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Andrey Belov-Belikov

Master's Thesis

**Contemporary street photography. Its
place between art and documentary in
the era of digital ubiquity.**

Master in digital communication and culture

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH PROBLEM.

Due to my hobby of a photographer, who owns diverse photographic equipment and my personal interest in the genre of street photography I have decided to explore this area academically and conduct the research on this subject. Street photography experiences the skyrocketed popularity nowadays, due to its very loose and free nature, as this is the genre which does not limited with any concrete guidelines. In addition to that, this discipline has a long, as old as photography itself, and complicated history, during which we can observe the complex relations with documentary and photojournalism. These relations are so tight, that even today the unified opinion on the nature of the genre can be found, whether it is a branch of documentary, or just a neighboring discipline, or whether it is art in documentary or documentary in art. Street photography absorbs different ideas concepts and cultural movements like a sponge. One of them is Surrealism, carried out in street photography by such terms as 'decisive moment', 'flaneur', and the most influential photographic creations of XX century. So, as one can see even the definition of this genre is not clear and may include too many nuances, depending on the perspective street photography is observed from. Moreover, the academic world is significantly lacking material on modern street photography in the discourse of its implementation in almost strictly digital realm. It is the era when of digital photography ubiquity, which makes us all photographers. If several decades ago a man with the camera was a member of some kind of one-class club, today the abundance of cheap photographic equipment and photography in general turns the world upside down, and such genre as street photography is exposed to this process, because of the blurring of distinction between the professional and the amateur. It especially fuelled by the wide-spread use of mobile phones as cameras. Also it does not matter if the image is of bad quality, blurry or grainy, because in the discourse of mobile phone camera the criteria of quality are not relevant anymore.

The thesis seeks to explore the discipline of modern street photography and how it is featured by means social networks and photo-sharing websites.

The objective of the thesis is to figure out how the ubiquity of digital devices (mobile phones in particular) influences the development of street photography.

The aim of the thesis is to distinguish the major trends or sub-genres of modern street photography and to find their placement on the scale between Art and Documentary, in the context of ubiquity of digital photography.

Street photography is the genre which is as old as photography and every step of its evolution was a reflection the global social cultural and technical transformations. It is the genre which is vulnerable to changes, that is why now, in digital age, is the perfect time to observe and study the way it is accustoming to its digital implementation. The topic is relevant for visual culture theorists, art historians as well as for photography practitioners of all levels (professionals, amateurs and novice).

1.2. THEORY AND METHODS.

1.2.1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND.

The theoretical background of the thesis will cover several issues tied to the notion of street photography. Theory is divided into two major parts.

First part will cover the observance of street photography as a whole concept. Having a rich history, street photography had been evolving from the very beginning of photographic imaging, through the start globalisation and urbanisation processes in the end of XIX century, through the rise of social documentary of the 1920s and 1930s, to the post war consumerism boom and to its eventual establishment in the mid-1960s. Also, to explain the discipline more precise it is absolutely necessary to present the greatest figures in the history of street photography, who are now considered to be the founding fathers of it, even though the term ‘street photography’ was not used during the time when their masterpieces were created. The discussion on street photography is impossible without mentioning the name of Henri Cartier-Bresson, Walker Evans, Robert Frank and others. Henri Cartier-Bresson is the creator of the concept called ‘decisive moment’, which is the central term in the field of street photography. His photojournalistic, yet artistic approach to capture the reality in images along with the vernacular photography of Walker Evans depicting American farmers in the time Great Depression and the iconic photo-book of Robert Frank, *The Americans*, became foundational to the observed discipline. Also I found it relevant to discuss street photography in the discourse of the surrealistic cultural movement, which immensely asserted influence over the genre, according to many scholars (Franklin 2016, Galassi 1987, Marien 2012, Sontag 1973). The discipline which has very tight connections to its, some scholars say, Big Brother, documentary, as well as to the style of photojournalism. There is still no consensus on street photography independence from these two genres, hence I found it important to observe the theory in order to figure out what characteristics unite and alienate them. The presentation of

surrealism in the thesis is necessary for the general comprehension of street photography. The second part of theoretical background is dedicated to the digital phase of the subject. Digital age is now and the street photography as a part of the medium so effected by digitising is experiencing a new metamorphosis. Today street photography evolves further and transforms and absorbs new techniques, which eventually lead to completely different aesthetic representations by means of social media and image-sharing websites. Digital photography will be studied as a whole. It has the new qualities which dramatically differ it from its analogue forerunner. One of them them is malleability, which implies that digital photography is interwoven into other media and very adaptive to different network communications, in terms of sharing and interlinking between devices. Another feature is ubiquity, thanks to cheap and simple photo-technologies, such practice as photography became wide spread, making such terms as ‘photojournalist’ or ‘street photographer’ too universal for anyone who owns a camera of camera phone. Mobile photography deserves a separate discussion where the use of mobile phone camera is presented as an apogee of the digital ubiquity. Discussion on the subject of digital photography ubiquity is important for this thesis in order to distinguishing major trend of the discipline’s further development.

1.2.2. METHODS.

With the help of this theoretical material I am capable of providing the research on the subject of modern street photography. Due to a very blurry and loose definition of street photography, the place of street photography in the world of art is still very indefinite. I plan to distinguish the over-inclusive style of street photography into sub-categories and highlight the major tendencies of the genre in the discourse of digital ubiquity and to localise those tendencies on the scale between art and documentary.

For my empirical research I have applied a quantitative method of research (method of observation and comparative study) to examine and analyze the significant amount of imagery and some of the acknowledged contemporary photographers which in today’s comprehension are be labelled as ‘street photography’ representations. The empirical material determination was provided by means of digital platforms (social network Instagram, and image-sharing websites Flickr and 500px, photo-catalogue Pinterest), due to easy and convenient navigation with the help of tagging and hashtags through the enormous quantity of imagery, and also due to very simple facility of search by the name, which allows to check and subscribe for the relevant street photographers accounts. In addition to that, I enlisted the help of several print media which showcase over hundred

different photographers, both already established and just debuting, from all over the world, representing widely different cityscapes and urban environment but still all rolled into one notion of street photography.

Moreover, I apply the method of comparison, without which the research would be incomplete, because the comparative study of the great amount of images helps to indicate the key differences and similarities according to chosen criteria of analysis, which, in turn, help to define the major common trends in street photography imagery so that they would come under the sub-categories of the discipline. Also I apply such benchmark study to the works of older masters, who are now considered as “the fathers” of street photography, because they formed this controversial and ambiguous discipline as a result of their different approaches to the photography process.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.

2.1. THE HISTORY OF STREET PHOTOGRAPHY.

The following chapter is dedicated to general notion of street photography. The first part presents different definitions of the genre and the overview of what it is now. The next sub-chapter illustrates the history of the discipline and the biggest representatives, such as Henri Cartier-Bresson and his famous concept of decisive moment, then Walker Evans and his manner of vernacular photography in the years of Great Depression. Furthermore I present the creativity of Robert Frank, who, being a foreigner, managed to depict the life of post-war America in his iconic photo-book *The Americans*. The next sub-chapter tells about some of the other significant figures in the history of genre establishment in the US and Britain after the WW2, amongst them are William Klein and Roger Mayne. Concerning the further development I also mention the infamous exhibition *New Documents* held in 1967 and represented the new wave of photographers.

Next part of the chapter explored the influence of Surrealism on photography in general and its street branch in particular, which evidently was significant and impacted to the discipline to a great extent. Surrealistic movement was expressed in several concepts, tightly connected to street photography.

Also I found it important to dedicated the entire sub-chapter to the relations between street photography and its “Big Brother” - documentary, and to photojournalism. Their relatedness is indisputable but it makes it very difficult to distinguish street photography as an independent style after all. That is why different perspectives on documentary and street photography will be observed in order to figure out what is the placement of street photography in the frame of reference between Art and Documentary.

2.1.1. THE NOTION OF STREET PHOTOGRAPHY.

Street photography is the genre that we might say as old as the medium of photography itself. The essence of what is known now as “*street photography*” is “the impulse to take candid pictures in the stream of everyday life” (Howarth, McLaren, 2012, p. 9). According to the authors street photography is an “unbroken tradition”, leading back to the invention of photography per se. What they mean is that the very first photographic images ever taken come under the notion of street photography, because most of the pictures in the early days of photography were taken on the streets, hence they fulfill the major criteria of

being the “street”. As an example, the picture below, the oldest preserved photographic image in history, which depicts the view from the window in France, and qualifies as the street photograph.

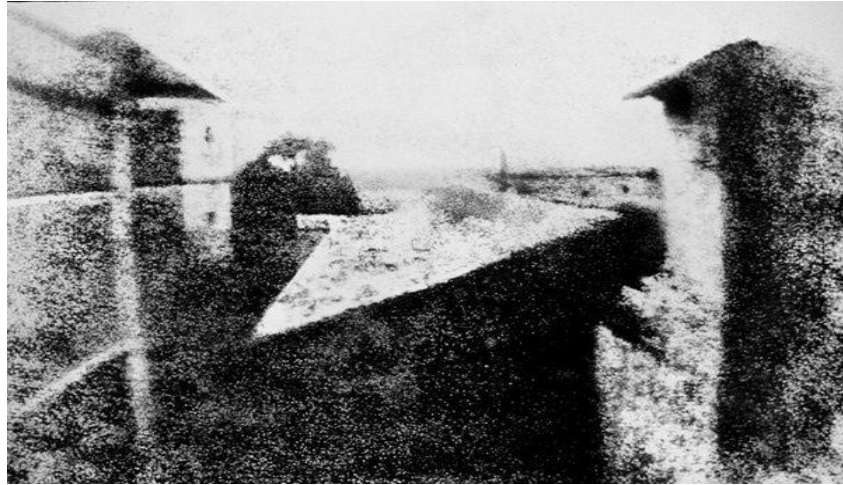


Figure 1. Nicéphore Niépce's earliest surviving photograph, circa 1826. Known as View from the Window at Le Gras.

