Archive nr. 275946).

These are objects that, at least ideally, share the same function and it can be postulated that the images they bear were intended to be used in similar ways. The elements to be compared here are the images decorating the inner tondos, images that we must imagine interacting with a number of external elements such as light, the drinker's body, gaze and mood as well as, most importantly, wine. The images decorating the cup's inner tondos must be imagined moving through the surface of the wine, gradually appearing to the drinker's view while also generating different effects and perceptions as the communal drinking and drunkenness progressed.


2 | Attic red-figure *kylix*. Attr. to Epiktetos. Ca. 510 BCE. Malibu, The J. Paul Getty Museum 86.AE.279.
3 | Attic red-figure *kylix*. Attr. to the Chairias Painter. Ca. 500 BCE. Paris, Louvre L69 MNB 2040.
4 | Attic red-figure *kylix*. Attr. to the Brygos Painter. Ca. 490-480 BCE. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum AN 1967.304.

Let us concentrate on the function of the borders represented on these cup tondos, paying special attention to the relationship between the borders and the narratives being represented. In the scene decorating the inner tondo of the cup attributed to Epiktetos [Fig. 2] dating to the end of the 6th century BCE, a simple and subtle linear border frames the figural scene in which a bald, crowned and bearded symposiast, draped in a mantle, reclines to the left while playing a lyre and singing heartily with his head tilted backwards (on the uncertain reading of the inscription, see https://www.avi.unibas.ch/DB/searchform.html?ID=5206). The border line delimiting the pictorial field of the tondo seems to interact with the figure rather than functioning as a decorative element belonging to the support, what we might call the world of the cup-user. Indeed, the adult symposiast

is bracing his left foot directly on the tondo's border, and it is the border that actually provides the necessary support to make possible the position of his lower body.

A totally different conception of the function of the tondo's border seems to be at work in the scene decorating the cup attributed to the Chairias Painter [Fig. 3] in which a young crowned symposiast, draped in a mantle, reclines to the left while playing his lyre. Here, the line that defines the figural field of the tondo seems to unambiguously belong to the world of the support, that is, the cup, and functions as a structural constraint for the vase painter who painted the figural scene. This function of the tondo's line can best be observed by focusing on the right part of the reclining figure, where the lower portion of his legs and feet are cut by the tondo's frame and thus not visible.

The cup tondo attributed to the Brygos painter in Oxford [Fig. 4] shows this same unambiguous function of the frame, a thick border decorated with a meander pattern, as an element belonging to the object and not interacting with the represented scene. In this case, the walking stick and the holder of the suspended sponge, strigil and aryballos behind the courting couple are 'cut' as to precisely fit in the space delimited by the tondo's border; both the adult and the boy, on the other hand, rest on a ground line that is independent of and separate from the border of the decorated field. These examples show that, among the cup decoration strategies, both patterns of interaction between the tondo's border and the represented scene were possible between the end of the VI and the beginning of the 5th century BCE. Indeed, both options treat the tondo's frame as a border: the border can either belong firmly to the decorated support and even 'cut' some of the objects in the painted scene, or it can interact with the figures and, in so doing, enter the pictorial field. In both cases, however, the border represents an unsurpassable barrier. In this context, the cases in which such a barrier is explicitly violated become potentially revealing. The inner tondo of a *kylix* in Malibu attributed to the same Brygos painter [Fig. 5] provides an example of how the violation of the tondo's border can be turned by the painter into a pivotal narrative element of the visual representation.

5 | Attic red-figure *kylix*. Attr. to the Brygos Painter. Ca. 490 BCE. Malibu the J. Paul Getty Museum 86.AE.286.
5a,b | Details of Fig. 5.

The tondo is decorated with the scene of Tekmessa coming to cover the body of Ajax, who committed suicide by throwing himself on his sword on the seashore (Most, Ozbeck 2015, with literature; Catoni 2015). Of the two ways we have seen for treating the border of the decorated field, this tondo adopts the second one, that is, the border unambiguously lies outside of the narrative of the figural scene. How strict a compositional constrain is represented by such a line becomes particularly evident if we carefully observe the lower right portions of the scene [Fig. 5a]. The lower edge of the decorated field becomes an internal thin black line where it meets the sandy ground on which part of Ajax' body rests. The detail of Ajax's hair spreading across the ground proves particularly useful for showing that the tondo's frame is treated as an unpassable line: Ajax' hair reaches this thin black groundline but it never touches the inner red line of the tondo's frame. The same is true of Ajax' elbow. On the left hand side of the representation, instead, Ajax' feet icastically and prominently cross the entire width of the framing band, thus conspicuously violating the border of the pictorial field. Apart from the possibility the painter might have been playing a meta-artistic game, here, this vase-painter's technically demanding choice can be seen to play a particularly powerful narrative function: the device of having Ajax' feet violate the tondo's

border augments to an extreme degree the perception of the corpse's rigidity as well as its enormous size, the latter being a physical trait of Ajax that is often mentioned in numerous literary sources (starting with Homer, *Iliad*, 3. 225-229). Not only does Ajax' huge body [Fig. 5] occupy the entire available horizontal pictorial field, but it also strikingly stretches across the entire width of the tondo's lower left border (Fig. 5b), thus invading the space of the support (the cup) and entering the world of the beholder. The visual contrast between the size of the cloth held by Tekmessa and the hero's enormous, rigid corpse is reinforced specifically by the visual device of having Ajax' feet violate the border of the cup's inner tondo, and both pictorial choices offer visual evidence of the narrative assertion of the size of Ajax' body. A number of ancient representations of the episode of Ajax' suicide simply refrain from depicting this physical trait; once the choice is made, instead, to give visual evidence of it, the device used by the Brygos painter in the Malibu cup obviously does not represent the only possible technical solution.

6 | Corinthian cup. Ca. 580 BCE Basel, Antikenmuseum und Sammlung Ludwig. Photograph from: LIMC, II s.v. Aias I, nr. 122.

The painter of a Corinthian cup [Fig. 6] (Corinthian cup. Ca. 580 BCE. Basel, Antikenmuseum und Sammlung Ludwig) dating to the first half of the 6th century BCE, for example, solved the problem of how to represent this particular physical feature of Ajax by establishing a visual comparison between Ajax' standing companions, who discover his corpse, and the hero's markedly oversized body: Ajax lies face down parallel to the ground, his body bent at the waist and knees, impaled by the sword onto which he threw himself and touching the ground with his toes and forearms. The horizontal extension of the dead body, as well as its unnatural pose and rigidity, are visually emphasized by the contrast with the size of the other figures standing nearby, lined up on both sides of the corpse.

Of course, the two different solutions adopted in the Corinthian cup and the cup in Malibu give rise to evident visual consequences for the whole composition. What matters in the context of this reflection on the role of

borders and cuts is that the Brygos painter resorts to the ingenious device of having Ajax' feet violate the borders of the pictorial field in order to artificially amplify a narrative element, that is, in order to provide visual evidence of the unnatural rigidity and uncommon size of the hero's powerful, majestic body. The violation of a border that is normally meant as a tool for marking and defining the space of the painted narrative thus becomes a narrative element in itself. The exceptional size of Ajax' body is translated by the Brygos Painter into a visual exception, through the violation of the tondo's border.

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English abstract

In this paper the notion of cut is analyzed in terms of its concrete functioning as a device, in the context of four wine cups from the late archaic and early classical times. Starting from the very famous case of the *Portrait of a Carthusian* by Petrus Christus, the function of the illusionistic painted frame is outlined and compared to the function of the borders delimiting the pictorial field in the tondos of the four wine cups analyzed.

keywords | border; frame; red figure vase painting; Petrus Christus; illusionistic painting.

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(v. Albo dei referee di Engramma)

Cutting down the interpretation of drawings

The case of Watteau

Camilla Pietrabissa

The notion of cut, compared to that of frame, implies that of a physical alteration. While framing indicates a cognitive operation, the cut refers to a material one. This essay interrogates the historical interaction between these operations, taking the historiography of landscape drawing as an example. For landscape drawing – a pleasurable practice taken up by artists since the 15th century – the notion of cut proves very productive to understand the parallel histories of mental and physical operations that gave rise to its minor position in the history of art. This minority is enhanced by the phenomenological nature of the genre, since in landscape images the margins of the work determine the mental process of selection of that portion of reality which is the matter of representation. In a phenomenological sense, landscape images always suggest the projection of the author's paradoxical experience of creation. Paradoxical because, while free to create by inclusion, the author will necessarily cut out from the frame objects which were nevertheless potentially there. In the absence of a framing device, the mental cut of landscape drawings made from nature or from imagination is perceived by the viewer as a literal cut of the paper support. The history of material cuts in drawings, integrated in the theory of landscape imagery, can therefore be seen as a fundamental component of a historiography of representation. What follows is a first essay of a theory of landscape drawing, discussing the 'material' problem of grasping the 'subject' of such a representation.

A short history of cuts

The manipulation of drawings has always been a common practice in private collections and print rooms around the world. Unlike oil paintings, whose standard presentation framed and under protective glass primarily implies appreciation at a distance, drawings, and particularly Old Master

drawings, require an additional kind of material study that requires close looking of the unframed work. In the quiet, secluded space of the print room, works on paper are presented in a cardboard mount to be picked up carefully and scrutinized on the surface and on the margins. Both sides are usually inspected. The drawing is thus apprehended via a number of elements such as inscriptions, additions in various media, framing devices, and collector's marks, an array of traces of the complex history of the transit from the studio to the collector's cabinet and the museum. The following pages are an attempt to interpret the evidence of cuts of the original paper support, resulting from three different types of operations: cuts performed along the margins, as in drawings that have been trimmed; cuts made at the centre of the sheet, as in the case of 'splits'; finally cuts made by removing portions of the paper entirely, as in the 'cut-outs'.The cuts analysed here occurred outside of the artist's studio, at an unknown point in time, by a variety of figures such as dealers and collectors. Despite the paucity of information on the events that caused the cuts, they pose fascinating questions about the handling and interpretation of Old Master drawings. How can we recover what was lost in the process of cutting the margins of drawings? What alterations in the meaning of the work follow the physical ones? Any answer to these questions should consider the intersection of art history and the history of connoisseurship, as well as the history of restoration practices. Since the late 15th century, when drawings began to be exchanged, sold, and collected, they also began to be subjected to cuts (Karet 1998; Karet 2003, 29-37). As is well known, Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) cut the drawings assembled in his *Libro de' Disegni*, comprising between five and seven-hundred folio-sized sheets. The *Libro*, referenced repeatedly in the *Vite*, can be considered as a hermeneutical tool that worked as illustration of Vasari's theories as well as a personal gallery to facilitate the study of artists' maniere (Panofsky 1930; Kurz 1937-1938; Collobi Ragghianti 1974; Caliandro 1999).

1 | Album page from Vasari's *Libro de' disegni*, with an arrangement of cut-out studies of animals attributed to Sebastiano di Bartolo Mainardi. Pen and brown ink, brown wash and red chalk, on ten sheets overlaid, 574 x 448 mm. The British Museum, London © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Despite the large format of the pages in the Libro – folio-sized, that is over 55 cm in height – drawings were cut to fit better into the ornamental, architectural frames in different polygon forms. The presentation of each page facilitated the comparison of works by the same author and the visual analysis of manner and techniques, but required many cuts and trimmings. In the case of a sheet from the British Museum, Vasari cut the figures along their margins to ease the attribution of studies of animals by Sebastiano di Bartolo Mainardi and other anonymous draughtsmen [Fig. 1] (see Degenhart and Schmitt 1968, 628-638; on this sheet, see Popham and Pouncey 1950, I, no. 153, II, pl. CXLIII). Vasari's procedure facilitated the comparison of artworks in the same way in which finished works of art decorated 16th-century interiors (Monbeig-Goguel 1987; Forlani Tempesti 2012; Schenck 2013). The goal of such procedure was manifold, including enabling attribution proposal and training the eye to recognize period style and techniques. In short, the skills of a modern connoisseur.

By the early 18th century, practices of connoisseurship were transformed into a more universal analytical and rational method, derived from early modern empiricism and shared among a growing milieu of collectors and critics. Throughout Europe, visual expertise was practiced on a variety of things that were collected and displayed according to a methodical order, including, of course, natural history specimens (Pomian 1990; Bleichmar 2012).

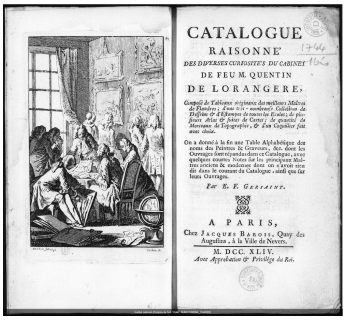
In this context, drawing grew even more important in the theoretical discourse and drawings gained importance as independent works of art, as can be gauged from its primacy in the didactic system of the French Royal Academy of Art and Sculpture (Lajer-Burcharth and Rudy 2017, pp. 12-39).

Subsequently, the burgeoning art market started producing a body of literature on the history of drawing in the form of sale catalogues.

From a theoretical point of view, moreover, the work of art was seen as the result of a process that could be reconstructed through a quasi-scientific analysis of graphic marks (Tordella 2012). Drawing was not the faithful evidence of the artist's idea, as in Vasari's texts, but rather the trace of artistic disposition or personal temperament. This attitude toward drawing can be considered as a symptom of a new anticlassical doctrine whereby the artistic gesture could enjoy an independent status – independent, that is, from its realization in painting or sculpture and more generally from commercial use (Griener 2010, 198). In terms of collecting practices this set of favourable circumstances meant that increasing attention was placed on drawings and their history. But dealers, collectors and theorists handled drawings in different ways, for different purposes: while the growing number of connoisseurs who promoted a new rational method for the study of art were concerned with the preservation of the original, others continued to manipulate and alter drawings for commercial or aesthetic reasons.

18th-century cuts

The case of drawings by Jean-Antoine Watteau (1684-1721) fosters discussion about different types of cuts produced on drawings in the early-modern period and about the existing gap between the current principles of conservation and the informal cutting practices that occurred at various points in time.


CATALOGUE
RAISONNE
DES DIVERSES CURIOSITEZ DU CABINET
DE FEU M. QUENTIN
DE LORANGERE,
A PARIS,
Chez JACQUES BARROIS, Quay des Augustins, à la Ville de Nevers.
M. DCC. XLIV.
Avec Approbation & Privilege du Roi.

2 | C.-N. Cochin, Frontispiece to E. F. Gersaint's catalogue of Lorangère collection sale, 1744, Bibliothèque de l'Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, collections Jacques Doucet.

3 | Album page from Vasari's *Libro de' disegni* inserted in a Mariette mount, with studies of hands by Raffaellino del Garbo. Metalpoint, heightened with white on pink prepared paper, two sheets mounted together, sheets 145 x 210 mm each. The British Museum, London © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Watteau's loose sheets, once bound in albums and praised throughout the 18th century, in Paris and internationally, were considered then as now as independent works of art. Nevertheless, as Pierre Rosenberg and Louis-Antoine Prat have attested on various occasions, they have been subjected to alterations of all kinds (Rosenberg and Prat 1996, Introduction; Rosenberg and Prat 2011, 18).

Even if modern museums practices require that particular importance is given to the preservation of the material condition of the work, the interpretation biases originally caused by the cuts are perpetuated to this day. A trans-historical analysis of the treatment of Watteau's drawings reveals the ways in which material cuts have affected their study in time.

In early 18th-century Paris it was not uncommon to cut drawings in order to frame them in mounts or to fit them into portfolios. Pierre-Jean Mariette (1694-1774), the most famous connoisseur of his time, occasionally trimmed and split his drawings motivated by concerns about the impact of presentation on visibility (Smentek 2008). The method of scrutiny elaborated in Mariette's milieu was based on the close observation and physical handling of the sheets (Smentek 2014, esp. chapter 2). In Charles-Nicolas Cochin's frontispiece for the catalogue of the sale of the Lorangère collection (1744), the gentlemen gathered around the table

4 | Fra Bartolomeo, A sheet with paper additions, depicting a farmhouse and a capital from the Ospizio di Sta Maria Maddalena alle Caldine. Pen and ink, 107x210 mm. Albertina, Vienna. Photo © Albertina.

handle sheets of paper with energetic gestures and scrutinize them with eyeglasses [Fig. 2]. This print suggests that a collection of works on paper was no longer enjoyed in isolation. The growing elite of 18th-century connoisseurs elaborated standard formats of presentation and conventional procedures to manipulate the sheets. Paradoxically, this implied that new alterations were made to ensure the best possible visibility.

As regards his own collection, which amounted to approximately 9400 sheets, Mariette was directly inspired by Vasari's Libro for the design of the blue mounts with a golden band that are associated to him as well as for the cartouches and other ornaments that decorated them (Bjurström 2001; the history of the inspiration for Mariette's mount is more complex, see Le Marois 1982). The main difference with the system of his predecessor lies in the fact that Mariette tried to make the drawings individually visible and handleable. A sheet in the British Museum that had originally come from the Libro shows Mariette's determination to preserve Vasari's mounting by incorporating the entirety of the original support into the mount, and by making restorations and enlargements that would help the beholder 'see' the work and its 16th-century arrangement in full (I. Rossi in Chapman and Faietti 2010, no. 47, 198-199) [Fig. 3].

As Kristel Smentek has demonstrated, Mariette's concern with the possibility of seeing a sheet as clearly as possible prompted him to enlarge or, more rarely, cut, those sheets that could not fit the standard size of his mounts (Smentek 2008, 42-44). These alterations served to manage the visual experience of drawings, to present them at their visual best, so to enhance the viewer's capacity to perceive an artist's drawing manner. This paradoxical attempt to mediate the appearance of drawing by physically altering it exemplifies how the entry of drawings into the sphere of connoisseurial discourse affected not only its perception but its material existence too.

A landscape drawing by Fra Bartolomeo, once in Mariette's collection and now in the Albertina, Vienna, serves to clarify this point [Fig. 4]. Chris Fischer has suggested convincingly that Mariette enlarged the sheet at the top with a tiny a strip of paper, an operation requiring the application of fine pen work to complete the uppermost part of the trees (Fischer 1989, 313-314). The detailed rendering of an Ionic capital in the lower right side of the sheet had also been glued in by Mariette, after removing it from another sheet with studies, to show that the site depicted was located in the area surrounding the Ospizio di Santa Maria Maddalena near Le Caldine, Fiesole, in whose loggia this capital could be seen. Although the insertion of a piece into the fibres that make up the paper is among the most radical of his interventions, Mariette's manipulation is gentle and careful. In so doing, the connoisseur instructed future viewers on Fra Bartolomeo's interest in topography, and particularly in the architecture of the convents, monasteries and villages around Florence. The resulting drawing can be read as a hermeneutical device with which the collector meant to enrich the understanding about the practice of an early Renaissance painter. Seen in this light, the kind of cut-and-paste procedure deployed by Mariette is more than a form of restoration: it is a fabrication of an entirely new object and an expansion of its meaning.

The afterlife of Watteau's drawings

Watteau's drawings were subject to a different kind of cut from those made by Mariette. Instead of a connoisseurial treatment, cuts on his drawings were mostly determined by current taste, that is, by factors relating to strategies of artistic reputation or the social value of pictorial genres. Watteau's drawn oeuvre is calculated to have comprised between two and four thousand drawings, many of which were probably cut out from albums and split for sale (on the number of drawings see Rosenberg and Prat 1996, XII-XVI). Even so, at the time of the artist's death the market for drawings by contemporary artists was not as developed as that for the Renaissance masters, and the wealthiest collectors did not buy the artist's works (Bailey 1999-2000). Mariette's severe assessment about Watteau was that he "handled drawing with finesse, but could never draw in the grand manner" ("ce peintre mettait de la finesse dans son dessin, sans avoir jamais pu dessiner de la grande manière" Mariette, *Abecedario*, vol. 5, 106).

Drawings by the artist were therefore put on the market in the decades following his death thanks to the efforts of his friends and supporters. Jean de Jullienne (1686-1766), an entrepreneur and collector who had been a good champion of Watteau, devised a successful marketing strategy for his drawings which included the publication of biographies and critical texts as well as the translation of his works into prints. Jullienne's monumental project to translate Watteau's drawings into engravings, titled *Figures des différents caractères, de paysage & d'études dessinées d'après nature*, was published in Paris in two in-folio volumes between 1726 and 1728 (Dacier and Vauflart 1921-1929). His supervision of a number of (mostly young) etchers for this project aimed to preserve certain characteristics of the artist's draughtsmanship – virtuosity, energy and elegance (Tillerot 2011, 35). In the preface, the drawings are called "studies made too quickly to be completed" ("études faits avec trop de vitesse pour être terminées' Jullienne, Figures, vol. 1, n.p.), an aspect of his artistic process that imparted the sheets with their most recognizable quality: their "natural and genuine character" ("un caractère si vrai et si naturel" Jullienne, *Figures*, vol. 1, n.p.). The selection of drawings and the organization of the volumes emphasized two features that gave the drawings the character of immediacy sought by collectors: Watteau's tendency to multiply figure studies in the same page and his inclination to isolate motifs from their setting (Lajer-Burcharth 2015). Thus, despite the title's claim that the volumes contained both figure and landscape studies, Jullienne gave greater priority to the former, including only fourteen landscape drawings over the total number of 272 plates. According to Marianne Roland Michel, the exclusion of many landscape drawings from the project could be explained by the fact that Jullienne "did not feel that they represented Watteau as the public expected him" (Roland Michel 1984, 158).

5-6 | J.-A. Watteau, *Sheet with studies*, Recto: Three studies of a woman's head and a study of hands, Verso: Landscape study. Red chalk and graphite with black chalk and pink wash, 179 x 159 mm. The National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

7 | F. Boucher after J.-A. Watteau, Plate 195 from *Figures de différents caractères*, depicting a rustic hut near a *château*. Etching. Paris, INHA, Collection Jacques Doucet.

More generally, Watteau's interest in landscape drawing has been matter of debate, so that the attribution of many landscape sheets to the artist is still ongoing today (see for example the entry for a drawing in the Teylers Museum, Haarlem, in Rosenberg and Prat 2011, no. 10, 51). This is rather perplexing if one considers that Watteau's 18th-century biographers claimed that his dedication to landscape had started early on, when he was an assistant to Claude III Audran at the Palais de Luxembourg and could stroll in the public gardens to sketch after nature (Jullienne, *Figures*, Preface).

This activity – according to the same authors – had continued in the area of the Porcherons where Watteau was a guest of Pierre Crozat (Mariette, *Abecedario*, vol. 5, 110; see also Eidelberg 1967). Later, his friendship with Jullienne would have brought him to draw the rural area around the Gobelins manufactory, as can be seen in the view of the Bièvre canal represented in Plate 23 in the *Figures*. Despite these accounts about Watteau's interest in landscape representation, some scholars still regard Watteau's landscape drawings as following compositional schemes typical of Italian and Flemish models, especially when compared with the immediacy and freshness of the figure studies (Michel 2008, p. 108). As a result, Watteau's landscape drawings remain in a subordinate position with respect to the figures.

Consider a two-sided drawing in Washington, D.C. which has been cut into square format to improve the arrangement of the side on which Watteau has drawn three head studies, now disposed in three corners of the sheet [Fig. 5]. As a result of this cut, only slightly more than half of the landscape composition on the other side of the sheet is left intact, as we can gauge from an etching by François Boucher made in reverse for the

Figures (Plate 195) [Fig. 6]. A quick comparison between print and drawing reveals that Boucher has been very faithful to the original, striving to render the details of Watteau's composition and handling style [Fig. 7].

The fact that the sheet was cut after the production of the etching supports the argument that the *Figures* were an early, almost experimental project that created a market for Watteau's drawings. Only at the moment of their dispersal, many drawings were cut according to aesthetic reasons at work in the commercial market. A further hypothesis on the reason for this alteration relates to the drawing's function: a collector might have preferred to acquire the heads because they served as models for the girls depicted in *La contredanse*, a painting which is known today through old photographs and an engraving (Dacier and Vauflart 1921-1929, vol. 3, no. 177). The canon of taste that gives primacy to the human figure and the practical function of drawing in relation to painting is still predominant today in the assessment of Old Master drawings, at the disadvantage of sketches and studies without a direct use in painting (Rubin 1991). Thus, we might assume that many of the drawings have been cut to make for a nicer arrangement of the figurative elements especially if these were known in print or if they related to paintings (for similar examples, see Rosenberg and Prat 1996 no. 338, Frankfurt; no. 321, London; see also the case of a drawing whose attribution has been challenged: no. R839 Washington). In these cases, the effect of the cut on interpretation is to create a hierarchy between the two sides of a sheet.

On the designation 'recto-verso'

The aspiration towards 'perfect visibility' that strived to preserve the entirety of the support seems at odd with a ranking system based on the overall quality and material conditions of the work. The historicity of the criteria with which various professionals intervened in the material history of the sheets derives from the fact that interests and tastes changed over time (Guichard 2011). It so happens that, in the case of Watteau's drawings, once these were taken out of the confines of the original album, the order of the loose sheets in a determinate sequence is lost and the two sides of loose sheets get 'ranked' more easily. With reference to the drawing by Watteau analysed above, a more definite provenance history detailing its ownership from the 18th century until the time when it was

gifted to the National Gallery of Art in 1963 would allow a greater comprehension about the point in time when the recto-verso designation was determined, along with the pre-eminence of the side with the figure drawings.

At present, the drawing is known to have been in the collection of Charles Gasc, Paris, c. 1850; then with Richard S. Owen, Paris; until it was purchased by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York in 1937. Unfortunately, the moment at which the drawing was cut cannot be determined. Even in the absence of such information, material history can help to grasp the relationship between the treatment of drawings and the recto-verso designation. One of the most extreme alterations ever operated by Mariette, for instance, consisted in the splitting of a sheet in order to separate the front and reverse side and eventually juxtapose them (a technique which was adapted from his work with prints Smentek 2008, 47-53). Sale catalogues in the 18th century moreover were careful to describe double-sided drawings, wherever possible (on the language in 18th-century art writing, see Kobi 2017). Two sheets by Guido Reni, for instance, were described as landscapes in Mariette's sale catalogue despite the fact that they had composition drawings on the reverse side:

> Un beau paysage en travers, fait à la plume, et au verso se trouve le Couronnement de la Vierge, à la plume, et lavé. Un paysage en hauteur, dans lequel se voit saint Jérôme, et deux autres moyens paysages en travers, à la plume (Mariette catalogue, no. 642; Johnston 1969).

8 | Photo of a drawing of unknown location, from P. Rosenberg, L. Barthélemy-Labeeuw, *Les dessins de la collection Mariette: école française*, 2011.

While for 18th-century viewers both sides were worthy of equal attention, the practices of today's museum have turned this description upside down: in actual fact, the Coronation of the Virgin is now designated as the recto of the sheet (National Galleries of Scotland, inv. no. D 702).

If compared with a drawing by Watteau which was described in the same catalogue, in a lot comprising "quatre études de paysages, des environs de Paris, à la sanguine", it becomes clear that the criteria for the assessment of quality were still in the making [Fig. 8] (Mariette catalogue, lot. 1392).

The finished, sophisticated landscape on the side that was designated as the recto in the catalogue is typical of the artist's free handling of red chalk that creates the receding planes in landscape pictures (see for comparison a drawing in New York, Rosenberg and Prat 1996 no. 18).

The sheet has been cut, in this case, along the margins of the landscape drawing, as the left part of the shoemaker's body has been left out on the reverse side. The scholars who have compiled the catalogues raisonnés of both Watteau's drawings and Mariette's collection of French drawings have thus retained the original designation of the landscape as the recto, giving primacy to the degree of finish (Rosenberg Prat 1996, no. 224; Rosenberg and Barthélemy-Labeeuw 2011, no. F2967). Despite landscape's lower status in comparison with figure studies, collectors seem to have appreciated Watteau's accomplishment of a scene.

Thanks to the fact that Watteau systematically separated figure and landscape studies on different sides of the sheets, the historical and material study of his drawings allows us to appreciate the historicity of

expertise and connoisseurship, all the while considering what we gain and what we lose in terms of meaning.

In this sense, some cuts have allowed connoisseurs and scholars to attribute more firmly certain sheets (see the case of Vasari's *Libro* in Collobi Ragghianti 1974, 8), while others confirm the primacy of a more aesthetic taste for function and finish.

Conclusions

The history of the cut is therefore a history of conservation practices. Any alteration may be seen as the counterpart of the continued effort to preserve an object for posterity. In this sense, the study of cuts performed on drawings puts an emphasis on paper, drawing tools, and mounting – in short, on the technical history of drawing. Aided by the improvements in the quality of images and in technical diagnostics, recent art historical scholarship is turning attention to these material features as vital information for a deeper understanding of a work's history (see for example the exhibition held at the Uffizi, Bacci et al. 1981; or for a more academic approach, Mussolin 2020). This means effectively entering an interdisciplinary sphere of study which brings together the various concerns of material conservation and the more theoretical interests of art history (see Rosand 2001).

Meanwhile, modern principles of conservation have radicalized Mariette's approach to the restoration and display of drawings. By contemporary standards, conservators are very careful to maximize visibility of the marks on paper, including inscriptions and traces that have nothing to do with the original 'drawing', and to preserve the entirety of the paper support, for instance when they have to decide whether to separate a drawing from its original mount, if it could partially damage the original sheet (see James et al., 1997). It can even be argued that this principle lies at the heart of the modern discipline of conservation, as can be observed in Max Schweidler's anecdote about the restorers who, in the 1930s, cut the margins of works on paper at the request of clients – something that he considered as absolutely incorrect (Schweidler 2006 [1938], 35).

In theory, we are therefore in the position to scrutinize drawings with unprecedented visual clarity, and yet, the study of drawing will always

compel the viewer to face the material history that modify its very meaning, from the artist's hands to the museum storage. Two types of 'cut' have been analysed here: the first kind allows collectors to juxtapose a drawing to another, even within the work itself, in order to supplement its comprehension, as in the case of Fra Bartolomeo's landscape drawing; the second kind, conversely, reduces the possibility of reading the sheet in its entirety. For contemporary scholars and conservators, the first kind is considered as a peculiar form of 'restoration' (both in Collobi Ragghianti 1974 and in Smentek 2008), while the second has been condemned as an incorrect practice (Schweidler 2006 [1938]). This essay has argued that a diachronic material analysis of drawings can take into account both kinds of cut, from the moment when the draughtsman traced the first mark on the paper support, to the first alterations performed by the artist himself or by collectors at a later date. All traces of cuts found on drawings today require an interpretative posture that takes into account the complex history of the handling of drawing.

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English abstract

Between the 16th and the 18th century, as the study of drawing emerged as a scientific procedure to write the history of European art, material cuts have transformed the way in which drawings were collected and studied. This essay examines various types of cuts, such as those operated on the drawings in the collections of Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) and Pierre-Jean Mariette (1694-1774), and offers an explanation on how such treatment shaped the interpretation of scholars and connoisseurs through time. The case of the loose sheets by Jean-Antoine Watteau (1684-1721) shows the impact of the cuts made since the 18th century on the study of an artist's drawn oeuvre, and particularly on the ranking of pictorial genres. Landscape drawings are cut to favour figure studies on the opposite face of the sheet. Starting in the 19th century, the systematic introduction of the labels 'recto' and 'verso' in art historical literature and museum practices has resulted in the hierarchical arrangement of the two faces, according to the evolution of taste. The philological study of the loss caused by the cut, it is argued, may promote fruitful intersections between the history of drawings' connoisseurship, collecting and restoration.

keywords | cuts; drawing theory; Watteau; Mariette; recto-verso; landscape drawing; collecting taste

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Framing representation

The hybrid zones of intarsia

Maja-Lisa Müller

The paradigm of inlaying. Brunelleschi and intarsia

Inlaying is one of the oldest decorative practices in history and can be found in ancient Egyptian objects embedded with pieces of metal, bone, or mother of pearl as early as 2000 BC. In the 15th and 16th centuries, this practice experienced a revival in northern Italy under the name of tarsia or intarsia, this time almost exclusively in the medium of wood. An explanation for the resurgence of this relatively old technique could be found in the concurrent emergence of central perspective as a visual regime, whose tenets achieved such a longstanding authority that they constitute the criteria for any 'realistic' depiction to this day. Technically, central perspective is the application or "projection", as Erwin Panofsky ([1927] 1980, 99) famously writes, of Euclidian geometry onto pictorial spaces and therefore, a mathematization and geometrization of images. In what follows, I approach central perspective as a cultural technique, an expression derived from the so-called German media theory of the 1980s. Cultural techniques emphasize that practices and operations actively produce and shape cultural phenomena and distinctions in the first place. In its radicality, this means a striving away from any essentialism, as media theorist Bernhard Siegert puts it:

> Humans as such do not exist independently of cultural techniques of hominization, time as such does not exist independently of cultural techniques of time measurement, and space as such does not exist independently of cultural techniques of spatial control (Siegert 2015, 9).

These techniques are made visible and can be historicized by the media that explicate them. So for example, the cultural techniques of time measurement entail different relations of human and non-human actors,

space and sound, individual and collective and so on if respectively a sundial, a church tower or a watch exemplifies them. While this may de-essentialize certain constructs such as 'time', it does not de-ontologize them: "This does not mean that the theory of cultural techniques is anti-ontological; rather, it moves ontology into the domain of ontic operations" (Siegert 2015, 9). These ontic operations can be carried out by human and non-human actors alike and therefore share a common ground with the actor-network-theory (ANT), most prominently represented by sociologist Bruno Latour. ANT imagines social interactions, phenomena, objects, and agents as networks that are in a constant state of emergence and disintegration, and consequently call for a continuous reinstating of themselves. Thinking with ANT and cultural techniques implies the change of questions from how certain phenomena are to how they come into being. Applied to central perspective this would imply rejecting an understanding of it as a mimetic depiction of the world, and rather interrogating the visual, mathematical and social operations it enables.

As a technique, central perspective was first used by Filippo Brunelleschi in the 1420s in his pictorial experiments and then described methodically by Leon Battista Alberti in 1435. Brunelleschi worked closely with the *intarsiatori* of his time. We know this, inter alia, from Giorgio Vasari's *Vita di Filippo Brunelleschi*:

> Nor did he refrain from teaching it [drawing with central perspective] even to those who worked in tarsia, which is the art of inlaying coloured woods; and he stimulated them so greatly that he was the source of a good style and of many useful changes that were made in that craft, and of many excellent works wrought both then and afterwards, which have brought fame and profit to Florence for many years (Vasari [1568] 1912, 198).

For Vasari the trajectory of the influence seems to be clear: in this narrative, Brunelleschi influences the intarsiatori and not the other way around. But there is a different way of seeing this exchange. French art historian Hubert Damisch interprets Vasari's comments as follows:

> Judging by this text, the definition of perspective, in the modern sense of the term and the new technique of marquetry appear to be logically contemporary and strictly complementary; and that complementarity and

contemporaneity in their turn point to an important historical interaction (Damisch [1972] 2002, 122-123).

For Damisch this interaction is not so much monocausal as convergent, a historical intersection or junction that opens up the possibility of travel in many different directions. To quote Latour and Michel Serres, this junction can be grasped as a "hybrid" or a "quasi-object". I will come back to this concept and its implications later. First, it is important to understand how operations of intarsia and central perspective can be productively read together. Therefore, I turn to German art historian Friedrich Teja Bach and his article *Filippo Brunelleschi and the Fat Woodcarver* in which he interprets Brunelleschi's famous pictorial experiments by complementing them with an anecdote about a prank Brunelleschi pulled that shares a connection with the operation of inlaying which is so fundamental to intarsia. His experiments are well known and widely discussed in the literature on central perspective, so I will only briefly mention them.

The first experiment, despite – or maybe exactly because of – its more complicated construction, is debated more prominently. With the help of his geometric method, Brunelleschi painted a picture of the Baptistery of San Giovanni on a tavola, which the viewers held in front of their faces, the painted side pointing away from their faces. In the other outstretched hand they held a mirror. Through a little hole drilled in the tavola, they saw the reflection of the painting in the mirror. If one now positioned oneself at a certain point in front of the Baptistery, the accuracy of the drawing compared to the depicted building could be verified by alternately holding and removing the mirror. This 'realistic' effect was reinforced by silver foil, placed in the image at the position where the sky would be depicted, so that the real sky above the Baptistery, including the movement of clouds, could be mirrored in the painting. Paradoxically, the reflection of the reflection - a twice mediated image – creates the effect of being even closer to reality. The otherwise sharply drawn borders between reality and its depiction are blurred for a moment (see Grave 2015, 29). This goes hand in hand with media theorist Marshall McLuhan's claim that when one "opens" a medium, one will only find another medium, as there is no "reality" that can be unpacked (McLuhan [1964] 1994, 9).

In Brunelleschi's case, this media-interweaving would be the mirror, which then shows the silver foil, which then shows the clouds and so on. In making itself invisible, the medium has become most successful. Reality as such reveals itself to be mediated. Brunelleschi's second experiment is much simpler and works without the mirroring, doubling structure: a panel, which showed the Palazzo della Signoria (today Palazzo Vecchio), was to be held at the height of the building. The panel in this case was not rectangular but cut at the top to match the outline of the Palazzo. The (admittedly modern) rectangular paradigm of a painting was sacrificed in order to achieve the blurring effect between the painting and its surroundings.

Teja Bach draws a connection between the way these experiments work and inlaying, one of the operations of intarsia. He further brings a different story about Brunelleschi into the equation, which is passed on in the *Novella del Grasso Legnaiuolo* by Antonio Manetti. Brunelleschi and his friends were upset about the intarsiatore Manetto Ammanatini, who had not attended a dinner he was invited to, so they decided to play a rather gruesome prank on him. They kidnapped him in his sleep, threw him into jail and then instructed everyone to make him believe that he was not the woodworker Manetto Ammanatini anymore, but a rather sleazy character named Matteo Mannini. When Manetto came out of jail, he found his house and workshop locked and everyone on the street calling him Matteo Mannini. Manetto had no choice but to believe everyone around him, especially since the only person who could have confirmed his identity, his mother, was absent at the time. After a couple of confusing days, the group surrounding Brunelleschi decided to end the prank and put Matteo – again in his sleep – back in his own home and pretend that nothing had happened. Teja Bach offers a reading of Brunelleschi's pictorial experiments by referring to this cruel prank:

> The unsuspecting persons in the *Novella*, similar to the silver coating and the line of the cut in the perspectival panels, mark the limits of artistry, the critical border zone where actual and simulated reality meet. Structurally, the prank is a mixture of initiated and uninitiated involuntary performers, of constructed and natural elements. The success of the game is decided at its margins. The clouds reflected in the silver and the visible surroundings of

> the Baptistery next to the mirror image are, as it were, reinforcements of reality for the purpose of authentication (Teja Bach 2007, 162).

