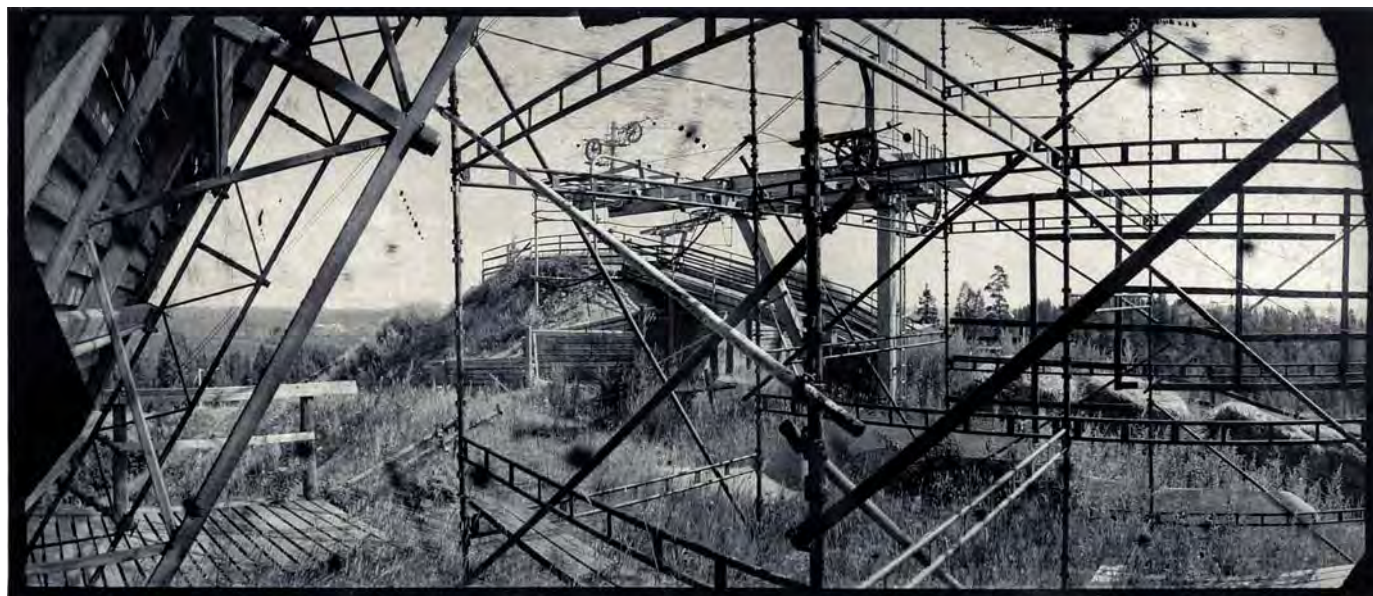


Kimmo E. Lehtonen

# RHETORIC OF THE VISUAL

Metaphor in a Still Image



JYVÄSKYLÄ STUDIES IN HUMANITIES 166

Kimmo E. Lehtonen

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Metaphor in a Still Image

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UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

JYVÄSKYLÄ 2011

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## ABSTRACT

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This study includes an introduction and six articles. The articles return to the problem of visual meaning as a content-intensive quality of an image. The elementary questions are in which ways does an image represent itself when it is published, and how much does the genre in a single visual presentation metaphorise itself before presenting its message, narrative or argument through the visual means?

The goal of this study is to make new openings for the analysis of the content in visual presentations in the field of humanities. It considers media studies and cultural studies in terms of semiotics and genre studies. The texts look at a variety of theoretical disciplines, especially semiotics, rhetoric and to some extent, hermeneutics and various theories of art.

The work comprises several approaches to the research topic. It studies the premises of the audience approaches to visual culture in terms of semiotics and rhetoric. It shows how rhetoric functions in photographic practice, in the ethos of technology and as a trope in artistic expression. It studies the signification processes between the image and the product, labels, and logos in relation to an individual, the society, and the different notions of a product. The ideologies in landscape photography and the transitions to idiosyncratic expression in contemporary photographic art are reviewed from the standpoint of the diversity and the expanding significance of the aesthetic.

The focus is on the aesthetic qualities of multimodal images and their affiliation with different traditions in visual representation. The visual is understood as a basic element that constitutes social bonding and the sense of community in contemporary culture. The study discusses various concepts of metaphor in visual rhetoric through trope and predication. It also offers nine distinctive close-readings of images and their use of rhetorical operations representing three major genres in contemporary media.

Keywords: visual culture, photography, information graphics, semiotic, rhetoric, art theory, aesthetics.

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Lillgård, November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

This thesis is based on six distinct articles, five of which have been published between 1996 and 2007. In addition, the first one, a theoretical introduction, "Pre-Conditions of Illustration", is compiled for this dissertation. Each of the texts has a different publisher and all the anthologies where they were published had a different approach. Consequently, the texts do not follow one theoretical approach but open the same problem to a variety of theoretical disciplines, especially to semiotics, rhetoric and to some extent, hermeneutics. I have participated in all these books as an invited writer, and I have not been involved with the editing nor the production of them in any other role outside that of an author of one of the texts. The common thread that runs through the texts has been the research of contemporary visual culture, and in my case, the visual culture from the perspective of photography. My texts do not address photography in visual culture as a practice, and the remarks on history are strictly in relation to the matter discussed. In my studies different uses of photography could be defined as a complex phenomenon of contemporary culture and art, and as a vital medium along the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century, and further, as a key instrument on 'lens-based' visual technologies that represent the core of the transition from modern and analogue culture to what is defined as visual culture, postmodern culture, consumer culture, digital culture, or by such definitions as late modern service-based society or self-reflexive society.

Reading *The Society of the Spectacle* by Guy Debord in the winter of 2005 made me see the big picture, which I address in this work. Guy Debord claims in his 1967 text<sup>1</sup> how the simple principle of the society of the spectacle is that what cannot be seen, does not exist, and what is visible, is all there is. He sees the period of the spectacle as the weakest link in Western philosophy and as a descendant of this period of weakness. This project attempts to understand eve-

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<sup>1</sup> Debord 2005, p. 13, an introduction by Jussi Vähämäki.

rything through the categories of sight, resulting in all concrete life turning into a world of speculation.<sup>2</sup> Despite the radical nature of Debord's thinking, I must admit that this is exactly where I am, and yes, that is what needs to be studied! Debord's conception of the contemporary society of spectacle is vigilant and most captivating. The different emphasis in the research orientation of this work does not concentrate on the late Marxist critique of culture, and this disallows me to define the phenomenon of culture and the spectacle. Therefore, I describe the contextual historical change that is studied as the *return of illustration*. Not as the weakest link in our philosophy, and not to return everything back to sight or its categories, but to propose a hypothesis that the intense, fantastic uses of visual expression in our culture could be understood better through their content.

Visual culture in its rich variety of different domains has rightly received the extensive attention of different academic disciplines. It has been a great advantage for me to find myself always in the wrong place. I completed my Master's degree in Social Sciences and graduated as a sociology major. At that time I was starting a career in photography, and encountered many problematic moments with my supervisors Kimmo Jokinen and Katarina Eskola while moving on to semiotics and writing my Master's thesis on photography in advertising from a socio-semiotic perspective, as a photographer. I also actively participated in courses on political science and was introduced to theories of rhetoric by Kari Palonen and Jukka Kanerva, as a sociologist. For the local photographers it took a decade to understand that I had been serious and full-heartedly committed to photography as art, despite the fact that I was an academic and at the time launching a BA-programme on visual culture at the faculty of education! I became a member of the curatorial board of LUMO, the international triennial on photo-based art in 1992 and have been a member since. It made me face the international scene and the currents of the moment. For me moving to the department of Art and Culture Studies finally opened up the interdisciplinary academic approach. The shared seminar sessions with scholars and students from The Research Center for contemporary culture, literature, art history, and art education made me understand how different disciplines may genuinely support each other.

The shared relevance between the five different research orientations in my texts from different periods is perhaps the only prospect appropriate to me due to my background. In this volume, the articles follow the chronological order of original publishing. I probably was obliged to progress one step at a time, through different, sometimes circuitous routes to reach the last text of this selection, *Pirates*. In terms of theoretical orientation, I always return to the same problem of visual meaning as a content-intensive quality of an image. It is also a continuum starting from social and political sciences, discussing the problem in relation to industrial design. The path of ideas returns back to the history of photography to make new openings in humanities and culture studies, to comments in media studies and contemporary culture in terms of semiotics and

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<sup>2</sup> Debord 2005, postulation 19, p. 36.

genre studies, and finally in rhetoric and various theories of art. It also helps to understand the fundamentals of visual expression that I have seen, felt, and experienced, but for the explanation of which I have not previously had a proper procedure. Before further explaining my approach in more detail, the foundation of the selected articles needs to be described.

## 1.2 Short Introduction to the Articles

*“On the Relationship Between Visuality and Rhetoric”*<sup>3</sup> was originally published in a collection that has a strong emphasis on social and political sciences. The anthology addresses different studies on the problematic of the global as a sphere. Political, religious, and visual dimensions are studied as representations of this development. My contribution concerns the premises of the audience connecting with visual culture as rhetoric. The research problem in this study is how to combine rhetoric as a photographic practice, the ethos of technology and a trope as an artistic expression. The significance of time/space attributes is looked into through medium and genre and in order to critically observe various aspects of photography as a sign system.

The second anthology includes essays on the relationship between an individual, society, and the different notions of a product, and has a clear connection to the research problems in industrial design. In my article *“From a Genie in a Bottle to Another Dimension”*<sup>4</sup>, I study the signification processes between the image and the product packaging, labels, and logos. The question I pose in this study is whether visual expression of branding in advertising and a product picture can be seen as a contextual stigma? Visual culture is studied as the commercial logic of a product, and the interventions this logic has caused in the productisation of the signification processes as well as in social spheres such as sports.

The third text, *“Post-topographical Landscapes”*<sup>5</sup>, was written for an extensive collection of texts on the history of photography as a modus operandi with the aspiration to reassess the history of Finnish photography and to reflect this heritage on the contemporary photographic art. In my article the ideologies in landscape photography and the transitions to idiosyncratic expression in contemporary photographic art are reviewed from the standpoint of the diversity and the expanding significance of the aesthetic. The study elaborates on land-

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<sup>3</sup> Published in Parvikko Tuija, Kanerva Jukka (eds.) *Exploring the Chronospace of Images*. SoPhi publications 4, University of Jyväskylä, 1996. In the introduction article I refer to this text as *“Chronospace- text”*.

<sup>4</sup> Published in Niininen Petri (ed.) *Tuote kulttuurissa: esseitä yksilön, yhteisön ja tuotteiden vuorovaikutuksesta*. University of Art and Design, Helsinki 1996. In the introductory article I refer to this text as *“Teemu The Duck- text”*.

<sup>5</sup> Published in Kukkonen Jukka, Vuorenmaa Tuomo-Juhani (eds.) *Varjosta: tutkielmia suomalaisen valokuvan historiasta*. Finnish Museum of Photography, Helsinki 1999. In the introductory article I refer to this text as *“Landscape- text”*.

scape as an individual experience and on the change in the representation of a landscape as a concept.

I published the next text, "*Technologized Snow*"<sup>6</sup>, as a member of a research group of the Finnish Academy. Under the supervision of the editors the group established an interdisciplinary approach to gain a better understanding the ever more important role of merging communication and medium of expression in the fields of art and culture in order to grasp the role of technologies in this change. My research here returns to the transformation of the authentic as an imperative quality to an experience. This approach includes observations from the tradition of landscape photography in combination with the argued metaphoric nature in visual presentation. In the article the focus is on the aesthetic qualities of multimodal images and their affiliation with different traditions in visual representation.

The fifth article in this selection is "*Pirates*"<sup>7</sup>. The interdisciplinary collection of essays in media studies and contemporary culture and art explores the visual dimension of the social in the Western cultures. The starting point for the collection was an assumption of imago-centric communication as fundamentally different in appearance from what is understood to be a logocentric<sup>8</sup> and language-based human activity. The visual is here understood as a basic element that constitutes social bonding and the sense of community in contemporary culture. My study recognizes content in visual expression as a "nonconformist" entity. It discusses multiple references of metaphor in visual rhetoric through trope and predication. In this article, visual representation is connected with an interpretational relationship with ideas of multiple reference and predication and in relation to perception and the concept of time which all reflect upon its meaning.

### 1.3 Research Questions

My background as a researcher is in the theories of semiotics and photography. This research defines context and culture in a way that can be elaborated by assessing the discussion of postmodern theories. I leave Fredric Jameson, Jean-Francois Lyotard and many important names out and include the postmodern in my discussions only when a specific definition of culture or existing conditions are needed. As these themes are an elementary part of the culture critique that post-structural semiotics articulates, my choices can of course be ques-

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<sup>6</sup> Published in Heinonen Yrjö, Kirstinä Leena, Kovala Urpo (eds.) *Ilmaisun murroksia vuosituhannen vaihteen suomalaisessa kulttuurissa*. Finnish Literature Society, Helsinki, 2005. In the introductory article I refer to this text by its name "*Technologized Snow*-text".

<sup>7</sup> Published in Stochetti Matteo & Sumiala-Seppänen Johanna (eds.) *Images and communities: the visual construction of the social*. Gaudeamus, Helsinki 2007. In the introductory article I refer to this text by its name "*Pirates*-text".

<sup>8</sup> Stochetti & Sumiala-Seppänen 2007. Imago-centric and logocentric are definitions by the editors of the book.

tioned. I comment here on Roland Barthes but mostly on his earlier works, other than *Camera Lucida* which is the great philosopher's testament that focuses on photography. Discussing *S/Z* or other later works by Barthes would have automatically taken my study deep into late- or post-structuralism. I justify my own turn in relation to these theories by my urge to find a way to discuss the content in visual presentation and not the structures of meaning in the visual, such as a code. Instead, my thinking leans towards hermeneutics and Paul Ricoeur in an attempt to understand how to interpret meaning when it does not settle for just one specific affiliation and when the references in which it anchors itself are multiple and mobile. Instead of relying on post-structuralist thinking, the step I take is motivated by the concept of metaphor in an attempt to understand and define the premises used to demonstrate elements of content in visual expression, which can therefore be approached analytically. In this work I apply the idea of rhetorical operations to discuss how visual expression and its intentional content can be defined and interpreted, particularly in the case of lens-based still image.

This kind of dynamic signification has been studied in tropology and discourse analysis. Both of them are quite useful in my study as well, but a trope as a concept only defines an operation, and discourse analysis discloses the meaning of larger units of language. I discuss these methods, but again, only in a precise connection to a certain problem or a point. I shall probably never abandon semiotics completely. In this study I initiate a new chapter in my semiotic thinking by applying American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce and his pragmatic semiotics. His tripartite theory of meaning covers different motivations of meaning. Peirce operates on the three axes of precision of impression and compares those to three different relations of meaning. I combine Ricoeur's ideas on pliable meaning with Peirce's tripartite model in order to ask how sharp and precise visual presentation could be and how closely visual presentation could be studied with qualities of "elocution". To conclude, my attempt is to see if an image can be an argument.

An elementary question in my studies is to what extent an image represents itself when it is published? How much does the genre in a single visual presentation *metaphorize itself* before presenting its message, narrative or argument through the means of the visual? Or the other way around, I return in my texts, implicitly or explicitly, to the same hypothetical idea that media image always metaphorizes itself. Media or medium is understood widely in my research. I do not refer only to media as in journalism or related platforms in popular culture, but I also include different platforms for publishing "media". Family albums, social media, posters as well as exhibitions or picture books all together comprise the "realm of published images". This is an important conclusion in terms of the concept of genre in relation to different traditions and styles of the images in the metaphorizing processes. Images belong to something and they are contextualized: in private, as in the case of a family album, or in public, like in these publishing platforms in visual and popular media.

Recently, maybe stronger than ever, the increasing popularity of uploading images to the Internet through social media has given rise to the question of publishing. The manifesto for open and free Internet brings up the question of immaterial rights such as copyright, but it also opens up the everyday challenge concerning the control of personal and private material that people upload to the servers. In content and in correlation we return to the images of the private sphere and the problems of privacy and the control of it. I see that images have argumentative power. Central qualities for this are the different attributes images have in view of the style, mode or of the genre. These are represented by different aesthetic qualities of an image, which all return to the content matter of a visual presentation. In that sense, publishing images on the Internet make them a feature of visual culture in public sense. An album image can refer to something private, but it also refers to a style or a tradition. The same applies to visual art. Without risking any quality of free expression in art, these images also hold aesthetic qualities, which I challenge as the argumentative qualities.

Methodologically the introductory article, *PRE- CONDITIONS OF ILLUSTRATION*, comprises of the following order and elements. In the first chapter, *FUNCTIONS - RELATING SEMIOTICS TO RHETORIC AND GENRE THEORY*, I return to Umberto Eco's ideas on visual culture and the concept of overcoding. It motivates the problem of genre and opens an excursion into Charles Sanders Peirce's thinking. In the second chapter, *CONDITIONS AND CONTEXTS - WHAT THERE IS TO BE SEEN IN CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS*, the idea of the return of illustration is introduced to discuss the vibrant nature of visual culture today. I return to social conditions and comment on the concepts of style, hegemony, and ideology in relation to published images.

In chapter three; *BROAD TENDENCIES - REPETITION AND OTHER TRICKS*, I look at the ideas of meaning structures of an image related to the idea of "visual language". The theorists discussed are John Berger, John F. Tagg, and Roland Barthes, and in the end I return to Umberto Eco and his concept of super structures. The notion of the moving meaning or meaning that does not hold a singular anchor is discussed through my critique of concepts of trope and multimodality in the fourth chapter, *COMPETENCE - SIGNS THAT ARE PASSING BY*. Applying Gianni Vattimo's and Michel Maffesoli's theories on the postmodern, I develop J.T.W. Mitchell's notion of idolatry to describe sight as a social sense and introducing the cynical consumer.

The second part of my introductory article models a theoretical proposal in order to rethink the problems of content and expression in visual presentation. The fifth chapter, *CONVENTIONAL PERCEPTS*, introduces Peirce's idea of sign, which I combine with my critique of genre. The fundamental impact of digitalization is commented on in relation to contextual qualities in visual culture. Peirce's sign-object relation is applied to a definition of "illustration" in order to re-motivate genre and the significance of rhetoric in visual as such. Chapter six, *SLOW PROCESS AMONGST GENRES*, continues the theme on style and on the cultural practices of image across genre borders as genre hybrids. Occurrence of genre crossing is then motivated by Michel Foucault's theory of repetition,



which I bring together with the concepts of index and indexicality. The idea of the visual metaphor is elaborated on in the critique of Roman Jakobson's division of metonymy and metaphor. In chapter seven, *THE ORDER OF THE PHOTOGRAPH*, I bring together Bruno Latour and the problem of knowledge with Peirce's important annotation on truth. This opening is commented on in critiques on the uses of metaphor in the theory of photography, and followed by my view on Ricoeur's view of the preconditions of metaphor. The idea of the argumentative qualities of an image is introduced in association to Peirce and his theory of the sign-interpretation correlation, which has been given less attention in visual analysis than his sign-object linkage has.

The eighth chapter, *FROM LIVING METAPHOR ...*, combines Peirce and Ricoeur in their different approaches to the image. Ricoeur's idea of speculative discourse is combined with his idea of a living metaphor. Rhetorical operations in visual culture and in media images in particular are analysed as a possibility for interpreting the image as Peirce's *dicent*. In the last chapter, *... TO CONCLUSION* I return to the selection of images and give an sample analysis of them based on developed theories. The images in the articles of this dissertation follow the original logic and order used when the texts were published. Layout of the images is different but the captions are kept in their original form. In the introductory article the images are commented on and described first in the caption of each image. Some of the images are discussed more than once, and the reference is given either in the text or in a specified footnote. In the last chapter some of the images are repeated and analysed in relation to the conclusions of this thesis.

## 2 PRE-CONDITIONS OF ILLUSTRATION

“An image can never be completely depicted by language; neither can all matters expressed through language be translated to images. Otherwise we might have only the images or only the language.”

”Kuvaa ei voi koskaan kuvata kokonaan kielellä, eikä kaikkia kielellisesti ilmaistavissa olevia asioita voi kääntää kuviksi. Muutoin meillä ehkä olisikin vain kuvia tai vain kieltä”.

Kai Mikkonen<sup>9</sup>

### 2.1 FUNCTIONS - Relating Semiotics to Rhetoric and Genre Theory

The images in the media, or flow of the images as the recent development in visual culture has been described, are always a rhetorical process that could also be returned to media illustrations. In such presentations this process is always a confrontation between the production of an image and its reception. Interaction can also be divided between aspects of publishing and reception. Since 1995, when the first academic text of this collection was published, a transition from semiotic to rhetoric thinking has characterised my writing on visual culture in general and the semantic nature of media images in particular. Starting from the advertising images and moving towards the more extensive field of media images, and linking photographic art strongly with these problems, it all comes down to the single question of the possibility of interpreting the image as an argument. The phrasing of the question does not have any intention of specifying visual presentation as a narrative. Although the development of Western visual culture has enhanced the richness of the moving image, not least through the Internet or mobile device based development, I am defining an

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<sup>9</sup> Mikkonen, Kai (2005). *Kuva ja sana*. p. 20. Helsinki: Gaudeamus. Translation by the author.

“image” as a published, lens-based presentation, and even more, as a still image representing a matter or a theme valid in its context.



#### IMAGE 1

From the 1920s to the beginning of the Second World War some photographers in Finland including Heikki Aho and Björn Soldan made strong careers in the film industry. In the first 20 years of the century reportage films actually had better markets than photography due to the rapid increase of cinema theatres. These early ‘media houses’ delivered to customers all the information they needed. The example here is by Heikki Aho. The image is from a Petsamo reportage trip and it is used here for a cover of “Automobile Special Issue (Autonumero) No 9, 1938” in Suomen Kuvalehti, a leading illustrated magazine.

In semiotics the definition of an image as an articulation anchors the visual representation to an iconic sign and turns it into a convention<sup>10</sup>. For understanding,

<sup>10</sup> See Eco 1979, pp. 213 – 217, or Veivo & Huttunen 1999, pp. 61 – 63.

these conventions carry perceived meanings in socially and culturally shared forms and potentialities, which are distributed in idiomatic form for the audience to extrapolate from. For visual representation these forms also provide convenient means to articulate abstract themes. When semiotics strives to construct a visual system of codes, it manages to describe signs relevant to the visual presentation of a meaning, but at the same time it falls out of focus because it lacks the ability to give a description of a coherent structure of visual signs that can relate directly to the articulations. In his 1979 book *A Theory of Semiotics* Umberto Eco makes a proposition in relation to the study of mass communication and to all the characteristics the genres within industrial society have in common.<sup>11</sup> Later in the same assertion Eco returns to C.S. Peirce's idea of "adding a circumstantial selection in company with acquired matter of convention" and accomplishing an *operation of overcoding*. Regarding the rules related to stylistic and rhetorical operations, Eco himself notes:

"Outside the range of verbal language, all iconological entities are the result of overcoding. If we suppose that there is a code allowing one to recognize as such the representation of a woman bearing her eyes on a saucer, the operation of iconographical overcoding will establish the correspondence between that woman and St. Lucy.

Overcoding proceeds in a twofold direction. It may be that given a code assigning meaning to certain minimal expressions, overcoding will assign additional meanings to more macroscopic strings of these expressions. Rhetorical or iconological rules are of this sort."<sup>12</sup>

This quotation had slipped from my attention when I was writing the critique on the semiotic approach, but thinking back, it might be one of the most important texts I had read during and after my Master's studies. It relates the semiotic approach to the concept of rhetoric. Another piece of work with equal importance to my thinking was a Finnish collection of essays by Victor Burgin published under the name of the leading text in this selection; *The End of Art Theory*.<sup>13</sup> The critique of structuralism was a refreshing experience after Ferdinand De Saussure, although Jonathan Culler and the debate on structuralism naturally always return to Roland Barthes. In the same book Burgin presents Jacques Durand's figure of rhetorical operations from 1970<sup>14</sup>. For Durand, all rhetorical figures can be analyzed through a breaking down of the barriers in morality, in society, in physical reality et cetera. Instantaneous interpretation of a rhetorical photographic image represents a fantasy and it is related to a dream or a hallucination, and metaphoric representation is a metamorphosis by nature. This kind of psychoanalytic interpretation of argumentative qualities probably alienated me from this discussion, though the given division between the main rhetorical operations had already attracted me in the early 1990's; adding one or more element, suppressing one or more element leading to; replacement or sub-

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid. p. 13.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p. 134.

<sup>13</sup> Burgin Victor, 1989.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. pp. 52 - 65. Burgin is referring to Durand 1970, "Rhétorique et image publicitaire", Communications vol. 15 1970, pp. 70-95.

stitution.<sup>15</sup> In analyzing French advertising Durand ended up with a classification table of 25 different variables based on the relationship of form and content and the type of rhetorical operation. These theories cemented my view of the significance of those qualities in the visual, and especially in photographs, in which it was difficult to find a proper solution through semiotics. How does a style communicate and how to explain the strength of visual expression?

While diverging from classification models, my thinking automatically returns back to structuralism through the critique I launched to justify my curiosity towards studies of visual articulations in photography. Roland Barthes elaborated on several occasions on the nature of code in association with photographic meaning and came to the conclusion of “un-coded message”<sup>16</sup> as a “paradox of the photograph”.

For Barthes a photograph was a combination of a coded iconic and an uncoded iconic message.<sup>17</sup> To unravel the rhetoric qualities of a photograph he thought of another division, this time between a private and general understanding of it. “Punctum” is the private quality of the meaning attributed to individual memories, experiences and emotions. It is problematic for analysis to anticipate this given meaning, whereas “Studium”, the general nature of the rhetoric of visual expression, is shared in a given cultural context by most of the audience.<sup>18</sup> The division gives logical and helpful explanations for the vast and flexible uses of visual materials in different media uses. However the general aspect in this theory is too wide.

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<sup>15</sup> Translation of the terms are by author.

<sup>16</sup> Barthes 1961, or Barthes 1964.

<sup>17</sup> Barthes 1977, p. 17.

<sup>18</sup> See studium and punctum and the cultural quality of a photographic image, Barthes, 1985.



IMAGE 2

An interesting interpretation of the possibilities of the shared cultural qualities of an image can be seen in Kari Soinio's series *National Landscape (Kansallismaisema)* where he photographed the most important examples of Finnish national landscape sceneries purposefully out of focus. The local audience recognized them all – a Barthesian conclusion would say this was due to the strength of studium. (Original in colour)

The challenge created by the semiotic approach is a problem of a code and how it could be used to conclude visual content. This can be approached from a different perspective as I have already pointed out in my *Chronospace-text*. The idea of genre has a cogent status in theories of visual culture. Genre classifies inter-textual production of different meanings by type, and these classifications can be returned to conventions.<sup>19</sup> Putting an interpretative weight on genre in opposition to individual texts emphasises the *social* nature of the production and interpretation of texts. In relation to film the commercial and industrial significance of genres has gained attention and the concept has taken on strong undertones. Denis McQuail associates genre with that very problem:

“The genre may be considered as a practical device for helping any mass medium to produce consistently and efficiently and to relate its production to the expectations of its customers. Since it is also a practical device for enabling individual media users to plan their choices, it can be considered as a mechanism for ordering the relations between the two main parties to mass communication”.<sup>20</sup>

Genre is defined more broadly by Gunther Kress as ‘a kind of text that derives its form from the structure of a (frequently repeated) social occasion, with its characteristic participants and their purposes’.<sup>21</sup> Kress further explores genre through questions such as how to define genre and mode. These are covered separately in relation

<sup>19</sup> See Lehtonen K 1996 A, pp. 180 – 186.

<sup>20</sup> McQuail 1987, p. 2000.

<sup>21</sup> Hodge & Kress 1988, p. 183.

to the discussed problem or an example. It can help us to understand the popular features of visual representations in terms of uses, styles, and the special characteristics of publishing. Johan Fornäs has crystallized genres into organized schemes of human behaviour, where cultural artefacts are created by using different symbolic forms.<sup>22</sup> A style, instead, also includes the personal side of comprehension and it carries a variety of reflexive nuances which always return to individual and personal interpretation.

Maybe style should include content-related qualities of an image and a genre as seen in the example from SX Snow Extreme Magazine from 2008.



IMAGE 3

"Wonderful Women on the waves." (*Ihanat naiset alloilla*). SX Snow Extreme Magazine, Winter 2008. (Original in colour)

This is an illuminating example of the challenges that contemporary visual production presents for interpretation and the efforts to utilise concepts for the justification of tenors in significance of visual content, even when defined in relation to photography. For genre analysis this would be a hybrid of two separate genres, or a presentation of one genre of publication. Discourse analysis would relate the images as a meaningful story in relation to other similar discourses, and structuralist semiotic analysis would wonder what might be the correct code to process the signifier and signified of intrinsically arbitrary signs and reach a contextually relevant connotation level hiding behind denotative details.

<sup>22</sup> See Fornäs 1998, pp. 213 – 218.

In my text “Chronospace- text” I still owe quite a lot to semiotic thinking and especially to Roland Barthes with my notion of “*a connotation universe*”. Nevertheless, the grounding idea of a shift towards rhetoric is given. My observation seeks motivations for a content-intensive analysis of a photographic image towards the acknowledgement of the qualities of intentions included in images or at the very least in publishing them. From the standpoint of the audience the given challenge of following the anchors of interpretation based on a variety of different genres available in a given context also includes the relating of the depicted elements with the logical potential meanings, ignoring those without that quality.

Selection of these meanings cannot consist completely of pre-defined structures as postulated by semiotics. The objective of the connotation universe is to name this process and describe the transparent nature of the recognition of a meaning and the intentional in it. Quite often the content of meaning is taken as something natural. Despite the burden of being iconic, or transmitting literal visual meaning, or documenting, a media still image has through its history also been capable of opening symbolic, abstract concepts which are multilayered in genre recognition. These presume intellect both in context and in different visual elements, forms of expression and qualities of the medium.

## 2.2 CONDITIONS AND CONTEXTS - What There is to be Seen in Cultural Representations

The quantity of visual communication has without doubt expanded. Several new media, internet culture, and innovations in wireless communication have made the development even more evident. In my later texts I have described these procedures extensively as illustration, or more precisely as the “return of illustration”. This polemic distillation of contemporary conditions essentially comments on the misinterpretation in concluding that the vibrancy and richness of visual culture in recent phenomena is a categorization of the existing contemporary circumstances. However, a very cursory study of the history of a poster, of photography or of print media reveals how contemporary visual representation is only a version of long-term development, and in fact these things will define themselves time and again. The versatile history of the aesthetics of posters, or the variety of genres in photography alone, is an adequate example of this.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Examples are from: Londen, Enegren, Simons. (2007) *Come to Finland. Posters & Travel Tales 1851 - 1965*. “Sjövägen till Finland” (“Waterway to Finland”, 1957) and “Lake Land” (1958) by Erik Brun. Brun is considered one of the most important figures and reformers of poster art in Finland after World War II.





#### IMAGES 4 AND 5

The history of poster art is incredibly rich in combining style, attributes of genre and fluent elements of argumentation in visual expression to create a complete presentation. "Sjö vägen till Finland" (Waterway to Finland), 1957. "Lake Land", 1958.

An approach to the visual as an aspect of culture and the dissection of the different aspects of those conditions, articulations, and styles should always define the study and interpretation of features in relation to the social, ideological, economic, and hegemonic interpretations. Moreover, these implications should be applied in the analysis despite the actual theoretical orientation. In his doctoral dissertation<sup>24</sup> Janne Seppänen bases his reading of photography on this grounding principle. As in every study, also in my case, the focus needs named aspects to establish a coherent review. In semiotics this definition is often exclusive of the content and is allocated to results of the analytical contemplation. This does not, by any means, make semiotic analysis less important. The remaining problematic feature is that semiotics is unable to bypass the tendency to focus on the theoretical construct, and the failure to create a sensitive reading of the content, other than through the deductive abilities of the scholar.<sup>25</sup> In all of the texts introduced in this work, this focus is stressed in the direction of the visual, and especially on the photographic image as an argument. I have studied the content matter in relation to rhetoric. I will return to the theme of the

<sup>24</sup> Seppänen 2001 A. The translation of the name of Seppänen's book *A Photography Does Not Exist* emphasizes his "anti-essentialist" approach where photographic image is always under an impact of its context.

<sup>25</sup> This returns to my earlier remark on structuralist semiotics about "a relevant connotation level". It has been criticized how it takes Barthes to come to same conclusion as Barthes does.

rhetoric in the next chapter and seek new directions with the help of Umberto Eco's ideas.

Erkki Karvonen<sup>26</sup> has crystallized the public nature of image in his book published some years after my article. Karvonen portrays a brand society, or image society as a distillation of attributes, which refer to post-industrial conditions. This is also described as information society, net-society, media society or post-modern society, where the image has become a salient element of success to any organization, individual or other subject. All these definitions refer to circumstances where the ideal reality has emerged next to material reality and determine our Western mode of conceptualizing the way we understand the contemporary conditions of reality. Even more, ideal reality predates material reality in the "planning" of any real human action in production, and as such the ideal directs the production of material reality making it a crucial factor in civil society.<sup>27</sup>

Zygmunt Bauman describes the postmodern condition of this Millennium as liquid modernity. Communality has become temporal and it is noisy, like mania. It draws strength from the need for "noisy" emotional attention the condition of uncertainty requires. Bauman names these short term forms of communality *cloakroom communities*. By this he refers to a play at a theatre. People arrive at the theatre, leave their outerwear in the cloakroom, and concentrate on enjoying the spectacle of the performance. Solidity of the structures of modern society is gone and replaced by these assemblies of people and their identities. Bauman sees the trauma, aggression, and emotional tensions as resulting from these liquid conditions and in the explosive communities people participate in. This emphasis on effusion that Bauman presents in his view of his book brings him close to Guy Debord's thinking on the spectacle. Another connection to Bauman's thinking in this work is the description of individual behaviour in these explosive communities. People seek moments of rest and recharge themselves to overcome the effusion of liquid conditions. For Bauman this happens in "*carnival audiences*", which break the solitude of everyday and give resolution to the experienced trauma.<sup>28</sup> I shall return to this later while discussing my idea of illustration and the concept of style in Michel Maffesoli's thinking. To keep the focus of this work in the set hypothesis, the themes of other postmodern theories are ruled out from this presentation.

According to the academic observations, division between interpreting media images and photographic art remains strong. The skilled study by Karvonen introduces a rich realm of factors most of which have genuine value both in understanding and in representing an image. Widely discussed cases, such as Benetton and Oliveiro Toscani's photography; or the media coverage of Twin Towers on September 11<sup>th</sup>, and the content-related and expression-intensive approach, have been engulfed by discussions from the perspective of genre or

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<sup>26</sup> Karvonen 1999.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Bauman Zygmunt, 2000. See chapter 5 "Community" and especially the subtitle "Cloakroom Communities". By this he refers a theatre play.

issue-related standpoints. It would be tempting to have the production of ideal reality in media integral to commercial visual culture. Nevertheless the process that I call the “return of illustration” touches all areas of visual culture.

In his remarkable *The Meaning of September 11<sup>th</sup>*<sup>29</sup> Mikko Lehtonen traces the qualities of media presentations in relation to the disastrous events of September 11<sup>th</sup> on the US soil. Lehtonen stresses the repetition of TV coverage that showed again and again how the airplanes hit the Twin Towers. He contrasts this to a still image that is stuck deep in the consciousness of the audience because of the very repetition. The indexical function of news images – “something has happened” – is mediated by active use of visual codes in relation to verbal codes and importantly with the codes of absence.<sup>30</sup> Lehtonen notes how important a role imagination plays for our concept of Nation, both in memory as well as in the present and future too. Furthermore, he also discusses how this social imagination brings the individuals involved together with the idea of Nation. Society or Nation is not only a political entity. It has also become a whole cultural system of representation. More than anything, in the case of the Twin Towers, this system of representation specified the division between “us” and “them”.<sup>31</sup>

Like in Lehtonen’s example of creating visual attributes to define the division between own communities and aliens, themes, and visual ideas of politically motivated representations have also merged with other not-so-typical contexts. They make a good example of how indexical qualities of published images alone cannot satisfactorily explain the transforming of content-intensive appearances developed in media and in the arts into visual arguments, as I’m suggesting. The different origins and themes and visual materials move fluently from one genre to another, and it is important to find the tools to understand these representative systems also by their visual content. This aspect of the image that Oliveiro Toscani introduced to the audience in his Benetton advertising is ignored, and the dispute concentrates on the debate between genre-related remarks – advertising, or value based argumentation – on what is appropriate and what options should be avoided. Social, economic, and ideological matters are all under discussion, but from the standpoint of this study, content orientation is emphasised, and by that I set myself to a certain extent in an opposing position to Seppänen’s idea.

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<sup>29</sup> Lehtonen Mikko B, 2001.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. p. 64.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. pp. 82-83.

# HELSINGIN SANOMAT

TOURNAAR-SYYSKUU 2011

115. fi Mikä vitsaus on karkurit vaati? ja...  
 Sanonien luotona...  
 Uraideiden ha...  
 Viikokummit...

**A** **Lain Hoosari lapsen kanssa**  
 Terveystieteiden tutkimuskeskuksessa...  
**LUETAAN TÄSSÄ**



Puolue...  
 Puolue...  
 Puolue...

**B** **Uusi...  
 Uusi...  
 Uusi...**



Kokkonainen...  
 Kokkonainen...  
 Kokkonainen...

**C** **Juhlat...  
 Juhlat...  
 Juhlat...**



Merkki...  
 Merkki...  
 Merkki...



Kokkonainen jääkiekkajoukkue kuoli lentoturmassa Venäjällä

## Tähdet syöksivät tuhoon

Kokkonainen jääkiekkajoukkue kuoli lentoturmassa Venäjällä. Joukkueen jäseniä on haudattu...  
 Kokkonainen jääkiekkajoukkue kuoli lentoturmassa Venäjällä. Joukkueen jäseniä on haudattu...  
 Kokkonainen jääkiekkajoukkue kuoli lentoturmassa Venäjällä. Joukkueen jäseniä on haudattu...



"Mori la pelailin...  
 Mori la pelailin...  
 Mori la pelailin..."

## Keskustan kannatus pohjalukemissa

**HS Gallup**  
 Keskustan kannatus pohjalukemissa.



"Keskustan...  
 Keskustan...  
 Keskustan..."

Keskustan...  
 Keskustan...  
 Keskustan..."

IMAGE 6  
 "The stars were destroyed in the crash" (Tähdet syöksivät tuhoon), Helsingin Sanomat September 8th, 2011. A very concrete, and in its own way silent expression of "not being one of us" is the tradition of hiding and showing the casualties in news coverage. Local casualties can never be presented in Finnish media. See also footnote 257.

