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A FACE WITHOUT PHOTOGRAPHY

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YÜZSÜZ BIR FOTOĞRAFÇILIK

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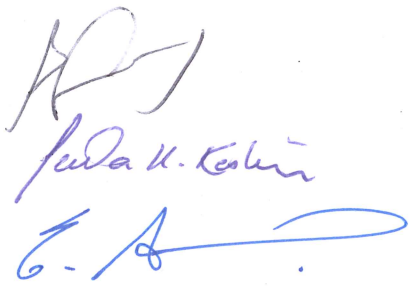

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name: Yavuz Erkan

Signature: 

To all my faceless beloveds, past and future-present

,

without whom I could not

get there and do (n)one proud.

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ABSTRACT

A Face Without Photography

My thesis' concern is to deviate from the representational premises of the face and attend to the unattainability of its absolute depiction within photography. Consider ID cards or imagine social media platforms, the face is representative of a person's entirety, mainly pictured to project a fixed appearance. 'As is' mug shots define the particularities of lawbreakers, engineered self-portraits show deceptive outward appearances. However, the crux of my argument does not involve renouncing the practices of photography. On the contrary, it is a proactive call for action to photograph the face beyond what is visible or visually intelligible. By refraining from a one-sided, conclusive point that adopts photography either as a progressive or a pejorative extension of the eye, my contention probes for the inconceivable: to conceptualise a faceless photograph. By attending to texts and works of art, which are not always photographs but are mindful of photography, I propose to photograph the face anew (in the) everyday, until how it used to appear in plain sight reappears as anything, but not as a single everything.

Keywords: Photography, Face, Representation, Body, Body without Organs

ÖZET

Yüzsüz Bir Fotoğrafçılık

Bu tez çalışmasının sorunsalı yüzün temsil edilebilirliğinden uzaklaşarak, fotoğraftaki mutlak tasvirinin olanaksızlığı üzerine kurulmuştur. Kimlik kartları ya da sosyal medya platformları düşünüldüğünde, sabitlenmiş ve belirli bir görünümü yansıtmak üzerinden resmedilen yüzün fotoğrafı insanın kimliksel bütünlüğünün temsili bir aracıdır. Mesela 'olduğu gibi' gösterilen sabıka fotoğrafları suçluların ayırt edici özellikleri için belirleyicidir. Kişinin kendi fotoğrafını planlayarak, düzenleyip çektiği selfie'lerde ise yanıltıcı bir dış görünüş sergilenir. Bütün bunlara rağmen, bu tezin öne sürdüğü argümanın merkezinde fotoğrafçılık pratiği reddedilmemektedir. Aksine, tezin savunduğu nokta proaktif bir eylem ve eyleme biçimi olarak yüzü görünen ve anlaşılır olanın ötesinde fotoğraflama düşüncesini içerir. Gözü, kötüleyici ya da ilerici bir uzam, ya da bilme odaklı bir genişleme aracı olarak gören tek taraflı, sonuç odaklı bir düşünce biçiminden uzak durarak, bu tezin fotoğrafla beraber düşünülen tartışma konusu kavranılamaz olanı, yani kavramsal olarak yüzsüz bir fotoğrafı içinde barındırır. Kendisi her zaman fotoğraf olmayan ama fotoğrafçılık mecrasına duyarlı metinsel ve görsel örneklere başvurarak gerçekleştirilen bu çalışmada, yüzün günlük yaşamın içerisinde yeniden fotoğraflanması önerilir - yalın görüş alanında beliren halinin, tek her şey olarak değil, herhangi bir şey olarak yeniden belirdiği şekilsiz şekliyle.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Fotoğrafçılık, Yüz, Temsil, Beden, Organsız Beden

INTRODUCTION

We live amongst a perplexing post-publicity image society, governed by a systematic language comprised of coveted signs and symbols. Photography is perceived as a mode of (dis)orderly communication, an utterance of commonality, although being subject to (mis)interpretation or (mis)appropriation. It automatically translates ocular and cognitive views into an instantaneously accessible material presence. Seen in this way, we consume images as a function of our photographic (in)sensitivity. Ever so much apart, virtually never as a part of the body, we predominantly photograph the face to preserve our mnemonic sensibility. What we know of a person becomes how we record to recall a face. The camera is a tool that informs a lot, and we make use of it as an extension of the eye that lies in wait for the face. Hackneyed and probable, these photographs then activate the perception of a static body image and identity. They act as a two-way mirror, through which we apprehend and project our echoed exteriority. For those conveniently illiterate, representation of the face becomes a visible façade and a resting place for the head, body, and soul tripartite. But strictly speaking, neither a single photograph nor a multitude of its disparate facsimiles can reduce the face to a probable linearity.

This study is conducted through text and image analysis. It is concerned with uses and readings of photographic representation, in particular of the (criminal) face that concerns the body as a whole. After having majored in photographic practice and its theoretical criticism at the art college, I got interested in conceptualization of photography, more specifically photographs of constructed banalities or failures that decontextualize a set of already existing relations by posing them with visually ambiguous affiliations. Thus far, numerous artists made works relating to the non-representational aesthetics of photography, especially after the *post-medium*[1]

[1] This is a term coined in by Rosalind Krauss. She defined the medium as a fiction – something that moves across all borders, a form of differential specificity – both revealing and hiding reality simultaneously and acknowledging this incompleteness and complexity of its origin. Following the demise of Clement Greenberg's medium-specificity (singularly collapsing the medium into one) and the rise of conceptual art and its postmodern derivatives, since the 1960s photography entered (de-ghettoized) into galleries as a dominant art form in the guise of an anti-aesthetic,

condition in contemporary art, but not many artist-scholars published critical studies of their theoretical underpinnings, detailing the social and cultural impact in the rise of such photography. Therefore, this study will give insight to the aesthetic and anti-aesthetic potential of the face, unburdening the possibilities of photographic image and identity from their representational legacy.

The first chapter is structured as follows. I begin the discussion with the distinction between traditional and technical images that Vilém Flusser deliberates upon. To scrutinize photography's widely established use of objectivity, I sketch out the genealogy of all devised conditions with which a technical image (a photograph) necessitates to behave as such. With that in place, I briefly turn to the subjectivity of his-stories of the medium. Here, I draw attention to the photography's historical reciprocity of revealing and concealing. Then, following in the footsteps of scholars such as Allan Sekula and John Tagg, I turn to focus on a photograph's document value and its representational use on criminal procedures concerning its evidentiary power. In doing so, my contextualisation will be driven by criminal identification photographs and the systematic ways in which institutions categorise visual information. I suggest that the police department and photographic archives are influential in establishing the representational codes of a docile body. Putting these disciplinary implications aside, photography also offers the pictorial tradition of (self)representation to a much broader stratum. After Sekula, I call this doubly convenient nature of the medium as its 'promise and threat'. The rest of the chapter is mostly reserved for Roland Barthes' *Camera Lucida* and Walter Benjamin's *Little History of Photography*. First, I turn to Barthes' thingness in photography to reconsider one's personal relationship to a photograph of unknown origins. It is at this point that the visual profiling of previously discussed disciplinarian photographic methods begins to show their infiltrating social power of facial praising for beloved ones. Ruling this as expected, I turn back to Tagg and argue

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theoretical object. For more on this, see Krauss' *A Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition* (2000). The consequential "anti-theatricality" argument by Michael Fried is based upon contemporary photographers, who seek to restore the aesthetics of beauty while sustaining the critical distance of neo-conceptual and anti-aesthetic aspects of postmodernity.

that the institutional power exerted on the body is constituent of a capitalist market economy. By just producing a photograph, photography wields and maintains power ever true to its referent. Towards the conclusion, I turn to Benjamin's familiar term 'aura'. Although complex in his articulation, I discuss it in light of Diarmud Costello's critical reception and focus on the significance of the 'auratic' face in Benjamin's argument.

The second chapter begins with a photographic example by Jeff Wall (along with his essay on analogy), one that which is structured around the formlessness of liquids, its photographic depiction, and the intelligence of chemical photography. Hereby, my aim is to revisit the affects of outmoded processes in which invisible ways of image-making still plays an essential part of photography and photographs labelled as consumable/digital objects. With that in place, to think anew about the medium, I briefly turn to Georges Bataille's definition of *L'informe* and Kaja Silverman's account of early camera obscura models, whereby she positions the body and shifts vision in relation to the image formed on a static surface. Reconsidering photographic words such as produce, take, and receive I ask rhetorical questions around 'forms of' and 'formations in' photography. In doing so, I raise again the issue of representation. Through the conceptualisation of Jacques Rancière's regimes in art, I scrutinise the representative and aesthetic order. Hereby, even though, my contention will be against his in the possibility of all being equally representable, I wish to consider Rancière's line of reasoning to come up with a model beyond the sensible on a representational level, and how to distribute its politics amongst the common domain and everyday experience of photography. The rest of the paper seeks for such photographic possibility – an orderless structure of depiction (if there is any) –in Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's musings about 'a body without organs' and 'abstract machine of faciality'. Using Antonin Artuad's radio play *To Have Done with the Judgement of God* as a cacophonic stimulant text, and Susan Sontag's introductory text on Artaud's practice (and personal life), I try to find an inconclusive answer (for conceptualising a faceless photograph), not just

in thinking around photography, but also in the dosages of being and becoming a photograph by making one.

CHAPTER 1. THE BURDEN OF REPRESENTATION

1.1. IMAGES: FROM TRADITIONAL TO TECHNICAL

In *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*, before categorically separating the photograph as a technical image, Vilém Flusser defines images as "connotative (ambiguous) complexes of symbols" whose intentionally structured materiality allows for an interpretation, as one scans its surface for significance.[2] Upon its readability, then these traditional images function as map for making the world around us visually more comprehensible. However, once the mutual significance is granted to a particular element in the image, based upon our temporal and spatial associations repetitively performed in the activity of looking,[3] then the image causes a state of *idolatry*.[4] In this way, they become mobile screens, and

> [i]nstead of representing the world, they obscure it until human beings' lives finally become a function of the images they create. Human beings cease to decode the images and instead project them, still encoded, into the world 'out there'.[5]

In order to combat such a state of decryption latency, whereby human beings are blindfolded and trapped inside the semantic content of the images that they created, writing was invented precisely to explain away images. And, as an adversary effect of the aforementioned image worshipping crisis, in writing, this time

> human beings took one step further back from the world. Texts do not signify the world; they signify the images they tear up. Hence, to decode texts means to discover the images signified by them. ... In this way, texts are a *metacode* [emphasis added] of images.[6]

At first sight, this interconnectedness between the texts and images indicate a hierarchical opposition, however they reciprocally enable each other. A text explains an image, which illustrates the text that it explains. But, just like images,

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[2] Vilém Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*, trans. Anthony Mathews, (London: Reaktion Books, 2000), 8.
[3] Ibid., 8–10.
[4] Ibid., 83. In Flusser's lexicon *idolatry* is "the inability to read off ideas from the elements of the image, despite the ability to read these elements themselves; hence: worship of images."
[5] Ibid., 10.
[6] Ibid., 11.

texts also have the tendency to fall short of their comprehensibility. As Flusser remarks, they cause a *textolatry*[7] condition due to conceptual thinking's more abstract grounds decrypting pictorial imagery.[8] Photography, as technical images, is introduced as a means to enable the harmony in-between, redeeming human beings from their mind-incapacitating nature in favour of "a progressive process of comprehension".[9] Seen in this way, a photograph can be a material trace, sensible embodiment, or the visual equivalent of (or any combination thereof) what the camera's lens registers in the digital imaging sensor or on celluloid film.

1.2. PHOTOGRAPHIC HIS-STORIES

> "IT IS AS IMPOSSIBLE to know when photography began as it is to know when our first ancestors opened their eyes, but if we were able to locate one of these events, we would not have to search long for the other."[10]

In *The Miracle of Analogy or The History of Photography, Part 1*, this is how Kaja Silverman begins her first chapter – *The Second Coming*. Since its inception, historians have long struggled to assign a date of origin on photography. A temporal fixity is made necessary to sustain its legitimacy, as if photography's Messianic power reverberates within the historicity of its history. Contra to this view, and bearing in mind Walter Benjamin's proposition that "the past can be seized only as an image which flashes up at the instant when it can be recognized and is never seen again",[11] I consider the continuum of photography with "cautious detachment" instead. By following Benjamin's conception of the historical materialist, I wish to "brush [photographic] history against the grain" and contest its monolithic nature –

[7] Ibid., 85. In Flusser's lexicon *textolatry* is "the inability to read off concepts from the written signs of a text, despite the ability to read these written signs; hence: worship of the text."
[8] Ibid., 11–12.
[9] Ibid., 13.
[10] Kaja Silverman, "The Second Coming," in *The Miracle of Analogy or The History of Photography, Part 1*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015), 13.
[11] Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn. (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 255.

one that chronicles momentous occasions of "homogenous, empty time" authored only by victors.[12]

Similarly, in *Burning With Desire*, Geoffrey Batchen is also set to explore the identit*ies* of photography in the histor*ies* (emphasis added) of its origins, between formalism and post-modernism.[13] Later, in *Each Wild Idea: Writing, Photography, History*, what he implies with the term 'Post-Photography' is that the boundary between photography and other media becomes porous; each one generously borrowing from, collaborating with, referencing, or deconstructing one another. As photography's indexical relationship with the real becomes obsolete this way, the medium is about to lose its autonomy because such interconnectedness leaves the "photographic residing everywhere, but nowhere in particular".[14] This claim re-introduces the ever present issue of photography, that the medium's identity is problematic. Post-photography is the questioning of the medium's established preconceptions in order to reconsider the following: What constitutes a photograph? With the emergence of conceptual art, a term that came into use in the late 1960s, Batchen analyses artwork*s* (sculptural in nature) that challenge the photographic medium's identity. Two points worth noting in his analysis include "objectness of the photograph" and "space and time" (spatiality) within the photograph.[15] With the former, we are forced to look at photography instead of through it. The latter point, shown through Jennifer Bolande's *Milk Crown* (see Figure 1.1), highlights the sensible distinction between past and present moment; the very crucial intermediary

[12] Ibid., 256–257, 262. Benjamin develops the concept of 'historical materialism' as a way to approach to the present (and future) moment, with the hindsight of the past. According to it, the traditional history's linear cause-effect relationship and the written/established facts that all events are composed of a 'progressive' motion is not valid anymore. These events/facts, piled up as a debris reaching to the sky, necessitate a new mode of looking into the history. He gives the visual example of a painting by Paul Klee, called *Angelus Novus* (1920). The painting shows an angel who is about to move away from the thing s/he fixedly stares at. There is a storm (called 'progress'), to which his/her back is turned, keeps the angel's wings from closing, and propels him/her into the future. Hereby, the angel stands for the historical materialist, who understands the illusion and/or incompleteness of the history.

[13] Geoffrey Batchen, "Identity," in *Burning with Desire: Conception of Photography*, (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1997), 21.

[14] Batchen, "Post-Photography," in *Each Wild Idea: Writing, Photography, History*, (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2002), 109.

[15] Ibid., 109 & 111.

concept that the medium's indexicality is reliant upon. The sculptural work of a milk droplet (formed at the frozen moment in time) puts the medium's privileged two-dimensionality into question. Embodied into the sculpted object with its photographic referent (one that which can be photographed by anyone), Bolande's work questions 'how does photography consume time and represent the existing' by blurring the boundaries between sculptural presence and photographic absence.

Strictly speaking, these intentionally pluralised notions (histories, identities, or artworks) function as singular and subjective entities for the governing ideologies in the everyday practices and institutional contexts that make use of photography as the state-of-the-art technology. If there is any temporal history to it (or an identity of it is to be probed), it is the conception of a photograph being "a *visual* document of ownership", which is born out of the necessity to define truth as a physical index.[16] Suitably, as I wish to argue, the "Year Zero"[17] of photography corresponds to its representational use as a law-binding document on criminal procedures in the legal field. Together with the role of the expert, who is to construct a system of persuasion as a "rationalised act of interpretation",[18] the metric photography of crime scenes[19] from the 19th century raise the status of the image to a veritable fact.

[16] Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," *October* 39 (1986): 6, accessed March 26, 2014, http://www.jstor.org/.

[17] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, "Year Zero: Faciality," in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 182. Deleuze and Guattari uses the analogy of 'Year Zero' as the starting point for faciality, and the representation of Christ corresponds as a landmark in the construction of the subject *I*.

[18] Allan Sekula, "The Instrumental Image: Steichen at War," in *Photography Against the Grain: Essays and Photo Works, 1973-1983* (Halifax: Press of Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1984), 35, accessed February 13, 2017, https://archive.org/. Sekula makes use of the role of the expert in relation to map readings (interpretation) from Aerial photography during the First World War, and I find the vantage point of metric photography relational to Aerial photography. Seeing the field from above grants a certain disposition for the onlooker, granting the mind the power to know. Since the visual input created with technical images cannot be read by untrained eyes, a trained expert was necessary to interpret the photographs as comprehensible. This way, interpretation is (formally) rationalised and (covertly) taken up as an essential constituent of the photographic medium in the everyday.

[19] For a number of metric photographs of the deceased, all shot from an aerial viewpoint, please see the book *Images of Conviction: The Construction of Visual Evidence*, trans. John Tittensor (Paris: LE BAL / Éditions Xavier Barral, 2015), 23–35. The images shown in the book (which was the publication of the exhibition at The Photographer's Gallery in London during 02.10.2015–20.01.2016) come from the Service de l'Identité Judiciaire at the Prefecture de Police in Paris.

Seeing (a record) is made into believing. Nonetheless, the medium's visual integrity remains multifaceted and its historic records also vary. "Into the substance of the image are etched a host of clear indicators along with other imprecise ones: significant details is mixed with illusion", Diane Dufour remarks.[20] There are several court hearings & judge verdicts (*i.e.* the Mumler case, case *Cowley* v. *People*),[21] or artists[22] that doubt about photographic documentation as evidentiary (mis)representation. There is always an ambiguity between how the mechanical eye records and what its human counterpart sees. Not every photograph sustains the legitimacy that it claims or mirrors what it shows. Irrespective of its cultural context, either it be a digital manipulation or a chemical accident, a photograph reveals and conceals ad infinitum. "Every disclosure is a partial concealment – that nothing ever stands fully exposed before us."[23] Photography's political economy and structural integrity is reliant on its reciprocity.

