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## INTRODUCTION

Following up, and enlarging on *Borders of the Visible: Intersections between Literature and Photography - I*, the present collection of essays further explores the paths meandering between these two fields of artistic expression, adding a few essays devoted to tackling questions related to contemporary literature, art and culture.

As in the previous volume, this collection presents a selection of the papers of the international conference *Borders of the Visible: Intersections between Literature and Photograph*, organised by the Centro Studi “Arti della Modernità” and held in Turin in November 2017. Both volumes explore the ways in which the borders traditionally separating the language of literature from the language of pictures are crossed and bridged, giving rise to all sorts of interactions, contaminations, hybridising which are examined from various scholarly angles, in a comparative and interdisciplinary way.

This issue opens with a new section, *Headlines*, which will host, from now on, a choice of essays by international leading scholars focusing on theoretical questions that may have been at the heart of a lively critical debate or displayed particular relevance to current events.

**W.J.T. Mitchell**, the author of our first “headline”, has contributed an essay focusing on the “images” and the “affects” that surround “temporality”. The author reflects on time as an “experiential and qualitative category”, placing his theme in a period of American political culture that has become “tense, uncertain, ‘interesting,’ and (above all) crazy”.

Our *Focus* is explicitly devoted to “borders of the visible” and the critical questions related to the intersections between literature and photography. The essays of this section investigate the meaning and uses of photographs in different literary genres, such as autofiction, historical narrative, fictional representation of places, and experiments of visual poetry. They focus, among the others, on the works of such authors as Roland Barthes, W.G. Sebald, Giorgio Agamben, Ohan Pamuk, and Michael Ondaatje.

**Angela Breidbach** analyses the images inserted in W.G. Sebald’s *Schwindel. Gefühle* (1990). At first sight, they work as their stories’ devices, but they soon

reveal a manipulative power. Sebald's intermediality is more than a mix of genres. Images deploy their own critical impact, while the story meanders around them: absence does not come as abstraction, but through ostensive figuration.

**Epifanio Ajello** explores a zone of life writing which is still almost uncharted: the photographic memoir, whose authors collect and order pictures to shape an autobiographical narrative. His analysis takes into account a prototypical text of this literary genre, Giorgio Agamben's *Autoritratto nello studio* (2017).

**Margaret Owens** comments on a passage of *La Chambre claire* (1980), focusing on an automaton in Fellini's *Casanova* (1976), to describe Barthes's notion of photography as a form of "shared hallucination." The automaton is linked to a longstanding *topos* in Western culture: a Pygmalionesque fantasy in which the artificial woman metaphorically embodies the allure of visual media.

**Julie Gaillard** focuses on the work of the photographer and writer Édouard Levé and on his poetics of the portrait as a genre on the threshold between the visible and the invisible. In works such as *Autoportrait* (2005) and *Suicide* (2008), Levé combines photographs and texts in order to reevoke imperceptible fragments of the past and thus to "translate time into space".

**Ayse Erek** and **Esra Almas** discuss Orhan Pamuk's use of photography in *Istanbul: Memories and the City* (2003), a portrait of the writer as a young artist accompanied with black-and-white photographs of the city. Photographs provide documentary evidence of the past and, at the same time, endow the melancholy of narrative with a reality effect that goes beyond words.

**Federico Fastelli** analyses the essential role of photography in Italian visual poetry. In the work of authors such as Lamberto Pignotti, Luciano Ori, Eugenio Miccini, and Lucia Marcucci, the combination of photographs and word represents a sort of interlanguage that is the opposite of advertising.

**Laurence Petit** examines Anita Brookner's *Brief Lives* (1990), a novel in which the inaugural "memory-photograph" is the starting point of the narrator's hermeneutic quest about herself, and the sudden irruption of the Real of death (in the Lacanian sense) comes to thwart the photographic apparatus.

**Serena Fusco** investigates the power of phototexts to reimage the past, focusing on Michael Ondaatje's fiction. Photographs are used by this author as agents, and photographed subjects as historical objects. Ondaatje's use of photographs—re-read through Benjamin—may be considered as an allegorical experiment, where fiction and history (co)exist.

**Rodigo Fontanari** reflects on the relationship between photography and the art of the haiku, focusing on the work of Brazilian photographer of Japanese origin Haruo Ohara. According to this artist, the photographer's aspiration to "capture the moment" corresponds to a condition of suspension, close to that of the haiku: an image of immediacy that does not seek any teleological effect.