The origins of street photography coincides in time with the beginning of globalization processes in the late nineteenth century. Rapid urbanization in Europe and in the United States inspired the technological development, which in turn gave momentum to the artistic techniques and ideas, that had to be featured, therefore street photography, being urban by default, was present in the right place at the right time.

The photographic movements all over the world in the beginning of the XX century (in Russia, the US, Britain and France) were pushed initially by social documentary, which sets sights on illustration of the real world and the real people in private and social conditions. Bate describes social documentary as the movement that “was emphatically about constructing the idea of a public realm through social experience”. However, it does not indicate the function of photograph as a document (Bate, 2016, p. 73).

As fine exemplified by Howarth and McLaren, street photography today has been gaining extreme popularity. Flickr, the world's biggest photo-sharing website, contains more than 400 groups devoted to street photography. So-called “home of street photography” website, In-Public, counts up to 100000 hits a month. Universities and museums now offer courses in the history and practice of street photography, and increasing interest in citizen photojournalism has opened new online editorial

opportunities for photographers to display their work. It is important to note that young photographers are interested in depicting the cities of the developing world (Howarth McLaren, 2010, p. 15). This is what concerns contemporary street photography conditions, governed basically by digital revolution, and the way how candidness of street photography ideally coincided with the mobility of digital devices.

Notwithstanding, the disputes on the modern status of street photography cannot be provided without the observing of its history,

When it comes to historical understanding of the medium of general photography it is necessary to mention, Lewis Hine, a documentarian who in the beginning of XX century saw the art photography as the way to capture real life, whilst camera was seen as a tool to present empirical evidence of something happened (Hine, 1909, pp. 355-59).

However, Trachtenberg elaborates, saying that it does not necessarily mean any beauty or personal expression, but just picture of how people live (Trachtenberg, 1981, p. 240). This idea of Trachtenberg relates to street photography quite tight, as it does not strike for the glamorous depiction, but rather for the instant picture as it is.

Wells suggest there is a tradition of street photography that formed by the history images from the streets that was a “mainstay of photographic practice” (2015, p. 118). This tradition was defined by Westerbeck and Meyerowitz as “candid pictures of everyday life in the street”, to which they also include such public places as bars, cafes, parks etc. (1994, p. 34-35). Which in my opinion is too broad definition and may include all kinds of nuances.

Max Kozloff, the art historian, in the following words explains the genre very briefly and superficially, however, pointing out functions that street photographer is supposed to fulfill:

Traditionally, street photography acts as a portmanteau term that covers a range of idioms centered on the built environment and the experience of those who perceive the human traffic around it by means of the camera. They have usually served civic, political, editorial and journalistic functions (Kozloff, 2014, p. 7).

Joel Meyerowitz, the famous street photographer, expresses the idea that street photography is the most photographic practice out of all of them, as he said in the interview:

I believe that street photography is central to the issue of photography - that it is purely photographic, whereas the other genres, such as landscape and portrait photography, are a little more applied, more mixed in with the history of painting and other art forms (Meyerowitz, in Salkeld, 2013, p. 87).

Here Meyerowitz is supported by David Blumenkrantz who summarizes with the following “street photography is central to the medium's potential, with literal, abstract and surreal interpretations of reality”¹. Blumenkrantz mentions 'surreality' in his explanation of street photography. As I will describe the genre further this cultural movement is tightly tied with the way street photographers reflect the reality. Indeed, as a genre street photography is probably the only one that ideally provides this amount of juxtapositions² due to accident plexus of the objects in reality

There is a significant debate in the world of photography historians and theorist on a nature of street photography and one of the major questions on this matter is whether it is art or documentary, or a combination and a blend of both, or even artistic components in documentary and documentary components in art. The consensus of opinion cannot be found so far.

Nevertheless, to figure out the real essence of street photography we have to look back at almost the very beginning of medium and see where the roots of the genre are growing from. The discussion of street photography cannot be complete without the discussion on the subject of photojournalism and documentary photography, because these practices relations are very complex. In a way, they are parallel and, ironically, interwoven at the same time, on the other side the former one is a branche of the latter ones. Anyway, not a single study of street photography can be managed without the observation of its documentary and journalistic counterparts. Mainly I am going to mention the documentary photography and photojournalism, in terms of its goals, history and aesthetics.

¹ <http://david-blumenkrantz.squarespace.com/mfa-thesis-street-photography/>

² 'the act or an instance of placing two or more things side by side often to compare or contrast or to create an interesting effect' (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/juxtaposition>)

2.1.2. THE ROOTS OF THE GENRE.

Documentary photography and photojournalism are established rather close related to each other genres whilst street photography has very strong ties with these two disciplines. This relations make it difficult to give a clear solid definition of street photography, because it includes too many details and nuances indicative for the former genres. In addition to that, every photographer since the early days of the medium follows his own exclusive approach to the subject-matter of his work, hence there are the dozens of famous artists working in under the category of street photography, but all of them has their unique unparalleled style, broadening the genre even more. Clive Scott comments on the complex nature of street photography:

street photography put us in a taxonomic quandary, not only because it stand on the crossroads between the tourist snap, the documentary photograph, the photojournalism but also because it asks to be treated as much as vernacular photography as a high art one (2013, p. 15).

So obviously the term has a very loose and broad definition but to understand the genre we have to observe its historical development through out the entire twentieth century. Even though the notion of street photography is very complex, I highlight the major time periods, events and the most influential figures in the history of photography to explain the fundamental nature of street photography.

2.1.2.1. *HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON AND 'DECISIVE MOMENT'.*

There is no much of a dispute on a subject of the birthplace of the genre, because Paris was always considered as a dominant city in the early history of street photography, not only because it was strongly influenced by the development of modernity and urbanism, but also due to appearance of department stores, tabloid newspapers and other forms of press. And the photographers who are now considered to be the greatest figures in the medium of all time all started in Paris back in 1920s and 1930s, these are Robert Doisneau, Willy Ronis, Brassai, Robert Capa and Henri Cartier-Bresson (Wells, 2015, p. 119). Here is the first I ought to mention the name of one of the greatest personalities in the history of photography, Henri Cartier-Bresson, which is unavoidable in the street photography discussions. Not only his matchless photographic style made a significant impact on the further artists' development but the defined key concept of street

photography serves as a major guideline for the photographers all over the world. His idea of the “decisive moment” is a well-seen demonstration of expressive realism in social documentary. It represents the fusion of momentary in photograph with the old art history concept of telling a story with the help of one picture (Bate, 2016, p. 79).

Warren refers to Cartier-Bresson and the way he applied the “decisive moment” concept:

it answers to an essentially modern urban condition: only the metropolis contains such a vast amount of chance encounters and only the modern urbanite, who has interiorized the shock experiences of modernity, is capable of making necessary fast and immediate reactions. Cartier-Bresson combined these quick reflexes with a gracious elegance” (L. Warren, 2007, p. 1504).

Cartier-Bresson himself explains the concept as “one unique picture whose composition possesses such vigor and richness, and whose content so radiates outward from it, that this single picture is a whole story itself” (Bate, 2016, p. 80).

John Szarkowski formulated his laconic theory of photography regarding the aspects of production and outcome related to artists of different backgrounds and practices, while still obeying the previously established rules and critically distinguishing new photographers on the ground of a several formal principles (Sampson, 2007, p. 232).

These are five elements that must be acknowledged by the artist in order to transform the “actual” world into a “picture”: “the thing itself”, “the detail”, “the frame”, “time” and “vantage point”. Especially, Szarkowski emphasizes on the element of “time”, tying it to the concept of decisive moment by stating “decisive, not because of the exterior event (the bat meeting the ball) but because in that moment the flux of changing forms and patterns was sensed to have achieved balance and clarity and order – because the image became, for an instant, a *picture*” (Szarkowski, 1966, p. 7). To put it bluntly, Cartier-Bresson refers to the visual culmination, not dramatic one, so that the image that counts not a story.

Bate also suggest that the most common device Cartier-Bresson uses in his work is “a figure whose foot is about to touch the ground” (2016, p. 81). This foot defines a future event, caused by the past and the result of which is predicted by what we actually see in the photograph, so that we, as observers of the photograph, can use our imagination back and forth across the depicted moment to visualize the sequence of events this particular picture can implicit (Bate, 2016, 81).

I want to demonstrate the perfect example of Henri Cartier-Bresson work which is definitely meets the definition of the photograph taken in 'decisive moment', furthermore, it is an exhibit A of a previous mentioned Bate's notion of the 'figure whose foot is about to touch the ground'.



Figure 2. Henri Cartier-Bresson. 1932.

This is a good example of how compositional construction affects the perception of the plot. Looking at the photograph, one can see the absurd resemblance of the figures of the jumping person and the dancer on the poster. Their interaction with their reflections turns this image into a surreal dance where the visible and the real, and the high and the mundane are mixed.

There is a great number of street photographers who wrote their names in history of photography, but, in my honest opinion, Henri Cartier-Bresson is definitely the greatest and the most impactful out of all. About him we can absolutely positively say that he is considered of more as an artist than a photojournalist or reporter. Blumenkrantz believes that Cartier-Bresson is probably more than any other photographer the one who “epitomizes the potential of artistic reportage, and with his unique ability to find universal moments wherever he traveled, is held in the highest esteem among street photographers”³.