1.3. THE CONSTRUCTION OF VISUAL EVIDENCE

One of the burning issues of photography lies in a photograph's coexistent capacity to reveal and accountability to validate. Each material and every virtual photograph permits an approximation of an opinion that may function as a definitive judgment. The medium is a contingency sensitive, ever-evolving apparatus that functions to record, equate, and allocate. Made possible with the rules of optics, it is both machine-driven and man-made. Exceeding the boundaries beyond this technology, supportive evidentiary materials such as maps, illustrations, diagrams also emerged.

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[20] Diane Dufour, "Introduction," in *Images of Conviction: The Construction of Visual Evidence*, trans. John Tittensor (Paris: LE BAL / Éditions Xavier Barral, 2015), 5.
[21] Jennifer L. Mnookin, "The Image of Truth: Photographic Evidence and the Power of Analogy," in *Images of Conviction: The Construction of Visual Evidence*, trans. John Tittensor (Paris: LE BAL / Éditions Xavier Barral, 2015), 10–13.
[22] Taryn Simon, a multidisciplinary artist working with photography, text, sculpture, and performance, produced a photographic series titled *The Innocents* (2008). The series' publication displays faces of police mug shots in a grid on its cover. These faces, who have been wrongfully convicted because of mistaken photographic identification or line-ups as carried out by witness testimonies' falsifiable visual memory, have been (re)photographed by Simon in their alibi location, as a way to present the double nature of photography.
[23] Silverman, "Unstoppable Development," 47.

The demonstrative "evidence was something to be *constructed* as well as collected" for the courtroom.[24] Yet, photographs also withhold certain details that exceed the capacity of eyesight, generates attributable contexts (ill)suited for institutional procedures, attains temporal lockdowns beyond the past moments, or summons mnemonic narratives of ghostly matters.[25] In a nutshell, photography's ways and means go with the current.

1.3.1. Photography and the Police Department

One pressing field to instantly implement the photographic apparatus was the police department. As a mechanically produced indexical sign charged with truth claims and fostered with scientific positivism, the camera is put in place to make factual copies of the real (crime scene photographs) as forensic evidence. Spread into other fields and uses, its systematised practise helps to construct the visual identity of the criminal body. In light of these opening remarks, the following passage charts how the face is photographed and normalised by the workings of police photography, which makes use of anthropometric camerawork to delineate human vision and characterise visual information.

In *The Body and the Archive*, Allan Sekula posits photography, or more specifically photographic portraiture, as a reciprocally operative agent between the bourgeois and sub-proletariat. Favouring the former's area of authority over the other, he commences his argument by associating the paradoxical nature of photography as a "simultaneous threat and promise of the new medium" in a timeline that precedes the proliferation of daguerreotypes.[26] Before broadening the discussion of such a rhetorically rich diametric opposition, it is vital to regard the historical conditions he positions the medium into. Against the notion that photography is the harbinger

[24] Mnookin, "The Image of Truth: Photographic Evidence and the Power of Analogy," 14.
[25] Throughout the thesis, as a sub-text without naming them as examples, I want to include varying degrees of contextual ambiguity that photographic images are capable of offering past beyond their visual accounts. The last mention, that of 'ghostly matters', refers to a previously written text about the Affect of a found-image discussing photography's melancholy inducing effect.
[26] Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 3.

of modernity, Sekula states that the medium is born into an already existing set of modernisation efforts and legislative inquiries about systematising and standardising penal procedures *i.e.* the Metropolitan Police Acts of 1829 and 1839 effective across England.[27] Although photographic records of criminals were not common until the 1960s, as he claims, his initial remarks put an emphasis on how photography played a crucial role in establishing "a new social order" as much as causing cultural anarchy.[28] To paint a picture that encompasses the inclusivity of its popularity, he attends to the public expose of the medium playing the part of an undercover agent for social security.

The first case in point he refers to is a witty street song, sung in the streets of London when the French government announced the daguerreotype in 1839. Thinking in consideration with contemporaneous ways of being seen/heard (online social media and networking platforms, blogs, photo-sharing websites), a song is an effective mode of address in order to broadcast the intensities and/or shortcomings of the medium that is newly introduced to the public. Having a consumerist emphasis, one that which helps to imagine industrial ambitions and conditions thereof, Sekula's mainstream reference is a valid choice to build upon for creating analogous contexts that other photographic representations trigger (ID photos and selfies). It is also appropriate to acknowledge that since photography is offered as an affordable technology to supersede the likeness a painting exhibits or the accuracy a drawing requires; the extended version of the street song communicates the emancipation of pictorial representation from the traditions of bourgeois culture (portraits destined for the mantelpiece, landscapes admired in the art museums). However, the threat that Sekula refers to is neither the commonality of its practice (class levelling effect) nor the reproducibility of its nature (demise of an artwork's aura). The song's revelatory tone in the third verse is as follows:

[27] Ibid., 4. In the 1839 Police act, as a regulatory measure to purge the streets from societal outcasts, there was a provision to take unregistered and unidentifiable people into custody. The year 1839 also coincides with the public announcement of daguerreotype, as he further discusses the medium's legislative role.
[28] Ibid., 4–5.

> The new Police Act will *take down* each fact
> That occurs in its wide jurisdiction
> And each beggar and thief in the boldest relief
> Will be *giving a color* to fiction.[29]

While these lines introduce people to the new medium's institutional authority, Sekula outlines the aforementioned threat in "the potential for a new juridical photographic realism".[30]

Soon after making such a bold statement, Sekula supports the triviality of the song reference with a canonical figure from the history of photography. He emphasises the implications of the new medium that contribute to the legislative truth claims in Henry Fox Talbot's notes about a particular photographic plate from *The Pencil of Nature*.[31] The image he is referring to, *Articles of China* (1844), is a frontal display of variously shaped and sized ornate items (see Figure 1.2). These hand-painted porcelains, as household objects typifying the obsession of Bourgeois dignity, are neatly placed on four shelves and presented all at once in a single photograph. Instead of making a written account of all the intricate forms and patterns that these items bear, he favours the power of photography over the textual/oral record. Advocating the accuracy and time-based economy of the medium, Talbot stakes a claim that "should a thief afterwards purloin the treasures—if the mute testimony of the picture were to be produced against him in court—it would certainly be evidence of a novel kind."[32] Neither a technical drawing nor a graphic itemization is capable of possessing this kind of unequivocal authority. A culprit's statement goes against the grain and the visual image grows into a legal document starting from the 19th century. This is what Allan Sekula calls "a new *instrumental* potential in photography: a silence that silences".[33] Seen in this way, a criminal body can

[29] Ibid., 4. (Quoted from Helmut & Alison Gernsheim, L. J. M. Daguerre: The History of the Diorama and the Daguerreotype, New York, Dover Publications, 1968, p. 105).
[30] Ibid., 5. Also, at a point later to be discussed, John Tagg addresses photography's document value as a threat in the emergence of new institutions of knowledge that photography is set to function amongst.
[31] Ibid., 5–6.
[32] William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, 1844, facsimile edition by The Project Gutenberg, 2010, pl. 3, n.p., accessed December 31, 2016, http://www.monoskop.org/.
[33] Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 6.

now be defined by photographically identifiable dissimilarities and likenesses that all faces embody, so that a more extensive social body can be invented for the welfare of public.

What constitutes the silence or silencing effect that Sekula associates photography with? How does it relate to the representation of the social body? For a moment, consider silence through the stillness of photographic vision. Until the invention of photography, (visual) information can only be recorded through people's vocational expertise reliant on personal observation, reflection, perception, and recollection. Recording the scene as seen from the spatiotemporal position that the photograph is taken, the camera provides an all-encompassing levelling effect, bearing the same amount of optical and operational inconstancy. Unbeknownst to Daguerre, the medium yields a fixed display and continuum of automated authenticity, seemingly eliminating the variable human factor. Whilst photography's institutional voice is charged with concerting the tonal range of dissonance, a photograph is rendered mute by the possibility of its say-so effect. Once photographed, a face can no longer preserve the unattainability of its versatile nature. It becomes an actual and current record, viable as a product.

1.3.2. What is doubly convenient in photography?

Whether it is a skill offender or an aura negator, both in relation to the pictorial tradition of painting, photography is the harbinger of a new visual economy – one that is casually centred around fixation and regulation, rather than its dormant emancipatory currency. Portraiture is the product of a system of representation that operates both "*honorifically* and *repressively*".[34] As Sekula suggests, by merging the two functions together, "photography could be assigned to a proper role within a new hierarchy of taste", one that introduces "the panoptic principle into daily life" with a vertically mobile gaze directed at one's betters or inferiors.[35] Considering

[34] Ibid., 6–7.
[35] Ibid., 6–10.

the connections between these opposing poles, and as Sekula refers to (following a Foucauldian discourse),[36] it is not enough to explain the power of photography only as a regulatory, repressive tool. The camera is an instrument that provides both societal discipline and public pleasure. Akin to the promise and threat argument the medium relates to, photographing the face is a doubly convenient practice. It incites both aspiration and apprehension, enabling the arrest of its referent literally behind the prison by faithful realism or symbolically in commercial images with stylised idealism.

If the answer is a question of consumer promiscuity, concerning the medium's aforementioned subtlety, 'who can photograph' comes to mind first. Photography extends the tradition of representation (in painting) to a much broader stratum. The privilege of possessing a depictive likeness becomes attainable by anyone, including the underprivileged, who has access to the camera. A (self-)portrait's visually clear titular registry generates self importance, together with and despite of an 'othering' gaze. At first sight, this egalitarian move seems to provide a destabilising effect on the veneration of the bourgeois face. Public access to the photographic equipment and services initially generates a much broader range of and chance for being visible.[37] However, institutional development of photography as a technology of surveillance and record-keeping is set to function in the opposite direction. These contribute to the establishment of the medium's twin nature, and another question of 'how and where' the photograph socialises as the finger-pointing agent demands further inquiry. Along with the invisible bodies (that of poor, diseased, insane, criminal, non-white, female, or every 'other' community imaginable), images of political leaders, famous figures, and law-abiding citizens become a visual marker to fall for or stay away from. Publicising faces via print

[36] Ibid., 7–8.
[37] As a matter of self-sustainability, technology always operates to outpace the already existing products so that other and better privileges could easily be established. Image making devices of such instrumental realism contribute to societal cut-offs as newer versions always remain exclusive to a particular social stratum. I particularly refer to a more attractive 'selfie' made with high-end smart phones with better front cameras and photo-editing applications (pay to play) that can touch up facial blemishes.

media sets the moral code for an appropriate look. Studio portraits in family albums also serve well as products of cultural sophistication and create sentimental ties within the family, especially amongst the migrant/distant ones.

1.3.3. Criminal identification photographs

Photographing the face as such creates a socially cohesive framework for the police department to adopt its already in-effect capillary forms of power. With the help of anatomical and medical illustration, behind closed doors, the medium advances as a utilitarian tool that can define "the terrain of the *other*" and every [self-]portrait in the everyday "has its lurking, objectifying inverse in the files of the police."[38] If a mechanical device creates plethora of life-like images or present a comprehensive look of diversity in a working-class society,[39] can we then consider photographic documentation of the face as a system to position and contain the individuals within an organised, all-inclusive social body?

Although Sekula continues to analyse the significance of portraiture in class terms, marking it mostly as a petit-bourgeois issue of photography, it is compelling to follow his argument in terms of how social and moral hierarchy is established during the mid-nineteenth century through the images of the criminal body, the face in particular. Most striking in his consideration is the insistence on recognizing physiognomy and phrenology as a point of convergence for understanding the 'art' of photographic portraiture and the 'power' of the image. He writes:

> In claiming to provide a means for distinguishing the stigmata of vice from the shining marks of virtue, physiognomy and phrenology offered an essential hermeneutic service to a world of fleeting and often anonymous market transactions. Here was a method for quickly assessing the character of strangers in dangerous and congested spaces

[38] Ibid., 7.
[39] Starting from the early 1920s until his death in 1964, August Sander took portraits of German citizens and categorised them by type and occupation. The resulting body of work, *People of the 20th Century* (*Menschen des 20. Jahrhunderts*), is a wide range of selection and visual record of German populace, including labourers, circus performers, and businessmen. The portraits, embraced as art from the archives of a nation, were censored by the Nazis because the depicted faces did not match with the aesthetic of the Nazi race.

> of the nineteenth-century city. Here was a gauge of intentions and capabilities of the other.[40]

According to the convictions of these two analogous disciplines, which "were the discourses *of* the head *for* the head", the surface of the body reflects "outward signs of inner character".[41] Measurement, classification, and representation of corporeal characteristics of the face help to establish societal labels.[42] Visual misconceptions of stereotypes' personality traits emerge from such opinionated, instrumental, and systematic reasoning of human vision. Therefore, I find it relevant to evaluate photographic portraiture in light of physiognomy and phrenology.

1.3.4. Interpretation: Phrenology & Physiognomy

Derived from Late Latin *physiognomia* ('physio' as nature, gnomon as 'indicator'), according to the Oxford Dictionary, physiognomy is a substantive term given to define "a person's facial features or expression, especially when regarded as indicative of character or ethnic origin" or "the supposed art of judging character from facial characteristics"[43] and phrenology is "the detailed study of the shape and size of the cranium as a supposed indication of character and mental abilities".[44] Following the studies of Johann Caspar Lavater in the 1770s, Sekula explains physiognomy as an analytical interpretation of the anatomical features of the face (such as assigning the forehead, eyes, ears, nose, chin, etc. a characteristic importance). Dating it in the first decade of the nineteenth century, he associates phrenology with Franz Josef Gall, as a detailed study of the shape and size of the skull/head for the mapping out of the brain's cerebral functions.

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[40] Ibid., 12.
[41] Ibid., 11–12.
[42] Following up the previous 'selfie' as a technological case in point, the definitive methods of stereotyping today developed into more refined forms with the quantification of likes and self-expressive tags circulating in social media platforms.
[43] "physiognomy." The Oxford English Dictionary, n.d. en.oxforddictionaries.com, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/physiognomy.
[44] "phrenology." The Oxford English Dictionary, n.d. en.oxforddictionaries.com, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/phrenology.

Perceptive and anatomical, both 'scientific' methods function on a comparative basis. In parallel with the systematic schooling of human vision to detect the (in)visible face as plain and simple, the criminal faces' forensic agency authorises the photographic identification of every able body. All faces come into sight, and each deviation from the generalized look becomes worth identifying. These two fields were "instrumental in constructing the very archive they claimed to interpret", merely by being speculative and reductive.[45]

As a case in point, Sekula refers to phrenological illustrations and photographic drawings of prisoners[46] in *Rationale of Crime* (1846), a book made to serve for criminal science. Along with a lengthy introductory preface detailing the phrenological analysis of criminal behaviour and its possibility of treatment, this scriptural publication contains graphic stories (as appendixes) about representative and anticipated demeanours of lawbreakers in relation to previously committed criminal activities (see Figure 1.3). In a concluding remark, by posing contrasting examples of honorific images pertaining to the three heads 'possessing superior intellect' to the readers as a visually moral cue, the authors of the book make a clear distinction between the virtuous and the villainous (see Figure 1.4). Seeing these textually supported and photographically assisted illustrations as a variant of phrenology, Sekula suggests that the book is "emblematic of the manner in which

[45] Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 12.
[46] Ibid., 13–14. The selection of the illustrated case studies is assisted by a publisher-entrepreneur of phrenology, Lorenzo Fowler. In an American context, Sekula gives an introductory analysis on the political rationale of the chosen examples' age, gender, ethnicity, and nationality. Children are identified with less stigmatizing attributes. They are believed to be the promise of the future as part of the reformist discourse, since they may grow to be compliant and disciplined individuals with the right discipline. On the other hand, the drawings are based on the commissioned photographs of Mathew Brady, an American photographer best known for his work on the documentation of the Civil War. He also photographed famous American political figures such as Abraham Lincoln. As Sekula notes, the pictorial labour behind the illustrations reflect Brady's career of an honorific archive, including all aspects of photographic sensibility the public is craving for *i.e.* war realism and celebrity culture. Supporting his photography simultaneously posing a 'promise and threat' argument, he then further remarks that it is no coincidence why Brady is chosen to photograph the prisoners.

criminal archive came into existence", where photography meets phrenology by evidently marking the intelligible "zones of deviance and respectability".[47]

At this point, still following Sekula's train of thought, it is crucial not to solely rely upon the camera as a truth apparatus in order not to repeat a short-sighted model of its optical realism. For this reason, a few things are worth re-emphasising when taking into account the integrated systems of representation (photography) and interpretation (phrenology & physiognomy) as exerted by the police department.

Philosophised by moral values and supported with textual information of the phrenological analysis, the conclusive and definitive identification principle of portraiture is primarily based on visual comparison. The criminal body is invented and looked for, so that the social order is attainable within a law-abiding body. However, there is an ongoing discourse about the crisis of faith concerning the medium's history – a photograph could detain or decriminalise anybody. Next to photography, a much more detailed taxonomic order is necessary to systematise difference and sameness. Therefore, Sekula was cautious of not solely authorizing a truth claim on the 19th century photograph,[48] because for him the key figure of intelligence was not the camera but the filing cabinet of the archive, aiming to discipline the semantic contingency and voluminous nature of photography (see Figure 1.5).[49] With every portrait, satisfactory or regulatory, the pool of images to

[47] Ibid., 14.
[48] Ibid., 13–17. Since the criminal also resembles an equivalent likeness to a bourgeois character trait, as in Eliza Farnham's illustrated case studies (see Figure 1.4) entitled 'Heads of Persons Possessing Superior Intellect' depicted in *Rationale of Crime* (1846), optical empiricism can subsume doubt. Therefore, Sekula dismisses the realist discourse based upon such police use of photography.
[49] An archive can also frustrate its own taxonomic order and become an art of mnemotechnics. According to Benjamin Buchloh, Richter's *Atlas* is defined by its heterogeneity and discontinuity. It is an attempt to reconstruct the memory of a post-war traumatized society who is fighting against the condition of anomie; a social instability caused by the erosion of mnemonic experience and of historical thought because of the sheer number of photographic images disseminating via illustrated magazines. In the first four panels of the *Atlas*, photography is working simultaneously as a double agent between destroying and sanctioning mnemonic trace of the family. However, during the turmoil of the post-war era, following the repression and denial of the past, the German's consumption and desire for a representational object-subject relationship had peaked. Subsequently, as he was moving from East to West, the homogeneity of the family album is

choose from or relate to expands exponentially. The medium's archival fever starts precisely at this junction.