What makes Brunelleschi's experiments and the prank so successful is their seamless transition between the zones of "virtuality" and "actuality" as Teja Bach calls them. Instead of being two realms that operate as opposites, they present themselves as interchangeable as well as constituting one another. Teja Bach even goes so far as to say that Brunelleschi and with him central perspective images introduce an entire new paradigm of pictoriality itself, one that is closely connected to intarsia and operates as an inlay itself. He contrasts this paradigm sharply to Alberti's concept of the image as an *aperta finestra* (Alberti [1435] 2011, 19, 224) which "has as its counterpart a wall, or at least a frame, which categorically sets it apart from its surroundings" (Teja Bach, 2007, 166). As we will see later, Teja Bach's understanding of the image as an open window is closely connected to an aesthetic paradigm of difference and separation between images and their environments. The pictorial paradigm he proposes instead interlinks and embeds virtuality and actuality rather than opposing them. Images are as embedded into their surroundings as the woodcarver is embedded into the prank and the pieces of intarsia are embedded into each other. Manetto, who was known for his beautiful woodwork, turns into a piece of art: "he himself, the intarsia specialist, becomes intarsia" (Teja Bach 2007, 162). The necessary seamlessness of this paradigm can be exemplified by the figure of the border itself: the picture frame. The following part will offer a brief historical account of the paradigm of the picture frame and its respective implications.

Framing the discourse. Artworks and their borders

Brunelleschi's *tavolae* are pictures without frames, which allows them to merge with their surroundings and make their own virtuality invisible. At first glance, the pictures' framelessness seems to be necessary in order to make their hybrid status possible. Following this assumption means obeying the distinctions made by the aesthetic theory from the 18th century onward. In their writings, theoreticians have construed the picture frame as a metaphorical and material figure of separation in order to establish a distinct zone, an autonomy and general otherness of art and aesthetics. Often theories about the frame include theories about the

artwork it surrounds. From Immanuel Kant and Karl Philipp Moritz at the end of the 18th century to Georg Simmel and José Ortega y Gasset in the beginning of the 20th century, there is unity in the opinion that a clear division between an artwork and its surroundings exists. The aesthetic zone is clearly separated and therefore distinguished from the spheres of 'reality' and 'nature'. The frame has to affirm this division, exhibit and double it. Its mission is to highlight the artwork, that is to say mostly paintings, and thus not to be too prominent itself. For Kant ornaments or frames, *Zieraten* or *parerga* as he calls them, are ways of decorating an object and therefore only supporting it "externally as complements" (Kant [1793] 2018, 76). As a supplement, the frame can only fulfill its duty when it is not too prominent itself. This claim gets tremendous support from sociologist Georg Simmel a mere one hundred years later. For him the roles of the frame are those of "assisting and giv[ing] meaning to the inner unity of the picture" (Simmel [1902] 1994, 12). He even attributes a centripetal character to the picture and the frame, which is emphasized when the outer border of the frame rises above the inner borders, guiding the view inward and establishing an outward barrier. From this point of view, other forms of the frame, such as higher inner borders or transitions from the painting onto the frame, are "completely reprehensible" (Simmel [1902] 1994, 12). The biggest transgression is therefore the transgression itself:

> That is why the frame, through its configuration, must never offer a gap or a bridge through which, as it were, the world could get in or from which the picture could get out – as occurs, for instance, when the picture's content extends to the frame, a fortunately rare mistake, which completely negates the work of art's autonomous being and thereby the significance of the frame (Simmel [1902] 1994, 12-13).

The frame works for Simmel as a mediator between the artwork and surrounding nature. Simmel's condition is again reflected in the influential media theory: a successful medium makes itself invisible and only becomes visible as a disorder or interference.

This strict separation into different, disparate realms of being between artwork, frame and environment cannot be maintained, on the contrary, it has never been that rigid. Examples of the transgression of the image

object into the frame or the frame being a structural and constitutive part of the artwork are manifold, especially in early modern times. Consequently, the separation of frame and artwork on a theoretical and very much material level exposes itself as a phenomenon of modernity. From the second half of the 20th century onwards the intellectual schools of poststructuralism and deconstructivism made a rethinking of the role of the frame possible. Philosopher Jacques Derrida famously re-reads Kant in his treatise *The Truth in Painting* and reexamines the frame in a typically deconstructivist manner: the painting or artwork and its surrounding frame constitute each other, *ergon* and *parergon* are not two opposites that mutually exclude each other. Instead, the *ergon* draws its inner stability from the differentiation to the *parergon* and vice versa. The frame is not just decoration or "Zierat" as Kant wanted it to be, but according to Derrida it "labours indeed" (Derrida [1978] 1987, 75) and actively produces and shapes the artwork.

For philosopher and art historian Louis Marin the frame becomes the condition for the possibility of representation itself. It is not a physical object anymore, but rather an operation, an action, a technique:

> In its pure operation, the frame displays; it is a deictic, an iconic 'demonstrative': 'this'. The figures ornamenting the edges 'insist' on pointing out, they amplify the gesture of pointing: deixis becomes epideixis, monstration becomes de-monstration (Marin [1988] 2002, 357-358).

The frame is not an object of material qualities anymore but a signifier of the signified. German art historian Vera Beyer comments on this as follows:

> By replacing the term of art with the term of fiction, later theories of the frame showed that not only picture frames mark the place and status of art, but frames in a broader and more abstract way can function as markers of fictional modi of representation (Beyer 2011, 365).

A frame of reference can therefore actively shape the way we look at things. For example, Damisch looks at clouds from a completely different perspective than a meteorologist. While their objects of analysis might be the same, their frames of reference are not.

Understanding the frame as a marker of representation and signifier of the signified gives the frame more agency, but it also positions it in the sphere of the symbolic and therefore neglects the frame as an actual material object. We see the oscillation of the meaning in the many double entendres that surround texts about the frame. With the recent 'material turn' in the humanities, this neglect has to be confronted. Especially art history has profited tremendously from incorporating analyses of the material qualities of artworks. The frame becomes the ideal object to exemplify how an analysis of an object as a material thing as well as a linguistic metaphor or symbolic signifier can be made productive. In the following section, I will focus on the analysis of the frame by drawing on the concept of quasi-object put forth by Serres and further addressed by Latour.

Hybrid theory. The frame in intarsia

In his famous essay *We Have Never Been Modern*, Latour claims that we are living in a time of hybrids. Commenting on the issues featured in a daily newspaper from the 1990s in the incipit of his essay, he traces objects and themes that have long transcended borders of scientific, political and life-worldly territories, and disciplines. In a rollercoaster ride between Monsanto, AIDS, whales and chlorofluorocarbons the mix of political, religious, scientific, and economic spheres manifests itself clearly. Instead of following the 'modern' urge to neatly divide all these spheres and treat them as mutually exclusive, he asks for a retying of the Gordian knot, and an understanding of the interweaving of those spheres. In this undertaking he builds on the concept of "quasi-objects", first coined by Serres in his book *The Parasite*. Serres calls objects that organize collectives and subjects "quasi-objects", as they undermine the dichotomy of subjects and objects and give agency to the object. Consequently, they could also be called "quasi-subjects". A well-known example would be the ball in a football game: the player who has the ball is the one that structures the game while the rest of the players become the collective around them. What is of importance is the flexibility of this system: the ontological categories of object and subject are not intrinsic but become dynamic and therefore instable. A network of exchanges is established, that means a system of attaching to and detaching from a certain status. Hybrid objects are likewise objects that are inherently divided among themselves, or as Siegert defines:

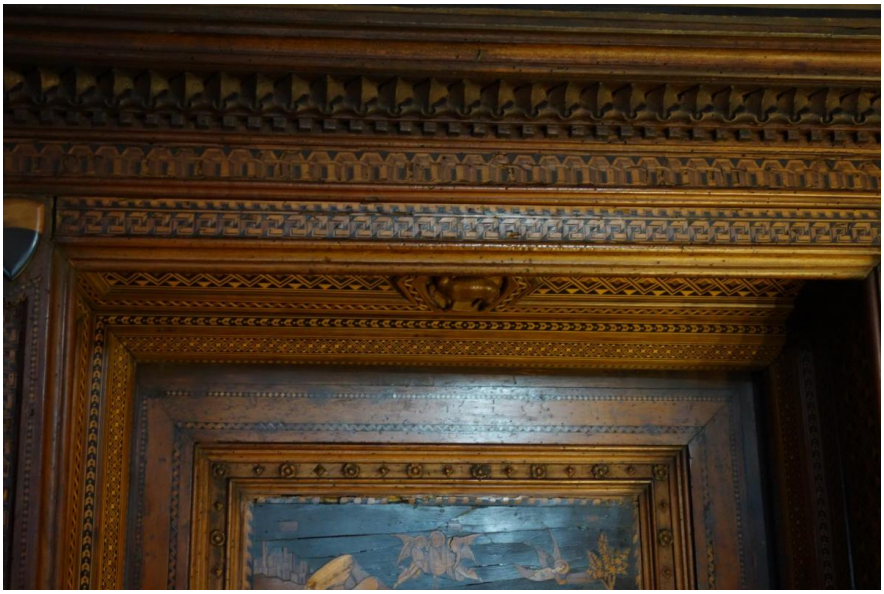
> Hybrid Objects are assemblages – i.e. they are linkings themselves – which have a specific agency due to the nature of the structure and the operations made possible by it (Siegert 2017, 102).

Hybrid objects refer to the operations that make them possible in the first place. In reference to the frame, this reads very similarly to Marin but emphasizes the material qualities of the object as well. The frame firstly exhibits the operations through which the artwork shows itself, secondly the operations of dividing between the spheres of artwork and frame and thirdly the transgressions of these spheres. This becomes clear in the moment when the division between frame and artwork cannot be upheld.

Intarsia becomes the perfect medium to discuss the frame in all its multiplicities. On the one hand, one could argue that intarsia is frameless in a way Brunelleschi's tavolae were frameless. It needs to be frameless in order to accomplish the dissimulation of virtuality and actuality as Teja Bach described. This dissimulation is also a prerequisite for the excess of trompe-l'œils exhibited here such as the protruding benches, the opened lattice doors and the hanging scrolls of parchment. But if we take a closer look, we find that inlaid furniture is in fact full of frames, a circumstance that paradoxically leads to its frameless impression. Alison Wright also recognizes the different framing operators for the Urbino Studiolo:

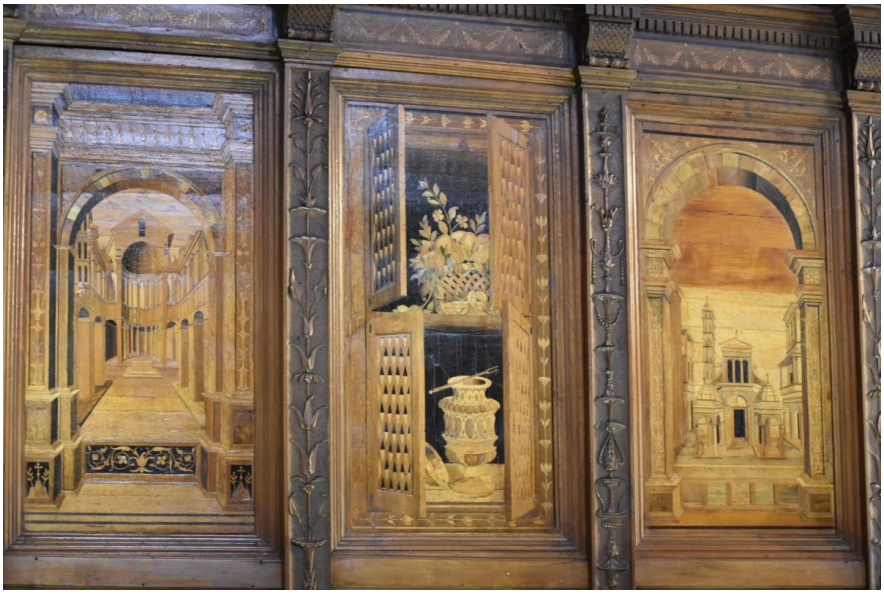
> The furniture of the lower zone offers a summa of contemporary palatial frames: 'niches' for allegorical or portrait figures, 'opened' cupboard doors vouchsafing precious private collections and, apparently, architectural apertures on to exterior views (Wright 2019, 20).

So while inlaid furniture does not need a frame (in the post-Kantian sense) for it does not need to be excluded, its excess of framing devices in a broader sense is undeniable. I argue that this excess stems from the operations of inlaying that are mirrored in the operations of framing. Inlaying and framing share some similarities on a material and operational level: both showcase the operations of encompassing and embedding and both prioritize wood as material. Often, inlaid image areas are surrounded by borders of regular geometric patterns, made as *tarsia a toppo* [Fig. 1].



1 | Domenico de Niccoló, choir stalls, wood inlay, Palazzo Pubblico Siena, 1415-1428.

Differently colored pieces of wood are glued together as a block to show a pattern at the cross section. Thin slices or veneers of this cross section are cut off and placed next to each other as a line. This manufacturing method is economical, easy and rather effective and leads to a mass production of certain patterns, which sometimes showcase small trompe-l'œil-effects in the form of overlapping ornamental bands on their own. We find this exemplified in Domenico de Niccoló's choir stalls in Siena. Two- and three-dimensional frames form a stair-like entrance to the main image field which shows biblical scenes. The framing of the frame as an unimportant parergon does not seem to apply here. The frames of the dorsals take up a lot more space than the main image itself and are visually more intriguing. Various ornaments show a whirring effect. Since the material of the 'real' frames and the ones of the depicted frames are the same, by looking directly at them one cannot distinguish whether they are three-dimensional or two-dimensional. This ambiguity is mirrored in the frames, which oscillate between being an ornament and a three-dimensional body.



2 | Fra Giovanni da Verona, choir stalls, wood inlay, abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore, ca. 1500. With courtesy from Ruth Hauer-Buchholz.

In another typical intarsia example – the still life-like depiction of objects on the border between inside and outside – we see another portrayal of frames as cultural techniques. Fra Giovanni da Verona's choir stalls in his home monastery in Monte Oliveto Maggiore [Fig. 2] show alternately views from the inside of an architecture onto a landscape and views into the niches of cupboards or other furniture. Both views exhibit their own transgressions, establish different zones of fore-, middle- and background only to step over the clearly distinguished borders. These transgressions of the borders or frames manifest themselves most evidently in the trompe-l'œil-figures such as hanging scrolls, opened books and opened cupboard doors. Patrick Mauriés even argues that trompe-l'œils need a border, a third space to overstep in order to achieve their optical illusion and protruding effect (Mauriés [1996] 1998, 12).

The illusionistic effect of Fra Giovanni's trompe-l'œil execution of opened doors is only possible through the frame-zone around the opening of the cupboard. Depicted as a two-dimensional frame, whose ornamental decoration is visually very close to the three-dimensional carved pillars, which separate each dorsal, this frame-zone simultaneously narrows the

image field to enable a seeming expansion of the objects into the third dimension. The trompe-l'œils coincide with the cultural techniques of the frame, that is, operations of separating, linking and transgressing. The inlaid frames can be described as the ultimate trompe-l'œil, a material interweaving of depicting image and depicted object. They establish "zones of indiscernibility" (Deleuze, Guattari [1980] 2005, passim) or hybrid zones. As exemplified in adjacent disciplines to art history, such as history and media studies, a recent paradigm shift can be seen. The investigation of entanglements or hybridities as well as practices and operations opens up new ways to speak and think about complex phenomena with respect to the entirety of their implications.

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English abstract

This article deals with the topic of the picture frame in the intarsia medium and its operations of inlaying, presenting, and transgressing. The discursive history of the picture frame, first theorized within the field of aesthetics, establishes the frame either as an inferior divisor to the picture it encompasses or a mediator between the artwork and its surroundings. Both ideas differentiate between the sphere of art and the sphere of reality or 'nature'. By employing concepts taken from actor-network-theory and media theory, the idea of a given or im-mediate reality will be rejected in favor of the notion of hybrid zones, that is, complicated interweavings of virtuality and actuality. The frame and with it the motif of the trompe-l'œil, another figure of transgression, will be analyzed as examples of the notion of hybrid objects, objects that have the agency to link the spheres of the symbolic and the real.

keywords | intarsia; cultural techniques; framing.

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The photographic cut and cutting practices in photographic archives

Costanza Caraffa

The theme of the cut, of the portion of reality that the photographic technique cuts out and freezes outside the time-space continuum, is intrinsic to photography. It has been analyzed by important curators and critics. A milestone was provided in 1966 by John Szarkowski with his exhibition and catalogue *The Photographer's Eye* at The Museum of Modern Art in New York. Szarkowski outlines his thoughts on the nature of photography through a comparison with previous picture-making processes, and in particular with painting: "paintings were 'made' […] but photographs […] were 'taken'" (Szarkowski 1966, 6). The past tense reveals Szarkowski's attempt at a historicization of photography, and in fact the catalogue and the exhibition presented pictures by various photographers from the entire lifespan of photography: pictures that share no vision or aesthetic theory, they are just "unmistakably photographs" (Szarkowski 1966, 7). This point is important to him since Szarkowski's concern is to demonstrate the autonomy of photography from other media and arts. The radical innovation brought by photography is that it is "a process based not on synthesis but on selection" (Szarkowski 1966, 6). Szarkowski does not use the term 'cut' but rather 'frame' and argues: "the photographer's picture was not conceived but selected […]. The central act of photography, the act of choosing and eliminating, forces a concentration on the picture edge" (Szarkowski 1966, 9). "Cropping" from the actual world and "immobilizing these thin slices of time" makes the essence of photography a visual production: "the result is not a story but a picture" (Szarkowski 1966, 10).

Complementary to this position is the 1981 exhibition and catalogue again at the MoMA in New York: *Before photography: painting and the invention of photography*, curated by Peter Galassi. He recognizes a sort of pre-

photographic vision already in early 19th-century paintings and investigates the way to frame through paintings, later championed by Edgar Degas. Here, in general, the cut is a manifestation of the artist's intention. However, returning to photography, something always escapes this intention, like the fly that got caught in 1870 on a collodion plate by Antonio Beato impressed in Cairo (Geimer 2007, 12-15). In his 1983 essay *L'acte photographique*, Philippe Dubois offers a theory of the photographic cut (in French *coupe*, but Dubois also uses from time to time the English term *cut*). The corresponding chapter (Dubois 1983, 151-202) follows a first part of the book which is devoted to the index and the relationship between photographic images and reality.

Compared to Szarkowski, Dubois further explicates the triangulation between cut, time and space: the photographic act is the radical gesture of a cut that cuts both the temporal thread and the spatial continuum. The photograph is cut out from life and photography is presented as an art made by cutting, with a knife, from the space-time of the real world. Dubois powerfully equates the photographic act to a knife or a guillotine blade cutting out "une tranche unique et singulière d'espace-temps" ("a singular slice of space-time", Ibid. 151; here it is impossible not to think of Walter Benjamin's "tiny spark of contingency" and Roland Barthes's "that-has-been" in front of the camera). Dubois also draws attention to the relation between what is visible in the photograph and what the photographic act makes invisible, but still exists: the off of a photograph, framed by the gaze of the camera and only apparently cut out. One could question these positions about photography as selection and cut and argue with Christopher Pinney (2003) that photographic technology never excludes, always includes. The excess of photography challenges, again, the intention of the photographer: "however hard the photographer tries to exclude, the camera lens always includes. […] no photograph is so successful that it filters out the random entirely" (Pinney 2003, 7).

Szarkowski's and Dubois' positions are historically related to the construction of a theory of photography as art, although these authors were also interested in so-called amateur photographers and vernacular photography. Here, I will focus on another type of photographic production: photographs in archives, the kind of photographs that were traditionally cut out from official narratives based on museum value

systems. This is specifically the case in the history of art, a discipline particularly sensitive to values of authorship and uniqueness and therefore inclined to neglect the value of 'documentary' photographs compared to 'artistic' ones. My paper deals with a hybrid institutional type that is halfway between collections and what Elizabeth Edwards (2019) has called photographic "non-collections": photo libraries and photographic archives created for documentation and comparative purposes in universities, research institutes, monument protection organizations, and even in museums [1].

1 | Michelangelo's David on photographs of the Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz. Digital photograph by Kelley Wilder, 2008.

They are rooted in the rhetoric of (photographic and archival) objectivity that developed in the 19th century, building on the positivistic concept that photography would produce evidence and that this evidence would be preserved in a neutral manner in photographic archives (Schwartz 2000; Caraffa 2011a; Mitman, Wilder 2016).These photographic archives are often well organized, catalogued, and sometimes even digitized. However, their status in the academic system is very low. Moreover, a quick glance is enough [Fig. 1] to realize that even the choice of the photographic cut alone makes any so-called 'reproduction' an interpretation of the work of art, which cannot, therefore, be objective. For generations, these photographs have been considered as pure documentation of the objects they show, some kind of working tools now believed to be replaceable by digital duplicates. Indeed, their very existence must be periodically legitimized. In order to undo their exclusion, or cut, from more or less official histories of photography, it has been necessary to develop proper cultural strategies – one of them being the material approach.

According to the material approach, it is not individual photographic works of art, but precisely the erratic masses of often anonymous documentary photographs, which in their complex materiality demand our special attention. The urgent need to study these materials arose from a combination of factors, starting around 1980 with the boom in critical

studies of the history of academic disciplines and of museums (and here I am mainly speaking about Europe and North America – broadening the perspective to a more global dimension is highly desirable, but beyond the scope of this essay). These studies cross paths with the need to come to terms with the huge number of photographs that the disciplines themselves – e.g. anthropology, archaeology, art history, geography, and many others, not to speak of the natural sciences – had accumulated in archives and museums. It was especially (British) anthropology that, around 1990, began to engage with these archives as well as with the masses of heretofore ignored photographs brought to light following the breakup of colonial empires (Edwards 1992). In the meantime, the advent of digital technology led to a distancing from traditional photography that could now be historicized as a medium of the past, reactivating the immediate experience of analog photographs. Since then, research in the field of photography has often stressed the need to intersect photography studies, archive studies and material culture studies (among the seminal writings: Schwartz, 1995; Pinney, 1997; Edwards, 2001; Edwards, Hart, 2004; for an overview, see Caraffa, 2020).

According to this research trend, photographs (and not 'photography') are not only images, but also material objects which exist, act and interact in time and space, and in social and cultural contexts. Along the way, photo-objects take on different formats and new, often divergent functions and attributions of meaning (Bärnighausen, Caraffa et al. 2019). The notes, stamps, inscriptions, and even damages on the front and back of such photographs, as well as on the card mounts and the archival boxes, reflect their itineraries, which frequently lead to (or unfold within) a photographic archive. Photographic archives are also more than the sum of the images stored in them. They are dynamic organisms endowed with their own materiality, ecosystems in which different agents act and interact: the photographic objects themselves, the archival structures and technologies, the various institutional and academic ideologies, but also the archivists, and finally their users (Schwartz 2011; Caraffa 2017; Edwards 2019). The material approach proves most effective in the encounter with vast sedimentations. Much, though not all, research with photographs occurs in archives. Not only the record, but also the researcher is "produced" by the archive's practices (Rose 2000, 566).

One of these practices is cutting. As Stefanie Klamm and Franka Schneider (2020a) recently argued, cutting practices in photo archives should not be considered a form of destruction, but rather a transformation of the photographic objects. Klamm and Schneider's analysis focuses on two case studies that show two different archival procedures: cutting as rearranging, cutting as recycling. The Photography Collection of the Kunstbibliothek, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, created around 1870, had to be rearranged in the late 1960s. The photographs with their mounts had to be adapted to the size of new cabinets and boxes: they were sometimes cut in two parts and the two new photo-objects resulting from the cut were put into two different sections and boxes according to a new classification system.

2 | Frank Cousins, "Salem (Mass.), Simon Forrester Mansion; Montgomery (Pa.), Gorkeitt Mansion", about 1900, gelatin silver print on card mount, 24.1 x 18.9 cm (photo on the left), 23.9 x 18.8 cm (photo on the right), inv. no. 1913,610. Digital photograph by Dietmar Katz (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kunstbibliothek), 2017.

The Hahne-Niehoff-Archiv at the Institut für Europäische Ethnologie of the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin is a photo collection documenting Middle-German rural customs, established between the 1920s and 1944 with the programmatic aim to demonstrate the continuity of the German 'Volk'. After 1945 the collection went to East Berlin and was incorporated into the Akademie der Wissenschaften of the DDR. It contained photographic films and materials, but also roughly 11,000 record sheets with photographs and data from ethnographic surveys. The record sheets were cut and reused: hundreds of pictures were cut out, pasted on file cards and became part of a file on rural customs that was continued with photographs taken in surveys conducted by the DDR academy. Many other record sheets were just cut into strips and repurposed as separators in folders. These practices show, among others, the endurance of ethnology methods between the Weimar Republic, Nazi Germany and the DDR. Finally, these photo-objects were shown [Fig. 2] in the 2018 Berlin exhibition *Unboxing Photographs. Working in the Photo Archive* [2], where they could take on a further function as exhibition items, serving the curators' programmatic aims. The two case studies

stress the idea that photographic documents are not just collected and preserved in archives; rather, they are produced by the technologies of the archive as well as by the work of archivists, scholars and curators as "historically-situated" actors (Schwartz 1995, 62).

Actually, the cut is omnipresent in the everyday life of a photo archive, and not only in special phases of its history. Consider the Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max Planck Institute (hereinafter KHI), as one of the ecosystems in which photographic materiality manifests itself. I, too, operate in this ecosystem as a "historically-situated" actor, as I have been the head of the Photothek since 2006. The KHI was founded in 1897 on the initiative of scholars from the German-speaking area and included a collection of photographs from the very beginning. It was intended to serve as a base station for art-historical research focused on Italy. For over 120 years the Photothek has been collecting photographic reproductions of works of Italian art and architecture (Dercks 2013, 2014), selecting, cataloguing, arranging, and making them available to scholars – also through cutting. Scissors or rather paper cutters come to the stage very early when photographs are processed to enter the Photothek's holdings. The white borders have to be trimmed before the photographic print, according to its size, can be pasted onto one of the card mount formats used in the Photothek: standard (c. 24 x 34 cm), large (c. 31 x 37 cm), extra-large (c. 55 x 75.5 cm), each corresponding to the size of a box or folder.

The production of the card mounts is a fundamental step in the entire archiving process. It includes cutting the cardboard itself to the appropriate size, cutting and pasting the photograph, adding stamps and inscriptions with the inventory number, the shelf mark according to the classification system, the description of the item as well as any additional information that may come to light in the 'biography' of a photo-object, such as a new attribution of the item represented or a digital reproduction number.

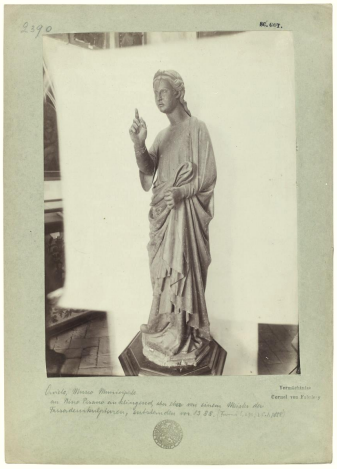
3 | Circle of Fra Angelico, Madonna and Child, collotype, 1928, 18.6 cm (diameter, print), 34 x 24.5 cm (mount), KHI inv. no. 174777, inventoried in 1966, discarded as doublet at an unknown time. Scan by Digitallabor KHI, 2020.

4 | Anton Hautmann, photographic reproduction of a drawing after the fresco *The Captains of the Misericordia Deliver Children to their New Mothers* by Niccolò Gerini and Ambrogio di Baldese, collodion wet plate, retouched with paper and color, before 1862, 13 x 18 cm (glass plate), KHI neg. no. 0350. Digital photograph by Digitallabor KHI, 2019.

Cardboards are essential to documentary photographs because they allow them to perform their function as evidence: they are stiffer than photographic prints and can be held and handled without touching the delicate surface of the pictures. They also offer the necessary space for stamps and inscriptions that can be read simultaneously while examining the picture, transforming the photograph both into an institutional and a scientific photo-object (Edwards 2014). Moreover, they work as evidence of the archival history of the photo-objects themselves.

The Photothek's cardboards were not cut in-house but rather purchased already cut to the right size. When a donation or bequest entered the holdings, sometimes the cardboards had to be cut to adapt them to the Photothek's archive boxes. This was done without any concern for the material traces they presented, leading, in some cases, to the loss of important information (an example in Caraffa 2015, 35, fig. 4). In some other cases, it was the cardboard that was cut, producing four diagonal slits in which to insert the four corners of the print – a technique that is known to everyone from old family albums.

Sometimes, either in the Photothek or by the former collector, the photographs were trimmed [Fig. 3] to the shape of the work of art represented in them (a tondo, a gothic altar panel in a gabled frame) before pasting them on the card mounts. This is the most radical form of the



5 | Premiata Fotografia Luigi Raffaelli-Armoni, Angel of the Annunciation from the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Orvieto, albumen print, before 1898, 25.3 x 18.6 cm (photo), KHI inv. no. 2390. Digital photograph by Digitallabor KHI, 2009.

decontextualization of the work of art that is a common feature of photographic documentation in art history. Cutting out the environment – be it a church, a museum interior, a dealer's showroom – was recommended to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the represented object (Johnson 2013).

This decontextualization was often accomplished through retouching techniques. Retouching mainly took place on the glass plate negatives, scraping with knives, drawing or painting on the emulsion surface. Most frequently, photographic documentation of works of art shows the retouching of the background, that was completely painted over or covered with a paper template, cut in the appropriate shape [Fig. 4].

In other cases, to the same end a piece of white cloth [Fig. 5] was hung behind the object while taking the photograph, often combining this with retouching. Retouching could occur also on the positive, often with the aim of highlighting the objects and preparing the image to serve as an illustration in a book or catalogue. Retouching is a means for eliminating unwanted details that are recorded by the act of photographing but are considered disturbing by those using the picture. This practice leads back to the lively mid-19th-century debate that accompanied the adoption of photography as a tool and medium of art history.

While some art historians and connoisseurs deplored the fact that photography would cut out the colors and the materiality of the art objects, others criticized photography for not cutting out enough: it does not filter out intrusive elements such as, again, the environment, but also, for instance, stains and tears on a sheet of paper in the case of old master drawings. Early critics praised old reproduction techniques such as etching and lithography exactly because they were able to render a

cleaned image of the work of art, eliminating the rest (Caraffa 2009, 13-14, 17).

Scissors are at work in many other daily tasks of a photographic archive (or in a photographer's studio), for instance archiving film negatives. Cutting a negative strip into portions or single frames to put them into appropriate sleeves is often a necessary conservation measure, on the other hand the cut rescinds the temporal sequence of the frames. The use of passepartouts is another conservation and presentation form that, with the aim of protecting the fragile photographic print, tends to cut out the photographic image from its context. Passepartouts are used mainly for the proper and safe handling of fine art photographs, similarly to old master drawings. However, sometimes they are unavoidable in an archive of documentary photography, for instance when photographs are loaned to exhibitions. To which extent the viewer's gaze is directed and formed by the framing provided by the passepartout was shown by an installation in the exhibition *Unboxing Photographs*, which played with the reversal of the passepartout principle: in a vitrine, a piece of ivory-white cardboard was cut in the shape and size of a photograph and laid on it to cover only the image. The effect was emphasis on the remaining part of the photo-object with the card mount and its stamps and inscriptions that are normally hidden by a traditional passepartout. This is again a hint to the processes of framing, re-framing and de-framing that are implicit in photographic as well as in archival practices.

A cut in a photo archive can also be intended as removal: when photo-objects are discarded, they are cut out from the 'official' holdings, even if they are not physically eliminated. I continue to use the practices of the Florentine Photothek as an example, with the necessary disclaimer that not every archive functions the same way – and yet, diving into the everyday life of a specific photo archive is helpful in order to understand the general mechanisms.

Cutting as discarding occurs for instance with the so-called duplicates: when a 'new' photograph documenting a certain art object entered the Photothek, the corresponding 'old' picture was often removed and put in the boxes of the *Dubletten* or Duplicates [3]. Over time, some duplicates were given to other institutions as exchange materials and were hence

irrevocably cut off. Many boxes of duplicates are still kept in the Photothek and, for the past ten years, have been a quarry of interesting findings: from our current scholarly and archival point of view, a blurred albumen print scattered with scribbles and stamps might be much more remarkable (that means valuable) than the neat silver gelatin print of the same subject that replaced it a century ago. This example shows very clearly the (changing) systems of value that govern the life of a photo archive. For a photograph moving from one box to another very often means a downgrade, for instance if it moves to the Duplicates, that is to the metaphorical and physical margins of the archive. However, it can also mean an upgrade, as is the case if the photograph moves from the Duplicates directly to our special collections called Cimelia Photographica.

Yet, this type of move is not intended as a process of musealization. A well-known phenomenon, related to the fine art photography market, is the 'discovery' of photographic storage materials that were 'anonymous' up to then, with the subsequent canonization of personalities as artists (think of Vivian Maier) or of individual photographs as works of art. This process of apparent appreciation cuts the photographs from their original context to put them into a (often private) museum collection. At the Photothek there is awareness that moving some photo-objects to the Cimelia Photographica should not mean that they are cut from the archive as a whole. Rather, they keep being active within the ecosystem (Caraffa 2017, 134-137). It is not a question of claiming their artistic value, but rather of drawing attention to their genuine "archival value" (Vestberg 2008). Cutting out has always to do with value, or actually with changing values over time. A mindfulness of the systems of values that archivists apply while doing their job is necessary to avoid unwanted side-effects.

What is described here with the Duplicates can be likened to the very process of selection of new accessions that is implicit in each archive. Through its acquisition policy, a photographic archive such as the Florentine Photothek contributes to the formation and transformation of the art historical canon. Archival selection sanctions the canon through the inclusion of certain photographs (and of the works of art represented in them), but also through the excision of other photographs and objects. Here again, cutting produces value.

The cross-section of archival procedures presented in this paper and conducted following the heuristic category of the cut reconnects with one of the main notions of current archival theory and practice: appraisal. Appraisal theory focuses on the archivists' active role and responsibility in taking decisions about what records should or should not be kept in accordance with societal values (Cook 2011). Appraisal is a political act precisely because it states not only what is included, but also what is excluded (cut out) from the archive, that means marginalized, ignored, potentially destroyed. The selection that takes place in this phase contributes to the establishment of the canon of art history (or of any other academic discipline) in two ways. Firstly, it makes some photographs and the represented works of art available and accessible to scholars; and secondly the selection is validated by the authority of that specific archive and institution (Wilder 2011). There is a certain similarity too with the (pre-archival) selection proposed by photographers' sale catalogues: these were the main tools that documentary photographic collections used in making their systematic acquisitions and also a kind of first-level inventory of artistic heritage, driven not least by commercial concerns (Cavanna, Mambelli 2019). Artworks and monuments that for a variety of reasons are not accessible to photographers risk being cut out from the canon. One of these reasons can also be the cut of financial support to a given research project which, in the end, has to be accomplished without the help of a new photographic campaign. In general, any funding cut produces very material results in a photo archive, which can react for instance by cutting the number of new acquisitions or substituting expensive photographic acquisitions with cost-free clippings from print proofs.

The figure of cut in photo archives helps us to highlight forms of exclusion, for instance in cataloguing as well as in digitization campaigns. Which information is, or is not, given on the card of a card catalogue, or on the mount of a photograph, or in the corresponding dataset in a database? Which parts of the holdings are, or are not digitized according not least to the available funding? Any decision in this sense also corresponds to a cut of knowledge that is not transmitted to the users and that shapes the affordance of the photo-objects and of the archive in its entirety. Lastly, traditional practices in photo archives tend to cut out people, mainly archivists, who for generations have been shaping the

photographic documents and the archival structures, as if their anonymity reinforces the neutrality of the archive as an institution.

6 | Gustav Ludwig's reconstruction of the mural decoration in the second room of the Magistrato del Sale, Palazzo dei Camerlenghi in Venice, wash drawing and albumen prints with Ludwig's handwritten annotations, before 1901, 41.7 x 53.5 cm (mount), KHI inv. no. 8392. Digital photograph by Digitallabor KHI, 2011.

7 | Unknown photographer, bust of a man and a woman, probably from the legacy of Elia Volpi, gelatin silver print, before 1918, 18 x 15.5-17.5 cm, KHI inv. no. 607441. Scan by Digitallabor KHI, 2013.

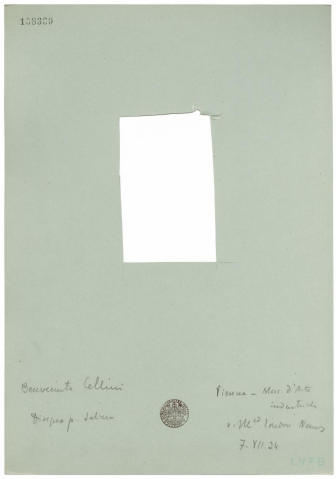
The Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz is not only made by cutting, it is in itself an archive of cutting practices in art history. The photographs as objects bear the traces not only of their archival, but also of their pre-archival itineraries. Thus, many photographs in the Photothek's holdings come from donations and bequests of scholars and permit a glimpse into their intellectual and also material laboratory.