2.1.2.2. WALKER EVANS.

Blumenkrantz argues that there are two major trends in photography practice of XX^t century that are expected to feature the unaltered and representational. The first is the realist and journalistic forms, such genres as documentary or reportage. And the second

³ <http://david-blumenkrantz.squarespace.com/mfa-thesis-street-photography/>

is family snapshot or vernacular photography⁴. Two genres serve some essential societal functions, and there are some fields where they interact⁵.

In my case, the most important area of interaction here is street photography, which “with its slices of life and frozen moments ironic and banal, sought out and arbitrary, incorporates vernacular qualities”⁶, and which ancestry and kinship to documentary was skated over. Vernacular features are expressed by Walker Evans in what he called *American Vernacular*, and Evans' most significant works coincide with the years of the Great Depression and emphasize on the documentation of the American farmers life. The great documentarist, his influential creativity made it even harder to differentiate between genres. He defined the culture by focusing on iconography of signs and symbols, and much of his work is recognized as street photography mixed with family snapshots (real life common people as the central objects, the same as in somebody's family photo album).

Despite wide recognition, he was heavily criticized and blamed for tendentiousness and prepossession of his photography, as well as for over-dramatizing of the overall situation. Among the critics is Susan Sontag, who notes that lots of his images are not candid, as he was taking a bunch of shots of people, literally offering the objects to pose, that is why



Sontag casts on doubt the actuality of his photographs (Sontag, 1977, p. 24).

Figure 3. Walker Evans, Allie Mae Burroughs, 1936.

⁴ he creation of photographs that take everyday life and common things as subjects (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vernacular_photography) 09.05.2017 11:20.

^{5,6} <http://david-blumenkrantz.squarespace.com/mfa-thesis-street-photography/>

However, Walker Evans himself saw photography and photographic images as something beyond our formal education, because photography for him was the one and only right reflection of reality. He never intended to call for social awareness, but rather just to express the reality He writes:

Our overwhelming formal education ... may be a form of conspiracy that promises artificial blindness. It certainly is that to a learning child. It is this very blindness that photography attacks, blindness that is ignorance of real seeing and is perversion of seeing. It is reality that photography reaches toward (Evans, 1969).

Therefore, he considered his own photography as the actual reflection of reality, with all its depressive and dark components of poverty dependence and underdevelopment of American social environment in the 1930s. Moreover, I suggest that Walker Evans was one of those photo artists who stood on a transition stage between the real documentary and street photography, even though ones of his most iconic images are actually portraits. But as it was already mentioned, street photography is still too controversial and polysemic field, thus all the interconnections are very consequential.

2.1.2.3. ROBERT FRANK.

In the post-war world, to be precise, in the 1950s we can witness the dramatic cultural changes in dominance of Paris in favor of the USA, and New-York in particular, which, definitely, reflected on street photography establishment, bringing in the new names and new styles. The brand new photographic trends were entrenched, expanding the horizons of photography approaches. The most recognized personalities of the US street photography are Robert Frank, Joel Meyerowitz, Diane Arbus, Garry Winogrand and many others (Wells, 2015, p. 119).

Another wave of establishing the genre of street photography (after Henri Cartier-Bressons and other Parisians) is tied to the name of Robert Frank and his infamous work *The Americans*, published in 1958, became a major photo-essay of 1950s, where he offered his vision of American life and held back documentary approach, but applied more ironic one, showing the moments of America's ordinary life. What is significant in this photo work is that he, being Swiss, showed America from alien's point of view, as an outsider. Thus, we can recognize not only honesty but also objectivity towards the depicted. People on his photographs are not poor or any other particular kind of social

being, but as Wells describes them, they exist as spectators looking at some invisible scene, which does not contain anything of great importance. Frank refused to show productive industrial life of America full of economic success as in some documentary project, he instead expresses the idea that most of the events happening everyday do not have any special meaning, while some of them can become special just by being photographed. Frank himself tells “to produce an authentic contemporary document, the visual impact should be such as will nullify explanation.” (Sontag, 2005, p. 86).

Concerning his own views on documentation of his work, when applying for Guggenheim Fellowship Frank writes “it is only partly documentary in nature: one of its aims is more artistic than the word documentary implies” (Tucker, 1986, p. 94). Frank himself did not mean to document American life in the way his predecessors had been doing it, as he rather applied his own artistic skills and the brand new approach to the content and to the subjects of his photography. As a result, he created a very controversial, yet to a great extent influential piece of art, which was also considered as a depiction of the dark side of American life.

Wells, therefore, states the fact and underlines that “the subject matter of documentary is both dispersed and expanded to include whatever engages or fascinates the photographer. Facts now matter less than appearances”. Frank's job became an indicator of the shift documentary photography was experiencing. It was a shift of tone towards subjectiveness, identities and pleasures (Wells, 2015, p. 121). Furthermore, Frank's work coincided in time with the revolutionary social changes (civil rights protests, student uprising, forthcoming sexual revolution etc.). He definitely was on those who gave momentum to the street photography development throughout the whole half of XX century and even beyond (Bate, 2016, p.174), by applying his innovative approach to the visual of documentary.

The two geniuses of photography were often contrasted in many aspects. The medium got a new critical form transmitted by snapshot aesthetics, as Frank's images are more casual and informal in comparison to carefully calibrated Cartier-Bresson's ones (Bate, 2016, p. 174), whose application of surrealism and golden ratio will be discussed in the next chapter. Joel Meyerowitz compares those two photographers, and points out that Frank's creations are looser, more conversational and ruder. He had 'balletic grace' in his approach to making photographs. Frank is also described as “athletic, spontaneous

and daring.” (Tucker, 1986, p. 96).

There are just a couple of examples from his iconic photo-book, nonetheless they present Frank's manner of hectic and, in a way, raw photography.



Figure 4. Robert Frank, Elevator, 1955.



Figure 5. Robert Frank, The Americans, 1955.

Concerning the vernacular components of street photography development, since Frank's photo book *The Americans* the lyrical element in street photography allows the manipulations and non-compliance with the general rules of lighting and composition, which resembles the indifference of snapshot aesthetics. Nevertheless, it stands to mention that the other characteristic of street photography is also anonymity, it assumes specific artist's behavior in the crowd, photographers try to be invisible and avoid social interaction in order to keep out of the natural flow of events. Blumenkrantz argues that the status of vernacular snapshots:

like the vernacular snapshots that have been recontextualized as Art, both the environmental portraits and the surreptitious candids serve two purposes. Not only do they become part of a visual narrative being constructed, but they are also appreciated as the type of photography

their subjects are most comfortable with.⁷

He explains it by the fact that people or (better to say) objects of the street photography consider themselves on the image in the same way as they look at a snapshot taken by his friends or family, embracing the pictures as a part of a record of their existence.

Generally speaking, Frank behaves in contemptuous way towards the photographic techniques, such as composition, lighting and print quality. Many critics and curators find *The Americans* very controversial, some call it significant, some call it irritating, but nevertheless we cannot play down the importance of this photo-book and the influence it asserted over the world of photography in general.

2.1.2.4. PHOTOGRAPHERS IN THE USA AND BRITAIN. FURTHER EVOLUTION OF STREET PHOTOGRAPHY.

Cartier-Bresson, Evans and Frank were not the only ones who were establishing the genre and inspiring the new generation of photographer. Another big name in American street photography is William Klein, who was working in New York , and whose interest lied in some hidden details in the background of the picture. “Klein’s aesthetic was in direct contradiction with the rules of what was then considered good photography” (Warren, 2006, p. 877). However, his neurotic and restless depiction of New York became a pattern of how big cities were understood and represented. (Wells, 2015, p. 121).



Figure 6. William Klein, *Gun 1, New York (1955)*

⁷ <http://david-blumenkrantz.squarespace.com/mfa-thesis-street-photography/>

Halla Beloff comments the following on American photographers of 1950s whose influential creativity and techniques far beyond the average impacted to the further development of the medium, and our comprehension of photography in terms of social and cultural paradigms depicted:

It is the truth value of American street photographers that gives them their special artistic and psychological interest. Their style and their subject matter in a state of consonance, they randomly sample their subject matter. They show fragments, *randomly* set out, *arbitrarily* cut off, with *bizarre* juxtapositions, and these epithets invite us to move from the photographs to the culture and people in them. (1985, p. 99)

So, in other words, the images started to be acknowledged as more private and personal indicator of the photographer, with their own backstories and inner narratives, not just like mere documentaries.

On the other side of Atlantic, a British master of photography, Roger Mayne provided the overview of the West London street life, however his images show intimate and relaxed situations, unlike Klein's (Wells, 2015, p. 121). He is most famous for his capturing the moments of The Southam Street in a period between 1956 and 1961. This collection now is of national importance and located in Victoria and Albert Museum in London. He dedicated his works to the theme of childhood, hence we see mostly playing and joyful children captured on the photographs. His purpose was to express young kids honesty in a big urban area. But taking into consideration his personal life during the war and post-war years, his motive was to fulfill his own lack of childhood.



Figure 7. Roger Mayne, *Southam Street, North Kensington, London 1956*.



Figure 8. Roger Mayne, Southam Street Group, North Kensington, London 1956

The nature of 'realist' photography was changed by “presenting new subject-matter and by treating old themes in novel ways” (Wells, 2015, 121). Street photography became 'subjective' documentary, as some might call it. The works of Frank, Klein or Mayne liberated documentary from the body politic, and let photographers work in quite off-beat ways of representation. That is where the freedom of street photography is actually contained. In the opportunity of the artist to do whatever he wants, according to his interest, his personal past or to his own view of life.