1.3.5. The problem of classification: practices of archival fever

Consider the police mug shot as an example of "powerful, artless, and wholly denotative visual empiricism" in relation to the "*inadequacies* and and limitations of ordinary visual empiricism" in the nineteenth century.[50] Seen in this way, the camera becomes just a technical adjunct. The abstract methods of statistical science, *i.e.* reducing mathematics to visual logic and the linguistic path to define mechanical vision, become instrumental first for establishing and later for extending the criminal body's photographic realism. Mug shots are regarded as a means to expose the face of the incriminated only once, yet they confine the body of the criminal in the archives for ever.

However, the archive's structural unity can be unreliable if one is to make one solely by collecting. The problem of classification results from a chaotic and accumulative collection of images. All the individual constituents will have circumstantial character and there will be plenty of similar images (to choose from) belonging to the same subject.

In the case of the criminal, archiving worked against the mastery of their false identities, artful disguises, and fictional alibis. Subordinate to textual and numerical signs, the photographic image was necessary but insufficient in itself. The archival promise of photography can be thought of as a capacity to transform the individually grouped mass into an order of collective individuality.

> Photography promised more than a wealth of detail; it promised to reduce nature to its geometrical essence. Presumably then, the archive could provide a standard physiognomic gauge of the criminal, could

displaced by heterogeneity in the fifth panel (inclusion of fashion, travel, soft-core pornography and advertising images). For more on this, see Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "Gerhard Richter's "Atlas": The Anomic Archive," *October* 88 (1999), 117–145.

[50] Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 18.

> assign each criminal body a relative and quantitative position within a larger ensemble.[51]

As Sekula suggests, one way to reduce the varying degrees of sameness is to transform the multitude of contingency into a single-handedly representative character.[52] The numerical mean of a particular appearance can be used to denote all that which the others are also partly accountable for, but not seen or visible in public. Another way is to create a codification-classification system by associating the photographs with keywords and tags, which will then allow the users to isolate a particular visual instance from the pool of verbal incidents.

Despite a shared theoretical framework on archiving the representational body in the late 19th century, there were two different practical approaches.[53] As a police officer, Alphonse Bertillon's *Bertillonage* is built upon identifiable differences, whereas Francis Galton's emphasis with his *Composite Portraiture* is hereditary sameness (as the founder of Eugenics).[54] By assigning the body a relative position, both systems aimed to define, regulate, and rehabilitate abnormal particularities of an individual into a social body using the guise of an average man's "moral anatomy".[55]

Bertillon combined photography, denotative shorthand, and anthropometric depiction with a "statistically based filing system" that he organised all the first

[51] Ibid., 17.
[52] Ibid., 17.
[53] Towards the end of the century, they are both considered less efficient and more cumbersome. With the advent of fingerprinting, the smallest trace becomes key to an individual's identity and the body need not to be wholly defined.
[54] Ibid., 51 & 54. He actively encouraged photographic self-surveillance to monitor the bodily changes of family members for hereditary purposes. *The Jewish Type* (1883), a photographic plate depicting a Jewish boy, become the visual landmark for racial essentialism.
[55] Ibid., 19–21. Introduced in 1835 at *Sur l'homme* and named after Adolphe Quetelet's studies on social statistics, the average man constituted an ideal body representative of the society in general. In his productive and reproductive investigations on the human body, Quetelet observed that large aggregates of (anthropometric) data fall into the middle of a Gaussian shaped curve. Then, using this binomial registry as a theoretical basis (borrowed from astronomy and probability) for a moral axis of society, he defined the large number of people who are clustered around the mean to be at the zone of normality, hence where the 'average man' name comes from.

three methodologies around (see Figure 1.6).[56] He was an enthusiastic filing clerk, aiming to accelerate the police's work of processing the criminals. Using an aesthetically neutral standard he photographed the face (in frontal and profile view), measured specific body parts (such as torso, head, ear, foot, forearm) as comparative constants of any given adult figure, and noted down distinctive marks of the body (such as birthmarks, tattoos, and scars). In short, he defined the criminal body in what he sees on its surface, and established a method of efficiency to identify their corporeal whereabouts within the police records as well as out-of-doors in public. In his own words:

> The collection of criminal portraits has already attained a size so considerable that it has become physically impossible to discover among them the likeness of an individual who has assumed a false name. It goes for nothing that in the past ten years the Paris police have collected more than 100,000 photographs. Does the reader believe it practicable to compare successively each of these with one of the 100 individuals who are arrested daily in Paris? When this was attempted in the case of a criminal particularly easy to identify, the search demanded more than a week of application, not to speak of the errors and oversights which a task so fatiguing to the eye could not fail to occasion. There was a need for a method of elimination analogous to that in use in botany and zoology; that is to say, one based on the characteristic elements of individuality.[57]

Galton structured a more direct way to embed the criminal archive into a singular photograph both visually and hermeneutically (see Figure 1.7). As Sekula notes, he "attempted to construct a *purely optical* apparition of the criminal type", one that which does not exist in real life but statistically defined as "photographic evidence in the search for the essence of crime".[58] Using a technique of twelve multiple exposures, the single composite image from the same class subject (*i.e.* a Jewish boy) rendered common facial signs potent and left the idiosyncratic singularities blurred and indiscernible. The composite image was the pictorial translation of the Gaussian error curve and only the main features of the head/face that mattered.

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[56] Ibid., 18.
[57] Ibid., 26–27 (Quoted from Alphonse Bertillon, "The Bertillon System of Identification", *Forum* (1891), vol. 11, no. 3, p. 335).
[58] Ibid., 19.

Using photography only as a secondary tool of conviction, both methods pursued to translate an optical model of truth into an evidentiary system of control. Bertillon focused on isolating the 'professional' criminal so that the police can easily detect repeat offenders lurking amongst public. Galton outlined common particularities of the 'unfit' face, encouraged how not to look like a criminal, and prepared the ground for engineering human reproduction based on eugenics' master race vision. Through the representation of the face, they surveyed singular appearances and fashioned a collective ideal. For the practices of criminology, invention of the archive induced everything into a representable nature and statistics supported the photographic rationalisation of the criminal body. The photograph becomes an agency of not only an identity but also a target of/for what is 'identifiable'.

1.4. THE 'REAL' THINGNESS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

If one considers photographic portraits as contingent bodies and photography as a whole corpus (like an all-inclusive archive), to picture the problem that of visual classification becomes more evident. Parameters given to define photographic categories (such as realism/pictorialism, landscape/portrait, professional/amateur) point at the photographed object through its relationship to the real or with the advent of external and/or variable means.[59]

Considering what is real, a photograph's material/digital presence is a complex matter of contention. Evolving through the course of its self-explanatory agenda, every photograph is made possible with the record of light. Just by making things visible, light enables human vision. An act as such naturally stimulates further insight, a desire to know. A photograph is an imprint of light onto a piece of paper/digital sensor as the material product of an apparatus. Seen in this way, as a

[59] For a more detailed analysis on what and how portraiture is divided into, see John Tagg, "Introduction," in *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 18–19.

source of information technology, the power of photography lies in its document value.

Likewise, Roland Barthes' line of reasoning behind photography's indexicality issue can be thought of as a constitutive investment necessary for authenticating a photograph's document value.[60] An automated deception of materiality certifies it as a sign of something or someone that is/was 'real'. Next to this machine-driven product of vision, linguistic desire aspires to define the semantic uncertainty and visual ambiguity inherently present in a photograph. In order to see the particular signifier, the proximity that which one approaches to photography inhibits the very essence of what the photograph can be. The impartial sociological/philosophical discourse lays the groundwork for the peripheral closeness (pertaining only to the surface of the face and the body) that the technical expertise necessitates. Nevertheless, if one pursues Barthes' ratiocination to the matter at hand, even unfamiliar/remote photographs (in particular to his own mother's) can suddenly appear intimately face-to-face. Now, the question is: can an impersonal facial photograph from the criminal archive be thought of personally, in Barthesian love and death?

In *Camera Lucida*, from a superficially distant vantage point, Barthes observes over and over a familial face, one that which his eyes did not see before. Through this photograph, he probes for the essence of photography in time. But before parsing the crux of his argument, it is crucial to uncover what he means when he initially suggests photography to be "unclassifiable" and in what way temporality is the source of its "disorder".[61]

[60] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1980), 76. Setting it apart from any other system of representation, he distinguishes photography's referent as a real thing placed before the lens, without which there would not be a photograph.
[61] Ibid., 4.

First off, he argues about how the photograph is always adhered to its physical referent, which is previously brought up with photography's evidentiary use provided by technology and science. With a straightforward question "What does my body know of Photography", he then thinks through the corporeal experience of the medium in context of ocular infinitives: to photograph (subject), to be photographed (object), and to look at a photograph (spectator).[62] In consideration of the object-subject relationship that the photograph is always wrapped up in, he singles out posing as a form of identification inconstancy. Once the sitter observes the presence of the lens, consciously or unconsciously, posing transforms the elusive character of the sitter into a temporarily fixed body. He writes:

> 'myself' never coincides with my image; for it is the image which is heavy, motionless, stubborn (which is why society sustains it), and 'myself' which is light, divided, dispersed; like a bottle-imp, 'myself' doesn't hold still, giggling in my jar: if only Photography could give me a neutral, anatomic body, a body which signifies nothing! Alas, I am doomed by (well-meaning) Photography always to have an expression: my body never finds its zero degree, no one can give it to me (perhaps only my mother? For it is not indifference which erases the weight of the image-the Photomat always turns you into a criminal type, wanted by the police-but love, extreme love).[63]

In opposition to any reductive system, whilst trying to find the 'decisive' photograph of his mother,[64] he continues to search for the 'thing'-ness of photography (what it is in itself) insisting on a rather personal journey. Refraining from any material or conceptual essence at first, he approaches to the past moment not merely as a point to be recorded/chronicled but more so as a pricking wound to be meditated upon.[65] He only selects particular images and writes about them unreservedly, evading any theoretical wording or visual truisms of photography most institutions are disillusioned by. Reading it against the death of his mother,

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[62] Ibid., 9.
[63] Ibid., 12.
[64] He uses the conceptualization of *punctum* to lead him out of a labyrinth of family photographs. He re-discovers his mother in "the Winter Garden photograph" with a face outside of 'likeness' or 'recognition' and when she was only 5 years old (not illustrated in the text, which makes its existence questionable but rhetorically stimulating). Because of her age, the face does not look like her, to the mother that Barthes once knew.
[65] Ibid., 21.

his interest resides in the sentimental domain of the medium, one that which belongs to longing *i.e.* the difference between *what is no longer* vs. *what has been*.[66] He adopts a phenomenological point of view and coins in the term *that-has-been* as a moment of indexical certainty. When looking at a photograph, one may doubt about the existence of its photographic referent but since the photograph exists, one cannot also be wrong about the way it appears as existing. This connection is inherently experiential. For him, every photograph is a document of presence, whether or not what appears in the photograph is already dead. In-between such a moment of oblivion and certainty, over a photograph of himself that he cannot remember how or when it is taken, he decisively formulates the following: "the Photograph's essence is to ratify what it represents".[67] In so doing, his entire discussion remains in a realist tone, and he finds "not just an image but a just image" of her.[68] Nonetheless, never making light of its deictic language, opacity remains as a necessity in Barthes' thought of Photography. In his words:

> In the image, as Sartre says, the object yields itself wholly, and our vision of it is *certain*- contrary to the text or to other perceptions which give me the object in a vague, arguable manner, and therefore incite me to suspicions as to what I think I am seeing. This certitude is sovereign because I have the leisure to observe the photograph with intensity; but also, however long I extend this observation, it teaches me nothing. It is precisely in this *arrest* of interpretation that the Photograph's certainty resides: I exhaust myself realizing that *this-has-been*; for anyone who holds a photograph in his hand, here is a fundamental belief, an "ur-doxa" nothing can undo, unless you prove to me that this image is *not* a photograph. But also, unfortunately, it is in proportion to its certainty that I can say nothing about this photograph.[69]

However, before finding the 'Winter Garden' photograph, he passes through ordinary ones through which he can only partially remember/recognize his mother. Considering the voluminous nature of photography, the number of images pushes him to chase after the 'essence' of her 'identity' even further, despite of the fact that she is out of reach and touch. Finally, he comes across a likeness in her 'kindness'

[66] Ibid., 85.
[67] Ibid., 85.
[68] Ibid., 67–71.
[69] Ibid., 106–107.

in the life of a child he never knew. Though this is not a pejorative disposition, from a phrenological point of view as previously discussed, it enables facial profiling that my thesis argues contrary to. Instead, how can we approach to the same photograph, this time in sight of another found image-object?[70]

1.5. A DOCUMENT OF TRUTH: STATUS OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE INSTITUTIONAL LABOUR PLANE

Barthes' running idea of photographic realism in *Camera Lucida* is a productive encounter of loss and mourning, a photographic eulogy that which one can find dearly close to the realm of Affect. He writes:

> A sort of umbilical cord links the body of the photographed thing to my gaze: light, though impalpable, is here a carnal medium, a skin I share with anyone who has been photographed.[71]

However, following the trajectory of Affect as a mode of aesthetic experience, Simon O'Sullivan presents it at the threshold both as a "part" of and "apart" from this world.[72] Focusing on "apartness" as immanence not transcendence, he introduces affects

> as extra-discursive and extra-textual. Affects are moments of *intensity*, a reaction in/on the body at the level of matter. We might even say that affects are *immanent* to matter. They are certainly immanent to experience. (Following Spinoza, we might define affect as the effect

[70] As a continuation from the previously mentioned sub-text running across the main body of the thesis, I want to introduce the reader with the Affect of a make-believe picture. I am wandering around *Le Marché des Enfants Rouges*, the oldest food market in Paris, which literally translates as *Market of the Red Children*. Besides that which is edible, a stall of photographic appetizers draws me closer. Emerging from a heap of small-scale found photographs, a picture with juvenile presence arrests my sight. I turn its back-to-front and a lead pencil inscription, César, gently shouts my name. I found a picture that took a photograph of me, so the memory-image of what I remember is not resolved but rather stays afloat, impulsive and volatile. *César the Leftover*, who is unearthed from a suitcase rummage in Paris, now sits neatly framed inside a cabinet of curiosities in my flat. Knowing that this photograph is nothing and everything to me, its provenance is simply played out in flux and reflux for all the coming visitors' prying eyes. I have no control of whatever he likes to speak about: what I hear only becomes corporeal when I wrap others and myself up in the things he says — with or without an aftereffect. Sometimes he is a tourist posing for an uncle at the gardens of Dolmabahçe Palace, another time he is just a sulky kid having dropped his plaything on the ground. But he is never the same thing twice.

[71] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 91.

[72] Simon O'Sullivan, "The Aesthetics of Affect," *Angelaki* 6 (2001): 125, accessed April 10, 2014, http://simonosullivan.net/.

> another body, for example an art object, has upon my own body and my body's *duration*.) As such, affects are not to do with knowledge or meaning; indeed, they occur on a different, *asignifying* register.[73]

For him, affect is immanent to the experience of the spectator, without the need for a representative vocabulary. Affects stay outside of coded linguistic structures and knowledge generating semiotic analyses.

When reading Barthes' definition of it amongst a pile of old family photographs and against the death of a downhearted author's own mother, John Tagg's following criticism of Barthes also sounds more appropriate, impartial, and critical. Tagg disputes him for producing "a pre-linguistic certainty and unity" simply inside a single and *just* image.[74] After all, towards the end of the book, Barthes also makes certain that:

> The important thing is that the photograph possesses an evidential force, and that its testimony bears not on the object but on time. From a phenomenological viewpoint, in the Photograph, the power of authentication exceeds the power of representation.[75]

Accordingly, in the introduction of *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories*, the reason why Tagg commences his argument by referring to the abovementioned aphorism is precisely because photography is practiced as an instrument to wind back time for fathering and mastering the past as a material object of presence. Since the photograph is (still) in a firm position as a product of/for the everyday, what is once photographed will always remain there, not necessarily to be ever looked at or matched up against/within the real. Barthes' mother becomes "the that-has-been-and-is-no-more" because the photograph makes her absence even more present as a "reality one can no longer touch" but relied upon as a document, if need be.[76]

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[73] Ibid., 126.
[74] Tagg, "Introduction," 4.
[75] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 88–89.
[76] Tagg, "Introduction," 2 & 4.

However, unlike the sight of Winter Garden, a photograph is not always the guarantee of a "corresponding pre-photographic existent" at the level of its private meaning.[77] Beyond its visible form, a photograph only functions as evidence "in specific contexts, by specific forces, for more or less defined purposes".[78] Either be it for the strategic purposes of a defamation campaign of political importance or the necessary correction of optical aberrations for the legitimacy of a legal document, the reality produced by photography is mediated. By selecting, editing, and piecing together partially visible units to form a continuous whole of vision; a photographic montage or a corrective visual manipulation as such wields authenticity not exclusively through the benefits of technology that makes it relevant and/or desired but through "the discursive system of which the image it bears is part".[79] What is evidential in photography is the combined effect of social practices and semiotic processes that are maintained with relations of power driven by institutional standards. As Tagg claims, an evidence requires "not an alchemy but a history, outside which the existential essence of photography is empty"[80] and

> [l]ike the state, the camera is never neutral. The representations it produces are highly coded, and the power it wields is never its own. As a means of record, it arrives on the scene vested with a particular authority to arrest, picture and transform daily life; a power to see and record; a power of surveillance that effects a complete reversal of the political axis of representation which has confused so many labourist historians.[81]

The way he approaches to better understand the status of the photograph as a document of truth is situated in his argument of its relationality to the

> institutional practices central to the governmental strategy of capitalist states whose consolidation demanded the establishment of a new 'regime of truth' and a new 'regime of sense'. What gave photography its power to evoke a truth was not only the privilege attached to its mechanical means in industrial societies, but also its mobilisation within the emerging apparatuses of a new and more penetrating form of state.[82]

[77] Ibid., 2–3.
[78] Ibid., 3–4.
[79] Ibid., 4.
[80] Ibid., 3.
[81] Tagg, "Evidence, Truth and Order: Photographic Records and the Growth of the State," 63–64.
[82] Ibid., 61.