Naomi Klein shook the wider audience with her book *No Logo* back in the year 2000<sup>32</sup>. Her thorough and interesting approach to commercialization, consumerism, and corporatism, despite the text's rather journalistic touch, gives rich background to the critique of hegemony of the existing conditions and the contexts of the genres that media apply. In so far as visual content would be ana-

<sup>32</sup> Klein, 2001.

lysed the same way, Klein is communicating that in her premise content and qualities of expression would be dictated outside of an image as a content-intensive entity.<sup>33</sup> And furthermore, the code giving form to expression would not involve an active relation to a communicative moment, but a given moment. In my article I return to Louis Althusser, Antonio Gramsci, and Wolfgang Friedrich Haug and the construction of hegemony.<sup>34</sup> Gramsci argued that power is strongly based on ideology as a non-violent form of control and as a practice of transformation of the hegemonic bourgeois values. In these forms of control he saw a very useful device to dominate the “modern conditions” and their reproduction. Instead of continuing the Machiavellian virtues of upholding power, the construct of hegemony can be applied to contemporary culture, like Klein does, and we can see what kind of practices can be identified in relation to hegemony. Furthermore, we can look at how visual expression finds its way to expressing these tendencies in the aesthetic.

First of all, to conclude what there is to be seen in cultural representations, it is important to keep in mind that this path has already started with the development of social conditions and the production of visual media, and that the early days of what I call “the return of illustration” go as far as the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and even deeper into industrial history, if the advent of commercial shop windows counts. Secondly, the same holds true with the visual formations of ideal reality and these two have lead cultural development to the kind of audience consciousness, where the impact of the visual in its different forms has only increased.<sup>35</sup>

### 2.3 BROAD TENDENCIES – Repetition and Other Tricks

Conditions create solutions. John Berger’s workshop at a premises of a remote primary school in Kaavi, Finland organized by Martti “Mara” Lintunen for the University of Arts and Design, Helsinki, played an important role in my thinking on photography. Face to face discussions about the themes Berger raised in his books *The Ways of Seeing* or *Another Way of Telling*, and workshop projects continuing the work he had established with the Swiss photographer Jean Mohr in *A Seventh Man* and *A Fortunate Man* also had from the beginning a silent but strong impact on my critique of semiotics. At the same time I felt a certain disappointment with Berger’s conclusion that photography is not a language, but a “half language”. Thinking about this afterwards, Berger actually introduced me to the problem, supported me in front of this challenge, and in a way left the problematic open for further studies.

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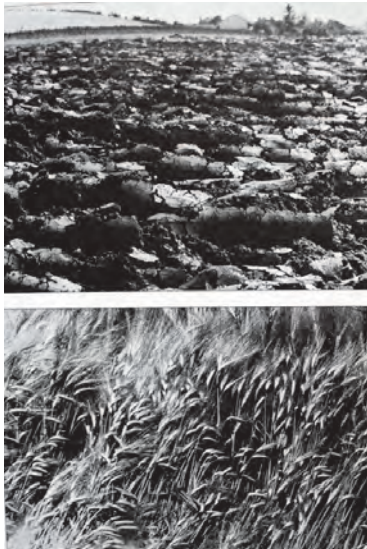
<sup>33</sup> Ibid. See chapters 3 and 9.

<sup>34</sup> See, my “Chronospace -text” page 92.

<sup>35</sup> Anadri Ramamurthy has an excellent general outline of themes discussed here “Construction of Illusion, Photography and Commodity Culture.” In Liz Wells 1997, see pp. 151 – 198.

By stopping the time, photography catches the moment. It does not just record it, but photography itself includes a quality of reaching “appearances” of what it has captured. Some of the images remain “weak” and create a documentation of something. Some other images get loaded with these appearances and, most importantly, start to relate with other images in these captured appearances and create “quotations”. They “fill”. To put it in Berger’s concepts there is a special weight put on the nature of memory which in his thinking does not primarily function linearly but radically, and therefore the discontinuity of a photographic image expands to “half language”.<sup>36</sup> In my *Chronospace-text* I critique the “anarchy of the receiver” and my suggestion of contextual gravitations emanates from the discussions and experiments done at the Kaavi workshop.

In 1988 John Tagg published his widely quoted book in which he comments on the conditions of a photograph. Starting with John Berger he suggests projections of a limited number of rhetorical forms in which society’s values and beliefs are naturalized. Tagg’s text comes close to my starting postulation when he argues that discussed photographic images are always constructed by their meaning. The very same statement already gave me a starting point for my Master’s thesis and the socio-semiotic analysis I tried to apply. Tagg returns his question back to learned schemas, and how they are used in interaction with codes, and how they should be understood as parallel to a whole sentence rather than a singular word.<sup>37</sup>



#### IMAGE 7

John Berger and Jean Mohr collaborated in order to test Berger’s ideas on photography.. When Berger wrote on something it was forbidden subject matter for Mohr to photograph and vice versa. The example is from *Another Way of Telling*, 1992 (page 123). The authors always created and agreed the final versions of the sequences together.

<sup>36</sup> Berger 1980, pp 57 – 63, Berger 1982, pp 119 – 129.

<sup>37</sup> Tagg, 1988, p. 187.

Tagg also refers to Umberto Eco, and with all due respect to his work, the problem that remains is how to define these broad tendencies visible in cultural presentations of the visual in such a manner that the explained conditions are followed by observation of content other than genre. In terms of directing the study to rhetoric, Tagg suggests some kind of semantics of an image to be studied from the perspective of power and ideology. The same problem was taken up by Umberto Eco who developed the idea of artwork having the same structural characteristics as language. Instead of latching on the cultural conditions of an image, Eco as a semiotician battles to understand the message of an image.

Based on the well known “commutation test”<sup>38</sup>,

If by changing one contextual element in a presentation the other elements lose their primitive function and are usually unable to acquire another; they remain unbalanced, as on a chessboard where the bishop has been replaced by a third castle. If there is such contextual solidarity, then there must be systematic rule.

Eco establishes his description of what he calls “*an aesthetic text*”<sup>39</sup>. It is a code in action, ruling the various different messages, and it composes a complex network of messages. Aesthetic texts are ambiguously organized on different levels of discourse; they follow precise design, and are under a complex contextual, often contradictory pressure by the existing norms and the ambiguous nature of the presentations and characteristics, and they are put forward by a single message. Eco describes this as a “*general deviation matrix*” where every level in this “*super system*” is explained on the basis of a single structural model. The deviation matrix entails a rearrangement of codes by proposing a new coding possibility. On each occasion this urge to touch the logic of an existing code that opens an aesthetic idiolect is a course to suggesting new norms in this very process. When this suggestion is accepted by the society, the idiolect may act as a meta-semiotic approximation for developing the existing codes. If we look at these changes as interrelated, including the code and the message, the change in semantic systems results in changing how the culture sees the world and the different contexts.

Due to the fast development of the production devices and computerized image production, the use of information graphics in media expanded rapidly since the 1980's. The constantly falling weather map symbols in TV weather forecasts, or the printed texts and statistics in reviewing political elections or the economy, were left behind and different versions of multi-layered presentations appeared in the media. The map I study in my *Technologized Snow-text* follows Eco's idea.<sup>40</sup> The image is an informative advertising image with a concrete function. It is also a landscape image and portrays information graphics. It can be understood as both presentation and representation. My idea is that with the use of rhetorical concepts, the complex and multi-linear presentation (an image)

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<sup>38</sup> Eco, 1979, p. 271.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. p. 272. For the “aesthetic text” see also footnote 45 in Eco's text.

<sup>40</sup> See Page 145 in this work for the information graphics image.

can be opened up for review, bringing to the centre of the analysis the argumentative/rhetorical properties of the photographic image and the whole visual presentation. This is also where I divert from semiotics and move towards metaphor. I assume that this kind of analysis, which does not avoid the practices and conventions of structural presentation and interpretation, helps the analytical understanding of visual culture (and in this case the published visuality based on photography). The piste map of the skiing resort Ylläs is an “exact” representation of a certain location in the tourism industry. It is a symbol as a landscape image, and an aesthetic presentation of information graphics. It uses hybrid forms of visual aesthetic to make itself accessible to its audience. In comparison to earlier considerations here, without ignoring them, analysis can look through the aspects of rhetorical qualities of visual representation.

Edward Tufte speaks about the control of information in the sense that the intentions and the ideologies of the distributor can be incorporated into the information graphics.<sup>41</sup> It is fascinating how Tufte is able to discuss these ideas from Galileo’s times in relation to the latest innovations in visual culture and publishing processes. The study I have made about the ski resort information map interprets the problem further. In the tourism business the idea is logical, but it leaves us with some problems of definition. What is ideological in information graphics? Is it the effective presentation of information, or is it the effectiveness in attracting attention? Also, information graphics and information design have an intentional nature and they contain expectations of the ways of reception. And there is also a purpose and expectations to reach the set goal in publishing this design. In this respect, if we develop Tufte’s remark about the ideological stage in information graphics, these questions take us to the problematics of assertion and the intentions behind visual expression, which I have here developed in the direction of rhetoric.

The examination should perceive what kind of expectations, interpretational needs, and their fulfilment the representation of a visual presentation (presumed to be personal) serves through the authentic (imperative), crystallizing into a (ideal) whole connecting the presenter and the receiver. The examination of these ideas would require a consideration of its own. An image is offered to the viewer as a hope-arousing presentation of space and the circumstances, whereas for the receiver the central dimension is locating the needs and experiences within this presentation.

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<sup>41</sup> Tufte 1990.





IMAGE 8

Aesthetically the example here has plenty of features of photographic colour documentary. In artwork, Eco's *aesthetic text* can create strong antagonistic approaches and the original aesthetic style becomes secondary. See more detailed analysis in my conclusion. Rob Hoonstra, from a series "*Roots of Runttur*" (The Roots of Cruising"), 2005. (Original in colour)

In Finnish photographic art the Helsinki School has received a whole tide of international recognition in the recent years.<sup>42</sup> Many of the artists of the Helsinki School comment quite critically on the issues of contemporary conditions. The coherent review and sensitive reading of content that I stressed earlier illustrates these examples well. Agility in operating within different genres, and in adapting modes, styles, details, and topics from other genres and visual mediums, requires the research to develop methods able to follow visual culture. These remarks direct my thinking towards the concept of illustration and metaphor as essential to better understanding the visual content. My old text returns

<sup>42</sup> The Helsinki School describe their agenda in their website: (<http://www.helsinki.fi/helsinki/index.php?k=8350>, retrieved September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011) The concept of "The Helsinki School" is not defined by a specific discipline, nationality or geographic region. It represents an approach, a way of thinking that has evolved out of a process of teaching at the Aalto University School of Art and Design, where each generation is given the chance to invent themselves. ... These exhibitions have established the Helsinki School as a unique approach to how to teach and apply use of the camera as a conceptual tool. ... Our hope is to use these works to establish a true edge of where photography fits into the world today.

to texts by Frank Webster, Stanley Fish and Chaim Perelman<sup>43</sup>. I discussed the possibilities of different gravitations, and emphasized the importance of visual representations as a means of conveying meaning in relation to economical and ideological spheres. I have given less attention to production, which plays an important role in Gunther Kress' and Theo van Leeuwen's concept of reading the visual through modal thinking. The reason for this can be seen in Kress and van Leeuwen's book *Reading Images*<sup>44</sup>, where multimodal analysis examines above all design. In the case of photography, the problematic of production does not have a comparable impact to design in the final result. However, I will return to the concept of production later in this work since illustration would be rather impossible to define without commenting on production<sup>45</sup>.

The difference between production-orientation and content-orientation can be manifested through Bill Nichol's theory of modes in film documentary. His model divides six varieties of documentary film into different modes. Expository mode is a descriptive mode. Observatory mode is based on a non-interventionist approach. It is empirical and evidence-driven. Interactive mode is participatory, presentational, and interventional. Reflexive mode is meta-communicative and it problematises the process itself, as well as the common conventions. Performative mode creates its own reality and poetic mode breaks up the temporal by replacing continuity with an associative element. Merja Salo notes in her book on the journalistic image<sup>46</sup> how visual discourses have been interpreted in photo-reportage as narrations, as Nichols does in his film studies. Differences between production-orientation and content-orientation boil down to two main aspects. Reportages in visual form rely strongly on description of something real, but as Salo points out, in narration film is incomparable to a photographic image, if we just compare the variety of different types of narration in film reportage. However, in journalistic photography it all comes together under one practice that naturally creates variations in different styles. Therefore Nichols gives an apt example of the limitations of the concept of mode when applied to a still image. The attributes in Nichols' model are unsuitable for researching photographs. The descriptive, non-interventionist, participatory, and meta-communicative, with the exception of the last one, better describe a photographer's or a publisher's approach and intentions rather than offer an interesting and fruitful insight into the content, aesthetic, or style in visual expression.

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<sup>43</sup> Lehtonen A 1996, p.76 and Lodge 1983. pp. 311-329, or pp. 94-96 in this work.

<sup>44</sup> Kress, van Leeuwen 1996.

<sup>45</sup> See pages 29-30 and 53-54 in this work.

<sup>46</sup> Salo, 2000, p. 107.



IMAGE 9

Aesthetic and rhetorical qualities in visual expression are often a combination of technical mastery and thoughtful control of visual elements in composition. Ilkka Halso gives an excellent example of this kind of active and in the same time almost hidden practice. See more detailed analysis in my conclusion. Ilkka Halso, from a series "Restoration" 2000. (Original in colour)

## 2.4 COMPETENCE - Signs That Are Passing By

In *Chronospace-text* the audience as a skillful media user is returned to gravitations by introducing Robert Goldman and Stephen Papson and an abbreviation of the encoding rules<sup>47</sup>. The competence of audience that can be returned to a singular is also mentioned in my later texts. Goldman and Papson call every member of an audience an individual semiotician who shape the meaning from the content with their own media skills. The concept of a Trope by Yuri Lotman anticipates the merging metaphor with a discussion on the content of an image also in relation to media culture and the individual. Chaim Perelman<sup>48</sup> stresses the importance of an audience in his idea of genre, and concludes that genre is not possible without an existing audience and therefore argumentation can always materialize only in relation to the audience. Media visual in a large sense can be enacted as a contextualized process, and judgments, such as Seppänen's,

<sup>47</sup> Lehtonen K. 1996 A, p 74. See also Proctor Jones, Hall Stuart. 2004. Chapter 3 pp. 57-74.

<sup>48</sup> Perelman Chaim (1982). p. 102.

are only justifiable in this sense. In relation to concluding the expressive qualities of visual representation, media visual performs through conditions that relate back to the constituents of rhetoric. Observations of content, aesthetic qualities in proportion to style and meaning and visual expression can be approached as an argument, and concepts of rhetoric can be applied to make sense of the actual content of an image under the given circumstances.

Regarding the issues discussed, this contextual space of visual culture can be found in all my earlier texts published here. It is deliberated as a critique of Frank Webster's reading of the audience and a platform for the rhetorical skills of audiences to be developed the way Chaim Perelman has discussed. My suggestion is that in order to understand how a published image functions, analysis should be extended to cover the process of metaphor itself.<sup>49</sup>

Diversification of the media environment, the expansion of published images, and the increase of the types and genres of images, have all expanded the flow of the shared references in visual communication. Photography is no exception to that. Multimodal thinking has unlocked the problem of modes and modalities functioning flexibly in those cases where a partial approach is unable to give a coherent explanation. For a receiver the recognising of an image and assigning it to a genre has become a moment of ambiguity. Audiences are different. Each of the interpretations requires an individual to place oneself in or out of the expected audience, and this decision is reliant on the individual him/herself. Even if a person has predefined this audience position accurately, each moment of looking specifies the standing of an individual in relation to various audiences. One can realise that they are outside of these expectations and still not restrain the personal viewer experience completely, but they perhaps give less attention to or even ignore the image. Analytically speaking, this kind of dichotomy between inclusion and exclusion is potentiality between individuality and community, which do not overrule each other.

Audience tends to be seen as the receiver, albeit the user might be a more accurate term to describe the multiplicity of different groups consisting of individuals actively contributing their personal media relationship and consumption in participation and controlling their own media uses. Important questions that return back to an image as an argument are how dramatic and concrete these individual interventions are, and what is the impact of this decisiveness in terms of the everyday life of the members of the audience. This includes experiencing contents of images as natural and constructing the ideological in all genres.<sup>50</sup> In the *Teemu The Duck-text* "a cynical consumer" is an elaboration that continues with the theme in advertising images. The frequently used example of "audience self-definition" is the "cool" expression in the street lan-

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<sup>49</sup> For an example of text – image relation and references to different genres see Magritte and Silomäki images on page 62.

<sup>50</sup> Nando Malmelin defended his doctoral dissertation about reading the advertising images in year 2003. He concentrated in his work on analysing content production in advertising to develop a better understanding of processes and their influences on it.

guage of the younger generation.<sup>51</sup> In hip-hop culture the impression “to diss” carries the same attributes. In both cases to be “cool” or “diss” something or someone is not at all the alleged lack of vocabulary or impression, but a hugely sensitive and invariably changing concept of self-expression and taste, not to mention a reflection of the agreed symbolic attributes to imminent social conditions.<sup>52</sup> Anu Mustonen<sup>53</sup> has published the first Finnish textbook on this topic, and Jukka Sihvonen reviews media’s educational approach in several of his studies<sup>54</sup>. In this study, further discussions on media psychology and media education are not addressed due to the fact that they have little relation with either the theories of an argument or a metaphor as a concept. Media culture will be discussed further in relation to the concept of modality later on.



IMAGE 10

Cool ‘animal rights activists’ in the SOKOS Autumn 2001 fashion catalogue. See more detailed analysis in my conclusion. (Original in colour)

Existing social conditions have naturally been studied and discussed thoroughly. I shall refer only to those which contribute directly to my articles or those which have helped me find definitions with which to elaborate on my topic. In political and social theories thought has turned from postmodern to

<sup>51</sup> Naomi Klein discusses the concept of “cool” as a global marketing strategy and gives a good example of the outspread of the originally local or marginal tendencies of consumption and as a style. See Klein 2000.

<sup>52</sup> An equally adequate example of self-consciousness of the audiences is the contemporary film where referencing the history and genres of film or popular history is used frequently. As far as I can see, this is based on trusting the sensitivity of the audience in terms of these “hidden citations”. Content of sometimes not so flattering references (such as indicating a lack of taste, to give an example) do not insult anyone due to the practice of leaving the clues of hidden meaning for the audience to discover. On a contrary, this play of cat and mouse often challenges the individual to find them and feel even closer relation with the rest of the audience.

<sup>53</sup> Mustonen 2001.

<sup>54</sup> Sihvonen 1989 is a good example, and I’ve always admired his title of this particular book, that could be translated: “Burning Teddy Curtains” referring to a view that parent often faces when retuning home in a winter night and seeing the shaded window of the nursery where the children are either playing games or watching videos.

late or reflexive modern. In his 1992 book Zygmunt Bauman refers to the post-modern conditions as a “habitat” characterized by complexity and ambivalence, but also by the self-determination of a subject premised on symbolic expression and the visibility of interpretations of these expressions<sup>55</sup>. In his later studies Bauman describes the macro level change in contemporary society as a “fault line” from solid to liquid modernity and as a loss of long-term motivations to fragmented lateral orientation.<sup>56</sup>

In relation to the considerations of individual subject positions, Gianni Vattimo expands on these changes of multiple world views. Even stronger is his description of “losing a sense of reality” as a result of the changes in society. He does not find this loss problematic, because it is the result of a shift from a world of measurable and manipulable, tangible objects to a world of images and mass-communication.<sup>57</sup>

Where Vattimo sees the risk is that nostalgia will start to justify the definition of an authoritarian reality, and the menace of a neurotic society will follow, Michel Maffesoli specifies the change as a quality of style. In his theory, style defines the synthesis of values and the order of social behaviour. An individual becomes a member of a social group when applying certain styles in life, and meaning does not actualize without a form.<sup>58</sup> Maffesoli writes about the saturation of modern values. Society experiences cyclic changes or *transfigurations*. They are almost like a re-emergence of certain new forms of solidarity in togetherness that replace the modern call for absolutes with a sensitive hedonism, culture of emotions and re-enchantment. Maffesoli describes this as an *imaginal* world, where symbolic play of different forms of expression has gained a central function, and where images have become more important than ever before. The *new configuration of a world* is based on style. Style is the prime principle of collectivity in the postmodern society. Here Maffesoli makes a much more sympathetic conclusion about the same phenomenon of a “postmodern subject” than Bauman, who describes quite a pessimistic idea of an explosive society, and cloakroom communal behaviour in the middle of a carnivalistic reality.<sup>59</sup> Being part of something as an individual experience will follow from this new social and cultural ethos. Maffesoli gives images a central role in this ethos. It is about the creation of a collective ego, dependent on a variety of symbols replacing the religion in *the return of the images*. The modern *homo religiosus* meets postmodern *homo aestheticus*. Style defines the synthesis of values and creates the conditions of a lifestyle.<sup>60</sup> It becomes the rationale and results in a new social behaviour. It gives form to everyday life, creates rituals, and gives a com-

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<sup>55</sup> Bauman Zygmunt 1992. See also my Bauman discussion on page 24 in this work.

<sup>56</sup> Bauman Zygmunt 2000. Chapter 2.

<sup>57</sup> Vattimo Gianni 1989.

<sup>58</sup> Maffesoli Michel 1993.

<sup>59</sup> See pages 39 and 52-53 for discussion on postmodern.

<sup>60</sup> Maffesoli’s idea communicates also Francois Lyotard’s definition of “simulacra” as well as Herbert Jauss idea of pure visual sensitivity 1978.

munity a cohesive logic.<sup>61</sup> Style has become something very concrete and actual. Sociality originates from emotional and effectual solidarity.

According to Maffesoli these directives explain how image and look have increased in importance and become the defining principles of the order of being. Aesthetic style overtakes social class structures and all professional categories and a new ethics combines with aesthetics. The result is not individualism but “tribal hedonism”, and although it comprises of strong elements of conformity, the different forms of it do not need to be passive. They may be violent, such as rioting, unbiased, such as different forms of support, or they can be indifferent. The Italian philosopher Omar Calabrese compares the same cultural development of the postmodern society to baroque and calls it *neobaroque*.<sup>62</sup> My reasoning on location and identity formulates differently. Instead of bringing the ideas of social construction or an audience back to the dissolution of society, as discussed by the three philosophers in this text, I read these conditions rather as a context of visual representation. One strong unifying undertone in my articles is the “self-reflexive modern” which defines configurations of identity and location in proportion to illustration and visual content as an argument obtained under these conditions.<sup>63</sup>

J.T.W. Mitchell portrays the image as a fetish of Western culture and as a “natural sign” such as an idol or idolatry. According to this principle, an image is obliged to rest on the idea of a natural presence. In his critique Mitchell returns to current images and encourages research to return to the relationships of an individual image, because customary rational correspondence on everyday illustrations, at least from the point of view idolatry, reveals features of cult and commensurate ideologies.<sup>64</sup> In my “Landscapes -text”, I focus on the interpretation of a Landscape through photographic art. To a certain extent Mitchell’s critique of idolatry and his interpretation of media as a set of visual rituals is easy to endorse, but the cult-like nature of a picture may align with theory as well. Alongside identity, my article refers to the dimension of experience and to the idea of “Another Landscape” by Tom Sandquist<sup>65</sup>. Sandquist combines the complete experience of a landscape including the memory of the concept of it and points out how the existing landscape, also in visual forms, cannot be completely separated from the experience, memory, and remembrance.

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<sup>61</sup> Maffesoli polemises structuralistic thinking by underlining that style is not a language, but a speech. In Ferdinand Saussure definition the analysable part of language is “la langue”, formal language, and “la parole”, the use of language, is not analyzable due the unstable nature of it!

<sup>62</sup> Calabrese Omar 1992.

<sup>63</sup> These matters are further discussed in my Landscape -text as well as in the Pirates -text.

<sup>64</sup> Mitchell W.J.T. 1986, pages 90 - 91.

<sup>65</sup> Sandqvist 1986.



IMAGE 11

Landscape by Petur Thomssen from a series *"Imported Landscapes"* 2003. The Work of Petur Thomsen is analysed by Æsa Sirgurjonsdottir in Lehtonen Kimmo (ed.) 2006, pages 39 – 46. See more detailed analysis in my conclusion.

In the same article Sandquist approaches Walter Benjamin's critical elaboration on the relationship between cult and beauty as a value. Benjamin's idea of experience compares media images and contemporary photographic art. Interestingly, Kia Lindroos applies Benjamin's concept of time in an analysis of media images and their reception. Reception is often understood as a cultural competence of memory and learning. Lindroos introduces "now time" (Jetztzeit) to complement Benjamin's no-time as an existing moment, which intensifies the reception of an image as an immediate experience.<sup>66</sup> For an image Benjamin has several different concepts. He sees it as a historical document that preserves history in itself. For him, an image can also be interplay of text and images. He believes that an image strongly expresses temporality and phantasmagoria where it is related to symbols, sign structure, and tradition. Then images became a synchronizing element between these different forces and in a given time or moment. For Benjamin the interpretation of an image requires a specific idea of time, memory, and history. Kaja Silverman has concluded on the same theme how, in his *Arcades Project*, Benjamin's relationship with images is pre-

<sup>66</sup> Lindroos 1998, pp. 43 to 47 and 191 to 195.



sented in a montage-forging method.<sup>67</sup> The montage-method is also a conceptual connection to actualization of time, *chairoi*, and photography's role in temporizing time in its representations.

Benjamin describes the nature of an urban subject as "indexes of collective sleep" - boredom. He argued that it connects the dream of upper classes and the assembly belt of the working class. He even created four different roles for this way of being - a collector, a gambler, a flaneur, and a whore. The most active one of these is the flaneur - the eyes in a crowd.<sup>68</sup> The flaneur is not a passive actor of boredom. Leisure as a goal of social behaviour is active. The project for a flaneur is the ongoing loitering and participation in time. In comparison to Maffesoli it is interesting how well this Benjamin's new social type communicates with the "homo aestheticus". Flaneur is an ambivalent product of its time. Participating in a crowd does not make the flaneur passive because his eye is active. Benjamin describes different types of social activity for a flaneur. "The reporter" is a flaneur turned into a detective. "A photojournalist" hunts without a safety catch and "a dandy" flaunts himself.<sup>69</sup> Sight, a sense for a mobile city and for annexing space, crystallizes the positions and manners in social activity. Robert Kaufman ponders the same in a larger context of signifying and the crisis of "Aura":

"One way to begin trying to understand this [crisis of Aura] would be to remember how aura's crisis comes to be so important for Benjamin's (and - through Benjamin's influence - for Adorno's) theory and practice of the constellation and force-field (Kraftfeld). These latter are often and rightly understood as an intellectual attempt non-deterministically to locate and dynamically connect elements (historical, socioeconomic, cultural) that are not initially given as relational, but that, when animated - constellated - into conjunction create or reveal a signifying force-field. That force-field for its part illuminates the larger social reality whose elements have been brought together in affinity and tension (rather than in a falsely integrative totalization) to make the constructivist force-field itself visible."<sup>70</sup>

## 2.5 Conventional Percepts

The transition that has occurred in visual culture has worked in favour of photographic image and illustration and channelled the change significantly well. Image has stronger and more versatile markets than ever. I cannot be the only one playing with the idea of what would happen if Benjamin were to spend time today thinking about virtual reality and games or the Internet!

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<sup>67</sup> Silverman, 2002, pp. 1 - 20.

<sup>68</sup> Benjamin 1999, pp. 152 - 196, "Some motifs in Baudelaire".

<sup>69</sup> Buck-Morss, 1991, p. 105, 228.

<sup>70</sup> Kaufmann, in Andrew Benjamin 2006, p 142.

What Maffesoli defines as a postmodern instant, where social shared styles are reflected by an individual with the personal attributes of the style defined in that moment, specifying exactly the logic of a time-related personal experience, and by defining this process as a ritual, does not open a contradiction between audience and the image.<sup>71</sup> I would rather emphasise and support Lindroos in that Benjaminian *Jetztzeit* elucidates the time/space relationship that is fundamental to the relationship between a visual argument and the used genre, at the very least from the perspective of contemporaries in visual meaning. Same tendencies can be found in press and journalistic images, where editorial materials, illustrations included, have turned more and more into products that substitute the genuine nature of documenting the factual.



IMAGE 12

This image by Markus Jokela is a perfect example of journalistic photography where the personal style of a photographer takes the documentation of the actual news event to a level of visual argument without losing any qualities of the genre. See more detailed analysis in my conclusion. Helsingin Sanomat November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011. See more detailed analysis in my conclusion.

In recent years, photographic art has received plenty of success and attention. Especially Finnish photography has broken through to the international art markets and gained worldwide attention in different exhibitions like never before. Visual art and photography can be contemplated so that the intentions of the artist and the audience expectations are not two completely independent entities and as such on a collision course, neither due to the rhetorical capacity of the work nor because of the qualities of the audience. This problematic relation is of particular interest in the case of photography with its enormous position and value in the media and its increasing importance in the art scene.

Mitchell agrees with Edmund Burke, Thomas Hobbes, and John Locke, and suggests that the definitions of the qualities in the visual are also strongly

<sup>71</sup> Maffesoli, 1993.

related to the language used and the values it defines. To him the modern idea of photography is automatically expressed in the discourse between iconophobic and iconophilic, and how these discourses reflect the conclusions on the whole nature of photography. He elaborates the critique of Marxist theories and discusses “dialectic pluralism”, but leaves the concept open. Mitchell also introduces Nelson Goodman and names him a “conventionalist” who places himself outside of iconophilia and iconophobia.<sup>72</sup> One demarcation line between formal theories and the rhetoric may be disclosed between these two authors. Nelson Goodman returns to the naming practices and argues that contrary to the ground of similitude in visual representation, these new naming practices play a key role in implying that metaphor is a foundation of the interpretation of the visual. This is crystallised in Goodman’s idea of exemplification.<sup>73</sup> Interestingly, Goodman’s notion is suited to the pragmatic naming practice, but it also avoids commenting on any special characteristics of content matter. In the *Technologized Snow-text* I apply Goodman in my own discussion on intertwining media images and photographic art together, based on the richness of the rhetorical capacity to develop the reading of idiosyncrasies of visual articulation. I cannot argue that the categories Mitchell is using would be empty in defined conditions, but his idea of dialectic pluralism is indefinite and might give enigmatic results in analysis.

Charles Sanders Peirce approaches the idea of a sign from three perspectives. We can reflect on the essential features of a sign vehicle, or the relation between a sign and its object, or the association between the sign vehicle and interpretation, to understand how a sign defines its interpretation. Each of these can be developed to *possible*, *concrete* or *conventional*, which Peirce named ‘*firstness*’, ‘*secondness*’ and ‘*thirdness*’. The sign – vehicle relations organize these three relations in the same order. Realising a possibility for meaning in certain substantial characteristics of a sign vehicle, recognising that something as an image defines qualities of this sign vehicle, is what Peirce specified as a *qualisign*. On the second level this relationship is observed based on its recognition as a sign and what kind of aspects the sign vehicle comprises. Peirce calls this a *sin-sign*. The previous two definitions lead the process of recognition finally to the level where the different principles and rules of a sign vehicle can be studied as a *legising*. All that I have mentioned here in relation to Peirce and his theory has mostly been ignored in applied uses of pragmatic semiotics in the interpretation of an image.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Mitchell W.J.T. 1986.

<sup>73</sup> Goodman Nelson 1988, and Cohnitz David, Rossberg Marcus. 2006, pp. 145-149.

<sup>74</sup> An important study, which helped me arrive at this idea is Veivo, Huttunen 1999.

	Firstness	Secondness	Thirdness
SIGN - VEHICLE	Qualisign	Sinsign	Legisign
SIGN - OBJECT	Icon - Image Diagram Metaphor	Index - Reagent Designator	Symbol
SIGN - INTERPRETATION	Rhema	Dicent	Argument

" TOBLERONE "

FIGURE 1 Toblerone

Pierce's definition of a sign - its object relation as an icon, an index and a symbol has been undeniably tempting due to the clear and solid qualities it can give to an image. Identifying something concretely as an *icon*, following the given causality in an image as *index* and finally recognizing habitual, conventional images as *symbols*, in my opinion works better. In trying to make Peirce easier to access for my students I have started to call his pragmatic theory construction "the Toblerone theory". This part of Peirce's theory has been applied by cutting it out from the original idea like a piece of chocolate from a complete bar - "click".<sup>75</sup> Often it has not been recognized how Peirce's epistemological idea includes two separable aspects of object. First the inner aspect is in a relation to a sign, immediately and directly, the object as the sign represents it. Second, there is the external dynamic aspect of an object, which is independent and merely the cause of the sign itself. Each sign has an immediate object, but not necessarily a dynamic one.

In the semiotic study of images, already at the first qualisign level, the sign object relation has mostly been reduced to being iconic, that resembles enough, a lookalike. However, I was fascinated to realize how Peirce locates three different relations under icon and especially surprised to see that metaphor is placed in firstness (recognition of sign vehicle qualities) and not in any closer relation to symbol. In Peirce's construction, metaphor is defined as a likeness in comparison to two sign vehicles. Moreover, he includes a map, a construction drawing, or any visual representation in precise proportions that exactly follows cer-

<sup>75</sup> John Fiske gives a typical example of this kind of "power semiotics". See especially Fiske John, 1990.

tain features of the object. Such features of elements as topographical get their recognition as an image and are put into relation with other forms and relations. *My Landscape-text* addresses the aesthetic and ideological in referential relations of place location and the representation of them.

Merja Salo constructs an explanation on a journalistic image where she structures her analysis of the whole genre on C.S. Peirce's pragmatic tripartite "Toblerone" division of semiotics in the news media. She interprets firstness as a news image, secondness as a news photo-reportage, and thirdness as an image in illustration. This division follows Peirce's idea that sign vehicle qualities progress from one level to another.<sup>76</sup> Salo's arrangement gives a solid understanding of photo-journalism, but in terms of content analysis it can be criticized, as I did before on narration and Bill Nichols, restraining more on the historical and analyzing more the production than the visual or aesthetic content. In Peirce's sign the interpretative relation remains ignored, although in my reading it also resonates strongly with the content matter in the visual and it enables us to rationalize visual expression further, as I will state later.

Theoretical approach could here be linked to the idea of modalities because it gives a fruitful opening to the question of a genre and of the visual in the media. Kress and Van Leeuwen<sup>77</sup> define multimodality as a structure where meaning is constructed in several fields of a semiotic code, and where finally all symbolic processes can be returned to multimodality. Mikko Lehtonen emphasizes that the concept is important especially in the analysis of popular culture. He supports the implication made in my article in relation to different fields of visual art by not denying that modality would not also attain the domain of high culture.<sup>78</sup>

These broad tendencies in culture will remain beyond the limit of this study, and I focus on the content- and meaning-related attributes in illustration through media images with emphasis on photography. I find my deliberation closer to Mitchell's critique of icono-phobic rhetoric. Furthermore, in the connection between photography in the media and photography in visual arts, which has been discussed less, I can bring new openings related to genre and content expression with the aesthetic qualities, and explain the processes of meaning in different forms of photography, some with amateur photographic practices such as wildlife and nature photography.

Wildlife photography bridges the themes together. Wildlife photography is an active form of amateur photography. It has been established as an active scene in camera clubs, which define the features of and the expectations for a good wildlife image. Species must be recognizable, environment must be typical for it, and any kind of manipulation of the image has been strictly forbidden. Juha Suonpää defines in his dissertation the conditions for proper wildlife photography and links his definition of the genre of wildlife photography with its aesthetic as a stipulation of a Foucauldian discourse. A sincere wildlife photog-

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<sup>76</sup> Peirce 1991, p. 188-189.

<sup>77</sup> Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996.

<sup>78</sup> More about the definition of multimodal in Lehtonen 2001 pp. 85-91.

rapher is competent and qualified, follows a moral code of environmental protection and tradition and, importantly, is a member of this community.<sup>79</sup> When wildlife photography became a profession, it came to question these virtues, created severe competition and revealed the use of other methods, such as the use of carcasses. The potential clientele was extensive and ranged from school books to advertising.<sup>80</sup> The penetration of commercial wildlife footage has reached forms quite distant from nature. Especially in the DVD and television markets, the productisation of “wonders of wildlife” has taken place. The identification of species and the annual rhythm of seasons and wildlife have been transformed into “life stories”, “struggle”, and narratives. Personally I find most revolting the advertisements of “The Greatest Fights of...” that turn wildlife into a strange competitive sport of survival.

Digital technology has enabled the camera to reach places unthinkable before. Fred Ritchin described already in the early 1990’s how remotely controlled devices can take “the witnessing eyes of a camera to places unthinkable before, such as inside a volcano, and create entirely new expectations for images in media.”<sup>81</sup> Ritchin writes:

‘Looked at in this way, photography becomes more variegated, less an automatic validation of the way things are. It is, like other communication systems, a way of asserting one’s own feelings through the prism of one’s own culture. This is reason why computerized image banks, which allows easy access to huge quantities of photographs from all over, may distort the nature of the imagery, treating them as if photography were a kind of universal esperanto’.<sup>82</sup>

Together with these topic- and circumstance-driven changes also insights of aesthetic qualities have developed into a new idea of photorealism. Digital image and High Definition technology have in a way saturated the idea of colours and sharpness. Spectators can study the details of feathers or a sharp reflection on a bird’s eye, and meanwhile colours have become stronger and deeper. In a way, the idea of “real” follows HD logic and diverges from reality to the overdone representations of it.

While commenting on the establishment of modern vision, Jonathan Crary states that the problem of mimesis is not only one of aesthetic but mostly of social power founded on the capacity to produce equivalence.<sup>83</sup> He describes how the whole nineteenth century has created a *photography effect* and how photography, rather than being a part of continuous history of visual representation, has become an important element of a homogenous terrain of consumption and a component of the cultural economy of value and exchange. This approach is fruitful when discussing the changes in paradigms in the history of modernity, but I deal differently with this matter. In visual expression and the aesthetic,

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<sup>79</sup> Suonpää 2002, pp. 62 – 63.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. 102.

<sup>81</sup> Ritchin, 1990.

<sup>82</sup> Ritchin 1990, p. 100.

<sup>83</sup> Crary 1993, pp. 12 – 13.

digitalisation of an image is inextricably tied together with the history of mechanical reproduction and the history of representation.

The examples of wildlife photography, or my examples of information graphics, stress the conclusion on how circulation between different types and modes of the visual intertwine in contemporary visual culture. Digital animation has adopted such practices, in a way comical, as lens flare, contrast of reverse light or limited depth of sharpness in an image. Actually, in a technical sense, there really is no need to do so – it takes great effort and huge computer capacity to produce these effects that were originally caused by different optical weaknesses! In the news media low quality VHS image-capture style has become a metaphor for eye-witnessing. This happened when ABC News, and immediately after them the whole Western press, published images of a student stopping a column of tanks at Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China in 1989.

By illustration I return to the construction of interplay of these qualities in visual culture – multimodal if you wish. “Do you think this is *photoshopped?*” is quite a common question today, keeping in mind what kind of specialist expertise this manoeuvre and noticing it theoretically requires from the spectator. Lev Manovich subsumes the historical framework of photorealism to the development of computer graphics. He claims that computer graphics have actually not reached realism, merely it has developed photorealism, “...*the ability to fake not our perceptual and bodily experience of a reality but only its photographic image.*”<sup>84</sup> By applying aesthetic and rhetoric it is impossible to study media images and reduce the attention to the technical aspects of the studied attributes. Presumptions and expectations that define the core of different genres are always, at least as discursive *modus vivendi*, in the orbit of the ideological, which make disputes of what is proper between different, often value based, cultural approaches historically logical but difficult to define. And the other way round, these engagements concerning violence, sexuality or other cultural taboos, or practices such as paparazzi photography, often looks exaggerated outside from their own time and context.