A good example is the bequest of Gustav Ludwig (1854-1905), who contributed to the foundation of the Kunsthistorische Institut in 1897. When his bequest came to the Insitut in 1906, it was cut, that is to say dismembered: the books went to the Institute's Library, the written documents and annotations went to the Archive, and the photographs went to the Photothek. This collection of approximately 2,500 pictures, mainly on Renaissance art in Venice, was inventoried in 1908 and dismembered again: the single photo-objects were separated according to the classification system that is based on the represented object. At the time, some of the photo-objects from the Ludwig legacy appeared problematic or not clear enough from the point of view of documentation, so they were put aside and inventoried only later, around 1930 or even in 2009.

While processing these plates around 1900, Ludwig was faced with the task of putting together visual information (the photographs of scattered works of art), archival data from his extensive studies in Venetian archives, as well as the pure reconstruction of the spatial context, which was assigned to a draftsman (Caraffa 2011b, 25-43; Caraffa Goldhahn 2013; Caraffa 2019). Ludwig's collages [Fig. 6] or assemblages are based literally on cut and paste combined with drawings, painted areas and written annotations, from the dates of the archive documents to instructions to the publishing house. These plates are true palimpsests with multiple – also temporal – layers, that extend to the traces left on them by the archive such as inventory numbers and captions.

In the art market too, different forms of cut and paste were applied to make photographs into business instruments. Lynn Catterson (2020) has recently reconstructed such practices within the establishment of Stefano Bardini, one of the leading art dealers active in Florence in the last decades of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Bardini's photographs were used among others for the preparation of displays and auctions, some of them are preserved in the Photothek [Fig. 7].

In the previous pages, cut has proven itself as a very useful metaphor and heuristic category for exploring the epistemological potential of (art-historical) photo archives; the material approach has been helpful in highlighting the mechanisms of knowledge production. Reconstructing some of the practices that shape and shaped photographic objects and documents over time proves beneficial to highlight the role of the Photothek – and of photo archives in general – as laboratories of academic disciplines. Moreover, armed with metaphorical scissors I have tried to deconstruct some of the assumptions that still accompany a very widespread view of archives, photography, *and* sciences, especially concerning their presumed objectivity and neutrality. This is explicitly intended as a contribution to the international, cross-disciplinary debate on the role and function of photographs and photographic archives in scholarship as well as in post-digital societies. At the same time, it provides food for thought for a re-definition of our own role as archivists *and* scholars *and* curators.



8 | Card mount with information about the missing picture: "Benvenuto Cellini / Disegno p. Saliera / Vienna - Mus. D'Arte / industriale / v. Illed London News / 7. VII. 24 / LVFB [Luigi Vittorio Fossati Bellani]", 34 x 24 cm (cardboard), acquisition date: 26 February 1936, KHI inv. no. 108339. Scan by Digitallabor KHI, 2020.

In this spirit, we could also use the 'cut and paste' metaphor to characterize the Photothek's collaboration with the artist Armin Linke, who has included photographic objects 'extracted' from the Photothek in some of his latest exhibitions (Linke 2020) [4].

In conclusion, I would like to return to the subject of the margins of the archive, which I have touched on a few times. The cut, as Linda Bertelli and Maria Luisa Catoni suggest in their introduction to this issue of Engramma, always has to do with the borders produced by more or less metaphorical scissors. Along these edges, together with the Duplicates and other boxes of photographs removed from the center of the Photothek for various reasons, there is a box labeled "Fehlende Fotos", missing photographs. Saying that missing photographs can be collected in a box may seem strange at first glance. The box in question contains the card mounts of the missing photographs, that is, photographs that have been stolen over time. Generally, they were torn from the cardboard; in one case the photograph was literally cut away leaving a rectangular hole in the mount [Fig. 8]. The cardboards in the "Fehlende Fotos" box always provide detailed information about the stolen photograph. All the inscriptions and stamps are clearly visible on the mount so we can read all about the work represented in the photograph, the inventory number that can allow us to go back to the date of the inventory, sometimes there is the photographer's name or even the provenance of the photograph. Often the date when the archivists detected the theft is written on a post-it. What we can no longer – or ever again – see is the photograph itself, either as an object or its visual content. In Barthes's terms, the cardboard with its cut can be interpreted as a reference or index to the fact that the photo-object "has been there" [5]. Cutting in this case means loss, literally a hole that can

never be filled. But, we can look through this hole to discover new photographic itineraries in the archive.

Notes

[1] I elaborate on the archival implications of the photographic cut in a slightly longer version of this paper that will be published in Sue Breakell and Wendy Russell (eds), *The Materiality of Archives: Creative Practice in Context*, London: Routledge, forthcoming 2021. I would like to express my gratitude to all the colleagues of the Photothek who helped me to identify relevant materials in our holdings, especially Dagmar Keultjes. Helga Auer provided invaluable assistance in the editing of bibliographic references and images. Special thanks to Tiziana Serena for our enlightening conversations.

[2] *Unboxing Photographs: Working in the Photo Archive*, Kunstbibliothek, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 16 February 2018 to 27 May 2018, curatorial concept by Julia Bärnighausen, Costanza Caraffa, Stefanie Klamm, Franka Schneider, and Petra Wodtke (https://www.smb.museum/en/exhibitions/detail/unboxing photographs/) [accessed 31 Aug 2020].

[3] However, this only happened with pictures representing the art object from the very same point of view. In other words, the decision to deaccess a duplicate was taken not in consideration of its visual content, which is identical or almost identical to that of the new acquisition, but rather on the basis of its materiality (blurred, faint, damaged, scribbled and similar).

[4] On other artistic projects curated by the Photothek, see Belmonte et al. 2018; Guidi 2018.

[5] In his seminal work *Camera Lucida*, Roland Barthes described the indexical nature of photography: each photograph confronts us simultaneously with the absence of the person or object represented and the certainty that it "has been there" (Barthes [1980] 1981, 115) in front of the camera at the moment of the shutter click.

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English abstract

The theme of the cut, of the portion of reality that the photographic technique cuts out and freezes outside the time-space continuum, is intrinsic to photography. It has been analyzed by important curators and critics such as John Szarkowski and Philippe Dubois, whose work is historically related to the construction of a theory of photography as art. This paper, focuses on another type of photographic production: photographs in archives, which were traditionally cut out from official narratives based on museum values. Using examples from the Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max Planck Institute, this paper analyzes how cutting practices that shape photographic objects and documents over time. It shows that cutting practices in photo archives should not be considered a form of destruction, but rather a transformation of the photographic objects. Moreover, cut will prove itself as a very useful metaphor and heuristic category for exploring the epistemological potential and the value systems of (art-historical) photo archives.

keywords | photography; materiality; cut; archive; practices; photo-objects; value systems.

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From cuts to clues, hidden narratives within the details of Carl Durheim's photographic portraits

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Carl Durheim was a lithographer and photographer from Bern (1810-1890). The Swiss draftsman successfully introduced the photographic technology within his business activity in Bern after receiving an education as typographer and lithographer in Paris. During his years of itinerancy between France, Belgium and Italy (1827-1841) Durheim encountered several enthusiasts engaged with the photographic process: he witnessed unsuccessful attempts to fix the latent image on paper in Turin in 1839, as well as early Daguerreotypes in Paris in 1841; despite the general euphoria for the French 'invention', he hesitated to learn the process and only later, in 1845, he foresaw a business opportunity for his already on-going lithographic atelier in Bern, soon advertising himself as Daguerreotypist after few months of practice [1]. His activity as portraitist includes an extensive production of portraits on metal plate for the Bernese bourgeoisie, as well as colourful portraits on salt paper and later on in the format of the *carte-de-visite*. With careful attention to the taste of his clients and the trends imported from abroad, Durheim soon learned the calotype process in Frankfurt am Main (1849) and started to collaborate with skilful painters in order to have his salt prints coloured [2].

In addition to the 'celebrative pictures' of the local middle-class, Durheim's portraiture production includes an anthology of about 228 salt prints collected at the Swiss Federal Archive in Bern. Located at the opposite end of the social spectrum, these pictures portray a group of Swiss itinerants without citizenship (Gasser-Meier-Wolfensberger 1998). The existing scholarship on Durheim has devoted far less attention to his working practice and his network of collaborations as a draftsman than to his ability as a businessman and image-maker. This can certainly be attributed

to the fact that no document has yet been found in which Durheim himself expresses his personal opinion about the conception of his work aside from his autobiographies, where photography is described as a lucrative commercial activity suitable for the sustainment of his family. Historians have yet to find contracts or correspondence that document Durheim's working relations with painters or amateurs who helped him deliver his photographic products; nonetheless Durheim was very good at advertising his activity on newspapers and he never failed to leave his trademark behind his photographs.

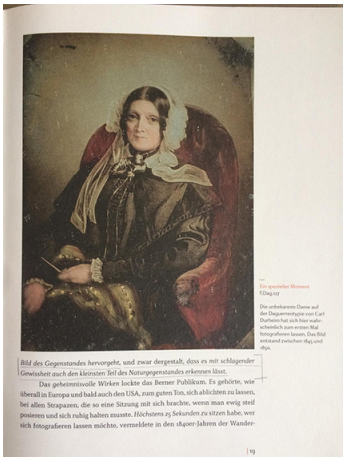
The following contribution sets out to start filling this gap: as I will show in what follows, unnoticed details of Durheim's pictures reveal modes of production and working practices that document the earliest confrontations with the varieties of photography's reception and the entanglement of working practices among amateurs, painters, draftsmen and photographers of mid 19th century Switzerland. The analysis of the pictures produced by commercial photographers provides the basic discourse of a system of values: it allows to identify habits, behaviors and implicit systems of relationships and working practices handed down over time. Such a history of photography exists as a "anthropological text" that asks the historian to be read in the details of representations and media relations (Miraglia 2011, 135).

As a case study, I will focus on two reproductions of Durheim's pictures as examples used in the literature on the early history of photography in Switzerland. I will indicate where a physical or metaphorical cut has been carried out on Durheim's pictures and starting from there I will investigate the kind of information that has been cut out, in order to investigate hidden narratives on photography and its early history. Rather than describing Carl Durheim's activity from the standpoint of his art, perpetuating a historiographical approach that privileges "conventional hierarchies of photographic value" (Caraffa 2019, 11), the present paper focuses on the reception of the photographic processes and the photographer's working network, where parallel practices of printmaking, painting and photography interweave. In this sense Durheim's work is considered within a network of professionals and amateurs, who collaborated in the early industrial age, where "far from being rivals and mutually exclusive, photography on paper and photography on metal were

two parallel arts destined to support each other" (Roubert 2018, 31), and "underlying the connections between printmaking, painting and photography [...] is the 19th century practice of reproduction" (Bann 2011, 14). I indicate as 'clues' precisely what has hitherto been cut out of the discourse. As the title suggests, I start from identifying cuts in order to use them as clues that reveal embedded or hidden narratives.

The first meaning of cut is thus intended as the physical edge of an image, which surrounds and defines the framing; the second meaning regards the metaphorical cut, intended as the selection of those details that has been more or less deliberately omitted from the narrative. In this way I investigate how such physical cuts are subject to or depend on the text that flanks the image, i.e., I ask how far these physical cuts reflect the narrative's intellectual framings. My aim is to align a study on Carl Durheim's portraiture production with already existing research on the "archaeology of actors and uses", and to bring to light photography "as the fruit of a social, political and aesthetic situation; at the same time a method, a fashion, an experiment, a stage" (Aubernas Roubert 2010, 16).

"... probably she had been photographed here for the first time"


Ein spezieller Moment
Daguerreotypie

Die unbekannte Dame auf der Daguerreotypie von Carl Durheim hat sich hier wahrscheinlich zum ersten Mal fotografieren lassen. Das Bild entstand zwischen 1845 und 1850.

Bild des Gegenstandes hervorgeht, und zwar dergestalt, dass es mit schlagender Gewissheit auch den kleinsten Teil des Naturgegenstandes erkennen lässt.

Das geheimnisvolle *Wirken* lockte das Berner Publikum. Es gehörte, wie überall in Europa und bald auch den USA, zum guten Ton, sich ablichten zu lassen, bei allen Strapazen, die so eine Sitzung mit sich brachte, wenn man ewig steif posieren und sich ruhig halten musste. *Höchstens 25 Sekunden zu sitzen habe*, wer sich fotografieren lassen möchte, vermeldete in den 1840er-Jahren der Wander-

19

1| Carl Durheim, "Wie die Fotografie nach Bern kam", Catalogue Burgerbibliothek Bern, p. 19.

The unknown woman on the Daguerreotype by Carl Durheim probably had been photographed here for the first time. The picture was taken between 1845 and 1850 (Giger 2016, 19).

This caption labels a reproduction of a metal plate by Carl Daurheim housed at the Burgerbibliothek in Bern, which appears in the publication *Carl Durheim, Wie die Fotografie nach Bern kam*.

On a full page Durheim's image stands out: a red armchair frames the thin figure of an elegant old lady dressed in black with a white bonnet, sitting quietly, whit her hands on her lap. The lady looks toward the viewer in a traditional three-quarter pose, as if she was asked to pause

for a moment from her occupation (probably knitting) and to hold still [Fig. 1]. From the information provided by both the image and the caption at the bottom of the page, one can imagine what happened in Durheim's atelier: the lady arrived in the photographer's studio, where she was asked to sit down in the red armchair. One sees the photographer adjusting the light and the camera in his glass atelier, handling carefully the *chassis* with the prepared plate; then, after reminding the lady to hold still, in a few seconds of exposure the picture was finally taken. The photographer would then have developed the positive and worked on the fine coloring following the taste of the client.

I was surprised when I visited the Burgerbibliothek in Bern and two daguerreotypes depicting the lady were handed to me [Fig. 2-3]. The two Daguerreotypes are identical in terms of subject and coloring, the only substantial difference regards the shape of the frame, which in one case is oval and the other is rectangular. Another difference lies in the state of conservation. For the small dimension and the play of reflections that characterize each Daguerreotype, the difficulty of seeing the actual portrait was another aspect, which immediately surprised me. Certainly, the illustration on the aforementioned publication favored an immediate reading of the image (it is reproduced as a 12x16,4 cm image versus a 10,5x 7cm metal plate), which the archival object at first sight does not allow. But the real surprise came when, thanks to the magnifying glass, I could notice that there was a detail within the picture that I missed while looking at its reproduction. The detail consists of a signature and a date on the left side that I could barely read. The signature and date, mirrored, read: "Dietler, 1849".

2-3| Carl Durheim, “Daguerreotype”, painted, Burgerbibliothek Bern, F.Dag.133, F.Dag.127. Photo: Jürg Bernhardt.

The amount of details that I encountered while looking at the archival objects (i.e. the signature and the date, two metal plates, the size…) stood out as *anomalies* in comparison to the clarity and accessibility of the reproduction; such *anomalies* challenged my initial reading of the photographic object as I saw it reproduced in the book. Most of all, the information acquired at the archive could not but clash with the information provided in the caption, which suggested that the lady’s identity was unknown and that she was sitting in front of the camera probably for the first time. After recognizing the signature I started to formulate a different narrative about the situation behind the picture’s production: the photographic portrait was actually the reproduction of a painting made by a famous local painter: Johann Friedrich Dietler (1804-1874). This of course means also that the lady was not portrayed by the photographer first, but rather by the painter, and the photographer reproduced the painting through the process of Daguerre. Johann Friedrich Dietler was a leading portraitist in Bern and worked assiduously for the Bernese patrician families. The painter was at his best in watercolors portraits and literature on Dietler estimates that he had created over 5000 portraits during his almost 40 years of activity in Bern (Gropp 2018, 47). In the online archive catalogue of the Burgerbibliothek Bern, 376 records

have so far been linked with the personal descriptor “Dietler, Johann Friedrich Dietler”.

In order to be sure that the original subject that once sat in front of the camera was not a lady but a painting, I looked for the original painting in the online catalogue of the Burgerbibliothek, and I found was – unfortunately not the original, but rather two black and white reproductions of a couple of different paintings depicting the aforementioned lady.

4| Johann Friedrich Dietler, Aquarell, 1849, Burgergbibliothek Bern, Porträtdok. 5056

Only one of them, however, is the painting that Durheim reproduced: the two daguerreotypes are obviously mirrored with respect to the painting, so that the signature and the date appear on the right side in only one of the two, and it is found, on the contrary, on the right side in the other [Fig. 4].

The painting reproduced by Durheim portrays Constance Helene Katharina von Sinner (1805-1849), it is a watercolor on paper and measures 21x16 cm. The recognition of the signature and date on the Daguerreotype, has made it possible to gather more information on the archival object per se. In fact, since Durheim’s Daguerreotypes do not have a date of production, one can now reasonably conjecture that Durheim took the picture either the same year the painter finished the portrait (1849), or later. The lady is not unknown, but she is, again, Constance Helene Katharina von Sinner, who died in 1849, the year when the painting was commissioned, and probably when the Daguerreotypes, too, were taken. Generally speaking, reproducing a portrait of a loved one by photography after his or her death was a common practice: interestingly, according to Burgdorf art historian Dr. Alfred Guido Roth (1913-2007), Durheim was probably commissioned to reproduced another portrait by Dietler around 1852: the Museum Schlossburgdorf possesses a Daguerreotype by Carl Durheim depicting Victoire Schnell. The Daguerreotype plate is unfortunately in very bad

conditions, but according to Alfred Guido Roth it may have been painted by Joh. Friedrich Dietler (1804-1874), who at that time also carried out commissions for the Schnell family [3]. The scant documentation only allows to formulate hypotheses, but further reflections on the nature of the archival object and the methodological approach to write about its history can be advanced. The fact that the painting was reproduced on the metal plate influences the reading of the portrait as image, which serves evidently different social needs.

The preciousness and precision of the Daguerreotype, and yet its difficult reading, turns the woman's portrait from an accessible visual representation to a three-dimensional object; while the painting traditionally answers the quest for resemblance and respectability first, the Daguerreotype adds to this meaning the quality proper to a precious object, through its being delicate and at the same time transportable. One can conjecture that, if the Daguerreotype was commissioned after the lady's death – as it seems reasonable to believe – the photographic plate performed a commemorative function in addition to the celebratory function already performed by the pictorial portrait.

The detail of the signature and date was – metaphorically speaking – cut out from the initial illustration in the book and, as a consequence, the brief explanation of the caption missed the nature of the archival object and its implications in serving different social uses. I demonstrated how the acknowledgment of the detail could conversely reveal to be a clue that calls for a different narrative: details disclose the possibility of new narratives, in that they reveal previously unnoticed layers of reading. On the level of a renovated study on Carl Durheim's portrait production of the standpoint of the reception of photography and its relation with the practice of reproduction, the acknowledgement of the painting behind the daguerreotype has transformed "the object of research" (Caraffa 2011, 11): similarly to what happened with the introduction of documentary photography, the object of research – the painting and the Daguerreotype – "were detached from their original surrounding, converted into standardized and transportable formats, newly contextualized and made comparable" (Caraffa 2019, 17) thanks to both the illustration in the book and the digital database of the archive. In Durheim's case, the transformation takes place on two levels: the first transformation regards

the use and function of the photographic object at the time of its creation. The painting intended for its representational quality as portrait, as image, was transformed firstly at the level of its being an object. Thanks to the Daguerreotype, the painting was converted into a transportable object. The visibility of the image has also changed: the case containing the plate was thought for a private gaze and in order to look at the portrait reproduced on the metal plate one should turn it back and forth until a light gray image appeared. The painting, although probably exposed in a space of private property was available for every gaze entering the room.

The second transformation regards the present 'use' of the photographic object, and its epistemological potential as research object (Caraffa 2011, 11). From the standpoint of the historical research on Carl Durheim's portraiture production, the acknowledgment of the nature of the depicted object, i.e., the acknowledgement of the painting as the object photographed on the Daguerreotype plate, redirects the investigation on Durheim's work. Such turn – the interest for the use of photography and the practice of reproduction – introduces a further and wider topic of inquiry, which is the 19th century practice of reproduction in Switzerland in the context of the working relationship among famous painters, minor draftsmen (such as lithographers, miniaturists…) and commercial photographers. Thanks to the information gathered with the analysis of the metal plate, I inevitably began to wonder if Durheim and Dietler had any business relations. My question is justified by a series of ads published by Durheim, to which I will refer in the second part of the article. "Will not captions become the essential component of pictures?" Walter Benjamin prophesized (Benjamin, 1931, 23). I suggest that captions become the essential components of pictures when, as Durheim's example shows, it comes to writing the genesis and history of the archival object and its relation to other archival pieces. The topic cannot be exhausted in this article; however, the general lines of the debate on the historiography of the history of photography can be outlined.

The average dimension of a historical phenomenon

"It is necessary to start from seemingly marginal details in order to grasp the general reality darkened by the fog of ideology" (Ginzburg 2016, 6) stated the historian Carlo Ginzburg in an essay on the "Conjectural Paradigm" and his reflections on it twenty-five years later. It is possible to

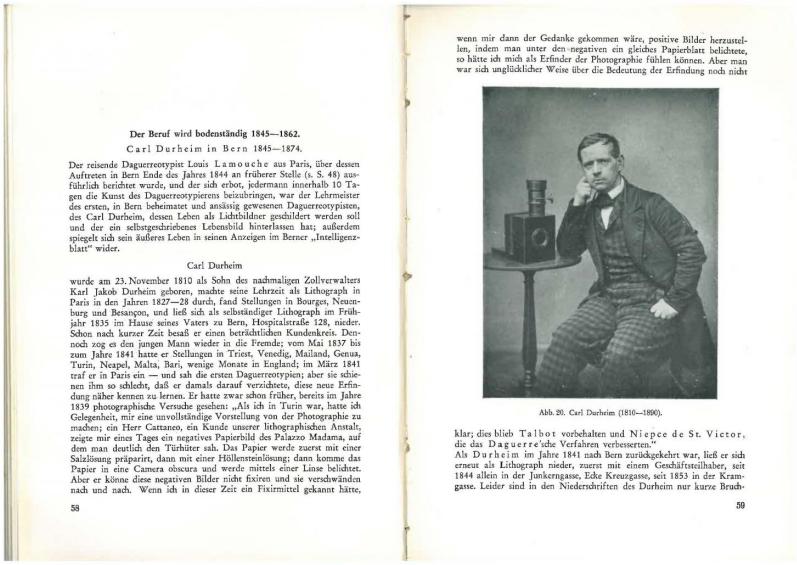
consider a series of clues as one piece of evidence: the historian challenged what he identified as "the evidential paradigm", a cross-disciplinary method of inquiry that interests history as discipline, which grants knowledge because of the direct links between observation of specific data used to draw a general (universal) conclusion. The historian suggests, on the contrary, to consider anomalies within a series as clues that "indicate or signal" embedded narratives, instead of demonstrating through major pieces of evidence the general trend or the average dimensions of a historical phenomenon. A renovated look at the relation among painters, printmakers and photographers requires a reflection on the historiographical approach adopted in the investigation of early Swiss photography and its implication in the formation of photography's identity in the art-historical texts. The art historian Martin Gasser has already showed how, in the near France, "photography's path originated in the context of industrie" and how the contemporaneous debate "shifted from the making to the maker of photographs giving rise to the emergence of the photographer as artist" (Gasser 1990, 8-29). In a different article Gasser also shows how in the German-speaking countries and in the early writings on photography's origin, "the intense illumination of the nationalistic undertones have directed the priority towards the claim for local inventors and contributors" (Gasser 1992, 50-60). These two positions described by Martin Gasser can be found in the first text written about Carl Durheim's photographic activity. Erich Stenger dedicated in 1940 a chapter to the Bernese pioneer Carl Durheim, titled *Der Beruf wird Bodenstaendig 1845-1862*. The contribution belongs to the first historical survey on the early history of photography in Switzerland, namely *Die Beginnende Fotografie im Spiegel von Tageszeitungen und Tagebuecher,* which became the bedrock literature for those historians interested in the historical survey on Durheim's work as commercial photographer. Erich Stenger writes:

> Noch im Jahre 1852 bezeichnete sich Durheim in senen Zeitungsanzeigen als Lithograph, im folgenden Jahre kann man beobachten, wie die Photographie die Überhand in Durheims Tätigkeit gewinnt; nachdem er sich noch einige Zeit Lithograph und Photograph gennat hatte, tritt er gegen Ende des Jahres meist nur noch als Photograph an die Öffentlichkeit. Beachtlich ist, daß auch Durheim, wie so viele der Frühzeit und meist gerade die Besten, aus der handwerklichen Kunst zur Photographie gelangte.

> [Still in 1852 Durheim identified himself in his advertisements as Lithographer, in the following years it is possible to observe how photography stood out in his activity; after little time he still identified himself as both lithographer and photographer, by the end of the years (1850s) he introduced himself to the public only as photographer. It is remarkable that Durheim, too, like the majority at the beginning and the majority of the best (practitioners), arrived to photography from the arts.] (Stenger 1940, 60-61)

As the title suggests, the German historian carefully analyzed local newspapers in order to reconstruct Durheim's carrier and locate in the linguistic register of the traditional media – such as painting – the reception of photography (Wolf, 2018). Stephen Bann defines such approach as "an historiographical form of a pattern of progress and fulfillment" (Bann 2001, 16), by recalling the reading of the history of the image from Hayden White to Erich Auerbach. With such interpretative framework in mind, Durheim's implication with photography has been described following the "average dimension of the historical phenomenon" (Ginzburg 2016, 6); following Stenger's thought, Durheim belongs to those groups of artisans, who became portrait photographers because they couldn't help profiting from of the photographic technology as a business activity. This reading goes hand in hand with the logic of progress, which considers the history of the technique in terms of development of processes, whereby the new technologies superseded the former, as Walter Benjamin extensively explains in his writing *L'œuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproduction mécanisée*(1936), a view that was later reprised by Willian Ivins in *Prints and Visual Communications* (1969). Could a selection of Durheim's images offer a look into the cracks and fissures of these narratives? To begin with, let us consider the aforementioned reproduction of Durheim's daguerreotype. It demonstrates the necessity of a reflection on the methodology used to approach photographs as archival objects and not only as visual representations. In addition to a reflection on the physical quality of photographs, a further step requires to look at how images by Durheim have been used in the early literature. For this reason, I take as an example the photograph chosen by Stenger, reproduced in the chapter devoted to Carl Durheim [Fig. 5]: a three-quarter portrait of the photographer mirrors the historian's point of entry, by reinforcing the

delineation of the trajectory of Durheim's carreer as a slow departure from lithography and toward photography.



Der Beruf wird bodenständig 1845—1862.

Carl Durheim in Bern 1845—1874.

Der reisende Daguerreotypist Louis Lamouche aus Paris, über dessen Auftreten in Bern Ende des Jahres 1844 an früherer Stelle (s. S. 48) ausführlich berichtet wurde, und der sich erbot, jedermann innerhalb 10 Tagen die Kunst des Daguerreotypierens beizubringen, war der Lehrmeister des ersten, in Bern beheimatet und ansässig gewesenen Daguerreotypisten, des Carl Durheim, dessen Leben als Lichtbildner geschildert werden soll und der ein selbstgeschriebenes Lebensbild hinterlassen hat; außerdem spiegelt sich sein äußeres Leben in seinen Anzeigen im Berner „Intelligenzblatt" wider.

Carl Durheim

wurde am 23. November 1810 als Sohn des nachmaligen Zollverwalters Karl Jakob Durheim geboren, machte seine Lehrzeit als Lithograph in Paris in den Jahren 1827—28 durch, fand Stellungen in Bourges, Neunburg und Besançon, und ließ sich als selbständiger Lithograph im Frühjahr 1835 im Hause seines Vaters zu Bern, Hospitalstraße 128, nieder. Schon nach kurzer Zeit besaß er einen beträchtlichen Kundenkreis. Dennoch zog es den jungen Mann wieder in die Fremde; vom Mai 1837 bis zum Jahre 1841 hatte er Stellungen in Triest, Venedig, Mailand, Genua, Turin, Neapel, Malta, Bari, wenige Monate in England; im März 1841 traf er in Paris ein — und sah die ersten Daguerreotypien; aber sie schienen ihm so schlecht, daß er damals darauf verzichtete, diese neue Erfindung näher kennen zu lernen. Er hatte zwar schon früher, bereits im Jahre 1839 photographische Versuche gesehen: „Als ich in Turin war, hatte ich Gelegenheit, mir eine unvollständige Vorstellung von der Photographie zu machen; ein Herr Cattaneo, ein Kunde unserer lithographischen Anstalt, zeigte mir eines Tages ein negatives Papierbild des Palazzo Madama, auf dem man deutlich den Türhüter sah. Das Papier werde zuerst mit einer Salzlösung präpariert, dann mit einer Höllensteinlösung; dann komme das Papier in eine Camera obscura und werde mittels einer Linse belichtet. Aber er könne diese negativen Bilder nicht fixiren und sie verschwänden nach und nach. Wenn ich in dieser Zeit ein Fixirmittel gekannt hätte,

58

wenn mir dann der Gedanke gekommen wäre, positive Bilder herzustellen, indem man unter den negativen ein gleiches Papierblatt belichtete, so hätte ich mich als Erfinder der Photographie fühlen können. Aber man war sich unglücklicher Weise über die Bedeutung der Erfindung noch nicht

Abb. 20. Carl Durheim (1810—1890).

klar; dies blieb Talbot vorbehalten und Niepce de St. Victor, die das Daguerre'sche Verfahren verbesserten."

Als Durheim im Jahre 1841 nach Bern zurückgekehrt war, ließ er sich erneut als Lithograph nieder, zuerst mit einem Geschäftsteilhaber, seit 1844 allein in der Junkerngasse, Ecke Kreuzgasse, seit 1853 in der Kramgasse. Leider sind in den Niederschriften des Durheim nur kurze Bruch-

59

5| Erich Stenger, Die Beginnende der Fotografie im Spiegel von Tageszeitungen und Tagebuecher Wuerzburg, p. 61.

The image chosen by the Stenger and placed in the opening section of the chapter on Durheim, is a portrait of the photographer that leaves no doubts: Carl Durheim portrayed himself using photography as a photographer. The man is sitting next to a table with a camera and a lens on it. The caption unfortunately does not mention either the archive where the image is collected, or the technique. Two copies of the picture exist: one is stored at the Burgerbibliothek in Bern and the other at the Photographic Collection of the Museum Ludwig in Cologne. From the appearance, one can conjecture that the photograph is an albumen print made from a glass negative, which locates the shot after 1853, and therefore belonging to the time examined by the historian. My intention is not to reject Stenger's contention: Carl Durheim did increasingly dedicate his efforts to learn and use different photographic techniques in the course of his business activity. I would rather want to enrich Stenger's narrative.

Recalling Ginzburg's words, I want to shed light on those aspects, which are considered anomalies from the average perspective, and for this reason are often cut out from the chronicle, but which, I argue, instead reveal to be fully part of the narrative. In contrast to the antagonism between media (lithography and photography) that Stenger implicitly suggests, I propose to compare Durheim's images as examples of the blurring boundaries between media. To say that Durheim presents himself at first as a lithographer and then as a photographer does not necessarily imply that he established a hierarchy of values between the two techniques, as Stenger suggests by writing that the best professionals came to photography from the arts. In addition, the idea that the transition from the arts to photography was a natural evolution due to the progress offered by the new technique does not take into account the visual economy in which Durheim operated. "Von diesen Tagen an setzen auch in der Aarestadt ein bis in die Gegenwart anhaltender Dialog zwischen der Fotografie und den bildenden Künsten ein" (Frey 1986, 11). These words, I suggest, best describe the relationship between photography and graphic arts in the specific context of the Canton of Bern is best described, in a very short time frame which is 1845-1860, i.e., before the widespread of the *carte-de-visite*. The different means of visual presentation moved in a circle of "aesthetic neighborhood" (Siegel 2018, 121), where the photographic processes expanded the field of the graphic arts instead of eroding or narrowing it. In the decades that immediately followed the introduction of photography, discourses about the use and value of photographic practices rose in terms of intermedia comparison. It was with the emergence of writings about the 'histories' of photography that a certain antagonism between media was adopted as point of view to narrate the flourishing of photography as a commercial activity in opposition to the arts. In particular, in regard to portrait photography works such as *Photographie et société* by Gisele Freund, first published in 1974, underscores the sociological perspective centering the discussion on the French art world and its mechanisms.

Although the history of Swiss photography is linked to the history of French and German photography, such that we can no longer speak of histories of photography by geographical origin and should rather illuminate the relationship between centers and peripheries, it is necessary to remember that the cultural and industrial context of France and Prussia

were not comparable to the Swiss context in terms of culture, economy and politics. In the second half of the 19th century, Switzerland was characterized by regionalism: although the Federal State was grounded in 1848, it was neither unified by culture, language, or class, nor faith.

It is necessary to keep these specifics in mind to get back to talking about Carl Durheim's photographic practices, which take place in Bern and for a short time in nearby Burgdorf. Durheim was a draftsman with strong roots in the Canton of Bern, so it can be assumed that his photographic practice was well placed in the context of social relations in a relatively small area. His geographical and cultural anchorage emerges in another portrait [Fig. 6], which is privately collected. With the juxtaposition of the image discussed above with this one, Durheim's photographic practice comes vividly into light. The portrait depicts in fact Carl Durheim, sitting on a chair next to a table, with the right arm leaning on a tablecloth with floral decoration. The background shows a typical Swiss landscape view. The photograph is a calotype printed on salt paper and then heavily hand painted. From the comparison with other salt prints from the photographer, it is probable that the photograph was originally taken in the studio, where the blank background was then decorated with the landscape view only in a second moment. The Eiger-Mönch-Jungfrau mountain chain stand out on the left side; in the middle ground the Bernese Dome and Blutturm characterize the profile of the city of Bern. On the right two women and a girl standing in traditional costume underline once more the local character of the image. The picture reflects the blurring boundaries between the use of different graphic languages combined together. The image per se cannot reveal much about the author's self-perception in regard to the use of one technique or the other. Nonetheless, it encourages reflections the indistinct boundaries between the use of graphic and photographic procedures and between the hand of the photographer and the hands of his "assistants". The few images discussed thus far make evident that Durheim exploited an array of graphic and photographic techniques, combining them together, and that he produced and reproduced images. Using the idea of 'intersected layers' the images reveal the narrowing of or the departure from elements that belong to different practices. In a short time span the photographic novelties followed one another in a high experimental setting: in the specific case of Durheim the actual utilization of different techniques and

methods go along with a ‘principle of contamination’ between inheriting and developing.

6| Carl Durheim, tinted Calotype, after 1849, Isabel Durheim Collection, Basel.

The 19th-century treatises insist on the unprecedented possibility of photography to imitate nature and to reproduce it faithfully: as a result, engraving has been often accused of playing the role of the unfaithful ‘translator’ of reality due to its manual component vis-à-vis photography’s mechanic and chemical procedure. In this regard, it is necessary to remember that engraving was originally designed for its purpose as a means of translating visual knowledge, in an era (the 16th century) particularly interested in promoting the works of great artists and spreading scientific knowledge. Engraving already had a documentary vocation and photography inherited the most widespread genres, such as genre scenes, portraits, topographical views and the documentation of great works. Most of the themes were designed to respond to the continuous and ever-increasing demand of tourists, a social phenomenon typical of the early 19th century, in Switzerland and abroad. For this reason, as Durheim’s portrait with painted landscape shows, the attention to the figurative qualities (portrait) and the creative tension (imaginary standpoint) go along with the attention to a taste for narrative (presentation of the subject) and informative elements (the topographic knowledge of the landscape) (Miraglia 2011, 140). Having said that, Carl Durheim’s photograph [Fig. 6] clearly shows visual models that belong to both the painting tradition and the visual language of engraving. First of all, recall that the tradition of visual arts was permeated by the objective of “illusionistic restitution of reality based on an exclusively monocular vision” (Miraglia 2011, 14), whereby photography is part of that series of technical expedients aimed at solving three problems concerning visual knowledge: (1) the quest for representation, (2) the attention to expression and (3) the far-reaching goal of communication. More specifically, the relationship between photography and painting is characterized by the conceptual continuity

expressed in the "tension to merge in unity the dialectic between nature and art" (Miraglia 2011, 15). The elements of continuity within the representative scheme of painting and engraving are the presence of the landscape view and the popular figures.

A recognizable reproduction of the view of Bern is painted behind the subject: the landscape is used as a perspective artifice that describes a portion of the real; this element reminds of the use of the *camera obscura* and its application in the topographical depiction (*veduta*). The landscape was most likely added after the printing of the positive. This working practice can be confirmed by Durheim's other portraits on salt paper, which show silhouettes of men and women standing out against a blank background, probably to allow the client to choose which landscape view to add at a later point. The dissemination of landscape view (*veduta*) grew particularly popular thanks to the engravings of urban scenography in the previous century (18th). These kinds of images convey a sense of depth enhanced by the presence of small figures of wayfarers – particularly popular – dear to the taste of nobles and specifically used in illustrated travel publishing. But if in the previous century the main interest fell on the precision and virtuosity in the reproduction of details and the perspectival structure of the image harking back to 15th-century scenography, the landscape view depicted behind the photographer is used with a different intention. The aim is, in fact, to enlarge the space and enhance its symbolic meaning, thanks to the choice of an extremely interesting point of view, which makes possible for the viewer the punctual acknowledgement of the place despite the observer's unrealistic standpoint. It thus turns out that the photograph is a condensation of as much information as possible, blended together across stylistic conventions and pictorial traditions of different media. The advertisements that Stenger consulted and summarized in his writing, can either reveal the slow abandonment of lithography in favor of Durheim's full dedication of photography, or else point toward what has been cut out by the historian's interpretation. Durheim published the three advertisements between 1853 and 1857, on the *Intelligenzblatt der Stadt Bern*.

> (11. March 1853) "Pour satisfaire aux demandes plus fréquentes de l'honorable public Ch. Durheim s'est adjoint un peintre habile, en sorte que des commandes en portraits etc. peuvent être livre a court délai sur plaque,

papier ou ivoire, au choix de MM les amateurs." Transl.: "To satisfy the more frequent requests of the honorable public Ch. Durheim has teamed up with a skillful painter, so that portrait orders etc. can be delivered at short notice on plate, paper or ivory, at the choice of the clients."