Any prior reality attached to photography's indexicality is deeply problematic and should be questioned as an ambiguity of visual information. Consider the societal impact of institutions through an array of photographic records consisting of abnormal bodies or ghettoized spaces. Picture ID photographs as a point of visual assistance for a discrepancy of character misrepresentation. Call to mind the criminal court cases or the scientific systematisation of criminal records in police photography. The institutional order's truth regime overlapped in the discourses of photography, physiognomy, phrenology, aesthetics, and psychiatry as a site of administrative space. Whichever way of its practice or use is preferred, the power of photography is shaped by institutions through which a social order can be established and extended upon an identifiable body.

Following the footsteps of Louis Althusser's conception of ideological state apparatuses and building up on Michel Foucault's microphysics of power, Tagg reconsiders the relationship between knowledge and power around photography's political economy on the human body. By examining the interconnectedness of expanding industrialization against population control, he explores the dynamics of institutional surveillance necessary to sustain the capitalist division of labour within class wars. According to the traditional Marxist thought, as he outlines, the state is repressive and state power serves for a particular ideology; to remain in power against the working class.[83] For the benefit of the ruling class and where necessary, power is applied through specialised apparatuses related to that of repression. Bodies need to be trained, disciplined, and positioned within a regime of control. Carefully staged by the state and clearly appropriate for the welfare of the public, such thinking neglects hidden relationships of power amongst the invisible and "'private' apparatuses of hegemony or civil society through which the bourgeois class sought to assimilate the entire society to its own cultural and economic level".[84] One must pursue the role of photography accordingly.

[83] Tagg, "A Means of Surveillance: The Photograph as Evidence in Law," 67–68.
[84] Ibid., 68.

At the time of photography's technological development, the exercise of governmental power shifts from the openly authoritarian central state to the covertly diffusive and pervasive practices of local states, *i.e.* the police force.[85] Next to the political conditions of the ruling ideology that are set by coercive and disciplinary measures (prison, penal court, army, and police); education, religion, culture, communication and family oriented ideological state apparatuses are designed to "secure the reproduction of the relations of production".[86] Transcending the regulatory state politics – at a capillary level and productively – power is exercised *in* and *on* the body. The ideological level of governance is constituted again within the visual representation. The point of focus shifted from the criminal body to the social identity of the working class. Power is extracted by the looks, gestures, and discourses of the public. Collected, compared, and generalised; the kind of knowledge produced through photographic surveillance increased the power exerted on the body. Next to prison and police records, "photography had its role to play in the workings of the factory, the hospital, the asylum, the reformatory, and the school, as it did in the army, the family and the press, in the Improvement Trust, the Ordnance Survey and the expeditionary force".[87] As a product of photography, the body is made compliant with its own (re)productivity.

Under these circumstances, if a docile body is a necessity for the construction of a workforce mass-producing commodities for a global economy, how can photography (as a mode of visual production) be thought of having an instrumental effect (on itself) proximate to the upkeep of capitalist state practises? Can its 'promise' be cut down to it being a comprehensive industry? Or should one always return to its evidentiary use as a product of the police department? Being cheap and accessible, the medium spreads on a personal level. By means of technical and

[85] Ibid., 72–73. Jeremy Bentham, the creator of the prison building called 'Panopticon', also drafted the Thames Police Bill of 1798. In it, he proposed that each house servant is to be a spy on the actions of their masters, and all classes of society to be spies on each other.
[86] Ibid., 69.
[87] Ibid., 77.

industrial progress, do-it-yourself photography[88] produces various degrees of likenesses – comparable and common. From the excess and for the success of such mediated all-inclusivity, new fields emerge to separate sentiment from document, truth from product. Commercial photography serves for the sustainability of the consumerist society, social documentary validates the photograph as a means of record, medical/scientific imaging enables invisible truths, legal field values the photograph as a source of evidence, and photography as art privileges the individual as an author. These considerations are only exploratory, perhaps meaningful only when all is combined, but one that which Tagg has an impact on me is his "realist mode" analogy – explained as a mode of signification dominant in the bourgeois society.[89] In realism, the signifier is identical to the pre-existing signified. In a capitalist market economy, the role of the consumer is only to consume, the production process evades the signifying chain. Just like that, as a direct transcription of the real, the photograph's production process is repressed, and the observer approaches to the photograph as evidence in a realist mode. All that matters is the value of its use. Seen in this way, photography as truth wields and maintains power, by just producing a photograph. Where there is power, resistance remains latent. The medium is a complex mode of language, and one must know more about the nature of its power in order to resist.

> In the domain of photography, what this implies is not an attempt to devise a single stylistic strategy which will meet all the contingencies, but a determination to begin the work of mapping out certain positions within an indeterminate field. We must pinpoint those strategic kinds of intervention which can both open up different social arenas of action and stretch the institutional order of practice by deploying or developing new modes of production, distribution and circulation; by exploiting different formats; by evolving different formal solutions; by cutting different trajectories across the ruling codes of pictorial meaning; and by establishing different relationships both with those who are pictured and those who view the picture. There is no centre to such a strategy, only a multiplicity of local incursions in a constantly shifting ground of tactical actions.[90]

[88] "You press the button, we do the rest" was George Eastman's motto to market the No. 1 Kodak camera in 1888.
[89] Ibid., 99.
[90] Ibid., 93–94.

1.6. RE-READING WALTER BENJAMIN'S AURA

Ubiquitous and unavoidable, a photograph is a measure of identification integral to each and every individual/institution, as previously discussed. Compliant with the pleasure and discipline principles of its (s)elective technology, industrialization and institutionalisation of the medium is mostly considered to be a precursor to its immediate approval as a form of document ever true-to-its-appearance, where its evident(iary) power is vested in. Despite the majority of societal impact coming from such an institutional authority, photographs as (de)valued cultural objects has their own contribution too. Therefore, a different point of contact to record-keeping and picture-making is appropriate.

What are the cultural aspects of the medium concerning the nature of its perception as a reproducible object? How can aspirant practices of a non-photographer be thought together with the representation of the face as an organ of the body? Not coming up with a definitive answer but more so to speculate what resistance to this kind of representative power loosely amounts to, a backward glance at Walter Benjamin's familiar term 'aura' becomes necessary. Given the significance of his textual contribution to cultural theory and art history, there is a danger in reading his essays purely on art and photography in isolation. Keeping this in mind, I will try to address the experiential plane of photography that his texts broadly apply to.

Without chronicling the expansion of the medium in its institutional use of, Benjamin contemplates on the cultural impact of the invention. Similar to that of Sekula and Tagg, the political/historical frame he initially sets include a critique of the capitalist industry. And like Barthes, he deliberates upon specific photographs from its history rather than offering a monolithic account representative of its meta-ness. Considering its reproducibility as a 'benefit' of its technology, his exemplary arguments (that of Eugène Atget and August Sander) position the photograph to emancipate the object from its unique appearance and presence. Seen in this way, how can a photograph still create a space of perception captive of its fixed

temporality when representation of the face is concerned? What aspects of the medium, that Benjamin refers to, lead to the transformation of relationship between the image and its (be)holder?

To start with, as an expansion of his line of thought (in particular to the *Theses on the Philosophy of History*), history is not an accumulative or a continuous flow of a singular timeline for Benjamin. In the *Little History of Photography*, he downsizes photographic history to a form that exposes the empowerment of the image as a condition to its referentiality. He also uses the visual equivocality of the medium[91] as a metaphor to reconsider the unfolding of a linear narrative. The content of every photograph is historical as something one can partially bring up or briefly return to. The fascination with photography lies in its constantly changing relationship to the present moment despite being a record of a past time. This opposition of pastness and immediacy is independent from the artifice that the medium is capable of creating or the aesthetic nature of the object that is photographed. Created with photographs as such, a history of photography ratiocinated this way provokes the viewers to critically engage with the past moment and attend to the complexities beneath the appearance of what is sensibly visible.

Concerning its proximity in relation to time and history, he then distinguishes the photographic image from a painted picture. Using David Octavius Hill's anonymous image of Newhaven's wife as a point of reference, he claims that maybe one or two future generations search for the name who the portrait belongs to (if it was a painting), but this inscrutable photograph[92] demands an inquiry past beyond

[91] Despite the indexicality argument of the medium with a photograph's direct relationship to its referent, I refer to Benjamin coming up with an ambiguous semantic term called 'aura' or phrases such as 'tiny spark of contingency' in relation to the visual appearance of a photograph (thanks to the technical incapacities of the medium). The contingency that Benjamin speaks of here also resonates so much with what Roland Barthes later coined as *punctum*, that which is extremely personal.

[92] With her head slightly tilted downwards to the left, this photograph shows a woman that does return her gaze to the viewer despite not looking at the camera. Displaying a rather dark tonal composition, her seated posture is almost blended into the background. When all of these non-intelligible details combined, one recognizes the technical restraints with which a perfectly (ex)posed subject a photograph necessitates in those days. However, over and over all throughout

one's identity. This is what the pre-industrialisation days of photography is visually capable of offering to the viewers. The commonality they share is said to exist as a form of temporality that a modern snapshot can never have.[93] As something beyond the testimony of the camera, Benjmain suggests that

> [n]o matter how artful the photographer, no matter how carefully posed his subject, the beholder feels an irresistible urge to search such a picture for the tiny spark of contingency, of the here and now, with which reality has (so to speak) seared the subject, to find the inconspicuous spot where in the immediacy of that long-forgotten moment the future nests so eloquently that we, looking back, may rediscover it.[94]

No longer determined single-handedly by its past, the immediacy a photograph relates to is an expanded plane of temporality. Its momentary pastness is not 'not' fixed but rests upon a present position that is 'rather' always subject to change, remembered, or to be kept in mind. Next to this temporal shift concerning a photograph's historicity, the benefits from technology transforms how a photograph is to be viewed. With particular technical conditions, that are only attributable to the medium of photography, an image of a phenomenon or a condition an object exhibits are now visually perceptible to the human eye. Previously invisible, this is a space revealed by optical unconsciousness, a key concept Benjamin describes as follows:

> For it is another nature which speaks to the camera rather than to the eye: "other" above all in the sense that a space informed by human consciousness gives way to a space informed by the unconscious. While it is a commonplace that we have some idea about what is involved in the act of walking (if only in general terms), we have no idea at all about what happens during the fraction of a second when a person actually takes a step. Photography, with its devices of slow motion and enlargement, reveals the secret. It is through photography that we first

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the essay and with the analysis of Atget & Sander's approach to photography, Benjamin claims that the quality adhered to such (early) photography is not a setback of technology, but as a result of the intentional attitude of the photographer.

[93] In the next chapter, I will argue contrary to this opinion. The reason why I am specifically referring to the 'snapshot' here is because Benjamin contextualises 'snapshot' as a by-product of capitalist industry. Lacking the photographer's intention and made within a fracture of a second, photographs as such only heighten the status of mass-mediated imagery as 'reality'.

[94] Walter Benjamin, "Little History of Photography," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 2, 1927-1934*, ed. Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland and Gary Smith, trans. Rodney Livingstone and others. (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, 1999), 510.

> discover the existence of this optical unconscious, just as we discover the instinctual unconscious through psychoanalysis.[95]

As seen above, he describes the achievement of these 'visual' effects purely in technical terms. Due to the longer exposure times in the early days of photography, the look of sitters grows into the photograph having a more lasting impression on the viewers. A photograph as such presents the person something other than an instantaneous appearance of a direct image that the mirror is capable of showing. The significant amount of light necessary to expose a photograph also necessitates to work in open air studios (or rooms with glass roofs). Seclusion from the man-made surroundings allows the subject and the photographer to fully concentrate on the act of photographing. The technical conditions under which a photograph is made transmits an equally visual intensity into the ways it is to be perceived when looked at.

These aspects when combined, that of historical and perceptual, form the basis of Benjamin's account of photography that distinguishes it from traditional art forms. Accordingly, he then reflects on the spatiotemporal conditions in which an object that the photograph depicts appears to a human subject, and introduces the term 'aura' as a riddling question for the reader:

> What is aura, actually? A strange weave of space and time: the unique appearance of a distance, no matter how close it may be. While at rest on a summer's noon, to trace a range of mountains on the horizon, or a branch that throws its shadow on the observer, until the moment or the hour become part of their appearance—this is what it means to breathe the aura of those mountains, that branch.[96]

Across all the tensions in semantic content Benjamin's account of aura generates, his attitude towards its demise is best described with the notion of reproducibility. Experiencing a particular object or person in relation to time and space is considered

[95] Benjamin, "Little History of Photography," 510–512.
[96] Ibid., 518. Given the degree of its own conceptual complexity, what Benjamin means when he says 'aura' is too vague to photographically categorise. It can be described as something to be uniquely experienced in vision. For the crux of my argument, I prefer to approach to it as the unattainability of visual representation (both in relation to an experience of expression and as an object made of matter).

as unique. However, this exclusivity is not just a measure of a (quantitative) constant, within which the comparison of painting and photography is (art historically) conditioned to. It is rather an experiential attribute of vision the modern man is systematically being stripped of. Benjamin sees the progress modern life begets as a conformism to be resisted. As a part of this modernisation regime, photography is assumed to deprive what is always otherwise unique. The mechanical reproduction (of a work of art) frees the object from its parasitic relationship to its original (accustomed) use of. What this surmounts to is a myriad of (open-ended, considered, critically engaged) possibilities that the previously amassed cultural heritage traditional media spatiotemporally transmits. If the 'productive' effect of mechanical reproduction is merely an interruption of the (art) object's aura (by bringing the cultural status of photography to communicate with the masses as Benjamin eludes to), its representational scrutiny remains rather incomplete.

Contrary to the task of the (commercial) photographer, who is to serve for an industry of visual decoration, Benjamin refers to Eugène Atget's uninhabited street photographs having an anti-auratic shock effect. Besides being literally empty, they are filled with visual non-clichés that frustrate the conventional subject-object associations viewers are expected of making. If this kind of photography, which is also a precursor to Surrealist practices of image-making as he claims, opens up a playful site of "salutary estrangement" for the "politically educated eye"[97] beyond the signified meanings, how can it offer a similar space of production for anyone who is not a photographer but only takes photographs? Anyone with an 'attitude' towards photography is what I see as a 'promise' in Benjamin.

As the product of a primitive camera (though Benjamin abstains from making such a distinct declaration), consider aura gifting the photograph a particular aesthetic quality bested with curiosity. Whatever it means or however it is characterised by

[97] Ibid., 519.

Benjamin, there are two things that dispelled the aura effect. The first one is prompted by technological and industrial progress; the accuracy of capturing an instantaneous moment with faster lenses and the circulating/sharing aspect of a photograph's pandemic capacity. In its vastness, produced and consumed hastily as such, the experiential interest involved with the perception of and immersion into a photograph withers. Related to the first point, bourgeois values in modern life also alters contextual and compositional ways in which a photograph is made, hence the burgeoning desire to commercially emulate the aura effect. Despite the medium's seemingly egalitarian contribution to (self-)representation, using the photograph as a symbol for communicating societal status or privilege leads to the changing structures of visual experience. What is an aura really? Is 'what is depicted' or 'the aura of its depiction' that matters most?

Imagine a face and consider the status of the portrait. When a face is photographed, what is perceived as unique is condensed into a surface as a totality representative of its all other possibilities. Despite being infinitely reproducible, a facial photograph negates the limitless and incomprehensible nature of one's character by fixing the experience of seeing a face into a single time and place, rather than the corporal (dis)continuity of its presence at different times in different places. Associative of how one recalls or identifies a face, the aura (of facial uniqueness) becomes a measure of visual perception presenting and equating to sameness within photography. However, if there is any, the 'true' nature of photography has a transient relationship with its referent. A photograph presents the object only at the time in its existence, rather than a fixed image that has the appearance of a unique significance.

The following section is a tentative exercise on aura not as something what Benjamin means when one reads, but more as anything that one sees when one's eyes squint. Therefore, a definition of the term still remains inscrutable. Putting all the previous photographic claims aside – only staying true to Benjamin's argument

about an artisanal attitude[98] – I introduce Diarmuid's Costello's conceptualisation of 'auratically' photographing a face with the photographer's intention in mind.

Drawing attention to the shortcomings of his argument on 'what is depicted, as opposed to the aura of its depiction', Costello disapproves Benjamin of

> simply projecting the characteristics of early photographs back onto what they depict. When, evidently, one cannot infer that a person possesses an aura from the fact that their depiction does.[99]

His account of aura is directly being attributed to an "object of perception", but the aura pertains to a "perceiving subject" as a modality of experience (as a capacity to perceive auratically), Costello remarks.[100] Even the aura analogy he comes up with involves aesthetic appreciation of a natural scene that the urban living conditions distances the modern individual from.[101] Despite the age of mechanical reproduction advancing into a digital state of virtual recreation, if one still rejoices the demise of an artwork's aura (so that the historical value attributed to 'tradition' phases out just to shift in another direction), "the capacity to perceive or respect the uniqueness, difference, or distance of any object of experience whatsoever – including that of other persons"[102] becomes even more so alarming for the future of the photographic image. In such a sparkling assertion, where does one place the notion of 'a face without photography' or 'a faceless photograph'?