In general, by the 1960s photographers started to apply more personal approach and visions of the current social existence (Wells, 2015, 121). Due to the above mentioned photographers the documentary practice has morphed into a semi-independent from documentary philosophy of street photography, which required a special mindset towards the urban world that can be featured through the lens of the camera.

In 1967, in the Museum of Modern Art in New York there was an exhibition, called 'New Documents', that promoted a radical rethink of documentary photography through the works of three photographers (Diane Arbus, Garry Winogrand and Lee Friedlander). The director of the photography department, John Szarkowski said: 'In the past decade this new generation of photographers has redirected the technique and aesthetic of documentary photography to more personal ends. Their aim has been not to reform life but to know it'. They, as he meant, “redirected documentary photography away from trying to make the world a better place”, having more personal aims and were ready to accept the world's imperfections (La Grange, 2005, p. 119).



Figure 9. Diane Arbus, A woman on the street with her eyes closed, New York, 1956.



Figure 10. Garry Winogrand, New York World's Fair, 1964.



Figure 11. Lee Friedlander, New York, 1963.

Photography was given a new direction, “where pictures that seemed to have a casual, snapshot-like look and subject matter so apparently ordinary that it was hard to categorize” (Gefter, 09.07.2007).

However his words are too controversial in regard to the time and the names mentioned because according to other historians, for example, Hacking such revolution in documentary happened a decade earlier and was marked with the very Robert Frank's work *The Americans*. His idea of photography as a reflexive action that privileged the artist's instincts, emotions and subjectivity is what made those three and many other photographers act the same (Hacking, 2012, p. 368).

Nevertheless, we have to admit that in such an artist-dependent genre it is impossible to avoid any interventions from the neighboring genres, therefore many scholars still dispute about the definition and functions of street photography. Although we can surely tell that the genre came into a sharp focus in the post-war time, thanks to Frank's iconic work *The Americans*, Mayne's photobook on The Southam Street in London and Klein's neurotic and restless manner of depicting New-York, whose progress was also elaborated by the new generation of the New-York photographers. However the very rudiments of street photography were definitely established in interbellum period of 1920s-1930s, due to enormous volume of work made by Henri Cartier-Bresson and Walker Evans. Interestingly the mentioned period of time from the 1920s, the age of Cartier-Bresson along with Kertesz, Brassai, Evans, the age of Klein, Mayne and Frank in the 1950s till the time of Arbus, Friedlander and Winogrand in the 1960s-70s, historians of photography usually link with the golden age of street photography. This was half a century when the genre reached its climax and blossom, according to a number of scholars.

Notwithstanding, the significant decay of street photography has been observed already since the late 1980s when the other forms of photography were in-demand (such as fashion and advertising), while street photography hit the skids. As Howarth and McLaren explain “traditional publishing outlets increasingly favored more sensational types of photojournalism, or staged fashion and lifestyle imagery” (2010, p. 15). On top of all that, there has been no any valuable supervision for street photography during last decades. As Wells ascribes this to the decline of street photography exhibitions, magazines and monographs and “the rise of televised pictures of streets and public spaces” (2015, p. 122).

Kozloff has distinguished the societal trends or 'environmental conditions' that influence

street photography the last 20-25 years: “media markets have dwindled; digital photography has virtually replaced film; post modernist skepticism towards documentary forms has increased in the academic world; and the division between public and private spaces has been confounded” (Kozloff, 2014, p. 7).

Facing such challenges street photographers reacted differently in their own ways. For example, a lot of photographer are now working in series or turning to video content for the purpose of reiterating their points or gaining the narrative (Kozloff, 2014, p. 7). Or at the same time, many photographers combined fashion or advertising photography at work and street photography as a hobby, therefore such masters as Nick Turpin turned up. He argues that his images do not say or do anything, “they are not reportage, there is no subject, they are not art, there is no great technical craft or aesthetic beauty. They are just pictures about life.” (Turpin in Howarth and McLaren, 2010, p. 15).

Despite all my respect to Nick Turpin I consider his thoughts too controversial and ambiguous, because even his own photographs are very aesthetically attractive, much less the narratives and juxtapositions with which his images are obviously filled up with.



Figure 12. Nick Turpin. Street Scene, Oxford Street, London.



Figure 13. Nick Turpin. Street Scene, Piccadilly, London.

Moreover, if Nick Turpin's position towards contemporary street photography is right and represent the common tendency, then it means that the genre has lost any goal or even anyhow recognized paradigm of development and has nothing to aim for, which makes it absolutely banal meaningless and unreflecting medium. I respectfully disagree with his opinion on that.

Thanks to the work of photographers of the XX century, each of which has their own motives and approach to the depiction of reality, street photography has firmly established itself as the main direction of non-staged candid art photography in the 1960s. It became the direction of photographic art, showing humans in their natural habitat. The “classics” of photography was created by the middle of the XX century.

2.2. CULTURAL MOVEMENT OF SURREALISM AND ITS REFLECTION IN STREET PHOTOGRAPHY.

Street photography as a very controversial genre with multiple meanings resembles the sponge which absorbs the most important components of culture. For the sake of thorough understanding of it, I considered it important to describe street photography in terms of its surrealistic nature.

I have already mentioned that street photography as we know formed by the mid-1960s, however its roots grow since the very appearance of photography and on the further way of evolution through out nineteenth and twentieth century it has been imbibing the major

socio-cultural influences. One of them is cultural movement of Surrealism. It is Stuart Franklin who finds the the roots of street photography development in Surrealism as a phenomenon which had become the major impulse given to documentary street photography both in Europe and America to raise and develop from the 1920s until the 1970s and even beyond (Franklin, 2016, p. 153). As I describe below, generally photography as a medium can be defined as surreal, while street photography is a process which includes ideal visual demonstration of the entire Surrealism concept.

Marien, reflecting on the place of photography in art, holds to an opinion of those many scholars and photography critics (Sontag 1997, Franklin 2016, Galassi 1987) who tie the whole phenomenon of photography as a medium with the surrealist cultural movement. She states:

Photography's ability to present someone or something as simultaneously there and not there is an essential fact of the medium. It smacks of the uncanny and psychological tensions. In this view, the photograph is a cunning doppelgänger, an evil copy set upon perplexing the real. Optical doubling, which a photograph does better than any medium – emerged as central to the art movement known as Surrealism (2012, p. 173).

Marien continues by connecting this movement to the genre of street photography and to the Cartier-Bresson's term of 'decisive moment' which “depends on the surrealist emphasis on perception and the notion that the surreal readily erupts into everyday life”. Hence, the street photography accent on a chance or a moment “bears the mark of surreal discernment – the rapid discrimination of signs of meaning, rather than clear signification” (Marien, 2012, p. 173). Susan Sontag supports Marien by positing that the earliest photographs that could be described as “surreal” are apparently street photographs taken in the 1850s, and generally Sontag states that photography is “the only art that is natively surreal” (Sontag, 1973, p. 40).

The idea of photography as a process of capturing or shooting the moment out of reality permeates in quite unusual comparisons. An example is provided by David Blumenkrantz who compares the whole concept of photography even with the act of aggression. As well, he is supported by Sontag who is drawing parallels between a photographer and a hunter, while a subject becomes a victim on the analogy:

to photograph someone is to violate them, by seeing them as they never see themselves, by

having knowledge of them they can never have; it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed. Just as the camera is a sublimation of the gun, to photograph someone is a sublimated murder—a soft murder, appropriate to a sad, frightened time (Sontag, 2005, p. 10).

But, in fairness, it must be said that not all photographers work in the same arrogant and rude way, however they do so with a motive to catch a candid moment, rather than with any philanthropical impulse. The examples are the discreet manner of Robert Frank, a hidden in a jacket camera of Walker Evans, or a false lens of Paul Strand.

But then the alternative to such a method is to be open and shocking, waiting for the right “decisive” or “in-between” moment to bring the camera up at the last second and make a click without giving time to react to the camera. However, this way implies a chance of being beaten or verbally abused.

In general, Sontag has a very critical and, to some extent, radical, perspective on photography and on street photography in particular. However, I agree with her in the ideas of street photography which, in a sense, resembles the action of some surrealist artist, and she adds:

what could be more surreal than an object ... whose beauty, fantastic disclosures, emotional weight are likely to be further enhanced by any accidents that might befall it? It is photography that has best shown how to juxtapose the sewing machine and the umbrella, whose fortuitous encounter was hailed by a great Surrealist poet as an epitome of the beautiful (Sontag, 2001, p. 51-52).

Moreover, it is definitely worth noting that street photography has been developing due to a collision and subsequent inter-influence of a cultural movement of Surrealism and the frame of reference of *flaneur*⁸. The origins of this inter-coupling were deduced by Stuart Franklin. He holds by an opinion that the well-known term *flaneur*, the idea elaborated to a greater extent by Charles Pierre Baudelaire and eventually so strongly attached to modern street photography, was reinvigorated in 1928 by the surrealist movement founder, Andre Breton, in his novel *Nadja*. According to Franklin “the street was to become the locus for serendipitous encounters with the public at large but also, romantically, with women” (Franklin, 2016, p. 153).

⁸ a man who saunters around observing society, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/flaneur>

Lets consider the following comment of Peter Galassi on the definition of who is actually a Surrealist and what he is doing:

Alone, the Surrealist wanders in the streets without destination but with a pre-determined alertness for the unexpected detail that will release a marvelous and irresistible reality just below the banal surface of ordinary experience (Galassi, 1987, p. 15).