(25. October 1856) "Der Unterzeichnete, welcher für Photographien die Medaille 2ter Plätze an der Pariser Weltausstellung von 1855 erhalten hat, hat sich mit einem in diesem Fache sehr geübten Maler in Beziehung gesetzt, um Porträt zu liefern, die mit den besten in diesem Genre rivalisieren können und empfiehlt sich daher sowohl für Porträts nach der Natur als auf Kopien von Ölgemälden, Aquarellen, etc." Transl.: "The undersigned, who was awarded the 2nd place medal for photographs at the 1855 Paris World Exhibition, has contacted a painter who is very well versed in this field in order to provide portraits that can compete with the best in this genre, and is therefore recommended for portraits of nature as well as for copies of oil paintings, watercolours, etc."

(16. Juli 1857) "C. Durheim prévient les amateurs de beaux portraits en photographie qu'il est en mesure de les livrer promptement ayant pour aides deux peintres très habiles pour ce genre." Transl.: "C. Durheim warns enthusiasts of beautiful portraits in photography that he is able to deliver them promptly with the help of two painters who are very skilled for this genre of commission."

The cuts carried out in Stenger's perspective regard the implications that these three advertisements have about the collaboration with painters. Such collaboration is motivated by many reasons. The reason that recurs in all of the three ads concerns the flourishing of Durheim's business activity. As his advertisement suggests he 'employed' assistants or colleagues to be able to keep up with the deliveries. This means that starting from the 1850s, Durheim might have directed his atelier less as a small-scale and artisanal business, and more and more as a pre-'industrial' company. With 'industrial' I mean that demand exceeded supply and tasks became specific. Durheim could not follow directly every single process, so he might have decided to engage personally with the first phase of the image-production, which regards the photographic process (the exposure and the printing phase) suing most probably the calotype process and later the glass negative, and to delegate to someone else with proper skills

the over-painting procedures. One can conjecture that – reading between the lines – Durheim admitted his impossibility to compete with expert painters in the field of portraiture. In Bern from 1836, Johann Friederich Dietler, (Solothurn 1804-Bern, 1874) was known as a skillful painter. The presence of photography was evidently not a problem for the painter either, who actually used photography himself as basis to paint his commissions. One can conjecture that Durheim was aware of the work of his colleague and instead of competing with him, he opted for a collaboration. On the other hand, Durheim's education as lithographer might have helped him consider his acquired knowledge as part of a more extensive practice, which did not compete with the knowledge of others. The attitude fosters the collaboration in a network of relations underlying shared interests. For sure each method was characterized by its specificity. But as it happened with photography on paper and photography on metal (Roubert 2018, 31), which were two parallel arts designated to support each other, photography and the graphic arts were far from being rivals and mutually exclusive as Durheim's photographic collection can demonstrate. As Marina Miraglia states: "The activity of professionals [...] allows us to access the ideologies and representative/cognitive schemes typical of a given era, i.e. the different strategies of domestication of reality elaborated over time, implicitly allowing a more precise reconstruction of a given historical moment, revisited in its socio-economic and cultural values. Professionalism, in fact, inevitably reflects the needs and taste of a client, in turn inevitably linked to the most widespread visual habits of a given era. Through the activity of professionals it is possible to reconstruct in a more capillary and true way the basic cultural fabric of the history of the image of the 19th century and to reach a deeper and more realistic definition of the role played by photography and its particular iconic writing in the context of that era" (Miraglia 2011, 137). Durheim perhaps conceived himself as a photographer, but the photographic procedure might have been considered just a piece of a more expanded and organic process of image-production. He was interested in pursuing his activity as a photographer, which means that he mastered the photographic knowledge, but before the picture was completed with color, other bodies of knowledge were required. As the advertisements demonstrate, in this specific case painters were asked to collaborate. Durheim's whole personal story is interesting because it sheds light on the inheriting and developing of working

practices between graphic processes and photography, whether on paper or on metal plate, and with photography and other kinds of image production – such as painting and the graphic arts – in the timeframe 1840-1860 in the Canton Bern.

*I would like to thank Isabel Durheim to have allowed me multiple visits to her private collection in Basel.

Notes

[1] Mss.H.H.LII 98, Buergerbibliothek, Bern.
[2] 11 March 1853, Intelligenzblatt der Stadt Bern, http://intelligenzblatt.unibe.ch.
[3] Schloss Burgdorf, Inv. RS-11.830.b.

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English abstract

The present essay focuses on the photographic production of Carl Durheim, lithographer and photographer from Bern (1810-1890). I propose a reading of some of Durheim's pictures and their reproductions in the existing scholarship. As I will show, unnoticed cuts carried out on the original images led to misleading interpretations because the framing erased key information about the

photographer's working practice. I will reflect on the relationship between the selection of images accompanying a scholarly text and their framing, both intellectual and physical. My attempt is to situate these reflections in the broader context of the early history of photography, which looks at the mutual intersections between graphic- and photographic- processes in the timeframe 1840-1860 in Switzerland. My hope is to integrate all the elements that have been cut and omitted in the standard narratives about a cross section of the early history of Swiss photography.

keywords | early history of photography; lithography; reproduction; Switzerland.

La Redazione di Engramma è grata ai colleghi – amici e studiosi – che, seguendo la procedura peer review a doppio cieco, hanno sottoposto a lettura, revisione e giudizio questo saggio.
(v. Albo dei referee di Engramma)

A look from outside

Foreign photographers in Palermo between the 19th and the 20th century

Laura Di Fede

During the first half of the 19th century the introduction of photography was far from being only a matter of technology. Photography took its first steps in a changing political and social context, strongly marked by the concept of progress, and was linked to very different fields – such as arts, sciences, communication – influencing the way people were experiencing the world, other cultures and themselves.

In 1839, when the daguerreotype was presented to the world, Italy was still a patchwork of smaller independent states: in the north, the Kingdom of Sardinia included the island itself, Liguria and Piedmont, while the Austrian-Hapsburg dominated Venice, Lombardy and Tuscany, as well as the cities of Parma and Modena; Rome and the central part of the peninsula constituted the Papal states, and in Southern Italy and Sicily, Bourbons ruled the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Although divided and evolving at different speeds, each part of the country was moving towards the innovation of its infrastructures and transportation, and this was starting to radically change the circulation of people, goods and information. During 1839, the first railway in Italy was inaugurated between Napoli and Portici, and the *Società italiana per il progresso delle scienze* organized in Pisa the first Congress of Italian Scientists, the first public meeting of men of science from the various states of the peninsula, gathered under the common attribute of 'Italians'. Nonetheless, the strong relationships among the different parts of Italy and other European countries – especially with France and Great Britain – made it very clear to the cultural, scientific, and political elite that there was a wide lag in the modernization and industrialization of the country. The awareness of not being able to compete with larger and stronger economic and productive systems, as well as the social discontent towards old political institutions,

first led to the revolutionary waves of 1820-21 and 1830, and inevitably played a role in developing an aspiration to national unity. As a large stream of literature outlines, the comparison among the different independent states, and their ties with other European countries had a great influence on the construction of national identity (De Seta 1982, 2014; Zannier 1997; Di Matteo 2008). Since the 17th century, Italy has been considered a unity from an artistic and cultural point of view, and as the cradle of Western civilization, became an essential learning ground for the education of young aristocrats and their courtiers.

Literary and artistic representation of the country, which those travelers had shaped during the Grand Tour, gradually contributed to composing Italy. These travelers, unfettered by the rivalry and the divisions that ravaged the country, developed an external gaze, which could convey a more complete picture of a land that in their mind was already spiritually united by religion and culture of humanism.

> È nello specchio del Grand Tour che l'Italia assume coscienza di sé: e alla formazione di tale coscienza il contributo maggiore lo portano proprio i viaggiatori stranieri attraverso la loro diretta esperienza [...]. Parallelamente si afferma il genere del vedutismo di interesse topografico: disegni, dipinti, incisioni eccetera fissano le immagini stereotipe di ogni città [...] si forma così un modo di guardare e di pensare il Paese Italia (It is in the mirror of the Grand Tour that Italy assumes self-consciousness: and the major contribution to the formation of this consciousness is brought by foreign travelers through their direct experience [...]. At the same time the genre of topographical painting develops: drawings, paintings, engravings, etcetera, fix the stereotypical images of each city [...] thus, a way of looking at and thinking about Italy is formed) (De Seta 2014, 35-36).

Until the mid 18th century, travelers were mainly coming from England, France, and Central Europe. They habitually started their itinerary from Genoa or Turin and then moved towards the most important cities of Northern and Central Italy, such as Florence, Bologna, Ferrara, Venice, and Rome, often concluding their journey in Naples and its surroundings. The south of Italy and Sicily became a part of the Italian travel itinerary only during the second half of the 18th century thanks to the discovery of its ancient ruins, as well as Johann J. Winckelmann's interest in ancient Greek

architecture: with the publication of the short essay *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* in 1755, he awakened a huge public interest for classical art and significantly influenced the formation of the neoclassical movement. Hence, in most cases the motivations behind travels began to change. They eventually lost their former remit of being a pedagogical tool for the young elite (De Spuches 2003, 158) and instead, became a means to physically and cognitively explore the world: during what has been defined as *viaggio di conoscenza* (journey of knowledge) travelers investigated, classified, listed, described, and catalogued the nature and the remains of classical culture (Berrino 2010, 366-367).

In this context, the opening towards Southern Italy and Sicily was part of a larger itinerary that also involved Greece and the Near East, researching particularly the roots of European civilization (De Seta 1982, 228). Then, towards the end of the 18th century, the drive for encyclopedic knowledge was slowly substituted by the emotional dimension of traveling, leaving more space to individual sensorial experience in the descriptions of the visited places. If we look at what has been published about Sicily during this century, it is possible to see this gradual evolution (Cometa 1999): only after a large number of antiquarians and archaeologists, such as Giuseppe Maria Pancrazi (Pancrazi 1752-53), and Jacques Philippe D'Orville (D'Orville 1764), wrote accurate essays on the ancient history of the island, the reason for traveling switched towards emotional experience of the journey. In addition, the attention focused on the symbiosis between the natural landscape and architecture, as expressed by early travel writers like Baron Johann Hermann von Riedesel (Riedesel 1771) and Patrick Brydone (Brydone 1773), who established the so-called "discovery" of Sicily during this century (Tedesco [1979] 2001, XXXIII). Clearly, this new interest that travelers and artists addressed to Sicily, and in particular to Greek Sicily, needs to be related to the rediscovery that Sicilians made of their own classical past. In 1758, for example, Ignazio Paternò Castello Prince of Biscari promoted the archeological excavations in Catania, opened there its *Museum*, and became an important reference point for travelers in Eastern Sicily by publishing one of the few local guides about the ancient island (Biscari 1721). In 1764, Lancellotto Castelli, the Prince of Torremuzza, initiated a series of archaeological researches in the western side of the island, aimed mainly at developing a Sicilian antiquities

catalogue (Fiorentini 2005, 20). All of the aforementioned experiences and travel accounts led to the foundation of a successful new route. However, with few local exceptions (Bova, Leanti 1761), the image of the island appears to be depicted mainly by foreign artists, like Richard Paine Knight, Jacob Philipp Hackert and Charles Gore (Dunker, Hackert 1782) and through a series of popular illustrated travel books, such as the *voyages pittoresques* of Abbé de Saint Non and Dominique Vivant-Denon, Henry Swinburne or Jean Houël (Saint Non 1785; Swinburne 1783; Houël 1782).

> I Siciliani infatti, per gran tempo e almeno fino al primo Ottocento non contribuirono sostanzialmente alla formazione di questo grande archivio figurativo (In fact, for a long time and at least until the early 19th century, Sicilians did not substantially contribute to the creation of this large visual archive) (Di Matteo 2008, IV, 9).

The accounts made by foreign travelers widened and promoted the image of Sicily during this period, like Johann Wolfgang von Goethe successfully did with his *Italienische Reise* (Goethe 1816-1817). However, the local society also played an important role in its building (Tedesco [1979] 2001, XIV). Because of the nearly complete absence of suitable accommodation facilities on the island, travelers were hosted and guided by local noble families and clergymen. Therefore, the image of Sicilian cities was clearly constructed through the encounters the European travelers had with the Sicilian elite (Iachello 2000, 43). The use of high society connections was a distinctive feature of the classical *Grand Tour*, which is conventionally considered to have ended with the Napoleonic wars, but remained as a long lasting tradition throughout the 19th century (De Seta 1982, 260). Yet, the condition of accommodation facilities and transportation in Sicily did not evolve until the middle of the 19th century: the Palermo-Agrigento was the first railway line planned and its sections were progressively inaugurated between 1863 and 1876, but the completion of the Sicilian network was completed only during the last decades of the century (Canciullo 2016). Therefore, making the journey by sea remained the preferred way to visit the island. This was probably one of the reasons behind the establishment of a coastal itinerary which included Agrigento, Catania, Messina, Palermo, and Syracuse.

At the beginning of the 19th century, many travelers were inspired by the increasing travel literature about Sicily and decided to discover this exotic *terra di confine* (Maffioli 1999, 23). By sharing their experience, they were essential for the development of a series of literary and iconographic stereotypes, which resulted from the affirmation of the neoclassical vision and the first development of the Romantic ideology (Kanceff 1989). Using these literature, it is currently possible to track the main points of interest of that time and link them to the tastes and fashions of the European elite of that time. Besides the attraction to its classical antiquities and 'sublime' nature, a renewed interest in medieval culture led travelers also to explore churches, convents, and religious festivals. To be specific, Annunziata Berrino, in her studies on tourism history (Berrino 2010, 2011, 2016) defines the early 19th century tours of Italy, *viaggi di diporto*. Even if the itineraries and the interests are similar to the 18th century knowledge journey, the experience it is not anymore limited to aristocracy, the interest toward antiquities starts to be influenced by the romantic gaze and alternates moments of knowledge to others of escape and emotion. As a transitional phase between *Grand Tour* and organized tours, it can be considered a preparatory stage to the organized tourism that developed in Italy after the 1860s.

As a large body of literature suggests, the discovery and diffusion of photography in Sicily followed the same itineraries as the last century, and gradually attracted itinerant daguerrotypists to these places (Mirisola, Di Dio 2002; Mirisola 2008; Hannavy 2008, 753). In early 1840, soon after a public demonstration of this new process by an unknown French photographer took place in Palermo, Romualdo Trigona, prince of Sant'Elia, acquired a camera, a set of plates, Daguerre's manual, and on the 19th January 1840 took the first known daguerrotype of the city. Some years later, the local newspaper *L' occhio: giornale di scienze, amena letteratura, e belle arti* (16.05.1943 issue) advertized the temporary daguerreotype cabinet of Mr. C. Fischer, hosted by the prince of Cutò in his palace until the 20th of the month. According to the sources, the names of a few local photographers who were active in Palermo during the 1840s, such as Stefano Bugliarelli and Giuseppe La Barbera, are known. However, none of their daguerreotypes or salted paper prints from calotype has been uncovered until now (Morello 1999, 13-14). This means also that, between 1840 and 1860, the vast majority of the photographs of

Sicily were taken by foreign travelers. These travelers were likely envisaging the new media to record their experience, a role previously attributed to drawing, engraving, and painting. Adventurers, scholars, and architects, such as George W. Bridges, Alfred Nicolas Normand, and some other pioneers of travel photography (Bouqueret, Livi 1989), followed the itineraries and the visual tradition built between the 18th and the beginning of 19th century, and reached Sicily to capture the monuments and the landscape of the island that had fascinated so many. Therefore, as this essay aims to show, it is not surprising to see how much the long tradition of *vedute* affected photography, particularly its choice of subjects, vantage points, and framing of cities (Bonetti, Maffioli 2003, 31-40). Also the technical limitations of the new invention conditioned this choice: buildings, works of art, and landscape topography, as static objects, became the favorite subjects for the early photographers, due to limitations in technology, such as the necessity for long exposures (Watson 1980, IX). At the end of the 1850s, a group of French photographers established their studio in Palermo including, among others, Victor and Edouard Laisné and Eugène Sevaistre. They became witness to the changes the city went through during the revolutionary events which led to the unification of Italy in 1861 (Morello 1999, 15).

When photography was introduced in Sicily, the island was going through radical changes in the administrative system, inspired from the English state model: during Napoleonic wars, Great Britain elected Sicily as its stronghold in the Mediterranean sea, establishing a political, cultural, and commercial influence that lasted during the whole century, especially in the western side of the island. Even though this "anglomania" (Russo [1979] 2001, XXXVI) had an upper hand in Sicilian society, the French revolutionary ideas which were changing the whole Europe surely had an impact on it. These changes, directly or indirectly, were delegitimizing the noble elite and favoring the middle class (Iachello 2003). After the Bourbon restoration and the formation of the Kingdom of Two Sicilies in 1816, the centralization of power in Naples and the severe repression increased the level of frustration among all Sicilian social classes, and this led to the 1820 and 1848 revolution, anticipating and opening the door to the process of unification with the rest of the country (Riall 2003, 33).

In 1860, Giuseppe Garibaldi's Expedition of the Thousand put Sicily under the spotlight. The interest for the island grew among the travelers in Europe, and Sicily was more and more reported on national and international press. The correspondents were sent to Palermo from the newspapers of the entire Europe and the United States, among others the *London Daily News*, the *Illustrated London News* and the *Times* (Pizzo 2011, 32). The unification brought new investments in infrastructures, which expanded the possibilities of traveling outside the circle of scholars, and influenced also the number of professional photographers visiting the island. To respond to the ever-increasing demand of souvenirs and the needs of the newly formed country, photographers started to build a catalogue of views illustrating the main cities of the country and developing a series of iconographic types that contributed to strengthening national identity (Pizzo 2011; Maffioli 2009). Regardless of these events and the multiplication of cultural actors, it is ironic to see how photography in Sicily, and especially in Palermo, remained under strong foreign influence during the second half of the 19th century. On the one hand, the international travelers were the principal audience of souvenir photography – as national travel to Sicily was still uncommon (Berrino 2011, 28). On the other hand, between the 1860s-1870s, the first ateliers of local photographers, such as Giuseppe Incorpora, the Fratelli Tagliarini, and Eugenio Interguglielmi (Bajamonte, Lo Dico, Troisi 2007, 18), which slowly entered the market, practiced essentially portrait photography. Therefore, the most common images of the city and its monuments were taken and distributed by Eugène Sevaistre, Gustave Eugène Chauffourier, Giorgio Sommer, Robert Rive, and some larger studios set up outside the island, like Alinari in Florence (Maffioli 2017). As the same Incorpora explained during his relation at the *II Congresso fotografico Italiano* (1899), the development of local photographic industry was stagnating and was widely depending on foreign purchase:

> La gente del luogo non ama in generale acquistare collezioni. Sono forestieri, o per lo meno i non isolani, che ne fanno acquisto. [...] Di certo le fotografie dei monumenti di Sicilia son più largamente vendute da stabilimenti fotografici del continente, che mandano qui a fare impressionare i loro fototipi (The locals do not generally like to buy collections. It is the foreigners, or at least people coming from outside the island, who buy them. [...] Certainly the photographs of the monuments of Sicily are more widely

> sold by photographic establishments of the continent which send here their photo types to have them impressed) (Incorpora 1899).

During the 1880s, the definitive recognition of the gelatin silver process over the collodion allowed professionals to work more easily on an increasingly industrial scale, and amateurs to practice photography. The "massification" of the photographic medium (Zannier [1988] 2007, 72) involved more cultural actors, increased the level of production and, more generally, its success. These changes, marked by a stereotyping process in the representation of the cities (Vinardi, 2011), are especially evident in the popular travel boxed sets developed at the beginning of 20th century by stereoscopic companies in order to answer the demands of a broader public to travel the world in a more comfortable (and affordable) way (Parmeggiani 2016, 35). This persistence of a foreign gaze over Italian cities' monuments and landscapes led to the choice of sources in this article. It is for the same motivation that the pictures of the monumental, archaeological, and historical-artistic heritage of Palermo produced by foreign photographers were placed at the center of this study. Drawing on Palermo as a case study for investigating the cultural, social, political, and commercial trends on regional and national level, in this article we want to discuss the process of construction of photographic *topoi* in the 19th and the early 20th centuries in relation with the previous visual tradition, and try to understand how the vision of photographers from different cultural backgrounds influenced the way in which the city was pictured. Starting from a catalogue of photographs of Palermo made by foreigners, hereby compiled from local, national, and international photographic archives, in order to have a representative list of materials produced between 1839 and 1914, this work offers, in addition to the visual comparison of the sources, a comparative analysis of a set of maps that locate, first the subjects illustrated in the most common *voyages pittoresques* and in essays on Sicilian architecture published until 1840s, then the subjects depicted by those photographers, and finally, the places of interest pointed out in a popular travel guide in the second half of the 19th century (Baedeker 1867). This comparison highlights the relationship of the choice of subjects made by these photographers, the locations illustrated in *voyages pittoresques*, the points of interest in travel guides and the urban evolution of the city.

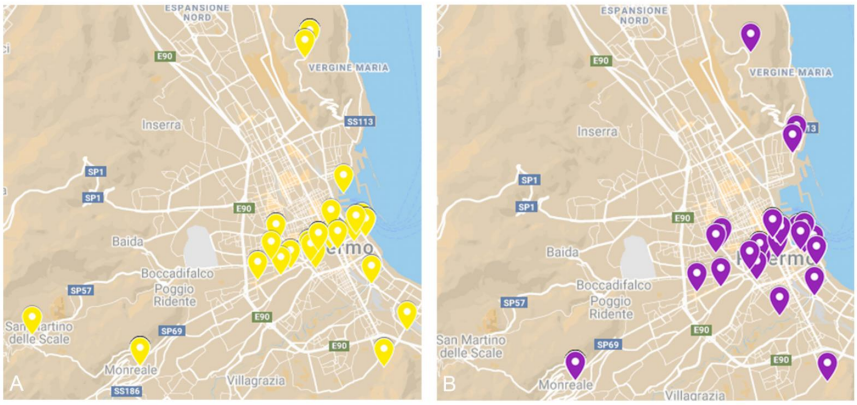
Framing Palermo: the influence of the painting and engraving tradition in travel photography

In the 1840s, the first sets of images of the Italian artistic heritage made by daguerreotypists demonstrate the best known application of this new technology, the documentation of monuments and topographic views. As a perfect convergence between arts and sciences, these pictures inherited their characteristics from the 18th century figurative tradition of *vedute*, but introduced the objectivity of vision, which was a new factor, typical of the positivist culture developed at the beginning of the 19th century (Bonetti, Maffioli 2003, 31). Similar encyclopedic and scientific motivations, moving artists in the representation of nature, can be found in the first publications illustrated by engravings from daguerreotype views, such as *Les Excursions Daguerriennes* (Lerebours 1840-1842) and the *Vues d'italie d'après le daguerréotype* published by Ferdinando Artaria e Figlio between 1840 and 1847. The translation of daguerreotypes into printable plates allowed their reproducibility on a larger scale and strengthened the bond between the newborn photography and the engraving tradition. However, the Sicilian heritage never appeared in these publications, and only a few of anonymous daguerreotypes taken on the island are known today. Yet, the early travelers, mostly working with paper negative, still considered the monuments of Sicily as fine subjects (Chazal 2010). Following the past travel itineraries and trends that we already mentioned (De Seta 1982, 228), they visited Sicily between 1840s and 1860s mostly as a layover in their journey to discover the ancient civilizations around the Mediterranean sea.

The early travelers were mostly foreign scholars that used photography to collect evidence for their research on archeology, natural science or architecture. Sharing a common cultural background, those photographers relied on similar references in terms of travel literature, practical guides, and illustrated books (Miraglia 2009). The *voyages pittoresques* illustrations and the landscape painting tradition shaped the image they had of Italy before reaching the destination, and thus influenced their way of taking photographs. In the case of Sicily, it is striking how the work produced from the 1700s to the 1850s by engravers and painters, such as those by Jean Louis Desprez, the Comte Louis Nicolas Philippe Auguste De Forbin, Franco Zerilli or Giovan Battista Lusieri, inspired subjects and

vantage points for the first photographers visiting the island (Di Benedetto 2009).

The illustrations taken into account [Fig. 1], together with the aforementioned publications of Saint Non, Vivant-Denon, Houël and Swinburne, were a part of some of the most common *voyages pittoresques* published between 18th and 19th century. These include, among others, *Voyage Pittoresque de Sicile* (1822-24) by Jean-Frédéric D'Ostervald (inspired by the drawings that the Comte De Forbin made in Sicily around 1820), *Sicilian Scenery* (1823) by Peter DeWint and William Light, *Italie pittoresque...* (1836) by Jacques Marquet de Montbreton, baron de Norvins, and the illustrated essays on Sicilian architecture that showed the increased interest in Norman heritage, like Jacob I. Hittorff and Ludwig Zanth's *Architecture moderne de la Sicile* (1835) [1] and Henry Gally Knight's *Saracenic and Norman Remains to illustrate the 'Normans in Sicily'* (1840). In addition, it is also important to take into account also *Lo stato presente della Sicilia* (1761), which was a very well-known illustrated book about Sicily written by the royal historian Angelo Leanti and illustrated by Antonino Bova, because it was probably inspired (or commissioned for) the work in twenty-four volumes of Thomas Salmon, *Modern history or, the present state of all nations* (1739-1761) which was translated into French, Italian, Dutch, and German (Di Matteo 2008; Cometa 1999; Garnero Morena 1997; Tuzet 1945, [1955] 1995). A comparison between the abovementioned imagery and the first photographs made by foreign travelers during the second half of 19th century of Palermo suggest how these followed the canonical cuts and frames used in printing tradition, and were aligned in terms of selection of subjects (Barbera Azzarello 2008; Barbera Azzarello, Ferrara 2017).



1a | Subjects of Palermo and its surroundings illustrated in *Voyages pittoresques* published between 18th and 19th century by Bova, Leanti 1761; Houël 1782; Swinburne 1783; DeWint Light 1823; Hittorff, Zanth 1835; De Norvins 1836; Gally Knight 1840; Saint Non 1785; D'Ostervald 1822-1824 (created by the author with GoogleMyMaps 2020).
1b | Subjects of Palermo and its surroundings photographed by G. Bridges, A. Normand, G. De Rumine, L. Vignes, J.A. Lorent from 1840s to 1860s (created by the author with GoogleMyMaps 2020).

Coming twice to Sicily between 1846 and 1847, the English reverend George Wilson Bridges visited Palermo on different occasions, as a part of a longer tour revolving around Southern Europe and Near East. The main goal for the journey (from 1846 to 1853) was to take photographs and prepare an English version of the *Excursions daguerriennes*, thus to extensively document the great ancient civilizations that once prospered on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea [2] (Brettel 1984; Lassam, Gray 1988; Militello 2018; Taylor, Schaaf 2007; Schaaf 2015-2020). Only a few of his photographs of Palermo are still extant today. As Bridges explains in some of the letters he sent to William Henry Fox Talbot – the father of the calotype that taught him the photographic process he invented, under the condition of a commercial exploitation of the photos the reverend collected abroad (Militello 2018, 95) – he decided not to bring its camera to his first visit to Palermo because of some technical problems with the photographic paper and the lack in chemicals (Schaaf 1999-2020, n. 5871, Malta, 2 February 1847).

Even later, the want for the paper supply and frequent failures in the developing process (Schaaf 1999-2020, n. 5915, Malta, 4 April 1847) hindered Bridges original project: "There is a building at Palermo I am anxious to take, The old Convent where originated the 'Sicilian vesper?' [...]. There are also some fine Saracenic remains thereabouts & I shall have, for a companion, one" (Schaaf 1999-2020, n. 5840, Malta, 2 January 1847). In his correspondence we can also see how enthusiastic is the response of Sicilians towards the new technology: "The monks [of the Benedictine Convent at Catania] are quite alive to their promised treat of copies" (Schaaf 1999-2020, n. 5840); "A Baron Borgia, *Intendente* of Sicily, will probably apply for your License & instructions" (Schaaf 1999-2020, n. 5871). Despite the technical challenges, we still have a number of images taken by Bridge: a view of the city from the slopes of Monte Pellegrino, the cathedral, a portrait of two people in front of a palm tree, probably taken in the Orto Botanico and a view of the Marina taken from Palazzo Butera, which includes Porta Felice and Monte Pellegrino. This last picture (see *Fondazione Alinari per la Fotografia*, online collection, inv. FVQ-F-040166-0000) follows a well established *topos* of the seafront promenade of the city and the increasingly iconic mountain embracing the sea, which is also present in the works of H. Swinburne, D'Ostervald, DeWint, and William Light.

Another emblematic subject was the cathedral, a magnificent building lying along the main road of the city (named Cassaro, then from the late 16th century Via Toledo and, after 1860, Via Vittorio Emanuele) already present in most of the voyages and essays on Norman architecture. Photographed also by Gabriel De Rumine and Alfred Nicolas Normand it later became a cornerstone subject of the post-unification ateliers (see Sevaistre and Rive [Fig. 5b, 5a]). Normand, an architect pensionnaire of the French Academy in Rome between 1847 and 1851, was conscious of the value of photography in his architectural studies when he arrived in Sicily to find an ideal subject for his restoration project (Ducros 2013, 876, letter 20), as he already based his essays on architectural restoration of Pompeii and the Imperial Fora on the calotypes he realized during his educational tours around Italy. The French architect used a more scientific approach closer to the earlier tradition of planimetrics, a system for the measurement of the buildings, to document the Cathedral of Palermo. He photographed the building parallel to his long axis, while focusing on

specific sections of the church to avoid distortions and converging lines (those calotypes are part of Paris *Médiathèque de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine* collection, inv. NRM00076-NRM00080, see also Dercks 2019, 34).

2a | Vauzelle (from C.te De Forbin sketch), *Vue de l'église de Santa Maria della Catena à Palerme*, Print in J.F. D'Ostervald, *Voyage pittoresque en Sicile*, Paris 1822-1824.
2b | G. De Rumine, *Palerme, église de Santa Maria la Catana*, Albumen print, 1858-59, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Cabinet Estampes et photographie, n. FRBNF45856809 (photo by the author).
2c | L. Vignes, *Dans la rue de Tolede à Palerme*, Salt paper print, 1860, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Cabinet Estampes et photographie, n. FRBNF41460340 (source Gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque Nationale de France).
2d | G. Incorpora, *55 Palermo, Chiesa della Catena*, Albumen print, 1870s-1880s, private collection (photo by the author).

Along the Cassaro, the road stretching from the seafront to the Royal Palace, the Church of Santa Maria della Catena was another favorite subject of 18th century travelers, showing the renewed interest in medieval culture. [Fig. 2] shows the building slightly to the right of the facade mimicking the same point of view used in D'Ostervald's *Voyage* [Fig. 2a], captured by the Russian aristocrat, engineer, and photographer Prince Gabriel Wassiliewitch De Rumine [Fig. 2b] in 1859 (Bouqueret Livi 1989; Durand 2015) and by the French Navy officer Louis Vignes [Fig. 2c], that took some pictures of Palermo in July 1860 after the clashes between the Garibaldian troops and the Bourbon navy, as he was stationed on the Donnawerth during the revolution (Aubenas Roubert 2010; Durand 2015). The same angle has repeatedly been preferred by following photographers, and entered the collection of later local photographers like Incorpora [Fig. 2d]. Rumine's interior pictures of the Cathedral of Monreale (stored at *Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Cabinet Estampes et Photographies*, catalogue n. FRBNF40467345, see for example n. FRBNF45853458) and the photographs the German scientist and archaeologist Jakob August Lorent (1813-1884) took in Palermo and Monreale in 1865 (stored at the Wurttembergische Landesbibliothek of Stuttgart, SWB-Katalog n.1486423183) similarly followed the development of studies around Norman arts. Both photographers were likely informed about the work of Hittorff, Zanth, and Gally Knight, as many of their pictures emulated its illustrations and followed a similar itinerary. For what I think it is more than a coincidence, for example, Lorent introduced in his photographs of the Cubula (Bennici 2017, 19, n. 252) and the Cuba palace (Bennici 2017, 19, n. 253) some human figures in the exact same positions depicted by Gally Knight [3]. To further clarify the early travel photographers' path and their vision of 'objective' eye, both of which followed *voyages pittoresques* of a century earlier, I have developed two maps. The first highlights the subjects of Palermo and surroundings that were included in the aforementioned illustrated books and *voyages pittoresques* [Fig. 1a]. The second one shows the locations of Bridges, Normand, De Rumine, Vignes, and Lorent pictures, taken between 1840 and 1860 [Fig. 1b]. When the two maps overlaid, it is noticeable that in both the main focus of the subjects lies mostly on the seafront, along the Cassaro (the main thoroughfare along which were located the principal churches and palaces), piazzas and main gates (Porta Nuova and Porta Felice). These locations identify and celebrate the places of religious and

political power while emphasizing the particular relationship that links the city with the sea.

After the revolution: from travel photography to commercial photography

3 | *Le couvent de Santa-Catarina après le bombardement à Palerme*, engraving from a photograph taken by Billardet & Laisné, printed in "Le Monde illustré" 4/169, 7.7.1860,13 (source Gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque Nationale de France).

During the 19th century, Palermo was the scene of a number of revolutionary events and major changes in the urban layout that would lead to the expansion of the city to the north. After the uprising of 1848, the short-lived revolutionary parliament that last until 1849 (Rial 2003), decided to extend Via Maqueda (the road that crossed Cassaro street in the Quattro Canti place, dividing the old city center into 4 parts) towards Monte Pellegrino, designing Viale della Libertà outside the original city walls. Between Italian unification in 1860 and the end of the century, this development and the opening of Via Roma – an intervention conceived in 1885 as a part of the Giarrusso urban plan and realized between 1895-1920, that slashed the old town in order to connect the train station that was inaugurated in 1886 to the port and the new northern residential areas – meant a gradual shift of bourgeois elite from the crowded and unhealthy old city center to the free and natural spaces available along the new roads.

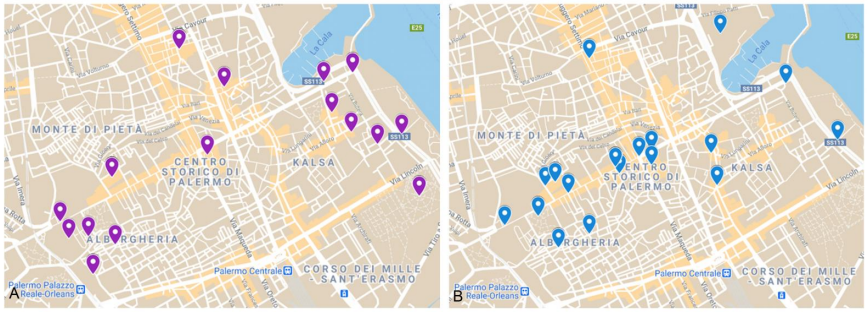
Following the will of Palermo's entrepreneurial middle class, the crowning achievement of this new city center was the construction of the theaters, Politeama and Massimo, which were inaugurated in 1874 and 1897, respectively, and the hosting of the National Exhibition held in 1891-1892 (De Seta, Di Mauro 2002). A second major source of influence on photography, besides the urban and social evolution during that time in Palermo, was the huge change in the political system due to the Unification of Italy in 1861. The occurrence of such unique events at the heart of Europe made the island the center of attraction for journalists and

photographers from all over the country and the Western World (Pizzo 2011, 32).

The Revolution of Palermo, which saw Garibaldi troops and the Bourbon army clash between May and June 1860, was documented by the well-known Gustave Le Gray (1820-1848) [4] and by other French photographers settled on the island in the middle of 1850s to escape the fierce competition in their country (McCauley 1994), such as Victor Edouard Laisné and Billardet who were correspondents for the newspaper *Le Monde illustré*, and Eugène Louis Sevaistre, who settled in Palermo during 1858 (Bajamonte, Lo Dico, Troisi 2006 & 2007). Their images of a war-torn Palermo can be considered among first photo-reportages, but some of these survived only as newspaper illustrations, like the ones by Laisné & Billardet that appeared in *Le Monde Illustré*, on the 7th and the 14th July 1860 [Fig. 3].

Both Le Gray's portraits of Garibaldi and his generals and Sevaistre's stereoscopic series *Révolution de Palerme* [5] taken between May-June 1860 immediately became famous as reproductions for illustrated books celebrating the deeds of the general and the Thousand, such as with the *Album storico-artistico: Garibaldi nelle Due Sicilie* published by the Fratelli Terzaghi in Milan (La Duca [1882] 1982). Their idea behind the project was to create a popular and common 'monument' of the historical moment. The diffusion of this kind of publications and prints started the constitution of the iconographic mythology of the Risorgimento and showed the potential of photography as a propaganda tool. At that time, Sicily saw a proliferation of its images beyond the national boundaries. In France, where the events in Italy were followed closely, and publishers such as *Gaudin Frères* commercialized a large stereoscopic collection about Sicily, advertizing them on the weekly journal *La Lumière – Revue de photographie* from June 1860 onwards (Lacan 1860). Founded in 1842 by Marc-Antoine and Pierre Ignace Alexis Gaudin, then joined by their brother Charles Jacques Emmanuel in 1854, *Gaudin Frères* was one of the oldest Parisian company selling photographic materials and daguerreotypes. The Gaudin brothers soon became successful publishers of stereoscopic collections from around the world. For their series they used to acquire images from different photographers but, as it was common at that time, the names of the authors remain mostly unknown (Durand 2015; Fanelli

2020). Sevaistre or Claude Grillet, another French photographer who owned a studio in Naples, probably took the majority of the Sicilian pictures sold by *Gaudin Frères* (Fanelli 2020; Bennici 2015a, 2015b).



4a | Subjects of Palermo centre photographed by G. Bridges, A. Normand, G. De Rumine, L. Vignes, J.A. Lorent from 1840s to 1860s (created by the author with GoogleMyMaps 2020);
4b | Pictures of the revolution in Palermo during 1860 photographed by Billardet & Laisné, G. Le Gray, E. Sevaistre (created by the author with GoogleMyMaps 2020).