Benjamin claims that Atget's street photographs "suck the aura out of reality".[103] Characteristically, they are distant from being a form of portraiture as they show no signs of people – akin to a body without organs sidestepping Deleuze and Guattari's faciality. Is it really the absence of the face that makes a photograph anti-auratic? If one follows Costello's line of thought, Benjamin's claim is said to associate the

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[98] Hereby, I use the term 'artisanal' for the respects in which it encompasses an idiosyncratic and a non-mechanized way of producing photographs, that of similar to Benjamin's exemplification of the medium's pre-industrialisation era photographers who are previously trained as painters.
[99] Diarmuid Costello, "Aura, Face, Photography," in *Walter Benjamin and Art*, (New York: Continuum, 2005), 7–8. Accessed January 26, 2017, https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/.
[100] Costello, "Aura, Face, Photography," 2–3.
[101] Ibid., 10.
[102] Ibid., 16.
[103] Benjamin, "Little History of Photography," 518.

presence of an aura with a particular way of depicting a person's face.[104] Bearing that in mind, August Sander's collection of faces across all social strata (despite canonically labelled as portraits) also serve for a similar causal effect. Sander's deliberately inclusive way of photographing people, whose faces have no value other than to be in a photograph,[105] allows for 'any' face to enter in a photograph with "new and immeasurable significance".[106] In a nutshell, it is the photographer's intention that makes a photograph anti-auratic. This claim sets free the medium of photography from the canonical burden of its history and practice, and opens up the floor to discussion about how perceptively and experientially 'ephemeral' facial photographs could be produced with.

The medium's reproducible technology systematically denies the viewers from the occasion that is inherent in the gaze – the expectation that it will be returned. Contextualising it as the kind of experience commonly declining in mass societies, Costello relates to this ethical dimension of aura within a photograph's ability to look at back. As a case in point, he insists on highlighting Benjamin's remarks on the sitters' gaze – irrespective of a specific looking direction – as a concept for critically approaching to the recorded visual information. Not taking all that is seen at face value, gazing encounters on a daily basis can lead to unforeseen or accidental interactions against the two-dimensionality of knowledge that a photograph generates and operates with. It is not the sitters who look back at the viewers, but rather the reflection of photographers who take the photographs that matters.[107]

Seen in this way, as a point Costello arrives at, the experiential nature of everyday life that pre-modern masses are subject to is considered as auratic. An (art) object retains its distance despite the experience of its image being contemplatively immersive. Imagine modern times; bodies shouldering one another in overcrowded streets, repetitive working patterns in sync with production deadlines, the

[104] Costello, "Aura, Face, Photography," 8–9.
[105] Ibid., 8–9.
[106] Benjamin, "Little History of Photography," 520.
[107] Costello, "Aura, Face, Photography," 23.

availability of everything as a copy to be consumed and the need to acquire everything at one's convenience. Under these living conditions, the representative possession of closeness and sameness photography allows for becomes the proxy of any tolerance shown towards distance, difference, and uniqueness. However, there is a difference between the inherent political significance a technology is assumed versus how a profession is put into action by an agent. With a sensible attitude, photographing the face can be a prophylactic act contrary to all degrees of class solipsism.[108]

[108] Ibid., 20.

CHAPTER 2. A FACELESS PHOTOGRAPH

2.1. THE LIQUID EFFECT: PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE INCALCULABLE STATE

I closed the previous chapter by re-emphasising the need for a photographic contingency, one that which restores the affective impact of the pre-industrialisation days of photography. By intending to extend the experience of vision to a realm beyond the fixity of what the photograph accurately reproduces as an object/document, I attributed Benjamin' aura to the uniqueness of a face (what it contains within and outside of itself) and therefore to the unattainability of its representation via photographic depiction. Furthering the burden of representation argument that my thesis is absorbed in, I now introduce the readers with an analogy of (non-)representation Jeff Wall succinctly develops with water in *Liquid Intelligence*.

Through the need for and use of liquid chemicals in photography, Wall impartially refers to one of his own works titled *Milk* (see Figure 2.1). It is a photograph from a restaged incident that he observed in the everyday lives of people at the margins of society. Beyond the associations that this may point at, the image simply shows a troubled looking man with a clenched posture. He holds a carton of milk that bursts out of its container. Suspended in mid-air, the explosion of milk spill's fluidity contrasts with the perfect geometry of the brick wall behind. The formlessness nature of milk becomes a formed, fixed image. "Photography seems perfectly adapted for representing this kind of movement or form", Wall says.[109] In doing so, he disassociates and distances the qualities of a liquid's fluidity from the photograph's arrest of its referent – instantaneous opening and closing of a camera's mechanical shutter.

[109] Jeff Wall, "Photography and Liquid Intelligence," in *Jeff Wall: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. Peter Galassi (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2007), 109.

Just like liquids, Wall arrays all natural forms to be complicated, unpredictable, infinitesimal, incalculable, or not really describable. He presents the relationship between the dynamics of liquids and their means of representation to be compelling, one that is similar to when natural forms are being photographed. Against the "liquid intelligence of nature", he differentiates the medium's institutional influence to be "glassed-in and relatively dry" as a result of photographic technology's delineative character.[110] The analogous approach to water's movement arrives at this point. Water is a constituent of chemical photographic processes that enables the photograph as a material object. But because it also has a fluctuant nature due to its fluidity, its use of must be controlled, timed, guided, isolated, or totally restricted – it cannot be allowed to spill over or spread across. Using the dichotomy of its selective treatment (admitted into or excluded out of the processes) as a basis for the analogy, he argues water/liquid chemicals to have an archaic character within photography. They appear valid only in particular contexts. He goes on to suggest that this archaism connects photography to the passing of time and history. A pre-historical image as such – with the memory trace of every production process water is involved with as he indicates – puts the dry part of photography into a restrictive context, one that is associated with the camera's objectivity. He claims that

> [t]his part of the photographic system is more usually identified with the specific technological intelligence of image-making, with the projectile or ballistic nature of vision when it is augmented and intensified by glass (lenses) and machinery (calibrators and shutters). This kind of modern vision has been separated to a great extent from the sense of immersion in the incalculable which I associate with "liquid intelligence".[111]

Interesting enough, as a precursor of its industrialisation, Silverman also points at how George Eastman's Kodak Camera seals off photography's liquid intelligence with sameness and immediacy.[112] How can we then think of photographing the face

[110] Ibid., 109.
[111] Ibid., 109–110.
[112] Silverman, "Water in the Camera," 83. Cameras come with pre-loaded film, once exposed they are sent back to be developed and printed. The resultant image as a material photograph is the exact thing that was photographed, what chemically happens in-between remains hidden.

or restore (modern) vision (in the age of post industrialisation) with respect to a liquid's formless nature or with a mode that is continuously shape-shifting?

Similar to Wall,[113] I do not necessarily see the inevitable shift from chemical (analogue) to digital photography and its consequent expansion thereof as good or bad. The photographic depiction of a person's face (industrial, institutional, public) is evidently a material product (of desire) and existentially a condition of one's presence – the *that-has-been* person. What interests me is the "self-consciousness" of the medium (explicitly the human factor; agency, intention, and thought) Wall talks about being developed with the technical perfection of image-making processes.[114] Therefore, I find the insight of liquids and dryness of the medium to be thought-provoking. The former's understanding (exhibited in the photographer's attitude) can counteract the latter from surveying and instituting natural forms (incalculable not calculated) of photography.

2.2. A SHORT-LIVED, FUTURE RETURN TO (PRE-INDUSTRIAL) PHOTOGRAPHY

The dryness – invisible, intelligible processes – of photography, *i.e.* that of the current photographic craze depends upon, is structured around instant gratification, (self-)identification, and ownership (of authority, property, or truth). From celebrity face scans[115] to biometric ID photographs or family albums, the conception and composition of bodies is constituted around the production of the facial photograph, both as an identity object and as an inherent condition to the medium's indexical nature of the photographic record as an image. Although (avant-garde) art practices

[113] In his concluding remarks, Wall refers to Andrei Tarkovsky's film *Solaris* (1972). Scientists on-board the space station, who are orbiting an oceanic planet called Solaris, have hallucinations of their past and memories as a new sensible reality. Solaris is a form of 'liquid' intelligence who studies the scientists unbeknownst to them.
[114] Wall, "Photography and Liquid Intelligence," 110.
[115] On the internet, including smart phone applications, there are programs that function through a face recognition software, which can detect, recognise, and analyse an uploaded photograph of your choice and match it with a celebrity from their database. For more on this, please visit https://www.celebslike.me.

problematised and disrupted this particular relationship (given the scope of an artwork's plane of exhibition and art historical value), disestablishing the face's direct embodiment of a body is often gone unnoticed for the everyday. Within what other discursive spaces –counter to its canonical usage and perception– one can generate and/or operate a photograph? In the following sections, and throughout the rest of my thesis' argument, I intend to conceptualise ways of forming a faceless photograph as such.

A way to consider may involve refusing to commonly photograph the face as a facial norm and imagine its form –analogous to the frame of (art historical) reference Georges Bataille sets with the word *L'informe*– by photographing a face's fluctuating/animated presence only in colours, across light, and within invisible forces all attached to its spreading/spirited corpus of organs.

> A dictionary begins when it no longer gives the meaning of words, but their tasks. Thus *formless* is not only an adjective having a given meaning, but a term that serves to bring things down in the world, generally requiring that each thing have its form. What it designates has no rights in any sense and gets itself squashed everywhere, like a spider or an earthworm. In fact, for academic men to be happy, the universe would have to take shape. All of philosophy has no other goal: it is a matter of giving a frock coat to what is, a mathematical frock coat. On the other hand, affirming that the universe resembles nothing and is only *formless* amounts to saying that the universe is something like a spider or spit.[116]

Instead of considering form as an idealised classification tool, Bataille favours the debased (art) forms. With such a delimitation strategy the very notion of form becomes questionable. What this allows for is a set of operational and structural tasks (of creativity) that the conscious photographer can now be involved with. Not necessarily meaning (or aesthetics in art) is to be about or constituted around a specific form. Formlessness has been delimited from the everyday field of perception and practices. Thinking around this analogy –nearing the task of the photographer towards an experimental way of photography in order to find a visual

[116] Georges Bataille, "Formless," in *Vision of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, ed. Allan Stoekl and trans. Allan Stoekl with Carl R. Lovitt and Donald M. Leslie Jr. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 31.

form for the face's formlessness, to record a photographic form that has no facial form– one can explore photographic failures, chance encounters, and de-skilling as means of generating formless forms of faces, similar to the formlessness nature of milk becoming a formed, fixed image in Wall's *Milk*. Seen in this way, formless photography is not only an action for photographing the face, but a form of resistance that exposes the medium to the conditions that renders the face as a product or a document.

Reading and referring to Benjamin's *Little History of Photography* differently than his other seminal essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility*, Silverman also invites us to think anew about the medium. In the beginning, she writes:

> [P]hotography isn't a medium that was invented by three or four men in the 1820s and 1830s, that was improved in numerous ways over the following century, and that has now been replaced by computational images. It is, rather, the world's primary way of revealing itself to us–of demonstrating that it exists, and that it will forever exceed us. Photography is also an ontological calling card: it helps us to see that each of us is a node in a vast constellation of analogies. When I say "analogy," I do not mean sameness, symbolic equivalence, logical adequation, or even a rhetorical relationship–like a metaphor or a simile– in which one term functions as the provisional placeholder for another. I am talking about the authorless and untranscendable similarities that structure Being, or what I will be calling "the world," and that give everything the same ontological weight.[117]

Later, she refers to how Benjamin speaks about the daguerreotype's uniqueness, non-reproducibility, and elusiveness, along with the disclosive potential of pre-industrial photography (as previously mentioned, *i.e.* long exposure times, the sitter growing into the image, the sitter's gaze turning back).

Accordingly, I wish to take up Silverman's another analogous outlook on early photography, one that is initially particular to the pre 1700s accounts of the classical camera obscura model, whereby the image is created inside a room through a small

[117] Silverman, "Introduction," 10–11. She only refers to three names from the canon, and suggests the reader to check out Geoffrey Batchen's account for his detailed historicity of the medium in *Burning with Desire: Conception of Photography*.

hole opening to the outside. Although many scholars would argue how the camera obscura model was the initiator of producing objective knowledge by disembodying the human subjectivity (by spatially and temporally rendering the human eye absent from the workings of the image making process), Silverman restores the subject position of the human body by considering its corporeity within the room. "Since the viewer had to enter the classical camera obscura in order to see its images, he was also a receiver", she writes.[118] Seen in this way, the image formed as a photograph becomes a receptive surface rather than being a product (paper or digital) of an apparatus. In order to see, one has to continually shift focus by moving around the image formed on the wall's surface. Later, during the development of the camera obscura (when it becomes a small portable wooden box as a precursor to the industrialisation of the medium), "[p]eople began thinking of the camera obscura as a mechanism for "taking likenesses," instead of receiving them."[119] Against the detail and precision of the photograph extending the medium's evidentiary condition, how can these early experiential conditions produce, take, or receive the contemporary face as an untotalizable camera obscura image? Since the first photograph (see Figure 2.2) was exposed for eight hours, whilst the image was being formed its view (nature) was changing, could long exposure be a way to overcome the permanency of the face? Every thing changes at every moment, there is no such thing as a fixity in form, "there is only *formation*", she writes[120] and I will now raise this issue with representation.

2.3. ARE SOME THINGS 'REALLY' UNREPRESENTABLE?

Since it works contrary to the inconclusiveness of my thesis' argument, a definitive answer to this question will be a matter of one-sidedness I insist on avoiding. Therefore, instead of giving a straightforward yes or no answer to the eponymous chapter title I borrow from Jacques Rancière's *The Future of The Image*, I wish to

[118] Ibid., 15.
[119] Silverman, "The Second Coming," 22.
[120] Silverman, "Unstoppable Development," 47.

come up with a concept similar to his deliberation of it – that "which proposes all spheres of experience univocally".[121]

Just to give insight for the scope and intricacy of the text's comprehensibility, the regimes of art (in the fifth and final essay) around which he develops the reader's understanding of is a demanding fusion. It contains discussions around the Platonic dialogue of *The Sophist*, Jean Baudrillard's simulacra, Kantian sublime, and Jean-François Lyotard's discourse on postmodernism. Concerning the weight of these references and his skilful use of wordplay in French (which could be misread in the English translation), it often becomes quite difficult to follow his argument. Often cross-referencing, he makes bifurcation after bifurcation, explaining them in a sentence or two. As one thing endlessly leads to another and expansively branches out, I consider his writings thought-provoking for the respects in which it is absolutely ungraspable as a whole – like the (re)presentation of the face.

Also, although his consideration of the question is conceptualised around examples from 'art' (in particular to literature and cinema) in general, I follow his order of thought purely on methodological terms for scrutinising the relationship between image and representation, *i.e.* can a photograph be considered beyond the politics of its representation, if so, how? Accordingly, I wish to position photographing the face (with intention) as a form of everyday activity at the juncture of what he calls the "distribution of the sensible" in *The Politics of Aesthetics*. Taking this notion word-for-word, I wish to explore what is it there beyond the sensible on a representational level, and how can one restructure an image's disposition from within photography? Can we think of this (re-)distribution in line with a body without organs?

Piecing it together from the onset of his argument, if the sensible corresponds to forms that are perceived by the senses (against what is intelligible), the distribution

[121] Jacques Rancière, "Are Some Things Unrepresentable?," in *The Future of the Image*, trans. Gregory Elliott. (London and New York: Verso, 2007), 109.

of the sensible is comprised of a "system of self-evident facts" (taken as a given *of* and *for* the common) that establish the conditions of possibility for what can be said, thought, or made.[122] This structure parcels out the world (by spaces, times, forms of activity) and leaves its participants with or without a share. From Aristotle's speaking political being (a slave understands the language but not possesses it) to Plato's artisans (who are devoted to non other than their work) not having a say, Rancière outlines who has a part in the distribution of what is defined as common and how "something in common lends itself to participation".[123] Seen in his way, the political determinant of aesthetics[124] (the person who has the ability to see and power to speak) becomes a condition of or particular to one's occupation. Although he quickly dismisses Benjamin's discussion of the masses, who has the will for art and access to artworks, it is difficult not to think of aesthetic practices in class terms. Instead, he shifts his attention towards aesthetic practices in art and details three of them as modes of visibility for intervening with the general distribution of "what is common to the community".[125] In a similar vein, photography can be thought of as an artistic practice involved in the politics of aesthetics . While the medium's democratic equality (ubiquity and ease of access) disables all representative hierarchies in favour of the community, what passes as a 'sensible' photograph reflects institutional structures of integrity (as a function of

[122] Rancière, "The Distribution of the Sensible: Politics and Aesthetics," in *The Politics of Aesthetics*, ed. and trans. Gabriel Rockhill. (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2004), 7.
[123] Ibid., 7–8.
[124] Ibid., 8. As a form of experience, political aesthetics functions on a variety of different levels (beyond the singular 'art' form). For Rancière, the political is the field in-between police and politics. Referred to as an organisation of bodies, 'police' is the mode of distribution (of parts and roles in a community) that establishes the borders of what is sayable, doable, and visible (and their exclusion thereof). In the search for equality (behind the universality of 'we are all equal'), politics is an act (a dispute) set against society (by those without a share in the communal distribution) for challenging the reconfiguration of the sensible. Seen in this way, beyond the distinctive realm (of art) it is often only associated with, aesthetics refers to the distribution of the sensible that includes other modes of visibility operative in the political domain. For more on this, see pages 88-95.
[125] Ibid., 8-9. After Plato's thinking, Rancière presents *writing*, *theatre*, and *choreographic* to be the forms of art that mark off the community. The stage is a platform (place) that liberates action and identity, blurring the clear boundaries of the doable and sayable. Similarly, writing (with an all equal indifference of subject matter and without knowing or having a direction for a particular audience) circulates freely and negates established notions of form and content in literature. Against the simulacra offered by the stage, choreography (singing and dancing bodies) enables authentic expressions of the community (chorus).

reliability via its 'automated' objectivity). This is why it is relevant to consider photography as 'art' against the experience of the senses (*i.e.* what is unrepresentable) Rancière sets in context with artistic regimes.

According to him, there are two regimes[126] –the representative and the aesthetic– concerning history of art and its practice. Liberated from the limitations that the previous one is established with, each new regime communicates a "specific type of connection between ways of producing works of art or developing practices, forms of visibility that disclose them, and ways of conceptualizing the former or the latter".[127] The aesthetic regime of the 'present-day', from which the future of the image is to be reformed, can be thought of as a reconsideration of (post-)modernism. The aesthetic of the future liberates the representative regime from the formal restraints of its subject appropriateness and medium-specificity.