Hence, any street photographer might meet the definition of a Surrealist with a small but significant detail, he always has camera with him. Street photographer is the one who is loitering the streets and enjoying the urban environment as a nineteenth century Parisian flaneur, but with a camera, which allows him to catch the moment and eventually interpret it in his own way, or to give the reins to spectator's imagination.

I found it important to mention Franklin's views on the last 150 years of street photography's evolution through the prism of Surrealism; as he emphasizes the role of the surrealist in street and documentary photography:

Surrealism and poetic vision have together woven a path through the world of street photography in much documentary work produced over the past 150 years. The staying power and force of these strategies of measured ambiguity in photography owe much to the psychological and emotional way in which images communicate: further research and a deeper understanding of which are long overdue” (Franklin, 2016, p. 169).

This notions invite the assumptions that basically street photography is documentary photography but with the layer of surrealism on that. In other words, if the documentary applies to the real, the street applies to the surreal, hence here is where the major difference between these two close yet parallel genres lies.

Apropos genius surrealist expressions of Henri Cartier-Bresson's oeuvre, if we take Cartier-Bressons who is beyond all doubt the biggest figure in street photography we can easily pick up the surrealist scent in his works. Cartier-Bresson has always followed the rules of geometry while taking photographs. His pictures often include people but still are constructed on the principle of golden ratio, thanks to Andre Lhote, the artist, who taught him and promote a love of geometry of the picture to.

The pictures below are some of the most recognizable works of Henri Cartier-Bresson, where the golden ratio is conveniently demonstrated.

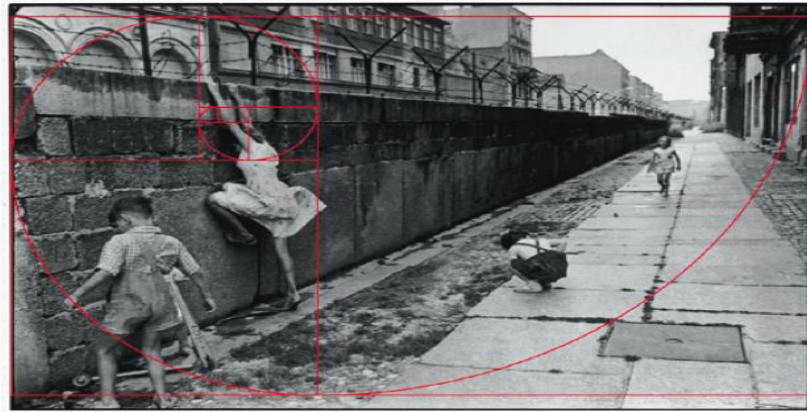


Figure 14. Henri Cartier-Bresson. *Hyères, France, 1932.*

Figure 15. Henri Cartier-Bresson, *The Berlin Wall, 1962.*

Clement Cheroux, a photography historian, comments on the surrealistic origins of Cartier-Bresson's photography: "Surrealism made a deep impact [on Cartier-Bresson]: the subversive spirit, the taste for games, the scope given to the subconscious, the pleasure of strolling through the city, and the openness to the pleasure of chance" (Cheroux, 2014, p. 85). Cartier-Bresson himself says about surrealism the following: "I owe an allegiance to Surrealism, because it taught me to let the photographic lens look into the rubble of the unconscious and of chance" (Henri Cartier-Bresson, 1999, p. 98).

Thus, according to some scholars and critics (Marien 2012, Sontag 1973) the medium of photography is already surreal enough, nevertheless, the genre of street photography per se is a crystallized representation of Surrealism, thanks to Andre Breton who gave new impetus to the concept of *flâneur* and thanks to Henri Cartier-Bresson, who, being the student of Andre Lhote, established a surrealistic trend for other photographers who work on the streets. Franklin notices that even though Cartier-Bresson, who was a coeval of such influences such as formalism and Surrealism, he kept his style conformed with them, yet expressed the sensitivity and respect towards the real world around him (Franklin, 2016, p. 157). Also the existence of street photography would be unimaginable without the influence of Surrealism,

which dictated the terms to the photographers in regard to juxtapositions and absurdity, and their relation towards the objects of photography. After all, even the most influential artist's practice and his own notion of 'decisive moment' are the direct interpretations of how “surreal readily erupts into everyday life”.

2.3. RELATIONS TO DOCUMENTARY AND PHOTOJOURNALISM.

It is has always been difficult to distinguish different genres of photography, due to the boundaries between them are erased and the definitions are not anyhow solid or completely approved by the scholars and art historians.

Street photography⁶ as it has become known, explicitly engaged the social and often critically-minded photographer in what is an “almost documentary” aim.” (Bate, 2016, p. 174). To comprehend what street photography is about it is necessary to compare it to its the closest relatives which are documentary and photojournalism. Because of unmanipulated nature street photography is strongly associated with its Big Brother – documentary photography, which is very strict and straight discipline, and this fact made it harder for street photography to separate from.

The initial conception of the documentary photography as wide-spread activity in media was established after the First World War and kept on evolving during the XX century.

Documentary (neither advertising, nor art) launched the idea that information about everyday life can be creative, and showing ordinary people to other ordinary people in an informal way might be interesting. Moreover, this idea is not only significant but even dominant in public media nowadays. Hence the main concept of social documentary established in the beginning of the XX century, in spite of all the changes and its inclusive character and transformation, is still prevalent (Bate, 2016, p. 67-68).

During XX century more and more photographers got out on the streets with the idea that they “were not those of the reporter but rather those of the novelist and poet - a search for resonant contrasts, rich metaphors, and found dramatic scenarios” (Coleman, 2010, 159).

With the rise of the documentary, photographs started to serve some social work, as for example, a picture of a poor unemployed man expresses the deep economical crisis, expressed in unemployment and poverty. To a greater extent documentary photography rose during the Inter War period, the time of the Lost Generation, poverty, unemployment and complete

economic collapse both in Europe and in the United States. These photographs were often commissioned together with articles on social and economic topics (Wells, 2015, p. 119).

In regard to the gradual evolution in the field of documentary, Liz Wells mentions the significant shift in the discipline that happened in postwar world, which was caused by the consumerist boom, implied in ubiquitousness of television and car ownership that turned the society upside down. If many artists who were working in a documentary genre in the 1930s could not lay account with being credited for their work, as photographs were treated as anonymous creations, in the postwar fast-paced world photographers received their creative individuality in a much greater extent than before and produced the artistic images that changed the nature of photography, and, in particular, the techniques of documentary photography were multiplied. Especially in the US, documentary started to explore the cultural spaces of everyday life (Frank), rather than the poverty or injustice, which used to be the major drivers of the pre-war photographers (Wells, 2015, p. 117). However, Walker Evans would be an exception here, because he himself admitted “I never took it upon myself to change the world” (Franklin, 2016, p. 66), as his motives never included bringing up some social awareness.

Here we already can speak not only about different approaches to documentary but also about different motives of photographers. Stuart Franklin, the famous documentary photographer, by comparing different street and documentary photographers of XX century distinguishes them by the criteria of intention of their works. He mentions the Chilean photographer, Sergio Larrain, who created his photo book, *El Rectangulo En La Mano*⁹, and whose purpose was to raise the awareness on the issues of poverty and homeless children and call for societal change, whereas the photographers who went out on the streets to document street children, such as Walker Evans, Helen Levitt, Willy Ronis, Izis, Henri Cartier-Bressons, were just picturing the society they lived in as a cultural project. Consequently, we cannot say that street photography pursues any social political or even superior purposes, but more likely to capture life as it is, but in more aesthetic and extraordinary colors.

Appearance of usual people was of primary importance to the street photographers, whose humanism and, of course, slight share of populism helped to provide interest in such a topic. Thus, those people were not depicted as the victims of some social injustice, as they could be

⁹ The Rectangle in the Hand

in documentary photography, they were rather characters of infinite ways of being acted out in little moments of street life (Wells, 2015, 119). The street images did not have to galvanize somebody into protest action, but rather exclusively fulfill aesthetic functions.

David Blumenkrantz argues that, I would like to emphasize, **historically** street photography was holding a place in between Art and Documentary. In the most general sense, street photography might best be described as an exploration of urban life, with equal attention paid to human and environmental elements. It can be undertaken as a solitary, virtually anonymous venture, or one in which the photographer becomes known, and perhaps accepted as a temporary presence.¹⁰

In regard to the grade of manipulation in documentary I have to agree with Bate who suggests that the interaction or any kind of construction is unavoidable in all photography, as any settings during the picture taking (including focus, lens used, space and distance etc) eventually shape the staging of the scene. In other words, composition per se is expressed in transformation of raw material into photographic codes, a rhetorical form to create a reality effect (Bate, 2016, pp. 81-82). John Grierson, the founder of the social documentary movement, states:

The only reality which counts in the end is the interpretation which is profound. It does not matter whether that interpretation comes by way of the studio or by way of documentary or for that matter by way of the music hall. The important thing is the interpretation and the profundity of the interpretation (Grierson in Bate, 2016, p. 82).

Hence, eventually we get the photographic technique which is by definition is supposed to be independent in its depiction of reality, but as a result we come to a notion that documentary is never neutral, neither are the rest of photography genres though.

To return to Grierson, he thinks of good documentary as of a good interpretation of the real, something that lights up the fact, but also it does not have the essence of the factual truth, but rather interpretations of what people do. Documentary can include a number of approaches where truth is seen in reference to representation and interpretation, but not as some abstract concept of the absolute objective truth (Bate, 2016, p. 81).