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<sup>84</sup> Manovich 2001, p 200.



IMAGE 13

Pedro Meyer, the Mexican documentary photographer, exposed how sensitive the issue of manipulation is in the whole photography community. One of his famous digital manipulations he produced was "an amputation" of an old man in a swimming pool. The response by his fellow photographers was furious, as if Meyer had literally cut off the poor mans foot! See Meyer 1992, Retirement Community. Yuma, Arizona 1985/92 page 58.

## 2.6 Slow Process Amongst Genres

Above I deployed a concept of argument alongside photography. By argument I mean that the significance of those visual articulations able to carry different meaning depending on the context and use must be stressed. Visual expression, photographs included, is multi-linear, and as such it has proved to be a tricky issue for semiotics. This has resulted in the idea of the image as a message without a code, as suggested by Barthes<sup>85</sup>. In his theory of myth, Barthes emphasises 'vraisemblance' to define a photograph, and takes his example from advertising naming the Panzani pasta advertisement as the perfect example of expressing "Italian-ness". Without any intention to deny this well discussed quality, my approach calls for a specific attention to the fact how concrete a photographic image is, and how this photographic "reality" makes it so easy to interpret, or at least looking at a photograph gives that experience. This is especially true with media images, and the widely spread conclusion that anchors it with photorealism cannot and should not be denied, but the impact of this very same quality of expression in photography being referential should not be ignored either. In articulation theories the contextual relations are put before the actual qualities of the expression itself. My interpretation is grounded in the understanding of the features of the "meaning vehicle" - in photography this

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<sup>85</sup> Barthes 1961.



could be the Barthesian noema,<sup>86</sup> – and in interpreting the visual qualities of a photographic image as “an expression” as articulations which are fluently appropriated between different genres in different contexts. John Berger’s insight, which I referred to in the beginning of this text when discussing the cultural level of the ontology of a photograph, comes very close to this and is in itself a very classical definition of photography.



IMAGE 14

Hannes Heikura has a very distinctive personal style in his photojournalism. Contrasted light, quite often “vignetted” – where tones on the edges of the images are printed dark – to complement the black and white photographic effect, and to refer to the modernist tradition of the genre.

In the history of photography, the gateway from its use by the media to the fields of art has been the institutional canonization by the galleries and museums who have repeatedly rewritten the history of photography by bringing new works and photographers into display in the context of art, and competed in the game of discovering new artists – quite many of which the institutional gate-keepers of art find from the field of documentary photography. Douglas Crimp and Victor Burgin debated in their books in the 1980’s how firstly, the museum that strives to establish its position and status is dead as an institution because postmodern conditions are taking over and desolating the forms and functions of these temples of aura (Crimp), and secondly.<sup>87</sup> Instead of trying to include or exclude photographic works in relation to visual art, I find it important to understand the different forms of content these images gain when changing from one genre to another.

In contemporary photography crossing the genre borders and creating a work and knowing already during the process that the images may be intro-

<sup>86</sup> Something has been there (in front of a lens and a camera apparatus).

<sup>87</sup> Burgin, 1989, Crimp, 1993, pp 108-125.

duced and used in different contexts, which depend on the publishing connection and genre, is completely and transparently accepted as an essential part of the process. At least for the last twenty years, orientation towards “genre-hopping” has become an important part of a photographer’s work. Finnish photographer Tuomo Manninen is an excellent example of this process in contemporary photographic practice. In my editor’s article for SHIFTS<sup>88</sup> I described this method as “Intensive repetition”.<sup>89</sup>

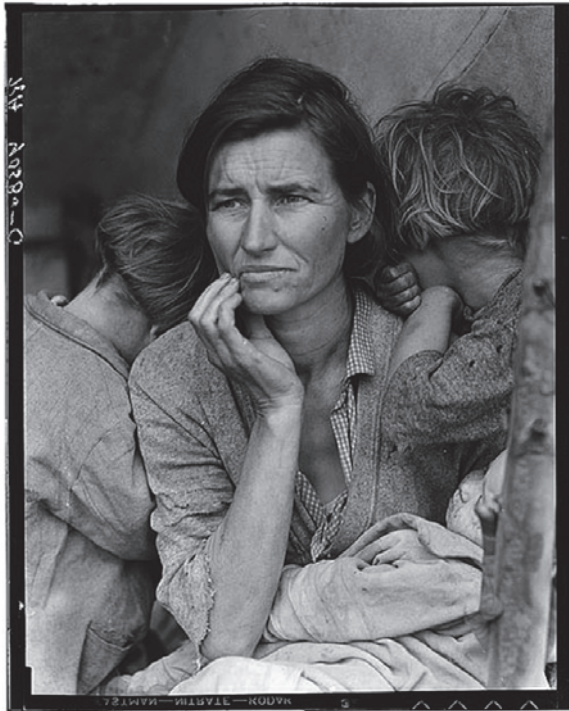


IMAGE 15

Probably the most famous single image in the Farm Security Administration documentation project is Dorothea Lange’s “Migrant Mother”, Nipomo California, USA, 1936. Library of Congress Prints and Photograph Reading room: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/>. This image has become an icon and celebrated example of documentary photography. As an interesting detail, even a small human thumb was retouched in lower right side of the image in the published version (an un-retouched and “un-published” version is available in the Library of Congress website as well.)

In his work for the 2006 – 2007 commission, Manninen continued a project that originally started as reportage for the Helsingin Sanomat monthly supplement

<sup>88</sup> International photography research network organized a series of international conferences. *SHIFTS -conference*, in Jyväskylä, Finland brought together scholars and photographers around the topics of the new identities in documentarism and the changes in the concepts of archiving.

<sup>89</sup> About politics of art see Lehtonen, 2006 p. 11 and about repetition see Knijn 2007. pp. 160-167.

'Kuukausiliite'<sup>90</sup>. It so happened that the leading daily paper in Finland started one of the most interesting and intensive works in progress in the contemporary Finnish photographic art. The assignment was somehow sociological: to photograph groups of people linked and related by their profession. For Manninen the hybrid of documentary and the staged setting of the images were the most natural choice and the visual qualities of expression I mentioned earlier in connection with Barthesian "noema" constituted his personal style in photography. In his images artificial light mixes with the natural conditions of the space, making the scene both lively and strongly staged at the same time. People who participate in these group portraits are invited to participate in the more or less slow process of taking a portrait image. The form of the image (well-controlled squares), the control of the space/light and composition, and the use of depth of focus: all these elements can be found in every image of Manninen's project. He summarises his working method by emphasising that there is no classification system in his work, and thereby actively denies a parallel with August Sander.<sup>91</sup> This intentional and active use of the photographic technique has been analysed in earlier writing on photography mostly as the talent of the practitioner or a style and quality of an epoch or a genre. Quite few remarks have been made in terms of content or expression in relation to the use of different techniques, leaving out from discussions a huge set of tools to communicate through photography.<sup>92</sup>

By photographing demographic groups, Manninen allows the workers participate in the history of photography, from passport images to Farm Security Administration (FSA), August Sander and the endless archives of atelier photography and media images. At the same time his emphasis on a different approach makes him unique in terms of understanding contemporary social conditions by practice-based photographic research. In these 'group portraits' the repetition meets the mirroring of the self by the photographed people themselves: Manninen invites the people he photographs into the process by letting them experience a certain slowness of the process. Everything is arranged, in-

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<sup>90</sup> 5.9: Muslim women; 17.9: 'Kotkan Hyrrät' dance group; 28.9: 'Radio City' radio station; 13.10: Miners from the Pyhäsalmi mine; 26.10: Finnish Association of Orchid Growers; 13.11: Fjell hotel 'Pyhätunturi'; 23.11: Pathologists; 30.11: Personnel at the presidential residence 'Mäntyniemi'; 21.12: Construction workers; 30.12: Transvestites.

<sup>91</sup> August Sander did his famous documentation of German people as an art project, seeking to create a large collection of photographic images covering the whole country. Classification and the idea of the project as a systematic inventory of German people were attributed to his work only after the fact, mainly by practices of archiving and historical writing. Manninen is in a sense distancing himself more from this tradition than from Sander's intentions. Ten years have passed and Manninen is still making group portraits. He described his goals for the Changing Faces commission in Paris beforehand in his *Changing Faces* EU Culture 2000 project proposal in autumn 2005: 'My main focus in the Work-Paris (working title) is to portray three different layers of work, workers and workplaces in the most photographed city on earth. I'm working to find groups that are either visually or historic-socially linked to certain turning-points in Parisian history.'

<sup>92</sup> The most active debates concern advertising and setting images, wild life photography and journalistic images on manipulations. Each of them making mostly critical remarks. It is also good to keep in mind, that the photographers themselves in these different genres have a very conservative attitude, at least to public debating on content and photographic techniques.

cluding the individual persons in the images. At the same time, Manninen allows – and even expects – these people to set themselves to be photographed.

Making something invisible visible to the naked eye by optical and chemical processes has not only determined but also cursed the practice of photography throughout its history. The very practice of repetition in photography is almost a transparent variable if we consider it as other than an archive or a genre. Michel Foucault has described power structures, surveillance, and control of the human body, to name some of his favourite issues. Repetition by photography is included in Foucault's concept, but his understanding of the repetitive nature of photography is connected to the practices and nature of an archive and the execution of power. At the same time in his thinking resemblance and repetition can be read as an intensive part of the practices of knowledge and also in relation to human action. Foucault discusses 'forms of concepts' as 'fields of presence' where hidden meanings and errors can be analysed by experimental verification, that is by repetition. Later in the same study repetition is described as an extension of time. Foucault returns to claim that continuity and repetition are phenomena that constitute 'resemblance as an archaeological description'. In my reading the characteristics that Foucault attributes to repetition are fully employed in the aesthetic of Manninen and that of Italian photographer Luigi Gariglio, whose work I shall discuss later in this chapter.<sup>93</sup>

In terms of the history of photography, the experience of the 'slow process' can be traced back not only to the techniques of the practice, but also to the social practices of atelier and portrait photography. People experience a certain importance in placing themselves in front of a camera, thus participating in an immortalising mirror effect. Another historical line of thought about being present is related to Foucault's theory of the control of the body. Writing about the ideological work of control, to develop an act of control as a social practice, is in a way an ultimate goal – self-surveillance as a pleasure. Foucault describes a history of 'a rule of an active place' (translation is mine). From military harbours and hospitals through to city planning and industrial installations, development has moved towards more and more detailed instructions and rules for the uses and control of the human body. It is a development from a straight division of spaces to different grids, such as the separation of rooms, or, as my own favourite example dictates, when sitting down to dinner we should be the distance of two fingers from the table – that's what the 'rule' says!<sup>94</sup> In the projects I discuss here, the participating people are actually controlling their behaviour in the way Foucault suggests, and I describe the system of realizing the images as "the intimacy of a place in common". The artists making these portraits are commenting upon these structures by bringing in elements from the history of photography. Moreover, they use elements in their own work to discuss the overall topic of Work.

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<sup>93</sup> Foucault, 1971. See, 'fields of presence' p. 57, 'an extension of time' p. 141, 'resemblance as an archaeological description' p. 173.

<sup>94</sup> Foucault 1980.

As a series of images *Me-We* (the overall title of Manninen's project, of which the *Parisian Nous/We* forms a part) does not develop in the direction of control, but rather as a network of relationships between the groups of people in these images. Some of these relationships happen inside a single image: a silent communication of the qualities of a shared profession, the intimacy of a shared space and the pride of a worker in a particular group. The title of the work is an echo of this idea. 'Me-We' is a word play in the Finnish language. 'Me' in Finnish actually means 'we' in English, and the title can be understood as 'we-we' if you mix the languages. It is a detail that is open and actually significant for a Finnish audience, bringing another aspect of repetition into play and at the same time not being completely transparent for the international audience.



IMAGE 16

Tuomo Manninen *'Roller Skating Police troops in Paris'* from a series *Me/We*, Paris, France, 2006.

According to the original idea for his commission, Manninen is searching for professional groups linked to Parisian history. Manninen explains his basic idea for Paris by examples: the Gardes-Français has given way to roller-skating policemen, street water salesmen are today water bottling factory workers, etc. Each of his images is motivated by the history of the actual place, Paris, in terms of local professions since the 14th century.<sup>95</sup> Isn't it the case in these images that the work and the working places are interpreted by repetitions generated by both the photographer and the people photographed? The lighting, the conditions – everything concrete in these images – communicate the present as an instant in the history of professions and their essence in Paris.

Individuals sharing the same profession, sharing the same work place, are included in the same image, each of them becoming silent in front of this challenge of participating in the image of a profession as a personal attribute. It is an act in which they attempt to participate in something more sensitive on a social level, 'Me' being in this profession 'We'. This interpretation is actually a full denial of historical praxis, other than aesthetic, in terms of using photography as an empirical method to openly discuss those characters within a given group, and naturally the circumstances, the concrete conditions of work as they are in Paris today. This opens a dialogue between the invisible micro level behind Foucault and the visible aesthetic of an image. It challenges the history of photography and aesthetics as an interpretation of the workers, understanding of their being and conditions in a society. It becomes an urban anthropology without a structure of classification, with different categories in dialogue, some of photography, others of work, workers and Paris.

Janne Seppänen has studied the presentation of photography and visual expression. In his PhD study Seppänen focuses his attention on contextual factors. Seppänen names his approach as anti-essential visual analysis, and argues that a photographic image cannot exist in terms of analysis and interpretation without influence from outside of the image itself. In his work "A Photograph Does Not Exist"<sup>96</sup>, Seppänen continues to develop ideas on visual rhetoric.<sup>97</sup> Whereas I stress the photograph as a rhetorical act and the means this requires, Seppänen aligns his thinking with Roman Jakobson's division between metaphor and metonymy.<sup>98</sup> In Jakobson's theory metaphor transforms meaning from one level to another, whereas metonymy operates on the same level with no transformation between the levels. Metaphor constructs a meaning, a content matter, on behalf and as a representative of something else, and metonymy is based on causal relation representing a whole of something. The latter quality can be linked to the indexicality of a photograph.<sup>99</sup>

All these three concepts can be used to assess media images but also photographic art such as Manninen's work. And moreover, the analysis of visual

<sup>95</sup> Lehtonen 2006, p. 30.

<sup>96</sup> Seppänen 2001 A. Original Finnish name *Valokuva ei ole*; translation here: "A photograph Does Not Exist", is mine.

<sup>97</sup> Seppänen 2001 B.

<sup>98</sup> About Jakobson, see Kuusamo 1996 p. 199.

<sup>99</sup> Seppänen 2001 A, pp. 185-193.

rhetoric should not reduce the importance of these concepts into a burden of forming grounding elements of argumentation then applied in some exact realization to different genres and context. In his PhD work Hannu Vanhanen refines an analytical reading of a photo-reportage through qualities he organises into different sequential attributes of a reportage, which he calls the “story-board structure”.<sup>100</sup> Since Vanhanen has a strong professional background in photojournalism himself, he is very fluent in his analysis. Possibly the most significant aspect of Vanhanen’s storyboard structure analysis of photographic images is his coherent interpretation of the properties characteristic of the photographic technique in such aspects that remain an elementary part of the visual expression itself. I refer to Vanhanen’s skill of organizing such features as “contrast” in order to define full aesthetic decisions highly relevant for the reportage as such, but also for the genre itself when generating recognizable and repeated elements in style and expression – in visual argumentation, I would conclude. Further from the storyboard idea, thanks to the contextual nature of a published image, the interrelations of these properties are going through functional shifts depending on the associations established by different genres.

In his critique on semiotics Bruno Latour comments how postmodern theory has fluently used the three most important elements in criticising modernity – nature, society, and language – by juxtaposing them but without trying to bring them together. The result, according to Latour, has been a ‘harmless’ science and a technology of images without any references. It has also defined an ‘illusory’ society, and a language that is based on ‘signification effects’. These have then been united together as a collage joining the time/space relations.<sup>101</sup> Could we use this critique and Latour’s remark to study visual presentation? This study should avoid the loose structures of classification and communicate with the modalities, the history of genres and aesthetics as an interpretation.

Italian photographer Luigi Gariglio’s approach to interpreting social change through the concept of work comes close to the history of portraiture in photography as well, but the definition of time is different. Tuomo Manninen’s Me-We project reaches layers of history both in terms of theme as well as in terms of his relation to genre and aesthetic. In Manninen’s project, the profession as a historical social group defines the identity of the people in the images, whereas Gariglio’s approach in his project of business families is the opposite. For him, the identity lies first with the family, which then, through the family business, takes the shape of a profession. Gariglio studies through his photography a kind of a vernacular definition for the intangible. The profession does not dictate the heritage. On the contrary, the family heritage has a vast impact on the profession, and because of that an individual understanding of identity is related to the concept of work. He photographed people wearing their casual clothing, posing in an outdoor location and as such establishes the ‘family heritage’ in a conceptual frame of the national landscape. The use of light plays an

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<sup>100</sup> Vanhanen 2002, see especially chapters 5 and 9.

<sup>101</sup> Latour, 2006, see chapter 3.5.

important role too. The images are made at two o' clock in the morning, as if Gariglio was celebrating the mysterious Northern light of summer nights.

The historical connection of the people in the images is divided into a relationship between the casual everyday and the closeness of nature. Both are perceived in Finland through the Weberian Protestant interpretation of a humble understanding of the self. Family heritage can be in a way 'confessed' when people are surrounded by these important elements of 'Finnishness'. It is traditional in Finland to camouflage prosperity! The result is that prosperity is somehow seen as potentially wrong, as if it might exhibit greed or fun, while in the Protestant ethic life should be a struggle and hard work in line with the idea of human dignity. Reflecting upon this tradition, the clear caution with which Cariglio communicates entrepreneurship as a family background is only an attempt to deal with a tradition based on social pressure.

The heritage of the landscape is perhaps even stronger than Gariglio originally planned. The history of Finland's independence includes so many anchors to landscape that the variety of interpretations of a 'Finnish summer night' includes references to popular culture, such as film and music or the history of arts; the contemporary phenomenon of the summer cottage culture is probably one of the strongest of them.<sup>102</sup>

Time/space relations in Gariglio's summer night move from the lakes, fields, and forests to delicate remarks about constructed landscapes. An architect is standing next to a lake in a city, a young girl in front of a sandpit; another girl stands in a wasteland before a forest of birch trees. Gariglio repeated the natural conditions as frame in the reproduced images of the previous generations he photographed in the same setting where the first images were shot. Family businesses are made to grow from the ground and the 'ground' is shown as a condensed landscape. Personal history becomes part of the work in texts written by the person posing in the large image. Text is naturally a concept of knowledge in itself, but Gariglio uses texts as a connecting element of passing time and changing generations. The texts deal with memories of the time when the business was established, and impressions of the person who founded it, a genealogy on the level of memory, family, and endeavour or fortunes. The individual's personal connections to the family patterns filter through the texts and reveal the blessings and the curse of being a family member. Gariglio unfolds transparent and hidden layers of history (national, local, personal) before our eyes, and an interpretation for us to debate. The problem of classification structures, as I pointed out earlier, in relation to the critique Bruno Latour made against postmodern theory, meets here the possibility of introducing new elements to ground the interpretation of a visual presentation. An image as an entity with strong connection to its rich history and different modal constellations

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<sup>102</sup> To give you an indication of the scale of this cultural phenomenon, the population in Finland is at the moment 5.3 million. We own roughly 300,000 summer cottages. Originally these buildings were humble leisure houses for summer holidays. Today most of the new and an increasing number of the old buildings are equipped for year-round use. They have become a contemporary access to nature, private paradises of free time, and central spaces for the family.



between genres shows how research does not need to require solid and permanently anchored elements for understanding the visual. Much more, it requires the understanding of the contexts, different genres and also aesthetic elements that are used and controlled in an image. Here I need to refer to studies of Kress and Van Leeuwen in terms of production. Each and every published image has gone through a multilayered and precise set of selections in the process of publishing, and therefore these different elements can be controlled. I will return to this later in relation to Peirce and Ricoeur, and explain how this quality can be used as an argument in the rhetorical analysis of an image.



#### IMAGES 17 AND 18

Luigi Gariglio, "Suomala family" from the project 2 a.m. „Family Business Society, Jyväskylä, Finland, 2005. Published in Lehtonen Kimmo 2008 (Cover and back cover).

The history of photography in Finland follows the development across Europe; in the early days of the history of photography portraiture was first adopted on a large scale by the middle class, the petit bourgeois of the cities. The earliest large-scale production of photographic images occurred when the ateliers photographed *cartes de visite* and postcards. Having oneself photographed and then giving a print as a token to a friend, relative or business acquaintance is one thing, to be photographed for a public audience is another. Privacy has always been highly respected in Finland. Images of power and science were made and archives created, but the popular images distributed through landscape postcards and picture books belong to an area in which landscape photography was strong and related to the family album. In addition the creation of a 'National Landscape' was very Finnish in character, related to the strong independence movement under the Russian rule.

Already in early 1900 the subject matter in Finnish photography developed from static landscapes and set images into lively compositions of captured

moments, which gained more space in publications illustrated with photographic images. At the same time Finland's unique nature, its four seasons and faraway locations brought some eccentricity to the images. Strong winter storms, forest working sites or late winter skiers rushing down the fells in Lapland may not be the most inviting imagery for international audiences, but they were repeatedly used in every book of the time as representations of the power of nature in Finland.

It was common in picture books that the pride in the progress of the nation was depicted in pictures of administrative buildings or educational venues, subjects which mostly had significance for the local audience. The growing success of picture books woke up the publishing houses such as Werner Söderström, Otava, Gummerus and other leading companies as they all started publishing them. Part of that interest was channelled to ethnology, arts, and science. Leading linguists and ethnographers travelled across the country discovering the origins of the Finnish language and people.

New ideas and styles developed quite often through copying and imitation. A good example is how in the 1910s and 1920s the Finnish village photographers documented their communities and local areas following the style introduced by ethnographers. Finland was an agrarian culture. The Finnish tradition of photographing tools, working methods and peasants as workers related here to a process Eric Hobsbawm has described as "the invention of tradition"<sup>103</sup>. Industrial topics, other than images of venues and landscapes arrived in Finnish photography during the 1920s. At the turn of the decade a fast and intensive improvement started and the Finnish photography could for the first time be considered mature in the 1920s.

Picture books and magazines had a strong influence when modern photography arrived in Finland. The volume of published images multiplied and through the illustrated press the range of topics became richer, and the audience was interested in everything new. The photographer was just emerging as a profession and in popular competitions organised by publishers on different themes amateurs, semi-professionals, and professionals all competed for the same prizes.

Harald Rosenberg started practicing journalistic photography in 1905 and is recognised as the first full time photojournalist in Finland. In 1909 he was employed by the Helsinki criminal police in the Department of Anthropometry where he worked for the rest of his life. Interestingly, Rosenberg typifies the times. His career interlinks the beginning of press photography and the systematic use of photography by public authorities. Here again European influence on the uses of photography is quite evident. Phrenology, Darwinist ideas of the potential of archived photography for medicine, criminology, and extreme ethnography all arrived in Finland. The Bertillon technique of photography<sup>104</sup> was

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<sup>103</sup> See Hobsbawm, Ranger 1983.

<sup>104</sup> Alphonse Bertillon was a French police officer who invented anthropometry. In the 1880s he invented a photographic method for the systematic identification and careful metering of different body parts. The system was widely used in European countries.

adopted, or as Michel Foucault would conclude, photography was in the uses of discipline and power.<sup>105</sup>

For this reason, if we study Gariglio's work as portraiture, the images do not only have a direct reference to the early days of the local tradition of photography. Finland has a whole library of books on these themes, unfortunately almost all in Finnish. The national history of photography is published in the book *Valokuvan Taide*. In this richly illustrated book examples of all the types and genres of photography can be found. The book also includes English summaries. Another equally important reference is to the general tradition of the Finnish landscape.

The addition of artificial studio light in the images and the plain or calm manner of arranging the composition has a strong connection to contemporary visual culture and references advertising. It may be that today it is easier to allow oneself to be portrayed using these references to contemporary popular advertising, rather than the tradition of portraiture. The transparency of repetition in these images manages to connect to the history of photography, with endless numbers of portraits by ateliers and studios, and the repetition of popular images distributed in contemporary media. Gariglio is adding dialectic elements to his photographs and includes them in his project as a study of the theme of work and creating a certain heritage of dialectics.

One of his interesting accomplishments is to involve the people photographed, and have them presented in a manner not familiar to themselves or the audience. Being photographed outdoors in nature is the only traditional element. Posing for a camera in nature belongs traditionally to the family snapshot and not to portraiture, which is a more formal tradition in its style, space and context. Studio light challenges the pale natural light of a summer night. Further, he creates a portrait image in which people are prevented from dressing up for an image, or allow themselves to be photographed for a theme that is traditionally hidden in Finland<sup>106</sup>. All these conflicts turn into a rich and intimate image of an interpretation of the heritage the photographed people carry with them. It is the dialogue of these elements that allows the people in these images to stress their personal relationship with their heritage.

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<sup>105</sup> More on this topic in *Families of Food*. See Lehtonen 2010, pp. 197-205.

<sup>106</sup> It is traditional in Finland to camouflage prosperity! The result is that prosperity is somehow seen as potentially wrong, as it might exhibit greed or fun, while it should be the result of a struggle and hard work in line with the idea of human dignity inherent to the Protestant ethic. Reflecting upon this tradition, the clear caution with which he communicates entrepreneurship as a family background is only an attempt to deal with a tradition based on social pressure.

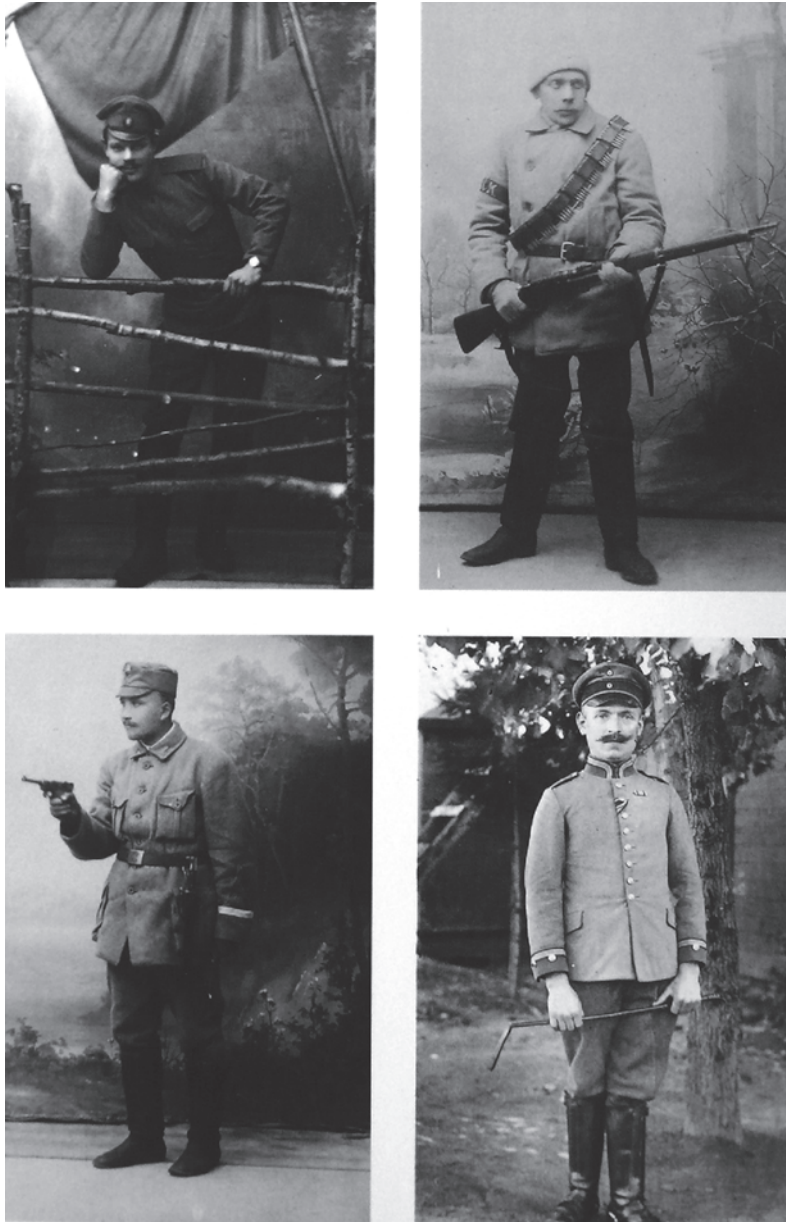


IMAGE 19

*"Atelier portraits"* . 1917 Uusi Valokuvaamo (New Atelier), Hämeenlinna, Finland from (Valokuvan taide. During the Finnish civil war, the nationalists (the whites) and the communists (the reds) as well as the representatives of Finnish and Russian officers used the same atelier to have their portraits done. Kukkonen, Vuorenmaa, Hinkka (eds.) 1992. Page 132.

## 2.7 The Order of the Photograph

Both artists are studying a period of a time characterised by rapid change in social structures, labour markets and, in the end, the idea of a personal history inside a framework given by society. In this respect they focus on time and approach the problematic without accepting structure(s) or sharp divisions or categorisations. The way the ontological qualities of photography, such as 'repetition', are in use as definitions by the artists for these intangibles of the topics they discuss, is fascinating and important. This approach reminds me of the critique of theoretical disciplines by Bruno Latour, who argues against the nature–science dichotomy, evolved from early modern to post-modern thinking. In his critique Latour underlines the need to understand collective, autonomic or discursive phenomena.<sup>107</sup> Latour's argumentation reaches out from self-sufficient classification strategies developed to control practices such as photography in order to re-constitute the classification practices used in these disciplines. In my reading, Latour returns to the same problem of knowledge Foucault developed earlier.

Latour seeks to better understand something he calls 'hybrids' - that is, phenomena in motion that will not tie themselves to a single structure but rather fluently occupy several patterns (social, discursive etc.) and maintain their communicative essence. Manninen's project originated from journalistic practice and has continued on the platform of photographic art. Still, the artist comments on the tradition from the early days of group photography, and causes the artwork to interact with contemporary visual culture through aesthetics of the visual and by means of repetition as a discipline. The strategy of making people pose in a defined space and in a group, both work-related, leads to communicating the 'order of a photograph' to the audience in all its richness. The artist is able to supplement 'Latourian hybrids' with the deduction from the artwork itself. For research purposes this provides a path for engaging in a dialogue with the approach introduced by photographic art. In comparison to the history and structure based orientations towards art, research interfaces here with photographic practice. The photography of Manninen and Gariglio has developed from an interpretation of an issue to observations concerning contemporary society. It is art relating to the history of photographic practice as well as the study of particular phenomena.

Multilayered meaning in visual representations cannot stop us from confronting the idea of illustration in terms of a platform for rhetoric in a picture. Moreover, in published images in media usage, and the uses of photographic or still images in illustrations, the meaning also transforms to a level of an argument. Realised forms of meaning are executed on a cultural level, on the level of media and communication, the levels of genre, and finally the level of revealing and expression. My attention is given to the latter, but in the context and time

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<sup>107</sup> Latour, 2006, pp. 88-94. Latour can be read in his rich website: <http://www.bruno-latour.fr>

regulated by all of these levels. Published images are always based on a singular setting of these levels, and especially when discussing a media image a metaphor is a valid concept for the two following reasons.

First, a media image is meaningful only when it is used in a regulated and standardised way, which in one extreme has become institutionalized and thereby transparent and unquestioned in its given meaning. Without this quality an image could be interpreted as nothing more but a recorded documentation of something purely literal. In Peirce's theories this is called the problem of verisimilitude. He argues that the image prevails only as a partial truth and is therefore always logically a falsehood. He goes even further by claiming that the truth of a conception is not in verisimilitude. Interestingly for Peirce, resemblance consists of likeness, which he defines as sameness of predicates, and that resemblance always has a limit. Otherwise it would destroy itself by transforming into identity. Veracity of a sign consists of the constant connection between the sign and the thing, and a sign must first become a sign and conceptions in their "truth" do not constitute veracity.<sup>108</sup> Peirce claims that veracity is a kind of truthfulness, which is not verisimilitude. Media image can be approached the same way, and surpassing the literal "realism" of an image, Peirce's "conditioned" meaning of veracity fulfils the first quality of visual metaphor as illustration.

Second, this does not make metaphor a superstructure of a meaning-content. It does underline a cultural agility and fluency in a different context as the multimodal theories show, and its nature of being self-evident makes it an ever more enchanting phenomenon to study. Seppänen's idea of the importance of the cultural conditions in which we perceive an image is absolutely right, but in my reading the focus is different. Through the illustrational uses the images are applied in, they construct conventions used in their content where metaphor is in a key role in establishing contentual operations audiences take for granted, such as the ritualistic images of news, or the distinctive images of image therapy, or the natural in wildlife and nature photography. This second quality also relates back to Peirce. He separates perfect veracity from cognizable veracity, and names the maximal veracity that approaches the perfection of verisimilitude as *verity* and the representation as a *type*, and concludes:

"Since conceptions perfectly correspond with qualities and since they have a connection therewith in the nature of things, they are 'types' of things."<sup>109</sup>

However, contrary to the tenets of the anti-essentialist approach, audiences are often sensitive to following and recognizing the variation of metaphoric content in different genres and under in different genres and in the specific conditions of published images.

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<sup>108</sup> Peirce 1991, p. 21.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. p. 22.

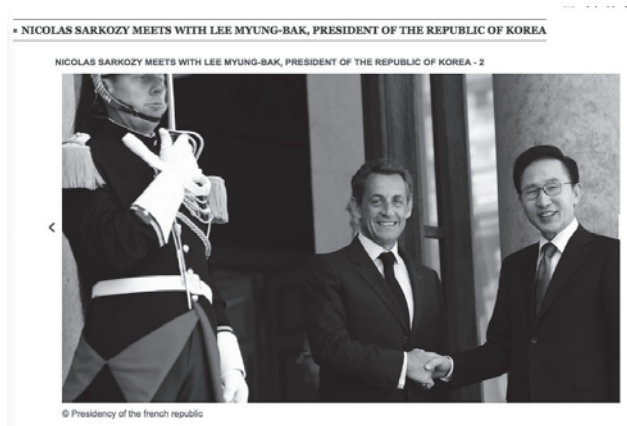


IMAGE 20

A handshake during the G20 – G8 Summit in France on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011. President of France Sarkozy meets with Lee Myung-Bak of the Republic of Korea. See more detailed analysis in my conclusion. (Original in colour)

My first article delineating the critique of the semiotic approach develops this idea. It does not point to the idea of verity as a relationship between the nature of *things* and *types* of things. Rather it outlines my inclination to reach out from the formal, in my case mostly structural, approach of semiotic theory. I elaborate on the Russian theorist Yuri Lotman's theory of a semantic trope, by which Lotman describes the transformation of a meaning between different meaning structures<sup>110</sup>. The concept of trope has relevance in the analysis of images to explain how an absent sign can be brought in to represent a specified use in a particular association of content. Another significant addition in understanding metaphor through a trope is its property of being semantically active without any burden of having to anchor the achieved meaning to anything more than the given use. By this nature the trope differs from a symbol. Employing aesthetic or other qualities in different contexts, other than the conventional symbolic or concrete resemblance of the visual itself, calls for abstractions beyond the symbolic and concrete resemblance of the visual itself.

Paul Ricoeur takes the conditions of a metaphor afar from a trope. He criticises classical rhetoric for diminishing itself to a theory of the classification of figures of speech and to a theory of tropes, and reducing the problem of metaphor to resemblance and the problem of metonymy to contiguity. Ricoeur argues that:

“The trope, teaching us nothing, has a merely decorative function. Its fate is to please by serving as the ornament of language, in giving ‘colour’ to discourse, in ‘clothing’ the naked expression of thought.”<sup>111</sup>

<sup>110</sup> See p. 98.

<sup>111</sup> Ricoeur 2003, p. 52.

Ricoeur wants to see how analogies would function as figures of construction, as figures of elocution, and finally as figures of style. He combines imagination and figures of thought, which for him approach metaphor and analogy. Ricoeur highlights how metaphor could be separated from naming and analogy, and distanced from trope and the linguistic structure:

“...in order to attach it to the central act of discourse, namely, predication.”<sup>112</sup>

Could we then expect an image be able to argue the content? Predication brings Ricoeur close to Nelson Goodman’s exemplification, and later in his book he describes how a metaphorical term can completely designate a new object with its whole structure. The linguistic metaphor and the stylistic effect of metaphor, aesthetic metaphor as Ricoeur writes, just need to be separated.<sup>113</sup> Metaphor can borrow, and in numerable ways it does, and it is a transposition from concrete to abstract forms even in its spontaneous form.



IMAGE 21

René Magritte “Ceci n’est pas une pipe”, 1928-1929 and Jari Silomäki “My Weather Diaries” 2001-2007. (Originals in colour)

Above I made a remark on my fascination for the way Peirce in his structure of the aspects of sign function places metaphor. In relation to the concept of trope, giving metaphor a very open nature in qualisign and as one element of an icon, Peirce opens the door to the relationship between indexical and symbolic meaning as more exact sign relations. Interpretation in Peirce’s thinking is an expanding process and meaning comes from this variety of aspects. Indexicality of photographic images has been widely connected to causal relations. There is no smoke without fire or a footprint on sand without someone having walked there. This interpretation is accurate. Peirce divides index into two aspects. He calls this kind of causal relationship a *reagent*. The other aspect of index, a *designator*, has not been connected to an image like the reagent aspect of indexicality. Designator is ostensive and it designates its object and creates continuity be-

<sup>112</sup> Ibid. p. 70.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid. p. 125.



tween a sign vehicle and its object. Can Peirce's immediate object, such as a photograph, also be interpreted as having qualities of a dynamic object? The interpretational relations in Peirce's sign functions are separated by an open possibility of interpretation, which he calls a *rhema*. Another relation is proportional; it is more defined but still includes more than one possibility of interpretation. Peirce calls this a *dicent*. The third level of interpretational relation is an *argument*. It has a sign system that applies to it, and it relates to a certain mindset that defines a limited amount of interpretations. A trope can be compared to rhema and dicent, but does it have the expected restrained quota of interpretations argument has? In principle, the answer is yes. Politicians shaking hands in front of the press is a solid example of this. In the news media this picture is so strongly defined and repeated that it can be even seen as a visual argument of the political ritual. The rhema too describes a variety of situations, but it returns back to the index at large. It is the quality of rhema that allows us to develop this idea further.