First, he looks upon representation "as a regime of thinking about art".[128] His response to whether "entities, events or situations" can or cannot be represented by "artistic means" remains within the (in)competence of art.[129] Although he does not consider the contribution of science or technology, which are both essential to the establishment of photography's institutional use, I too find the concept of art as an adjustable and open system of means applicable to a myriad of possibilities. Its societal impact is accessible enough to bring down the governing use of facial photography representative of one's identity.

To present something as "intelligibly equal to its material power", to render a thing's inherent presence as a material object cannot be done because certain things "cannot adapt to the surplus of presence and subtraction of existence", he claims.[130] An excess of material presence through artistic means betrays the uniqueness of the

[126] There is also a third regime of 'images' called 'the ethical' (associated with the Platonic ethos of community) that predates the representative and aesthetic regime of art.
[127] Rancière, "Artistic Regimes and the Shortcomings of the Notion of Modernity," 15.
[128] Rancière, "Are Some Things Unrepresentable?," 109.
[129] Ibid., 109.
[130] Ibid., 110.

thing that is represented and moves it further away from the existing reality peculiar to its very own nature. These two effects are interconnected. When combined, which can also be thought analogous to the impact of photography's industrialisation, they offer "the thing represented to affects of pleasure, play, or distance which are incompatible with the gravity of experience it contains".[131] This declaration, described with simulacrum in Platonic terms (concerned with the origin of images, their truth content, and the effects their uses produce, as Rancière notes),[132] brings to mind the indexicality argument and the conditionality of experience a photograph institutes. A reproducible image, as the faithful reproduction of the original, fixes what is visible in time and space. The act of photographing and a photograph's use as a product distort the unique experience of perceiving the subject (*i.e.* the face) as such. A photographic referent (an ID photo) is set to stand in for what is before the camera (the real person). A multitude of significations are possible, yet the art of a (single) one's persuasion is sufficient.

When (or if) representation of things fall outside the capacity of art, "the prestige accorded to the word of the witness" as the "contrast between straightforward tale and mimetic artifice" leads to "the existence of events that exceed what can be thought", Rancière remarks.[133] This realm is past beyond the conception of an event as a record of something that happened – akin to a photograph beyond the mechanical objectivity of the camera. The narration of experience (as an art form) is "the essential discrepancy between what affects us and such of it as our thinking can master", he further elaborates.[134] Recounting something beyond thought, in its own impossibility of witnessing or perceiving, "to record the trace of the unthinkable" as he neatly outlines,[135] necessitates a new mode of thinking – the art

[131] Ibid., 110.
[132] Ibid., 110. Plato's *Sophist* is a dialogue about how he is different from a philosopher and a statesperson. In the dialogue, there is a passage about two kinds of image making. One is related to copying the original with precision, and the other is about intentionally distorting the copy so that its image appears true to the viewers.
[133] Ibid., 110–111.
[134] Ibid., 111.
[135] Ibid., 111.

of sublime. Contrary to the representative regime, this realm short-circuits traditional and appropriate relationships between what is present and absent, heard or visible.

Can there then be a regime beyond representation, that revokes both? Whether or not it exists, Rancière claims that the "internal impossibility of representation" in art leads to a regime outside of it (adopting the ethical framework of Plato) concerned with "simply *images*" – whether the copy is "worthy of" the original (not mimetically) or what affects do they evoke in the viewer.[136] Keeping this in mind, I consider (en excess of) photography impairing the experiential nature of face-to-face encounters in the everyday. What is more crucial to my thesis' argument comes in the following:

> The first concerns the distinction between different regimes of thinking about art – that is, different forms of the relationship between presence and absence, the material and the intelligible, exhibition and signification. The second does not involve art as such, but only different types of imitation, different types of image. The intertwining of these two heterogeneous logics has a very precise effect: it *transforms problems of the adjustment of representative distance into problems of the impossibility of representation* [emphasis added]. Proscription is then slipped into this impossibility, while being disclaimed, presented as a simple consequence of the properties of the object.[137]

Both in relation to and irrespective of the cases labelled with "unrepresentability" from literature and cinema (in particular to the novelistic realism and "the representation of the inhuman" sections of his essay),[138] he then tries to first understand the relationship between these two similar logics and disentangle it later. Before concluding with a definitive 'no' to the question of 'are some things unrepresentable', he unfolds what representation and anti-representation entails. In the following, I try to approach both poles of the subject through its conceptual rigour, not for what the text details or how it could be applicable to the medium of photography in practice.

[136] Ibid., 111.
[137] Ibid., 111–112.
[138] Ibid., 112.

For Rancière, representation functions in an order (a system of relations) shaped within a triple of constraints. Regardless of what these are, the representative framework can be adjusted (*i.e.* by inventing supplementary elements to it) so that seemingly unfitting entities, events or situations can become present for the viewers. What this leads to is a realm of completion or an excess of (re)presentation, where all subjects are suitable by being presented as representable. Notice the similarities of this juncture with the representation of the present material interface through the photography of ever-itinerant appearance(s). The face is a peculiar blend of finite number of cells exposing an infinite intensity of sensations.

He claims that the system of necessary adjustments to render everything as representable rests on a "dual presupposition" pertaining to subject and genre appropriateness and to their adjustment of it.[139] However, the current order of conditions that establishes the representative regime is collapsed. This is a relative consequence, not only within the representative system, but also according to it. Why he regards the tragedy of Oedipus to be no longer staged is "because our perception of art has, since Romanticism, rested on strictly converse presuppositions that define not a particular school or sensibility, but a new regime of art".[140] In the aesthetic regime, where anti-representation is vested in,

> there are no longer appropriate subjects for art. … There are no longer roles of appropriateness between a particular subject and a particular form, but a general availability of all subjects for any artistic form whatsoever.[141]

While the representative regime requires an order of balance in the system of its relations, the aesthetic revolution entails disorder. Rancière speaks of it as the simultaneity of possessing polar attributes – the "double identity of the opposites".[142] By the agency of the absolute (im)balance between its "knowledge-effects and *pathos*-effects", he makes use of Oedipus[143] as a contextual tool posed

[139] Ibid., 118.
[140] Ibid., 118.
[141] Ibid., 118.
[142] Ibid., 119.
[143] Ibid., 118. Oedipus is "the one who knows and does not know, who acts absolutely and suffers absolutely", Rancière also writes.

against and beyond representation (anti-representation). In doing so, the aesthetic conception in art emerges as an in-between of knowing and unknowing, acting and being acted upon.

> We can deduce from this that the break with representation in art is not emancipation from resemblance, but the emancipation of resemblance from that triple constraint. In the anti-representative break, pictorial non-figuration is preceded by something seemingly quite different: novelistic realism. But what is novelistic realism? It is the emancipation of resemblance from representation. It is the loss of representative proportions and proprieties.[144]

Hereby, it is important to note that he does not consider the purpose of art in the representative regime to create resemblances. Therefore, when he suggests novelistic realism (whose photographic equal in modernism, both in form and content, serves for the camera's objective treatment) as a break away from representation, he credits the levelling effect (the disorder/non-intelligibility of knowledge-pathos effects) it allows for (which in turn topples down the order of representative constraints).

Referring to it as an "accident of representation", another symbolic case he points at, for the aesthetic negation of the representative regime, is Mallarmé's prose poem titled *Un spectacle interrompu* (*An interrupted performance*).[145] This is a poem composed around the latent power of an animal's action that questions the "theatrical space of visibility" given to representation.[146] In it, a dancing bear puts his paws on a clown's shoulders and the audience experiences this unexpected stage incident as a threat. The stage-specific perception of spectacle is interrupted with a visible action unspecific to the privilege of the stage. Through Mallarmé's "interrupted spectacle", Rancière notes that "there is poetry anywhere and

[144] Ibid., 120.
[145] Ibid., 122.
[146] Ibid., 122.

everywhere – in the attitude of a bear, the flick of a fan, or the movement of a head of hair".[147]

How could these two be thought together with a new conceptualisation of photographing the face? Concerning the all-inclusivity of subject matter, the photographic key here could be the banal activities and everyday experiences of that are gone unnoticed away from the stylised pictorial presentations or well-resolved definitions of the recognisable face. For once the notion of binary oppositions, whose routine requires an either/or approach, becomes a constructive point for the crux of my argument. To picture photography as a continuous practice (without boycotting its present currency), it is now appropriate to make the distinction between the prefix of –anti from –non. Anti-photography is not a mode of non-photography. Similar to Rancière, who does not outline anti-representation as a form of non-figuration in art, I suggest that the non-representation of the face is only possible within the medium, but through other means (*i.e.* the redistribution of the faculty of vision to unseeing/eyeless organs, or embracing the previously discussed 'shock effect' in photography that Benjamin speaks of).

Moving on, he reconsiders "the representation of phenomena that are said to be unpresentable" through two works that are emblematic of concentration camps, as he claims.[148] First, he speaks of Robert Antelme's *The Human Race* to reduce the 'life at camp' experience to an everyday routine of basic actions and small perceptions. Written in paratactic[149] style, form and content of the text is presented as fitting to Anselme's experience of it. But, by comparing it to a previously written (also in paratactic syntax) paragraph of the unrepresentable "amatory moments" in Flaubert's Madame Bovary, Rancière shows that language for conveying the

[147] Ibid., 122. The bear's unexpected reaction upsets the primacy of the theatre stage, whereby representation presents itself to the visible only through a particular act.
[148] Ibid., 124.
[149] Parataxis is a literary technique where sentence forms are short and simple.

unrepresentable (of the inhuman) does not exist, or is not singlehandedly particular to the experience of it.[150] He writes:

> Where testimony has to express the experience of the inhuman, it naturally finds an already constituted language of becoming-inhuman, of an identity between human sentiments and non-human movements. It is the very language whereby *aesthetic* fiction is apposed to *representative* fiction. And one might at a pinch say that the unrepresentable is lodged precisely here, in the impossibility of an experience being told in its own appropriate language. But this principled identity of the appropriate and the inappropriate is the very stamp of the aesthetic regime in art.[151]

Next, to further illustrate the point quoted above, he picks Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* as a second example. The temporal analogy of resemblance and dissemblance Rancière comes up with in "the clearing of Chelmno" scene from the film is interesting in terms of how testimony does not simply attest to representation.

Through the reconstruction of a scene based on witnessing, he claims that what is filmed (using the same location) today resembles "the same silence, the same tranquillity of the place" when the "killing machine was functioning" to the extent that everybody is absorbed in a form of idleness and/or disinterestedness.[152] However, on a different level of representation, the scene also contradicts with resemblance. Concerning what is sayable and visible of the unrepresentable, he refers to the dissemblance in the scene as "the impossibility of adjusting today's tranquillity to yesterday's".[153] He then discusses the framing shots of the scene that surround the tiny figure of the witnessing body while his speech attempts to fill the vastness of the space. For Rancière, compliant to a logic that masterminded extermination, the impossibility of words necessary to articulate witnessing (speech act) corresponds to the unbelievable character of the events that took place. He emphasises this negation of representation in the following:

[150] Ibid., 124–126.
[151] Ibid., 126.
[152] Ibid., 127.
[153] Ibid., 128.

> even if one of you survives to bear witness, no one will believe you - that is to say, no one will believe in the filling of this void by what you will say; it will be regarded as an hallucination.[154]

But the content of witness' speech in Lanzmann's film has a reverse logic and complicates the temporality of presence and absence for what is sayable and visible. "I don't believe I'm here", says the witness.[155] What is (re)presented as the film (of the Holocaust) becomes the "reality of its disappearance, the reality of its incredible character".[156] Here comes the most interesting point of his argument concerning the objectivity of the camera, with which the documentaries representative of 'unrepresentable' events as such are built upon. According to the historians of the Holocaust, the dimensions of Chelmno wasn't properly presented in the film. It has been upsized to indicate the enormity of genocide. Rancière writes:

> The camera has had to magnify it subjectively to mark the lack of proportion, to fashion action commensurate with the event. It has had to use special effects when representing the place in order to account for the reality of the extermination and the erasure of its traces.[157]

Where does the by-products of camera/technology trick effects lead us to within the representation of the unrepresentable? For Rancière, the answer is about "comparative representability" based upon subjective choices of what one wants to represent.[158] There is nothing unrepresentable (in art), "[i]n and of itself the event neither prescribes nor proscribes", everything is equally representable.[159] Not being content with Rancière's closing remark: the "[t]he logic of the unrepresentable" only to be "sustained by a hyperbole that ends up destroying it", I wish to continue the pursuit of the 'unrepresentable' in the indeterminate (mal)adjustments (despite what this strategy leads to the current aesthetic regime in art, as he claims) of what makes (non)sense between the sensible and the intelligible.[160]

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[154] Ibid., 128.
[155] Ibid., 128.
[156] Ibid., 128.
[157] Ibid., 129.
[158] Ibid., 129.
[159] Ibid., 130.
[160] Ibid., 137–138.

The reason why I extensively labour over Rancière's text(s) is beyond the illustrated conditions of (un)representability under the 'known' regimes of art that he systematically details. Also, the political dimension of my argument cannot solely be the artist's intention, as Benjamin alludes to. A work (of art) is not political in itself, and there is no political art. The artist is already in close proximity with politics, but this does not mean that an artwork will offer the political as such. Therefore, the aesthetic effect is about politicising art by "creating forms of perception, forms of interpretation".[161] What interests me is Rancière's deliberation of the aesthetic regime –equal admission to subject matter and form– to retain 'new' ways for being and becoming a political subject(ivity). Beyond the critique of (post-)modernism or artistic activism his writings warrant, and keeping in mind the way he formulates[162] photography gaining the status of art in "the appropriation of the commonplace",[163] I wish to remain within the realm of everyday experience and production (in non-art) that thinking around 'art' (and photography) begets. No thought or artwork challenge or deconstruct the photograph's virtually supposed exactitude of the face, none other than what I spotted upon reading O'Sullivan's reflections on affect regarding Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's "question of making yourself a *body without organs* [BwO], in this content, a strategy for accessing that which is normally "outside" yourself; your "experimental milieu"

[161] Rancière, "Interview with the Machete Group (2009): Farewell to Artistic and Political Impotence," 80.

[162] Rancière, "Mechanical Arts and the Promotion of the Anonymous," 28–30. For Rancière aesthetic revolution happened before the technological revolution of mechanical arts. Invalidating the definition of high-low distinction (by content and form accomplished first in literature) enabled the grounds for the emergence of photography. In order for an object (produced by technology) to be acknowledged as art (other than recognised as a means more than recording and reproducing), its subject matter must be also about art, he declares. Revisiting Walter Benjamin's point of reference (David Octavius Hill's photograph of Newhaven's wife), he claims that photography gained the status of art with the anonymous figure. Not imitating the pictorial traditions of depiction (such as using soft focus to convey ephemerality), photography presents the anonymous (to the masses as a work of art) as someone (now) visible – "the ordinary becomes beautiful as a trace of the true", he writes.

[163] According to the translator's note, Rancière refers to the word 'commonplace' (la quelconque) both in relation to the ordinary/everyday and insignificant. Thinking in consideration of how Benjamin also refers to the camera enabling an 'aura' to the otherwise nameless people's depiction in Russian film, Rancière's association of the masses/individuals as 'commonplace' contain traces of indifference and worthlessness transformed into value and quality.

which everywhere accompanies your sense of self."[164] A body without organs is where and how I wish to seek for such a photographic possibility – an orderless structure of depiction (if there is any).

2.4. PHOTOGRAPHY WITHOUT PHOTOGRAPHS (PWP)

With reason(s) and without resolution, thus far I structured my argument around antagonisms concerning the establishment and proliferation of institutional photography, in particular to the representation of the face, the latent power of such photographic practice taken up by everyday users, and what counter-action one might pursue to negate its influence on facial representation. You may if you like, remember the extended outline I drew, first with the criminalisation of the face in police photography, then through the implications of photographing the aura of namelessness, and finally urging representation to be emancipated (disembodied) from resemblance.

After developing these thoughts around the unrepresentability of the face within photography, I now end up coming face-to-face with Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's deflection on the *Body without Organs* (BwO). Despite the parallelisms their thinking harbours in my argument, I wish to make use of their deliberation of BwO not as a revelation, but more so as a productive way to come up with more questions to all the answers photography is set to be accountable for. In other words, as information carriers, the real danger surfaces when we no longer criticize photographs for what they are but what the medium systematically appoints them to be. The camera is capable of producing an infinite number of images, and with every depiction there is one less face to represent but one more to outwit, since what it creates is a photograph, a technical image by the apparatus.

[164] O'Sullivan, "The Aesthetics of Affect," 127.

As a war declared against systematicity (of language), I think of BwO akin to 'photography without photographs' (PwP) and wish to mobilize this proposition's conceptual potentiality further towards 'a face without photography'. Through this double negation, I pose the question of being and becoming a face by making a photograph of, from, around, without, against, through and on it. Towards an inconclusively experimental form of photography, methodologically independent from the unconscious processes canonized as the surrealist photography of thought, I intend to forget how the facial photograph looks like (appears to us) by experimenting with the structure and sensibility of all faces with(in) photography.

According to Deleuze & Guattari, a BwO is not a "notion or a concept but a practice, a set of practices".[165] Not trying to formulate what it really is, it seems that their deliberation of it nears to a measureless limit. As something that contains nothing and everything, it can be thought of as a horizon to look forward to, but not as a goal to attain. Therefore, best described in the following introductory remark, Deleuze & Guattari's BwO suits my thesis' conception of a faceless photograph.

> At any rate, you have one (or several). It's not so much that it preexists or comes ready-made, although in certain respects it is preexistent. At any rate, you make one, you can't desire without making one. And it awaits you; it is an inevitable exercise or experimentation, already accomplished the moment you undertake it, unaccomplished as long as you don't. This is not reassuring, because you can botch it. Or it can be terrifying, and lead you to your death. It is nondesire as well as desire.[166]

Refuting to initiate from or be stranded upon the undesirable (by detailing the "poorly understood" features of the "negative" bodies such as the hypochondriac, paranoid, schizo, drugged, masochist), they propose the organs to be used against their intended functionality, but in dosages.[167] Besides misremembering (not forgetting as Deleuze and Guattari would suggest) the assigned roles of organs and

[165] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, "November 28, 1947: How Do You Make Yourself a Body Without Organs?," in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 149–150.
[166] Ibid., 149–150.
[167] Ibid., 150.

experimenting (against the odds of interpretation) with the formal status/structure of a photograph, what this brings to mind is also in parallel with what Rancière's aesthetic regime calls for – the equal admission of form and content. Irrespective of whether a body does this or contains that, what matters is to welcome photographing anything and everything. The rule that is wise to follow is not of 'wisdom' but concerns 'caution' instead.