The wide circulation of these photographs though the press, publications, and international societies in the following years, together with the social and economic changes occurred, forever changed the way the city was perceived. A comparison between the maps of subjects depicted by early travel photographers with the ones portrayed during Palermo revolution [Fig. 4], suggests that the latter moved the gaze of spectators around the world on less common and mainstream routes and places. Among others, these include small streets of Albergheria and Kalsa districts, and defense structures, such as the Castello a Mare and Porta Maqueda. After the Unification of Italy, the growing demand of souvenir images increased and this, matched with a policy aimed at celebrating the national heritage to promote the cohesion of the country, favored the proliferation of professional photographic studios. Facilitated by the simpler and faster wet-collodion plate process published by Frederick Scott Archer in 1851 (Watson 1980, X), the newborn ateliers engaged in the construction of a complete visual archive of Italian cultural heritage. This experience was probably inspired also by the *Mission Héliographique* that the French *Commission des Monuments historiques*, entrusted to five photographers – including G. Le Gray – in 1851: a large photographic campaign to

document the most important national monuments inspired by the growing consciousness around cultural heritage and its preservation.

> Si fece sempre più evidente l'intenzione di utilizzare il tanto celebrato patrimonio artistico italiano per facilitare la coesione nazionale […]. La fotografia partecipò a questo medesimo clima culturale nell'assoluta certezza che le opere dei grandi artisti del passato dovevano contribuire a diffondere gli ideali patriottici e nazionali (The intention to use the much celebrated Italian artistic heritage to promote national cohesion became increasingly evident [...]. Photography participated in this same cultural atmosphere under the absolute certainty that the works of the great artists of the past could contribute to spreading patriotic and national ideals) (Pizzo 2011, 138).

Sicily started to welcome more visitors traveling also for leisure, and this encouraged other foreign photographers to establish their studio on the island, as Gustave Emile Chauffourier. Working in Palermo from 1862 up to about the 1870, he first opened the *Photographie Parisienne*, and later started the atelier *Chauffourier & Girgenti* specializing in sights, reproduction of monuments and works of art, and collaborating with a local photographer. After a failed marriage, Chauffourier left the island around 1870 to work in Naples and finally settled in Rome, maintaining his partnership with Girgenti in Sicily (Cartier-Bresson, Maffioli 2006; Cavazzi Paladini 1977; Mirisola 2008). Meanwhile, other larger ateliers started to conduct a series of systematic photographic campaigns in order to cover the entire heritage of Sicily between 1860 and 1890, like Giorgio Sommer and Robert Rive. The first was born in Frankfurt, but in 1857 he decided to settle in Naples where he opened a photographic studio. Operating from 1857 to 1888, Sommer produced thousands of images of archaeological ruins, landscapes, art objects, and portraits, becoming one of the Europe's most prolific and successful photographers of the time (Miraglia 1992; Fanelli 2007). Robert Rive was a Prussian-born photographer that opened his studio in Naples around the 1850s. Similarly to Sommer, he conducted a series of systematic photographic campaigns around Italy. After his death in 1868, his brother Julius Otto took over the studio until 1888 (Fanelli 2010). After the Unification, travelers started to rely more on first travel guides, like the Baedekers [6] and the few standardized services already available (Berrino 2011), than on the network of the high society

(a characteristic aspect of the previous era). Trying to satisfy their desire to return with an accurate visual 'report' of their journey, professional photographers adapted the former visual tradition to the systematic documentation of the Sicilian heritage, aligning themselves to the past *topoi* identified by their forebears, and started to look for a way of narrating the changing face of contemporary cities (Vinardi 2011). The description of the Cathedral of Palermo and Monte Pellegrino, for example, has preserved the same points of view throughout the entire century [Fig. 5], building on a visual tradition founded upon linear perspective and balance of forms inherited by the local photographers who opened their atelier after the 1860s-1870s, such as Francesco Pelos [Fig. 5d].

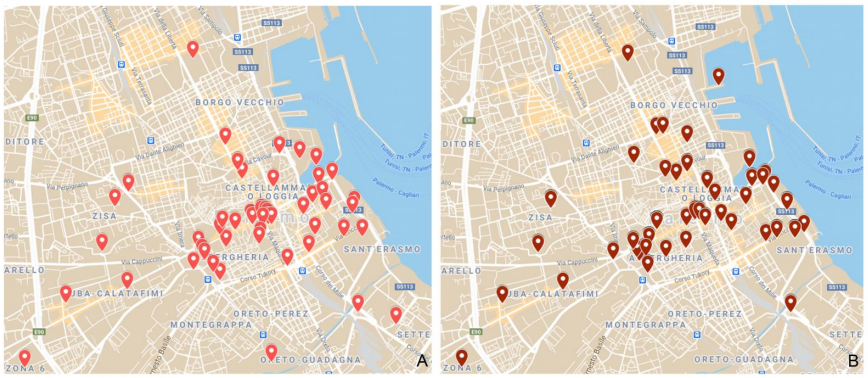
5a | R. Rive, n. 1627, *Palermo, veduta della Cattedrale*, Albumen print, 1868 ante, ENSBA Paris, inv. PC 4671-II-96 (photo by the author).
5b | E. Sevaistre, *Madri chiesa di Palermo*, Salted paper print, around 1860, Raccolte Grafiche e Fotografiche del Castello Sforzesco. Civico Archivio Fotografico di Milano, Fondo Lamberto Vitali, inv. LV 25/6.
5c | G. Sommer, n. 1319, *Palermo, Monte Pellegrino*, around 1860-1865, private collection (photo by the author).
5d | F. Pelos, n. 10, *Palermo, Porto (fatto nel 1563*), 1880s, private collection (photo by the author).

In some other cases they set a model in the illustration of a subject, like Sommer did with the cloister of Monreale Cathedral during his first campaign in October 1860, commissioned by Domenico Benedetto Gravina for the volume *Il Duomo di Monreale illustrato* (Gravina 1859-1869). His description of this space focused mostly on the decoration of colonnettes and capitals, photographing each one of them systematically with the same framing.

This approach influenced the work of local photographers and impacted on the development of comparative visual analysis of artworks (Dercks 2019, 36). After the 1880s, the introduction of new photographic and photomechanical processes allowed professional photographers to work more easily on a growing industrial scale and amateurs to practice photography, marking the surge of the real "massification" of photographic medium (Zannier [1988] 2007, 72). The proliferation of images between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, produced by both local and foreign amateurs and professional photographers, hinders any systematic study of their work on Sicily. However, to investigate the external gaze over Palermo, the present work focuses on its commercial aspect by analyzing stereoscopic photography: the most popular expression of the emerging voyeuristic desire of a broader public to discover the world in the comfort of their homes and the ideal medium that middle-classes used to know and describe themselves (Fiorentino 2007).

6 | Underwood & Underwood, *Mummies of old Sicilians that startle the visitor to the Cappuccini Convent*, Palermo, Sicily, (7) 8560, Silver Gelatin Print, 1906, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., inv. 2020684061 (Retrieved from the Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2020684061/).

Published before World War I to build an educational visual encyclopedia of the world, travel box sets developed by American stereoscopic companies, such as Underwood & Underwood – a company founded in Ottawa, Kansas in 1881 that became the largest publisher of stereoviews in the world (Hannavy 2008, 1417-1420) – and Stereo-Travel co. (Anselmo, La Cecla, Lo Dico 2008), were composed by views that could recreate an immersive experience of the journeys by using exactly the same viewpoints of tourists. Using the itineraries suggested by increasingly popular tourist guides as a reference, just like photographers like Sevaistre and Sommer did, The anonymous American photographers who produced the views of Palermo for collections used, like Sevaistre and Sommer, the itineraries suggested by the increasingly popular tourist guides as a reference, following a precise route. This was based on the main visual stereotypes of the city, including once again Monte Pellegrino, the city gates, the port, buildings of power, and the monuments of the Norman architecture that were especially important to the Sicilian identity. At the same time, they testified an ever-growing interest in the human aspect, depicting both the most 'folkloric' expressions of society, like the uncanny Cappuccini catacombs [Fig. 6], and the everyday life in the newly constructed spaces that benefited the industrial middle class. An exploration this large body of commercial photographs, taken between 1860 and 1910, suggests that those professionals internalized the former visual tradition to the point of exasperating it into stereotypes, which in some cases became identifying characters for locals.



7a | Points of interest in the center of Palermo selected in K. Baedeker, *Italy Handbook for travellers, Part III: Southern Italy, Sicily, The Lipari Islands*, Koblenz 1867 (created by the author with GoogleMyMaps 2020);
7b | Subjects of the center of Palermo included in the catalogues of E. Sevaistre, Gaudin Frères, G. E. Chauffourier, R.Rive, G. Sommer, Stereo-Travel co., Underwood & Underwood from 1860 to 1908 (created by the author with GoogleMyMaps 2020).

The present analysis also outlines that, while the first generation of photographers were driven by a desire to compose a complete inventory of Sicily's heritage, they progressively aligned their catalogues with the itineraries of tourist guides. This emerges in the case of Palermo by overlaying two maps showing the places of interest selected by the Baedeker guide of 1867 [Fig. 7a] and, in the second one, the locations of the subjects photographed by professionals between the late 19th and the early 20th centuries [Fig. 7b]. Their representations, however, involved also the social and urban transformation of the city, and thus explored a larger area, which was beyond the main street of the Cassaro and its surroundings.

The views of the city moved towards the backstreets and marketplaces in the historical quarter and up north, to Via della Libertà (compare map 1 and 7), where the emerging industrial bourgeoisie was building its new residential area along with its new icons, such as public parks and theaters [Fig. 8], the new temples of modernity presented with the same majesty of the cathedrals. On the other hand, photographers began to capture more peculiar subjects (like the Cappuccini Catacombs and the exotic Chinese Palace) and to also describe the life of inhabitants to satisfy the growing interest of the public in folklore and domestic customs.

8 | G. Sommer, *9030 Palermo Politeama*, Albumen Print, 1877 post, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg (MK&G), inv. P2015.2.11.

Conclusions

The above analysis shows that, in a period of extreme changes in the political and administrative systems, in the travel habits and in the urban layout, the photographic images of Palermo heritage taken by foreigners between 1840 and 1914 may have contributed in building the visual identity of the city. Like the other travelers, early travel photographers were attracted to Sicily mostly because of their common interest in ancient civilizations. But their pictures also show that they were attentive to the Norman art, following the new interest on Middle Ages culture that was widely developing together with the new medium. As recipients of the tradition of 18th century *vedute* and of the visual tradition of *voyages pittoresques*, these early photographers likely acted as a bridge between this culture and the one of local photographers, who entered in the market only some years after the Unification of the country. With its 'objective' vision and its new language, photography also pulled painters of the second half of 19th century, like Francesco Lojacono, Michele Catti, and

Antonio Leto, towards the use of a changing focus on perspective plans, influencing their choices of subjects and their way of framing the Sicilian natural and urban landscape (Miraglia 2005). Foreign photographers were the first capturing the battles for the Unification of Italy in 1860, and thus showed to the world an unusual Palermo, contributing to the construction of the first icons in the Risorgimento imagery. Their presence during this period likely allowed them to be visual agents of a new common image of Italy leaned on its cultural heritage.

After the 1870s, a new generation of local photographers raised and started to share the market with the foreigners, which lose their predominance. Nonetheless, the number of visitors in Sicily continuously increased, but most of them were international travelers relying on travel guides published abroad. Indirectly, this represented a continuum of foreign influence on the choice of subjects for souvenir photography.

As predictable, the foreign photography impact faded during the period of democratization of the medium, between late 19th and early 20th century, when local actors and new interests entered in the game. However, with the present study we tried to show that foreign stereographs of this period could exemplify a homologation process (Zannier 1997, 59) of Palermo image, that reflects a general trend in the representation of the Italian cities: a common consolidation of canonical cuts and frames that was linked to the diffusion of organized travel and, later, with the evolution of the tourism industry (Berrino 2001), that will take place in the whole country (even if at different speeds on a local level).

Notes

[1] In the list of subscribers of this work, we can see few of the most important names linked to the early history of photography, like Louis M. Daguerre and Paul Delaroche, enabling us to picture how those images were spreading through the small circle of Parisians photographers, hungry for exotic subjects.
[2] Around 1852 he published some of the 1.700 photographs taken during this tour, *Selections from Seventeen-Hundred Genuine Photographs: (Views – Portraits – Statuary – Antiquities) Taken around the Shores of the Mediterranean Between the Years 1846-1852, With, or Without, Notes, Historical and Descriptive by a Wayworn Wanderer.*
[3] Gally Knight' *Saracenic and Norman Remains to illustrate the 'Normans in Sicily'*

plates are available in MIT Libraries online collection. For the Cubula plate see n. 183788, and for the Cuba palace see n. 183789.
[4] Parisian photographer and inventor of the *papier ciré* process, he was traveling with Alexandre Dumas when the revolt started and they quickly join the Expedition in Palermo. The pictures he took some days after the battles are in Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Cabinet Estampes et Photographies, catalogue n. FRBNF40462979 (n.16-26). See Aubenas 2002; Longo 2010.
[5] This series can be found in the photographic collection of the Salinas archeological Museum of Palermo, in the *CRICD* (Centro Regionale per l'inventario, la catalogazione e la documentazione dei beni culturali della Regione Siciliana) and, together with his other Sicilian pictures, in the *Civico Archivio Fotografico di Milano.*
[6] Published by the German Karl Baedeker since the 1830s, those guides started to be really successful during the 1860s. The *Handbook for travellers* that included Sicily was first published in 1867 (Baedeker 1867) and had seventeen new editions until 1930.

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English abstract

When photography entered the scene in the mid-19th century, the representation of Sicily consisted largely of drawings, paintings, and written accounts that foreign travelers made during the previous century and, even after the diffusion of the new medium, the photographic description of the island was mostly left to them. The continuity of this 'external gaze' motivated the choice of an analysis aiming to explain its influence over the photographic image of Sicilian cities. Using Palermo as a case-study, this article investigates the relationship between the previous visual tradition and the repertories of foreign photographers. Its purpose is to understand how their description of the city evolved between the 19th and the early 20th century, and in what way their choices in subjects, cutting and framing influenced the construction of visual tropes.

keywords | photography; travel; Palermo.

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(v. Albo dei referee di Engramma)

Framing the 'delegated gaze'

Handbooks for travelers and the making of anthropological photography in Italy at the end of the 19th century

Agnese Ghezzi

Introduction

The technique of photography, the practice of observation, and the discipline of anthropology have always been tied together. When anthropology was first institutionalized as an academic field in the middle of the 19th century, the new scientific community had the need to define its scope, its boundaries, and its method. Observation and visualization emerged as crucial practices to address. However, in its first phase the discipline relied heavily upon documentation gathered by other people, as scholars very rarely carried out fieldwork and observations directly. In their place, there were travelers, meant broadly as people who could move to distant places: businesspeople, diplomats, navy and military officers, naturalists, explorers, and settlers, were just some of the categories that interacted with the new scientific category of the anthropologist. A separation of labour was in operation between the so-called 'armchair scholar' who analysed collections and produced theories in the metropolitan centres of knowledge and travelers who provided direct reports and gathered materials and photographs from the colonial periphery (see Kuklick, Kohler 1996; Edwards 2001). The very fact of 'being there' allowed travelers to testify to an external reality, inaccessible to others, that they should adequately observe and register. Precisely, the possibility to see was the key element around which the transfer of information originated, in an entangled relationship between traveling, seeing, and knowing. In the system of "epistolary ethnography" as George Stocking defined it (Stocking 1996, 16), the knowledge transfer had to be regulated in order to receive reliable and pertinent information: how could anthropologists trust the evidence provided by explorers and travelers? How could misrepresentation be avoided? How could reliable and standardized reports be obtained?

To gain control, guide and size the practical experience of the men on the spot, handbooks and instructions for travelers were published. As Paolo Mantegazza proposed

> In this way, […] without reading voluminous books, [the traveler] could discern, between the many things happening under his eyes, the important and new from the useless and ordinary and, without being himself an anthropologist, he could gather precious material for the science (Mantegazza 1875, 102)*.

This framing attempt will be at the core of the present article. In particular, I will consider the reference to observation and to photography in anthropological handbooks to detect if and how the gaze of travelers was directed toward portions of reality that were marked as relevant. The preeminent role of the sense of sight in the Western scientific tradition has been widely analyzed and this study seeks to address how the anthropological discipline was working within this eye-centered paradigm while dealing with the separation between direct observers and knowledge makers, leading to the creation of "delegated gaze" as Cosimo Chiarelli defined it (Chiarelli 2015, 15-18).

Travelers' guides had a long literary tradition and existed in many variations (see Urry 1972; Rubiés 1996, 2002; Blanckaert 1996). The main formats were three: the generic handbook for travelers, the discursive guide, and the questionnaire. The former contained an introduction to the topic and guidelines on how to conduct the research; guides often aimed to illustrate a specific territory; questionnaires contained a list of questions that highlighted features worth considering. In some cases, these three formats were combined; other times, instructions were explicitly written at the request of travelers who, before starting a trip, asked to scientific communities which aspects merited consideration. While acknowledging the connection with other European traditions, such as the renowned British Notes and Queries, I will use examples from the Italian case from the Unification to the beginning of the 20th century. This geographical and chronological choice allows me to illuminate new problems, looking specifically at the newly-founded scientific community within the newly-founded Italian state.

From the 1870s, many guides were published in Italy and used as models for other countries as well (see Puccini 1998; Collini, Vannoni 1997; Bossi, Greppi 2005). The author was rarely a single individual; scholars often designed these handbooks as team and they were frequently connected to a specific institution. Therefore, instructions can be considered direct emanations of the learned societies, providing an insight into the disciplinary agenda and demonstrating the attempt of building exclusive control over scientific authority. One of the first examples was the *Raccolta dei materiali per l'etnologia italiana*, published in 1871 by Paolo Mantegazza, Cesare Lombroso, Maurizio Arturo Zannetti. In 1873, Mantegazza, the Anglo-Italian Enrico Hillyer Giglioli, and the French Charles Letourneau published the *Istruzioni per lo studio della Psicologia comparata delle razze umane*. This work initiated a new approach in Italian anthropology, opening the disciplinary interest to the socio-psychological behavior of the civilization under analysis.

The first comprehensive text that includes anthropology among many other scientific disciplines can be considered the *Istruzioni scientifiche per viaggiatori*, curated by Arturo Issel, and published from 1874 to 1875 as articles in the *Rivista Marittima* and later, in 1881, in a single volume. For this collection, Giglioli and Zanetti wrote together a section dedicated to *Antropologia ed Etnologia*. In 1883 Mantegazza, Giglioli, Alexis Von Fricken, and Stephen Sommier made available the *Istruzioni Etnologiche per il viaggio dalla Lapponia al Caucaso dei soci Loria e Mochi*, an example of a guide written for a specific exploration campaign as an aid to the travelers Lamberto Loria and Aldobrandino Mochi. On the occasion of the General Exhibition held in Turin in 1884, Enrico Morselli developed a handbook for observations on Italian people. In 1887 an enquiry on superstition was launched by Mantegazza and Girolamo Donati. Moving explicitly to the African space, Mochi wrote *Alcune Istruzioni antropologiche per il Congo*, in 1903. The *Istruzioni per lo Studio della Colonia Eritrea*, in 1907, was a joint effort of the *Società di Studi Geografici e Coloniali* and the *Società di Antropologia ed Etnologia* and a clear example of the close connection between anthropology and colonialism. In the occasion of the 1911 Ethnographic Exhibition, Loria developed instructions for the so-called '*raccoglitori regionali*'.

In the article, I will use handbooks and methodological texts as sources to reflect upon the concept of cut and framing in different ways: what falls inside and outside of the disciplinary interest? Which strategies were put in place to direct the gaze of travelers? What was the role of photography in transferring visual knowledge? Can we see a call for standardization in the descriptive and representative forms? And what are the implications of this framing and cutting practice? With this analysis, I do not mean to prioritise the written sources over the visual one, but to provide a view on the theoretical background associated with the production of pictures. I do not conceive of these texts as the most relevant or diffused tools, but as the most explicit products of the specialists who were trying to promote standards and specific procedures over others, although travelers did not necessarily follow these standards successfully or intentionally.

Framing observation

"I am convinced that science enters through the eyes, and from there it becomes a mental vision; therefore it is easy to understand, through reading and figurative pictures, what did not pass through direct visual observation" (Sergi 1908, V). This quotation from the anthropologist Giuseppe Sergi puts forward two themes that will be at the core of the following paragraphs: the connection between seeing and science, and the role of pictures and texts as substitutes for direct observation. With the word "vision" Sergi refers here to three different actions: the act of seeing directly, the act of seeing through a picture, and the act of envisioning science mentally. In giving such importance to the visual domain, Sergi here spoke generically of science, but he is implicitly referring to anthropology. The statement further demonstrates how the discipline established observation as a critical epistemological practice. As Daston and Lunbeck analyzed, rather than being a naturalized act, "observation is a highly contrived and disciplined form of experience that requires training of the body and mind, material props, techniques of description and visualization, networks of communication and transmission, canons of evidence, and specialised forms of reasoning" (Daston, Lunbeck 2011, 3). An "army of amateur observers" (Daston, Lunbeck 2011, 4) was asked to provide the 'raw data' from which the theory could be built. The scientific community was drawing the line between professionals and amateurs, a line that fluctuated on the divide between collecting and ordering, gathering and interpreting, observing and structuring. Giglioli and Zanetti

insisted particularly on this point in their essay: "the traveler can only gather and preserve. Ordering a collection is like writing a book [...], and it requires a fixed dwelling, time, comfort, talent, and study" (Giglioli, Zanetti [1874] 1881, 323). The hierarchical distinction of roles proposed here separated collecting – the amateurs' duty – and ordering – the anthropologist's task: observation as a passive exercise was distinguished from theory making as an active practice.

Although depicted as a preliminary step, less relevant in comparison to conceptualization, observation was a fundamental phase. In order to be reliable, theories should be built on "a large number of precise facts, well-observed and well verified" (Mantegazza, Giglioli, Letourneau 1873, 317). Mantegazza saw anthropology as "a science of observation and experiment, like the other sister sciences" (Mantegazza 1871, 26) claiming to follow the scientific standard: "[Anthropology] describes what it found; it does not presume anything, it does not invent anything; it does not desire to find facts that conform to the theory, but it looks for the theory after having observed and enumerated the facts" (Mantegazza 1871, 19). If well conducted, as Mantegazza, Giglioli, and Letourneau said, the knowledge gained through someone else's observation could substitute direct observation: "Through observation, methodical and precise observation, we aim to get to see first-hand the moral and intellectual value of the diverse human groups, which constitute that diverse group named humanity" (Mantegazza, Giglioli, Letourneau 1873, 320). In another passage by Giglioli and Zanetti, the authors put together the practice of collecting and observing: "[a] well-made, well-preserved collection is like the journal of observation, like the group of witnesses for the prosecution and the defence that from the court of reason will be sued, to understand merits and errors of our theories" (Giglioli, Zanetti [1874] 1881, 318). Observation and collection both acted as 'witnesses' in favour or against anthropological theories. The legal metaphor is particularly interesting because it disclosed the connection between making knowledge and providing evidence. Moreover, the figure of the witness strongly related to the sense of sight. The witnesses were the men on the spot who should meticulously observe and register objects and details.

In the attempt to build a proper observational procedure, anthropology took inspiration from other sciences, but it was confronted with the field, a

space inherently characterized by ambiguities and unfixed rules, by presence and closeness: "[a]s an open space it is less easily defined, bounded, and policed than its intramural counterparts like the laboratory or the museum" (Livingstone 2003, 42). In Giglioli and Zanetti's text, in line with natural sciences, a proper distance between the observer and the observed (see Stocking 1983) was created by considering the latter as an animal, belonging to the natural world:

> The traveler who inspects the religion has to observe the savage as a naturalist who observes an animal and its customs. He must watch him when he lights a fire, or he gets close to it, when he does a vital action, when he is spectator of a great natural phenomenon, when he negotiates with the head of a tribe or with the physician, when he kills or breeds an animal, when he tries to foresee the future (Giglioli, Zanetti [1874] 1881, 325-326).

Directing the gaze to exterior qualities was seen as a possible strategy, rooted in an evolutionary paradigm that places human civilisation at different stages of progress in a linear chain that goes from the natural condition to the modern and cultured Western society. However, the multifaceted nature of human subjects and societies makes them intricate objects to isolate and record:

> We cannot measure, or express in numbers, all the things we observe. So we need to take note immediately on the spot, and not to write it by memory and after some time, because many things become confused and vanish in our mind, without even noticing it. The skin, the hair, the physiognomic traits are the things that strike the most the gaze of the observer (Giglioli, Zanetti [1874] 1881, 345).

Aware of the strong impressions left by physical elements on the observer, the authors suggested gaining control over these bodily characteristics through notes. Not surprisingly, the same features became the preferred target of the camera.

Indeed, a crucial characteristic that anthropology shared with medical and psychiatric sciences was that "the object of discourse may equally well be a subject, without the figures of objectivity being in any way altered" (Foucault [1963] 2003, XV). The complexity of human expressions and the

inaccessibility of the subject/object of study to the anthropologist's gaze required the creation of a new analytical system, to make sense of what Mantegazza called "[the] twist of animal and divine elements, that confuse at first glance the eye of the observer; but that then decrease to infinite variety of measure and form, that is all blended in only one unity, the human type" (Mantegazza 1871, 24). While grounding their approach on psychology, Mantegazza, Giglioli and Letourneau adapted it and proposed a method of external observation:

> Our Psychology is Anthropological Psychology, objective Psychology […] It is clear that […] we cannot use the internal and subjective observation, usually employed by most psychologists in Europe […]. The psychological method of the 'I' that looks inward, is hardly applicable to the redskin native, the negro of Africa, the Papua, the Australian etc. Here only one thing can be observed: the external and apparent act, actions and works (Mantegazza, Giglioli, Letourneau 1873, 316-317).

Here the authors differentiated between the treatment of Western people and those coming from the colonial space – labelled with racist terminologies – whose interiority was considered inaccessible. The authors devised the possibility of dealing with excess by limiting the attention to external acts that could be more easily translated into facts to be analyzed. Rather than a subjective approach, based on interpersonal dialogue and interior examination, the authors opted for an objectifying/ objective strategy. In such an effort to grasp objectively what was labelled as the 'physical' and the 'moral' character of 'human civilizations', anthropologist saw in photography a possible ally.

Framing photography

As Christopher Pinney and others have argued, photography and anthropology developed along parallel paths (see Pinney 1992, Edwards, Morton 2009). The Italian history of such parallel growth has to be shifted some twenty years from the British one, when institutions, such as museums and learned societies, developed from the central state – strengthening scientific communities, launching projects and publications, and proposing guidelines. The following paragraphs considers the rhetorical discourses produced around the use of photography in anthropology, as a way to show how the imagined possibilities offered by

the medium modified the language of the discipline, which was so profoundly rooted in visuality.

Photography served the anthropological discipline because it was believed to "close the space between the site of observation of the colonial periphery and the site of metropolitan interpretation" (Edwards 2010, 31-32), creating "immutable mobiles" (Latour 1986, 7) "through which information could be transferred in uncorrupted form to another interpretative space" (Edwards 2000, 31-32). The promise of a visual linear exchange, without any loss of information in the transfer, was combined with a discipline based upon indirect observation. Anthropological handbooks, therefore, boosted the positivist confidence in photography as a means of reproduction of the external reality. When the objects' materiality clashed with the anthropologist's aspiration to possess, photographs were perceived as useful substitutes that allowed the creation of another kind of collection, a visual one: "drawings, the art of shaping, and especially photography, will compensate the difficulty in collecting" (Giglioli, Zanetti [1874] 1881, 358). The authors here mentioned photography and stressed its adoption as an essential element in the procedural standard, highlighting particularly its reproductive supremacy and its cataloguing function as a recorder of objects (see Edwards, Morton 2015).

However, pictures were not merely illustrations, but active objects in the making of scientific knowledge (see Bredekamp, Dünkel, Schneider 2015). In this regard, even before anthropology was formally established in Italy, Mantegazza perceived a problematic representational gap in comparison with other sciences:

> There are animal and botanical iconographies that can be considered works of art; but there is not yet a human iconography that could make the synthesis between the studies of men of letters who, unaware of anatomy, take the only path of linguistics and history and that of doctors who, worshippers of raw and nude material, struggle to make ethnography on skulls, skin and hair (Mantegazza 1853, 302).

The issue of a "synthesis" between the scientific and the humanistic domain was at stake. The form of the atlas was used as the model, capable

of being scientifically accurate, aesthetically fulfilling, and stimulating for the men of letters. As Daston and Galison have shown, atlases represented very specific objects of scientific dissemination, that

> have served to train the eye of the novice and calibrate that of the old hand. They teach how to see the essential and overlook the incidental, which objects are typical and which are anomalous, what the range and limits of variability in nature are. Without them, every student of nature would have to start from scratch to learn to see, select, and sort (Daston, Galison 2007, 26).

Pictures perfectly served as instructors of the eye, because they showed what the object of study was, using stylistic and technical methodologies to isolate it.

As already mentioned, the human element, physically revealed in men's and women's bodily presence, constituted the primary object of anthropology. Interestingly, the Italian anthropological community used the categories of "artistic" and "scientific" photography to indicate the two kind of visualization modes necessary to the discipline. Giglioli and Zanetti introduced this distinction in the chapter of the *Istruzioni* edited by Issel. By "scientific" they meant anthropometric portrait: "the man must be photographed in front and profile, in the position that we have recommended for measurements"(Giglioli, Zanetti [1874] 1881, 350). Thirty-six bodily measurements were indicated by the authors and should be combined with personal as well as geographical information. Through standard postures, anthropometric photography should ideally produce a set of comparable visual data. This kind of representation enabled, in the positivistic conception, the possibility to assess the belonging of a specific race and to theorise related hierarchy, influences, and affiliation.

The opportunity to extrapolate numerical and comparable information from a series of pictures of human bodies was related to an iconographic protocol that produced not the representation of an individual body but a general image of a 'type', intended as an average representation of a given group.

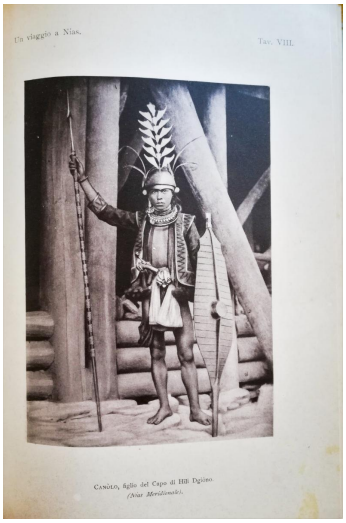
The qualities of typological representation objectified the subjects of the pictures and inserted them in a series with the aim of classification. Front and profile view, naked body, the adoption of specific postures, the use of neutral background were all devices introduced in the anthropological field to develop standardized and measurable pictures. One of the first to propose a protocol was the Englishman John Lamprey in 1864, based on the use of a black and white grid; another example was Huxley's proposal, based on the use of a white neutralising background and a measuring stick (see Ellenbogen 2012).

1 | Paolo Mantegazza and Stephen Sommier, *Lars Nilsen Hotti, età 58, da Karasuando – Lars Hendriksen Valkiapaa, età 25*, albumen prints, in *Studii antropologici sui lapponi*, Firenze: coi tipi dell'Arte della stampa, 1880, fig. XXXIV. Biblioteca dell'Orto Botanico dell'Università degli Studi di Padova.

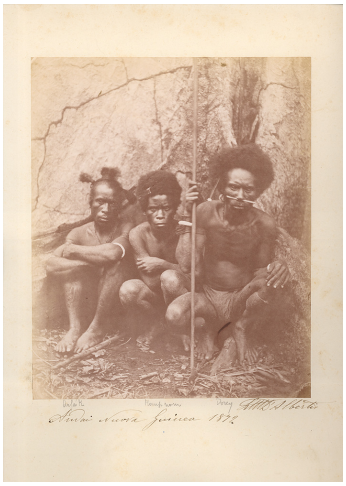
Enrico Morselli—curator of the anthropological section of the 1884 *Esposizione Generale Italiana* in Turin—gave further indications for the scientific representation of the human body, enlarging Giglioli and Zanetti's definition:

> We recall here the scientific utility of photography and we remember how to proceed to photograph a man scientifically. From the anthropological point of view, the man has to be portrayed in front and profile, in size big enough so that light can capture every detail of the physiognomy. The individual should be erect, with the arms tight to the body, one leaning to the hip and with the palm on the thigh, the other with the forearm bent and the hand on the chest with the fingers slightly open. Both in front and profile, you should try to put the head on the horizontal line of the gaze (Morselli 1884, 128).

The anthropometric representation was strongly connected to issue of measurability but, notwithstanding the widespread attempt in the creation of a



2 | Elio Modigliani, *Canolo, figlio del capo di Hili Dgiono (Nias Meridionale)*, engraving, in *Un viaggio a Nias*, Milano: Treves, 1890, fig. VIII.



3 | Luigi Maria D'Albertis, *Arfak – […] – Dorey – Andai Nuova Guinea, 1872 – LMD'Albertis*, albumen print, Collection Luigi Maria D'Albertis, Inv. F63, Castello D'Albertis Museo delle Culture del Mondo.

typological human iconography, the "pursuit of method" (Edwards 1990) was manifold and plural. Visual protocols crossed national boundaries, but they also encountered local traditions and practical variations. Therefore, despite the unifying presumption and the strong framing attempt that accompanied such photographic representation – only meaningful when it adopts the same structure providing comparable data – the archival research reveals a non-unified employment of several anthropometric techniques [Fig. 1]. The written sources give an insight into the active concern of anthropologists towards a systematic use of the photographic tool, a theoretical desire that was not paired with the practical results.

After having delineated the correct method for a scientific depiction of the human bodies, Giglioli and Zanetti called for another representational intention in their chapters: "To this kind of scientific photography it should be added an artistic one that gives the natural behaviour, the personality of the individuals and the race" (Giglioli, Zanetti [1874] 1881, 338). Interestingly, the authors here distinguished clearly between photographs made to measure the anatomical features of the body and photographs made to understand what they call the "natural behaviour" of both the single individual and the racial group. The subject should appear at the same time as an individual (therefore in its exceptional character) and

as racial type (therefore presenting, as an exemplary member, the features shared with the group).

Enrico Morselli also reframed this definition:

> To scientific pictures, it would be useful to add artistic ones, namely taken with the natural and free attitude of the portrayed subjects, possibly in their traditional costumes or surrounded by tools and utensils typical of their region and their social class (Morselli 1884, 125-126).

Quoting from Giglioli and Zanetti, Morselli removed the allusion to race (as he was referring just to one ethnic group, the Italian population), adding instead a reference to traditional costumes and objects as well as to class and regional belonging. The picture could therefore serve to condense the individual in his or her physical, cultural and social features. This tendency echoed the agenda presented by Mantegazza, Giglioli and Letourneau in 1873, according to whom "[a]nthropology without abandoning compass and scale, without neglecting [human] morphology, had to force itself in showing the acting, thinking and living man" (Mantegazza, Giglioli and Letourneau 1873, 320-321).

Anthropologists, unsatisfied with a purely scientific and anthropometric representation, sought in artistic photographs additional information on the context, the environment, the activities of human groups and individuals. The photographer's cut should focus on factors able to reveal what would be later called the 'material culture' of a given society, an interest that at the end of the 19th century began to concern all European and North American anthropologists. In the British debate for example, Everard im Thurn in 1893 criticised anthropometric photography, arguing that people should "be more accurately measured and photographed for such purposes dead than alive", calling for a depiction of subjects as "living beings" (im Thurn 1893, 184). In Italy, instead, the two representational modes existed in parallel. What is interesting to notice are the words selected and the different implications they opened. Im Thurn referred to "naturalistic photography", having in mind the possibility of direct access to the external reality. Instead, Italian anthropologists used the word "artistic", an adjective that explicitly pointed to a subjective dimension, opposite to a naturalistic and objective

view. Therefore, it could be interpreted as an awareness of personal intervention in the representational system. However, even the artistic depiction should follow "procedural correctness" to assure its validity (Edwards 2016, 94).

If the aspiration for a documentary style and an authentic representation gleamed from this definition, this framing exercise appears as artificial as anthropometry, inasmuch as it required a similar isolating performance. In anthropometry the human body was shown with a logic of excluding/removing disturbing influences (see Poole 2005), while in artistic photographs the person was immersed within the most typical objects and garments, in a logic of inclusion/addition.

The sitter should be surrounded by and dressed with all sorts of elements, implying strong intentionality on the photographer's side, that developed a condensed, powerfully staged and constructed depiction. The 'typicality' of the surrounding elements was often exaggerated, leading to the creation of stereotypical representation [Fig. 2 and Fig. 3]. In this sense, artistic photography can be seen as a reinterpretation of the anthropometric images in relation to cultural elements. As scientific pictures should make visible the racial type, and present a set of stylistic and technical elements that make it unequivocal, so artistic images should make visible the cultural type.

Conclusions. Framing anthropology

The distinction between scientific and artistic photography reveals the inherent duality of anthropology, summed up by Mantegazza in a fascinating quotation "[the] anthropologist [must] be at once naturalist and psychologist" (Mantegazza 1871, 25). The naturalist looked for measurable and objective data in the outer world, while the psychologist investigated personal and internal experiences. Mainly the discipline oscillated between two options: treating humans as specimens and ordering them in taxonomy or studying men as living beings in their complex social relationships. Throughout this closing section, I want to show how the anthropological discipline moved along this borderline, taking inspiration from both natural and human sciences, using them not as opposed and self-excluding areas but as two fields of knowledge in the making.

The capacity to register and put in relation measurable and unmeasurable features, to observe bringing together a naturalistic and psychological approach, was not only a matter of particular concern in the Instructions for travelers but a central methodological issue for the discipline's structure. In the struggle between what we would call today quantitative and qualitative data, a reflection by Carlo Ginzburg could be useful: "the inability to quantify stemmed from the impossibility of eliminating the qualitative, the individual; and the impossibility of eliminating the individual resulted from the fact that the human eye is more sensitive to even slight differences between human beings than it is to differences between rocks or leaves" (Ginzburg 1980, 21). Worried about the limitations of an anthropological science only concerned only with numerable records, Mantegazza made clear that in his view the scope of the discipline was not only naturalistic and anthropometric:

> If anthropology, in its first years of life, dealt more with the skull than with the thought, more with the races than with the comparative psychology of the human family, that is because it had to start from what is most comfortable to be studied, measured, weighed, following the same path of the sister sciences, and it had to move from the accessible and known to the complex and unknown (Mantegazza 1871, 19-20).