An important remark by Ricoeur is that similar does not mean same.<sup>114</sup> A metaphor can apply elements and qualities of a "discourse", here an image, without losing the other, earlier meanings of the discourse. Roman Jakobson names this a criterion of *sensitivity to form*, which is crucial for interpretation of a poetic function in language. As discussed earlier, for Jakobson metaphor transforms meaning from a level of meaning function to another, whereas metonymy operates on the same level of the meaning function with no transformation between the levels. Jakobson repeats the same anchoring of an image to object relation, which is sometimes able to express symbolic meaning, but in terms of Peirce's pragmatic semiotics, sign and interpretation remains undiscussed other than in their transformation, which, in my understanding, returns Jakobson back to the concept of trope. Instead, Peirce emphasizes that his categories relate to one another, they have significance with each other and they are capable of changing each other. In a symbol, a causal relation of a reagent can be an image, a diagram, or a metaphor, and they are able to interrelate in the way they are used.

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<sup>114</sup> Ricoeur, 2003, p 358. Ricoeur borrows the expression from Émile Benveniste, *La forme et le sens*.

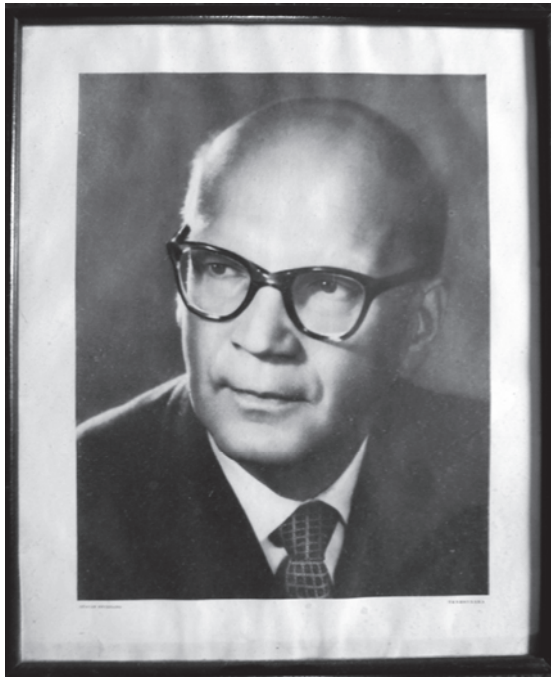


IMAGE 22

Official portrait of president Urho Kaleva Kekkonen. His period as the president of Finland lasted from 1956 to 1982. Generations of people born during the 1960s, like myself, had difficulties with the symbolic function of separating the institution from the person – it was just “Kekkonen”. In every school this portrait by Aarne Tenhovaara was hung on the classroom wall. I call this photograph a Foucaultian institutional indexical symbol. (courtesy of Mika Remes)

The remaining question is how to combine this interplay of the sign object relation with the concept of actual images and to open this in a chosen context as “an illustration” and as a meaningful association to interpretation. What is already clear is that neither Peirce nor Ricoeur sees any problem in the accuracy or literal nature of a photographic image. Noema of an image, or its resemblance or verisimilitude all remain central features of a photograph. “Similar” is not “same” writes Ricoeur when he comments on assimilation and the actual identity of meaning. And as observed earlier, Peirce defines a logical idea from a concept of truth, its shifting correspondence of veracity, the truth of a sign, and a description of verity. Verity is an imperfection of verisimilitude, the closest one gets to veracity, the representations of which Peirce named *types*.<sup>115</sup> Naming an element in an image is an undeniable action of looking. In an image, someone may disturbingly resemble my father. Does this result in the deprivation of the actual meaning of the whole concept of representation? From this point of view Barthes can be acquitted with his punctum as any personal, even shared recognition of a meaningful element in an image. It is always a detail, and a whole image can create a certain nature as a detail in a precise genre, such

<sup>115</sup> Peirce 1991, p. 21 and p. 22.

as a cliché that defines the most of the material the image banks administrate, or a family album as a medium just to name few. To recognise a detail or to understand a genre always includes an invitation to an individual interpretation or remark.

In order to define how these details combine together with the cultural in visual presentation and with the principles of shared meaning requires a different view. This does not exclude an attempt to piece together the aesthetic characteristics of visual argumentation that reinterprets historical images to the detail to discover new classifications. On the contrary, a performative approach to vernacular images operates closely on the same field but not from the point of view of visual argumentation. A good example of re-reading details in photography in art history is Geoffrey Batchen's nostalgia critique, where he emphasises the richness of details in photo albums and argues how important it is to keep in mind how we tend to remember those details which we feel are worth remembering.<sup>116</sup> Batchen calls for a complete rewriting of the history of photography if the vernacular is to be included in the history of art.



IMAGES 23 AND 24

Wilma Hurskainen "Family Portrait 2005", from a series Growth 2004 – 2006. Project is published in 2008 as a book. (Originals in colour)

In his discussion of "the iconic moment of metaphor", Ricoeur defines metaphor as any shift from literal to figurative sense as a metaphor, extending from

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<sup>116</sup> Batchen 2004, p. 17.

naming and words to all signs and being in-lexical where values are created by the context. Ricoeur refers to Paul Henle's ideas. The possibility of paraphrasing a metaphor involves saying, or depicting something else than a literal interpretation. It is more than deviation, and substitution that allows us to do and to reach out from the structure of naming and predication. If we compare this to Peirce's decision to link metaphor with the possibility of interpretative relation with a certain sign as a rhema, and to link symbol to the conventional mindset of an argument, the paralyzing connection with predication may become visible. Symbol has always had qualities of conventions, which are agreed on and repeated in its uses. This kind of visual expression is relatively logical to paraphrase. Metaphorical structure does not close itself to such a predication, even when it has an open connection to a convention. Ricoeur wonders if that might be because a metaphor is a "brief discourse in itself".<sup>117</sup>

Is it always necessary to paraphrase or predicate, or name the discourse of an image? By taking the meaning of the visual from its sign object relation, and bringing the visual to the interpretation in relation of a sign, the polysemic and non-linear – which can be interpreted from the meaning content of visual presentation – paraphrasing is actually needed only in analysis for explaining and discussing the content. Instead, the audience reactions return to conclusions, which are similar to naming but not necessarily just that. They can also include qualities of predication and, naturally, taste and value based judgments.

## 2.8 From Living Metaphor ...

"However, metaphor is not quite the clash itself, but rather its resolution. One must decide, on the basis of various 'clues' (ibid.) provided by the context, which terms can be taken figuratively and which cannot. One must therefore 'work out' (185) the parallelism between situations that will guide the iconic transposition of one to the other. This activity has become useless in the case of conventional metaphors, where the cultural usage decides on the figurative sense of certain expressions. It is only in living metaphors that one sees this activity at work."<sup>118</sup>

In the 'clues' mentioned in the previous quotation, Ricoeur returns to the theories of metaphor by suggesting that we take the theory of metaphor from the level of the words to the level of a sentence. The Peircean *possible*, *propositional*, and *conventional* may lead the analysis back to the problem of the dead metaphor by giving it lexical interpretations, or as Ricoeur suggests, it can show us the way to understanding the different uses of metaphor in multimodal or inter-textual uses of an image in visual culture. Ricoeur himself divides intersection in general theory into the spheres and the modalities of discourse, and intersection as an issue of ontology into metaphorical reference and dialectics of the modalities of discourse.<sup>119</sup> Connection to Peirce's model is in reading meta-

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<sup>117</sup> Ricoeur 2003. pp. 222-223.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid. p. 225.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid. p. 349.

phor as a larger process of meaning and including the sign interpretation level in an analysis of visual meaning. In Ricoeur's theory this is done by giving conditions for speculative discourse. It requires a possibility of semantic dynamism in utterance and resources of conceptual articulation.



IMAGE 25

I documented this scene of the outside wall of Magnum Photos in Paris Photo 2008 (image by the author). It is Paolo Pellegrin's special edition of three prints of the dead Karol Wojtyła, Pope John Paul II. The edition was sold out.

In the beginning of my *Technologized Snow-text*, I have tried to combine advertising, landscape, and information design together under the same idea of hybrid forms of aesthetic presentation where the dialogue between genres makes the actual content matter familiar to the audience in terms of combining the given elements together as a metaphoric meaning. What I have tried to open here, is the *dicent* and the conditions of audience interpretation of a multilayered metaphoric meaning. I'm calling for expectations, interpretational needs, and the fulfilling of them in the representation of a visual presentation including personal, authentic, and the ideal in interpreting the meaning. The examination of these encountering ideas would require a consideration of its own. An image is offered to the viewer as a hope-arousing presentation of space and circumstances, whereas for the receiver the central dimension is locating the needs and experiences within this presentation.

In his study of visual meaning in advertising Charles Forceville argues that metaphor is always by its nature an assertion, and larger than a singular word or sentence. Like George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, Forceville defines metaphor primarily as a basic characteristic of thinking and function, and sec-

ondarily as a feature of language.<sup>120</sup> In language, metaphor is a manifestation of a conceptual metaphor, and it is to certain extent based on resemblance. Despite fairly general results in actual analysis, Forceville has two notable credits. His book is an excellent overview of the 1980's discussions on metaphor in so called new rhetoric. For my study, his depiction of the metaphor as operation is fruitful. Metaphor indicates something outside of language structures and requires the occupation of contextual elements, the use of these elements, and an understanding of these elements. His description of metaphor being able to represent the partial truth is actually very close to Umberto Eco's definition of a photograph being able to lie!<sup>121</sup> One simple way to test how visual representation is able to create metaphor and metaphoric meaning is to see how the values, beliefs, sentiments, and even superstition, are all included in contextual agency.<sup>122</sup>

Ricoeur suggests that an unknown referential field functions in language as what he calls 'gravitational pull' and 'dynamism of meaning'.

"At the origin of this process, therefore, there is what I shall call the ontological vehemence of a semantic aim, hunting at an unknown field that sets it in motion. This ontological vehemence cuts meaning from its initial anchor, frees it as the form of movement and transposes it to a new field to which the meaning can give form by means of its own figurative property."<sup>123</sup>

Speculation becomes a condition of the possibility of the conceptual, and it expresses the systematic character of the conceptual in a second order discourse. This operation is possible only if the horizon of constitution is given in advance of the horizon of speculative logos which is able to create the configured properties (for interpretation). This interpretation is a mode of discourse that functions in the intersection of the metaphorical and the speculative. It seeks the clarity of a concept and tries to preserve the dynamism of meaning held down by the concept. Ricoeur merges together imagination and understanding. He describes it as a 'game' and 'soul of interpretation' where creative imagination is forcing conceptual thought to 'think more'.<sup>124</sup> This is 'a living metaphor' and as pointed out before, similar is not the same.

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<sup>120</sup> Lakoff and Johnson 1981.

<sup>121</sup> Eco 1979.

<sup>122</sup> Forceville, 1996. See chapter 2.

<sup>123</sup> Ricoeur, 2003 p. 354.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid. 358.

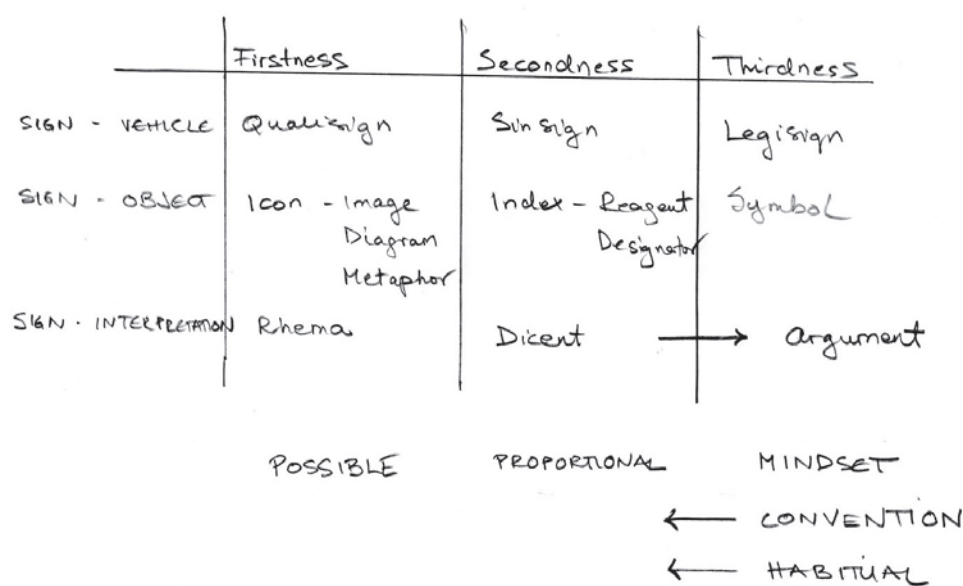


FIGURE 2 Visual metaphor

In this second chart I have placed Ricoeur's living metaphor inside Peirce's semiotic model. Since the *Chronospace-text*, the focus of my research problem has been to find a way to express theoretically that a published lens-based image also consists of argumentative qualities. Applying Ricoeur's theory and the living metaphor and combining it with the sign-interpretation relation in Peirce's model, the basis for a theoretical argument opens up. I agree that it is an exception for an image to have the needed preciseness even in terms of convention, to make an argument following the Peircean implications. In this respect a photograph is mostly a symbolic entity. But at the same time I argue that visual presentation has qualities Peirce is requesting for a dicent in both of its senses.

The living metaphor defines the conceptual condition that allows interpretation to take it further from the open character of the liability of a trope. All tropes do not signify in this way, and they do not unravel. These parallels between the different elements of meaning, even the antagonistic anchors, define new interpretations and strong resonance in the qualities of the visual itself, and they develop in uses and in time, and create conventions, that are needed for a metaphor. A trope, on the other hand, remains in use, and has its importance in details transferred between the uses, mediums, and genres, where they could be included in the active use of modes and modalities. I would conclude that the trope in comparison to Goodman's exemplification, in this case, includes switching from one medium and genre to another.

The 'gravitations' I refer to in Ricoeur's thinking should be specified in relation to visual and photographic presentations. I apply John Kennedy's list of

rhetorical operations from 1982<sup>125</sup> to give examples of images and to prove how argumentative qualities function in the visual. To have a solid reference for the definitions of these operations, I have referred to J. Cuddon's *Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. I use a footnote reference to Cuddon's book when mentioning the operation for the first time by the name of it.<sup>126</sup> Basic questions are simple: can an image apply to these rhetorical operations? Some definitions are needed before the rhetoric of an image can settle in its place.

The first remark concerns the definition of metaphor. In the theory of binary oppositions, metaphor and metonymy are related to the two the axes of meaning in language, "horizontal" *syntagm* association in a continuity of sign relations in a language structure, and "vertical" *paradigm* in substitution of a sign and meaning in the same structure. Jakobson, as discussed before, grounds metaphor in the substitution of meaning, and metonymy in causal relations, linking the latter with indexicality. Metaphor requires both understanding and experiencing something in terms of something else, and it is indicative of the system that defines it. This system can be shared among a group of people, an audience, under the premises of time, place or medium and a logical connection to these all in the context of the specific metaphor.

Secondly, metaphor can be seen as a "figure of speech" or a comparison between two elements of signification.<sup>127</sup> Metaphorical expression requires the elements of signification, recognition of the relation between them, and the imagination in terms of "speculation", as Ricoeur defines it. Forceville reminds us that metaphor is also fully operational even when it is incomplete, a half-truth. I already discussed this same quality in Latour's quest to understanding the hybrids of knowledge in connection with Peirce's elaboration on the definition of verity. J.T.W Mitchell describes how an image is a natural sign and has become a cultural fetish of the Western world in the same way that an idol or a picture of idolatry must be based on an idea of the real presence of signification.<sup>128</sup> He goes even further and asks if the common rational behaviour in spatio-temporal relation and experience toward images could not be interpreted in different forms and genres as an ideology or a cult?<sup>129</sup>

Peirce's theory of meaning defines an argument as a precise statement on something based on a mindset or a habitual relation of meaning or a convention. In my analysis (see the second diagram on a previous page) the challenge is in the possibility of interpreting propositional meaning in relation to the practices of meaning in visual presentation. Interpretation may gain properties of fetish and cult, but the habitual nature of expression modifies the different generic practices as illustration and gain on argumentative qualities. Habituality is also

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<sup>125</sup> Kennedy, 1982. The list is given in the appendix.

<sup>126</sup> Cuddon J. 2004 (Internet edition: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/9406738/Literature-Penguin-Dictionary-of-Literary-Terms-and-Literary-Theory-4Th-Ed-Text> fetched August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

<sup>127</sup> Max Black, 1979, has made a thorough description of the principles of metaphor in terms of utterance. pp. 28-30.

<sup>128</sup> Mitchell 1986, p. 90.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid. 91.



a principle that modifies value judgments, taste, and interpretation under the influence of a canon, style, and configuration of conventions it relates to. It creates the conditions of predication in terms of the expected and the applied interpretations. In this floating configuration, metaphor in a still image is the platform of Ricoeur's living metaphor. An image in Plato's *endoxa*, is giving a metaphoric meaning "as agreed" in the context where it is published.

This I have named as "*illustration*", which refers to the rhetoric of visual expression as a cultural construction. Two important additions need to be emphasized. First, the different interpretations of the same visual presentation can be in a strong, even antagonistic, position to one another. A good example of this is the reception of the Danish caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed. For the Muslim culture the sacrilege is clear because of the rule of the religion banning all visual depictions of the prophet. For the Nordic audience such taboo does not exist, and even more, their religion sees Holy images as something perfectly natural, those depicting God included. In the contextual realm, both of these interpretations of the very same presentation are correct. The same difference in perception and interpretation applies to all visual presentations. In some cases this tendency, gravitation, brings cultural interpretations together and in some others it pulls them apart. The other important specification allocates the personal cognizance of images in art and in private. Convention-based interpretation as a living metaphor or proportional meaning as a dicent in Peirce's theory does not create obstructive tendencies in meaning between the individual and the convention. If anything, these two readings can support each other as they are applied and as it happens all the time, in the arts with themes of general interest.

## 2.9 ... To Conclusion

Visual rhetoric is a directive quality in interpretation and in illustration and the public uses of images. If these qualities can be specified, the question of iconic, non-linear meaning and the problem of predication through similitude can be studied from a different perspective. Traditionally a photographic image has been understood through documentary and mechanical characteristics. Still today the need to maintain the accuracy, truth, and veracity of certain media presentations is strong. Visual presentation in journalistic uses needs to remain realistic. It can involve *personification*<sup>130</sup> or it can depict a complete entity through a representative part of it like *synecdoche*.<sup>131</sup> The third element of being "photographic" has been to prove something to exist, also as causality like in

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<sup>130</sup> Cuddon 2004. p. 661. Impersonation or embodiment of some quality or abstraction; the attribution of a human qualities to inanimate objects.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid. p. 890. A figure of speech in which a part represents the whole, or, less commonly, the whole represents a part. Closely related to metonymy – the replacement of a word by one closely related to the original – synecdoche is an important poetic device for creating vivid imagery and a most regular rhetorical operation in image.

*metonymy*<sup>132</sup> as Jakobson has described. As a rhetorical operation repetition and *cliché*<sup>133</sup> cannot be disregarded. The press conference, the official handshake of the leaders, and the image of the official speech – they all follow the strong nature of a cliché in media. The image banks of today comprise a whole archive of the business of clichés, and the aesthetics in image bank images has become more and more recognizable with certain hollow or general expressions of themes such as summer, family or gender, to give some examples.

This may fulfil our expectations of describing a journalistic image, but it does not mean that this would be a complete description of the rhetorical operations media uses in visual journalism. Even more interestingly, in printed media the best response to the expectations of accuracy can often be found in visual presentations that combine photography, charts, and information graphics. It uses sequential expression in reportage that creates narration. Like in cliché, repetition can also define reportage by making the visual expression of a sequence recognizable, in the way Vanhanen analyzed them in his storyboard model, by giving the uses of reportage the attributes of a ritual. Some things can happen to us, and some things can happen mostly to “the others”. This ideological demarcation line is visually present in the coverage of catastrophes and especially in the visual media coverage of death.

The same matter can be expressed in different ways in multiple images, which gives reportage the qualities of a *hendiadys*<sup>134</sup> – this can be described also as a substitution of conjunction for subordination which communicates well with the aesthetic qualities of an image that gives two expressions for one meaning. The addition of an indefinite element, a new aspect, or a detail to visual information, relates to *parentheses*<sup>135</sup>; a thing can be shown to be different from the one expected by adding an unexpected element or by taking out an expected one and reversing an assertion or depicting the future act just like a parenthesis does. The latter is common in publishing images of facial expression where “someone is in trouble” or “under suspicion”. As a rhetorical operation this is a *prolepsis*.<sup>136</sup> People and different stages of news events are depicted in such way, where the expectation of probable is denied by showing the opposite – a person smiling in a desperate situation, modest and happy daily life shown in the middle of a catastrophe. In rhetorics this operation is called *litotes*.<sup>137</sup> The examples given here create “a news world” genre of an expertise of

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 507. A figure of speech in which the name of an object or concept is replaced with a word closely related to or suggested by the original. In Jakobson’s thinking metonymy is related to indexicality of an image, and as discussed, this has been applied by several theories in order to define a photographic image itself.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid. p. 141. A very large number of idioms are clichés through excessive use.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid. p. 373. A figure of speech, in which one idea is expressed by two substantives.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid. p. 639. An indication of a vocative element or an attribution of speech. And p.639 A rhetorical figure in which a word or words are interclued within a clause ... include not only the indication of vocatives and attribution of speech ...but also a sententiae and comparisons ...

<sup>136</sup> Ibid. p. 702. A figure of speech in which a future act or development is represented as if already accomplished or existing or reversing an assertion.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid. p. 473. A figure of speech which contains an understatement for emphasis, and is therefore the opposite of hyperbole.

information and the cultural context for interpretational conventions and proportional meaning, a mindset, that we shape into metaphoric meaning in the same way that Ricoeur defines the living metaphor. In my reading, the genres are important in order to show this movement or circulation over the conventional borders in visual presentation. The development moves increasingly towards the more active and flexible use of the visual in different hybrids. This I have named the *return of illustration*. I have chosen the word illustration to describe the fact that visual culture doesn't stop under a specific genre other than the ontological essence of the presentation in terms of publishing them. The genuine qualities of presentation where the visual expression is strongest combines the elements, Peirce's proportional, in these hybrids and modifies *new expressive forms of visual culture as an illustration*.

This all sounds very fragmented when it is presented in this kind of condensed list as above. So, let's return to some of the images I have discussed in my work. In the following section I divide the rhetorical operations into three groups that question how hermetic the uses of the images are in journalism, advertising, and in art. The starting point is that in all these three uses or genres, visual presentations based on photographic images fulfil the ontological qualities I described before. The examples I analyse raise the question of how close these genre related definitions are and how much the used rhetorical operations are overlapping between these kinds of divisions.

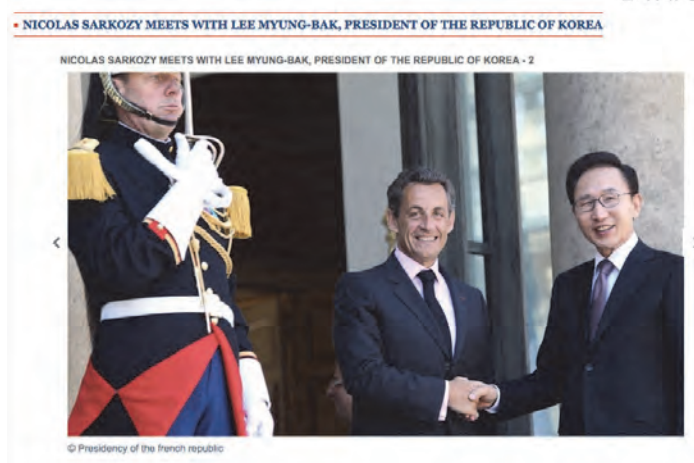


IMAGE 26  
"A handshake"

The first journalistic image is a classical cliché of a handshake. In the image, President of France Nicolas Sarkozy meets with Lee Myung-Bak of the Republic of Korea. The image was taken during the G20 - G8 Summit in France on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011. I downloaded the image from the official website of the event

where there is a slide show available.<sup>138</sup> Both persons are recognisable and their official gesture of shaking hands is conducted in an openly friendly manner. Important element on the left hand side of the picture is the soldier in a parade uniform. Handshake – cliché, recognition – personification, soldier – *allegory*<sup>139</sup>. The G20 Cannes summit started under catastrophic political and economical conditions due to turbulence in the banking sector, especially in Europe. The handshake of the leaders in front of the camera is almost always a ceremonial moment organized for the press in order to be documented. It tells naturally that those people have actually met. But even more, the repetition of handshakes, as vulgar they might be as images, are an important part of the official imagery of diplomatic meetings and visual policy making in terms of assuring a positive atmosphere completely detached from the actual agenda. Allegoric elements are quite natural and convincing in this kind of ceremonial use of photography. Documented officialdom is metonymy in the sense Jakobson describes it, but the image itself is loaded with metaphoric euphemism in gestures and in expressions of the persons photographed – and as an image of the politics of the day, the repetitive visual presentation used here as journalism is convincing.



IMAGE 27  
"Athens"

The second image relates to the first one through the issue of European economical turbulence. Markus Jokela shot an image in Athens, Greece, during the

<sup>138</sup> <http://www.g20-g8.com/g8-g20/g20/english/photos-and-videos/2011/november/cannes-summit-thursday-november-3rd.1550.html> - retrieved November 3rd, 2011.

<sup>139</sup> Cuddon 2004, p. 20. A story in verse or prose with a double meaning; a primary or a surface meaning; and the secondary or under-the-surface meaning. A symbolic fictional narrative, which may have meaning on two or more levels that can understood only in interpretive process.

same week.<sup>140</sup> This image does not fulfil the criteria of personification, at least not as fluently as it did with the image of the president of France. Without the caption, a Finnish reader cannot recognise that the lady in the picture is a Member of the Greek Parliament, Irina Kailin, The holes in the window depict aggression at the same time as the caption of the image stresses she is shaking hands with her political supporter! The composition of this image is interesting and dynamic and it lacks all the stagnation of the previous image. In the window, the reflection shows an orderly handshake, a street view and a park with palm trees in the background. The facial expression and composition is far from a euphemism. Documentary and metonymic expression both are conducted in such a strong manner that the image can be seen as catachresis<sup>141</sup> – contradiction between the reflection and the foreground of the image. Markus Jokela is a strong name in Finnish photojournalism. It does not come from ontologically correct documentary in terms of journalism. He has created a recognisable personal style. He never struggles against the journalistic expectations in terms of reporting the factual. Instead, he very often further develops his expression from these genre-related and journalistic expectations forcing them to follow his way, and not the other way around.



IMAGE 28  
"Hydroelectric"

The third example of the photographic documentation of political issues comes from the Icelandic artist Petur Thomsen.<sup>142</sup> He started to document a huge hy-

<sup>140</sup> Helsingin Sanomat November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Premier image in "international news section", page B1. Original in colour.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid. p. 114. Another meaning is to use an existing word to denote something that has no name in the current language or misapplication of a word, especially in a mixed metaphor".

<sup>142</sup> Petur Thomsen, A13\_1d, Karahnjúkar, Iceland, 2003.

droelectric development project that was built in a place the Icelandic people felt to be a pristine National treasure as a landscape, the Karahnjúkar area. Again, the ontological elements of a photographic documentation are all present. In an exhibition that Thomsen held in Reykjavik, the images were received very warmly by the audience. In my interpretation, the rhetoric act that Thomsen expresses to discuss this very antagonistic and delicate matter is a euphemism. The large (100cm by 120cm) high quality images in the context of art state the destruction of the landscape as something genuinely beautiful, in a way that only art can. The history of photography has canonised documentary photography as art and the institutions of art have supported this tradition well. Thomsen gives a very strong example of the use of style and aesthetic combining neutral, objective, and matter of fact together with expressive and even political art.

The second group of images relate to advertising. In advertising and in sales pitch, an image can depict a person in a certain role or a person can be shown in a testimonial which creates the personification or an idol. The image can propose fantastic qualities of a product or a service through the feature of a visual element or the image itself and follow the order of a synecdoche. Causal relations in advertising can be those which Jakobson describes in metonymy, or this relation can be defined inside the advert as a genre in a pair of images, "before and after", or it can be based on an indication of the relationship of a product and its user. The mortise I discuss in my "Teemu, The Duck" texts<sup>143</sup>, shows that these relations are seemingly infinite – beauty, strength, success or performance can be expressed freely and be limited only by a norm or a taboo together with the mortise. Hidden ideologies such as "good people" or "we" are outspoken through metonymy, and expressed as a repetition resulting a visual cliché of advertising itself or a cliché of the cultural context. Style has its visual reproduction, and smile can validate so many positive attributes relating back to the advertised product.

Rhetorical operations are not set and closed processes. Comparison of the expected visual expression in journalism and advertising gives a range of questions about how solid these genre definitions are in terms of these operations. They are not. I challenged the core of the tradition of journalism and the same challenge can be directed at advertising. Contemporary arts, in its traditional forms such as photography and especially in the different visual forms of media art, the references from a medium or genre to another are anything but exceptional. The allegoric landscape in arts is an equally recognized style which complements the positive the same way portraiture tends to present a person's features in a good light, as *euphemism*<sup>144</sup>. When we add exaggeration to this list, which creates an effect, *hyperbole*<sup>145</sup>, or an implication that something is lesser in

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<sup>143</sup> See Cynical Consumer in this work, pp. 100-105.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid. p. 292. A substitution of a mild and pleasant expression for a harsh and blunt one. Euphemisms are intended to amuse, or to mislead or at least put a positive nuance on events.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid. p. 406. Exaggeration to evoke strong impression. Composition and arrangement both are used like hyperbole.

significance or size than it really is, like in *meiosis*<sup>146</sup>, it can be shown that, as a rule, none of the rhetoric operations can be determined as a singular genre. All these operations can apply to any of the different genres if the depiction in content calls for it. *Irony*<sup>147</sup> and *persiflage*<sup>148</sup> are both forms of eloquent mockery in arts, in advertising as well as in a news media.



IMAGE 29  
"Pirates"

The breast cancer campaign and the image of a woman I analysed in my *Pirates-text* makes a good example of the genre. The campaign uses a dramatic, theatrical, and strongly manipulated image that an average spectator cannot take as a documented fact. The created scene refers to a whole history of piracy, and makes a parallel to the film industry of the time when the advertising campaign

<sup>146</sup> Ibid. p. 501. Meiosis contains an understatement of emphasis.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid. 430. A verbal irony involves saying what one does not mean. ... Situational irony occurs when, for instance, a man is laughing uproariously at the misfortune of another even while the same misfortune, unbeknownst, is happening to him.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. p. 106. A pun. In images facial appearances, gestures and different incidents are used to indicate different interpretations that the literal documenting depicts.

was launched (The Pirates of the Caribbean). The question here is not if the visual presentation is or is not typical to its genre. What is interesting to analyse is the rhetoric of the key elements in the image. The scene is a seascape and the action refers to a well known narrative in Western culture. A pirate as a figure is an allegory of such qualities as freedom, being a renegade, and being dangerous. None of the qualities are historically connected to the female gender. The setting itself is a cultural cliché of a heroic tale empowering the female gender to encounter the challenge of the forthcoming with bravery. The detail that I describe as an eye patch lowered to cover the woman's breast is an important separate vocative element in the picture. This heroic woman has her other breast exposed. A detail that is not rare in contemporary advertising. Rather, the eye-catching detail is the covered breast, which in this context is a parenthesis, explaining the reference to the disease dealt with in the image. Or it can be interpreted as a *paranomasia*<sup>149</sup> of covering an injured part of a human body, which makes her a metonymy of a fight against the disease.



IMAGE 30  
"Fox"

The second example is actually not an advertising image. The link between the images is the genre expectation of the use of digital manipulation, and the aesthetic expression in the image. There is an important annual competition of wildlife photography in Finland. It is an event important enough to fill the fa-

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. p. 41. Impression is used in more than one possible way based on a structural or comparable feature.



mous Alvar Aalto designed Finlandia Hall in Helsinki where the prize is announced. In 2011 the winning image features a fox.<sup>150</sup> Unlike the qualifications for a good and proper wild life photograph, Juha Suonpää explicates in his study, this image is a portrait image, resembling the profile portraiture from the early 15<sup>th</sup> century. No natural environment typical for the photographed species, not even the natural behaviour of it, just an image of a face from a profile angle. Wild life photographs are popular in advertising, and allegories of different characteristics are created by using an image of an eagle, a bear, or a tiger, just to name a few. In this version it is as if the depiction of the fox is an *oxymoron*<sup>151</sup> between these two traditions, one of advertising and another of a wild life photography. Light is so complete, and the background is all blurred, and there is not a factual element that a spectator could point to argue that no forbidden digital manipulation has been used. And conversely, the fox is so beautifully photographed and the image so controlled, that there is not a single detail allowing anyone to complain that digital manipulation has been misused. It denies the cliché of the genre that celebrates it by being a portrait. The Fox was a winner in the in 2011 competition, where the most popular categories again were “the birds” and “the landscapes”.



IMAGE 31  
"Animal rights"

<sup>150</sup> The winning image is by Kai Fagerström. The image will be published in a annual book of the competition. The image can be seen in: <http://luontokuva.org/>

<sup>151</sup> Ibid. p. 627. Oxymoron combines incompatible elements together. An element or a group of elements which are self-contradicting, such as "a false King".

The third image is again from advertising. In 2001 in the Autumn catalogue of SOKOS, a Finnish department store chain, published this image of two young people. The same Autumn, animal activists struck several fur farms in “animal liberation front” style. The way the models standing in a frontal pose in the image is very typical fashion style. Their neutral, almost vacant looks were also the generic impression of this genre during the time. A hooded jacket, the cargo trousers, knitted hats, and heavy boots all belong to the fashion style of this season. The important argumentative element in the image is the setting. Shooting fashion images at industrial locations, such as the metal fence indicates, is popular. But in this image, the background of the image is a rural landscape. The fence is closing a road that leads to the fields, and the building in the middle of the autumn mist does not look at all like an industrial venue. It reminds us more of a barn or some other farm building. The rhetorical operation is not an *anachronism*<sup>152</sup>, as in the case of using nostalgic images in advertising, but it is more the *catachresis* that Markus Jokela used in his journalistic image from Greece. Landscape and the foreground of the image do not meet in a customary way. These elements create a certain anxiety in the image itself. It is meiosis of advertising that is trying (again) to stand out from the cliché and create a metaphor of being “cool”. The image includes indexical elements related to the certain civil disobedience and actions of activists. Such as the stone the girl is holding on her shoulder.

The ontological core of each genre of visual culture has been considered in the analyses of different types of published images. The other consideration has given attention to the processes in visual culture supporting the idea of historical types of practices and genres. The idea of the return of an illustration agrees with these premises that define the “media” or “visual culture” as a phenomenon. Somehow the actual production of the aesthetic qualities of the images, designing the layout together with an image, and publishing an ensemble do not fit to the traditional division of genres. The ideological disposition of the tradition in visual expression defines the foundation of the media context that is conceived to be natural, normal, and expected. To find a method for reviewing and analyzing these expressive configurations in visual culture is interesting in terms of the various interpretations that open up the issues dealt with in visual expression and their content. Furthermore, the potentialities hiding in the silenced expression, which intentionally approaches the conventions and taboos are significant enough to be pointed out and commented on, because the contemporary visual expression naturally has its limits for the adequate articulation of issues, some of which are normative. Even more, the blurred demarcation lines between media and visual art and the dialectics of approach to a certain topic or phenomenon artists open can be approached from the point of view of the rhetorical operations and as the cultural process of illustration. The contextualized commenting and the presented arguments and perceptions become interrelated more as rhetorical operations. The audience

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<sup>152</sup> Cuddon 2004., p. 33. Anachronism may be used deliberately to distance events and to underline a universal verisimilitude and timelessness – to prevent something being ‘dated’.

responses then include the personal reception of both art as aesthetic expression and the dialectics in given arguments or the potential proportions of them.

The examples I use in the third group of images are considered photographic art. Historically speaking this group has a special interest in terms of genre and in outlining different tendencies of style and content. The artists, institutions, and the markets of visual art all have made the field of photographic art both broad and dynamic, and the policy of including and excluding has been an endless battlefield of quality and taste. In case of photography, the interesting exclusion comes from the defined genres of photography itself. In photojournalism, documentary, scientific photography, and in wildlife photography, it is a justified criticism to state that an image is "too artistic". Naturally the same debate has been going on inside the art scene, but in such a manner that one cannot define other dichotomies than in - out of art scene, and these parties constantly redefine themselves depending on the hegemonic style of the time.

An image can express anachronism and "twist" the expression of time out from the historical or actual order, or it can use the rhetorical elements deliberately in a wrong order and express the content as an *anticlimax*<sup>153</sup>. These operations are quite often introduced to the public by art and this is also true with the history of photographic art. After a needed delay of making these rhetorical openings familiar in art, the media started to apply the same expressions in their circulation. Art then does the same in its own contexts and *appropriates* themes, elements, and styles from media for its own expression. Different expressions of meaning are represented in a conflict of one and another, so they are applied in rhetorical expression as a chatachresis. Combining two inconsistent elements to emphasise the meaning "old and young", "fortunate and poor" or "beautiful and ugly" is common in visual presentations both in media and in arts. As a rhetorical expression it is called oxymoron. Pointing out these operations from a presentation, it becomes possible to study them, in their intended content, in relation to other presentations and presentations in different contexts.

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid. p. 42. Anticlimax is a figure of speech that consists of the usually sudden transition in discourse from a significant idea to a trivial or ludicrous one.



IMAGE 32  
"Mixed light"

Visual presentation of pollution or the impact of it can be documented in countless ways. In his series *"Restauration"*, Ilkka Halso has discovered a way to express affectual and abstract features of his topic as a catachresis. The logging site is a very common symbol of negative impacts of industrial forestry on nature. In Halso's work the logging site as a background is also a source of natural light. The foreground in the middle of the image is composed of a manmade structure that fences a boulder that is exposed with artificial light. By changing the nature of the light between artificial and natural light, and by composing the image from a lowered angle to show the boulder as if it were a statue, Halso creates a conflict. Natural light expresses "a friendly light" in photography. Even in the case of high contrasts, the strong impression (drop shadow, profile, reverse light...) is mostly interpreted as natural, and therefore "unaggressive". The other way round, aggressive nature of light is often created by the use of artificial light. Halso's work is not an oxymoron because the use of mixed light is common practice in photography, but the changing of the order of the nature of the light is a rhetorical operation. The landscape with its manmade logging site and the darkened natural light is a menace to the boulder, sheltered with the manmade fence and by the artificial light! Taking notice of the use of light can be defined as a specialist observation. I would argue that in different uses the light, the nature of it, and how it is used is all an elementary part of the visual expression and spectators recognize the differences it creates in the content of an image. This does not happen only through named elements in use, as a specialist observation can do. It is possible in proportional sign-interpretation relation which makes abstract and affect-related interpretations possible.