> Why not walk on your head, sing with your sinuses, see through your skin, breathe with your belly: the simple Thing, the Entity, the full Body, the stationary Voyage, Anorexia, cutaneous Vision, Yoga, Krishna, Love, Experimentation. Where psychoanalysis says, "Stop, find your self again," we should say instead, "Let's go further still, we haven't found our BwO yet, we haven't sufficiently dismantled our self." *Substitute forgetting for anamnesis, experimentation for interpretation* [emphasis added]. Find your body without organs. Find out how to make it. [168]

Concerning how my thesis frameworks the medium of photography, this exploratory attitude leads to two particular absolutes I ought to refrain from: the depiction of those pejorative bodies cannot be separated from other BwOs that are full of pleasure/presence, and an erroneous practice of photography (solely relying on technical downfalls) cannot reform (human) vision.

Seen in this way, if the physical/digital manifestation of appearance (as a photograph) is visually inconclusive but unavoidable, one must always photograph by all –and against– other means. Therefore, my photographic contention is not to double as or re-expose (to restore) those poorly understood bodies, of which the societal order is set to be anxious about. Because, as a form of resistance, just to avoid categorisation or not to become another subject of stratification, one (who has the means, *i.e.* artists, celebrities, etc.) cannot insistently produce influentially subversive, avant-garde, or eccentric photographs, later to be deemed as photographic canon. The (self-)representation of marginalised bodies generates a sense of photographic togetherness for the construction of identity (exclusion by inclusion) or a rule of thumb for formulating the opposite – an appropriate looking photograph for how not to become the other. Either way, there is a societal

[168] Ibid., 150–151.

segregation. I wish to consider the everyday role of the photographer in sight of a (non)particular re-distribution of the organs' functionality and an object's affect for vision, *i.e.* navel becoming an eye to discharge what one cannot see or cherishing a sun-bleached (almost invisible) chemical photograph from a family album. This necessitates a particular singularity – a subject position in which freedom is not a right but a regulation to exploit.

Accordingly, aimed at the possibility of any photographer's freedom, I now briefly turn back to Flusser's philosophy towards photography, whereby he interrogates the act of photographing. He suggests that if one departs from the automated programming mechanisms and plays against the odds of the automatic camera, one can produce improbably informative images, thereby bringing photography to the level of human consciousness.[169] Consciously abdicating the comprehensible structure of the photograph defeats the purpose of its author function and evokes an all-equal form of visual anonymity. Through Benjamin and Rancière, this photograph is similar to the faceless person's image, which is already snapped many times to include itself in the form of vernacular (art) photography, however yet to be publicised in the form of a facial photograph by the apparatus. Acknowledging and disseminating this image may be adversely improbable or meaningless outside the world of art, but its disruptive potentiality for the everyday is a threat to initiate new cracks in the dominant linguo-visual systematicity, which only the conscious photographers, to say the very least artists, were able to decode, expose and restructure before.[170]

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[169] Flusser, 80–81.

[170] Ibid., 46–48; 81. According to Flusser, for a naive observer undecoded photographs seem to be the representations of the world itself as they are taken merely as signified surfaces. To decode a photograph involves the awareness of a conflict and the comprehension of cooperation between the photograph and the image, since the photographer's intention is to be immortalized via photographs that inform others and the camera uses society as a feedback mechanism through the images that the photographers create for the progressive improvement of the apparatus. Only the "so-called experimental photographers" challenge the programming capabilities of the apparatus, undoing its magic in search for the unpredictable information. They continue to play against the camera, but not in full consciousness "of the consequence of their practice" as in challenging the combined effects of the "*image*, *apparatus*, *program* and *information*." To be conscious means is to be a part of the process and to monitor the consequences of its practice in being.

To be engaged in such a practice shares a parallelism with what Susan Sontag sees as a challenge in literary modernism. For her, "the movement to disestablish" the author function demands a new writing practice that ceases the author's authorial responsibility to inform the society.[171] Sontag's case in point is Antonin Artaud, who

> may have come closer than any other author to actually doing it—by the violent discontinuity of his discourse, by the extremity of his emotion, by the purity of his moral purpose, by the excruciating carnality of the account he gives of his mental life, by the genuineness and grandeur of the ordeal he endured in order to use language at all.[172]

Along these lines, in transgression from the conventional limits of the camera, Artaud treats theatre as a surrealist mode of affective practice and assaults our senses for the disorderly. In playing against the hierarchy of language, from consciousness parallel to his own mind and body, he raises the question of freedom to the level of the mind and body's singular insufficiency. He attempts not to define but challenge the limits of his own body, arguably in his daily life as well. In his works, he "despairs of attaining his own mind" consciously, whereas the surrealists aim for aesthetic pleasures in a state of unconscious mind of working practices.[173] Hence, Sontag is correct in saying that "Artaud's criterion of spectacle is sensory violence, not sensory enchantment" and "the aggressiveness that he proposes is controlled and intricately orchestrated" because parts of his work should remain *intentionally* unintelligible.[174]

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[171] Susan Sontag, "Artaud," in *Antonin Artaud: Selected Writings*, ed. Susan Sontag and trans. Helen Weaver (California: University of California Press, 1973), xvii–xix.
[172] Ibid., xxiv–xxv. Artaud disavows contributing to the pool of literature in the traditional sense after one of his "relatively shapely poems" is rejected for publication in 1923. And the year after the failure of *The Cenci*, he became even more cryptic in his writings towards his death. The language he used in *To Have Done with the Judgment of God* "verges on an incandescent declamatory speech beyond sense" as Sontag remarks. Throughout the essay, Sontag also includes minor biographical anecdotes about the several years he had spent in mental asylums and the fact that he was using opiates to calm down his migraines. Seen in this way, Artaud may seem 'mad' for his readers who choose not to listen to what he says. However, in reading and thinking on Artaud, what we should be most certain of is his insistent pursuit of defiance for structural unity. For him, consciousness changes and renders *to* change.
[173] Susan Sontag, "Artaud," xxvi.
[174] Ibid., xxxii; xxxvii.

Not outlining it as an absolute model but more so attending to it as an influential fragment, I now wish to refer to one of Artaud's radio plays called *To Have Done with the Judgement of God*. Initially remained unpublicized,[175] the audio recording[176] of this final tirade is partially comprehensible. Besides that which is audible as a French monologue, which I have no clue of, it is readable as an English translation. In doing so, I am exposed to a deluge of emancipated sounds and words regarded structurally as erratic noise before. Herein, I am only a spectator/listener to test my orderly working senses. There is nothing in sight yet I stand still to hear what I cannot see. Even if I see him speak, I do not understand what he says. In this chimeric audio-visual experience, Artaud's language, both literally and conceptually, is foreign to me.

> There is in being
> something particularly tempting for man
> and this something is none other than
> **CACA.**
> (*Roaring here.*)[177]

As Sontag says, "[t]o read Artaud is nothing less than an ordeal."[178] However, in view of listening his words out loudly just as sounds, the anarchy of deeply (non)sense-making cries, grunts, and screams, in other words his voice and what he says become purged from its linguo-visual intelligence. Artaud restores and inspires my photographic vision to be *in* and *for* the sightlessness. For it to be further inaudible, one ought to disrupt the euphonic photograph of the face from its sterile sense of communicability. In doing so, one cannot bestow an absolute muteness to

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[175] Ibid., lii. This radio play was "banned on the eve of its projected broadcast in February 1948. (Artaud was still revising it a month later, when he died.)"

[176] Antonin Artaud, "To Have Done with the Judgement of God," broadcast in French: KPFA, 15 Oct. 1968 (41 min.), *BB2075 Pacifica Radio Archives*, accessed April 02, 2014, https://archive.org/.

[177] Antonin Artaud, "To Have Done with the Judgment of God, a radio play (1947)," in *Antonin Artaud: Selected Writings*, ed. Susan Sontag and trans. Helen Weaver (California: University of California Press, 1973), 560. Only in denouncing the CACA's scatological state people can be alive, instead of consenting to die as an inanimate substitute of and for consumerism. Possibly, what Artaud suggests here is a rebellion, he prefers people to excrete intentionally; releasing what has been repressed in their subconscious.

[178] Sontag, "Artaud," lvi.

it *i.e.* refusing to photograph or affirming its programmable autonomy. Instead, I will rethink the possibility of freedom in being conscious of but preferring not to see that which I (can) continuously photograph.

If we consider the photographic universe as a limitless pool of images, one that everybody contributes to, what remains outside of it exposes the limits of the camera and the eye to a reduction of mastery. We can either erase or discard over/under-exposed, out-of-focus and off-frame depictions of the face, yet they remain collected in photo albums or stored out of sight behind the eyes. Salvaging them from being redundant requires a shift in seeing, which will also refrain them from being obsolete as contemporary melancholy objects only to be collected and exhibited. As an intentionally accidental image making practice, concerning the face, the task is then to first photograph conscious errors, but more importantly, render them a part of us in the everyday. Amongst the many, this is just a way of impairing the exactitude of photography. Because these images, once not abstracted, are capable of de-skilling our organs from their designated abilities *i.e.* how the eyes see or stare at.

Still trailing Deleuze & Guattari's lateral musings about the BwO as something "not at all the opposite of the organs", I then argue the enemy to be not the photograph(s) but the formalising organism called photography.[179] In hindsight of the war Artaud declared,[180] they come up with an experimental destratification strategy in order to challenge the uniformity of codified systems currently in effect for a social order.

[179] Deleuze and Guattari, "November 28, 1947: How Do You Make Yourself a Body Without Organs?," 158.

[180] Artaud, "To Have Done with the Judgment of God, a radio play (1947)," 561. The organs or rather their organizational structure within the body impedes "the infinite without" in favour of "the infinitesimal within" is how Artaud critiques God's ability to create and the conditional necessity (of other living beings) to pro-create after God. He criticizes the ways in which systems of religion and consumerism co-produce synthetic proxies in order to replace the sensible with the inflexible. According to Deleuze and Guattari, God's judgment is "the organic organization of the organs" (Deleuze and Guattari, "November 28, 1947: How Do You Make Yourself a Body Without Organs?," 158-159) and Artaud is against the totality of this organism imposed as a stratum on bodies, with or without organs. Because forged goods only create a diversion from the

> The principal strata binding human beings are [first] the organism, [second] signifiance and interpretation, and [third] subjectification and subjection. These strata together are what separates us from the plane of consistency and the abstract machine, where there is no longer any regime of signs, where the line of flight effectuates its own potential positivity and deterritorialization its absolute power. The problem, from this standpoint, is to tip the most favorable assemblage from its side facing the strata to its side facing the plane of consistency or the body without organs.[181]

Within their creative approach, they framed desire in the "plane of consistency" for making a BwO, neither fragmented nor absolute, by a set of practices that are never fully attainable for closure.[182] A healthy BwO should include a certain dose of strata, which excludes the idea of annihilation, as in total destratification, because they are only against the totality of the organism as "the organic organization of the organs."[183] This is particularly important for not inventing another stratum that will negate the stimulus of their reason. Upon searching for a way to refrain themselves from being an organism in the *everyday*, they reiterate experimenting with "the art of dosages" using the strata in the following formula:

> Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. It is through a meticulous relation with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight, causing conjugated flows to pass and escape and bringing forth continuous intensities for a BwO.[184]

Disengaged from the psychoanalytical past, BwO creates the body in the present. Neither cancerous (self-stratifying) nor unhealthy (non-strata), this healthy BwO is

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BwO, leaving an amorphous void to be filled with more structured mechanical progeny. And God cannot bear the possibility of a BwO because Christ is the only soul to live without a structured body so that men can protect his invisibility and perpetuity.

[181] Deleuze and Guattari, "587 B.C.–A.D. 70: On Several Regimes of Signs," 134.

[182] Deleuze and Guattari, "November 28, 1947: How Do You Make Yourself a Body Without Organs?," 154. For Deleuze and Guattari, desire is a "process of production". It is not something that we lack, hence, the reason why we feel the need to fulfil what is already made impossible for us. It is also not a particular kind of discharged pleasure reincarnating in another form. Here, they anonymously criticize Jacques Lacan's and Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic residues of lack, pleasure and jouissance whose projections implemented the societal interpenetration of signifiance and subjectification strata.

[183] Ibid., 158–160.

[184] Ibid., 161.

not fit for a possessive pronoun, because it is just *a* body, relative in variation. It is not beneath the organism, but adjacent to it. Organs position themselves inter-independently irrespective of the form of the organism,[185] *i.e.* the face can be nowhere visible in particular or it may not exist for some. But how come and to whom this is possible?

2.5. ABOUT-FACING THE ABSTRACT MACHINE OF FACIALITY

For Deleuze and Guattari, the representation of Christ –its transfigurability into everything from universal to particular– is a landmark for the construction of the subject but the primitives "have the most human of heads, the most beautiful and most spiritual, but they have no face and need none".[186] Few things function across the primitive's face; being and becoming is directly relational to the vocal and corporal gestures, it is not power oriented or related. In short, faciality is not a particular construct of the White Man, it is "White Man himself"[187] that the (post-)modern progress is indebted to.

In order to map out the workings and expose the transgressions of the face, in *Year Zero: Faciality*, they begin by lining up three stratums; organism, signifiance, and subjectification. Body forming, meaning making, and subject specifying are what I make of their designated positions to be. The body belongs to the living organism(s), and across its topographical territory, at differential speeds, de- and re- territorialization movements occur. These movements, determined by intensities and desires, enable the positioning of the organs in order to make the body (without organs) into an organism, whereby the organism is not a totality but pertains to be an integrated part (and not a disunited fragment) of itself. My thesis' concern is raised when the photograph of a face operates otherwise – towards an absolute representation of one's uniqueness.

[185] Ibid., 163–164.
[186] Deleuze and Guattari, "Year Zero: Faciality," 176.
[187] Ibid., 176.

> The face constructs the wall that the signifier needs in order to bounce off of; it constitutes the wall of the signifier, the frame or screen. The face digs the hole that subjectification needs in order to break through; it constitutes the black hole of subjectivity as consciousness or passion, the camera, the third eye.[188]

Accordingly, amongst the system of semiotics, Deleuze and Guattari position the face as a moving mechanism at the junction of a reciprocally dependent structure of a "dimensionless black hole" of subjectification and a "formless white wall" of signifiance, whereby a particular meaning can be attributed to the face upon which the social subject is constructed.[189] Concerning the medium of photography, this is where I wish to challenge the *absolute* deterritorialization of the face, as "it is no longer relative because it removes the head from the stratum of the organism, human or animal, and connects it to other strata, such as signifiance and subjectiviticaiton".[190]

The face simultaneously acts both as a projection screen and a projecting camera, but their interplay is impromptu; therefore, the face is not always a fixed entity. By further elaborating on the particular allocations and bearings of body-head and face systems, they state that "[t]he head is included in the body, but the face is not"[191] and the abstract machine (of faciality) only produces a face

> when the head ceases to be a part of the body, when it ceases to be coded by the body, when it ceases to have a polyvocal corporeal code—when the body, head included, has been decoded and has to be *overcoded* by something we shall call the Face.[192]

The term facialisation can then be best described as a process of transforming the entire body into a holey surface of subject Faces, producing faces with a capital F. This mechanism does not function by resemblance (it is not a matter of taking a body part and making it look like a face), but "by an order of reasons"[193] similar to

[188] Ibid., 168.
[189] Ibid., 167–168; 180.
[190] Ibid., 172.
[191] Ibid., 170.
[192] Ibid., 170.
[193] Ibid., 170.

how Rancière conceptualises the representative regime of art. Deleuze & Guattari state that

> the role of the face is not as a model or image, but as an overcoding of all of the decoded parts. Everything remains sexual; there is no sublimation, but there are new coordinates. *It is precisely because the face depends on an abstract machine that it is not content to cover the head*, but touches all other parts of the body, and even, if necessary, other objects without resemblance. *The question then becomes what circumstances trigger the machine* that produces the face and facialization.[194]

Regarding their closing remark posed above, I wish to position photography as a constituent of this facialisation process – for the crux of my argument, straightforward portrait photography produces nothing other than faciality.

In representational (photographic or cinematic) terms, the face is part of a twofold signifying system. It is doubly expressed, developed as a surface behind the expressions that we see on it versus what the photographer had seen behind the camera and wanted for us to look at in the photograph. Instead of thinking about what the face can and cannot represent that which it expresses, one can disunite the expression(s) from the face, and reduce the face merely to its "nominal register".[195] Then, the face becomes a perfectly transparent matter. As Richard Rushton suggests, this is what the abstract machine of faciality is aimed at doing. In consideration of this predicament, *what can a face do?* becomes the critical question Rushton asked and responded to, in the wake of Deleuze's potential. As Rushton formulates, the face is not the "external effect of an interior cause" anymore, it becomes "the phase of *communicability* between a here and a there".[196] A photograph enables communication, following an order of reasons, as it is the conditional possibility that the systems of signifiance and subjectification are dependent upon. Facial photographs (as technical images deprived of identity-based uncertainties) regulate zones of our communication infrequencies. In light of this,

[194] Ibid., 170.
[195] Richard Rushton, "What Can a Face Do?: On Deleuze and Faces," *Cultural Critique* 51 (2002): 223. Accessed March 17, 2014, http://www.jstor.org/.
[196] Ibid., 224–225.

to acknowledge a photograph's ability of having an impact on public appearance, societal gaze or even increasing the value of commodity objects is important, but not sufficient enough to elude or undo their conjointly normalizing effects.