*Percorsi*, the third section of the issue, hosts essays that explore the intersections between literature and photography moving from general questions to the work of specific authors. The essays discuss the collaboration between Henry James and Alvin Langdon Coburn, Virginia Woolf's photographic imagination, the Italian translations of Bertolt Brecht's *Kriegsfibel* (1955), the images of Sylvia Plath's biographies, the visual poetics of Carla Cerati, the use of photographs in Siri Husvedt's narrative, and the presence of phototexts in postcolonial literature. This section ends with two essays on the narrative power of images in contemporary society.

**Gabriella Bologna** investigates Henry James's role in directing Alvin Langdon Coburn for the photographs of the New York Edition of his works. Not all of these photos, however, follow the writer's detailed instructions. The essay explores the reasons for the changes, and redefines the role of the photographer in the choice of the subjects and the composition of images.

**Annalisa Federici** focuses on *Orlando* (1928) by Virginia Woolf, a text that undermines the supposed faithfulness of the form toward its subject by presenting false photographic evidence. Woolf's combination of words and pictures determines the collapse of denotation: the concepts of "reality" and "meaning" crumble, and new definitions of "truth" begin to evolve.

**Salvatore Graziano Spampinato** focuses on the two most important Italian editions of the Brechtian *Kriegsfibel* (1955): the *Abicì della guerra* by Roberto Fertonani (1972), more literal and classical, and Renato Solmi's edition (1975), freer and more actualising. The essay focuses on the latter, which vividly captures the didactic and performative meaning of Brecht's phototext.

**Sophie Mayr** examines the role of photographs in the biographies of Sylvia Plath, describing how they shape collective imagination, despite their apparent referential meaning: some of them are sort of "pathographies" that concentrate on her mental illness; others support a feminist perspective; others focus on her relationship with Ted Hughes.

**Silvia Mazzucchelli** investigates the relationship between word and image in the work of Carla Cerati (1926-2016). A writer and photographer, Cerati tried to explore the world with her photos, while her autobiographical novels reflect on the contradictions of bourgeois family, criticising its conventions.

**Spencer Meeks** argues that photographs in novels distort narrative linearity to alter readers' perception of time. His essay focuses on the effects of photography in Siri Hustvedt's *The Blindfold* (1992). According to Meeks, phototexts mirror the postmodern refutation of master-narratives, problematising the dynamics of time, which is represented as duplicitous and subjective.

**Jin-Young Hwang** focuses on *The Elegy of Whiteness* (2016) by South Korean writer Han Kang, a book that mixes together writing and photography, since the text is intertwined with the work of the visual artist Cha Mihye. The combination of these two artistic languages symbolically represents memory as "whiteness".

**Valeria Cammarata** deals with a recurrent theme in phototexts, that of migration as a collective story of wandering and hope, looking in particular at two works that reflect on the issues specific to this type of memorial narrative: the recent *Incoming* (2017) by photographer Richard Mosse, and the *Récits d'Ellis Island. Histoires d'errance et d'espoir* (1980), by Georges Perec and Robert Bober.

**Maria Festa** investigates the works of some postcolonial authors, such as Caryl Phillips's play, *The Shelter* (1984), Andrea Levy's novel *Small Island* (2004) and Teju Cole's novella *Every Day is for the Thief* (2007). These writers use literature and photography to renegotiate questions of displacement and belonging, identity and otherness.

**Emanuele Crescimanno** explores the social and aesthetic meaning of photographic portraits. From Bertillon to Lombroso, mugshots have been used as a form of social control, but photography can also be subversive: when photographic portraits are not used solely for identification, they reveal the irreducible uniqueness of human faces.

**Silvia Verdiani** investigates on how language and images, since the advent of digital culture, work together in intersemiotic conglomerates. Just as image theory is investigating the role played by pictures in this new context, the essay reflects on a linguistic theory that may take into account the specific role of language.

The section *Letture* is, as usual, miscellaneous. It hosts the last three essays of the volume. The first one is a review of a recent book on photography and modernist literature. The second, is an essay on literary translation. The last one is a study on the political implications of H.P. Lovecraft's fiction.

**Teresa Prudente** reviews Adèle Cassigneul's *Voir, observer, penser. Virginia Woolf et la photo-cinématographie* (2018), discussing the notions of *photo-cinématographie* and *imageographie*, that involve considerations on how and to what extent images reproduce reality.

**Lorenzo Devilla** and **Rémy Porquier** analyse the Italian translations of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). Their essay describes the way the translators dealt with Friday's interlanguage, representing oral interactions in a written form, and compares them with some French and Spanish translations.

**Lee Herrmann** discusses the relationship between H.P. Lovecraft's apocalyptic fiction and the contemporary political unconscious. Their fantastic subjects notwithstanding, Lovecraft's stories involve a meditation on violence and modernity.