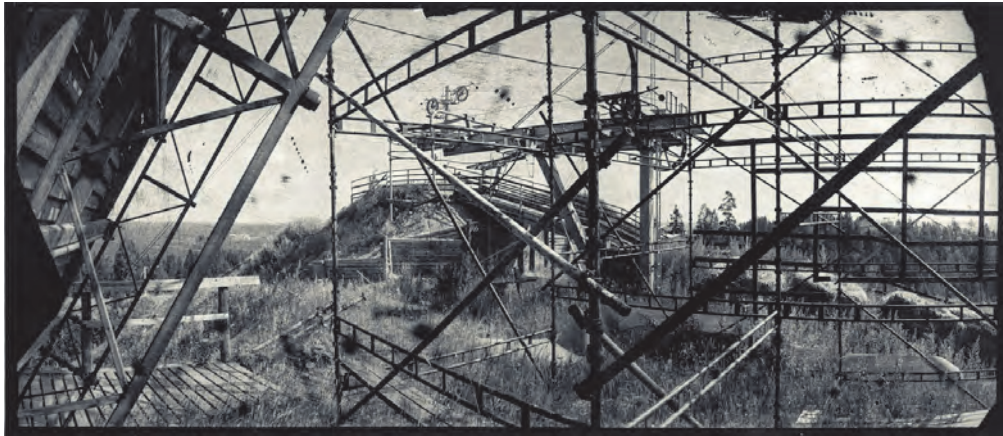


IMAGE 33  
"No Snow"

The second image is by a Finnish artist KAPA from his series "*After Ski*". In this example the light and the manmade structure is used differently. Here, the structure is an existing part of the location and the landscape he has photographed, and he is using natural light in a more neutral manner than Halso. As an artist KAPA is famous for his skill as a 'wizard of old printing techniques'. It is characteristic that he touches the print and leaves traces on it. They may be unexpected shades of tones, scratches or even small holes alluding that the original of the image is old and worn out. Kapa changed from negative based photography to digital photography already years ago but his personal style remains unchanged. In this photograph he has "been there" in a Barthesian sense, but the time/space relation loses its precise anchor to anything else other than the mystified moment of documentation the artist has conducted and that turns in a way the idea of *Jetztzeit* to un-historic. It may have happened in present times or earlier. For some reason humour and irony are quite rare in photographic art. In "*After Ski*" series Kapa shows how ugly and stupid the deserted ski resorts look during the summer after the snow and skiers have disappeared. Environmental commentary turns to subtle *irony* when the artist is combining neutral documentary photography, the strong arrangement of the image and his characteristic printing style. The manmade structure looks absolutely awful in the landscape, but the beauty of craftsmanship shows it in a euphemistic manner. The image is also a strong metonymy of the topic – downhill skiing, and combining these rhetorical forces together gives the image qualities of a stated persiflage or a pun.



IMAGE 34  
"Our Kids"

The last image is from an *EU-culture 2000* residence project in Iceland by the Dutch artist Rob Hoonstra. He followed the local teenagers outside Reykjavik and made a show and a book *The Rooth of Runtur*. The image documents the youth spending their time on a Friday night. Hoonstra mixes the naturally fading early evening light with a strong and identifiable flashlight familiar from street photography. Surprisingly, the local audience had difficulties in approving the images because they show the local children in a negative light. For an outsider this image is quite a benign interpretation of a teenage Friday night, but two elements struck the local Icelandic audience. First, the images are about their own kids, and as everywhere - "They don't hang around!" Secondly the aesthetic Hoonstra creates with his use of light is well controlled, aesthetically beautiful in its contrast between the existing background light and the emphasised use of flashlight. The problematic element in the image is most probably here. Hoonstra's use of light is too much. What is emphasised joins together the activity in the image, doing nothing in particular but just hanging around, and

the second element, that these are local people. For the locals the image is an *anticlimax* of a group portrait. Therefore it is interpreted as voyeurism without any actual reference to the artist's intention. Another critical interpretation is to combine the aesthetic style of the image with the fact of locality and see it as a *paranomasia* – this looks like a street photography – our kids are presented as street juveniles – combining two incompatible elements together as an oxymoron. Hoonstra's entire show of was received very positively outside Iceland, and the images were seen as beautiful documentary art of contemporary Europe. I highlighted this example to stress that metaphor in an image is not always singular. Interpretations may differ significantly especially when it comes to details. Metaphoric meaning in a content of the images opens a proportional sign-interpretation relation and sets the parameters to approach the image so that the impact of habitual and conventional in the affiliation of the context becomes deliberate.

Here the list of rhetorical operations is not completed and in terms of aesthetic qualities this is just an opening. The very heart of the elements the lens-based visual presentations are about, a light, a colour, a composition, and the expression of time, to name some, has been left completely out of this research. The only remarks I have made in this respect have been in my comments on individual works. In my earlier texts these elements are commented on, but not to the level of proper analysis. What I have opened here is a division of ontological elements connected to visual presentations and furthermore which are made in relation to a medium and genre. It can be argued that the rhetorical qualities of visual presentation define illustration on three levels. First, I've tried to describe how the visual expression, as we comprehend it in the contemporary Western culture, *intrinsically* includes such rhetorical operations as personification, metonymy, cliché or synecdoche. Secondly, in different *uses* of visual presentations, metaphorical operations define the result. Operations like irony, allegory or euphemism characterize the expressions in advertising, or sequenced expressions in news media are based on rhetorical operations like parenthesis or prolepsis. Thirdly, the expectations of content, style, and even aesthetic qualities in different genres and circulation channels create *expectations* for expression. These are given by the audience, but they define the construction of the content by the same expectations of the qualities.

## 2.10 Afterword

Despite the strong start with the citation from Kai Mikkonen, my observations on the text-image relation are few. I have given two distinctive roles for text in this analysis. First, it is a central contextual element binding images together with the genre. In such cases text is an element directed with the same layout-related design definitions as the images. They are on a same page, so to say, and design is equally important factor to both of them. The relation between the headline and the image, the subtitle and the image, and the story and the image

are all left out to focus attention on the content in the images. Second, the text has been interpreted as one element of the image. This is especially obvious in information graphics and in the visual designs of internet visualizations, where image and text are combined into interactive elements like never before. Interactivity, usability or other essential issues in internet presentation have not been analysed either. And the texts in the images are analysed as elements of the image only. I have also not extended my analysis to computer games even though they play an increasing role in the development of the aesthetic in visual presentations today.



IMAGE 35

Equadorian artist Maria Teresa Garcia is doing a project where she "photographs" her friends in images she publishes on Face Book by "taggings". The precense of the friends in the images refers only to tags. Original in colour.

In the beginning of this work I expressed my intention to apply Charles Sanders Peirce's tripartite theory of meaning and combine it with Ricoeur's ideas on pliable meaning in order to ask how closely visual presentation could be studied with qualities of rhetoric. My ambition was to see if an image could be interpreted as an argument. Thinkers I refer to have sometime conflicting views, and the way I combine and use the different theoretical concepts is eclectic. I'm bringing together several different paradigms from semiotics and structuralism to post-structuralism, hermeneutics and rhetoric. It may be challenging for the reader to follow the detailed commentary through the work.

Eclectic crossing of the boundaries between the different paradigms and disciplines gives perspective for new openings in theoretical study. This kind of somewhat unorthodox use of the concepts is after all one way to step out of the problematization I have worked through. I have sought a fresh approach to the



questions I have been working with and which brings my articles together. The different rhetorical operations have been used in analysis and the focus seems to carry itself, but the conclusion remains fragmented due the multiplicity of these operations. In future studies one of the key challenges is to bring these operations closer together the same way the classical rhetoric concluded elocution to addition, omission, permutation, and transposition. Kennedy's list I have applied here can be developed to a combination of two axes of the operations based on the inner qualities of each rhetorical operation. Such a division is between order and relation of the used expressive elements, or the form and the style of them.

In terms of the research topics the area of information graphics and information design are increasingly important, because their use has expanded through all media, and they are already introduced in media arts. Another equally interesting subject of research would be documentary aesthetics, as it is a fully applicable approach in every genre, and its history is immensely rich.

The quarrel over images of the iconoclast then turns into a quarrel over the VISBLE and the INVISIBLE; a quarrel not only about the OBJECT, pictorial or otherwise, and the SUBJECT, but about the TRAJECTORY without delay that goes so far as erasing the very memory of the 'mental map', the mental mapping that once allowed us still to get our bearings, to stand up to the other as well as the completely other.<sup>154</sup>



IMAGE 36

Social media is changing the practices and policies of visual materials and expression in media. This image spread through the internet in November 2011.

<sup>154</sup> Virilio 2007, page 106.

### III

## ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VISUALITY AND RHETORIC

by

Lehtonen Kimmo, 1996

In Parvikko Tuija & Kanerva Jukka,  
Exploring The Chronospace of Images, 69-83  
Translated by Markku Nivalainen

(Ref.)

## 3 ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VISUALITY AND RHETORIC

### 3.1 Introduction

Rhetoric as a term was originally used to describe eloquence or speech competence, such the ability to persuade and convince. In this article I apply the term to photography. My goal is to “fix” attention where I think it belongs when dealing with the rhetoric of photography - on the photograph itself.

Media research has widened rhetoric to include technologically aided messages and to describe internal occurrences in the transfer of these messages. Media rhetoric takes an interest in the mass media (above all TV and the press), massmediated art (e.g. movies, videos, multimedia etc.), and the interaction between sender and receiver. One could conclude that this research orientation introduces rhetoric as a theoretical term describing the nature of influence via the message rather than of eloquence in the message itself. Therefore I pass over this aspect and move on to other approaches.

An interesting way to introduce the rhetoric in photography is to put practical and theoretical experience into a dialogue with one another. Frank Webster<sup>155</sup>, a specialist in photojournalism and magazine illustration, regards rhetoric as one of the major concerns in the development and rebuilding of ethos and its consequences in a professional photographer’s education and work, while the well-known Russian semiotician Yuri Lotman<sup>156</sup> discusses theoretically the role of rhetoric in artistic expression. Culture - or more precisely, visual culture - brings these two writers together. As Lotman (and his colleagues) makes several observations in the same field where Webster operates, I have an opportunity to polemize them both.

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<sup>155</sup> Webster Frank 1985, *The New Photography, Responsibility in Visual Communication*, Riverrun Press Inc. New York.

<sup>156</sup> Lotman 1989. *Merkkinen maailma, kirjoitelmia semiotiikasta*, SN-Kirjat, Helsinki.

Webster classifies his critical approach to the ethos of technology as sociology, whereas for semiotics the rhetorical approach amounts rather to research on the production of signs and meaning. Semiotics cannot be equated with media research and even less with discussion about photographic practices. However, the cultural context and its central role in the production of visual signs point to the parallels of these two approaches with semiotic ideas.

### 3.2 Technical Ethos

By using the term “technical ethos” Frank Webster criticizes photographic education and its tendency to concentrate on improving photographers’ technical skill as the expense of learning decoding and analyzing the meaning or content in photography. This kind of education gives students the opportunity to learn to produce “correct” photographs without questioning their work, ambitions, or even the medium itself. The education is unsuitable for giving competence in dealing with the meaning of expression, and therefore strengthens the *status quo* of cultural sign signatures. At the same time, Webster exposes two misleading myths about photographers, which have both fostered the tendency towards the *status quo* and promoted the idea that photographers are objective “mirrors” of the world. First, has been romanticized as (and believed to be) a creative individual who shares something unique with his/her audience. In my perspective, a photographer can better be seen as a subject (i.e. “artist”) but as well as an actor in media (the latter determines the former). Second, the camera has been seen as a passive and objective eye-witness of reality. Realistically the camera can be specified simply as a tool and nothing but a tool. After these myths have become blank, it is easy to agree with Webster that photography is always received in both culturally and historically specific situations.<sup>157</sup>

For Webster, a fruitful approach to present-day photography as a cultural phenomenon is to divide it into the processes of encoding and decoding. Webster characterizes encoding as a photographer’s way to “load” a picture with meaning produced by using elements in the cultural sign signature, and decoding as the audience’s activity of receiving the meaning in photography. The well-known idea of encoding-decoding gets a new interpretation when Webster claims that the main responsibility for the transformation of the message lies with photographers. If they wish to speak with communicative power, they must be conscious of the constituents of the symbolic meaning of their culture, even while the audience may be unconscious of these meanings.

“It seems to me crucial that recognizing the role played in communication by culture, we ought to focus our attention upon the constituents of that culture. This is of vital necessity for two reasons. First, because acknowledgement of the importance of culture allows us to recognize the need to query ideas that are not generally reflected upon. ... Second,... When we recognize culture as wedded to communication we re-

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<sup>157</sup> About misleading myth, see Webster, 1985; 18-20, and about status quo e.g., 47-51.

alize that decoding is a process of interpretation in which the viewer selects and reads symbols by way of their cultural knowledge. ... Such a principle points out the need for communicators to study carefully not only their own cultural dispositions but also the orientations of their audiences."<sup>158</sup>

In other words, Webster recognizes the basic elements in the production of visual signs but in his search for the answer to "the problem of communication" he turns his gaze only in one direction, namely towards photographers. For Webster, the audience, although not a passive crowd, is an "innocently ignorant target" for photographers, and the latter should be well aware of this. For a researcher Webster offers the role to study the cultural unconscious, which he regards as the connecting level between photographers and their audience. This he names "rhetoric of visuality".

Webster's conclusion about the need for the study of rhetoric in visuality is easy to accept. On the other hand his presentation implicitly suggests that the manipulative capacity of the photographer (or "communicator" as he would put it) in the encoding - decoding process has increased. According to Louis Althusser, for example, this is exactly what has happened; the cultural unconscious has been increasingly used as a method of attracting audiences' attention in media markets without disturbing the prevailing *status quo*.<sup>159</sup> Webster avoids criticism by stressing the importance of ethics and sign production as the primary concerns of education. When speaking about the positive self-reflection of culture, he nevertheless reduces power to hegemony by describing it as a highly uncritical practice which leads to the phenomenon of ethnocentrism. Even though he sees the audience as an active decoding part of the communication process, his idea of ethnocentrism is dangerous. TO express Michel Foucault's vocabulary, it hides within itself an anatomy of power. This consequence is evident especially when photographers use their professional skill to maintain *status quo* by producing material which audiences take as "standard images".

### 3.3 Towards Rhetoric of Visuality

Cultural visuality or socialization into it as a value or attitude generalization cannot be understood by questioning the quality or goals of photographers' education. On the other hand, when theorizing about visuality, it is not enough just to mention the need for cultural analysis. As Webster says, photography is communication, but to connect intersubjectivity and socialization directly together is reductionism. Both encoding and decoding are based on the activity of an actor. I cannot accept Webster's idea of rhetoric of visuality as this point. Webster in a way forgets the connecting level between the two extremes of the

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 47-51.

<sup>159</sup> About advertisements and status quo, e.g. Westergaard Torben, Schroeder Kim 1985, *The Language of Advertising*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 89.

communication process. By this level I mean the photograph with all its properties. These properties cannot be insignificant; on the contrary, they may be purposely hidden or unrecognized, but this does not make the whole phenomenon rhetorically empty or unsuitable for theoretical analysis.

The competence of the audience in receiving visual material (i.e. their ability to be open towards that material) has changed quite a lot since Theodor Adorno's or Antonio Gramsci's days. People have learned to interact with a new kind of (audio)visual culture. A look of glance that an individual has at visual information, no matter what kind of material he/she is dealing with, already includes contextual knowledge that makes him/her able to locate this information not only in a certain individual memory of history but in a culturally familiar genre as well. In other words, the same situation of receiving is a moment of several potential interpretations. A Finnish art critic and semiotician, Altti Kuusamo, calls this the "law of the genres". Depending on what genre of visual representation the receiver finds to be relevant at a given moment, he/she becomes sensitive to its meaning structure on a level on which this structure is recognized.

This does not mean "anarchy of the receiver" over the meaning of visual representation. On the contrary, it is the omnipotence of the eye which is concretized every time we find ourselves in a conflict because several different ways of interpretation are available for us and still we know which one to follow. Furthermore, in this momentous conflict, for a whole variety of reasons, we can hardly deny the charm of "misinterpretation" whose presence becomes apparent to us in this multitude of possible interpretations.<sup>160</sup>

Robert Goldman and Stephen Papsen have noticed that every new generation of advertising introduces in its signification-process forms of ellipses based on the abbreviation of encoding rules. They call this tendency "hypersignification". According to Goldman and Papsen, nowadays advertisers use deliberate minimalism instead of explicit commodity narrative, and leave the construction of the narrative to the audience. Making sense is now embedded in the code itself, or it may involve the disappearance of the product, or even enigmatic ambiguity, challenging viewers to act as self-conscious semioticians:

"We live in a sea of signs in which it is ever more difficult to differentiate one sign from another. Viewers who have a history of media consumption also have a history of negotiating the positioning strategies used by advertisers – this permits advertisers to call on viewers' memories, ...they thus speak to a higher form of media literacy where viewers are asked to abstract and generalize from specific texts. Contemporary culture is turned into a giant mine of intertextual references."<sup>161</sup>

Goldman and Papsen deal with the visuality of television advertising. As I already mentioned when introducing Altti Kuusamo's idea of "law of genres",

<sup>160</sup> In fact, a caricature can be named as "an ancient" example of this. Nowadays the potentiality of several interpretations has spread very wide to the visuality in media as a whole.

<sup>161</sup> Goldman Robert and Stephen Papsen: *Advertising in The Age of Hypersignification, Theory, Culture & Society* (SAGE, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi) Vol 11. (1994) 23-24.

contemporary audience (audiences) can be considered very competent in acting with massmediated visuality. I use the expression "visuality", because advertising cannot be the only "sea of signs" in the media where the audience use their skills of interpretation and construction of meaning. And in this respect while connected with "hypersignification", Kuusamo's idea can be very perceptive as a principle explaining the relation between the audience and the meaning structure.

I am inclined to use the term rhetoric differently from Webster. Rhetoric is, without doubt, the main concern when we aim to understand the multipotential situation into which a press photographer is led by his/her work. But rhetoric as a theoretical term that we use when attempting to conceptualize sign production leads us, in the first place, to the ontology of photography and to semiotics. Therefore, I would prefer to talk about two different "gravities". First, the gravity inside the photograph, where the sign structure of visual representation and its meaning is concretized. This is the area that can be called the rhetoric or rhetorical gravitation of the photograph. Second, all the possibilities and limitations that the photograph meets when published, such as type of publication, association by publication, the way, time and place of publishing, and more, circulation, repetition, volume and duration I call the contextuality or the contextual gravitation of a photograph. Both parts of the gravity are historically and culturally determined.

When rhetorical gravitation can be connected hypothetically to the level of sign structure, the contextual gravity (or a contextual bond between the photograph and the viewer) can be seen as a level of evaluation of the visual data based on the "decoding" process (such as connecting the photograph to a certain type of photography, or forming a continuum or rhythm between photographs in one's memory to be compared with former experiences that one has about visuality stored in another memory). One could also conclude that Kuusamo's definitions operate in the area of contextual gravitation (knowledge about genres), and "hypersignification" is operationalized by the audience in the area of rhetorical gravitation (that is, skills of understanding visual messages and making them complete when needed).

A good example of this evaluation is the spectator's skill in perceiving different genres of photography. New documentarism and advertising have tested the limits of these genres, and some of this has been swallowed by the audience without notice. On the other hand, as soon as someone crosses the "sacred" border too roughly or evidently, the audience responds aggressively (as has happened in the case of Benetton or in the beginning with computer-manipulated photographs). When we approach the unconscious level e.g. in art photography, the confusion of the audience who cannot decide which type of gravity ought to be primary is evident (there is a whole trend of exhibitions of this kind but one of the most famous is Cicciolina's and Jeff Koon's exhibition on pornography.) And this happens to despite the fact that the audiences of exhibitions are normally a highly specialized minority of the population as a

whole. The separation of these two gravities is naturally a purely theoretical approach of reaching the goal set at the beginning of this article.

The importance of the audience cannot be underestimated. The historicity of photography and the importance of the audience can be described by drawing on Stanley Fish's idea of interpretive communities. According to fish, both the authoritative intentions and the characteristics in a text are subordinate to the reader's presumptions and style of reading. What is more, the intention and characteristics have no existence outside reading and the reader's experience in this situation. Fish denies that texts involve formal activities of interpretation as ready-made models of decoding. He suggests that reading as an experience is based on interpretative strategies, which take the form of models of receiving in perception practices. In the act of interpretation, the reader applies his/her own procedures to the text. Signification does not happen between objectivity and interpretation but between the conscious and the unconscious. For fish, text is reinterpreted in each reading experience. Interpretative communities are built on prioritized strategies which the members of the community follow. Because the strategy is learned, it is under constant reformulation in debates and conflicts.<sup>162</sup> I want to add to Fish's idea of "ready-made" structure that interpretation strategies are, in my opinion, the mediating level between author (here the photographer) and reader (here the audience), and – to connect this to cultural visibility – that debate is a target of contemporary advertising, as Goldman and Papson argue. Fish does not use the idea of the communities of interpretation to the visual representation, and therefore his conclusions must be considered by keeping the perceptual strategies of visibility in mind.

### 3.4 Rhetoric of Photography

So, for one author the significance lies in the coding process, and for another it is in the never-ending interpretation. When speaking about rhetoric of visibility, I place it between these two. The rhetoric of photography is embedded in the photograph itself. I do not deny the importance of Webster's and Fish's ideas, but there are certain reservations I would like to make.

First, photography is communication that works mainly in one direction. "Mainly", because there is slow but unmistakable feedback in the markets of visibility, but here this is not a major concern. Second, it is polysemic way of representation, and should therefore be discussed as a more complex sign system than simply as something that can be sent or received.<sup>163</sup> Third, a photo-

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<sup>162</sup> Fish's argumentation has affinities with Derridean theory of discourse and terms conscious/unconscious here are comparable to that. Fish is more pragmatic than Derrida and the idea of total relativism does not therefore include the conception of "interpretative community". See; Lodge Davis (ed.), *Modern Criticism and Theory*, Longman, London and New York, 1983, 311-329.

<sup>163</sup> Umberto Eco has concluded iconic code to be example of "weak codes" where precise sign structures are hard to find and under a constant transformation. Another definition is between semiotically clear "ratio facilis" and "ratio difficilis" where expression is motivat-



graph is published most often in connection with a text (even though this separation is artificial) and then, after the study of the photographer's inner qualities, be re-connected with it and the phenomena as a whole analysed.

To distinguish the uniqueness of rhetoric in visual materials, I find this analytical separation of utmost importance. Without it, we end up making observations about the genres of visuality, and of course, we can point out most of the meaning and its hidden structures (this is hegemonic, that is ideological, these articulate power, etc.), but this ignores rhetorical specifications. Moreover, if the analysis of rhetoric regards the meaning as given, as Webster of Fish suggest, it would lead us into a situation where one or the other of the participating parties would be at the mercy of the other. The process of communication can be divided into encoding and decoding, but when speaking about rhetoric, we need to connect it to a specific place or situation. And that happens in my opinion *in* the photograph and not outside it.

The third approach which has to be included in this discussion is the question of the theory of rhetoric. Chaim Perelman has developed some interesting ideas about the "contemporary" theory of rhetoric.<sup>164</sup> He points out that argumentation is not a formal system and therefore the status of elements that enter the given arguments cannot be fixed. Perelman shows his curiosity for the adherence of the audience to the premises of the arguments.

Perelman has pointed out that argumentation cannot ever be true in itself. Its aim is to make itself reasonable. As a matter of fact, each choice made in this respect shows the possibility of alternatives. For Perelman, argumentation always takes its shape according to its audience. "Since the number of arguments is *a priori* indefinite, a choice must inevitable be made, guided by the idea one has of the respective arguments."<sup>165</sup> Perelman tries to make this intuitively evaluable notion precise by giving argumentation two qualities. These are efficacy and validity:

"Since the efficacy of an argument is relative to the audience, it is impossible to evaluate it above and beyond reference to the audience to which it is presented. On the other hand, validity is relative to competent audience, most often to the universal audience. The strength of an argument depends upon the adherence of the listeners to the premises of the argumentation; upon the pertinence of the premises; upon the close of distant relationship which they may have with the defended thesis; upon the objection which can be opposed to it; and upon the manner in which they can be refuted."<sup>166</sup>

The rhetorical qualities Perelman mentions – efficacy and validity – can be found in photographic practices as well. In this distinction I made earlier they belong to the area of rhetorical gravitation. And as Perelman notes about political speech, these two qualities are mixed together in it in such a way that they are hard to be kept apart. The strength of an argumentation can be understood

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ed by "the nature of the context". The latter describes successfully the challenge that the iconic code puts to the analysis.

<sup>164</sup> Perelman Chaim, *The Realm of Rhetoric*, University of Notre Dame Press, London 1982.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

to be dependent on the activity of the audience. The more reasonable the audience find the connections of the argumentation with their cultural knowledge, memory and beliefs, the easier they can find, as Perelman writes, “the methods of reasoning appropriate to it”. In photography, if the audience cannot make conclusions about the genre of visual representation they are facing, their interpretations of it will be ambiguous and they may as well ignore it. In other words Perelman’s idea of adherence is based on the quality of photography I have called contextual gravitation, but the two properties of adherence, efficacy and validity, are qualities of rhetorical gravitation. These ideas can also be applied to visuality. When Perelman concludes that the qualities of argumentation are a gateway to the listener’s mind and opinions (adherence), he is describing the same kind of influencing strategies that Webster in suggesting for a good and responsible photographer.

If photography has to be connected to one semiotic structure, it is metonymy. Without any detailed description, I want to emphasize that photography is cropping and constructing in the name of expression.<sup>167</sup> Therefore it stands, as representation, for something larger within its bounds and parameters. When speaking about symbolic liason, Perelman comes very close to my subject. He claims that “insofar as a symbol gives presence to what is symbolized it can serve as a figure of rhetoric, such as metonymy”.<sup>168</sup> To make it simple, the efficacy of a photograph is its ability to make visual representation in such a strong manner that it is intensive enough to attract expected attention. The rhetorical validity of the photograph means getting its significance received at a certain cultural and historical moment in such a way that the photograph is located in a clear position in medium, genre and debate.<sup>169</sup>

How, then, could we find means of analysis to operationalize the rhetoric of photography? I would like to refer to one more writer concerned with the characteristics of photography. John Tagg put together very well both the possibilities and the problems of the idea of rhetoric when speaking about photography:

“This pattern on paper is, in turn, the object of a perception – or reading – in which it is constituted as a meaningful image according to learning schemas. The meaning of the photographic image is build up by an interaction of such schemas or codes, which vary greatly in their degree and schematization. The image is therefore to be seen as a composite of signs, more to be compared with a complex sentence than a

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<sup>167</sup> Yuri Lotman theorizes about semiotic tropes as a mean to switch from a code system to another. A basic division of the tropes between metaphor, where the relation of a sign to what it stands for is resemblance, i.e. relation in *abstentia*; metonymy where the relation is based on time, position and logic, i.e. relation in *praesentia*; and *synechdoche* where a part can stand for the whole and vice versa. A photographic expression uses all of these tropes. But to characterize photograph as a rhetorical entity in all its qualities and to admit its ideological nature, metonymy is the only suitable one. If a photograph is named metaphorical, all that cannot be counted as resemblance have to be left out. Determining a photograph as *synechdote* means not to discover its qualities to abstract.

<sup>168</sup> Perelman, 102.

<sup>169</sup> Victor Burgin has elaborated a photograph’s rhetorical and contextual properties. See “Photography and Art Theory” in *Studio International*, vol190, 1975 (In his text Burgin applies structural semiotics which I have left out in this article.)

single word. Its meanings are also multiple, concrete, and most important, constructed. In common also, with other language-like systems photographs may also be exhaustively analyzed as projections of a limited number of rhetorical forms in which a society's values and beliefs are naturalized and which may not be dispelled simply by analysis since, following Freud's discussion of desire and censure, we may see rhetorical forms as mock transgressions of notional, simple, underlying propositions which may be rejected but which still provide, through their very rejection, a sources of unpunished satisfaction."<sup>170</sup>

For Yuri Lotman, rhetorical structure does not rise straight from the principles of linguistics but from the deliberate reinterpretation of rhetorical principles. He develops further Roman Jakobson's idea of semantic trope. For Lotman the semantic tropes are a mechanism of transformation in situations where the sign construction is impossible in one language of code. The trope is a mediating "rhetorical metaphor" between two sign structures which cannot be connected. This semantic turn is not just a shift but a merge where the signification in the rhetorical situation integrates the whole.<sup>171</sup>

Because rhetorical organization is produced in semantic tension between the organic structure and "alien" structure, Lotman argues that it is possible to analyze this organization.<sup>172</sup> When an element of "alien" structure ceases to be equivalent to itself, it changes to a sign and an imitation of itself. Umberto Eco discusses the same metamorphosis of a sign and calls it an "idiolect of aesthetic". Code and message feed one another in close interaction. The receiver compares new semiotic possibilities to the sign system of language as a whole and organizes his/her communicational experience again and again. The aesthetic code can recreate a sign system by widening the consciousness of the code, and the cultural way of discovering the world changes. Because the receiver/spectator does not know the code system that the sender/photographer uses, he compares it to his own aesthetic experience and memory. For Eco, the aesthetic code is therefore a dialectical relation between preciseness and freedom. To open this dialectics, Eco calls for a new rhetorically oriented semiotic approach.<sup>173</sup>

Lotman steers his semiotic consideration in this direction. He uses the concept of replica. According to Lotman, in a "pictorial text" the transformation and multiple replication have a special function. In a text the content-expression relation is evident and conventional. On a poetical level (where the replica belongs) these levels mix to unite as a higher organization than the text. In the

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<sup>170</sup> Tagg John, *The Burden of Representation*, MacMillan, London 1988.

<sup>171</sup> See also footnote 13 in this text.

<sup>172</sup> By "alien structure" Lotman emphasizes a situation where the trope is used for bringing one element from a structure to another which are principally not connected. A good example of this in visual materials is usage of different materials in the same film, e.g. documentary as a part of drama. The difference and its effect are not mechanical but then can be subjectively interpreted as "strange" and understood as a strong rhetorical effect. Lotman concludes a very similar idea about interpretation that I have introduced earlier by Altti Kuusamo's "Law of genres".

<sup>173</sup> See, Eco Umberto, *A Theory of Semiotics*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1976, 168-178.

area where this multiple replication takes place, the level of conventionality thickens and becomes clearer than the replica was.

I interpret Lotman's formulation and adapt it to photography. A single referent in a photograph is culturally charged exactly in that form in which the cultural practice applies it. Here I refer to my idea of contextual gravity. The rhetorical qualities that a photograph gives to the receiver in order to challenge him/her to formulate what Lotman calls a multiple replica may be based on contextual facts. But the rhetorical means and intentions present in the same situation must be carried by the photograph itself. And therefore the main interest given to the rhetoric of photography should be aimed at the other part of gravitation I mentioned – the area of rhetorical gravitation. That can be sociological as Webster suggests, but more important than this sociology of rhetoric is, I think, the need to create methods to understand the aspects of a photograph as a sign system. When this level of visibility is familiar to us, we can study the communication as a whole and better understand the idiolectal differences that Eco saw as a basic principle of dialectic relations in visibility.

**IV**

**FROM A GENIE IN THE BOTTLE TO NEW  
DIMENSION**

by

Kimmo Lehtonen, 1996

Niininen Petri (Ed.),

Tuote kulttuurissa, esseitä yksilön, yhteisön ja tuotteiden vaikutuksesta,  
60-73

Translated by Markku Nivalainen

## 4 FROM THE GENIE IN A BOTTLE TO NEW DIMENSION

### 4.1 Industrial Philately

On the bottom corner of a magazine advertisement, or beautifully aligned within it, is an element that draws one's attention. The reader sees it either as something nice and familiar or as a yet another "nuisance poorly placed to cover something more important". It is a product or a product package. Perhaps it is a piece of soap or the bottle of a cleaning agent, maybe a cosmetic product or a beverage. Or it might be a miniature car or a packet of coffee. Nonetheless we recognize it instantly: "that is it" or "that contains it". In a highly specialized publication the products may startle the uninitiated. The product can be a tank, a book or a passenger aircraft! What they have in common is that they are all the size of a postage stamp.

The topic of my article is the visuality of advertising. I discuss a deeply-rooted mode of representation found in advertising catalogs: the inclusion of a picture of the packaged product as a part of the advertisement. The question is why product pictures remain parts of advertisements even though the development of the contentual and expressive imagery of advertising has been through so many different stages, all of which have taken the content into a more allusive and "racy" direction? A worn out answer is that the manufacturer wants to present the packaged product together with the advertisement. However, at different times the presence of the packaged product has attempted to send so many different messages simultaneously that this answer alone cannot offer a satisfactory explanation. One might also ask what a product actually is or how to hide inside a packaging?

In advertisements, the *mortised* element is usually the package containing the product. The package itself is designed to be appropriate for storing the product, carrying it, and so on; convenience, durability, logistics! In addition the package naturally has to be selling. Since every possible route inside a supermarket is carefully mapped and designed so that every step the customer

takes is a statistically probable step between two different decisions to buy, it is certain that the lying of the products on the shelves has been thought out just as meticulously. This “topography of the retail trade” is enough to show the insufficiency of the worn out explanation. The packaging of the product has to be drummed into the customer so efficiently that he or she doesn’t shop for just a detergent but for “that” detergent. This would lead the focused customer, who is loyal to the brand, at “the” shelf without ever realizing it is actually a shelf for detergents. For the manufacturer the ideal customer is one who doesn’t even notice the alternative products.

This creates a dilemma: how to be original just like the others? Even a packaged detergent has to look like a detergent, yet it has to appear as unique. Only innovative products break this topography. It might seem silly to search for milk among the spray cans, but does it really differ from cream, the spray version of which has been available for quite a while? Whipped cream! Let’s get back to the packaging issues. How to place the product where it belongs in a shop? How to introduce a new product to the consumer? And yet again the manufacturer insists that the advertising agency includes the packaging in the advertisements. If the innovation or the design differs markedly from the earlier products, a whole new advertisement is created. Advertisements that sell products with similar utility values are defined by “the spirit of consumption”. This is exactly what happened with detergents, cigarettes and cosmetics. But think about the way cars are marketed to us as beautifully curved shapes, excitingly sculpted turn signal lights, rear-view mirrors etc! The fine lines between the product, the packaging and the symbolic meaning of consumption are impossible to define. At the same time the ultimate goal for our temptations is a kind of appearance through personal consumption, an accentuation of self-image finding its expression in commodities. This relation of an individual to his or her environment through different kinds of codes of consumption has also been described as a dilemma of similar nature – how to be original just like the others.

## 4.2 The Extended Product

Another way to untangle this web of problems, still starting from the packaging, is branding. Since the 18<sup>th</sup> century the *raison d’être* of brands has been tri-fold. A brand reveals the manufacturer, works as a guarantee of quality and ties together all the products under the same brand.<sup>174</sup> Marketing focuses on the whole company and aims to make it a household name.

Labels were born a century later as a by-product of retail packaging. In Finland the golden age of labels started in the 1920s.<sup>175</sup> The idea of labels is the same as that of brands, but unlike brands labels clearly strove to build an imaginary connection between the product and its consumption. This can be

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<sup>174</sup> Hovi, 1994.

<sup>175</sup> Hovi-Wasastjerna, 1995.

considered as the third central function of brands and especially of labels. It differentiates the product from other products, while the focus shifts from marketing the company to marketing individual products.

A 1992 study reveals something essential about the role brands play in the culture of consumption: there are ten times more brand name mentions in the American fiction of the 1990s than there were in the 1940s.<sup>176</sup> "I sat in my red *brand* and pushed the pedal to the metal. I felt the *brands* grip the road as I drew on my *brand*, the smoke of which was warmer than the concrete afternoon of Santa Barbara, which seemed blissfully safe observed through *brands*" etc. To hold an idea that a text like that is the privilege of Jerry Cotton is as delusional as would be to claim that James Bond doesn't drive an Aston Martin, or was it a Saab, or a BMW... It is also worth noting that the increasing consumption has created a way of being and observing one's surroundings that considerably defines the individual's position in relation to not just other individuals but the surroundings on the whole. I will return to this later.

The original idea of branding a product was to uphold its market value. Advertisers noticed that the saturation point of a marketed product led into a fast decline in consumption. It was believed that the decline in sales could be overcome by branding. The branding strategies evolved further into "extending the products", which meant introducing new versions of the product under the same brand. The most famous variation is the light version of soft drinks. The development won't stop here. Light versions of soft drinks have been followed by "brand hybrids" like light drink popsicles, which are connected to the sales of supplementary brand products. The tobacco industry did just that. The light cigarette was followed by tobacco shoes and tobacco shoes were followed by a whole wardrobe with its ties and suspenders. All the while the product packaging stood its ground as a common device in visual advertising.

In connection to advertisements, the "original" product packaging signifies the whole development as it is described here. It can lend a part of itself or just a single property to serve the whole. A trademark, the company logo and the product packaging are tied together like the double helix of DNA. The analogy is purposeful for none of the elements can be removed without paralyzing the entire strategy. Any element can step aside for the benefit of the other two, but only to return soon, even in a way "refreshed", to the limelight. In fact this is the whole the actual visual advertising is built on, and which conjures up, usually with photographs, the ways of consumption and ideal living we want to identify with. The familiar Coca-Cola has transformed into a bottle cap that rolls on and on. The product packaging spins along without ever being forgotten. The aforementioned, already classical way of mortising the product image into an advertisement is not the only way to apply paste to this very anchor, for stylizing abounds.

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<sup>176</sup> Twitchell, 1996, 205.



### 4.3 Not Just a Product

Anglo-American research<sup>177</sup> has defined the structuring of the substantial relations in magazine advertising as the combination of caption or words, framing and mortise. I focus on the latter one in this presentation. Because the most common mortised element in visual advertising is the picture of a product packaging, I shall use the term “product” to specifically refer to a mortised picture of a product packaging. Mortising brands a picture as an advertisement by way of a product. The particular image is immediately related to the vast imageries of advertising. The function of the image could be compared to that of a trademark used instead of, or together with, the mortising. According to Robert Goldman mortising opens up in an image a relational meaning in which the product acts as the signifier and the actual advertisement image as the signified.<sup>178</sup>

The relation Goldman borrows from semiotics makes it possible to transfer meaning from the image to the product, and the interaction of the product and the mental image mediated by the actual image, in which both can refer to or replace each other. From the point of view of the viewer the referential relation offers a chance to link not just abstract possibilities and images but also the commodity form to a chain of associations produced by advertising. Like a simple chain from a pack of cigarettes to the Marlboro Man, or Marlboro Country, and, the other way round, from the prairie or a cowboy to a cigarette. Stuart Hall<sup>179</sup> has summed it up by saying that mortising picks one of the many meanings contained by an image and anchors it to the one meaning most wished for by the advertiser.

Regarding the image, the aforementioned means that advertising has an ability to detach the image from its original context and “produce” it within the sphere of advertising. This means reconstructing the meaningful contentual and social relations as parts of the commodity relations the advertisement seeks to tie them to. Erving Goffman labeled this the realism and mythology of advertising and Risto Heiskala went on to point out the surrealism of advertising. These are labels for new ways of representation that have emerged in advertising.<sup>180</sup> I will return to the subjects of mortising and the product.<sup>181</sup>

The product packaging is no longer just “convenience, durability, logistics” like I mentioned before. Instead it manifests the whole ideology of consumption. In Marxist terminology, the product transforms into a commodity fetish. An interesting conversation piece is the “United Colors” campaign Toscani designed for Benetton. In it the trademark and the words attach the advertising

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid. 205.

<sup>178</sup> The terms originate in semiotics, which is not within the scope of this article.