Thereupon, exceeding the limits of its corporeity, and through a protective screen and a computing black hole, the abstract machine of faciality creates and plays with the Face as a political surface. "The face is a politics", Deleuze and Guattari remarks.[197] It produces, re-produces, judges, and transforms that which it rejects using a normalizing grid, until sameness is attained or familiarity is instigated and distributed amongst the common. For that matter, the photographed face disconnects the head and the body because the photographable Face re-territorializes itself above the head and the body. Through conventional portrait photography, the entire social structure of the body becomes vulnerable. If there is any way to dismantle the Face, like Artaud did in writing, one way will be to frustrate it by conceptually photographing like a BwO – as the *a*signifying and *a*subjective realm of the face. Not only how Artaud did, but also others (not every body though) shall spontaneously return to

> spiritual and special becomings-animal, by strange true becomings that get past the wall and get out of the black holes, that *make faciality traits* themselves finally elude the organization of the face.[198]

However, Deleuze & Guattari strictly emphasize that this is not about retreating to a pre-faciality[199] photographic condition *i.e.* one cannot succeed in making a faceless body only by mimicking the characteristics of primitive societies' polyvalent bodies. Semiotics of signifiance and subjectification are protected from within, we are born into them. The affective myths of *what a face does* can be undone in the following slogan of theirs: "Find your black holes and white walls, know them, know your faces; it is the only way you will be able to dismantle them".[200]

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[197] Deleuze and Guattari, "Year Zero: Faciality," 188.
[198] Ibid., 171.
[199] Ibid., 188.
[200] Ibid., 188

In a nutshell, to be able to negate faciality, one should be fully aware of its potential dangers first. Then, invent or synthesize something anew from within, in order to set free the face from its interpretive subjectivity towards an alternative mode of organization, like a Deleuzoguattarian rhizomatic probe-head.[201] As a possibility, this might accord to a photographable *faceless* singularity, decontaminated from individuals or universals within. Being as such, devoid of any representable identity, would productively be antithetical to the abstract machine of faciality. The face should always remain improbable, continually shifting and being formless in its *a*temporal circularity, and deterritorialized in a form of groundlessness, settling in without cogitable coordinates. Photographing the face is about its politics: one should always expose its vulnerability without extending its authority.

[201] Ibid., 190.

CONCLUSION

I present *a face without photography* as a puzzle to (the readers and) everyone who photographs and perceives the face representative of its lifelike referent. Unfolding of it is open-ended, and shall remain inconclusive, but a co-thinking exercise or a creative reaction with this (self-)inquisitive question in mind may set off formless photographic forms previously unseen or unheard of for the present and future practitioners of the medium. Perhaps the scope of this proposition necessitates an in-depth analysis of the medium's internal and external dynamics of its economy-politics (relating to both subjectivity, production, and exhibition), but I only focused on its conceptual prospects, in which my routine of photographic expertise (as an art schooled photographer) is to be cut off from its disorientating skilfulness. I, or anyone else who ruminates around this issue for that matter, shall not aim at an absolute success, like trying to take the perfect photograph in a tourist spot. There must be a transformative potential of everyday photography, one that can elude its implicitly intentional mastery.

Throwing a backward glance, around photography's historical and technological course of expansion, one can easily discern the medium's desire to select, multiply and disseminate towards an absolute totality without a gap. Besides being coded as technical images, photographs are woven into the fabric of daily life so much so that it is hard to evade their presence. Under the fast-paced living conditions of present-day, the medium becomes a constituent of a consumerist market economy, one that continuously caters the individuals with a need to visually (self-)express, communicate, and appreciate (in order to make up for the lost time). We all love taking pictures that which we can spare and share. Right before your eyes, at the tip of my tongue and in-between our hands; these accumulated pictures are identified and embodied as likenesses to everything one holds dear in life. Physical or digital, photographs are irreplaceable for many.

Also, at the time when photography is taken up by the police department, the capacity of human vision is already under scrutiny. Through this lack (or incapacity) of everyday vision, criminal mug shots and affordable studio portraits simultaneously authorised a particular photographic accuracy to the perception of faces. With these intensely identity-based affective positions and consumerist submissions in place, an authentic representation of the face is and will be hard to negate. Therefore, as my thesis aims at doing, it seems difficult but I find it possible to overcome the institutional restraints and remnants of photographic representation (of the face) by merely discussing or philosophizing about what counter actions one might take. What this sets in stone is the cognitive acknowledgement of a problem as such. Also, instead of arguing whether a photograph is a (legal) document of not or who is a real 'photographer' these days, I find exploring the impossibilities of representing a face (by contesting the possibility of all things being equally representable) within a re-organisation of all perceptive structures (that of photography and the body) more appropriate.

In constructing my argument, I try to highlight these two things intertwined. The reason why I did so is precisely because these polar opposites cannot be considered one without the other – criminal identification photographs versus an auratic photographic experience. Both relate differently to the identification/representation of the face, one is a disciplinarian measure, and the other permits (self-)satisfaction and possession (of absence). There is too much at steak to undo the criminal identification methodology or to dispose photographic traces of passed/loved ones. The subject's position, *i.e.* the attitude of the photographer, becomes crucial here. Since its inception, the medium has already a very complicated institutional relationship with its intent (make use of) and meaning. This 'double' relationship is mostly repressed, rendered invisible, or its pejorative implications is put into constructive use for the welfare of public. The task of the photographer is to expose and question these visually informative limitations. To reiterate, the crux of my argument does not involve renouncing the

practices of photography. This is a proactive call for action to photograph the face beyond what is visible or visually intelligible.

Pushing the medium past beyond its indexical and evidentiary limits, one shall loop photography back on itself and revisit its pre-industrial days. One can also experiment with and explore more of its material/digital and linguistic capabilities. Or else, one must perhaps take up on ‘bad’ photography, either by creating new images or appropriating on found ones – for one’s own creative nonsense fun. The foundations or fundamentals with which one photographs must always shift with every photograph one takes, receives, creates, presents, or looks at. I hold nothing against to photograph, but just suggest and support photography only with and within thinking.

FIGURES

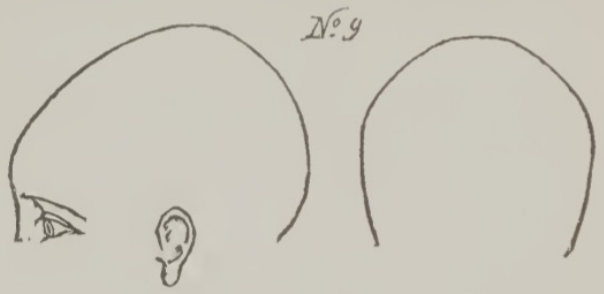
Figure 1.1 Jennifer Bolande, 1987, *Milk Crown*, cast porcelain, 2" height x 7" diameter. Accessed March 14, 2017, https://jbolande.com/images/milkcrown.html.

Figure 1.2 William Henry Fox Talbot, 1844, *Articles of China*, salted print, 13.4 x 18 cm, The J. Paul Getty Museum Collection, California. Accessed December 31, 2016, http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/129878/william-henry-fox-talbot-articles-of-china-british-1844/.

No. VII.

ILLUSTRATIVE DRAWINGS.

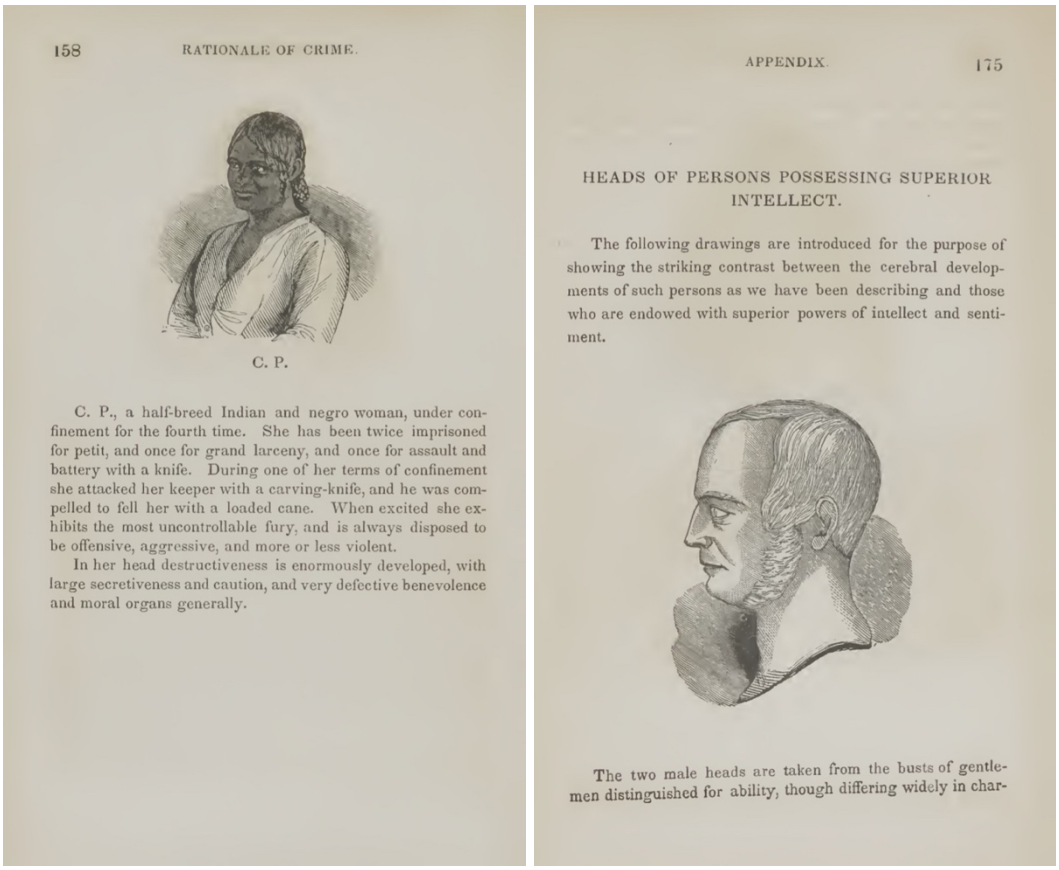
The following drawings are presented for the purpose of further illustrating the connexion of criminal desires and acts with peculiar conformations of brain, and also with the view of adding somewhat to the mass of evidence already collected on the same question:



This is a drawing of a young female who was sent to this prison at the age of 15. She is the youngest of three girls, sentenced in Oneida county to ten years each, for the crime of arson. She has a lymphatic temperament, slightly tinctured by the sanguine. She has a scrofulous constitution, and bears all the marks of having suffered severely from this disease in her childhood. She says that her illness led to her being excessively indulged, and her organization shows that it would have been no easy matter to procure obedience to any thing but her own desires.

She reads with tolerable correctness, and has some memory of isolated facts, but little capacity to reason. In her degradation she was very degraded; in her better state, she is dependent, almost entirely, on influences external to herself. She is

Figure 1.3 Eliza Farnham, 1846, a page from *Appendix to Marmaduke Sampson, Rationale of Crime*. Accessed January 12, 2017, https://archive.org/details/60630050R.nlm.nih.gov.



158 RATIONALE OF CRIME.

C. P.

C. P., a half-breed Indian and negro woman, under confinement for the fourth time. She has been twice imprisoned for petit, and once for grand larceny, and once for assault and battery with a knife. During one of her terms of confinement she attacked her keeper with a carving-knife, and he was compelled to fell her with a loaded cane. When excited she exhibits the most uncontrollable fury, and is always disposed to be offensive, aggressive, and more or less violent.

In her head destructiveness is enormously developed, with large secretiveness and caution, and very defective benevolence and moral organs generally.

APPENDIX. 175

HEADS OF PERSONS POSSESSING SUPERIOR INTELLECT.

The following drawings are introduced for the purpose of showing the striking contrast between the cerebral developments of such persons as we have been describing and those who are endowed with superior powers of intellect and sentiment.

The two male heads are taken from the busts of gentlemen distinguished for ability, though differing widely in char-

Figure 1.4 Eliza Farnham, 1846, two pages from *Appendix to Marmaduke Sampson, Rationale of Crime*. Accessed January 12, 2017, https://archive.org/details/60630050R.nlm.nih.gov.

Figure 1.5 Gerhard Richter, 1962, *Atlas Sheet 5*, newspaper and album photos, 517 x 667 mm. Accessed May 15, 2014, http://www.gerhard-richter.com/art/atlas/atlas.php?paintid=11585.

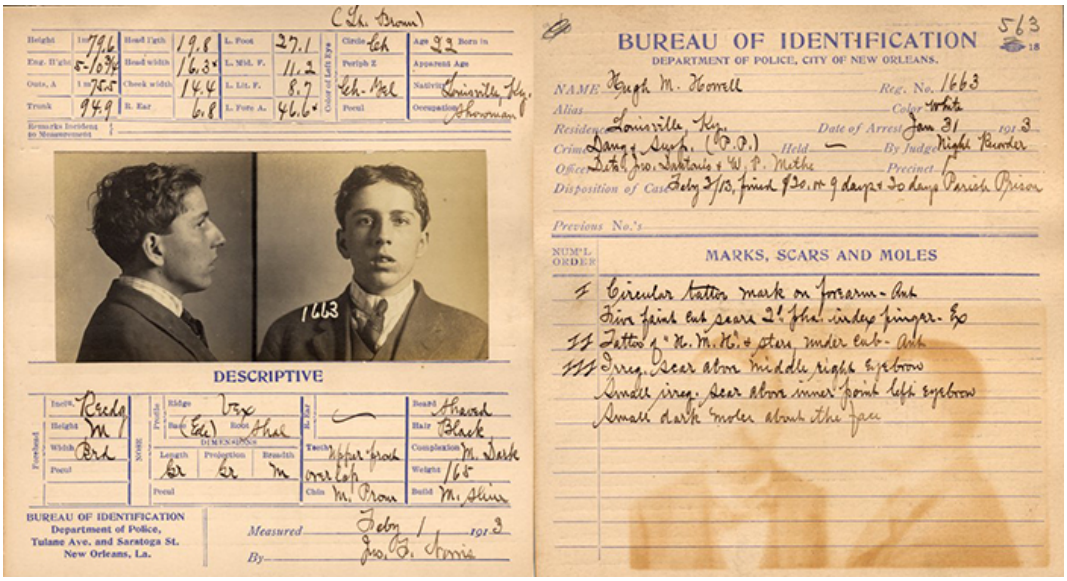


Figure 1.6 Hugh M. Howell, 1913, *Bertillon card*. Accessed April 5, 2014, http://nutrias.org/~nopl/monthly/sept2002/bcd1.htm.

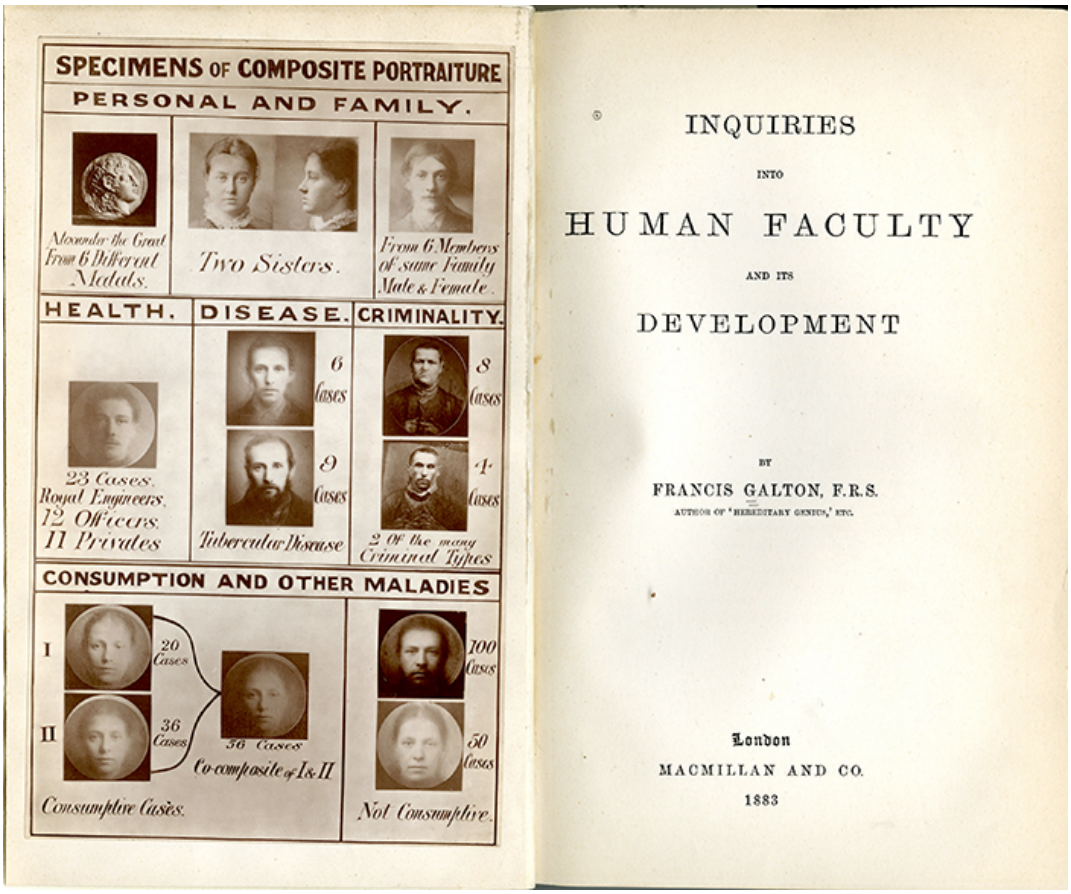


Figure 1.7 Francis Galton, 1883, a page showing composite images from *Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Development*. Accessed April 5, 2014, http://collections.countway.harvard.edu/onview/items/show/6207.

Figure 2.1 Jeff Wall, 1981, *Milk*, silver dye bleach transparency, aluminum light box, 204.5 x 245.1 x 22.2 cm. Accessed March 21, 2017, https://www.moma.org/collection/works/93456?locale=en.

Figure 2.2 Joseph Nicéphore Niépce, ca. 1826, *View from the Window at Le Gras* (Retouched). Accessed May 12, 2017, http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/exhibitions/permanent/windows/southeast/joseph_nicephore_niepce.html.

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