¹⁰ <http://david-blumenkrantz.squarespace.com/mfa-thesis-street-photography/>

When it comes to Henri Cartier-Bresson's works, these are all interpretations. “It is obvious how they form a special set of relations (Warehime, 1996). His concepts of photography (a combination of surrealist observation and documentary photography (Bate, 2016, p. 174)) established the entire new school of street photography. Bate calls street photography a documentary-inspired genre, which comments on everyday life, however is less interested in social issues (Bate, 2016, p 82).

The other criterion in photographers style or approach is defined by the level of involvement into the scene. When discussing the engagement and commitment to the moment of the photographer to the process, Max Kozloff's note should be considered:

From one practitioner to the next, the old rule that observation should be faithful to an external reality has itself become debatable. Instead of remaining opportunistic spectators of passing scene, they have become agents involved in posing situations, with the hope of kindling meanings otherwise in short, random supply (Kozloff, 2014, p. 7).

David Bate distinguishes two tendencies in documentary photography: “first-person expressive and third-person descriptive.” (2016, p. 82.) Bate suggests these terms are less confusing in comparison to subjective and objective. Such division implies different points of view on the captured events. The first one means engagement into the scene, while the latter one implicates more independent approach and the lack of involvement. Bate point outs that:

[the] human expressive aspect remains a key feature of reportage-type photography in snapshots and subsequent digital practices even today, no matter how far ideals of photographic truth are critiqued and dismissed. Equally, with descriptive photography we live with the fact that someone has chosen and (even by default) used a point of view, lighting, and so on to depict things, people, events “as they are” - within a “rhetoric of neutrality,” as it can be called (2016, p. 82).

The goal of documentary photography is to turn an observer into an “eyewitness”, but being a witness anyway requires a particular point of view, hence the views on one event might range significantly. Thus, we cannot separate documentary photography from just someone's mere point of view on events. As David Bate argues “telling a story”, usually associated with documentary, provides a chance for fiction and subjectivity. The point of view is pivotal, because people can form their opinion only by relying on what is given or already known, therefore documentary photography always has or even is a point of view, regardless how

simple or questionable the image is. (Bate, 2016, p. 82).

Thus, from such descriptions and observation it may seem that documentary does not differ from street photography whatsoever, due to their same intention to catch and interpret the reality, however it must be noted that if documentary needs some general content of the scene, and the exact location of the incident, then street photography does not require such settings. Also, street photographer is not tied to time and can easily use the method of cut and try, whilst documentarian cannot afford such a freedom. And one more point of difference is that the documentarian is seeking some social or political message he can transmit through the image, and street photographers are not hunting for any societal value.

I support Bate who argues that in street photography we can observe this documentary gaze at the world, but it is not concerned with ordinary life but rather with extraordinary elements of it. Street photography in this way applies its own philosophical conjecture on reality and human existence in general (Bate, 2016, p. 175).

Kozloff comments on the matter of street photography's style of candidness, spontaneity and lyric, which basically overlaps the subjectivity of photojournalism:

Underlying street photography is a naturalist argument that goes something like this: The value of the picture resides in its truthful observation. The value is jeopardized to the extent the photographer intervenes in the social circumstances, causing a rupture from what would naturally have happened . . ." (1984, p. 68).

On the contrary, there is a characteristic that separates street photographers from photojournalists, it is a lack of consideration for the traditional narrative. Street photographers work without any obligations or editorial restrictive guidelines which allows them to be absolutely subjective in interpretation. Kozloff continues on that subject "if these street photographers certify that nothing more is seen or meant than what is shown, they offer concrete findings without any journalistic pretext." (1984, p. 69) But it does not mean that a street photographer is as concerned with self-expression as making social statements, being an independent and creative artist.

Howarth and McLaren, however, still call street photography "a form of documentary photography but", they add "it is decidedly not reportage and rarely simply tells a story"

(2010, p. 10). With which I am not completely agree, as for my personal understanding of the genre – each street photograph is a story, however trivial, banal or exciting it may be, it must contain a narrative. Marien, for example, comments on the differences between documentary and street genres and adds:

unlike **documentary expression**, to which it seems related, street photography seldom has any goal beyond offering piecemeal perceptions. It does not aim to change the world – which, from the point of view of the street photographer, is perfect in its fallen state (2012, p. 169).

If “perceptions” here means the interpreting of the caught instants then I support this idea of hers, however it needs to be examined whether street photography does not have any other targets than this, because taking into consideration those who can be recognized as the founders of contemporary street photography (Cartier-Bresson, Frank, Klein, Mayne), they seem to have their own general goal, just because the notion of common sense that the result of meaningless pressing the button of the camera cannot be acknowledged as a masterpiece which changes the face of photography.

Street photography represents a discipline of photography that make an artist involved and engaged, though at the same time loose and free in his action, hence subjective. As I have already mentioned in comparison to documentarian or photojournalist, street photographer is liberated from the guidelines, instruction or any assignments. Therefore the urban environment becomes perfect for this kind of practice. The genre became a well respected medium functioning according to its principles of subjective photography “formulated a balance between comment and criticism, description and inscription, where meanings were acknowledged as “fleeting,” as if, like the people in the images, in constant transition themselves” (Bate, 2016, pp. 174-175).

However, it might be true that street photography becomes a victim of its own freedom and loose nature without any strict rules.

Eventually, arguing on the nature of street photography, I have to **partly** support Blumenkrantz's viewpoint on the issue. He insists on the placing street photography as some “amorphous genre” between Documentary and Art, thanks to the history of the genre, which development includes Strand's Straight Photography (mixture of photojournalism and documentary), then the surrealistic creations of Henri Cartier-Bresson and Walker Evans, who mix social motives with artistic self-expression, and then finally the contribution of Robert

Frank and Garry Winogrand who self-consciously deny the necessity of social meaning in real appreciation of the pictures.

But in my honest opinion position right in the middle between art and documentary would be a perfect placement for street photography of the 1920s and the 1930s, but in regard to post war decades and contemporary photography it is much harder to specify the genre's position, when the common trends and personal photographers intentions transformed into the new paradigms, especially in a discourse of digital ubiquity, however some of them can be categorized as more documentarian and some are more artistic, so this is very conditional.

2.4. CONCLUSION.

To sum the content of the Chapter 2, it is important to mention that street photography is the genre full of ambiguous terms and definitions. It has very rich history and arguably the birth of street photography coincides with the birth of photography itself. Different external factors such as globalisation and urbanisation in the end of XIX - beginning of XX centuries played their significant role in the first steps of this young genre, as well as the consumerism boom after the WW2. The figures who are now considered as classics of the discipline also made a difference in different periods of time from the 1920s of Cartier-Bresson, through the 1930s of Walker Evans to the 1950s of Robert Frank and finally to a complete formation of street photography as we know it in the 1960s thanks to the New Documents exhibition and the personalities presented there.

Also I shed a light on the connection of street photography to Surrealism. This movement played a significant role in the genre formation. The influence of it is expressed in the works of Henri Cartier Bresson the most demonstrably, due to his approach of 'decisive moment' and the fact that he applied geometry (golden ratio) for his composition. Some of the scholars mentioned tie the whole concept of photography to the surrealist reflection of reality, however street photography per se became quintessence of the Surrealism.

In regard of the place of street photography frame of reference, it is obviously very hard to distinguish and separate it from the documentary or even photojournalism. Because the even "fathers" of the genre were working, applying their artistic skills in what used to be called 'social documentary', whilst Cartier-Bressons was an acknowledged photojournalist, who could implement his creative style in journalism. Hence the discussion on the subject of street

photography is impossible without considering these two genres. The discipline can range from Art to Documentary, depending on the style of photographer and according to his attentions of what he wants to express, therefore a place of modern street photography is indefinite and extremely artist-dependent.

3. DIGITAL ERA IN PHOTOGRAPHY.

The following chapter is dedicated to the digital aspect of modern photography. Below it will be described the brief overview of what is digitalization and how it effects our lives, and then in the following sub-chapters the major features of digital photography will be discussed, these are malleability and ubiquity, that eventually effects our behaviour and our creative thinking, which in turn effects street photography, the main object of this thesis.

Furthermore, the next sub-chapters represent the views of different scholars and art historians and theorists in the way how the mobile phones dictate the rules of contemporary photography, while everyone who has a phone and access to urban environment is a potential street photographer, which leads to the next chapter which explores the vanishing of any boundaries between a professional photo-artist and an amateur with the phone on his hand, as some scholar already proclaimed modern era – the Age of the Amateur.

3.1. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE DIGITALIZATION.

We live in twenty first century under the orders of digitalization of literally everything. Same as other cultural movements and media were revolutionized by digitalization, photography has been extremely strongly affected by these complex processes since the 1990s. Modern photographers live in the world where ideas, pictures and money easily cross any national and cultural borders.

The total digitalization of the world led to the irreversible changes in socio-technological and socio-cultural fields, altering our worldview and habits. An interesting point of view on digital photography is represented by Hirsch, who even refers to Immanuel Kant's ideas of categorical imperatives which function as a precondition “for prognosticating the ultimate reality – the causes and principles that make up Western thinking” (2009. 414). Today pictures determine behavior, form identity and fashion and constitute our memories. The photographs are an integral part of our existence to such a degree that life has become a collection of images, creating confusion between the real and the artificial. Thus, entertainment, including social networks, photo-sharing websites and other mass media are

the primary frames of reference through which we filter experience” and are actually a part of those imperatives which predetermine our behavior and habits. (2009. p. 414).

As a part of the medium street photography also have morphed, and due to ubiquitous character of mobile digital devices, many scholars consider digital revolution as a thread to the genre and some of the critics already proclaimed “death” of street photography. However opinions differ, and what some art historians assume 'dead', others count as the new era or rebirth.