<sup>179</sup> Hall et al. 1980, in the article “Encoding/Decoding”.

<sup>180</sup> See Goffman, 1987 and Lehtonen, 1991.

<sup>181</sup> The rhetorical possibilities of advertisement images are ignored here. I have written on the topic in an article found in Parvikko & Kanerva, 1996. I have written about the semiotics of advertisement image in Lehtonen, 1991.

with images, the origins of which lie entirely elsewhere. Paying no further attention to the discussion I just want to point out, in support of Goldman, that the debate would have had no grounds had the two-way transference described above not been strongly present. I don't think a simple discussion about the tastelessness and ethicality could have thrived without the ability of the public to follow the partly abstract chains of meaning of the trademark and the product, the words and the image. It is with these very relations that Toscani has mapped "the boundaries of the taboos of the Western culture".

#### 4.4 The Cynical Consumer

The relationship of advertising and the consumer, and the role advertising plays and the effect it has as a visible element of post-industrial culture, have been extensively discussed. I shall refer to two notions the temporal distance of which is about half a century. Walter Benjamin noted that the arcades (*die Passagen*), which for example the Finnish shopping centers of the 1980s and 1990s strongly resemble, are "dream houses" built for the worship of consumption with their windows showing art used by the traders. For Benjamin art functions in advertising as the mediator of technological progress and increasing "social lust", the consumption. The development of advertising turns information into propaganda, thus making itself socially "practical" in a positive manner. Advertisement images make the products seem more humane to help us forget that they are commodities after all.<sup>182</sup> Any reference to art might be giving too much credit to the Finnish shopping centers, but considering the spatial and visual dimensions of trade, Benjamin's insight is telling.

After myriad schools of thought, decades of thinking and enough books to fill an entire library with, Michael Schudson notices that consumption has moved from products to images. He assumes that if consumption is believed to be having its own infrastructure, the social conditions that look kindly on the modes of consumption, there must also be a "superstructure", the total imagery of consumption that at any given time makes the product normal, acceptable, pleasant, manageable and popular.<sup>183</sup>

Several researchers have made an important addition to those observations. It has been discovered that people have become aware of advertising and consider themselves to be the objects of consumption. One of the most daring commentators is the American James B. Twitchell. He comments on the Marxist ideas of spreading false consciousness and of consumption as a new religion by saying that advertising is an extension of religion produced by the secular consumer society, not its replacement. Like many others he sees advertising as a conservative phenomenon that doesn't dare create anything new, but only aims to conserve and strengthen the prevailing practices of consumption. He states

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<sup>182</sup> Buck-Morss, 1991, 134, 144, 184.

<sup>183</sup> Schudson, 1984, 238.

that advertising cannot be thought of as a distinct factor that dominates the culture. It has become a central part of the mainstream culture; it is the folklore of the consumer society. According to Twitchell advertising is no longer able to create needs, it can only fulfill them. Advertising has thus become the target for possible manipulation and consumers have become its users.<sup>184</sup>

Marketing has in fact paid attention to similar observations with discussions of target groups, market segments and so on. Market researchers' observations carefully follow the inner movements of societies and marketing eagerly reacts to them. I guess it could be said that personal identity is not completely helpless even when surrounded by the marketing decoys of the post-industrial society. Not even when experiencing what Gianni Vattimo has called the "feeling of homelessness"<sup>185</sup>, which is caused by the loss of communal references and leads one into endlessly rebuilding his or her identity through for example consumption, or when facing and retrieving the "communality"<sup>186</sup> of the continuous identity.

One would think that the power of the product packaging described by Goldman would decrease as the market awareness increases. Twitchell especially has emphasized that market awareness is simultaneously a case of market optimism. Positive attitude does not simply mean the worship of advertising or the eternal growth of consumption. Instead it also redefines the position of the consumer. The consumers have learned that advertising does not oblige them to do anything. It just does what it can to lure the public into buying. Goldman's variation is the "cynically sophisticated" consumer.<sup>187</sup> Advertising has become a natural part of the environment and as an object of consumption it can be both successful and "fun" or unsuccessful and "boring". The "cynical consumer" builds his or her own identity through oneself by setting oneself against the most pleasant or convenient identity available. I have referred to this earlier by mentioning James Bond. An identity built through consumption, the studied collection of trademarks and interpreting the surroundings and other identities by perceiving similar collecting, has become a central form of communal self-definition. Meanings constructed as the codes of communal definition are bound to change as often as Bond's cars.

Picturing the product in the advertisements has held true and reacted to the changes by dividing itself. Certain types of advertising have retained the old ways: consumers are drawn simple pictures that explain "use-value sovereignty" with the focus on the product. For example diapers have changed into pants that are illustrated with talking child actors, who may proclaim, "I pee, let the others explain". The final line is reserved for the enchanting product packaging. In the magazine version the product packaging is still mortised into the advertisement. Often it is accompanied with a "narrative image" and information on how the diaper works. The classic structure is again repeated. The

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<sup>184</sup> Twitchell, 1996, see for example page 14, 110, 152 or 230

<sup>185</sup> Vattimo, 1989, 56-69.

<sup>186</sup> See for example Agamben, 1995 or Maffesoli, 1995.

<sup>187</sup> Goldman, 1992, 162.

product packaging brands the advertisement and functions as a supermarket code referring to “the shelf”, the napkin is presented as a material object of consumption and an image illustrating the situation ensures that the chain of associations gets formed.

Elsewhere the advertisement processes further. Perfume and alcohol marketing realized ages ago that it is not necessary to mortise the product packaging into the advertisement. On the contrary, it can work as an advertisement in itself. For pre-marketed and established labels the “bottle” alone is presented as a “design product” to which the trademark is added. When the “bottle” is coupled with a celebrity, who is also presented as a “product”, these two can alternate. The best known example of this strategy must be Catherine Deneuve and Chanel 5. The contemporary “Super Model” phenomenon refines the strategy further in a way reminiscent of the “glamour advertising” of the golden age of cinema. The essential difference between these two is how the idolization is constructed. During the glamour era the heroism and the celebrity’s role as an idol were created outside the sphere of advertising, from where they were borrowed for commercial usage. Super Model is instead a form of an idol born within the sphere of advertising and borrowed by the film and entertainment industries.

#### **4.5 Absolutely Vodka Mister Penguin**

One of the things that have ensured the continuing visibility of the product is the increasing usage of information technology in producing images. The products can go through unbelievable transformations right in front of our eyes, and the photographs in advertisements conjure up surprising images. I would say that the digitalization of picture material is taking us back from the age of photography to the age of illustrations. Products and their packaging have started to “live” in a new way: a plastic bottle transforms into a money box or the shadow of a car starts to resemble wild animals, not to even mention all kinds of flying and traveling in either real or illusory landscapes.

Even before the aid of information technology, the product packaging could work as a window or a mirror that reflected different landscapes and scenes. In these advertisements the product packaging functioned as a framing element, but the way of life and the building and maintaining of the consumer illusion through “realistic visions” has been replaced with fantasies that are designed to appear as such. The novelty phase of the invasion of information technology seems to be giving way to a composed and aesthetically more finished imagination. An international brand of vodka uses images of bottles that distort the background scenery; we can see the bottle “distort” a penguin. Another reality, if we could call it that, still refers to connections that fantasize consumption. All the while the fantasy reaches the aforementioned codes of social definition.

In other words, the product will not yield. Instead it dissolves and remains an independent element of visual marketing. The metamorphic age of the product packaging is not down to mere information technology. Advertising and visual arts have been juxtaposed throughout the history of advertising. At first disapproved the advertisement image became part of the popular culture and posed a threat to the good taste and respected visual representation as they were defined by the high culture. After that advertising made courageous references towards the visual arts and the modern art started to make counter-references. Eventually pop art broke down the barrier and art started to utilize advertising and the whole of popular culture.

I want to highlight two examples. Andy Warhol, who ended up as the poster boy of pop art, provoked the art world by using product packaging as a subject of his art and endlessly copying both the subject and his art works. The statement "business is the highest form of art" crystallized the new attitude.<sup>188</sup> Advertising, for one, adopted Warhol. And that was easy. He was already a celebrity, a star and respected visual artist who commented on advertising. Something about the relationship between visual arts and advertising surely had changed since the food processing giant Campbell, whose soup cans had earned Warhol a reputation in and outside the art circles, ordered works from the "master" for their own use!

Pop art had crossed the – almost galactic – distance between two fields of visual presentation. And pop art enables us to see this as a dialogue. Since then the appreciation and power of popular culture has steadily increased and the dialogue has flourished. One of the most famed campaigns to willfully and aggressively overlap the spheres of advertising and art was the attempt of the virtually unknown Swedish liquor brand Absolut Vodka to break through to the American alcohol market. The advertising agency ordered renowned young artists to produce a series of advertisement images with the subject being the product packaging – a vodka bottle. What emerged was a series of advertisement images in which the product packaging is presented as a work of art and subtitled with texts like "Absolut Warhol". Art was presented as an advertisement and an advertisement as art, while the product packaging had transformed into art, which had switched into an advertisement, which was illustrated with what were clearly works of visual art.

It is easy to imagine what kind of power of social distinction and value of cultural capital, to use the terminology of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, was attached to the brand in question and, naturally, to the consumption of the product. The consumption became trendy and it could be used to communicate "urban cultivation" that went very well with "cynical consumption". Here the aforementioned ideas of Walter Benjamin spring to life. The role of art as a mediator of the "social lust" of consumption has come true. But unlike he believed

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<sup>188</sup> Twitchell (page 220) notes astutely that the relationship of art and the market has always existed. Only florins have been replaced with dollars and the Medici with Mobil – the mining counsellor has replaced the pope. Regarding patronage in the visual arts, I think this is exactly the case. Heiskala has made similar notions in the article referred to above.

the consumers have not forgotten the commodity form of “humane products”. Instead they have distanced themselves from mass products, which are of low value in social distinction. “Cynical consumer” acknowledges his or her consumption and enjoys it because he consumes willfully, stylishly and as a master of the codes of consumption.

The effect of the vodka commercials surpassed all expectations and the Swedes got their product on the American market. In later commercials the easily recognizable form of the product packaging has been set into different “designed” environments. What started as a daring campaign thus repeats the archetypal form in which the product is dissolved after there no longer is a pressing need to highlight it. The new role of the product is not an independent, mortised element, but something that has sought its way into an image or imagery presenting a consumer or a lifestyle ideal. Of course this has been done before, but the difference to the standard practice is the “immersion” of the product packaging as a part of the whole. The image draws the product with it instead of just functioning as a context for it.

#### 4.6 The Catastrophe of Everyday and the Complete Immersion

It takes a lot for advertising to discard an approach it has once invented. Mortise remains a part of visual advertising. But it can be said that “immersion” added a new way to vary the mortising of a product packaging as an element of the advertising catalog. And new ways will come up.

Just when packaging had been used to guide the consumers to buy small portions, the oil crisis suddenly promoted economy sizes. “Buy more at once, it’s cheaper.” As the consumer became aware first of prices and soon of him- or herself, the power of the previously mentioned strategies was no longer enough. The first solution offered was the symbolism of wealth, nostalgia and the style of the modern age. In his novel *White Noise*, Don DeLillo portrays the next strategy to market the product packaging. It has made the conscious consumer, bored of style, to return to the market in order to avoid deliberation and conspicuous consumption.

We ran into Murray Jay Siskind at the supermarket. His basket held generic food and drink, nonbrand items in plain white packages with simple labelling. There was a white can labelled CANNED PEACHES. There was a white package of bacon without a plastic window for viewing a representative slice. A jar of roasted nuts had a white wrapper bearing the words IRREGULAR PEANUTS. Murray kept nodding to Babette as I introduced them. “This is the new austerity,” he said. “Flavourless packaging. It appeals to me. I feel I’m not only saving money but contributing to some kind of spiritual consensus. It’s like World War III. Everything is white. They’ll take our bright colors away and use them in the war effort. -- Most of all I like the packages themselves. You were right, Jack. This is the last avant-garde. Bold new forms. The power to shock.”<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> DeLillo, 2002, 18-19.

It is about the type of retail packaging also available in Finland in which the name of the manufacturer has been replaced with the name and the logo of the retail dealer. Pirkka coffee and Spar filters. The sale aesthetics that in the 1970s shone as an orange sea of bargain prices has in the 1980s been refined as the realm of product families that shun conspicuous consumption. DeLillo paints an accurate picture of the mental alertness that helps consumers to adopt this “neo-modest” visuality. The brand will not vanish, as always the packaging is a message, and the whole functions as an advertisement that “refreshes” viewer bored of advertising! Advertising appeals with counterforce, just like the type of advertising that brought up ecological issues. Interesting connections and suggestions are created: save the nature by driving a car, resist consumption by consuming. The drinking of (light) liquor could just as well be promoted as a way to avoid intoxication!

I have already mentioned that advertising no longer defines and comments on culture from outside, but has instead become a vital part of it. The role of advertisers is to guide the interests of the public towards themes that will not allow the “advertising is fun” attitude to transform into reserved boredom. Robert Goldman has noticed that the critical attitude of adults has been countered by including everyday conflicts into advertisements.<sup>190</sup> Examples in the Finnish television commercials include the pillow fight that promoted bed linen, “jos et sä soita” [if you don’t call] of the telephone services and the Domino biscuit a career woman eats to relax before confronting the everyday catastrophe waiting for her at home. Instead of “this product will let you avoid a catastrophe” the advertisement speak now tells us that “this product works even under chaotic circumstances”.

This allows us to analyze the tempo of advertising. The assumption that satellites, commercial television channels, everything that culminates in the globally known combination MTV (Music Television) and later on in the name INTERNET, would force the media relations to be pulled into a maelstrom is not entirely correct. Remote controller, if anything, has turned out to be the biggest danger to advertisers for it is in the hands of the consumer and not the advertiser or the program provider. Otherwise advertising behave like a cat and always falls on its feet; magazines are bought and read. Advertisements showing everyday conflicts are as clear and calm as before. The catalogues are renewed, the everyday is highlighted for a change and the tri-fold relation I compared to DNA is doing fine. And magazines repeat the imagery of those narratives we may have tried to avoid by actively using the remote.

The new tempo can be seen in advertising targeted at the young. As a target group the young no longer seem to be interested in advertising; they don’t care. According to Twitchell<sup>191</sup> the Beavis & Butthead generation’s assumed immunity to advertising is just an illusion. The members of Generation X appear indifferent to advertising because they are fluent consumers of it. It might make the marketers feel it’s impossible to deliver them a sales talk, but it is

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<sup>190</sup> Goldman, 1992, 226–227.

<sup>191</sup> Twitchell, 1996, 238–242.

partly because this generation has fully absorbed the ethos of the advertising culture. For them the advertising has moved away from the media and become a natural part of the physical surroundings. The advertisement is defined as a product and a part of surroundings, which is evaluated just like any other cultural product or an element of surroundings. Advertising isn't fun or boring, but if it is successful, it can be "cool" like a good video is "cool" or a hat is "cool". Especially for them the spinning of the old familiar cap of the Coca-Cola bottle just goes on and on. The trick with a brand is that the logo makes the spinning recognizable even for those who had the first dram of the beverage at the Helsinki Olympics in 1952. From the point of view of art, the situation could be defined as the continuous re-definition of the popular that won't remain in its own sphere but permeates the whole culture. And this is not just "child's play". Goldman's "cynically sophisticated consumer" operates exactly the same way.

#### 4.7 Teemu The Duck - a Finished Product

There is obviously no point in denying the effects of the MTV: the tempo goes up, the editing gets more rapid, the camera angles start to wander wildly, and the difference between advertisements and editorial content is blurred. The most interesting phenomenon regarding the relationship of reality and media reality might be the transformation of everyday life into a stage. Throughout its reign the visual advertising has conjured up stages that should compare to the everyday reality. Now the everyday reality is starting to construct itself as a set of stages. Finns should be asked: what is pesäpallo (Finnish baseball) Is it the "folk sport" Tahko Pihkala invented that advances military skills or is it "Superperesis", as the series is called? And what does it have to do with the satellite television?

Sports are an excellent example of the possible fate of an everyday phenomenon in the contemporary setting. The pervasiveness of brands was first spotted in sports. Even the previously all-white tennis outfit had to be fitted with a logo. Compared to the sports scene of the 1990s, the invasion of brands seems rather modest. One does not even have to focus on satellite channels although they are laden with unbelievable anecdotes. In the North American hockey league the referee is to award a player with a penalty for using equipment showing any brands of an unlicensed company. The games are paused for commercials and the Olympic events take place at ungodly hours just because they happen to be "prime time" for the largest concentration of audience. At the same time the homely pesäpallo and ice hockey have turned "super".

My point is not to bemoan about sport outfits or the aesthetics of the sports temples. In my opinion the athlete is, to some extent, taking the place of a product. In advertising the product packaging can be substituted with an athlete. This is not the old testimony of the advertising, of which the history of advertising is full. The new way to use an athlete like a product packaging is to



present him or her as a separate mortised element. As a result the image of the athlete in question is related to the imagery of advertising, not to sports. Sports are related to the entire sales narrative as entertainment, that is, as a product. In Helsingin Sanomat our own Teemu Selänne commented his "sale" from one team to another by saying: "Anaheim took no risk in buying me, because I am completed product."<sup>192</sup> There is no doubt his statement is true. Helsingin Sanomat understands the product relation very well. In the same interview it is told how Disney Productions discovered that a movie with a fictitious ice hockey team called the "Mighty Ducks", the symbol of which is naturally a duck, did well at the sports entertainment market and therefore decided to create a real team for the North American hockey league.<sup>193</sup>

Basically Teemu the product could be grouped with any other products making it a case of testimony or at least referral by presence. If the relation is not compatible with the image of that particular product, he can be substituted with a more suitable athlete. There are areas in which the products Kankkunen, Häkkinen and Salo move more nimbly than Teemu. Or think of swimming as a major sport of Finland. It has been actively promoted and it has created its own heroes. In connection with sports, the return of the trademark or the re-strengthening of its position emerges as a topic for discussion. The logic of sports has acquired features from MTV and television's news magazine programs. It is a series of different camera angles, replays and slow motion, and is considered to be first and foremost entertainment. Sports intensify the development through which the product form makes the real seem imaginary for the consumer. And all the while it takes care of the visibility of trademarks and products. There might be more fun for the whole family than ever before.<sup>194</sup>

We find the transformation of a product into an athlete perfectly natural, but it works both ways. Perhaps it really is versatility. One can choose between Cindy's workout video and Jack Nicklaus' computer golf, for example. Returning to Michael Schudson, I cannot help but wonder if Teemu forms the part of consumption imagery that makes me accept the product and consider the image normal. At least his face connects to products as smoothly as Catherine Deneuve - although she never smiles.

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<sup>192</sup> Helsingin Sanomat, 18.2.1996, D1-D2.

<sup>193</sup> There are already three movies about the Mighty Ducks. The most recent was released this year.

<sup>194</sup> "Body aesthetics" alone is a topic worth of an article of its own.

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**POST-TOPOGRAPHICAL LANDSCAPES**

by

Kimmo Lehtonen, 1999

Kukkonen Jukka, Vuorenmaa Tuomo-Juhani (toim.) Varjosta. Tutkielmia  
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Translated by Markku Nivalainen

(Ref.)

## 5 POST-TOPOGRAPHICAL LANDSCAPES



IMAGE 37

Jorma Puranen, from series *Curious Naturae Spectator*, 1997. The mythical and the mythological are represented through the thematic of looking and experiencing. (See note 208)

The North is wild again. While the flurry-heads careening through the snow with their hickory skis and the heroic woodsmen wistfully telling stories about the serenity around the camp-fire were only recently the laughing stock at ski bars and lakeside huts, the situation is now, less than a decade later, completely different. Mountain bikes, hiking boots and trekking clothes can be spotted on

Finnish streets, camping is nice for a change, a sleeping bag is considered suitable for sleeping, and on Easter holiday the after ski disco is only entered after a lengthy ski trek and no one minds the slight perspiration.

“Extreme” and “ultra-extreme” sports and athletes have become part of the media imagery. There are two ways to approach the ski heaven. Considering the zonal landscape in connection with the idea of consumption, turns the consumption of a landscape, the consumption by experience, into a route for the individual to something authentic and good. Symbolism develops when the everyday essence is laden with tools that articulate the positive meaning of this repossessed and thus tamed nature for “me”. The route goes all the way to the authentic as “the viewers” on snowmobiles explore the wonders of the tamed landscape. Considering the individuals relationship with the landscape as experiential, as being encountered through experience, the landscape is again seen to be “everyman’s” home and as such an experiential articulation of purity and authenticity. It is a controlled or divided paradise within which to construct a carefully predefined, even cathartic, relationship – experience.



IMAGE 38

Kari Soinio, *Koli II*, from series *Kansallismaisema* (National Landscape), 1997(original in colour). Interpreting the landscape in photographic art must also focus on the concept of “the national”.

## 5.1 The Living Boundary

The marching in of experientiality has been followed quite flexibly in the photographic productions of the 90s. Landscape pictures have not forgotten the conventions of the genre but the approaches and the conceptual contexts are historically determined. That is why the main thesis of this article is the change in the concept of landscape in photographic art. In the introductory article of the book *Paikkoja – Places* Janne Seppänen identifies three categories of landscapes photography. The first category is “romantic” and it emphasizes the worshipping of the beauty of the landscape and its sublime nature. Another category is the social landscape, the origins of which are similar to those of, among other things, street photography. And finally there is topographical photography that strives to take a distance from the subject and thus remain neutral.

The landscape topography focused on showing and commenting upon critical features of the landscape that reveal the problematic borderline between nature and culture.<sup>195</sup>



IMAGE 39

Pekka Turunen, *Kemie*, 1991, from Turunen, 1995. The lines between landscape, environment and scenery are no longer clear-cut. In landscapes the photographic art turns its topic into a dialectics between different dimensions. (See page 127, Sandqvist and Bergson.)

In human geography the concept of place has a personal dimension. Place is defined through emotions and meanings, thus making the physical location a secondary attribute when thinking about the meaning and importance of a certain place. Primary attributes would therefore be the individual's personal relationship with the environment and the feeling of belonging.<sup>196</sup> We are dealing with "a mental landscape" – the conception of landscape is constructed both by personal and culturally produced representations of space. I started with the return of "outdoor Finland" because I believe that notion to be enough in itself to work as the basis for an argument for human geography, at least from the point of view of consumption. Equally, studying the Finnish photographic art and the way it represents landscape, we encounter a similar replacement of neutral topography with a more intimate, culturally conscious perspective that comments upon the borderline between nature and culture.

In my opinion this decade has seen landscape photography move into what could be called "the age of experience". The romantic landscape is a vital field, the works of which can be found in landscape books, mainstream nature

<sup>195</sup> Nuutinen 1993. Illustrations of the book are from an eponymous exhibition by Petri Nuutinen that is based on the grid of a phone book map. It is a fascinating indication of how the approach can be used to narrate and to surprise the viewer. Nuutinen's photos create such a powerful presentation that the viewer has to remind himself of the origins of impressions, tastes and value-based judgments are originated in his own head. It could probably be said that the landscape speaks to its viewer.

<sup>196</sup> Tani 1997, 211–216.

photography and advertising. Traditional social landscape is a lot harder to come by. On one hand it has become transparent by being less “programmatically”. On the other hand it has emerged in works that are not primarily landscapes. Are Veli Granö’s *Onnela* or his photographs of collectors, landscapes? What do Pekka Turunen and Esko Männikkö portray?<sup>197</sup> Together the latter have shot landscapes in Murmansk and Nickel in a critical and documentary fashion. These works could, in all their frankness, be considered as topographical (neutral) or, because of their commentary nature, social landscapes. But Turunen’s and Männikkö’s work in their “local areas”, North Karelia and Korpi-Kainuu, are above all portrayals of life and people. The concept of landscape becomes problematic when approached with the concepts of human geography. In the works of both photographers, space is tangibly present as environment and milieu.



IMAGE 40

Japo Knuutila, series *Elämännälkä* (Thirst for life), 1996. Hamppujärvi, Perniö. (Sun’s UV rays, dampness, dust, mask, plywood in silver gelatin print). The multi-dimensional nature of landscape and the centrality of personal experience, both originating in the observations made by “the human geography” can be found in, for example, the works of Pekka Turunen and Japo Knuutila.

How to draw the borders of landscape photography today? Japo Knuutila has a topographical touch in his landscapes.<sup>198</sup> At the borderline of nature and culture Knuutila finds unexpected traces that reveal how man exposes himself by interfering with nature and how nature is always present in culture. The standpoint is that of a distant observer, making it topographically neutral. Again the concept of space is emphasized. The topographical is still there, but representing the observations of landscapes has gained ground. At the same time the topographical has evolved, or expanded, to be a part of a more comprehensive approach. Its evolution has forced the purely topographical approach to disintegrate and therefore the concept no longer defines landscapes with earlier accuracy.

<sup>197</sup> Männikkö 1995. Granö 1997.

<sup>198</sup> Knuutila 1996 and 1998

## 5.2 The Harju Park is a Landscape

Landscape has been an essential building block of the Finnish identity. The dwelling or the surrounding landscape has not been thought of simply as a habitat or as the circumstances. Instead it has been the sanctum of contemplation and celebration but also of fears. A landscape within a landscape, the primitive cave paintings and Karelianism as the cradle of Finnish nationalism show that for us, Finns, the landscape has a mythical meaning. It is important to see and remember that the experience of history and sensing the foundation of identity is still a part of "the landscape". In this sense the 18<sup>th</sup> century Romantic idea of landscape as something powerful and worth remembering is still with us.<sup>199</sup>

Harju park, the esker, at the center of Jyväskylä, is a treasure-like landscape for the people. It is essential for the city to retain it as a carefully cherished oasis with its sturdy pines that are considered to be wild. Harju is eternal. It is frequented by joggers and dog walkers. It is a site for car racing and drinking. Harju is the primal state of a provincial city called Jyväskylä. It is a reminder of the wild, harsh, beloved nature that gave birth to the Finnish everyman. As an area it is not simply seized but also utilized. Everyday experience, peace, space and freedom as well as carnivalism and a sense of the sacred take place on the same ground.<sup>200</sup>

Building an identity and defining a place, "the here and there" dualism, being present through a picture and feeling left out by a picture or defining "the other" can all be connected to the Finnish landscape photography ever since its Romantic tradition. In his article Georg Grotenfelt locates the sources of the Finnish identity in glorifying the authentic and the simple. The special characteristics of the landscape were used to emphasize the differences to "others", especially Sweden. Photographing the landscape has its roots in the photographs by explorers, such as I.K. Inha, and on the pages of illustrated works.<sup>201</sup> Judged by its sheer volume, the dissertation of Taneli Eskola together with the accompanying exhibition must be the most important occurrence to open up the diverse nature of the national landscape.<sup>202</sup> The exhibition shows Eskola's work from a period of about ten years. He reflects his relationship with Aulanko and the large amount of pictures produced of Aulanko. As a photographer Eskola chooses personal subjects. As a researcher he dissects his work, his photographs and comments on the historical imagery. He studies "the offi-

<sup>199</sup> Sironen 1996, 115-124. The romantic idea of landscape has produced an entire research tradition in philosophy and art history. Esa Sironen formulates it an incredibly clear manner: "Nature as something beautiful is a landscape." Sironen places the experience of the authentic on the city limit. As someone from Jyväskylä he finds such in Laajavuori from where one horizon opens up as a city and another as "endless" forest. As a border Laajavuori is a better example than Harju. Considering the experience of space, Harju with its pine forests is a natural "oasis" in the middle of the city.

<sup>200</sup> To clarify: walking the dog (everyday), sitting on a bench (peace), the park (space), the bottle of liquor on a Friday night (freedom), the observation tower (sense of the sacred), May Day or the famous rally racing (carnivalism).

<sup>201</sup> Grotenfelt 1988.

<sup>202</sup> Eskola 1997.

cial Sibelian landscape” of Finland, the travel marketing landscape and perspective of the visitor/user of Aulanko, a perspective formed by his own childhood experiences and shared with his audience for several decades already.



IMAGE 41

Taneli Eskola 1998. The work of Eskola raises several questions about the dichotomies of the landscape. What is “a nature park”? Is it a common untamed and untouched “nature of the folk”? Or is it a seized “manor courtyard” that culturally creates differences? Both are connected by nostalgia, “the primal state”, that can be seen in the work of Eskola.

In his work Eskola travels from the wild, the free and “the official” landscape into the experience of space that connects him to “the here and there” dualism. Despite the theoretical knowledge and the observations of Eskola the researcher, the work of Taneli Eskola is at the same time a travel from the national landscape into his experiential landscape. The national landscape is in all its national holiness “elsewhere”. Eskola discusses, among other things, the defining meaning of perspective for the pastoral seen through aerial views and from the observation towers.

“There” can also be distant both physically and culturally, yet reachable by the photographer. From the Helsinki of Jorma Puranen the North is far away and as the land of the Skolt Sámi it is culturally other. Puranen started his work



on the subject in the 1970s. Back then the approach was warm and documentary. The cultural was defined as a topic after the documentary phase. *Maarf Leu'dd* (1986), *Alfa & Omega* (1989) and *Kulttuurinen kotiinpaluu* (1996) have taken the photographer deeper and deeper into the culture of the Skolt Sámi. But Puranen has always been a self-aware photographer. The photographs are works and the series form a whole for which culture, its location and landscape offer a perspective. In the latest set, Puranen introduces the position of the viewer.<sup>203</sup> In the photographs the landscape is unattainably beautiful and unattainably far away. At the same time kind of archeological observations or cultural anthropological features like a caravan park, a power line or a dam, emerge from the landscape. The sheets of cloth Puranen has set on the scenery stick out. They are inscribed with Latin words and proverbs Puranen uses to distantiate and comment on the landscape, the traditional experiential dimensions connected to it, that is the quiet, tragic presence of the man using or consuming the landscape. The silken shiny curtain has been dropped from between the viewer and the landscape, but the viewer isn't getting an inch closer.<sup>204</sup>

"There" can also be presented in an aestheticized documentary fashion. The black and white panoramas Pentti Sammallahti produced in the Republic of Karelia do just that.<sup>205</sup> For the Finnish viewer, the portrayed landscape and the milieu are quite easy to place beyond the Eastern border. Sammallahti's village roads depict the wintry everyday life, the astonishing isolation and the humorousness that carries through the harsh conditions. The long, narrow horizontal image appears to tell it all, although what it actually shows are crystallized moments in carefully composed settings. But who remains isolated? The village road and the architecture are painfully easy to recognize easily causing "Karelia nostalgia" despite the evident hardship and difficulties. At the same time the signs of everyday life seem foreign. It is like the decrepit tractor would try to communicate with the viewer in Russian, the ever-present village dogs acting as translators! Whereas the border Jorma Puranen drafts, which positions the viewer inside the territory causing anxiety, the camera of Sammallahti crosses the territorial borders presenting the audience with a different kind of "otherness". It is this "aestheticizing shamelessness" that differentiates these images from the earlier tradition of Finnish landscape photography, and also from the commentary labeled topography that settled for distantiated presentations.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Puranen 1986.

<sup>204</sup> The work of Puranen is connected to the concept of territory. Georg Grotenfelt (1988) highlights it in the previous article discussing the notions of Christian Nordberg-Schulz. Nordberg-Schulz sets as a goal the unity of man and nature, a sort of an ecological perspective. The goal is based on three different perspectives on the territory. The first one is the perspective of orientation connected to the feeling of security. The second is the perspective of identification as the possibility of understanding the concrete. The final one is the territory as the architecture of objects, which makes memory and its organization possible.

<sup>205</sup> Sammallahti 1996.

<sup>206</sup> I should probably mention that in this article my perspective is deliberately "short". Critical documentary has always been a part of our photographic tradition and I do not mean to simply forget Matti Saanio or Mikko Savolainen. At the same time I will stick to my notion of "aestheticizing shamelessness" as characteristic to contemporary photographic art.



IMAGE 42  
Jorma Puranen, from series *Curious Naturae Spectator*, 1997.

At the moment a certain dimension of the landscape in the photographic art is sublime. Awaking the viewer to contemplate the dimensions of the unconscious makes the pictures affluent. The conjunction of feeling, reason and instinct in the concept of landscape has always defined the Finnish and the whole Scandinavian idea of landscape. Here lives "the everyman" who genuinely feels like having the right to comprehensively enjoy the landscape. The landscape has been called "national property" for a long time. New themes have arisen as builders of identity and the landscape engages people once again. Environmental consciousness and the question of fixed national identities in the developing Europe are examples of these themes. The picture at hand is ambiguous. Politically the landscape has quickly returned from being a one-dimensional metaphor for production, "a warehouse of raw materials", into a multifaceted dimension offering experiences. The perspectives differ and emphasize their own basic values as to "the national property".

The American scholar Deborah Bright has used the term "togetherness" to define the concept of landscape. As such the landscape is a collection of communal imagery or of commitment to shared workings.<sup>207</sup> In contemporary land-

<sup>207</sup> Bright 1991. The landscape as a representation of human organization functions as a document of the era which the prevailing cultural "texts" can be implicitly collected into. The landscape communicates typical contemporary structures and feelings born through them.

scape photography, the most distinctive phenomenon in regards to Bright's conception and the idea of national property is the exhibition by Kari Soinio.<sup>208</sup> In his installation the enormous arched landscapes are elevated, which makes them appear immaterial and as if floating in the air. The structure has been intentionally left visible and the sharp steel bolts stick out of the pieces creating a frame that is either protective or threatening. The pictures are glossy, garishly glossy, and convexing or concaving ensures that one part of the picture always shines. The pictures depict our national landscapes, for example Aulanko, Koli or Olavinlinna. The installation is spatially organized so that the spectator sees the landscape from inside or outside of the circle of images. The national landscape can be examined as "a hung" whole and seen from the outside as a kind of harmonic concept. It can also be examined from the inside when the viewer is surrounded by the landscape, and enclosed the viewer is within a circle, although not unequivocally in the landscape. Every photograph is fuzzy throughout with colored surfaces and outlined figures. The landscapes remain identifiable despite their haziness. The picture is in front of the viewer, or around the viewer, but the landscape is already on the retina. The landscape - cultural - aesthetic and space. The landscapes of the photographers I have discussed this far are conjoined by aesthetic, cultural and spatial dimension. In this respect Finnish landscape photography could therefore be defined as an art contemplating the spatial in experiential and cultural sense, defined primarily by the aesthetic and the experiential instead of, for example, the political.



IMAGE 43  
Taneli Eskola 1998.

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<sup>208</sup> Soinio 1997.

### 5.3 The Mind is a Landscape

The landscapes of Tuija Lindström would fit several places of this exposition. Her imagery is powerfully and deliberately aesthetic. She discovers a landscape in a concrete urban space and in an imaginary and sublime dream-world of her own creation. Her “untouched” landscape is paradoxically found in a gravel pit. For the romantic these pictures evoke the old pop song “Kangastusta”. These are pictures of “another place” with rugged faces of mountains and beautifully detailed seas of sand. Yet they remain pictures of the gravel pit. Another series by Lindström portrays a quiet and beautiful maritime city. It is connected to the previous series through a feeling of the insignificance of time, a mythical presence of eternity. The city is also Helsinki, “the Daughter of the Baltic”.

Despite “the silence” of the pictures, Tuija Lindström is not quiet. On the contrary, by giving the space a mythical dimension she forces the viewer to encounter the landscape from the vantage point of something “inexplicable”. The Helsinki pictures can be interpreted to communicate the early political history of the city, which would make Helsinki more than just the capital of Finland. I think it is misleading to use the political aspect to explain the mythical in Lindström’s work. I suppose these pictures were repudiated partly because of this “misreading”. Lindström shows a quiet, dignified and beautiful maritime Helsinki that has a European history. How closely that resembles our own myth of our own country as a secluded cradle of civilization. For her latest series Lindström photographed European ports. Again the political offers itself as the starting point for analysis, but I dare say the aims behind the photographs are multifarious and more humane.<sup>209</sup>

In *After Ski* Kapa has photographed the summer at downhill skiing centers in an essentially commentary fashion. The panoramic black and white prints show the bare hillsides, mountains and fells after being torn open and broken down by construction. Kapa uses printing to define time in a way reminiscent of Lindström, not allowing it to anchor into the moment but letting it linger. The photographs are the history or ethnography of tomorrow. The backyard of the ski heaven lives on in the photographs, the power of which is, in the aesthetic sense, again grounded on their finished form. Through this strength the evident argument, “was this absolutely necessary”, gets motivated by the aesthetic both in landscapes and in prints.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> Lindström 1991, 1994 and 1997.

<sup>210</sup> Kapa 1996. See the conclusion p. 82.



IMAGE 44

Ritva Kovalainen, from series *Puiden kansa* (Tree People Project), 1997. Besides being the shared experience of the everyman, the sublime is also strictly personal, “a self-form of the unconscious”. The cultural and historical background of yearning mentioned in connection to Žižek form an affluent whole in the work *Puiden kansa*.

Another approach that speaks out through representing and commenting upon issues without having a single programmatic view can be found in the recent Finnish discussion regarding the changing surroundings. It is about communicating “the local standpoint”. Henrik Duncker and Yrjö Tuunanen assembled a collection called *Hay on the Highway*, in which the photographers, both born and bred in the countryside, depict their own home areas, their “backyards”. This four-color documentation expanded into a book shows homes, professions and representations of the encounter of dreams and the reality. It conjures up the contemporary countryside, the landscape containing living, being and even the coming of Europe.<sup>211</sup> I mean that whereas the work of Esko Männikkö, for example, depicts societal changes by focusing on the lack of change, Duncker and Tuunanen have brought out the active side of those same changes. The cabbage heads that have taken over the manor hall, the traditional birch that has become a prop and a computer found right there on the yard, among other chores, signal the feelings at the countryside produced by the inevitable transformation of farming from an inherited way of life into a mode of production.

In *Lapiorullaäes on maamiiehen tärkeä työkalu* Jaana Kautto uses old agricultural machinery to approach the same issue.<sup>212</sup> Alone, forgotten in barns, abandoned at the edges of yards and fields, machines like the rotary spade harrow mentioned in the title of the series reveal that the structural transformation has reached the home of Jaana Kautto. Where Duncker and Tuunanen create stage-like frozen scenes, Kautto is using a more classical photographic approach by carefully composing, searching for angels and using existing light. Writing about American landscape photography Tony Hiss writes that an important and strongly experienced memory the viewers have of the landscape is often connected to a sense of loss. The landscape has changed and returning to it means losing it.<sup>213</sup> He proposes that we can experience any place by way of what we have absorbed from our surroundings. Hiss describes perception as a supplementary-like “sixth sense” that condenses our observations so we can

<sup>211</sup> Duncker & Tuunanen 1993

<sup>212</sup> Kautto 1994.

<sup>213</sup> Hiss 1998.

focus on anything surrounding us and have a feeling of community as the perception becomes conscious. Hiss calls this relatively simplistic conception of the idea of communality, “simultaneous perception”.