If to a certain extent a "botanical model" (Foucault [1963] 2003, 6) was hoped for, due to its rigid and unmistakable ordering structure, it was also rejected:

> [Anthropology] has to pass from the static to the dynamic period, since anthropologists would not indefinitely want to limit themselves to classify men, as botanist classify plants in his herbarium (Mantegazza, Giglioli, Leatourneau 1873, 320).

Firmly rooted in medical knowledge, anthropology was moving on the line between what Ginzburg called an anatomical/naturalist model and a conjectural/semiotic model. The former aimed at obtaining generalised and standard knowledge by looking at the shared and countable characteristics, while the latter concentrated on particular details and was based on the idea that "nothing differs more from a man than a man"

(Mantegazza 1871, 22). Such parallel paths, modes of observation and systems of knowledge also impacted on the definition of its visual tools.

The concepts of cut and framing provide useful lenses of analysis to study the origin of anthropology: from a discursive point of view, they allow to consider the definition of the disciplinary scope and the creation of boundaries between scholars and amateurs, theories and practices. These categories become particularly useful to analyse how direct observation was delegated to non-experts, and how their gaze was guided in the description of the field. In the regulation of this urgent matter, photography was promoted as the perfect medium. However, its indexical power had to be sized, to assure the correctness and pertinency of the resulting visual information. The request for artistic and scientific pictures reflect the double identity of anthropology, split between the scientific/ anthropometric/naturalistic method, and the artistic/cultural/ psychological approach. This article elaborates on this Janus-faced nature, showing how the discipline became a contested space for experimentation and visualization at the crossroad of natural and human sciences.

*All quotations from primary sources in the text have been translated from Italian by the author.

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English abstract

This article analyzes the role that observations had in anthropological practice at the end of the 19th century and considers how Italian anthropology at its origin framed it through textual discourses, handbooks and instructions produced at the end of the 19th century. In these sources we can detect the attempt to guide the gaze of travelers and observers on the spot, in order to ensure the reliability of the information received and, consequently, of the making of science. The investigation connects the practice of observation with photography, to see which form of representation were promoted and how the medium was associated with the anthropological discipline. In particular, the demand for "scientific" and "artistic" photographs is analysed as a distinction strongly connected to the way anthropology conceived itself.

keywords | anthropology; photography; objectivity; observation; travel

La Redazione di Engramma è grata ai colleghi – amici e studiosi – che, seguendo la procedura peer review a doppio cieco, hanno sottoposto a lettura, revisione e giudizio questo saggio.
(v. Albo dei referee di Engramma)

Chronophotography as an archive

The dialogue between the physiologist and the artist in Le Mouvement by Étienne-Jules Marey (1894)

Linda Bertelli*

Scenes from a Marriage

Between the 19th and 20th centuries, the questions of the relationship between photography and art and, more specifically, of identifying the criteria according to which photography could be considered an art, were the focus of broad debates on the status that should be attributed to this new technology with respect to other, already recognised ones. From its very first steps, there were tensions and resistance around integrating photography into the repertoire of the arts, as the case of Daguerre strikingly exemplifies. In 1839, the inventor of photography was awarded the Legion of Honour by Louis-Philippe, but neither the French nor the English Academy (the American Academy being an exception) gave him any recognition and indeed this lack of recognition illustrates the general refusal to grant photography the status of art. However, it was in the 1850s and 1860s that the diatribe erupted in full and in various guises, perhaps the best known and most effective of which was a court case. The trial held in France in 1861-1862 involved three photographic studios, Mayer et Pierson as plaintiffs and Thiébault et Betbéder and Schwabbé as defendants. The former studio accused the latter ones of illegally copying the photographic portraits of some eminent personalities, portraits over which it claimed ownership. The Tribunal Correctionnel de la Seine ruled against the plaintiffs in the first instance, but the Cour de Paris overturned the judgment, ruling that photography was a form of art and, as such, protected by the same legal system as other arts. In the autumn of that same year, a petition, signed first by Ingres along with many other artists, was submitted to the Court in opposition to the April decision. However, the Cassation ruled against the petition, thereby confirming the previous decision (see McCauley 2008). It was thus through the courts that photography became to be recognised as an art.

As mentioned, however, the struggle to secure photography official recognition as art had been waged in the previous decade by the photographers of the Pictorialist movement. Their photographs began to be exhibited in galleries, the authors participated in competitions and contests, and specialised magazines published formal and stylistic analyses of the characteristics and compositional concepts of these images alongside articles on procedures and technologies. The use of gum bichromate printing also made it possible to produce scratched images that looked like the grain of a canvas. One of the consequences of this stream of claims was that many art critics and artists began to perceive photography as a threat, viewing it as the cause of a decline in taste. The most widespread criticism and accusation levelled against photography as an art form took on the tone and content of the criticism already formulated and directed against the pictorial current of realism in the name of safeguarding neo-classical art. For their part, the photographers, especially the pictorialists along with the critics supporting them, took action in an attempt to assert the artistic nature of photography.

From its foundation in 1854, for example, the Société française de Photographie worked toward this aim. The following year, the Society took advantage of a dispute between Gustave Courbet and the organisers of the Universal Exhibition in Paris. To protest against the exclusion of his painting *L'atélier d'artiste* from the Salon for being too "realist", Courbet opened a personal retrospective (the well-known Pavillon du Réalisme); he had this new space specially built opposite the Exhibition's Palais de l'Industrie. A few months later, from 1 August to 15 November 1855, the Société française de Photographie organised the first Salon of photography, a major exhibition aimed at overcoming the official Salon's resistance to exhibiting photographic works. In 1859, the organization succeeded in having a second show authorised in the same Palais de l'Industrie. Whereas Courbet intended to stigmatise the jury's choices, however, the exhibition organised by the Société had set itself the objective of emancipating photography from the sole function of serving as an instrument for producing realistic images.

In his review of the 1859 Salon, Charles Baudelaire reserved a scathing judgment for photography, framing its lack of spirituality the ultimate criterion for distinguishing what is art from what is not. This argument

appeared recurrently in the discourse of its photography's detractors, convinced as they were that the spiritual value of art is revealed in the artist's authorship and creativity [1] (see Baudelaire 1859 [2004], 220. See also Frizot 1983; Laforgue 2000, 108 ff.; Roubert 2000, 143 ff). As an automatic image, photography lacks these characteristics; since it even succeeds in rendering visible real elements that are not perceptible to the naked eye it constitutes, on the contrary, the highest model of a truth of representation that is identified with the exactness of the imitation of nature. The critique of realism in painting deployed this same polemical theme and even exploited the analogy with photography. According to this critique, indeed, the alleged lack of spirituality in realist painting derived from the fact that such pictorial images were constructed as analogues of photography. Photography was thus viewed with suspicion or even contempt in the critique of realist painting as well, as the material starting point of the work. On the one hand, therefore, photography attempted to position itself as an independent art in the same way as the other arts. On the other hand, its role of supporting arts with guaranteed status, such as painting and sculpture, was initially encouraged with a view to commercialising and disseminating the new photographic technique; later, however, critics of the time who took a stand even against realism in painting, blamed this role for making artists mere copyists of the photographic image or even held it up as an indication of their laziness or a true corruption of art.

It was within this lively framework that the work of the father of chronophotography, the French physiologist Étienne-Jules Marey (1830-1904), was positioned. Indeed, Marey's most relevant text, entitled Le Mouvement (1894), explores how to represent movement in accuracy without seeking to change this division of the field because, for him, photography was a support for the figurative arts. In other words, Marey recognised photography as having a certain position and function of instrumentally employing the boundary thus defined between art and photography in relation to physiology. Marey also followed a traditional approach: the documentary value characterising the photographic image – and snapshot in particular – irretrievably distances it from the status of art form. This documentary value derives from the automaticity of the technology used to produce photographic images, a quality that in turn makes it possible to show the world without interference from the

producer. However, photography's ability to record reality transparently gives it the role of aiding the figurative arts, an argument that had been in vogue since the 1839 popularisation of the daguerreotype. Notwithstanding the many cautions that run through Marey's work and specifically his declared refusal to deal with aesthetic themes, he does observe that the decisive impact of photography's use on painting and sculpture is clear from even a superficial analysis of the artistic practices of those years. Marey was convinced that the possibility of transferring the capacities and potentialities of another medium, i.e. photography, to traditional media such as painting and sculpture would bring about a change in style and, above all, a change in practices of artistic creation; such a shift would, he argued, contribute to the reformulation of aesthetic canons.

The technological development of photography also played a decisive role. In fact, in the years immediately following the appearance of the daguerreotype and calotype, portraiture and landscape painting were affected by the repercussions of this new type of images, as already mentioned. Photographic techniques and typologies proliferated and developed, undergoing a particular boom from the 1850s onwards, and this evolution was intertwined in an increasingly complex debate the main theme of which was photography's mimetic capacity and, therefore, how to define the status of realism. More precisely, one issue that proved particularly relevant was photography's alleged ability to represent movement in snapshots. In Le Mouvement, Marey explores the hypothesis that instantaneous photography could produce a mechanical optical truth that, by recording phenomena which are impossible to grasp with the naked eye, occupies a position of pre-eminence with respect to physiological optical truth. Artists should therefore make use of photography, he suggested, because it allows a degree of naturalism and image-correctness that is unattainable through sensory perception alone.

Chronophotography as a catalogue of images

Marey's position on the question of the art-photography relationship is thus clear, especially if we read it in the context of the general debate – only barely sketched out, above – the elements of which had all already emerged and been settled in the central years of Marey's activity, between the mid-1880s and the 1890s (see Bertelli 2019; Braun 1992). Some of the most recurrent arguments were therefore reworked by Marey in the book that constitutes a summary of all the research he had conducted to date, Le Mouvement, and the book in turn provides a sounding board for those same arguments, given that in the meantime the scientist had risen to a position of cultural prominence. Le Mouvement states that the usefulness of the chronophotographic technique lies in the way it generates a repertoire of images from among which artists can choose the most appropriate one for the movement they intend to represent. According to Marey, both types of chronophotography (fixed-plate and moving-plate) lend themselves to this purpose, although for different reasons: while fixed-plate pictures more precisely represent moments of transition from one pose to another, moving-plate pictures offer a greater variety in the representation of poses (see Marey 1894, 181) [2].

On the one hand, therefore, Marey believed that the photographic image, given what he saw as its unquestionable adherence to the object, could act as an inescapable check on the degree of naturalism of the painting or sculpture (naturalism which Marey evidently considered to be the objective of art); on the other hand, however, he recognised artists as having the active, creative role of selecting the material without which the work, as a work of art, could not be produced. With this method – Marey observed – the laws of aesthetics would be respected and, at the same time, artists will would have at their disposal a wider variety of poses on which to draw for their representational choices.

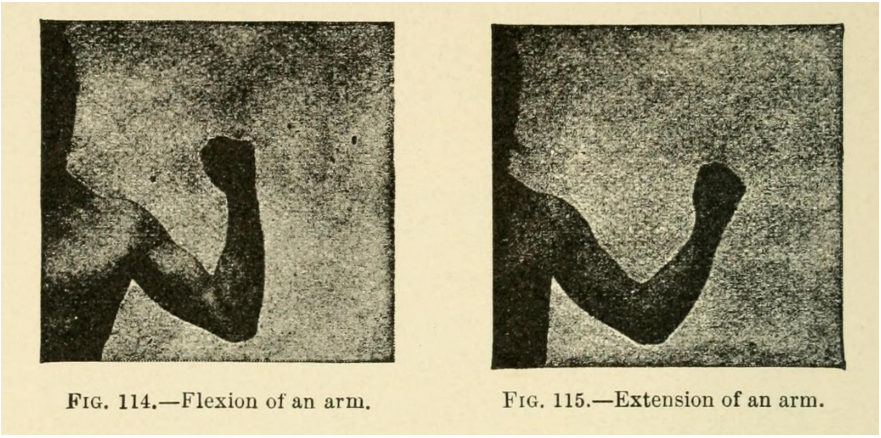

FIG. 114.—Flexion of an arm.

FIG. 115.—Extension of an arm.

1 | Movement (1895) by E.J. Marey; translated by Eric Pritchard, p. 174 (Courtesy of Biodiversity Heritage Library).

In other words, Marey believed the photographic image was capable of faithfully recording the action of the muscles the different contours of which, visible under the skin, express muscular contraction or relaxation. Contraction and relaxation (i.e. the qualities that cause muscles to take on different appearances according to the gesture that is being performed) are linked by relations that are necessary for each phase of movement: when moving, Marey suggested, the muscles of the body have specific expressions exactly analogous to those produced by the muscles of the face, expressions to which we are accustomed to assign particular and precise meanings (see Marey 1894, 169) [3].

If analysed in detail, the specific form of the different muscles in action that make up a pose or gesture also constitutes the model or scheme for artists' representation of movement: this aspect not only translates the single gesture to which it corresponds, as we shall see, but also allows us to understand the movement, the action, in its entirety. Marey referred here to the work of Georges Demeny, who was also his assistant at the Station Physiologique for the chronophotographic study of the movements of fencers and boxers (see Demeny 1890; Demeny 1891b; Demeny 1891c), and gives, among others, the example of two images both depicting an arm bent in the same position [Fig. 1]. On closer scrutiny (which is relatively easy to do with photography, according to Marey), however, it is possible to see a different relationship between contraction

and relaxation in the two pictures. These are, therefore, two distinct muscular physiognomies to which two different movements necessarily correspond:

> [...] l'expression des reliefs musculaires pour une même attitude est différente suivant la nature de l'acte qui l'a produite. Ainsi les figures 119 e 120 [Fig. 1, where the nr. of the figures corresponds to the English edition] représentent toutes deux un bras demi-fléchi, mais sur la première le relief du biceps (muscle fléchisseur) montre que c'est la flexion qui est en train de s'opérer. Sur la seconde c'est le triceps (extenseur) qui a le plus de relief, tandis que le biceps est affaissé: l'attitude représentée correspond donc à une phase de l'extension du membre (Marey 1894, 169-170).

> [...] the expression of the muscular contours for the same attitude varies according to the nature of the act which produced it. Thus Figs. 114 and 115 both represent a semi-flexed arm, but in the first the contour of the biceps (flexor muscle) shows that a movement of flexion is in the process of being produced. In the second, it is the triceps (extensor muscle) which stands out most markedly, while the biceps is flattened: the attitude here represented corresponds to a phase in the extension of the limb (Marey 1895, 173-174. Slightly modified translation). [4]

The gesture thus possesses its own morphology. If through photography and the gaze of the scientist who must necessarily rest on it in order to understand it these specific traits can be recognised, moreover, it is also possible, as well as desirable, for artists to learn to integrate the specific traits (and those traits alone) of the gesture they intend to represent into their works, so as to render it adequately.

However, the excerpt of Marey's argument quoted just above also contains a further element: the movement of the limb, if correctly analysed (and such analytical correctness depends on chronophotographic technology), corresponds to a precise series of signs. On the basis of an analysis of these signs, i.e. the stable characteristics of the muscular forms, an observer can recognise and refer to only one specific action. The form of the individual muscles, their function in the articulation of the gesture and their use within the action are not, for Marey, separate elements; they necessarily refer to each other.

It is because of this invariance in the muscular expression of each gesture, visible thanks to the chronophotographic technique, that a taxonomy and atlas of gestures can be constructed in order to correctly represent each action. Each gesture therefore also has a physiognomy (a form that the expert gaze perceives as an ordered set of signs): while it is true that this form is not the reflection of an inner quality (as asserted in the classic example of physiognomic theories about the relationship between facial expression and emotion), it nevertheless refers to an invisible element, i.e. the complete action, that is virtually contained in the gesture.

If each and any attitude expressed by specific muscular contours can only correspond to the phase of a specific action, therefore, accounting for such differences, even minimal ones, in muscular morphology would be equivalent, for artists, to the opportunity to represent, in a single gesture reproduced in its "physiological exactness" (Marey 1894, 173), not only position but also direction and, therefore, the action as a whole. It is also by virtue of this relationship between muscular contours and the phase of the action that observers may imagine the completion of the action (and thus understand its intention) despite the fact that only a single gesture is being represented. Although not explicitly expressed, it is clear from this passage of Marey's work that sight constitutes the dominant supporting sense of anatomical knowledge. At the same time, the idea of the pre-eminence of the camera's mechanical perception over human vision also comes to the fore, thereby fulfilling the dream hatched by physiologists at the beginning of the century (and simultaneously leaving them high and dry): to make the invisible visible. The photographic plate and the images that could be achieved with chronophotographic technology are presented as the materialisation of the description of the anatomical gaze with which François Xavier Bichat inaugurated, almost a hundred years earlier, a century of research into the visible signs of that which inevitably escapes perception:

> Pour eux – Bichat is referring here to the 'new' surgeons – tout est presque considération de forme, de granderur, de position, de direction. C'est une image qu'ils se peignent, plutôt que des choses qu'ils apprennent. Ils doivent plus voir que méditer, pénétrer la profondeur moins que s'arrêter aux surfaces; et leur but est attaintatteint, lorsque les opaques enveloppes qui couvrent nos parties, ne font plus à leurs yeux exercés, qu'un voile

transparent qui en laisse à déècouvert l'ensemble et les rapports (Bichat 1798, 101-112. See also Foucault 1963).

For them – Bichat is referring here to the 'new' surgeons – everything is almost a consideration of form, size, position, direction. It is an image they paint for themselves, rather than things they learn. They must see more than meditate, penetrate the depths less than stop at the surfaces; and their goal is attained when the opaque envelopes that cover our parts is, in their trained eyes, nothing but a transparent veil that leaves the whole and the relationships revealed.

The most effective portrayal of movement as a whole, in its entirety, is achieved through the use of a single instant pose, the result of an analytical method and the new photographic technology; it does not, for example, lie in the out-of-focus style of certain Impressionist paintings, such as Monet's Boulevard des Capucines, that was becoming more common in that period. It is precisely this recourse to the instantaneous pose as an auxiliary element of art that allows us to recognise an affinity between Eadweard Muybridge's research (see Muybridge 1899. See also Braun 2010) and that of Marey and Demeny. Their work can be seen as proximate even though the former dedicated himself to analysing movement through images of single positions which, viewed as a whole, could be used to synthetically reconstruct the continuity of movement, and the latter ones attempted to do the exact opposite, that is, to produce an analysis of movement within a single image, each segment of which can be taken separately as an aid for the artistic process.

2 | André Adolphe-Eugène Disdéri (French, 1819-1889), *Les Jambes de l'opera*, about 1862; Albumen silver; object No. 84.XD.428.12 from Getty Images.

The revisitation of Marey's work by the avant-garde movements of the early 20th century, as well as the reference to his research that appeared, a few years earlier, in the texts of Paul Souriau (see Souriau 1889; Souriau 1893), instead overturn its intended influence on artistic production. As can easily be seen in works such as Duchamp's *Nu descendant un escalier n. 2* (1912), Marey's representational mode was borrowed in its entirety, as these artists saw the sequence as an innovative form of expression of the body's movement in space. This literal interpretation of Marey's iconography, specifically the importance attributed to the image as a whole (and not to the representation of the sections of movement) actually runs counter to his own aims, therefore, and in so doing chronophotography was relocated out of its primary scientific field completely. Certainly, this subversion of the use of the image derives from an aesthetic dimension of Marey's images and, at the same time, enables viewers to recognise this dimension [5].

According to Marey, photography in its range of varying poses and actions for representing bodies offers an alternative to the forms and models established by the classical tradition. In making this argument Marey cites the way artists, and painters in particular, from the 1860s onwards, used the carte-de-visite photography patented by André-Adolphe-Eugène Disdèri in 1854 as a repertoire for their works. In many cases, in fact, these images were produced as series in which the same figure or type of subject was depicted in a wide range of poses, sometimes cropped as a single pose and at other times assembled together (see, for example, E. Disdèri, *Les Jambes de l'Opéra* [Fig. 2]).

Choosing the photographic image as a reference thus allows artists to avoid repetitiveness and monotony in their representations, i.e. to prevent a "canon des attitudes" ("canon of attitudes") being added "à celui des proportions du corps" ("to that of the anatomical proportions") (Marey 1894, 174; Marey 1895, 179. Modified translation). This passage of Marey's argument certainly deserves a more in-depth analysis. Indeed it forms part of the history, mentioned at the beginning of this essay, of the accusation levelled by some art critics since the 1860s blaming photography for leading artists to a homogeneity of style that was absolutely ruinous for their individual creativity. Marey was opposed to this perspective.

In his hypothesis, photography has the advantage of being able to show every minute detail of the depicted object, every inevitable prosaicity of real life complete with its apparently defective proportions and gross defects and, therefore, of potentially multiplying the possibilities of representation, since "[l]e laid ne sarait-il que l'inconnu" ("the ugly is only the unknown") (Marey 1894, 179; Marey 1895, 183). The tendency to converge on specific representations was apparently unlikely (a judgement with which, moreover, Eadweard Muybridge's photographic images of the equine gallop presented a few years earlier were also accepted) and depends only on the "éducation de l'oeil" ("education of the eye") (Marey 1894, 179; Marey 1895, 183), that is, the possibility of integrating specific representations into our familiar visual economy over time. Marey's images are thus twofold: on the one hand they are integrated elements of experimental demonstration, and on the other they serve as aids for the communication and transmission of that same experimental knowledge. It is interesting to note that this education was understood as general and common, concerning not only the scientist's gaze (on which the model of correct observation is built), but also that of the artist and the spectator.

*I would like to thank Angelina Zontine for the accurate proofreading.

Notes

[1] For Baudelaire, the attack on photography served to denounce the blind trust that the Salon public placed in nature and the consequent belief that the imitation of nature constituted the ultimate goal of art. Baudelaire defended the role of

imagination, a central element to his philosophy of art, in open contrast to the idea of art as an imitation of nature. The bibliography on this subject is now extremely copious.
[2] For a detailed analysis of the different photographic and chronophotographic techniques used by Marey, see Braun 1992.
[3] While it is true that Marey was interested in chronophotographic representations of facial expressions in order to understand the physiognomic characteristics correlated with different emotions (following a path already traced by the experiments of Guillaume-Benjamin Duchenne de Boulogne, although he does not mention Boulogne's work), the most relevant aspect for his research in this field was the study of facial movements accompanying the articulation of language, a study that was also used for language learning by deaf-mute people (see Demeny 1891a, 216 ff.; Marey 1894, 177; Marey 1898).
[4] It is quite banal to note that Marey only takes into account the appearance of a specific muscular-skeletal and skin type, claiming to analyse the fundamental expressions that appear in every case regardless of the specific experimental subject performing a given gesture. Marey's standardization of the human deserves an essay all its own.
[5] However, as Manuel Chemineau has also observed, the search for aesthetic value is not entirely extraneous to the original conditions and context in which these chronophotographs were produced, namely that of scientific research (see Chemineau 2012). Some references to the finding of this constitutive aesthetic dimension can be found in Marey's own text: see, for example, Marey 1894, 176 and Table I and Marey 1894, 181.

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English abstract

The paper focuses on the in-depth analysis and historical contextualization of a chapter from Etienne-Jules Marey's *Le Mouvement* (1894). The part of the book under scrutiny is devoted to the potential function of chronophotography – a photographic method born and developed for scientifically representing motion – as an aid for figurative artists.

keywords | photography; physiology; art; motion.

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(v. Albo dei referee di Engramma)

The aesthetics of cut in found footage film

The case of Decasia by Bill Morrison

Sonia Colavita

Found footage film and its aesthetics

Found footage, in the cinematographic context, is a term used to describe films made partially or entirely with existing footage, subsequently reassembled in a new context. It's a recycling practice linked to the idea of ready-made art. There is a variety of ways and strategies that filmmakers have followed to recycling found footage, but montage/collage seems the most effective because it exposes the footage to a lot of social implications and the interpretation of these works is more critical than their original makers conceived. If we divide the aesthetics of montage into three levels as a compilation, collage, and appropriation, it is precisely collage that has the great potential to challenge and subvert the power of images produced and distributed thought the corporate media. Incorporating different materials found in compliance with principles of coherence and organizational unity, the collage expresses referentiality that leads to the substitution of meaning, the objects to imitate, with a new set of signifiers that draw attention to themselves as real objects in the real world (Wees 1993). For this reason, this procedure is the filmic equivalent of a Duchamp ready-made, because it can be anything a filmmaker artist finds and decides to show in the form he or she found it.

Two forms of found footage film production can be outlined: a diachronic and a synchronic perspective (Brenez 2002). But starting from the 60s to the 80s, found footage became a central element of experimental cinema, eventually becoming an independent genre that broke the tradition with classic structural cinema. This type of 'new' cinema loses its distinctive ontological criteria, in a tendency towards hybridization between different media, prompting a new interpretation through an archaeological practice, capable of reconstructing an unconventional history of the medium,

privileging its forgotten aspects and discontinuities (Mariani, Fidotta 2018). These avant-garde works catalyze attention on the social function of art and the media not only concerning the search for the new but also and above all for how a form of hybridization of languages is proposed. Found footage has become a way that allowed the filmmaker artist to maintain a link with the avant-garde tradition, the love for classic cinema and for the film as perishable material and with the recognition of the preciousness of the archive as an infinite catalog to source from. This practice creates a moving meditation on the question of meaning without order. The content of the original footage is recognizable, but its visual impact depends on the filmmaker's reworking. Thus, there is a moving of intention: from a taking to an overturning. Found footage has a meaning close to the film-collage and editing itself because it rises when there is the need for a secondary elaboration, it is made by selection and collage, so we literally cut something. The artist tears pieces out of context or picks them out of the cultural heritage. Thus, found footage film differs from other experimental films properly for the fact that it doesn't work on staging or composition, but only on montage, therefore, in fact, on cutting. By being interrupted, these cultural fragments expose their ideological functions and encourage the viewer to see it differently and think about it more critically not only for how they can serve for the film and how they now appear, but also because they reveal their original function when they first appeared (Wees 1993).

Speaking in a modernist approach, this type of found footage film normally has a free and open story, due to a non-ordered space and this means that a lot of interpretations are possible; a rejection of causal rigidity, because there is an apparent absence of connection between scenes; finally, the presence of metalinguistic elements like iconology, symbology and archetypes creates associations that produce narrative continuity. The images come from a variety of sources and are juxtaposed in montage constructions that invest them with new or previously unrecognized implications. In this case, cut makes an interruption and this is one of the fundamental methods of all form-giving. By cutting we can take the material of the reality and manipulate it to reveal its power to communicate and shape another reality; explore actions through which it's possible to create stories; make the familiar unfamiliar and instilling in the viewer the opportunity to comprehend and distinguish a new reality. There

are two ways in which interruption serves as a form-giving device, both emphasize the constructive end of the process, the act of putting pieces together. The first one is extrinsic to the films themselves and this involves finding the materials as fragments: what is interrupted is inside the sense and the context in which the materials normally exist and in which they seem perfectly 'natural'. The second one is intrinsic to filmic collage: the most obvious method of intrinsic interruption is the juxtaposition of shots with no apparent relationship between them.

The role of the archive in a post-digital approach

'Old' media such as painting and drawing had the claim to be autonomous, their specificity occurred precisely in their essence, they were engaged by everything that was outside their frames. From the end of the 1960s, however, deconstructivism began to attack the aesthetic autonomy ensured by the frame. Derrida built many of his demonstrations on the idea of an 'interior' of the work as opposed to its context, but deconstruction has instead dismantled the idea of the 'self', the abstraction from all other things that are not proper to the artwork. But the film apparatus is by its nature aggregative, a question of layered and simultaneous levels. Thus, the separate work of art loses what Benjamin called 'aura' as well as the specificity of its medium. In this way, postmodernity is configured as the total saturation of the cultural space of the image with a permeation of social life, so that even the aesthetic experience has expanded and made the notion of an individual work of art problematic and reductive (Youngblood 1970). This postmodernist attitude has prompted many artists to try their hand at intermediate work, where art is an accomplice to globalization (Krauss 1999). The advent of digital has radically changed cinema, its characteristics, and all the procedures for its creation.

The media of the 1800s and 1900s entered a crisis, pushing us into a post-media condition, because the balance between the social pervasiveness and the individuality of media devices has been broken, leading to a convergence of such media on digital platforms. This new condition, therefore, allows us to consider the forms of 'relocation' of cinema within new contexts, pushing cinema to re-read its past by entering the field of media archeology. Cinema has freed itself from the theoretical confines of the screen, becoming a rhizomatic and intertextual

structure (Eugeni 2015). Recycling archival footage becomes a methodology that can be placed in the synthesis of four paradigms: the historiographical process, the reconsideration of a primitive cinema, awareness of the content, the ideological and stylistic value of images and, finally, the interest in the aesthetic and anthropological possibilities of reuse of the archive. There is therefore a new experience with the document, because the archive is no longer conceived as a neutral deposit, but intends to broaden the spectrum of the visible, constituting itself as a treasure chest of common memories and stories (Baron 2012). By integrating the archival footage through films in the contemporary era, we place ourselves in a post-digital perspective. Indeed, in post-digital culture, an old medium may be used, according to procedures linked to new media, precisely with the purpose of remediation or re-enactment (Bolter, Grusin 1999; Pierson 2009). The result of this deep interaction is an experience in which the two heterogeneous systems (old and new media) can be no longer split: this fusion becomes the key to interpret our present (Manovich 2011, 39-45; Fickers, van den Oever 2013, 272-278). Thus, the innovation starts properly from an ideal cut which is outdated. Post-digital culture is the awareness that digitality does not simply transform everything into a virtual dimension, but it is matched with which is material, spatial, urban, and human (Balzola 2010, 7-19).

An analog and a digital system can be combined to create experimental products, to satisfy our eyes and feed our nostalgia and "this hybridity of practices becomes one perspective to the so-called digital turn" (Catanese, Parikka 2018). Also, these new creations do not have great opportunities for distribution, because they need spaces and modalities different from traditional ones (De Rosa, Hediger 2016). These works are innovative in terms of aesthetics and fruition, so it is necessary to analyze their hidden expressive potential because they do not belong to a market dominated only by audience ratings. This means that the analog system is not only a precursor destined to co-exist with the digital world, but it should be considered for its development and historicity. This directly demonstrates that analog technologies could offer many possibilities today, emphasizing and celebrating its vividness instead of falling into obsolescence (Knowles, Beugnet 2013, 54-65). Indeed, obsolescence is a theme very dear to these artistic products. Krauss stated that when a form falls into obsolescence, an evocation of the utopian ideals that the form held in promise at its

advent re-emerge, freed from the technological cell we're in (Krauss 1999). The blazing speed of technological advances has increased exponentially, similarly planned obsolescence is a daily experience in the 21st century that constantly overwhelms consciousness. Outdated technologies become very precise indicators of specific periods, down to the minute level of our memories. In this perspective, obsolescence, one of the main drivers of this contemporary anxiety, can be considered an act of reinventing the medium.

These nostalgic tendencies are more than a useless artistic melancholy, but the attention to obsolete technologies constitutes an effort to recreate a reference temporal place. Nostalgia manifests itself in the visual arts through forms created and framed by the aesthetics of a given technology that was available at a specific point in time. A work, therefore, that employs obsolete technology will evoke associations with the time within which it was relevant. The technology is freed from its function as a device to stimulate consumption and can be used to demonstrate a site of resistance. This means that old and analog technologies made by materiality can interact with digitality in the 21st century and these two worlds can create new experiences and reinvent the redemptive possibilities within the technological support itself. The materiality of the cinematographic medium can be traced to the role of the film strip, which is the film object par excellence and which was a vehicle for experimentation during the avant-garde, erasing cinematic conventions by exploring the medium with its properties and materials, detaching itself from the classical narrative and creating its history. Avant-garde filmmakers followed the idea of ephemeral and 'de-materialized' artworks, the reduction of the art object to the essential physical or material components of its medium into a reconsideration of the dictates of modernism in the arts. According to this analysis, the films of Andy Warhol, Michael Snow, Hollis Frampton, Paul Sharits, Tony Conrad, Ken Jacobs, and many others are all fundamental examples of the material parameters of the medium (Hanhardt 1977).

Thus, we can consider that post-digital art seems to want to represent the transcendence of materiality, as an experience that goes beyond what is sensitive, because of the progressive dematerialization of the cinema screen and the film strip (due to its natural deterioration and the digital

switchover). The emerging trend, in a completely digitalized world, is a return and an attachment to what is still totally physical and material. This means that behind a modern and technological medium an ancient one exists. Thus, post-digital attempts are made to return to a human approach, to something that can be touched. This shows that there is a reaction to an era in which everything is labeled as digital. The word 'digital' derives from the same source of the word 'digit', from the Latin *digitus*, which means 'finger', so this concept refers to something physical like the use of the ten fingers of our hands (Alexenberg 2011, 31). We are in a multiform era, where different realities meet and easily create hybrid products. These products have something that is linked to the past, which often coincides with physical devices, but they also have a contemporary part that today relates to the virtual world. This demonstrates that it is possible to create something new, starting from the ruins of the past, through an analytical approach to film analysis. Specifically, analyzing the stylistic, semiotic, and iconological aspects, decomposing the elements of the pheno-text, and reading the subtext, to go beyond what is immediately visible. The configuration of moving images can be studied together with their operative aspects to provide an aesthetic experience or to produce knowledge. It is also possible to examine how the moving image relates to other elements of its configuration.

1 | Boxer frame from *Decasia* (2002) directed by Bill Morrison.

Framing practices in *Decasia* by Bill Morrison

Decasia is a case study that well represents the reflections described so far. It is among the most important and well-known works by experimental artist and filmmaker Bill Morrison. It was chosen by the Library of Congress in the National Film Registry as a film worthy of being preserved for its high cultural, historical, and aesthetic value. Bill Morrison began *Decasia* at the very end of the 20th century, in September 1999, and finished it in the first years of the 21st century, in May 2002. It took a year for the research of the material and two years for editing and it was made entirely on analog film. Bill Morrison spent many hours in the archive at the Museum of Modern Art, at the Library of Congress, and George Eastman House, always looking for particularly exemplary films from the point of view of decay. The decaying nitrate strips were first re-photographed into new master copies, in this way the decay was frozen as an image and the director concretely took a picture of decay, thus placing itself in line of continuity with experimental and self-referential modernist practices. In this regard, for the research of my master's degree thesis, I

had the pleasure of personally interviewing the artist who confirms as follows the procedure with which he worked for the creation of his film:

> The film was made entirely on film. For every shot I acquired, I optically printed a new negative, and this was eventually cut into the master negative of the film. It was this moment, at which the decaying nitrate strips were first re-photographed into new master copies, that the decay was frozen as an image. If you were to digitally scan the same source material today, it would look very different. I took a picture of decay. Sometimes I took a picture of a picture of decay. The decay seen in those images continues, and in some cases, those films no longer exist (Colavita 2019).

Morrison is interested in manipulating the material component of the film to create new stories so that the images are reformulated as part of collective mythology. His approach demonstrates that we are not speaking only of the meaning of the contents of what is visible, but also of the material-support that allows its use. The strip of the film itself becomes the principal object of interest. Morrison's works, therefore, reveal a collaboration between time and matter that Herzogenrath defines 'matter-image', contrasting it with the more classic 'image-time' theorized by Deleuze and specifying that in this case time and matter exactly produce their filmic image (Deleuze [1985] 1989). It must be considered than experimental films that precisely highlight their physicality, showing the work as a material process, depend on the cinematographic device and become texts in the double meaning of a 'testament' (lat. *testes*) and 'fabric' (lat. *textum*); it is through this double nature that the triggering of an interlingual process is built (Herzogenrath 2018).

Decasia is a meditation on old, decaying silent films and represents mortality in several ways of its manifestation. It should also be considered that the film's production period roughly coincides with the 100 years of cinema, for this reason, many artists have reflected on the role of cinema in this sense. It is possible to contextualize this trend by citing *Historie(s) du Cinéma*, a 1988 work by Jean-Luc Godard. The director has tried to compose his point of view on the history of cinema using images from institutional films, changing their meaning and changing the context of the original film. Just as Morrison did, he did not try to tell a story that presents itself as objective, but he tried to build a new genealogy in the

relationship between sound and images to talk about his history of cinema and stimulate the viewer to create his own. In this case, the main theme of the film is exactly to intertwine the film with history.

Thus, the characteristics of Morrison's work find a genealogy in modernist experimental practices and the tradition of situationism and the idea of destruction, which can be traced, for example, in Guy Debord's cinema or *La Verifica Incerta* of Alberto Grifi and Gianfranco Baruchello, an emblematic case in the Italian panorama. In Debord's Situationist cinema it is a provocative declaration on the death of cinema in the classical sense and he makes interruption the very essence of the vision. The perception of montage is already an expression of discontinuity but Debord intends to make cinema a means of propaganda using détournement, a method of recovering elements already given because to oppose the dominant trends, it is necessary to use the artistic and literary heritage of humanity. By combining two fragments that derive from different works, their original meaning is certainly denied, but in fact, a readable reconnection is obtained, a devaluation-revaluation of the element in a new unifying meaning. Détournement is therefore a de-constructive method through which also a broad general critique of today's society can be advanced. The history, to which reference is made, is not a chronological but an eschatological history because it needs a new interpretation, freeing us from the chronological sense of events.