The fundamental concept of photography stood upon the light imprinting an image at the specific joint of space and time. It is worth noting that digital revolution has changed the entire old idea of imaging by giving the opportunity not only to determine place and time but to control them. It is possible because photographs are now captured in binary code and can be preserved for any future retrieval. (Hirsch, 2009, p. 414).

Wells (2015, 118) continues and explains that due to technological progress and socio-cultural changes a lot of practices, that were considered to be fixed and unchangeable are now more fluid and flexible. In other words, people today capture everyday life in public spaces and record some unusual events with the help of their mobile phones, becoming real photography practitioners, in terms of photojournalism, documentary and street photography. Any instant can be recorded and sent through social networks and shared with millions nowadays, but, if the state of documentary and photojournalism is becoming unstable and shaky nowadays, as for street photography, I have already mentioned, it has always had rather loose and free from instructions nature a priori.

Nevertheless, the big picture of this practice is changing too. But that concerns the so-called old-school photographers, while the modern contemporary photo artists find the new ways of expression in the framework of digital photography, and, in particular mobile photography, by finding new styles, approaches and techniques, that would become original or extraordinary, as far as it is getting way much harder to stand out from the crowd of the mundane photographers and their non-discript works.

3.2. MALLEABILITY AND UBIQUITY OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY.

The interaction of photography to another media is definitely not a new phenomenon, as

historically photography has always been interwoven into other technologies (like print technologies in magazines and newspapers). In fact, as Hand aptly notes, the very factor of photography's malleability and interaction with other media areas made it a central and dominant visual know-how of XX century (Hand, 2016, p. 115).

It is also ought to be mentioned that we have to understand that digital photography is not just an imitation of its analogue forerunner, but its rather a whole new concept of depicting the world, giving it new narratives and absolutely new ways of communication and image distribution. Fred Ritchin says:

Rather than attempting simply to imitate previous media while offering an increase in efficiency, digital media, including their visual aspects, will eventually involve a more flexible, integrative, 'hyperphotography' that takes advantage of the many potentials of digital platforms, including links, layers, hybridization, asynchronicity, nonlinearity, nonlocality, malleability, and the multivocal. (Ritchin, 2013, p. 57).

Thus, the digital photography presents the medium that is very adaptive, with the multiple meanings and functions, and which is completely involved into other media especially due to its malleability. Digital photography became an essential part of network communications, by means of photo-sharing and interlinking of digital devices.

Hirsch has his critical argument towards our evaluation of the imaging and adds that the simplicity of how digital technologies combine regulate and manipulate the photographs lead to the thought that they prepare the ground for “a hybrid of mixed media based not only on the observable reality of actual events, but also on the inner workings of imagination” (2009, 414).

These changes are evident in the nature of photography as well as as in the general perception of art and reality. Digital picturing has made the world smaller and let people ruminate about themselves. In rapid transforming technologies environment of the developed countries the individuals who do not adopt to changes or who do not have any presence in virtual reality, use the pralance of Hirsch, cease to exist (2009, p. 414).

Geoffrey Batchen in his essay “Post-Photography” draws a parallel and makes a comparison between historical relations of painting and photography and nowadays photography and digital imaging interwoven into other media. He writes:

once art photography was measured according to the conventions and aesthetic values of the painted image, today the situation is decidedly more complicated. Over the past two decades, the boundary between photography and other media ... has become increasingly porous. It would seem that each medium has absorbed the other, leaving the photographic residing everywhere, but nowhere in particular. A number of critics have also lamented the loss of photography's "truth effect" under the pressure of new photographic simulation technologies. These critics draw a distinction between photography as a direct inscription of a referent in the world and the photographic as a practice dependent on the recirculation of already existing codes and images (Batchen, 2002, p. 109).

Therefore, it is important to comprehend the relationships between digital camera and the Internet, mutual interaction of which is reflected in the convergence of visual, computing and telecommunication technologies, which in turn created a whole new area for digital photography practices and expertise (Hand, 2016, p. 115). Talking about the interconnection between those media Victor Keegan notes:

It is difficult to know these days whether the internet is reinventing photography or vice versa. The convergence of cheap digital cameras, affordable computers and low-cost access to the internet has made photography vastly more popular than it has ever been and transformed it from a personal to a community experience. (Keegan 2006).

Dematerialization of photography is a still ongoing, but rather completed process that reflects in the growth of digital photography. The entire landscape of visual communication and culture has changed with the ubiquity of digital photography, so that any moments and instants of life are "caught" and distributed as pictures on a scale beyond comparison (Hand, 2013, p. 12).

In the context of the marketing component of contemporary photography, Hand reminds that first of all digital and electronic camera (not necessarily imaging itself) were created and initially maintained as the tools of scientific or medical research, as well as in photojournalistic purposes. However, the rampant development of consumerism culture displaced the positions of analogue/film and digital photography, whilst the latter one from an alternative became a substitution of the former.

Many consumers of photography devices in 2000s used to have both types of photographic equipment, analogue and digital. And the choice of using either of them lied in the way how

their special characteristics were matching the situation or occasion (Hand, 2016, p. 106). A number of scholars (Van House, Davis, Takhteyev, Good, Wilhelm, Finn) collaborated and conducted the research on a subject of social use of modern technologies. They came to a series of conclusions on the matter of people's choice of equipment according to different situations, for example shutter lags of digital cameras seemed to be too slow for a 'candid' shots, and analogue cameras were used due to their interchangeable lenses, while digital cameras were much more compact and lighter, hence they were used everyday and everywhere as a permanent accessory, whilst analogue ones were reserved for some special photo expeditions (2004, p. 4). Contemporary trend now is that consumers own several digital cameras and use them in accordance to a situation. I personally own a few digital cameras each of them serves different functions and is used in specific situations (traveling, sport, video footage etc.), while the camera on my phone is used all the time, regardless conditions and environment, thanks to its in-built function and ready-at-hand nature. Thus, even though analogue cameras are used to a much smaller degree today, the same level of distinction is still present, however this distinction is evidenced in a purely digital field.

It goes without saying that digital era is here and the omnipresence of digital cameras or camera phones is a fact, but as some scholars (Van Dijck) suggest it is no longer a matter of whether digital photography will be ubiquitous, but a matter of how to comprehend the importance of this phenomenon (van Dijck, 2007). Hand adds

In embracing the term 'ubiquitous', then, I am not referring simply to images: I suggest that the discourses, technologies and practices of photography have become radically pervasive across all domains of contemporary society (Hand, 2013, p. 20)

Some components of modern photography (it is still a matter of dispute which ones) transformed and were implicated into information technologies and social, economic and cultural forms. This implications are defined by Hand in the following:

while the proliferation and convergence of visual and networked technologies creates a potentially ubiquitous photoscape with significant consequences, the ways in which images are produced, consumed, distributed and interpreted are tremendously diverse. (Hand, 2013, p. 20).

In the field of, for instance, photojournalism, which closeness to street photography I have shown, due too this digital ubiquity we may now observe one tendency. There is this

reconfiguration of the photographer–technology–image relationship (as the camera disappears inside another device) goes on and removes the need to ‘be a photographer’ per se. (Hand, 2016, p. 93). What he means here is that the development of digital photography goes along with the new ways of journalistic practice, and, I elaborate, same goes for street photography. If some decades ago a street photographer was a citizen photographer or citizen photojournalist, who documented the reality in candid moments, nowadays digital age with its camera malleability and ubiquity broaches a question of existence of such categories as ‘photojournalist’, and actually ‘photographer’.

So a photographer does not belong to a privileged group, today he is basically a pebble on the beach. However, it should be noted that historically, photography as a practice almost have never been elite, taking into consideration the appearance of the first cheap hand-held cameras in the end of nineteenth century, which led to their popularity and mainstream nature. The same concern modern digital cameras which are the egalitarian device, Jack reflects on the subject of contemporary digital photography:

The digital camera is an egalitarian piece of technology - cheap (most mobile phones have them), easy to use, convenient to carry and quick to produce images that can be spread throughout cyberspace in seconds. What we are witnessing, as any professional photojournalist will tell you, is the unstoppable rise of the citizen-photographer (Jack, 2009).

But at the same time, the interesting parallels can be observed, for example, several hundred years ago only few had the ability to write, while nowadays this ability is close to universal, however there is still very little percent of people who write and can leave the mark of their creativity in writing, the same happens in modern photography, while everyone is a photographer but only few can be recognized as the masters.

Even though Jack, followed by many scholars, such as Hand (2013), Bate (2016), Larsen (2013) and many others, examines the mobile photography in a discourse of documentary, or, to be more precise, in a discourse of photojournalism, street photography relates to their ideas to a great extent. It is after all a genre that absorbs the techniques of the neighboring genres, and historically it is very hard to differentiate and strip from other photographic practices. Hence, today everyone everyone who lives in a city and has a mobile phone with camera is technically a representative of the new generation of street photographers.

Generally speaking, digital photography invigorated and extended the ways of space representation and documentation practices, at least due to cameras mobility and camera-phones ubiquity. Plus digital devices are used to produce a massive number of images, hence they document a much wider range of sites than, for example, analogue cameras (Lee, 2009).

Nevertheless, the massive quantity of digitized imaging brings some significant consequences, but it remains unclear and still hard to predict how this huge amount of images of the ordinary and mundane will effect our social or cultural life. (Wells, 2015, p. 122).

The quantity of photographs we are facing now is extreme and large-scale, however, we also can observe some personal developments. As photography became a wide-spread practice, it caused the increase of everyday photography. Plus, the lighter and more mobile accessories and devices make the older practices evolve (Lister in Larsen Sandbye, 2012, p. 36).