Studying how different routes the discussed artists have taken to all end up commenting and articulating change, the ideas of situation, as kind of finding, and loss, as kind of giving up, come to the fore. Tom Sandqvist writes about “the other landscape”. He borrows Henri Bergson’s concept of “duration” (*la durée*) to describe a situation when, in regard to experience, the past and the present cannot be unambiguously separated.<sup>214</sup> Looking at the countryside portrayed by Duncker and Tuunanen and comparing it to “the time” conjured up by Lindström and Kapa or the moment of Kautto that shows the landscape after the change has passed by, the aforementioned concepts open up.<sup>215</sup> Geographer Petri Raivo discusses morphologies as chronological elements of perceiving the landscape. To put it simply, an interpretation of the past is always in a relation to the present. An interesting and fitting idea is that of “a mental landscape” which Raivo borrows from Parteous and Martin. Besides visual perceptions it consists of sounds, smells and feelings. The experience and the engram are extensive instead of being just simple images.<sup>216</sup>

This kind of spiritual dimension, the extensive “mental landscape” and its relationship with “cultural landscape”, which is connected to experiencing the past from the present, finds the same language with the concepts of situation and loss. Through pictures the experience of place becomes powerful and the power of narration inexplicable, and as such copiously enchanting. This feeling is not perspective, three-dimensional in the two dimensions of the photograph. It is spatial in the two dimensions of the photograph.

The ideological dimension of the landscape has not just disappeared. Photographs represent and speak out from a standpoint. “The aestheticizing shamelessness” I mentioned earlier is connected to this way of representation. In a cultural sense the comments that emerge from the photographs are not political. Instead the ideological of the commentary is served as personal and shared. The viewer is presented with a space that puts the idea of situation into effect and is “like a mental landscape”. In addition the approach often carries a mythical tone. I will return to the mythical later.

## 5.4 Place and Identity

Environmental consciousness and identity can be highlighted alongside identity and Europeanism. The return of outdoor activities, through their technologization, also brings the landscape back. In the autumn the papers

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<sup>214</sup> Sandqvist 1986.

<sup>215</sup> “La Durée” is a much discussed concept. Walter Benjamin’s (1986) *Silmä väkijoukossa* constitutes some kind of a starting point. The first chapter references, for example, Marcel Proust.

<sup>216</sup> The concept of cultural landscape is discussed, for example, by Raivo 1997, 197–200.

printed pictures of forest and village roads, suddenly lined with parked cars. Finland collects mushrooms. Walking the dog on one autumn morning I awoke to a strange whizzing accompanied with a peculiar crunching. A rhythmically moving group of women appeared from the fog only to disappear back into it soon after: Nordic walkers in the middle of the city. I think this revival of the everyman's right is a sign of the complex redefinition of our roots that is taking place in the structurally reforming Finland. Obviously I am not saying that the political dimension of photography has withered away, but in landscape photography it is not the dominating approach. Similarly the urbane does not seem to be on focus outside a few exceptions. But it seems that people are not willing to accept just the winter vacation, an observation deck or a lakeside cottage at the center of the landscape experience. On the contrary, this concretizes the need to discern the lost identity once considered to be a certainty, the need connected to a yearning and an awareness of an identity.

Mikko Junninen turned his diploma work on photography into a book that portrays the landscape and life threatened by the Vuotos reservoir.<sup>217</sup> Junninen announces his position clearly: he opposes the reservoir plans. He shares his opposition through the hesitancy and the uncertainty regarding the future of the locals. The photographs show houses, yards and the landscape marked with the future water-level if the reservoir gets built. In addition to this imagery Junninen introduces people and families photographed in their yards. Photos are accompanied with texts in which people tell their feelings regarding the threat posed by the reservoir.

Mervi Autti has a totally different approach.<sup>218</sup> The situation is similar, but the way of telling different. Whereas Junninen aims for as direct presentation as possible and wants to show the humane catastrophe inherent to the possible development, Autti emphasizes the humane aspect. The pictures are allusive. Compared to the work of Junninen, they could even be considered as lyrical. It would be wrong to interpret Autti's intentions as neutral. In her series the world just opens up through more subtle references than in the work of Junninen. I would not go as far as to call Junninen one-sided, but he certainly is more straightforward than Autti.

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<sup>217</sup> Junninen 1995.

<sup>218</sup> Autti 1997.



IMAGE 45

Mikko Junninen, in his work *Vesiraja 4,8m* (Waterlevel 4.8m), *Valokuvia Vuotoksesta* (Photos from Vuotos), 1995. Large value conflicts always find their way into visual arts. All major Finnish reservoir plans have been tackled by photographers. Vuotos has been commented upon by Mikko Junninen and Mervi Autti, each from a distinct perspective.

An interesting transference of perspective and narration has taken place in the two parts of Petri Nuutinen's *Paikkoja - Places*. The first part, which I have mentioned in connection to Janne Seppänen's introduction, followed a map grid. Within one meter from a position defined on a map, four pictures: north, south, east and west. For the first series Nuutinen placed the camera on adult eye level, the normal perspective. From each series of four, Nuutinen picked one image and printed a separate copy of it, much larger than the others. Pirkanmaa. *Paikkoja - Places II* documented Tampere.<sup>219</sup> Again the starting point was a phone book map sheet. Even the four cardinal directions remain. This time Nuutinen places the camera on a child's eye level, shoots in color and displays the photographs as picture walls, in which the cartographic dimension is no longer highlighted. And everything is different. The exhibition presents us with nuanced and even contradictory Tampere renewed by the perspective. Juxtaposed with the second perspective, "the normal" used in the first part gets questioned. The difference of the photographed regions accentuates the change in progress; the countryside is reduced into a single city. But questioning the normal interestingly turns it into "ordinary". From the standpoint of a child that ordinary one is unreachable and for us the seemingly new perspective is "normal" for the child. And as such it is not just the point-of-view of the child, but an environment.

Defining place and identity through the everyday is also important in the Jorma Luhta exhibition.<sup>220</sup> Luhta, known for his nature photography, touches upon the aesthetical change taking place in the sparsely populated areas. A variety of modern day machinery, furniture and items has appeared on yards and now aesthetically control the environment. In the work of Luhta those objects transform into shapes, colors and compositions that through their sheer strength beat the old conception of a yard that includes lawns, berry bushes and swings. In these pictures the yard has started to resemble a traffic jam in its rest-

<sup>219</sup> Nuutinen 1996.

<sup>220</sup> Luhta, Jorma 1993-96.



lessness. A plastic bucket screams at the playground together with the tricycle accompanied by the water hose a bit farther. Of the objects Luhta has discovered, surprisingly many are blue – hence the name *The Blue Series*.

Renowned nature photographer and storyteller Juha Taskinen worked for a few years at Lake Ladoga and the resulting book was published this year.<sup>221</sup> The work is a large document of the lake, its animals, especially the Ladoga seal, and life near the enormous lake, sometimes even considered a sea. This extensive representation of Lake Ladoga connects to the earlier themes in two ways. First of all it is an attractive document of natural beauty. In addition it is inevitably a testimony of human interference with the nature and its equilibrium. The book is a successful balancing act between “narrative biology”, the narration of beauty by landscape and natural photography and the ecological perspective. Taskinen and Luhta are connected through a kind of calm and declaratory narration, which leaves the perspective for the viewer to ponder upon. “The Karelia aspect” gives the book a distinct flavor. Even if one perceives the region apolitically, our historical landscape imagery, “the national landscape”, ensures that the book is also approached as depicting a Finnish landscape.

In a special issue on landscape of the journal *Katalog*, Aleš Erjavec discusses the concepts of nation and landscape in relation to the sublime, the unconscious.<sup>222</sup> The landscape, in Erjavec’s case the mountains, hides its ideological dimension almost completely into the unconscious, the sublime. The landscape is simultaneously seemingly realistic and fictitious. The unconscious dimension of the landscape strives to be represented as the hive of authenticity and identity. For Finns this kind of condensation is very well known in connection to such features of the landscape as “the forest”, “the field”, “the lake”, “the fell” and “the wild”. In my opinion the contemporary Finnish landscape photography allows this unconscious to speak more freely than ten years ago. I am bringing this issue out in a way between two perspectives. The unconscious is not only a factor ineffaceably connected to an image and experience. I would say it is also a dimension alluded to in the work of every contemporary photographer I have mentioned.

The unconscious is also articulated more openly. Juha Suonpää has sought after a new, multi-level approach to nature photography. He has photographed children’s books in which the imaginary everyday life of animals functions as a central element of the plot. He is also a wildlife photographer and in his photographs of bears and the book compiled of them the relationship between the photographer and the king of the woods, the bruin yearns to transform from observation to coexistence, a dialogical being in the landscape.<sup>223</sup> The book attacks myths unhesitatingly. The book bears a lot of traces of the bear. Not only is the beast conjured up doing its chores, but also the myth – the bruin. It is that very dimension Suonpää uses to communicate with the viewer through the mythical. When I think about what a bear is, two very different creatures come

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<sup>221</sup> Taskinen 1998.

<sup>222</sup> Erjavec 1997, 39–4.

<sup>223</sup> Suonpää 1994.

to mind: the aforementioned bruin, the king of the woods and the teddy bear, the one that eats honey. Suonpää's book questions both, creates its own narrative and yet there in the forest are both, the bruin and the teddy bear. At the same time Suonpää challenges the traditional nature photography to adopt a new mode of expression. He examines himself as a nature photographer and his photographs as examples of a genre.



IMAGE 46

Juha Suonpää, from a series *Petokuvan raadollisuus (Rotten Predatory)* 1996-2002 (Original in colour). Nature, traces and myths. The cultural dimension of nature is in all its multiplicity the central theme in the nature photography of Juha Suonpää.

## 5.5 The Mythical Space

Ample waters have not been photographed just at Lake Ladoga. Rita Jokiranta targets the sea as a landscape of the Finnish coast and archipelago.<sup>224</sup> Jokiranta portrays the sea bare. For her the islands are not interspersed by the sea, but "the sea is interspersed by islands", which is actually the right way round. The sea is impressive, blue, gray or multicolored depending on the light and the season. Besides being the landscape the sea is the source of bread and forms the route and the environment. In this sense Jokiranta's imagery is linked to the thematic of space discussed earlier. The sea is shown as a whole. It is life and as the work makes it is easy to believe, it is also death, fate and grave. Having been born to a lakeside community, the work of Jokiranta makes me wonder

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<sup>224</sup> Jokiranta 1996.

how someone born by the sea experiences Finland and how different it must make the relationship with landscape. The infinitude makes the sea a mythical dimension, which her book quite clearly shows. This book has to be compared to the book by Ritva Kovalainen and Sanni Seppo that deals with the forest.<sup>225</sup> It is extremely affluent to have two books published in Finland within such a short period of time that study two landscapes as a mythical home or a primal state. Two Finlands emerge at the same time, different like night and day and through the mythical and unconscious dimension so much alike. Coziness gets fate-like aspects in the experience of hopes and fears, respect and love. One feels like rephrasing "this is where I am from" into "in here, I am from". Here in the land of snow, which the photographic artist Tuovi Hippeläinen pictures in a beautiful and interesting way in her latest works.<sup>226</sup> She paints on snow. The pictures are in the landscape as concrete details. They are also concrete as acts, as paintings. In her works the color is not trapped on snow but continues together with it, forming further and thus getting its abstract shapes. This is what Hippeläinen brings out through the photographic medium, as moments in the landscape.

In the *Rumpu ja kamera* (The Drum and the Camera) exhibition Arno Rafael Minkkinen presented his view on the experience of landscape.<sup>227</sup> In his usual way, Minkkinen has placed his own body as part of the landscape. This time those limbs pave the way for the viewer to the "massive" landscape that has received so much attention in the history of photography. Therefore Minkkinen moved in the landscape starting from a standpoint not unlike that of Jorma Puranen and his sheets.<sup>228</sup>

Slavoj Sizek has pointed out that experiencing the landscape or the national is always based on hiding.<sup>229</sup> For him national identity as such does not exist. Instead it is a reason in itself that is always justified as a series of effects. This is why it is always presents itself or is represented in somehow distorted form that is impossible to actually locate. I think this idea of Sizek opens up the nature of the discussion and the atmosphere within which the contemporary landscape photographs are looked at and, naturally, taken. If I had to choose one word to describe the idea of landscape in contemporary Finnish photography, I would pick yearning.

Words and deeds have gained new expressions. In everyday form people have discovered that they still yearn for a living relationship with nature, but through contemporary, prevailing structure of needs. The relationship with nature could be replaced by relationship with environment. That would render the origins and the foundations of the milieu, its full scope and all its nuances perceivable – in a way they would return.

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<sup>225</sup> Kovalainen & Seppo 1997.

<sup>226</sup> Hippeläinen 1998.

<sup>227</sup> The exhibition was on show at Tarvaspää, The Gallen-Kallela Museum in 1997. *Rumpu ja kamera* 1997.

<sup>228</sup> Minkkinen 1998. The works from the solo exhibitions of Minkkinen were shot in Arizona and Utah in 1995 and 1997.

<sup>229</sup> Sizek 1994.

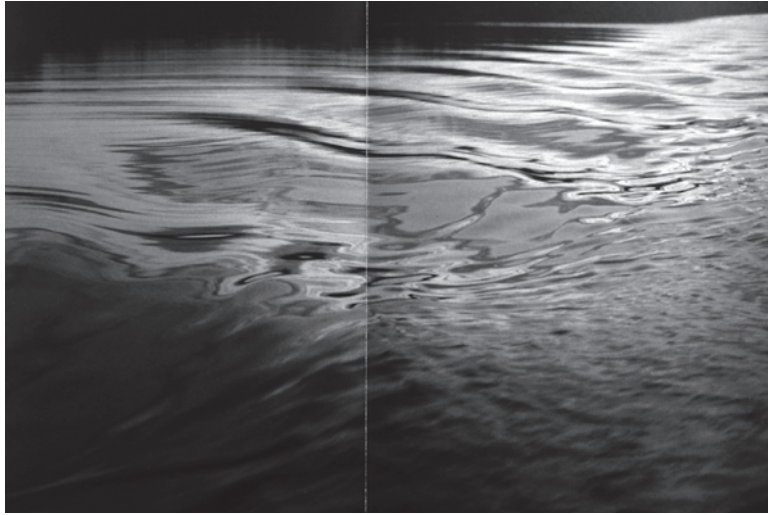


IMAGE 47

Rita Jokiranta, from the series *Seascape Stories*, 1996. (Original in Colour). In this context the sea does not represent just livelihood (fishing, seafaring) or the forces of nature (sunset, storm) like in the classical conception. Instead its value as a bearer of all the aspects of landscape has been highlighted.

Viewing the landscape from a mythical dimension has brought the identities, rights and duties of the indigenous peoples back to the discussions. Through Sámi literature, and recently popular culture, the aforementioned aesthetic, spatial and ideological perspectives have enriched and, from their own standpoint problematized, our conception of the North. The theme has brought us back perspectives the foundations of which the mainstream culture had almost completely forgotten. Comparably perspectives only recently accused of nostalgia have returned and again speak to the audience.<sup>230</sup> The exhibition *Kadja-Nilla* by Marja Helander presents her northern roots in a rather allusive manner.<sup>231</sup> In his photographs time is realized as space. The collages combine landscapes with the ornaments of jewelry and mundane tools that already are narratives. Together they form timelessness or the eternal, which is ever-present. It is also contained within the four basic elements earth, air, fire and water, the presence of which in the pictures emphasizes the role of the mythical as the joiner of space and experience out of which identity wells.

Approaching the myth through the imaginary the concept of landscape can be extended to a level where the mythical itself becomes a starting point and creates its own landscape. Okko Oinonen lands Kullervo Suomenlinna and

<sup>230</sup> Helsingin Sanomat 1998. It is booming. Timber rafting is the topic of a successful movie, although it is made from a North-Karelian point of view. A movie about the gold rush is in the making and as I am writing this, in November 1998, the latest *Kuukausilite* has a gorgeous photo series from the Vaskojoki River. The "Wild North" campaign of *Metsäliitto* does its part in articulating the zeitgeist.

<sup>231</sup> Helander 1997.

takes him further right in the middle of Helsinki.<sup>232</sup> In the photo manipulations Kullervo, glowing in the dramatic spirit of the Kalevala, ventures at the Three Smiths Statue, on a pedestrian crossing, on the street and in the harbor. "In search of lost place" would be just as fitting a title for the work, because Okkonen has managed to get "the national mythology on its knees" in the middle of urban surroundings. The work is skillful in that despite getting lost, Kullervo retains his dignity and his mythical charisma. Ilkka Halso uses a totally different method to return the past into the present. His excavations engage in a controversy regarding our need to measure and survey the landscape as well as history. Halso's exhibition creates the essence of reconstruction into the landscape, a landscape where what is believed to be true and what is known to be imaginary are set to interact.<sup>233</sup> The PreKalevala, which was realized by quite a large number of people over many years, also approaches the landscape from the mythical or even beyond it. In the work of art based on the concept by Vertti Teräsvuori "the archeology of the possible" is conjured up from the mythical. The central question is how the mythological was experienced before the Kalevala, which leads into figurative speculation that produces an idea of what our mythology may have been based on.<sup>234</sup>

In his 1989 book *Nordiska landskap* Jan-Erik Lundström divided the change in landscape photography as transference from the portrayal of the innocent and the immediate towards the revolutionary and the reflective.<sup>235</sup> This is the direction taken in the 90s. I think another notion by Lundström, replacing time with space as the central metaphor for meaning, still holds, but the effects of the change of the metaphor are actually starting to show. This is why I have tried to present the subject matter in a way that would create at least some kind of a contemplative basis on why the landscape of the photographic art will not fit under any clear-cut concept.

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<sup>232</sup> Oinonen 1995.

<sup>233</sup> Halso 1994.

<sup>234</sup> A totally different approach to the connection of space and the mythological is offered by Marjut Huuskonen (1995, 177-191) whose article discusses the metaphorical qualities of the traditional Tana Sámi place names.

<sup>235</sup> Lundström 1989.



IMAGE 48

Juha Taskinen, *Saari palaa!* (The Island Burns!). From *Laatokan seitsemän merta* (The Seven Seas of Lake Ladoga), 1998. (Original in colour).

The landscape still contains its romantic aspect. And why would it not since cultural history makes it our shared historical narrative. The landscape photography of the 90s has risked quite a broad dialogue with time and the audience. In it aspects of the past are reinterpreted and the present problematized. The transference takes us into narratives, the landscape of multiple dimensions and a whole range of perspectives. The spatial dimension is run over through experientiality. The multi-dimensional nature of “the experientiality” of the landscape prevents it from adopting any precise theme or agenda. The stratification of the approach into a whole of parallel and even conflicting dimensions takes landscape photography towards the aforementioned direction. That is from the picture-oriented perspectivity towards space-oriented spatiality. Similarly the cultural is accompanied by the ideological dimension in which identity and yet again the experiential start to define the interpretations. The landscape, or perhaps more fittingly the environment is experienced as authentic but also as cultural in which “the untouched” as an attribute experiences a positive departure. The responsibility is not communicated through the political, but then again the political transforms into spatial. A simple example, noticeable in the everyday life is the meaningfulness of recycling, a duty found positive. A mundane act that seeks to answer same questions landscape photography does. Simultaneously the border between ideological (shared) and experiential (personal and shared) refuses to succumb to definition and remains transparent.

The landscape of the photographic art is nowadays defined by the aesthetic instead of the distantiating topographical. It transforms into different versions that are connected by the experience of the sublime’s presence, the con-

tents of which are defined by the need to reconsider the mythical, and that are concretized into different experiences of spatiality. I believe that replacing the distanced position with the curious commenting will also bring the photographic landscape closer to the audience that equally has a lot of questions to ask.



IMAGE 49  
Arno Rafael Minkinen, from the work *Frostbite*, Nauvo, 1973.

VI

TECHNOLOGISED SNOW

by

Kimmo Lehtonen, 2005

Heinonen Yrjö, Kirstinä Leena, Kovala Urpo (Toim.) Ilmaisun murroksia,  
vuosituhannen vaihteen suomalaisessa kulttuurissa. 167-191

(Ref.)



## 6 TECHNOLOGIZED SNOW

### 6.1 Paljakka at Your Service

The marketing imagery of the Northern Finland at winter utilizes an image called a slope map. This quite functional visual presentation combines information on ski trails, downhill skiing possibilities, essential services and relevant information such as the distances and the designated levels of difficulty. It is a map, a topographical representation, providing a three-dimensional, bird's-eye view image of the fell or the ski resort, theoretically perceivable with just a glance.<sup>236</sup> Theoretically, because the representations are laden with symbols that require an understanding of the codes used. Without code an experience of such image of the fell as a terrain and as a landscape can be quite breathtaking. An eye-catching feature of these pictures is the portrayal of snow as blue – the blue of polar night, electricity or the sea? This blue will not hold still. It blazes or billows along the portrayed shapes of the landscape. It makes the snow-covered landscape glow. It is technologized snow, the artificial and natural snow intertwined into a hermetic whole – a (ski) center.

In the 1999 book *Varjosta*, I argued that the experience of space or of landscape, communicated by the representations of the landscape, can be divided into several dimensions.<sup>237</sup> On one hand the perception and the experience of landscape takes place as a *representation* through everyday symbolism – the landscape for me – that nowadays is the target or field of aggressive productization. On the other hand the idea of landscape is experienced as a *concept*. It

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<sup>236</sup> As a projection the slope map is interesting because the bird's-eye view compares to "the gaze of God", topography as an idea is affiliated with the accuracy of scientific image, and the whole history of cartography is characterized by illustrating certain, for example unexplored areas. One image in the brochure contains two very different ideas; "this is it" (the exact nature of the projection) and "the exact possible" (illustrated assumed), that form entire mental histories. (Of map presentations see for example Korhonen 1992 and Turunen 1996.)

<sup>237</sup> Interesting material related to my article in *Varjosta* anthology are "Of Nation, Mountains and Photography by Aleš Erjavec published in *Katalog, Nordiska landska – en antologi* by Jan-Erik Lundström and *Mapping Ideology* edited by Slavoj Žizek.

makes me an actor and the singular subject of experience, one who concretizes the concept and realizes what is presumed to be personal. These in turn are joined together by *the dimension of interpretation* of each representation, the imperative of the authentic and the original, which in this case is the ideal that provides connecting factors between what is represented as own and what in the representation is experienced as own.

Discussing the idea of wilderness and natural state, Tuomas Nevanlinna came to the conclusion that the idea of the authentic has become a romantic interpretation grounded on nostalgia and only made possible by the loss of the actual object.<sup>238</sup> The much whiter birches lost to the hills of Karelia fit the definition well. The urban environment does not prepare us to encounter the wilderness as a natural environment. The wilderness could be seen as requiring a process of naturalization to become possible as a concept.

A fell covered in technologized snow is not just a recording or a documenting image, it is a complete visual presentation. What raises questions is the relationship of presentation and representation – what is the image a representation of and what kind of interpretations is the presentation loaded with. This is a familiar basis for a visual presentation. From the standpoint of creating, maintaining and experiencing identity the presentation does not open up in its entirety. The notion is quite open and opening a visual presentation up into narration or narratives requires more from the examination.

The examination should perceive what kind of expectations, interpretational needs and the fulfilling of them the representation of a visual presentation (presumed to be personal) serves through the authentic (imperative), crystallizing into a (ideal) whole connecting the presenter and the receiver. The examination of these encountering ideas would require a consideration of its own. An image is offered to the viewer as a hope-arousing presentation of space and the circumstances, whereas for the receiver the central dimension is locating the needs and experiences within this presentation.

This article is named after the pictorial material I examine. I have traced the developments of the marketing material of the ski resorts in Finnish Lapland.<sup>239</sup> The material consists of a sample of winter season brochures directed at

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<sup>238</sup> A column in Helsingin Sanomat, Nyt –extra, 16.5.2002.

<sup>239</sup> The material is from 2000-2003 and I have divided it as follows. Tunturi-Lappi (Levi 3 brochures, Pyhä-Luosto 5 brochures, Ruka 3 brochures, Saariselkä 2 brochures, Suomi 1 brochure and Ylläs 3 brochures), the rest of Finland (Himos 1 brochure, Iso-Syöte 2 brochures, Paljakka 1 brochure, Puijo 1 brochure, Riihivuori 1 brochure, Tahko 2 brochures and Vuokatti 1 brochure). The rest of Finland is not comprehensive and I have used it in comparison to the material of Tunturi-Lappi. Additionally I have used general brochures, that do not mention any single resort by name (these are titled Winter, Lapland, Snow holiday etc; altogether 10 brochures). The Villi Pohjola brochures from 1996–2002 have certainly affected my notions on illustrating identity, although I have refrained from their further examination. Based on my exploration of international brochures I shall only mention two things. First of all the creation of a place anchor by visual means, like presenting slope maps and services, follows in Finland the international style. Corresponding general but recognizable place-themes, such as “the Alps”, are typical to the brochures. In this sense people travel “somewhere”. On the other hand the dimensions of identity, concept and interpretation are not highlighted at based on cursory examination. This is why I am willing to consider it a Finnish characteristic. It would be worthwhile to compare the Finnish

Finnish travelers in 1999–2003. The material changes yearly. During the period in question “the extreme” and the connected lifestyle marketing targeted at the young emerged, but were left out of the material.

The tourism in Lapland is growing rapidly, the services are getting better and they are more widely available every year. There is massive growth in the proportion of foreign tourism, but the material I examine is clearly directed at the local market. It is therefore only natural that the marketing connected to accommodation and services has increased. Marketing the accommodation has quickly introduced the brochures with a new visual dimension in which the supply and the amenities are exhibited “flat by flat” in a series of pictures. I will not examine either this “Torremolinos of the fells” or the “Wild North” campaign by Metsähallitus, which was launched already in 1996 and strives to change people’s misconception of deserted huts.

I will not examine the structure of the presentations in a semiotic context. My main interest is the argumentative nature of visual presentations. I will examine the images/brochures as commercial visual presentations used to persuade the audience, and I assume that their background contains shared themes and narrative ways of presenting them. Now, in February 2004, if ever the topic is timely with Finland hosting the first ever Alpine Ski World Cup race at Levi. The local press and television declared that “Finland is at least now an alpine skiing country”.

Here the visual is understood as both presentation and representation. My idea is that with the use of rhetorical concepts the complex and multi-linear presentation (an image) can be opened up for review bringing to the center of the analysis the argumentative/rhetorical properties of the photographic image and the whole visual presentation. I assume that this kind of analysis, which does not avoid the practices and conventions of structural presentation and interpretation, helps the analytical understanding of visual culture (and in this case the published visuality based on photography).

By defining my starting point like this, I could take my discussion to several different directions: the concept of genre, discussing the audience, the tradition or the visual code, for example. Although none of these essential elements are to be ignored, the concept central to this examination is *the metaphor*. I will try to limit the themes of landscape, accommodation and untouched nature in a way that makes it possible to discuss the aforementioned notions of identity through the idea of producing experiences. One possibility is offered by the hermeneutical idea of tracing the practices and changes that the production of meaning lies upon at any given time. I doubt this approach would be fruitful considering the limited amount of material I am using.<sup>240</sup>

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material to equal material from other Nordic countries to see if this is actually the case. An interesting type of material are the rental brochures of summer cottages published in Finland at least by Lomarengas Oy. They have stamp-sized pictures depicting the building, the site and the floor plan, where in an extremely bare visual presentation is fitted with different free time and vacation qualities, like for example the “dead standing tree”.

<sup>240</sup> For more on the topic see for example Malmelin 2003, 155.

## 6.2 Reality on a Plate

Computer technology has brought graphical presentations back to media illustrations. For a while the drawings disappeared from newspapers only returning as presentations of election-related statistics, charts and histograms. A visual presentation implemented as computer graphics is an effective way to represent the data as an image. It can be fully controlled and planned, different layered presentations make sense, an image can contain a plenty of data related to the same theme. All the while the presentation is ultimately an image. It is an image of a whole, but also an image in lieu of something. Illustrating wars and catastrophes has gone so far, and the narration has reached such a level of detail, that their content has become almost absurd.<sup>241</sup>

Graphical representation is unquestionably untrue, it is considered to be and interpreted as an illustration and it compares to graphs or drawings. This kind of a presentation is also true in an interesting manner. Its scale, details, vanishing point and perspective has been taken care of with infallible precision. The information represented is “exact”.

In front of the viewer is a man-made image and a technologically precise presentation, in this case a fell. The viewer expects the image to conjure up a “flawless representation” of the landscape in question while immaculately presenting the “relevant” information with a variety of symbols and text. In the history of the press this connects to the “pictures that were never taken”. A drawing from the scene of the accident or courtroom gets a “sense of the real” through naming – had photographing the situation been possible/allowed, the picture would look just like this presentation. The slope map of technologized snow is simultaneously the fell as a picture and a picture of the fell. It is man-made and yet the landscape as it is.

David Grusin and Richard Bolter have researched the developments in electronic media. They depict how the developments of parallel media and technologies have through comparison and competition caused different forms of the media to assume and acquire each other’s features.<sup>242</sup> The effects of technology have been researched more widely. Of works handling the mechanical reproduction and the technical development of the image, the ones by Friedrich Kittler and Jonathan Crary are the most fitting in this context.<sup>243</sup> Kittler discusses the changes in the ways of recording and handling information, and how this development is connected to technological innovations. Crary focuses on

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<sup>241</sup> The newspapers have adopted a way of graphic presentation that has especially on war illustrations become charged with details such as rate of fire and present a flawless scale, making them resemble a wet dream for the reader of *Korkeajännitys (Commando Comics)*. The actual portrayal of catastrophes are discussed by for example Salo 2000 and Vanhanen 1991.

<sup>242</sup> Bolter and Grusin identify three sequential dimensions, which they label *mediation*, *re-mediation* and *hypermediation*. The concepts describe the change that can be traced back to the inner comparison and the development of technologies within the mass media. (Bolter & Grusin, 1999.)

<sup>243</sup> Kittler 1992, Crary 1993.

the cultural relationship between the development of thought and conceptualization and the innovations in technology. Also worth mentioning is the extensive discussion around the concept of convergence.<sup>244</sup>

Johan Fornäs and Mikko Lehtonen have written about the idea of mediation. The concept can be understood as a catch-all explanation of how the development of the all-reflecting mass media has reached a form in which it actively produces the reality it "reports".<sup>245</sup> A more focused examination of mediation arouses interest in those forms of action and presentation with which the media participates in the conceptualization of culture and the environment.

I think the perspective of mediation can be even further focused by concentrating on those forms and features of presentations, the examination of which enable us to make observations and formulate ideas regarding how and with what kind of meanings we operate with, in this case in the field of visual narration. Even the blue fell is not alone. Referring to Grusin and Bolter, the fell has acquired prominent graphical (technological) features central to it, through which the viewer can perceive its narrative properties. The blue fell also acquires properties in the way pointed out by Lehtonen and Fornäs, at least up-to-date form and style of visual narration. What a fine division into two dimensions! The technologized snow has been "renovated" to match up to the prevailing form of media visibility. The landscape, which is ancient and due to its role as a national landscape originates from the very core of Finnishness, is also liable for the style of the visual presentation, which functions as persuasion in connection to the services of the travel industry.

Published images are produced into a form in which the rhetorical allusions of the visual presentation are not even assumed to focus on just one single direction. The narration is enriched by references that surpass the genre limits. It is important that this production of content does not question the way the visual material in question defines its own genre. Understood like this, the development which leads the imagery of advertising and news to refer to each other is not only understandable but presumable. Whether this is motivated by economic or for example political interests is not within the scope of this examination.

In this context the central pair of concepts is formed by how and what is presented. An interpretation sticking to recognizing the genre is in my opinion dangerous, because it relies on "*how the presentation is offered*", that is, what the image aspires to show. The concision of my article forces me to skip a more rigorous examination of the visual environment. My notions regarding the genre are descriptive and unfortunately taken as a given. Bolter and Grusin, and for

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<sup>244</sup> On the other hand the discussion on convergence just leads towards the super-ordinate term that has to be divided into different "convergences" of which technological and argumentative form just parts.

<sup>245</sup> Fornäs 1998, Lehtonen 2001.

example Fairclough, highlight the role of layout and design as essential to the end result of visual narration.<sup>246</sup>

To be understood *the media image has to primarily metaphorize itself* and all other interpretation related to the content will happen based on it. In short, the presentation of an image has to be constructed so that in a certain publishing context it will be safe enough to assume it is going to be interpreted as belonging to a known genre. Umberto Eco has highlighted idiolect, a sort of an idea of a dialect, as a way of articulating style.<sup>247</sup> My idea can be summed up as this: the public forms of the mass-circulated visual get arranged in each cultural situation by their content, genre selection, publishing context and publishing form. The mediated meanings create expectations connected to their way of narrating or style as well as the narrative and its contents. These direct the interpretations of the visual narration.

There is no categorical difference or contradiction as presentation between the real and the imaginary. Instead they are central to the form, style and rhetoric of the visual in the presentation as it is interpreted by the viewer. The real is set on a plate it is forced to share with the imaginary. In the cases of advertising and marketing this type of notion is unsurprising. A lot of research from different perspectives has been made of advertising. It is interesting to note that similar research regarding the journalistic image, excluding its propaganda usage, is still only scantily available. The new discussion of the advertising thematic utilizes the concepts of *generic conventions* and *intermediality*. The messages' ostensible shared characteristics and their connection to the communal properties of interpretation have been of interest. In his recent thesis on advertising Nando Malmelin discusses the idea of genre using the concept of generic conventions.<sup>248</sup>

Because I start with the assumption that the audience cannot get a hold of the meanings in visual narration without recognizing the genre of the presentation, mentioning the news image or the journalistic image is arguable. The experienced journalist Petri Sarvamaa of Yleisradio reported from Iraq when the US-led coalition had started to distribute groceries and water to civilians: "These are the images the West has longed for." The images showed soldiers and relief workers handed out clean water and fresh bread to the residents of Basra.

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<sup>246</sup> Fairclough 1997, also Bolter & Grusin 1999 and Kress & van Leeuwen 1996 (see chapter 7, Meaning of Composition, 181-229) highlight design and appearance as the central expressional elements of visual communication.

<sup>247</sup> See for example Eco 1991, 268-275. Eco divides "the production of texts between the messages of art" into arbitrary organization, exact formulation and contextual pressure. He claims that works of art have a special language-like structural nature. Eco describes the aesthetic idiolect as a socially constructed feature controlling different anomalies of expression directed at a limited audience. It gets interpreted as the style of the performer, different kinds of imitations and for instance mannerisms. According to Eco the aesthetic idiolect can affect the norm of a whole community and change the code based on metasemiotic deduction. This kind of moving of the code by creating different versions of it, even crossing the ideas of genres, is in my opinion a good description of the prevailing popular-visual field, although on a very general level and keeping to the properties of the structure.

<sup>248</sup> Malmelin 2003, 134, 138.

It is an interesting example because of the notion included in the remark of the journalist. In my opinion he referred to how the images of the delighted locals receiving aid, had from the standpoint of one party of the war a special meaning, content that is not exclusively reporting. If I am correct – and the journalist referred to the propaganda value of the news material – the journalist's remark is either sarcasm that explains the nature of the images but is restricted by his position as a journalist, or an active comment regarding the ambiguous nature of the news material as a genre.

The remark could be called a guide to interpretation. Obtaining images from the war zone had been controlled throughout the conflict. In this sense the journalist's remark about the material and its nature is justified. Also the "scantiness" of the remark is justified. Customarily the journalists do not actively comment on the material. Instead the comments are focused on the event and things related to it.<sup>249</sup>

### 6.3 My Lapland

Perhaps the most quoted text discussing the relationship of the photograph and *the personal* is Roland Barthes's *Camera Lucida*, in which he sketches the idea of the concept of "punctum".<sup>250</sup> For him the personal in the photograph is an element indefinably placed in the image and able to touch a single viewer like a pinprick. It is a restless detail that carries the enchanting potential metonymy of the whole image. What makes Barthes's deliberation interesting is the idea of the viewer having a possibility to continue the interpretation into the personal. According to Barthes this happens through the uncoded message of the photograph.

Secondly, the dimensions of time and memory are also set in an interesting relation. "This has happened" – or the noema of the image – as Barthes has it, gets interpreted without having a straightforward relationship with the moment of watching or seeing. In another text, *S/Z*, Barthes divides "texts" into readerly and writerly.<sup>251</sup> The meanings of readerly texts are fixed, more or less consistent and such easy to interpret. Writerly texts are more openly constructed and not committed to a single possible interpretation. Here too Barthes defines the basic idea of studium and punctum. The third idea of Barthes worth mentioning is that of "text" as an organism-like independent whole, withdrawn from the author and interpreted by the receiver.<sup>252</sup>

Concerning cinematic meaning he writes about concealed meaning that cannot be opened with the system of linguistic structure, but which is unques-

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<sup>249</sup> Kellner 1998, see chapter 6.

<sup>250</sup> Barthes 1985.

<sup>251</sup> Barthes 1993. The ideas of subject and authorship are central to the work of Barthes. The ideas found in *Camera Lucida* and their previous incarnations are interesting to trace in his other works.

<sup>252</sup> Barthes 1993, 23–127, 164–167.

tionably within the area of interaction and the mediation of the message, and regarding stills requires consideration of *distribution* and visibility to become thoroughly interpreted and carefully listened.<sup>253</sup>



IMAGE 50

The creator of the picture, Hannu Sievilä has specialised in drawing piste maps since 1987. Piste maps are prepared on the basis of maps. A model is drawn from the altitude symbols of the map, which is then used as the base. Even today, the foundations are still created primarily by using a retouching pen. The original of this map of Ylläs is ca. 3m wide and it shows the artist's impression of the area. During the making of the map it is necessary to familiarise oneself with the nature of the area thoroughly, also on skis. Sometimes aerial pictures are also used to study the character and details of the area. In many ski centers, piste maps are also published as an internet version. The net version of the Ylläs map has an inbuilt program that enables the user to locate destinations based on coordinates, and for example, the location of a place can be immediately shown on the map directly from a variety of databases. The location of moving targets, such as trail maintenance equipment, can also be shown. This program utilises the "model" described in the beginning. The internet version of the picture can be found at [www.panoraama.com/yllas](http://www.panoraama.com/yllas) (Original in colour) and the corresponding map of the Levi Ski Center is at [www.panoraama.com/levi](http://www.panoraama.com/levi).

Technologized snow offers a representation of a landscape in which an idea of fostering something through a gaze, the act of looking or an image is actualized.<sup>254</sup> An eye-catching feature in the material is the interlocking of multiple, different visual narratives into a single "*brochure*". This co-existence of themes brings a memory or the memory and experience or the dimensions of waiting to reach something into a dialogue in an interesting way. The difference to Malmelin or Seppänen is that I aim to interpret the visual specifically as presentation.

Visual presentation contains a noticeable amount of repetition, whether it is approached from the standpoint of genres, social practices or ways of presen-

<sup>253</sup> Ibid, 141-156.

<sup>254</sup> There are many possible approaches - through the images of experience, pleasure or the carnalization of experience, on the other hand the maintaining and continuous rebuilding of identity or the themes of consumption and free time.



tation. From this standpoint the family album and the news photo can be juxtaposed. The formal features clearly reveal that normally an album photo and a news photo are quite easy to recognize through the form of the presentation, the situation or the environment. Throw in the publication channel or the visual surroundings of the presentation, the recognition is inevitable. This obviously requires the viewer/audience to already be familiar with the practices of presenting the pictures. Both can be interpreted as *a ritual*. The album picture is the “compulsion” of recording and presenting the private. A family that has not recorded itself into any form of visual presentation is considered strange.