This is the meaning of Debord's détournements: re-proposing 'stolen' sequences imbued with a new meaning, within a reconstruction with a different meaning. Cinema then becomes a way of projecting power and possibility towards what is impossible, towards the past (Agamben 2001). On the other side, *La Verifica Incerta* is a 1965 modernist collage film outlined by a strong criticism: classic American cinema as a product of a specific language and as a collector of gestures and stereotyped images. Grifi and Baruchello use duplication and analogy, displacement and similarity, repetition and interruption, fragmentation and contraction as the use of found footage that shows a completely new intellectual montage that should not be confused with previous found footage films. In *La Verifica Incerta* each moving image has been transformed in its space-time connections, removed from its context, and inserted into another completely different significant series: a new meaning, which has

nothing to do with that of the old images, both as icons with symbolic content and as cells of a larger film organism. The pre-existing meaning is abolished, the new connections fill space/time with unsettling ideas. Even the viewer is called into question by the new work, indeed is a fundamental part of it in searching how to understand a new language, a new code, although nothing can be definitive to learn a new syntax that no longer exists, because the true meaning is the work itself, a ready-made film. The film as a material already existed before, the act of Grifi and Baruchello is of appropriation in itself that infuses new meanings to the old images through a process of destruction-resurrection of the meaning which, with the selection and editing, comes to articulate a new completely artificial rhythm, orchestrating a completely reconstructed space-time.

As *Decasia*, also *La Verifica Incerta* didn't have a working plan, not even a script at the beginning of the work. Once again the radical break between meaning and signifier emerges and prevents any profound comparison with other found footage films: the meaning of the film is no longer in its visual content (although there are many symbolic connections, many iconographic links, etc.) but in the very act of deconstruction and artificial reconstruction in which even chance plays a major role. Morrison's process of taking pre-existing footage from films that have been largely lost due to the natural process of nitrate deterioration and reconstituting them as artifacts for a new artistic product compromises the original shots and bring them to a new aesthetic existence by re-editing and integrating them into a new narrative. *Decasia* escaped the breakable world of celluloid through the eerily immaterial kingdom of digitality. Moreover, *Decasia* is not even just a collection of decayed films or a documentary on the film's need for conservation, but a carefully structured portrait of a decadent world, which is concretely disintegrating when we see it revealed on the screen. That means also that this film can be placed in the tradition of the American avant-garde and the experimental film because of the attention to the structure of the film and to the film strip, the material-support that allows its use, thanks to archive recycling.

Decasia was initially commissioned by the Europaischer Musikmonat as a symphony that had to be composed by Michael Gordon. Next, the Ridge Theater, where Bill Morrison works, was asked to create the visual part for Michael Gordon's symphony. So, the director's work was in close contact

with the composer who worked on sounds and music. Bill Morrison asked Michael Gordon to develop a symphony that evoked decay; the director showed the composer some segments of the film he was assembling, and this collaborative process allowed the music to integrate with the images. But *Decasia*'s soundtrack is far from synchronism and has the aim to accompany the images which date back to the silent era, trying to express the same feeling of them. Thus, also in music, the selective operations are generated by the cut itself, that's especially because during the montage, the film came after the music and it was functional to it. In addition to thematic development, found footage montage can produce rigorous formal designs with graphic and rhythmic relationships between shots, and complex alignments of images and sounds. Together, music and images make a moving meditation on the relationship between the question of meaning without order. In the experimental film, music is used as another part of the collage technique to draw attention to the materiality of the new visual combines. Music and sounds, used in an unfamiliar way, not only creates a form of de-contextualization that mirrors the images, but also forms a new and audio-visual collage.

The de-familiarisation of sound, as well as image, questions the appearance of audio-visual synchronicity so neither image nor sound is dependent on the other, although they work closely together (Rogers, Barham 2017). Nicholas Cook has identified three primary ways in which music can interact with a film's visual track: music can complement the image by underline emotional or narrative aspects; it can match or replicate certain aspects of the image or its rhythmic construction, and it can provide contrast through audio-visual dissonance. The first two types are common in mainstream cinema, the third type, however, is relatively rare. That's because audio-visual dissonance is experienced as a rupture at the level of reception (Cook 1998). The experimental found-footage film can oscillate continually between all three types of audio- visual engagement and these forms can fundamentally influence our experience of a collaged composition. According to this perspective, it is possible to split found footage audiovisuality into three types. First, the replacement of existing sounds with original music. Second, the removal of the original sound in favor of new music produces a secondary form of found-footage compilation that runs in 'harmonic dissonance' to the de-contextualized visual collage. And third, the mixture of original and new sounds to create

a disjunctive and dissonant audio-visual flow that requires an audience to re-read images. What is significant about all types of a musical play in found-footage films is that there is a clear preference for the reuse, or production, of musical forms and timbres. However, there is a difference between avant-garde, or experimental music and avant-garde audiovisuality. Here, an experimental form is created from the clash of several re-situated forms of filmic discourse (Rogers, Barham 2017).

The 'sounds' of *Decasia* do not accurately translate what is seen on the scene and they are not even sounds that we could place side by side within those environments, yet they manage to merge with the images due to their common nature. So, if on the one hand this acousmatic situation, in which the source of the sounds cannot be traced in the scenes, still offers a sense of empathy with the images, on the other side, the soundtrack through this apparent indifference to what happens in the scenes further emphasizes the tone of the emotion, thus serving as an anempathetic music. This is possible because the experimental film can adopt different ways of interacting between sound and image. This continuous flow of music is automatically performed in harmonic dissonance in the context of a decontextualized visual collage. The soundtrack of *Decasia* does not need to denote anything in the space represented, rather, it represents the expression of the mood, of the rhythm, of the feeling concerning that space. The rhythmic, material, harmonic and expressive qualities of music emphasize the latent or manifest narrative content through a synergistic relationship with the other channels of filmic discourse. Thus, the music reinforces Morrison's interpretation of the diegesis.

Furthermore, according to the idea of de-framing and re-framing practices related also to the concept of expanded cinema because exposed to the audience, the recording of the event itself becomes an event; the transitory action, once fixed in the immateriality of the reproduced image, composed of a vibrant flow of luminous impulses, is configured and reads like another work, which tends to acquire its modalities; the relationships between the observer and what is observed, between space and time, are modified through the self-reflective potential of the mechanical gaze of the video. This process of transformation of the audiovisual media thus renders more and more explicit multiple specificities of the codes that transmigrate from one expression to another, from homo-media systems

in variable media or mixed media forms. Thus, in this inter-media path, the concept of expanded cinema proposed in 1970 by Gene Youngblood demonstrates how various intersections have emerged that have contributed to providing a new context for the formation of cinema between technologies, media, and art. Morrison stated that *Decasia* was not created to end up on DVD, but as a theatrical happening. Thus, *Decasia*'s performative dimension systems – like live screening with live music – are examples of a deep change with the perception of the classic frame of the cinematographic screen because even in this case we are cutting something: the boundaries of the screen and the speakers too. In this way, inter-media art and environments are built to create a total experience for the audience and the show maintains its nature as a social phenomenon recognized by a community that includes traditions and meanings.

Decasia talks about mortality, memory, dreams, and resistance at the same time. There are several cropped and combined realities. Indeed, by ordering scenes in particular sequences, the film induces a certain kind of expectation and reaction in the audience, so found-footage collage gives the sense to cut as a powerful tool for a visual experience. About the effects of a cut in storytelling and viewers, it's important to consider the theory of the Kuleshov effect which has interesting results in storytelling and viewers' perception. When a sequence is shown to an audience, the spectators have the feeling of a coherent visual narrative through the editing of various pieces of the existing film. This shows that sometimes scenes are linked to each other through different connections, by a specific emotion for example, but they can be also put together because their development is in the same direction. In all the cases, the common feature for *Decasia* is the state of decay of the film. Morrison explains that the bodies represented in the film are rotting, but the spirit transcends and continues to live.

This experiment, therefore, tends to demonstrate the great importance of montage to understand what appears in a sequence (Mobbs, Weiskopf, Lau, Featherstone, Dolan, Frith 2007); viewers can only project their emotions onto an actor's face and relate them to the rest. Thus, by ordering the shots of a scene in a sequence, the film induces a certain type of expectation in the audience. In *Decasia*, therefore, there seems to be a

logic in the succession of images. In this regard, it is interesting to note how the work concretely recounts the evolution of human nature through a review of moments that describe what one person can experience in life, with a warning to the ever-present *memento mori*. We can list some main aspects of *Decasia* and its relationship with the idea of cut. Primarily, Morrison's film is based on the expressive power of decaying film as a metaphor for the human condition destined to death. But this also means that the aesthetics of this work is close to the oriental philosophy called wabi-sabi, widespread in the 14th century as a reaction to the Chinese formalism according to which all things are ephemeral and imperfect. We must therefore accept the reality made of a constant flow but of a mortal nature (Rowell 2005). The director has created a link between the state of the film and human life, so he has selected images for his purpose through exclusion procedures. The key is considering decay itself as a form of cut because the decay of the film physically created a kind of cuts within the scene: something is missing and it is up to us to reconstruct the meaning from a metaphorical point of view, based on our feelings or experience. We can interpret the signs of the time as producers of new figures, the material damaged becomes an image itself (Habib 2007). Secondly, we must consider de-framing and re-framing executions.

Decasia is a work that has been conceived as a theatrical happening with live musical accompaniment. The connection with silent cinema is evident and it is worth taking into consideration the performativity of early cinema, enjoyed in theatres with live sound accompaniment. Silent cinema was not entirely 'silent'; the practice of accompanying the silent films shown in the theatre, with a piano or small orchestra, dates to about the 1920s. From the very beginning, music has therefore been an integral element of cinema, whether it was comic or dramatic. At the dawn of cinema, the need was felt to give a sound dimension to images through music. Viewing animated but silent images was unacceptable as it produced a feeling of discomfort and even fear, being experienced as a completely unnatural perceptual experience. This relationship between music and silent cinema is important for two reasons: first, it can give more details on how music has been used, providing transitions, attention to detail, and creating specific atmospheres; secondly, it is useful for establishing an exact comparison with the approach to *Decasia*. This is because the work is composed of silent archive images and the projections

of the film with music played live in the perspective of a live performance can exactly recall the cinematographic experiences of the silent era. *Decasia* was originally conceived as a silent film for live orchestra and Bill Morrison also collaborates with many musicians active in the music scene, for example, Bill Frisell who in 2003 composed the music for *The Mesmerist* (2003), another work by Morrison, and still today there are musical performances that accompany live projections. Therefore, what happens in the current century with the live performances of *Decasia* seems to be an evolution of the past.

As the director stated during my interview:

> SC: Another main aspect concerns the screenings of your movie accompanied by live music. This approach reminds me of the era of silent cinema when in the 1920s films were accompanied in theatres by a piano or small orchestra. Your screenings seem to be an evolution of silent cinema. Do you think this reference can be appropriate?
>
> BM: Yes, it was originally conceived as a silent film for a live orchestra. The tradition of the City Symphonies from the 1920s was very much an inspiration, as was Godfrey Reggio's work with Philip Glass from the late 1970s and the 1920s tradition was very inspiring (Colavita 2019).

The film had to be shown on three screens around the audience and musicians would have to perform the soundtrack composed by Michael Gordon. Only later it has been transformed into a DVD, but still today the live performance is an execution modality used by the director. Some of Bill Morrison's works have been screened, always with live musical accompaniment, on architectural constructions, in a modern video-mapping perspective made by productive, executive, and distributive modalities which are conducted following a creative use of the medium.

Iconology and symbology: another type of cut by selection

Decasia requires a deep analysis of the imaginary and iconology. When I interviewed Bill Morrison, I've asked him how he selected the images, because, for example, iconology is a solid point of reference for cinema and I was wondering if he wanted to recall specific imaginaries. It is indisputable that also iconology can be connected to the concept of the

frame because it tends to understand the cultural meaning of images through their formal elements, and it is also connected to the idea of cut because there are several elements to be separated to consider their relevance in the iconological reading of a film. Thus, interpretation is exercised in the sense, to discover the possible relationships between what is evident and what is hidden. During my interview, Morrison stated: "I had two criteria in choosing images, decay and engagement in some tranportative activity" (Colavita 2019). So, the director was not completely aware of choosing iconic images from cinema history, but he has practically cut by selection. As a matter of fact, in the film, some scenes recall iconologies shared by the common imagination and some figures can be considered as strong archetypes. Among the most indicative examples in the film, some recall the idea of death and rebirth.

For instance, there is the scene of birth, a heap of manure and a fire, destroyer, and purifier at the same time, which burns a house. The archetypal birth scene is indicative above all for the reference to the work *Window Water Baby Moving* (1959) by Stan Brakhage, another well-known experimental director. Brakhage's work celebrates the natural processes of life through a set of poetic and direct images focused on birth. The choice of such a moment is highly symbolic typical of Brakhage's American avant-garde, who sought inspiration starting from his own family and the birth of his children. The one proposed by the artist is a revolutionary act, especially considering that before the 1950s, childbirth was a forbidden subject for film production, due to its links with the taboos of sex and blood. It seems that cinema has treated the theme of birth as a guilty secret of humanity, a mystery that had to be hidden from young people, an event reserved only for medicine (Vogel 2005). But a theme like that is charged with symbolism, because a moment is being shown to take hold of time, trying to defeat that aura of death that sticks to each of us as soon as we take our first breath. Furthermore, this approach allows the externalization of the memory process. Brakhage, like Morrison, also questions himself and nature through a body that becomes a work of art, a metaphor of a becoming that begins from that crack that secretes the unborn child (and the world).

The birth scene in *Decasia* is therefore also important because it acts just as an opening of the narrative about the evolution of human nature. It is

followed by close-ups of children on buses, which seem to describe the second phase of human growth passing from birth to education. Probably, this is the reason why their gazes seem empty: they are absorbed by an almost mechanized routine, made up of contents to be learned to build their identity. Many other images are indicative, as in the case of the boxer scene who trains by throwing punches at a rotting patch that erased the punching bag (as the actor is struggling with something symbolic: disease, death, time) or when a group of explorers discovers what seems to be an alien mass that pulsates in a cave. The film, in semiotic terms, is a basic 'open work' (as Umberto Eco theorized), it allows multiple interpretations, mediated by the viewers.

As he already stated, *Decasia* was not originally meant to end up on DVD. It is interesting to note, however, that precisely in this version the work has been divided into 4 chapters, each having a name to give a narrative on DVD, ordering by a meaning. This segmentation reinforces some important life concepts that this film deals with within an entropic universe. The chapters are so organized: 1. Creation; 2. Civilization; 3. Enigma; 4. Disintegration and Rebirth. The boundary between one and the other is implicit in the development of the film, it is not explicitly marked nor are there captions announcing the beginning of each section. While these chapters suggest a formal break into sections, the materials often repeat throughout the film, so no section is truly independent of the others. This subdivision, therefore, demonstrates and underlines that obviously, each scene follows the next for a reason precisely according to this cyclical perspective in the sign of creation, death, and rebirth. This order of scenes shows that found footage films frequently include vertical montage and associational montage, as Eisenstein called the juxtaposition of a film's sound and image tracks in which two adjacent shots produce through their juxtaposition an abstract meaning not inherent in either one of them (Eisenstein 1943). Thus, montage can be also found in natural phenomena such as human perception. So, watching the images, hypotheses about the narrative meaning of the events are immediately formulated, building a semantic union. This mechanism in *Decasia* does not apply only to the images, but also to the succession of the different sections. They presuppose a circular trend that, starting from birth, develops according to vital linear phases until the moment of destruction and rebirth itself. Moreover, to unify the various sections, there are

recurring images of a newsreel showing the birth of a film in a laboratory. There is the moment when the film emerges from developer liquid, as well as the repetition of images with a circular gait that recalls the movement of the film on the roller, as in the case of the image of a dervish who dances turning on himself, following the idea of the roller on which shoots the film. In this regard, the film features numerous rotation images not directly related to the decay but a kind of entropy and circularity of life.

2 | Child on the bus, frame from *Decasia* (2002) directed by Bill Morrison.

Among the many significant examples, we can also observe some 'fire tongues' that eat faces, wounding celluloid, picture, and actors. Thus, the 'skin' of the film and the 'skin' of the actors crack and swell like hot lava, and the faces are transformed and melted. The skin is a symbolically important organ, it possesses life when a person blushes or pales without control. On this aesthetic there are contemporary productions, in particular, the production of Cécile Fontaine who also works exclusively on found footage, developing gestures and plastic techniques that refer precisely to the material nature of cinema, most of the time through the detachment of the three constituent layers of the emulsion (obtained

through the use of certain chemical substances). The first function of Fontaine's chemical work is to analyze the nature of the images by multiplying them (the detachment produces three versions of the same images, which vary according to the specific color of each layer); the other main way is chemical alteration and degradation of the film. However, even in his case the choice of the initial motifs, the found footage, is as decisive as the editing which is itself essential.

The main formal characteristic of Fontaine's work, the detachment, and transfer of the layers of the emulsion, also concerns the montage, which is no longer the connection between patterns or series of figures, but the superimposition of planes, which is why a of Fontaine's great inventions is to circulate the meaning between, within and above the images. From this perspective, *Decasia*'s 'skin' is also a field of experimentation: it is uninterrupted, but it can evoke scars and wounds, living and dying continuously. It also represents the most extensive apparatus of human beings, the envelope that conceals a deeper structure, the essential: flesh, organs, spirit. It is an expressive vehicle that puts us in communication with the outside like a bridge, and through the skin that we can live and feel our whole body. In this perspective, the skin treatment in *Decasia* overturns the oculocentric paradigm of cinema (Marks 2002).

3 | Old woman decaying frame from *Decasia* (2002) directed by Bill Morrison.

Conclusions

Speaking of common imaginaries and the audience's perception, I have also created questionnaires that I submitted to some viewers. Many questions concerned some aspects of film reception, for example, which feelings caused the film. Regarding the birth scene, for instance, is interesting to note that many viewers have found a powerful and symbolic content in this scene and they have identified themselves in the child (someone directly, others remembering old family memories). This probably means that the absence of a coherent and unified meaning is experienced as a shock by the recipient and the shock represents a breakthrough aesthetic immanence that changes the recipient's life praxis. So, montage politicizes art confronting the viewer with the reality within a 'frame'. Analyzing and summarising all the aspects that have emerged so far, we can say that the signs represented in the film are like a trace rather than *deixis*.

Deixis refers to a meaning that cannot be fully understood without additional contextual information. The interpretation of a deictic sign is linked to a specific context in which the sign is received by the viewer, depending on the filmic situation, in which the signs are presented, and the spatial, temporal, and personal situation of the viewer. In *Decasia* we haven't any type of spatial or temporal positioning, except for a subtle sense of future due to images' impermanence. Also, the lack of words and dialogues means no literal use of signs. What is indexed is the historicity of the medium made by its decaying. Therefore, the semiotics of the deixis can be linked to the question of cutting because in *Decasia* even in the creation of a narration some classical reference coordinates – like space and time – have been excluded.

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English abstract

In the field of experimental cinematography, recycling images offered the chance to give life to innovative audio-visual products, creating a new type of cinema starting from the remains of its past. In the perspective of all recently produced found footage film, we are witnesses of a re-enactment and remediation able to revive and reinstate old objects in the contemporary age considering all the opportunities of this era. Specifically, these works are configured almost as archival curatorial practices, placing the artist as a filmmaker, archivist, and film preservationist. They are made by evaluating the possibilities and limits of their physical materials and are conceived by analyzing their relationship with the historical, artistic, and social context and with the most suitable forms of presentation for today's audience, moving from analog production 'framed' in electronic and digital distribution. This essay focuses on this topic analyzing Bill Morrison's *Decasia*, a case study which well represents the nature of this kind of films, inscribed in a precise modernist tradition that relates to some specific audiovisual experiments and artistic research to the materiality of the media. In this instance, according to the Kuleshov effect, cut, montage and selection have an important role which constitutes an efficient

example of film syntax because the vision of a scene is a stimulus-response phenomenon since the spectator actively participates in the process of creating meanings. The manipulation of the context can certainly modify the perception of the audience which projects its emotions into the face of an actor or in a scene and relates it to the rest. Therefore, the perceptive effect produced by the succession of images is rapid and unconscious. The aesthetics of cut in these works cannot be separated from linguistic specificity typical of found footage films that goes beyond the traditional film structure. For example, there is a free and open story, a rejection of the causal rigidity, the presence of metalinguistic elements, and a possible soundtrack free from synchronism. Moreover, these works often make use of the performative dimension, especially with live screening, which determines a deep change with the perception of the classic frame of the cinematographic screen, making possible the reconstitution of ancient cultural objects in structures with a new interpretation.

keywords | found footage film; experimental cinematography; archival cinema; Decasia; Bill Morrison; post-digital.

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(v. Albo dei referee di Engramma)

Rediscovering censorship to understand the struggle for the contemporaneous age-oriented movie rating system

Maria Giusti

I. Censorship and censorships

In cinema censorship can exist in multiple forms, so as to having been compared to 'a thousand-headed monster'. State censorship can be preventive or repressive, or even both at the same time. In the former case, the executive power is in charge of preventing the diffusion of films that may compromise the established order's stability and interests. The State may exercise its control not only on the films already realized but also on the scripts: operators cannot start shooting before its approval. Repressive censorship occurs when judges are entitled to stop the circulation of already released films. Even private organizations can exercise censorship, such as religious confessions or associations of common decency. Finally, some forms of censorship may operate in a more elusive way, through expected business consequences likely to affect authors and directors' freedom of choice. In its multiple configurations, censorship does not merely represent an intervention to grant or deny the opportunity of artistic expression; by its threat, it influences operators' choices, actually taking part in the realization of the films.

The history of Italian cinema reflects the multifaceted character of censorship (see, among many, Argentieri 1974 and Laura 1961). Preventive censorship was established in 1913 (Law No. 785/1913 of 25th Jun) and was only abrogated at the end of 2017 (Legislative Decree No. 203/2017 of 7th December) [1]. Indeed, since 2017, the State can only determine whether a film is suitable for all or only for minors. In over 100 years of censorship's existence (1913 to 2017), the legislator modified the system several times. Still, some aspects recurred over the whole period. Film rights owners (producers and distributors) were required to present their works to a State committee, the composition of which changed over

time: magistrates, mothers, public officials, cinema experts took turns in this role. The committee was able to adopt a number of decisions. It could declare the film suitable for everyone or classify it as suitable for adults only, or it could order a ban on the film's projection, censoring it entirely. Finally, it could opt for partial censorship, subordinating the projection to cuts of single scenes or lines. If unsatisfied with the committee's decision, film right owners could appeal to a second-level committee, and from 1962 on eventually to an administrative judge. The absolute prohibition of a film's projection – frequent in the past – was established for three movies since 1960 (if one excludes the pornographic ones): *The return* (Jens Jørgen Thorsen, 1992), *Totò che visse due volte* (Daniele Ciprì and Franco Maresco, 1998) and *Morituris* (Raffaelle Picchio, 2011). Still, the imposition of cuts has been persistent in modern times too. In some cases, this intervention made films incomprehensible by eliminating scenes or lines fundamental to the plot's evolution or the comprehension of directors' thoughts (Liggeri 2012, 226).

II. Cutting or not cutting as a matter of images

To discuss the relationship between censorship and images, this paper exploits four films that did or did not experience preventive censorship in Italy. The films were chosen based on the following criteria: a) their censored frames and related committees' decisions are available. Indeed, this material is accessible only for some films shot between 1926 and 1988, thanks to Cinecensura, a permanent virtual exhibition organized by the Italian Minister of Cultural Heritage; b) they were cut (or not cut) for reasons not immediately comprehensible.

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helpful to look at what was not censored rather than to what actually was; c) they allow for the analysis of cases of censorship and non censorship related to sex, religion, and politics – that is, the three largest censorship triggers in Italy; d) they were realized in a homogenous historical period: the oldest case study is from 1957, the most recent from 1964. This way, the historical circumstances (political, sociological, etc.) considered here are circumscribed. The paper explores if the occurrence of censorship, or lack thereof, can be partially explained by considering how the films' images are built, rather than the topic they talk about. This approach highlights the complexity of censorship and allows for a structured discussion on the relationship between censorship and images. Upon this discussion, the paper analyses the pros and cons of the different possible juridical contemporaneous approaches to establish the films' rating.

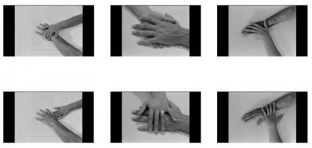
1 | Charlotte (Macha Méril) in *Une femme mariée* (1964), directed by Jean Luc Godard and produced by Anouchka Films and Orsay Films.

2 | Charlotte.

II.1 Sex

The first case study is the French film *Une femme marriée* (Jean Luc Godard, 1964). The plot tells a 'typical' day of a bourgeois woman, Charlotte. In the course of 24 hours, she kills time and meets her husband and her lover, making love with both. She discovers to be pregnant and, unable to figure out who the father is, she does not want to keep the baby. When she asks the gynaecologist what he thinks about contraception, he replies that it is appropriate to start talking about these issues. "We live in the age of moon trips! We cannot continue to allow children to be made against nature or in poverty conditions […]". These are strong topics for the time: in Italy, there was still no divorce (it was legalised in 1970) and producing and advertising the contraceptive pill was a crime (it was decriminalized in 1971). Moreover, this is

3 | Charlotte, Pierre (Philippe Leroy) and Robert (Bernard Noël).



4 | Charlotte, Pierre and Robert.

the first time a French film directly addresses the contraceptive pill (Habib 2020).

Censorship moved against the movie. In France, the State authorized the release of the film, still banning it to minors. However, the production had to meet some requirements: cutting a couple of frames and changing the title. Initially, Godard wanted to name his film *La femme mariée* (*The married woman*), but according to the censorship committee, such a title risked evoking an exemplary model, normalizing the adultery. The definite article was exchanged with an undefined one: *Une femme mariée* (*A married woman*) allowed to show Charlotte as just one of the many married women, unable with her behaviour to ruin the reputation of the others. In Italy, the first instance committee banned the whole film, considering it "contrary to common decency" ("contrario al buon costume"). Distributors appealed to the second level committee, which allowed the film to be screened in theatres without asking for any cuts, merely imposing a ban on minors (the first and second instance decisions are available here).

Why did the second-level committee reverse the decision of the first one? In *Une femme mariée* there are several scenes of sex and the images of nudity and intimacy were usually censored in Italy during those years [2]. The reasons why the movie was able to avoid cuts can be partly explained in terms of images: the particular visual choices made by Godard to treat sex allowed to weaken its threat. The full naked body of the protagonist is shown only once [Fig. 1].

At the centre of Godard's work lies the fragment: each image is limited to a single detail of the actress' body. The camera sometimes shows her neck, sometimes the back, the lips, the eyes [Fig. 2]. The different parts of the protagonist's body, always shown in the foreground on the sheets'

white background, are sometimes kissed, sometimes touched [Fig. 3]. As Moravia noticed, “Godard's contemplation has never been so intense, so fond, so charmed. No coincidence that a good third of the film represents hands that caress, touch, grope, intertwine, help each other, tighten, separate” (“La contemplazione di Godard non è mai stata così intensa, così affettuosa, così affascinata. Non per nulla un buon terzo del film rappresenta mani che si accarezzano, che palpano, che toccano, che si intrecciano, che si aiutano, che si stringono, che si separano”) (Moravia 1975, 76). The protagonists’ hands manage indeed to self-establish as a predominant image: they are enough to tell the love acts that are being consumed [Fig. 4].

Still, no source let us think that Godard shot sex scenes in such a delicate way to specifically escape from censorship. The director claimed instead to have torn the protagonist’s body to pieces because she is a woman in pieces, in the proper sense of ‘parts detached from each other’, divided as she is between husband and lover. However, such a delicate way of telling sex has probably been one of the reasons for the lack of censorship.

II.2 Religion

The next case studies are *Il grido* (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1957) and *La dolce vita* (Federico Fellini, 1960). The analysis focuses on three sequences, one from the former and two from the latter, and how they deal with the topic of religion and the risk of potential blasphemy.

5 | Virginia (Dorian Gray) and street vendor in *Il Grido* (1957), directed by Michelangelo Antonioni and produced by SPA Cinematografica in collaboration with Robert Alexandrer production.

In the first sequence of *Il grido*, a street vendor tries to convince a woman to buy one of his paintings, representing copies of famous Italian Madonnas: “to which Holy Mary are you devoted?” (“A quale Madonna siete affezionata?”). She would like to buy one of the representations of the Madonna del Carmine, which is yet too expensive for her. The street vendor then offers a different Madonna, that of Pompeii: even if less expensive, “it is miraculous too” (“è miracolosa anche questa”) [Fig. 5].

6 | Marcello (Marcello Mastroianni), paparazzo (Walter Santesso) and girls in *La dolce vita*.

7 | Paparazzi and family of Dario and Maria in *La dolce vita* (1960), directed by Federico Fellini and produced by Riama Film, Gray Films and Pathé Cinéma.

In the first sequence of *La dolce vita*, Marcello – the reporter protagonist of the film – and his pal fly over Rome in a helicopter. They are following another helicopter, which is spectacularly transporting a statue of Jesus in Saint Peter square. The two fly over a terrace where some girls are sunbathing, capturing their attention: "Look! It is Jesus!" ("Guarda! È Gesù!"), affirms one of them pointing to the floating statue. Marcello and his pal stop above the terrace, and the girls shout at them, "Hey! What is that statue? Where are you bringing it?" ("Hey! Cos'è quella statua? Dove la state portando?"). The two men shout back, trying to overcome the engine's roar: "We are bringing it to the Pope!" ("La portiamo dal papa!"). They briefly flirt with the girls, asking for their phone number. After this short break, Marcello's helicopter must return to follow the other one. The scene ends with the image of the statue of Jesus embracing Saint Peter Square [Fig. 6].

In the second sequence of *La dolce vita*, Marcello and his pals reach a country village to report Madonna's apparition to two indigenous children. The paparazzi manage to find the children's family and prepare them to shoot the pictures they need for the media coverage. The mother is in shock; she would like to go back home, but the paparazzi make her pose as if she is seeing and pointing to the Madonna. They are enthusiastic about her crying, making the shooting very effective: "Bravo: cry, cry!" ("La pianga, la pianga!"). The father, happy about the sudden popularity, cares about looking beautiful in the photos: "Do I look good like this?" ("Sto bene così?"), and happily states: "It is a real miracle! The Madonna remembers everyone!" ("È un vero miracolo! La Madonna si ricorda di tutti"). The grandfather poses as if he was praying, sings a Hail Mary, and asks for a cigar. After having taken the shots, the paparazzi run

away without losing any more time, while the three are still posing [Fig. 7].

All the three scenes show a possibly blaspheme approach to religion, combining it now with money, business, or sex. Still, they received different treatments in terms of censorship. The sequence of Il grido was censored: the State committee decided for the prohibition to the minors only after the realization of some cuts, including the sequence described (the decision is available here). Interestingly, the sequences from *La dolce vita* were not censored: the committee allowed the film to be released in theatres with the minors' prohibition without asking for any cut (the decision is available here). Still, the question is not why the Antonioni's sequence was censored: it is rather why Fellini's sequences were not.

It is difficult to come forward with a single answer. Politics played a role: Fellini, unlike Antonioni, had close contacts with the Church. According to different sources, *La dolce vita* was not cut due to the mediation of Jesuit Angelo Arpa, who was very close to the President of the *Conferenza Episcopale Italiana* – the influential official assembly of the bishops in Italy. Indeed, not everyone in the Catholic world criticized the movie. The most conservative components cried out at the scandal, condemning the film as exalting vice and malpractice: seven articles appeared on the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* nicknaming the movie like 'The disgusting life'. Others, including some representatives of the governing party Democrazia Cristiana, defended Fellini: in telling the life of dissolute people, he showed the crisis of a society far from Catholic values and expressed anxiety for redemption. Pasolini came to define the film as "the highest and absolute product of Catholicism in recent years" ("il più alto e il più assoluto prodotto del cattolicesimo di questi ultimi anni"), noticing that it tells the loss of the sacredness of sex – in typical Catholic rhetoric – reduced to a mere superficial and sinful game (Pasolini 1960).

8 | Marcello, Maddalena (Anouk Aimée), Sylvia (Anita Marianne) and others in La dolce vita.

9 | Rosina (Mirna Girardi), Aldo (Steve Cochran), Elvia (Betsy Blair) and Virginia in *Il grido*.

Still, one of the reasons why *La dolce vita* was not censored can be investigated in terms of images. The strength of the sequences analysed, and therefore their potential danger in the censors' eyes, is influenced by the overall aesthetic of the two films, by how all the images that compose it are built. In Fellini's work, there is a disproportion between the power of a single sequence of images considered on its own and the power of the same sequence contextualized in the whole set of film images. The power of a single sequence is weakened by the whole film being a triumph, a carousel of strong images, characterized by an extraordinary crowding of characters, who move in an opulent environment, between frivolous parties and erotic hangovers [Fig. 8].

Il grido is a film in which the protagonist, Aldo, was left by the woman he loves. He starts a journey with his daughter, Rosina, looking for some distance, hopefully sufficient to forget. The images used to describe this drama and the film's entire stylistic structure are coherent with Aldo's feeling of distance and estrangement. The landscape in which he moves is the Delta Padano, depicted in the frozen coldness of an endless winter, that admits no other dimension than the emptiness, and no other colour than the grey. A sacrilegious scene in *Il grido*, like that of the street vendor of Madonna paintings, remains much more impressive than in *La dolce vita*. Antonioni builds its film on the concept of absence, both thematically and stylistically. Consequently, the little that is present assumes a considerable weight, becoming necessarily significant. And easy to cut, for a censor, unlike *La dolce vita*, where the blasphemy is just one more depiction of a frivolous and sinful world [Fig. 9].

III. Politics

The last case study is the film *Salvatore Giuliano* (Francesco Rosi, 1962), the Sicilian criminal known as the responsible for the massacre of Portella

della Ginestra. On May 1st, 1947, some workers gathered to celebrate the victory in the Sicilian Regional Assembly elections of the coalition of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party. They were attacked in a shooting: 11 people were killed and 27 wounded. During the trial that followed the massacre, many suggested that some political authorities planned the crime and commissioned its realization to Giuliano's gang. It was generally suggested that there were some forms of collusion between the Giuliano's gang, the mafia, and the Italian State. Still, the judges concluded that Giuliano's gang acted autonomously.

10 | Salvatore (Pietro Cammarata) and mother in *Salvatore Giuliano* (1962), directed by Francesco Rosi and produced by Lux Film, Vides Cinematografica and Galatea Film.

It was a complicated tale to tell, and the censorship committee kept the film blocked for forty days without making any decision. In the end, it imposed the realization of several cuts (the decision is available here). It required, for example, the cut of a frame in which the carabinieri "act excessively rude, pushy" towards some women ("si mostrano eccessivamente rudi con spintoni"), frame considered "offensive to the decorum and prestige of the police officers" ("offensivo del decoro e del prestigio degli agenti della forza pubblica"). Other scenes were cut because "cruel and shocking" ("truci ed impressionanti"), such as the one of Carabinieri shooting on Giuliano's corpse, and that of the bandit's mother in pain, kissing the corpse while crying and screaming, which is probably the most interesting cut. While an image of a desperate woman in front of his dead son can be shocking, it can be regarded as a high manifestation of love and caring, a natural distress [Fig. 10].

Therefore, one can suppose that, in this case, commissioners declared the intention to censor something – a sequence that could shock the audience – while they were actually censoring something else: the humanization of a criminal. Through the strong visual impact of his mother despair, this sequence does not show the death of a felon, but that of a man. We

cannot be sure that, while stating some reasons to cut a sequence, the committee was not after something else – possibly wholly different [3].

Between certitude and flexibility

Preventive censorship no longer exists in Italy: in 2017, the legislator abrogated it and introduced an age oriented film rating system to protect only minors. Although censorship was abrogated, being aware of its mechanisms helps understanding the pros and cons of the contemporaneous juridical approaches to classify films, such as labelling them for everyone or adults only. During the discussion on how to organise the new Italian system, some experts proposed taking the Dutch system as a model. In the Netherlands, the film rating is not determined through human evaluation, but via an automatic online procedure. Before distributing their films, producers must answer preestablished questions on the length and nature of potentially offending scenes. The system analyses the answers and, almost in real time, automatically determines the rating of the film (see Sammarco 2014). The Italian legislator did not follow the Dutch model. The system introduced in 2017 remains human-driven, based on the evaluations of both cinema operators and the State: producers and distributors must classify their films (for all or adults only), and then send a copy of it to a State committee in charge of confirming or modifying the rating (Ramajoli 2018). Moreover, the legislator did not state precise preestablished criteria for such an evaluation. Shortly, Italy prefers to pursue flexibility over certitude.

In the light of what has been seen in this paper, the Italian approach is understandable: one can legitimately wonder if an automatic procedure, based on preestablished questions, may be able to take into account the evidence that images may deliver the same content in very different ways. Films can address a subject potentially harmful for a child, but using images able to weaken the topic, or even strengthen it – depending not only on the images themselves (*Une femme mariée*) but also on the context in which they lie (*Il grido* and *La dolce vita*). Through this approach, Italy wants each film to be evaluated as a specific case, taking into account a larger complexity and avoiding the risk of excessive rigidity and automatism. This allowed, for example, for the release of the movie *Blow-Up* in 1966, without it attaching the reputation of a pornographer to Antonioni.

> The prosecutor of Ancona agrees with the one of Naples (who orders the seizure without territorial competence) on the presence of two erotic scenes. Considering the film as a whole, "with regard to its intimate content" ("con riguardo al suo intimo contenuto"), he concludes, however, that such scenes are necessary for the script. As highlighted in the prosecutor's indictment, the first scene, breaking the state of tension created in Thomas by the revelation of the accidentally photographed crime, "underlines once again his inconstancy, so easy to pass from the convulsive search for reality contained in the photographs of the park to the fun with the possessed teenage girls" ("sottolinea ancora una volta [...] l'incostanza di lui, così facile a passare dalla convulsa ricerca della realtà racchiusa nelle fotografie del parco al divertimento delle invasate minorenni"). The second scene – the intercourse of the painter's wife – has the purpose of highlighting "the antinomy between the condition of the painter, impregnated in that moment of a complete, real state of certainty and well-being, albeit only carnal, and the state of mind of Thomas, oppressed by doubt [...] and more than ever only while he feels the need for contact and communication [...]" ("l'antinomia tra la condizione del pittore, pregno in quell'attimo di un compiuto, reale stato di certezza e di benessere, sia pure soltanto fisiologico, e lo stato d'animo di Thomas, oppresso dal dubbio [...] e più che mai solo mentre sente il bisogno del contatto e della comunicazione [...]") (Sbordone 1968, 103-104).