The genre and the ritual of an album photo change with practices, time and cultural manners.<sup>255</sup> The news photo can be correspondingly called a ritual. It sets the pace for the everyday much denser than the album photo, its visual presentations live in time and are affected by technological change, and the practices related to it are formed culturally. As a visual presentation, the news in Finland has been in transition for the last twenty years because of the international news transmission and the changes in technologies, and also because of the stressed competition in the domestic market.<sup>256</sup>

The visibility of the news and the album photo can be both described as rituals, one mostly on the area of the private and the other on the public. I highlight the ritual aspects to bring new tenses of interpretation into the images, their reception and interpretation, to accompany the perfect “this has happened”. If there are expectations regarding the image or the visual presentation, the idea of future can be highlighted. The album picture is expected to present the happiness and the development of the family and the news are expected to tell us what has happened on this very day. The album photograph is connected to a *compulsion to happiness* – the pictures are prepared for, the families look their best and troublesome, conflicting events are pictured and presented with discretion if at all.

The expectation value of news contains in my opinion an understandable and humane but somehow twisted compulsion to happiness. In the news the unpleasant incidents always occur somewhere else and suffering can only be presented if the target is a tacitly defined/agreed other, “the others”. Construction of the other in news imagery deserves its own research. I will just stick to saying that defining otherness is an object of extreme discretion especially when considering, for example, “who can die in a Finnish news image”.<sup>257</sup>

<sup>255</sup> Whereas taking a dead child into an atelier to be photographed was commonplace in the late 19th century Finland, trying the ritual out today would most likely lead into an interrogation by the police. One would probably have to smuggle the child out of the hospital, which would mean getting accused of “body snatching”. Then again, can you imagine a dad in the 1960s attempting to film the birth of his child? Imagining it all the way to the ensuing scuffle would also end this story in the criminal court.

<sup>256</sup> Salo 2000, Vanhanen 2002. The same theme on the part of TV is mentioned by for example Pietilä 1995.

<sup>257</sup> Erkki Laatikainen, the editor of the newspaper *Keskisuomalainen*, had to publish an apology regarding “a professional error of judgment”. In the summer of 2001 the newspaper published a photograph from the scene of a fatal accident in which a shadowy character was visible inside a car. The character’s age or sex were not distinguishable nor he could be identified or even considered dead.

The expectation value described above is customarily connected to the imageries of advertising. It has the right and the function to define objects of envy; I do not yet have that or I would like to be like that. In the imageries of travel this idea of a dream is focused on a place and the possible experiences it offers. And what does a news image present when there is nothing to show/report? If this way of presenting some kind of value by indication were not possible, a situation like this would be impossible for visual presentation, and nothing would simply be presented. An important topic would get published without an image.

Nonetheless, just like album pictures, that expectation for a newsworthy object of photography and presentation both pressures the publisher to publish something and offers an opportunity to publish just something. Something that is good enough as defined by the expectation value. This raises the question how much the image represents itself. How much does the genre in regard of a single visual presentation *metaphorize itself* before presenting its message, narrative or argument through the means of the visual?

Comparably the imageries of advertising contain whole areas in which the value of narrative, the "noema" of photography or the probative value based on concrete evidence has been dissolved. In the travel marketing of Lapland there are lots of presentations of visual presentation to be seen. The pictorial narrative of a brochure is advanced so that it does not include something relevant to marketing the product, but the presentation advances as parts of the brochure that show/tell something that fits this very part.<sup>258</sup>

At this point Nelson Goodman would emphasize the concept of exemplification and the examination would focus on highlighting the details of presentation so that the possible dimension of representativeness could be deduced. In connection to children wearing winter clothes and different hobbies this would work out excellently. The interest is focused on the expectations that speak to the viewer and are built by the visual presentation itself. At this point the viewer seems to settle with the image looking exactly like it should in this very context.

The media image metaphorizes itself. The central imperative of the content is that it should contain nothing ethically, journalistically or politically "inappropriate". The image is shrouded in the properties of the genre and that is enough for the grounds of understanding - or should we in this context say "accepting" - the meanings. The image truly represents something - it represents itself. A good example is financial journalism that is always on the lookout for images to supplement graphs and portraits. Waiting for something to show up, a lot of "something" is published, because the articles are "worthy of an image". In this sense the image gets a hierarchical value.

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<sup>258</sup> Bravuras in the travel brochures of the North are made double beds, a couple hand in hand in front of a sunset or a cut out picture of a dumbbell, to name a few. None of them is anchored to a certain place or location. A holiday in Lapland is also children, meals or for instance a Sonera hot air balloon. Goodman 1988, 52, see also note 5 in the same text.

The public use of a landscape is *illustration*. The landscape refers to being Finnish, Finland, in short *identity*. The pioneer of illustrated Finnish travel advertising, The Finnish Travel Association, adopted in its marketing a kind of a strategy of getting to know the homeland. The advertisements showed features of the national landscape at first with drawings and later with photographs. Correspondingly, periodicals utilized the positive reception of illustrated books and published, especially during summers, all sorts of travel stories of “floating gangs”, packs of photographers and journalists, in “authentic” or “naturally beautiful Finland”. Tours to advance circulation were organized as reporting trips and the reportages were published. As a quick conclusion it could be said that the visuality of Karelianism and the independence speech evolved by the era of illustrated books into the golden age of pictorial reportages. All these were connected by presenting the landscape as an untamed and free wilderness inhabited by civilized, resilient and hard-working Finns.

The inhabited wilderness is an excellent crystallization, but I think it can be returned to the illustrations of Lapland with “technologized snow”. From the standpoint of identity work the presentation of a landscape is divided into two dimensions. The commonly (among Finns) shared independent Finland – the wilderness, and the subjective experience, Finnishness, that is “My Lapland” – the wilderness to me. The whole personal and ideological construction of the everyman’s right are both present, just like the division into the “renovated”, which compares to media illustrations, and the ideological construction of the national. The original appears as an interesting concept. The articulated and ideal original is the metaphorical presentation of a national identity implemented by advertising, and the personal experience of the real gets presented as a deliberate construction – the wilderness – that guarantees the experience.

I somewhat challenge the ideas of Barthes by claiming that approaching the personally cherished “my Lapland” and the Lapland promoted by the ideology of national identity with the concepts of *studium* and *punctum* leaves the promise of an experience felt privately as own and presented by the visual presentation unexplained. If in the cases of album and news image the expectation value of meaning can be approached through the concept of genre, in the advertising imagery of technologized snow the genre of advertising and the dimension of personal expectations are paralleled. How to open up the meaning and illustration of images so that the public dimension of the advertising image and the personal charge of the image support together the whole they form? Despite its personal nature, “My Lapland” is an ideological construction in which art and the different forms of popular-visuality are drafting what the viewer feels as one’s own as a personalization of experience and a presentation of “authentic” surroundings offered by the advertisement.

## 6.4 The Return of Illustration

The field operationalizing different genres and their presentations is constantly on the move. The limits to different visual presentations and the rhetoric they employ still exist, but they have become transparent. The visual culture has turned into references and citations between different technologies and forms of expression. *Styles*, practices and ways of narrating are used in different genres while trying to ensure that the genre of a presentation is not too difficult or impossible to identify.

The technology-oriented clear borders of presentation, such as photography, cinema, video..., have been replaced by a moving media imagery of meanings, *the return of illustration*. With the concept of illustration I want to emphasize the newly emerged feature in which different means and forms of visual narration can construct visual presentations more freely than ever before. A typical example is the “documentary style” in advertising and comparably the abundance of visual narration that has spread into news imagery with the commercial pictures functioning as a model.

What has come to the fore most powerfully as a new field of media illustration in the news imagery, is the use of different pedantic graphic presentations.<sup>259</sup> The concept of remediation by Bolter and Grusin clarifies this development from the standpoint of medium and technology. The French philosopher Michel Maffesoli has described style as a central way of building communality. He even remarks, regarding the thematic of this article, that the deployment of style has actualized so amply that style does not only carry meanings, but is becoming a central way of producing meaning and understanding.<sup>260</sup>

Publicity has also been seen as a factor defining meanings and ways of interpretation, a rhetoricizing dimension the functioning of which is approached through the ideas of “the new rhetoric” and media rhetoric.<sup>261</sup> The idea of illustration brings the concepts of viewer and audience to the fore. In a Barthesian manner the personal closes up into an indivisible unique, the research cannot easily access. If the visual is understood as a mediation of knowledge, meaning or presentation, in the situation of moving forms and styles of meanings described above, the personal does not have to be fully excluded from the examination.

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<sup>259</sup> Illustrations are charged with a huge amount of examination and narration. In the WTC reporting a Finnish tabloid accidentally printed a graph containing an arrow incorrectly illustrating the course of the airplane. The graphic designer was stigmatized for a long time – so much fits into an arrow.

<sup>260</sup> The style and form of Maffesoli are joined into a surface that uses the devices of style also articulates meanings – according to Maffesoli the apprehensive fantasy articulated in the discussions on postmodern of everything transforming into a surface has in this sense started to happen. See Maffesoli 1995, 54, 60. Janne Seppänen has also pondered what kind of a combination of elements the interpretation or understanding of the recipient gains its strength. See for example Seppänen 2001, 224.

<sup>261</sup> Jukka-Pekka Puro has mapped the rise of rhetoric into a “new rhetoric”. See Puro 2001, starting from the page 150.

As far as I can see, the audience has a rather sympathetic approach to visual presentations. This is because of the simple reason that humans have a natural need to understand “what is going on”. The knowledge of genres and styles is connected to the personal and the individual’s need to understand rests on the mastery of media culture and its visual practices. The enormous liquidity and speed the contemporary audience can react to the visual presentations of media is in the context of popular-visual a central aspect defining the media rhetoric. I do not intend to deny the characteristics of the personal and cultural dimensions as such. By juxtaposing the two dimensions I intend to open up visual narration toward its own properties.

An interesting question is how much the presenter and the viewer of the image depend, without their knowledge, on different expectations regarding the conventions of visual presentations. A computerized map has become an overall presentation that has “everything”. What follows is that the other, mainly photographic illustrations function as comments upon this overall presentation. The slope map is much more than just a guide for the alpine skier to the contours of the terrain and the services it offers. As a visual presentation the slope map reveals at a glance all the structured services of the landscape on offer. Because of this the photographic expression focuses on presenting the special features of these uses, and of course ensuring wellbeing. The photograph discussed ontologically true transforms in the form of overall presentation as a commentary on the interpreted “truth”. In this sense the accuracy of the different elements of visual narration in the brochure concerning the conventionally set expectations is immense – mistakes are not allowed.

A visual presentation always leaves itself open to interpretation – sometimes offering one, sometimes many different interpretations. This is why the narrative categoricalness I described above does not solidify the visual narration. On the contrary, a cleverly used narration that builds on a variety of references really gets off the ground when the conventionally set expectations are not questioned. This is actually a structure well known in advertising. Studying media texts of other genres I have noticed that in this respect they do not differ from advertising. The demands of conventionally set expectations and fulfilling them seem to hold true for articulating morality, ideology and different factual themes. All the while assuming the aforementioned quotations of style and practices of argumentation over the limits of technology and genre is sensible in a situation like this. Thinking about different modes of argumentation in the sphere of rhetoric, *the metaphor* is highlighted simply because of the frequency of its usage.

The metaphor is a set of meanings larger than a word or even a sentence. It is a proposition or a presentation that gets actualized as an expression of a concept and is only secondarily a linguistic construction. Metaphors reference to the referent is not based on identity. The metaphorical can be charged into a feature or detail of the expression. The concept of metaphor borders on Eco’s concept of aesthetic idiolect and Barthes’s idea of myth because the reference as

a meaning further outside the actual manifestation, and like idiolect engaging to time, place or situation, makes metaphor a temporal entity.

Using a metaphorical presentation through conventions opens up a route for ideological, normative and conventional meanings and practices. But what are these directed towards at this moment of the metaphor? Juri Lotman explores the same problematic with the idea of semantic trope, in which the interactional relationship of open meaning is not based on the strict similarity of texts. Instead the similarity that makes semantic translation possible is the approximation of meanings that move from one text to another based on a system produced by a shared cultural-psychological context. Lotman describes the trope "irrational" which fits well with the concept of metaphor. The meaning mediated in the contemplation of a trope or a metaphor is assumed to be actualized particularly well when it is considered natural. The idea has been summarized by for example Charles Forceville (1996).

Metaphor carries likeness that can very well be reference-like. To get articulated understandably it presupposes knowledge of the contextual factors and it refers outside itself, in this case outside the visual presentation. Metaphor is a very useful way to present abstract themes. Of the material for this article a good example is the theme of "peace" connected to Lapland. The brochures themselves are quite fully charged and they show how conveniently everything connected to services and experiences are available at the destination. The visual environment, in which the theme is argued for, is not typically peaceful, like the marketed environment factually is: even it cannot be described with the word peaceful. On the level of experience, peace can be assumed to be one of the central attractors of Lapland. So how can "restless" be presented in a restless environment so that it produces an illusion of "the peace of Lapland"?

## 6.5 Wild and Wonderful Lapland

Lapland as a province and its landscape as a central part of the Finnish national landscape have been illustrated throughout the history of Finnish visual advertising. Prominent additions to the "Lapland imagery" are the different kinds of illustrated books.<sup>262</sup> As is typical in the history of photography, the illustrations are mostly done by "others", "strangers". In building the visual identity of a province, local narration is minuscule.<sup>263</sup> The people of Lapland have thus been the receivers of the ideal landscape, and the metaphorical nature of articulations,

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<sup>262</sup> Illustrated books were very popular in Finland before and after the Second World War. They can be seen to have articulated for the Finnish people, using the way paved by fine arts, what in the landscape is both Finnish and valuable as such. See also Palin 1999.

<sup>263</sup> I tackle the issue in a 2004 article "Rakennettu erämää" included in my licentiate's degree. In the article I argue that examining how the landscape is created as a presentation of photographic works the ideological is also released into the work of the photographers. The absence of local perspective is typical to the landscape ideal, even so that the local perspective adopts cherishable and valuable properties from the ideological, "landscape produced by others".

interpretations of landscape and visual rhetoric that depicts the northern Finnish idea of locality is widely charged. Interpretations of the original, the authentic or the harmony of nature and livelihood are therefore typically a part of some larger whole.

Utilizing this kind of repressive visual narration, which is targeted at around one third of the Finnish surface area, plays a central role in understanding the narratives concerning Lapland or its inhabitants. The only thing connecting the historical material and the current visual presentation is the place, Lapland. The connection is created in narratives, in their forms and especially in utilizing the ideal Lapland by means of visual rhetoric. Part of the narratives seem to follow Finns through decades as “presentations of real Lapland” wished for by the audience and in the illustrations as strongly argued for presentations of “real Lapland”. The form and interpretation of the national landscape with an ideological background has transformed into a natural part of the visual presentations of Lapland.

The real power of the presentation of Lapland is revealed in how the in itself *ideological image* of Lapland has become *natural* in the eyes of the audience. The ideological argument is not only connected to the idea of Finnishness, but also characterizes our self-image. It is the connection to that cherished authentic experience of Finnishness the individual wants to identify with and which functions as a guarantee of the authenticity of the desired and possibly acquired experience.<sup>264</sup> It is analytically interesting to see what kind of forms the presentation, argumentation, of this kind of content gets in the visual, and how the individual/audience receives and identifies with these narratives.

The idea of Finland and Finnishness was built along with the state propaganda from the 1910s until the 1960s when the illustrated book as the “image of Finland” was replaced by the landscape pastorals of nature and gift books.<sup>265</sup> In this identity production Finnishness can be summed up as uncommunicative and honest resilience, which through cultural hobbies and democracy has managed to live in harmony with the nature. The God-fearing Finns has persuaded this wild and invincible environment into producing welfare together with us in perfect harmony.

Industrial development, the “endlessness” of wilderness and the barrenness of the conditions have been successfully articulated as a rationalization of nationality the audience has learnt to identify with. Stylistically the aesthetic presentation is a product of an era. All the while a rhetoric approach reveals the

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<sup>264</sup> YLE has produced a two-part documentary Suomikuva maailmalla (part 1: Lännen etuvartio and part 2: La Ensalada Finlandesa) in which the early history of the Finnish national propaganda film is marvelously presented. The narrative of Finnishness I attached to illustrated books is repeated in this material. In his doctoral dissertation Juho Suonpää discusses the idea of the authentic and its construction in the perspectives of the nature, its experience and natural photography.

<sup>265</sup> I shall only mention as a good example of the genre of Finnish illustrated works the Villi Kaunis Lappi - Wild and Wonderful Lapland by Heikki Aho and Björn Soldan published in 1937. As an example of ideological purity, national fitness and exercise one should check out Haltin valloitus by Kaarina Kari. It tells of the first women and their conquest of the highest fell in Finland.

foundation of this idea of Finnishness to be moving along offering a silent, but understandable core for the authenticity. The tourism in Lapland is marketed to Finns as guaranteed by the national ethos. The presented wilderness is uninhabited and wild, but in the narratives we have always attempted to conquer and colonize it, only this time we are doing it riding a snowmobile or an Icelandic horse.

I return to the discussion of the personal I presented at the beginning of the article, especially the idea of urbanism's reconstruction of interpreting the nature as it was formulated by Nevanlinna. Technologized snow is just that. The image of the fell is not left alone. The narrative about services is supported by visuality convincing the possibilities of experience. The narrative of Finnishness is a myth of oppressing and taking over the nature, a narrative in which we have convinced ourselves to be an exceptional industrial or postindustrial nation in that we want and are able to (in our own opinion) retain in our relationship to nature the authentic that respects the nature – the Finnish living in all of us, the identity foundation of the everyman's right.

The slope map functions as an excellent example of this type of presentation. It is a graph and everyone interprets it to be one. It is a commercial presentation that makes the "incredible blue" I mentioned at the beginning of the text, understood and accepted. All the while that blue of the snow has to be connected to something. Does it emphasize the technological nature of the presentation? "This is a computer-created image" that tells about the conditions and services of the ski resort, but as a computerized image it has to be "electric" and as such "something more".

And what is the use of this kind of picture? The picture was originally created to show the skiers the location, length and difficulty of ski routes. In addition signs telling of services have been added. Codes in bright colors tell of accommodation areas, the peak heights to show "the most important conquests", routes marked for skiers, alpine skiers, snowmobiles, dog and reindeer sleds, and shops, hotels and restaurants with their services et cetera. There is also another map – the graphical presentation of the fell terrain with exact route lengths and distances. The map is distributed as a landscape topography, which the user of the landscape and its services can easily slip into one's pocket when the adventure begins.

So it would initially seem wrong to claim that a Finnish skier could come to Lapland and experience the services of the city on a vacation. They are just necessitated by safety and the actual relationship to nature restricted to vacations. It would be just as unreasonable to claim that a Finn would come to Lapland for Lapland. It is the experience that attracts people, and it is ultimately personal. Lapland is a scenery, but as such it has to be an original, authentic and national scenery – and of course located near immaculate services.



**VI**

**PIRATES!**

**Perception and Analysis of the Meaning of a Commercial Image**

By

Kimmo Lehtonen 2007

Stocchetti, Matteo & Sumiala-Seppänen, Johanna (eds.).  
Images and Communities. The Visual Construction of the Social, 117-126

(Ref.)

## 7 PIRATES! Perception and Analysis of the Meaning of a Commercial Image

Two ships are struggling to push their way through a roaring yet remarkably beautiful sea. The wind direction at least is favourable, and they certainly have a chance of reaching the harbour. There is no sight of a crew on the vessel that is further away – it seems like a ghost ship – but on the deck of the ship that is closer by, one person is standing, wearing red trousers, a hat and a strong black belt and holding a sabre in her hand. In her other hand, she is holding only a piece of rope, and she seems to be defiantly standing on a wooden grid, a ship deck one might assume. The waves are high and the water is rushing over the gunwale. What can I tell? I can tell that this a photographic image, published by one of Finland's leading women's magazines in the summer of 2006. The water is a deep and intense colour, it does not look like the Baltic Sea. The ship in the distance looks very much like a commercial vessel that could well have sailed the waters around Finland.

The content in visual expression is hardly ever a closed entity. In this article, I analyse this image from a Finnish advertising campaign in relation to perception and to the concept of time and reflect upon its meaning. My challenge is to bring visual representation in to an interpretational relation with the ideas of multiple reference and predication. In terms of time and reference, we can recognize from the image the woman, the water and the weather. At the same time we cannot tell how we would have reacted to the same image if we had been shown it five years ago, or whether we would see it the same way five years later. The woman could be a pirate, a vixen, a matriarch, a phallic woman or even a fetish. Holding the sabre in her hand as she is, she can be dangerous, even violent rebellion; or is she perhaps strong and shamelessly brave, to the extent that we actually envy her for that, ignoring her "hostile circumstances".

A photographic image is by its very nature a restless, strong set of meanings, but of and despite this richness of interpretational dimensions, still so? Casually published, and received too. How do we discuss the visual as an argument, or understand it as a platform for shared meanings, depiction and il-

lustration? Some interesting aspects of predication can be developed by bringing the idea of visual rhetoric into dialogue with Bruno Latour's thinking.

The divisions and difficulties of modern thinking discussed by Latour are characteristic in theories of the interpretation of meaning.<sup>266</sup> Latour distances himself from discussions in modern science, which he criticizes for being based on dichotomies. He denies the separation between "translations of nature-society hybrids" and "the practices of purification" that moulds ontologically separate entities together. Latour does not rely on "closed categorizations", and he prefers to leave definitions open to a certain extent so as to leave more room for interpretation. Interestingly, this approach ties in with Paul Ricoeur's critique of interpretations based on literary similitude.<sup>267</sup> With respect to the poetic function, Ricoeur argues that the separation between denotation and connotation is an unfruitful principle of differentiation. For him, poetic qualities are "true" to the extent that they are appropriate, that is, to the extent that they join fittingness to novelty, or obviousness to surprise. Ricoeur's reading suggests that the division between substitution and resemblance should be broken and detached from naming and attached to predication.<sup>268</sup>

## 7.1 Circumstances of the Woman

Although the elements of the image discussed here – such as the opening sky, the female character herself, the settings I describe as the "circumstances of the woman" – are all in harmony, their references can be returned to a vast variety of cultural and historical conclusions. So many important contextual elements of predication can be discussed even before we start to explore a photograph! In looking at the image of this woman, and deciding how to understand the given image, the moment of a choice so to speak, is leading us to the different interpretation. But does this time and context oriented factor in interpretation deny the multi-referential nature of the given visual meaning, or by that a study of the image in terms of meaning? As possibly ambivalent elements in the image would make it less by its interpretation?! To analyse either the woman or the situation by naming would be to anchor the meaning to a set of dichotomies, which would then celebrate one interpretation. How unstable would the meaning actually be if the woman were studied as a figurative articulation from predication? It might be more interesting to ponder whether the

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<sup>266</sup> Different "turns", it could be a semantic turn here, has therefore resulted a circle like situation where interpretational practice are productive more in their interplay to justify the divisions of practices in science, and by that in Latour's critique the results of the research are not describing the given matter by its features, but more the research itself. I relate Merja Salo to this same tradition, but not in terms to follow Latour literary, on the contrary to show how fluent and insightful this approach can be in it's remarks. As to be show later, my approach share same "moments of hesitation" in interpretation based on a certain terminology.

<sup>267</sup> Ricoeur, 2003. p. 281.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid. 222.

given elements of meaning are parallel, or whether the image itself is controversial – both of these questions have a major impact on the way of impression, on the rhetoric of the given image.

Membership of an audience can be analysed over a longer period than five years. Michel Maffesoli (1993) conceptualises the change from pre-modern to late-modern as a development from western Christianity-oriented “homo religiosus” to the contemporary late modern orientation of “homo aestheticus” where style becomes an important and communicative factor in an individual's life, but also in grounding a social or contextual relation. In Maffesoli's theory, shared narration or understanding of existence and its appropriateness can be interpreted out as such. In my eyes, this strong female and her “destiny” in the images she is living through is designed for the audience that Maffesoli describes as “homo aestheticus”, and the critique by Bruno Latour in terms of the grounding principles of research finds an eligible example from this “exemplar”.

Merja Salo and her analysis of fashion images elsewhere in this volume<sup>269</sup> relates to a tradition of interpreting images according to a certain semiotic turn. I for my part am interested in understanding how a single image can be so different depending on when and where I look at it. Strong connections to the history of art, for example, also open up opportunities for totally different emphases of interpretation.<sup>270</sup> Emancipation, gender, but also a whole myth of pirates in art, especially in literature and film, belong to this area of extending the understanding of the concept of memory. What is remarkable is that according to Walter Benjamin, extension can also materialize as intensification, and references develop according to the conception of time in looking at the image. With respect to advertising, or media images in general, Benjamin's *Jetzt Zeit* also points in the opposite direction<sup>271</sup>. One may ask how long or how far back should a viewer remember? And should that memory organize the understanding of the image in a certain context based on chronology, or does this situation and idea of time allow us to choose or even to be unaware or forget?<sup>272</sup>

Whereas for Benjamin the temporal was still a matter of a “politics of phantasmagora” and the result of technological ethos, Maffesoli says that even in, say, temporal conditions, he would prefer to talk about constant change

<sup>269</sup> See Stochetti, Sumiala-Seppänen, 2007. pp 111-115.

<sup>270</sup> Gestures of the woman, composition of the image just to start with are so open reference to “*Freedom Leads the People*”, a famous painting by Delacroix (1830) that when recognising that connection, this advertisement can hardly be seen without remembering the connection. Connections to popular culture, like film are naturally more updated, but depending to spactator the time line of references of interpretation can grow surprisingly long.

<sup>271</sup> In comparison, Walter Benjamin (1986: 63-74) comments on the ideology and ethos of “development” by referring to the idea of a state of mind as “flow”. He describes another dimension of time, a temporal “*Jetzt Zeit*” – now time – which is an extension or a condensation of time over and over again in a given moment. He dubs this dimension of time as “*chairs*”. This now time is for him most of all characteristic of a metropolis, although he does continue in the direction of an individual in his thinking of memory. (See: Buck-Morse 1993: 242-252, or Lindroos 1998: 99-102).

<sup>272</sup> In terms of a nature of a moment, to describe a crowd and an experience it creates for an individual, Benjamin proceeds with “*memoire involontaire*” and “*memoire pure*” as well as the idea of “*durée*” (duration/length), and caleidoscopic space having consciousness of it own.

rather than development as understood in the modern sense. These changes that in Maffesoli's thinking follow economic, social and political conditions can be seen and interpreted in style. And here we have an image in full colour including some text and somehow so "fluent" to watch and still so loaded with the allegorical and rhetorical, with both historical and contextual links for interpretation.



IMAGE 51

In the struggle against the breast cancer. An advertisement in Me Naiset in Summer 2006. Photo by Markku Lähdesmäki, copyright Hasan & Partners Oy.

## 7.2 Multiple Perspectives of Interpretation

The history of advertising or the history of photography do not necessarily have to be examined as chronological developments, they can both be studied in terms of the idea of temporality, politicized *chaïros* and Maffesoli's notion of style.<sup>273</sup> How is it that today, in this day and age, a pirate is such a living myth or character? Is it because of the film industry? The mainstream film *Pirates of the Caribbean* is celebrated everywhere. Some years ago, Renny Harlin tried to surprise the world's film going audience with a pirate film called *Cut Throat Island*, but failed to reach them. Was it because of style, time, temporality – or was the film really so bad?

Is it possible to find any theoretical background for an interpretation of a visual artefact, such as this advertising image is, that proceeds in the direction of the temporal, multiple or even fragile and so make it easier to understand the reactions of the audience? If we regard a given visual presentation as a trope, a [relation from a “sign in praesentia” to – a “sign in absentia”], that will provide us with a principle of a rhetorical character or a relation, but it will leave us with no tools to study and negotiate the meaning of a particular presentation. The New Rhetoric worked with the same problem, but ended up giving solid descriptions of audience relations and argumentative structures. We can name many of the elements and/or details and draw many conclusions. In the end we hesitate whether we understand the story and its details by its origin in our memory\_ – some of them visual, others something else.

Latour's ideas lead us to Nelson Goodman (1976: 81-98), who introduced “exemplification” as an active mode of trope and as a result of labelling and predication. Goodman argued that reference should be understood not as a singular but a multiple relation, and that we should celebrate the active nature of visual expression instead of trying to control the meaning and expression either to give the correct interpretation or exclude the image that is “impossible to interpret”<sup>274</sup>. In the advertisement here, the female figure as well as the circumstances would be open to this level for interpretation. Exemplification as an active trope or a metaphorical expression gives an image back the freedom it was denied by theoretical thinking of analysing the meaning in an image Bruno Latour criticizes. Bruno Latour (2006: 88-94, 143-147) argues that the division between nature and science has evolved from early modern to postmodern thinking and that this distinction is limiting or even denying us the necessary means

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<sup>273</sup> We have published very rich studies in Finland on such themes as “a cultural history of an extraterrestrial life”, or as it did happened just some weeks ago, a researcher and a practicing priest published a book on “the cultural history of hell”. The image from the Me Naiset campaign makes these topics relevant for this presentation. As the idea and understanding or the fantasy of extraterrestrial life or a description of a concept of Hell has changed in history, so has the understanding of a Pirate.

<sup>274</sup> In terms of a nature of a moment, to describe a crowd and an experience it creates for an individual, Benjamin proceeds with “memoire involontaire” and “memoire pure” as well as the idea of “durée” (duration/length), and kaleidoscopic space having consciousness of its own.

to understand collective, autonomic or discursive phenomena. For Latour, semioticians avoid trying to get to grips with referent and context as a problematic duality. Therefore the “semimotical study of signs” cannot reach quasi objects as such, and furthermore social and discursive are divided only to rhetoric of establishing the research itself over and over again. (Latour, 2006: 107).<sup>275</sup>

In another article in this same volume by Merja Salo, the problematics with Lauri Eriksson’s image are in a sense similar. Following Latour’s idea of hyper-incommensurability, the problem is this: how to analyse something that is by nature collective, discursive, autonomic by form, unstable and fragile? In her remarks Salo proceeds to womanhood, beauty, posing as a practice and décor in the image to interpret the meaning and “its remote connection to religious images”. She reminds us that in the absence of a proper empirical study of the reception of the image, the understanding of that image is necessarily limited. I started my own contribution by pointing out some details in the advertising image that I am discussing here. Metaphorization leaves us both, Salo and myself, pondering or even vacillating between multiple references and the predications we would follow in our readings.<sup>276</sup> Goodman (1976: 272) calls for a semantic study of a metaphor and a schema of split reference.

We still have one important detail in this presentation to deal with, i.e. the pink ribbon in the lower left hand corner together with the name of the magazine running this campaign. Rather than trying to decide whether this representation is precise enough as a sign/code structure (semiotic approach), we can study this “pirate woman image” as an illustration. In writing about metaphor, Paul Ricoeur (2003: 70) explains how “...analogy works within the ‘figures of construction’, the ‘figures of elocution’, and the ‘figures of style’. ... figures of thought themselves come close to metaphor and analogy.” For Ricoeur, this vast domain of analogy could be reconstructed by confining metaphor within the tropes by detaching it from linguistic activity in order to attach it to the central act of discourse, namely, predication.

When one looks at this image it makes no difference whether or not one has made the connection to breast cancer before noticing the pink ribbon, or on the contrary, if one did not need to see that symbol to make this connection, this fluency of reading the “ambivalent meaning does not question the study of the image. This challenges us to understand the meaning in visual presentation as predication. It challenges us to a rhetorical study based on the understanding of

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<sup>275</sup> On quasi objects, see Latour (2006: 88 -94) By a quasi object, Latour calls for a new thinking to deny the divisions between “society and objects” and to get out of dialectics that he finds a circular and as such empty in terms of understanding phenomena which are social and produced instead “natural” as modern thinking have labeled them. In advertising, this production aspect of an object is quite easy to agree.

<sup>276</sup> By accepting the challenge by Latour and to the direction of Goodman, this image of a standing woman can be taken as an image participating to “visual culture” (photograph?), or in media, and not only as an image to a certain genre, but in to time and technology too (digitally manipulated advertising photography). As a “homo aestheticus” I can reflect myself or my desires to it; I want her, I want to be her ... or politicize it and get a reason to ignore or disagree with it.

“pronounced” visual argument represented/illustrated in a chosen style, figure, function, and time.

Just a few years ago, this image of “a challenging woman” might have been ignored (as Harlin’s film was), even seen as a piece of tasteless advertising. And it may well be that in just a few years’ time we will see how the very same illustration may well appear “outdated” and still both familiar and time-bound at the same time. That important variation in time and perception of every media image makes a “researcher’s reading” very demanding, as it is expected to see and name the context to which the interpretations are connected.<sup>277</sup> As the image itself, like the “pirate” here, may have strong and rich connections for interpretation, the interpretation may follow predication in a given time and reconnect in some other.<sup>278</sup>

Merja Salo suggests an empirical research to enrich our understanding of these images, while Bruno Latour calls for a whole new paradigm to study “quasi objects” and “subjects as networks”. In terms of rhetoric and the visual, and media images particular, we can formulate a starting-point for study of a meaning A multiple reference, or predication located to a context and uses can open the practices of meaning, to a theoretical discussion of illustration. In terms of theory a visual argument as construction can be located and by that we can make an opening to aesthetics in illustration.<sup>279</sup> As Latour does not give much for a method, my way of accepting this challenge is to return to the rhetoric.

### 7.3 Towards Visual Rhetorics

The strongest individual detail in this image is the eye patch, which instead of covering a lost eye has been lowered to cover the woman’s breast. This is at once the detail that places the image in dialogue with the symbol of the pink ribbon. It may be just another stylistic gesture, but the reading of the eye patch still leaves little room for other interpretations than that “something is lost”. The trope is evidently strong, as are the given metaphorical connections both to the notion of being an outlaw pirate and to having something missing in one’s body. At the same time, posing (see Salo’s text), arranging the image to create a certain composition, with the eye patch lowered to the woman’s breast, leaving her concentrated brave gaze exposed to the viewer and even higher, over the lens and avoiding eye contact by looking over the viewer of the advertisement –

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<sup>277</sup> Urpo Kovala (2001: 145) has suggested that practice itself can be foundational in terms of meaning by serving “as the source and support of the kind of tacit knowledge concerning meaning and interpretation.”

<sup>278</sup> The conclusions Guy Debord (2005: 33) gives for “*A Society of Spectacle*” comments and support temporality as “nothing but a formation of a certain economical practice and society, its’ mind and its schedule.”

<sup>279</sup> The developments in photographic practice, at least in Finland, have mobilized aesthetics to a dialogue or a interaction between different genres. This has happened in journalism, in advertising and in photographic art, too. Robert Goldman (1992: 173-74) returns the responsibility to understand advertising images to the audience as semioticians”.



all of these have strong interpretations which connect outside of actually quite literal idea of a pirate. Predications are arranged into a multiple reference. I have shown this image several times to a number of different people, some of whom are familiar with visual design and advertising, others completely ignorant of this kind of production (of meaning), and their interpretations provide some intriguing anecdotes. First of all it is clear that it is much easier for women to follow and accept this image than it is for men. Secondly, the loss of a detail, even an important one does not necessarily mean that the challenge, bravery, the "atmosphere" in the image is lost. One person I showed the image rambled on about its various elements, and eventually concentrated to wonder why she (the pirate woman in the image) did wear such a funny and ugly looking bikini - and by concentrating his whole attention to this fascinating detail, he was not able to make any connection to the metaphors and predication in that image.

A carefully produced image that at first glance seems to be a nice idea of "The pirates are coming", ends up to be a strong and even demanding allegory of a painful issue in medical care and social policy, and at the same time in terms of rhetoric and a (visual) argument strong enough to awake compassion, but most probably feelings of anger\_too. As for predication and multiple references, individual interpretations of separate elements of the very same image, can be so far away from one after another. And most importantly, this diverse richness in content does not call into question the essence of interpretation of this photography-like image of media illustration. For semiotics, this is a dead end; for rhetorics, it is an important element of visual eloquence.

## **Appendix**

### **KENNEDY'S LIST OF RHETORICAL OPERATIONS**

Allegory

Anachronism

Anticlimax

Euphemism

Hendiadys

Hyperbola

Catachresis

Cliché

Litotes

Meiosis

Metonymy

Oxymoron

Parenthesis

Paronomasia

Persiflage

Personification

Prolepsis

Synecdoche

(Author's remark, Kennedy's list does not include for example Irony.)

## TIIVISTELMÄ

**Lehtonen, Kimmo E.**

### **VISUAALISEN RETOORIIKKA – Metafora Still-kuvan tarkastelussa**

Tutkimus perustuu kuuteen artikkeliin, joissa käsitellään visuaalisen merkityksen ongelmaa intensiivisenä kuvan sisällöllisenä tekijänä. Tutkimuksen keskeisenä kysymyksenä on mediakuvan tapa esittää itsensä ja myös se, missä määrin mediakuva metaforisoituu suhteessa genreen tullessaan julkaistuksi. Samalla kysytään voidaanko tällainen visuaalinen esitys tulkita argumentiksi? Päämääränä on luoda nykykulttuurintutkimukseen uusia analyttisiä ideoita visuaalisen esityksen sisällön analyysiin retoriikan käsiteapparaattia hyödyntäen. Tutkimuksessa kommentoidaan semiotiikkaa ja genretutkimusta muun muassa viestinnän- ja nykykulttuurintutkimuksissa.

Tarkastelu perustuu useisiin teoreettisiin traditioihin, erityisesti semiotiikan, retoriikan ja hermeneutiikan lähtökohtien yhteen saattamiseen. Työ tarkastelee yleisöjen määrittymistä visuaalisen kulttuurin retoristen tekijöiden suhteen ja sitä kuinka erityisesti valokuvan ja retoriikan yhteys voidaan osoittaa eetoksen, teknologian ja erilaisten taiteen kuvastojen trooppien välillä. Ideologian ja visuaalisen esityksen, erityisesti nykyvalokuvataiteen idiosynkraattisten maiseman esitysten, mainonnan ja valokuvataiteen välistä yhteyttä tarkastellaan esteettisen monimuotoistuneen roolin ja merkityksellistämisen prosessien näkökulmasta. Tarkastelun fokus on kuvan multimodaalisten ominaisuuksien ja erilaisten traditioiden yhteen kietoutumisessa, ja näiden yhteydessä myöhäismodernin kulttuuriin. Tämä ilmiö avataan monikerroksisten referenssien, metaforisen ja visuaalisen retoriikan kautta, osin troopin ja predikaation käsitteiden kritiikkinä.

Artikkeleissa esitettyjen empiiristen havaintojen lisäksi tutkimuksessa on yhdeksän kuvan retoristen operaatioiden ominaisuuksien analyysit jotka kuvaavat kolmen visuaalisen kulttuurin genren sisällöllistä vuorovaikutusta.

Avainsanat: visuaalinen kulttuuri, valokuva, informaatiografiikka, mainonta, semiotiikka, retoriikka, taideteoria, estetiikka.

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