Interestingly, even the French legislator has recently shown to be aware of the importance of flexibility. In 2017, it changed the criteria to be followed to classify a movie as forbidden to minors (Decree No. 150/2017 of 8th February). While previously every film with not-simulated sex scenes had to be forbidden, today this applies only to those with scenes likely to "seriously disturb the sensitivity of minors" ("troubler gravement la sensibilité des mineurs"). This new formulation, requiring questioning if a scene "seriously" disturbs minors' sensitivity, generates less certitude on the rating decisions. However, the criterion of presence/absence of simulation sometimes led to inappropriate rating: a scene simulated by the actors can be realistic and disturbing, while there may be not-simulated sex scenes without dangerous effects for minors.

However, as a system based on a need for certainty, even a flexible system, such as the Italian one, is likely to generate risks. The main one is

that the decisions may be affected by the culture, experience, and sensitivity of the evaluators – the operators, the committee, and the judges in the event of appeal – compromising the objectivity and homogeneity of the ratings adopted. Moreover, there is a risk that the State committee may declare the intention to forbid to minors something with the hidden – or even unconscious – intention to forbid 'something else' (as in the case of Salvatore Giuliano) [4] . The danger here is not only that those movies are forbidden to minors, but that no one will ever watch the images considered dangerous to minors. Indeed, a film prohibited to minors is not desirable for production companies, since it is less marketable. One can wonder whether producers are induced to autonomously cut the elements likely to induce the ban to minors, thus obtaining the 'for everyone' rating for their movies. The risk is to face a sort of 'self-censorship', sneakier since it uses the market leverage rather than the power of the State.

The hope is that we never have to agree with those who referred to censorship as 'Madama Anastasia', a nickname that Italy took from France, where it began to be used during the Deuxième République in reference to censorship of literal and theatrical works. According to a first hypothesis, the nickname is related to Pope Anastasius I, the censor of Origen's works. Another one tells that Miss Anastasia was the clerk in charge of carrying the files of censorial practices to the censor commissioners of Paris (Ory 1997, 92). However, the most accredited hypothesis is that the nickname was invented to express the idea that censorship, a monster with a thousand heads, even when believed buried, resurrects relentlessly. In Greek, *ἀνάστασις* indeed means resurrection.

Notes

[1] Note that the long-life of film censorship has been possible because of the wording of art. 21 of the Italian Constitution. Its first paragraph recognizes everyone the right to freely express his thoughts in speech, writing, or any other communication form. However, freedom of expression founds a limit in public morality: paragraph 6 prohibits any publication, performance, and other exhibits that breaches it. Furthermore, the article puts the ordinary legislator in charge of prevention and enforcement related to such violations. The Constitution explicitly limits preventive measures to seizure for the press: under Par. 2, it «may not be subjected to any authorizations or censorship», Still, such a prohibition explicitly concerns only the press: therefore, it seems that preventive measures may end up including even censorship for all other forms of communication – including cinema.

[2] Among the films that experienced problems with censorship for reasons linked to sex exposure during that period: *L'Avventura* (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1960), *Un amore a Roma* (Dino Risi, 1960), *La notte* (Antonioni, 1961), *La ragazza in vetrina* (Luciano Emmer, 1961), *Una storia moderna: l'ape regina* (Marco Ferreri, 1963), *Marcia Nuziale* (Ferreri, 1965), *Blow-up* (Antonioni, 1966), *La caduta degli dei* (Luchino Visconti, 1969), *Partner* (Bernardo Bertolucci, 1968).

[3] The topic will be more deeply addressed in collaboration with Professor Maria Luisa Catoni in a future paper, currently under preparation.

[4] Note however that the Italian legislator provides several protection mechanisms. First, the right for the producer and/or distributor to be audited by the committee (Art. 4, Par. 6, of Legislative Decree No. 203/2017). It follows that the committee is expected to provide an adequate explanation and motivation in case its decision is inconsistent with the observations of the distributor and/or producer. Second, in case of dissatisfaction with the decision, the producer and/or distributor has the right to request for a committee with a different composition to reassess the case (Art. 4, Par. 5). Finally, the producer and/or distributor can appeal and challenge the decision of the second committee in front of the administrative judges.

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English abstract

In Italy, since 1913, producers were required to obtain approval from a ministerial committee before screening their films in theaters. The committee could either censor the whole film or impose cuts. This paper explores the relationship between cuts and images through the analysis of some movies that were (or were not) cut for reasons not immediately clear: Godard's Une femme mariée, Fellini's La dolce vita, Anonioni's Il grido and and Rosi's Salvatore Giuliano. Are cuts decisions (or lack of them) always related to the film's topic, or may they depend on the images narrating the topic themselves? Did it ever occur that images were used as a pretext for cutting something different from what was stated? After having reasoned upon these and other questions, the paper analyses advantages and disadvantages – for the freedom of artistic expression – of the possible juridical approaches to films rating. Indeed, the Italian State can no longer censor films, but it is still in charge of establishing whether they are suitable for everyone or adults only.

keywords | censorship; Italian cinema; minors protection.

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(v. Albo dei referee di Engramma)

At the border of artistic legitimation
Geography, practices and models of project spaces in Milan

Laura Forti, Francesca Leonardi

Introduction. The art system

In Italy, in the last ten years, a multiplicity of project spaces has taken place especially in Milan, following the previous "generation" of independent venues which opened in the first decade of the 21st century (Sperandio 2010). Looking at this phenomenon, it must be acknowledged that the origin of independent exhibitions and spaces in the art field can be traced back to mid-19th century [1]. In 1884, for the first time, the word 'independent' was used by the Salon des Indépendants organized by the Society of Independent Artists. It was a very liberal society, that exhibited all the artists who wished to participate, with no selection or jury. In 1903, in Paris, the Salon d'Automne was set as an independent exhibition, alternative both to the official Salon and to the Salon des Indépendants, since it showed the works of young artists but at the same time it was chaired by a jury. This effort toward an artistic independence was part of a broader socio-cultural change that opposed the bourgeois values to the bohemian lifestyle, where the intellectual freedom of the artist contrasted with the commercial art produced for the bourgeois market. This contraposition was encountered not only in the artistic field but in every cultural production: for instance, as analyzed by Bourdieau (Bourdieau 1992), Flaubert and Baudelaire it played a major role in the conquest of autonomy of the literary field. Therefore, independence in the cultural field arose from the necessity of intellectual freedom of the artist, and this would have led to the formation of the artistic avant-gardes and to the formation, in the last decades of the 19th century, of the art market as we came to know it.

The gallery-based art system, indeed, was the result of this socio-cultural transformation: from the rigid academia-controlled art production to the

bohemian artist supported by visionary gallerists who, together with collectors and critics, created the market for him. The art market, or better saying the art system, started to look as an 'artworld' with its own internal rules and paradoxes, as philosopher Arthur Danto defined it: "to see something as art requires something the eye cannot decry—an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of the history of art: an artworld" (Danto 1964, 580). He thought that what distinguishes art from non-art is the ability of some people to understand and position the artwork into a theory of art. The philosopher George Dickie elaborated on this concept up to the formulation of the Institutional Theory of Art (Dickie 1974)—that is the theoretical framework in which this article is also grounded. Dickie stressed the institutional aspect of the art system, meaning the network of relations which constitutes it: "by institutional approach I mean the idea that works of art are art as the result of the position or place they occupy within an established practice, namely the artworld" (Dickie 1983, 47). What Dickie addressed with institutional theory is the complexity of relations which defines and structures the art system [2]. The artworld (or framework) is composed of different actors, which both Dickie and the sociologist Howard Becker described (Becker 1982): both of them stressed the multidimensionality of the artistic production, meaning that an artwork includes the collaborative work of many professionals with different competences and the adoption of a set of conventions [3]. It emerged that even if rules may not be explicit, the structure and functioning of the contemporary art system is highly regulated; indeed, Becker used the word "cooperation" to describe how the artworld works [4].

This pattern of collective activity can be visualized from the perspective of the career of the artist: on one side there is the multitude of artists who have graduated from art schools and have a little production of artworks. On the other artists, generally after studying, participate in art residencies in order to develop their artistic research and produce some artworks (usually residencies have a production budget). Then, the artist somehow manages to get represented by a small gallery which puts him on the market. Critics start writing about him and curators invite him to show in their exhibition space and later in biennials. The fame and appreciation for the artist should grow sustainably for the rest of his career: he should exhibit in more and more important museums, passing from a smaller to a

bigger gallery getting access to global fairs, and his prices should steadily grow. Of course, this status creation process takes place neither at the same speed nor in a linear way for all the artists. As a matter of fact, very few of them manage to become 'stars' of the sort that are included in the collections of the most important museums and achieve record prices on the market.

Project spaces at the border of artistic legitimation

The position of independent spaces (or project spaces) in the art system is between academia and the first gallery experiences. They embody a very important phase in the career of the artist indeed: when he/she for the first time exhibits his/her work to a public and starts confronting the art system. Small galleries usually pick up emerging artists from project spaces, which are often the first showcase opportunity for them. Whereas in other countries the final year exhibition of art students is a very crowded event, attended by gallerists and museum curators, in Italy few significant exhibition opportunities are provided by schools, and they are generally considered not attractive. The lack of official endorsement from academia and the general scarcity of public grants for artists make project spaces a vital and fundamental resource of the system. In this sense, project spaces are the first gatekeepers of the art system and sit at the border of artistic legitimation.

Focusing on the independent scene in Milan through qualitative interviews to curators and founders of art spaces, this research studies the challenges and characteristics of project spaces by addressing their organization, identity and relations with other actors of the system. The notions of independence and interdependence are here investigated in relation to the spaces' identity and activity: how do they balance intellectual and financial autonomy? How can they avoid the risk of isolation? Can common rules or organizational models be identified? Finally, which are the most relevant objectives of these spaces: visibility, legitimation, research or innovation?

It is important to address a terminology issue: the authors prefer to use the term "project space" instead of "independent space" because the majority of the curators interviewed recognized it as more appropriate and in line with their ideas and purposes. Apart from terminology, the

instances brought up in the past by independent spaces and their relationship with the art system are very similar to the project spaces' ones. In the first part, the article focuses on the concept and organization of the spaces, addressing issues of identity, curatorial choices and budget; in the second part it visualizes the formal and informal relationships between spaces, artists and founders through a network analysis; in the conclusion, a morphology of project spaces is outlined, identifying three main models: the research space, the hybrid space and the proto-gallery.

Literature review

Even if, internationally, studying and mapping project spaces and creating archives is a relatively common practice (Young 2016 on Halifax; Tavano Blessi, Sacco and Pilati 2011 on Montreal; Picard 2009 on Chicago; Miles 2005 on Melbourne; Wilczek 2010 on UK), apparently there is not much specific literature about contemporary project spaces in Milan or in Italy. Among international publications, Murphy and Cullen (2016) is maybe the most similar research to this one: it looks at the conditions, organizational models and role of spaces in Europe within contemporary art and society, even if it does not include network analysis in its methodology. Mapping seems to be the most common strategy in order to fight the temporariness and sometimes evanescence of project spaces; the online platform artist-runspace.org is a global database, but very few Italian spaces are detected and put on the map (11 project spaces in Italy and only one in Milan).

The main reference in the Italian field is "Italian Cluster", an independent research by Giulia Floris and Giulia Ratti published in 2019. It is a collection of 13 in-depth interviews with various professionals who manage, participate, observe, finance and inspire project spaces in Italy, with infographics and data. The publication does not aim to be an exhaustive research nor an updated map of Italian project spaces, since their speed of opening and closing is almost uncatchable: the major point of their study is to shed light on the independent dimension, in order to initiate a discussion on its challenges and issues. Even if it is not a scientific nor systematic one (interviews do not follow a geographical criteria of selection), the study has the merit of gathering primary information on spaces and collecting testimonies in different geographical areas of Italy.

On the use of network analysis in the cultural field, and more specifically in the contemporary art system, literature is richer. The major reference is the work of the Observatory on Contemporary Art of ASK Research Center (Università Bocconi), where the authors of the article also worked. The exploration of the Observatory was carried out on the visibility, the recognition and the processes of verification of contemporary art production between 2005 and 2013. In particular, Baia Curioni and Rizzi (2016) uses network analysis to understand the convergence between the market-oriented actions of commercial art galleries at the Art Basel fair and the exhibiting choices in the museum environment. Another important reference is the work of Mitali and Ingram (2018) which uses network analysis applied to abstract artists of the early 20th century. The research finds out that an artist in a brokerage, rather than a closure position, is likely to become more famous; that rather than creatitivity, brokerage networks associated with cosmopolitan identities are perhaps the key social-structural drivers of artists' fame.

Within organizational studies, Di Maggio (1982) analyses Boston's cultural entrepreneurship scene in the 19th century and the creation of an organizational base for high culture. He addresses the context of cultural capitalism by focusing on the Museum of Fine Arts and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, concluding that the alliance between class and culture is defined by its organizational mediation.

On the notion of entrepreneurship, Klamer (Klamer 2011) studies the figure of the cultural entrepreneur, who shows similarities with artists or curators running project spaces, and questions his/her peculiarities and role in the economic system. Gehman and Soublière (Gehman and Soublière 2007) analyze three perspectives on cultural entrepreneurship: making culture, meaning the processes by which high culture organizations and popular culture products are created; deploying culture, or the processes by which culture constitutes a toolkit for legitimating new ventures; and cultural making, meaning the distributed and intertemporal processes whereby value is created across multiple and fluid repertoires and registers of meaning.

Lastly, on the notion of independence in the cultural and artistic field the literature is extremely rich, to cite just a few: Bourdieu (1992) on the

conquest of autonomy in the literary field, Bennett and Strange (2015) on the independence in the music and media sector. However important, these last publications are not the primary references in terms of methodology and discipline for this article, so the authors limit themselves to just acknowledge them.

Methodology and sample

In the initial phase of the research, the authors have collected different lists of project spaces in Milan from some cultural aggregators' databases, such as "Zero", "That's contemporary", "Untitled" [5] and "Italian Cluster". A comprehensive list of independent spaces in Milan was finally created. On a total of 69 independent or cultural spaces detected in Milan, a selection of 39 spaces has been found based on the following criteria:

- the project space needs to have a physical location (no online projects);
- it must be located in Milan;
- it has agreed on answering to our questions;
- even though we did not discriminate between private and public spaces, for the purpose of this article and for reasons of comparability, no public institutions have been taken into consideration.

The sample includes the following project spaces: /77, Armada, Assab One, Brown Project, Casacicca, Circoloquadro Arte Contemporanea, Converso, Current, Dimora Artica, Edicola Radetzky, Erratum, Espinasse 31, Fantaspazio, FuturDome, Galleria Inconsueta, Il Colorificio, La Casa di O, Le Dictateur, Lucie Fontaine, MARS, Marsélleria, Mega, On Off, Pelagica, Sblu Spazio al Bello, Spazio Cabinet, Spazio Gamma, Spazio Nour, Spazio O', Spazio Serra, SpazioFico, Standards, Studiolo, T-space, The Open Box, The Workbench, Uno a uno, Vegapunk, Xcontemporary.

Given the peculiar nature of these realities, qualitative data have been gathered through structured interviews to their founders [6]; while quantitative research has been carried out on the list of artists who have exhibited in these spaces in 2018 and 2019. The period of analysis of the article, which coincides with the period of data collection, are the years 2017, 2018 and 2019. The structured interviews are divided in three major paragraphs: Identity, Organization and Relations. The first part focuses on the concept of the space and on the idea of independence; the second part

investigates the organizational structure and the financial aspect of it; the last part collects the relationships between the space and the actors of the art system, in order to create the network analysis. Interviewed spaces gave multiple answers to some questions (e.g. multiple criteria, definitions, activities, ect.), that is why some results may exceed the total number of spaces. Interviews and additional desk research allowed to build a dataset of 840 artists and more than 1,000 art events held in the selected 39 Milanese project spaces from 2017 to 2019. The network analysis has been carried out with UciNet (Borgatti et al. 2002).

1. Identity of project spaces

Considering the overall sample, a growing trend of new project spaces can be seen between 2015 and 2017, during which 18 new spaces have opened. From 2001 to 2018, only five spaces have closed due to different reasons: some of them just reached their purpose, respecting their nature of project with a beginning and an end (Brown Project, /77, Marsélleria); others changed completely their identity from project space to a co-working (Lucie Fontaine) or a publishing company (Le Dictateur). They are small spaces, usually both in terms of square meters and in terms of public: on average they attract 150 persons per exhibition and each exhibition lasts approximately two months. Generally, the public is composed of professionals and students from the art world (25 project spaces) and less frequently by generic people or neighbors (14). Legally speaking, project spaces generally assume the juridical form of non-profit cultural associations (24), some of them are private property spaces (8) open to the public, few of them (4) are supported by a company or have an additional for-profit activity supporting them and others (4) have different informal settings: some begin as a squat activity in an occupied place (Galleria Inconsueta), others are nomadic not structured curatorial activities (/77, Uno a uno) or informal organisations in temporary rented places (Lucie Fontaine). Notwithstanding their different legal form, the prevalent activity of those spaces can be identified with organising exhibitions and being a space for experimentation and research in the artistic field.

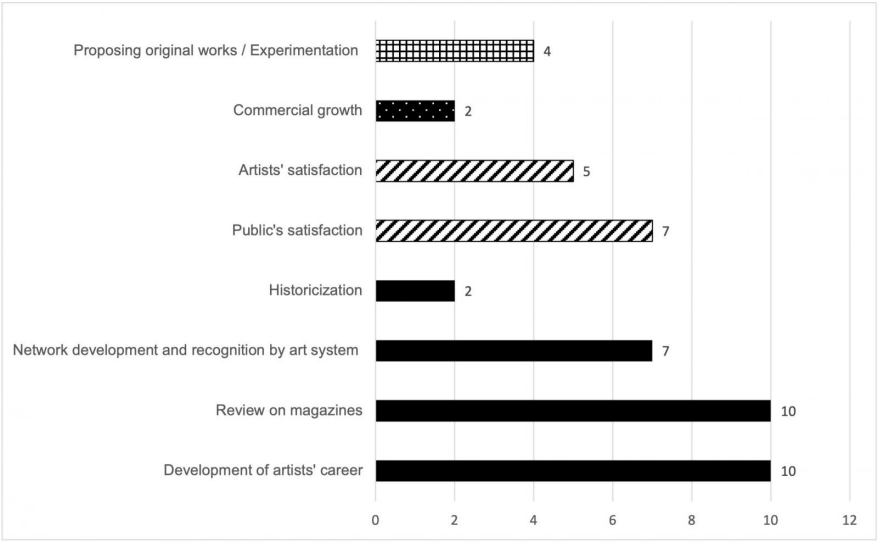
When asked if they find themselves in the term ‘independent space’ a rich discussion followed over the meaning of independence. Those who recognised themselves in that terminology (64%), defined independence in

a twofold way: economic independence and curatorial independence. The first means not only that they provide for their own financial support, but also that they feel out of the art market logics and dynamics in managing the space. In this sense, independence is strictly related also to curatorial choices. This translates in the freedom of working with artists in a non-continuative way (as galleries usually do), in the possibility to focus on the creativity of the artist and not on the selling of his/her works and in being autonomous in every stage of the project. Curatorial independence also was linked to improvisation, openness, fluidity, freedom of expression, freedom of choosing artists independently from market trends. So 'independent space' signifies curatorial freedom, managerial autonomy and experimentation—which undoubtedly are the positive aspects of every project space. However, those who refused or partially agreed to be associated with that term (35,8%) interpreted the meaning of independence as being 'isolated' from the system or as an outdated adjective signifying 'alternative' to the mainstream. Their point is that it is impossible to be independent from the art system, in fact, in order to have a voice, the space needs to be in relation and in connection with it.

Interdependence with the art system and the importance of creating a network of relationships have been highlighted by several spaces as a fundamental element. The discussion helped in de-structuring the meaning of independence and highlighting its paradoxes: spaces need to be independent from the logic of the market and need to embody their curatorial freedom in offering a place open to research and experimentation; at the same time, they need to financially survive and being taken into consideration by the system. The discussion also provided a new vocabulary: in general, 'project space' seems to be the most appropriate term to use because it includes a temporary attitude and openness to different formats and objectives. Other terms which have come out in addition to project space and independent space, are: artist-run-space, curatorial reality, private kunsthalle, platform, artist residence. Some of these terms highlight specificities of single spaces which are run by artists or perform a specific activity (artist's residence), whereas the others emphasize its curation and exhibition. Even if some of these terms refer to realities well-studied by art history, they cannot be fully considered synonyms of 'project space' because they are too specific and unable to include the complex diversity that the term implies.

Looking at their operational behaviour, obviously the main selection criteria curators or artists follow is their personal curatorial taste – which is coherent with the curatorial independence mentioned earlier. Most of the founders are emergent curators or artists, so it is easy for them to know other emerging artists and support each other. Some of them admit that they choose artists amid their personal network or coming from a specific university (usually Accademia di Brera). Some project spaces focus on emerging artists (6), whereas others (3) prefer to exhibit established artists. Both of these are legitimation strategies: the first one aims to legitimize the space as cutting-edge for emerging talents, the second uses the prestige of established artists in order to legitimize the space. Other spaces (4) select artists that work with a specific technique (e.g. painting, sculpture, etc.) because of a curatorial statement or peculiarities of the space.

An important observation comes from the criteria which projects spaces use in evaluating their activity.



1 | Criteria of success, Key: black= legitimation by the system; stripes=social appreciation; dots=commercial; squared= research. Note: total may vary because of multiple answers. (Source: Interviews)

If most of them have stressed the importance of curatorial independence and freedom of their practice, however, when it comes to evaluate the

success of their program, the vast majority of them use criteria tied to legitimation by the system [Fig. 1]. Legitimation (black in the graphic) comes mainly from the development of artists' career after they exhibited in the space and by the reviews on art magazines. Particularly important is enlarging the network, meaning obtaining collaborations with important institutions and galleries, which gives legitimacy and importance to the project space. This demonstrates that even if spaces want to act or to be perceived as neither dependent on the market nor on power dynamics, this is not truly possible since they rely on their judgement and approval. Furthermore, two spaces – which are now closed – mentioned as their success criteria the fact that they have been historicized: again, it is the recognition and legitimation over time by the system that decrees the relevance of a project. Appreciation by the public and by artists are also relevant indicators: it signifies that the impact of these places is evaluated also on a social level (stripes in the graphic). The increase of visitors' number and the increase in artists' proposals is taken as an indicator of success and appreciation. Counterintuitively, the merit of exhibiting for the first time artists and brand new works is valued only by few spaces as a criteria of success (squared in the graphic). Finally, two spaces indicate the commercial growth as their criteria of evaluation (dots in the graphic) – which suggests that legitimation may not be sufficient for the sustainability of the space.

The specificity of the place of a project space is either particularly poignant or completely irrelevant in relation to the exhibition program. For some spaces the curatorial project is consequential to the place in which it is set. For instance, Casacicca is a private house where artists live for a period and leave their work there as a gift. The Open Box derives its name from the fact that it is a car box turned into a project space. Edicola Radetzky is a dismissed news stand which now hosts installations and sculptures: the fact that it has windows all around convinced the curators to choose only sculptures to be displayed there because they can be appreciated from all the perspectives by passengers. Converso has as its main objective to open spaces closed to the public and to exhibit artworks which confront the place. For other project spaces the choice of the place has been more random and defined more by the real estate market than by curatorial taste.

2. Organisation of project spaces

Concerning funding, the major source of revenues for 74% (29 out of 39) of project spaces is self-funding. Of these, 13 are the spaces whose only supporting means is self-funding, whereas the rest have mixed funding. Only 26% of project spaces are able to get external funding (sponsors) or public grants to cover the costs. External or collateral sources of revenues other than public grants are: sponsorships, offering the space to rent for workshops or courses and creating a membership or subscription card. This last option is also used to create a community of supporters and to engage the public with the space. Starting a business collateral to the exhibition space (e.g. Spazio Gamma with the library) is a good way to partly cover costs, even though it drains energy and funding itself. In this way project spaces become hybrid spaces with different and synergic souls. Since there is such great diversity between funding, the annual budget greatly varies too: it goes from a minimum of 3.000€ (basically covering the bills) up to 120.000€ (when supported by a company).

It is necessary to note that usually curators and founders who work in these spaces (when they are not funded by commercial companies) do not get a salary. Indeed, generally founders of project space have another job which provides them their main salary. Moreover, all of them work in the cultural sector and the vast majority of them in the art field. For this reason, their contribution to the project space is residual and highly influenced by their primary job, also in terms of relationships within the system.

One of the most sensitive issues with which project spaces have to deal with is selling artworks, since according to Italian legislation they generally could not (or, rather, it depends on the juridical form of the organization). For this reason, the majority of spaces do not sell artworks, they limit their intervention to put the collector in contact with the artist. Those who sell artworks, they either legitimately can because of statutory declarations, or they do it through donations. This is a consequence of a lack of bureaucratical flexibility to address specific issues in informal associations.

Finally, in an art world in which rules are not written but widely shared, it came with little surprise the acknowledgement of a lack of explicit ethical

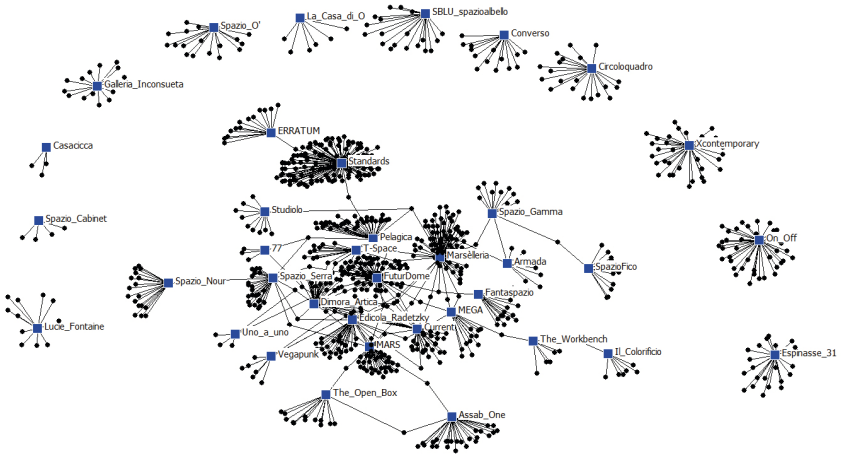
rules in the management of the space. In fact, when asked if curators perceive a conflict of interest in working in more than one space, the majority has answered that they see no conflict whereas only four spaces said that they would avoid doing so. Working in galleries or cultural institutions and curating their own project space is not perceived as incompatible, whereas the same operation in another sector would probably be. Indeed, curators admit that they can run the space thanks to their primary occupation, not only in terms of funding but mainly in terms of connections with artists and other actors of the system. Moreover, when asked if the founders-artists use the project space to exhibit their work, 15 spaces answered that they do, while only 7 say they do not. This is an explicit self-legitimation practice in which emergent artists who are not represented by galleries rent a space in order to be noted by the system. Usually operations like this, whose aim is entering the system and the market for the first time, are done by independent curators who select the most interesting artists and organize a show (e.g. talent scouting). That is why many project spaces are run by emergent artists or emergent curators: it is a collaborative way to autonomously get visibility in the system in their very initial career. On the other hand, artist-run-spaces have a long tradition: usually they start in the studio of an artist who invites other artists to show their work. This practice is generally detached from commercial implications and it is aimed at creating a community of artists who sustain each other's research in a fruitful way. This is the case of MARS (Milan Artist Run Space), a decennial project born in an artist's studio whose initial objective was to create a space for discussion and experimentation between artists. However, nowadays not all the spaces who define themselves as 'artist-run-space' share the same intentions: some resemble a window-shop for the art market, which closes once the gallery picks up the artist.

So, the initial phase of the legitimation of the artist is a very interesting and complex experience: it spans from confrontation and research with other artists to get visibility on the market. Self-legitimation strategies are very diffused in the art system and they are quite coherent with the temporary attitude of project spaces: these are platforms of experimentation and visibility, which close once their purpose terminates.

3. Relations and Network analysis

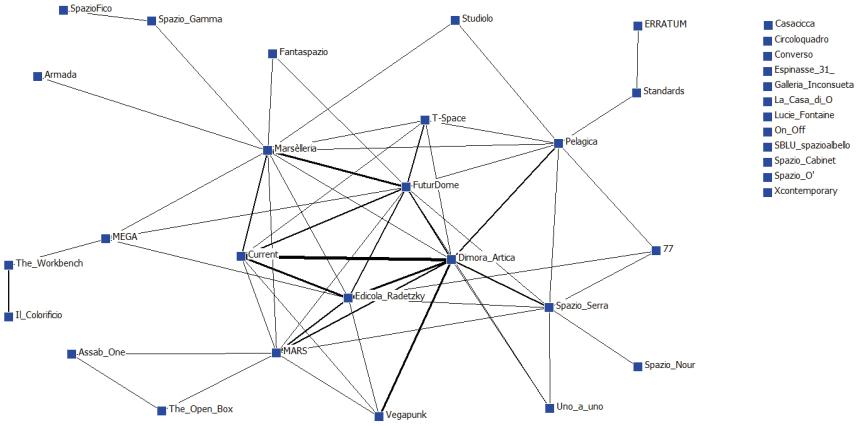
It is interesting to analyse the attitude to conduct autonomous artistic research and the notion of independence in a network perspective, as discussed in the interviews. Considering all the events and projects organized in the 2017-2019 timespan, we can check which artists are shared by more than one project space in Milan, and which are exclusively shown by a specific one.

The resulting network ([Fig. 2] where blue squares represent the art spaces, and the black dots represent the artists) clearly suggests the presence of 'islands'. On 37 project spaces (Brown Project and Le Dictateur, included in our sample, were not active anymore from 2017 to 2019), nearly one third (12) do not have any artists in common with the other independent spaces working in the city, and other 8 spaces have a weak connection through just one artist. We can assume that these realities program their activities with a marked independence and select their artists without an exhibition history within the local independent scene. Besides, only the 6% of the artists in our dataset (48 out of 834) is shown by more than one project space. These artists are young (half of them is under 35 years, 3 out of 4 are under 40 years) and nearly all Italian-born (the 92%), with some experience abroad; the 70% is male, thus suggesting a significant unbalance in the promotion of emergent artists. Around them, we can see a nucleus of 17 spaces that have links with more than one space. This can be interpreted in different ways: it could be the result of an explicit collaboration, a sign of the capability to influence other spaces' choices, or just a consonance of artistic taste; the presence of the same founder or curator is not so relevant, occurring in just two cases. At the very centre of the network we find spaces that share more than 10 artists: Dimora Artica (14 artists), Current (13), Marsèlleria (12), FuturDome (11) and Edicola Radetzky (10), immediately followed by MARS (9).



2 | Network of project spaces and artists exhibited, 2017-2019.

We also represented the implicit relationship among spaces [Fig. 3], connecting them if they have artists in common (the thicker the line, the more the artists they share). We can recognise stronger links between some of them: for instance, Dimora Artica and Current, Dimora Artica and Futurdome, Dimora Artica and Vegapunk, FuturDome and Marsèlleria.



3 | Network of Connections among project spaces with one or more artists in common, 2017-2019.

The nature of these links, more or less intentional, can be developed through initiatives that incentive partnerships and collaborative projects, events and platforms helping these kind of spaces to know each other and make their programs more visible. Many of them (10) take part in Fuori MiArt, a dedicated section of the contemporary art fair of Milan, while others participate in diffused events opening artists' studios and spaces (Spazi Aperti, Studi Festival). Moreover, some spaces actively organise specific initiatives to create connections, and this is particularly interesting in a context in which, as represented in the previous figure, 'off' projects tend to develop isolated curatorial choices. With *Outer Space* in 2017, FuturDome invited ten independent spaces to exhibit, showing the overall art system their great potential. In the same year, *Rose Bouquet*, a two day-long workshop at Marsèlleria, was intended as a collective portrait of different artistic contexts sharing intentions, struggles and an aptitude to rethink organizational structures.

Conclusions. A morphology of project spaces

Even if the project spaces analysed in this article widely differ between one another, three major typologies can be found: the research space, the hybrid space and the proto-gallery.

The research space is a place dedicated to experimentation and artistic research and it is detached from commercial constraints. For this reason, it is often managed by artists, possibly in their studio, or by emerging curators who want to realize a creative curatorial idea. It is a space for training and development for young artists who just graduated from art schools. It can be indirectly managed or influenced by professors acting as mentors, as in the case of Armada where the artist-professor gave the space to his students and the place is currently used by students of Accademia di Brera. It is self-financed and this is why it can be short-lived: either new generations of artists take care of the space or it closes following its founders' careers. This is particularly true for spaces intended as 'curatorial projects' which generally close in a few years, after having attracted enough visibility from the system.

The hybrid space is a more complex organisation in which the exhibition program is sustained by a commercial activity usually carried out in the same space. These are not the spaces of commercial companies who use

them as a pop-up shop, on the contrary here there is an entrepreneurial business beside the exhibition activity. Some of these activities may be in relation to the exhibition program, as in the case of Spazio Gamma which has a library and invites artists working with graphic design and editorial products. In this instance the activities are synergic and enable the space to get specialized in a niche sector. Another good example are spaces which organise artists' residencies and then exhibit their work in the space. However, hybridity does not just mean a simultaneous presence of more than one activity, but also a path of hybridization: a space can start as an exhibition space and then it can become something different following founders' specializations. For instance, T-space was born as a project space dedicated to contemporary photography and lately has become a photographic studio offering photographic services. Another example is Le Dictateur whose identity has always been on the threshold of an exhibition space and an editorial project: once the space closed, it continued as an editorial company collaborating with artists.

The proto-gallery model represents all those project spaces seeking to become a gallery. Frequently curators (who later become gallerists) open project spaces as cultural non-profit associations to try to navigate the art system without competing directly with galleries. Later, once they have strengthened their relationships with artists and collectors, they complete their transition into a commercial gallery. During this phase, they do occasional sales and try to create contacts with collectors. In this case, the project space serves as a moment of learning and observation of the dynamics of the art system.

Project spaces have some internal challenges in common, such as the gentrification effect, which almost directly follows the opening of artistic spaces in a specific city area, or limited access to funds, which is directly related to their informal or little structured organization. If the 'independence' claimed for their cultural activity risks to become a fragile isolation (both in terms of visibility and sustainability overtime), the participation to debates, exchanges, dedicated events can make spaces more aware of the central role they play in the art system: they are the first gatekeepers and the first opportunity for emerging artists who can be noticed and later picked up by galleries. Moreover, as some interviewed curators have said, there is a big representation gap of emergent artists in

Italy: in opposition to what happens abroad, generally galleries in Italy tend to show international emergent artists rather than Italian ones because of a supposed matter of prestige. Project spaces cover that gap by exhibiting young Italian artists who otherwise have no chance to enter into the artistic scene. In conclusion, project spaces meet structural needs of the contemporary art field, especially in Italy.

Further research, given the peculiarities of this period, should analyse Covid-19 effect on the art system, especially if and in which measure the online channel has created a disintermediation of traditional structures in the system.

Notes

[1] The first independent spaces can be identified with 1855 Courbet's Pavillon du Réalisme in Paris, which was organised next to the Exposition Universelle. Later in 1863, Napoleon III organised the Salon des Réfusés in Paris in order to show the paintings not selected by the official Salon. All these events showed a clear opposition to the official evaluation criteria of the Salon and the rigid cultural discourse of academia, up to the point that this necessity to self-identify as an independent and not institutional movement was pursued in 1874 with the first exhibition of Impressionists in Nadar's studio in Boulevard des Capucines.

[2] "The institutional theory attempts to place the work of art within a multi-placed network of greater complexity than anything envisaged by the various traditional theories. The networks or contexts of the traditional theories are too thin to be sufficient. The institutional theory attempts to provide a context which is 'thick' enough to do the job", Dickie 1983, 47.

[3] "What is primary is the understanding shared by all involved that they are engaged in an established activity or practice within which there is a variety of roles (...) Our artworld consists of the totality of such roles with the role of the artist and the public at its core", Dickie 1983, 52.

[4] "The forms of cooperation may be ephemeral, but often become more or less routine, producing patterns of collective activity we can call an art world", Becker 1984,1.

[5] "Zero", "That's contemporary" and "Untitled" are online magazines and blogs dedicated to the artistic scene of Milan. They agreed on collaborating with the authors and sharing their databases.

[6] Interviews have been done with the collaboration of Accademia di Brera's students, who attended the course "Economia e mercato dell'arte" in 2018 and 2019.

Appendix: structured interview

BASIC INFORMATION

Address

Legal form

Number of projects per year and how to access

Description of the last projects

IDENTITY

Aims of the project space

Self-definition (independent space, project space, artist-run space…)

Meaning of the notion of "independence"

Other spaces considered as a reference

How artists and projects are selected

Choice and relation with the physical space

Self-assessment criteria

RELATIONS

Description and dimension of the audience

Map of relations with other private and public institutions in Milan

Relations within the neighbourhood

Participation to organized events for project spaces

Eventual collaborations / partnerships

ORGANISATION

Funding sources

Eventual rules / code of ethics

Communication of activities, relationship with reviews

Names and biographies of founders and curators

Relationship with other professional activities (founders and curators)

Projects and vision for the next 5 years

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English abstract

The article focuses on the role and typology of project spaces within the contemporary art system and in particular in the city of Milan. By problematizing the notion of 'independence' and the terminology of 'independent space' in opposition to 'project space', the article investigates how an art space interacts with the system. The objective is twofold: firstly, the research displays the interrelation between project spaces through a network analysis; secondly, it outlines a morphology of project spaces based on similar organizational and managerial models. In the conclusive part the authors identify three main typologies of project spaces of the Milanese scene: the research space, the hybrid space and the proto-gallery.

keywords | project space; contemporary art system; network analysis; independent space.

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(v. Albo dei referee di Engramma)

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