In spite of the quantity of digital imaging, which grows gradually at any moment of time, people tend to believe in a notion of the 'lack of waste' in the digital age. In this respect Hand comments that the opportunity of deletion or disposability allow people to compile their creative photography skills and this way “digital camera acts as a *technology of skill redistribution* rather than *de-skilling*” (Hand, 2016, p. 111).

Hirsch (2000) drilling down deep to the history of snapshot states that the way how easy it became to take a picture changed the perception of what “was worth taking and whether a ‘mistake’ mattered so much”. People with the first handheld cameras applied some new approaches and, as a result, obviously, made mistakes, which, in turn, formed or were united into genres of photography and other media such as painting. And street photography is definitely a significant, if not a major one of them.

The extraordinary motives and styles were observed more and more often, and it was more common to see a number of hitherto-unapplied methods, such as “unusual angles, cropped and unbalanced frames, blurred images, and so on, which arguably influenced the understanding of perception in the visual arts in the early twentieth century and became manifest through new art movements such as surrealism” (Hand, 2016, p. 92) .

For example, Francesco Lapenta, suggests that this mass of imagery is not actually an issue, but we must pay more attention on the entire digitizing process, because it transforms the very

idea of photography procedures. He comments on the mobile camera sharing and on concerns about the quantity of images nowadays: “what is really changing has little to do with the increasing numbers of images taken every day and more to do with the increasingly differentiated forms of photographic image production, aggregation and distribution” (Lapenta, 2011, pp. 1-2). So, according to him it is not a number of photographs that matters, but the way people create and share them.

Within this framework street photography is at the ideal position, because the choice of equipment for street photography work is exclusively up to an artist's style and approach. A freedom of the genre allows (or better to say does not prohibit) to use any kind of camera or lens, therefore the ubiquity of camera-phones combined with the accessibility of an urban environment go about their business. As a result we observe a great amount of street photographers working only with their mobile phones, developing and by means of social media promoting their style. But on the other side there are opinions that the future of street photography as a cultural phenomenon is jeopardized. However the idea that total infatuation of photography does not endanger the existence of the genre, however it significantly alters the essence of it.

3.3. MOBILE PHONE PHOTOGRAPHY.

As it was already told, digital media are all around us and digital revolution still dictates the terms of modern being. Digital photography has almost completely pushed out the analogue and has never been so close to us as it is now. Thanks to our mobile phones and the in-built camera feature, digital photography moves to a new level, as ubiquity of the medium is definitely on its apogee.

Most of the time people have their phones with them, hence the camera function is always available for some unpremeditated and quick shot in keeping with the best traditions of street photography. The medium is so inter-tissued to digital media, “it is becoming something of a banality in terms of its corporate, institutional and everyday prevalence” (Hand, 2013, p. 13).

Marien mentions camera phones are not just another useful camera tools, but it is basically a camera connected to the Internet, and the way how fast images can be snapped and sent is completely changing the idea of photograph, transforming it into an instant message (Marien, 2012, p. 191).

Photography is simply extended to many people who had never been engaged into any form of image-making (Marien, 2012, p. 191), therefore, we may say 21st century is an epoch when the boundaries between professional photographers and amateurs are erased and the distinction between them looks old fashioned, because sometimes even the most usual and ordinary snapshots become iconic. Thus, such terms like “amateur” or “professional” has changed significantly, thanks to mobile phones (Hand, 2013, p. 22). Here is one of the directions of the modern photography development, it is so called 'citizen photographer' or 'citizen journalist', an amateur who has a digital camera or mobile phone, without any particular training in journalism or photography, and who happen to be around some special occasion and record it. The citizen photographer can upload tons of imagery without let or hindrance from editors, publishers, printers and any other intermediators. Photographs are sent to social networks that function not only as publishers but the mainstream media refer to them as to the source of information (Wells, 2015, p. 95).

Through the example of mobile phone photojournalism I would like to demonstrate the general trend of the mobile phone use. Even though it does not have anything to do with street photography, it is still the perfect example how the amateur becomes symbolic and iconic in the modern networked communications.



Figure 16. Camera phone image during London bombing 07.07.2005

This is the photograph taken by Adam Stacey on his camera phone the minutes after a terror attack in London July 7th, 2005. As noted by many scholars, such as Rubinstein & Sluis (2008) and Hand (2016), this picture alongside with other mobile camera pictures taken that day,

rather than professional photos of journalists taken later the same day, became the icons of the incident. Why had it become revolutionary? The answer is due to its completely inverted perspective where the observer is also the participant of the happening, plus the manner of self-portrait allows us to see the very photographer. Whereas in contrast to photojournalist whose job is to be the *detached observer*, who with his equipment simply create the distance or a formal border between himself and the incident.

Although this particular picture does not anyhow represent street photography, it is very important for our understanding of the genre and its potential, because this case shows the essence of camera-phone impact in the medium. Street photographer is also a kind of “citizen photographer” in terms of his technical component (pebble on the beach, armed with the camera), but with one significant characteristic, he does not search for an event to broadcast or cover, he is rather an artist who creates the event. This paradigm of comprehension of urban environment is quiet reverse to journalistic way. Contrasting to the notions of mobile phone photography as non-photographic, such characteristics as grainy image and bad quality do not exclude mobile phones from the modern reportage and citizen journalism (Hand, 2016, p. 121). I enter to Hand's idea and would like to add that street photography today experience the ubiquity of mobile phones and, in turn, adjusts the technologies applying them into new styles.

It is seen quite clear that a symbolic image does not demand perfect quality, rather than it demands a narrative, a story-telling. The context around the photo image is what makes it noticeable and extraordinary. This notion strongly relates to the genre of street photography. The use of mobile phone as a camera in street photography depends heavily on the function of this genre, as well as on the approach of photographer. Whether he wants to be an observer or a participant of street life depicting the reality and interpreting in his surreal way.

Gerard Goggin is one of those scholars who supports the idea that the camera technologies biggest breakthrough is the in-building the camera into the mobile phone, which indicated the shift in different kind of cultural forms and genres (Goggin, 2006), and also implicated “the *disappearance* of the camera as conventionally understood” (Hand, 2016, p. 119). Even though the data given by Keegan in his article is relatively old (2008), he still noted the tendency of the time of 2008, when the camera-phones were starting gaining popularity:

This is a seminal time for cameraphones. Within the next few months, according to industry calculations, the number of cameraphones is expected to exceed the total number of

conventional cameras ever sold. Not bad for a device less than 10 years old, as cameras have been around for a century. (Keegan 2008)

These were the trends of 2008, now in 2017 the very idea of mobile phone without any photo or video options seems absurd. However, when it comes to the aesthetics and the content of the picture it would be fair to note that due to a large amount of cameraphones and hence a large amount of imagery they produce, the mundane and everyday content of the photographs predominates the iconic or symbolic ones. As the following scholars show the contrast between traditional camera and a phone, they apply to a camera-phone's field of use which is everyday situation:

In comparison to the traditional camera, which gets trotted out for special excursions and events – noteworthy moments bracketed off from the mundane – camera phones capture the more fleeting and unexpected moments of surprise, beauty and adoration in the everyday. (Daisuke and Ito 2003)

The words above perfectly suit the genre of street photography, where the mundane and boring everyday life gets filled up with the story in the way it is depicted. Moreover, Hand adds that the freshness of mobile photography is still synchronized with the traditional applications of the camera, because even though mobile photography usually implies the most ordinary depictions of the mundane, sometimes those depictions gain the immediate iconic potential thanks to global network communications (Hand, 2016, p. 120-121).

But on the other hand, Batchen, for example, argues that snapshot photography destroys the entire concept of 'the art history of photography' (2008, p. 125), being rather repetitive and boring, unless they have anything personal or bibliographical that can attract us (2002, 133). Nevertheless, it is important to note that the word "snapshot" is too controversial and of multiple-meaning term. The ambiguity of "snapshot" can only be compared with ambiguity of "art" in this case. This word can be discussed as a process as well as the result. Jonathan Greene suggests the following:

A snapshot may imply the hurried, passing glimpse or the treasured keepsake; its purpose may be casual observation or deliberate preservation. The snapshot may look forward in time to a chaotic, radically photographic structure, the appropriate equivalent of modern experience; or it may look backward to the formal portrait of a bygone age". (Jonathan Green in Hirsch 2000: 412).

Hence photographs lose their archive-like nature, which is the most important feature of documentary photography and they become the 'moments' caught out of reality. Street photographs, in turn, do not need to be stored or function as evidence like documentary, that is why such attitude of gaining the moments goes together well with street photography.

Jonas Larsen refers to the photographer Stephanie C. Roberts, who explains the sub-genre of snapshot photography, iPhoneography, as “the art of shooting and processing (editing and enhancing) digital images using an Iphone” (Roberts, 2011, p.1). It includes a number of digital platforms, applications and social-networking services (Flickr, Snapchat, Instagram and many more). Most of these applications and services have the function of different filters, which can be easily applied by the user to make photographs look classy and old-fashioned, ironically, resembling the analogue ones.

Due to the term “phone” and the opportunity to take pictures, many other notions appeared, for example, on the analogy with *flaneur* term, now the smart phones with in-built cameras created another expression, *phoneur*, defined by “a person who pretends to be talking on the phone, while covertly snapping and taking pictures” (Marien, 2012, p. 191). Some public places where photographs were until recently banned, like schools or churches, “have joined the public street as a setting where a person's expectation of privacy has been lowered, and, where the notion of performing the self has taken in new meaning” (Marien, 2012, p. 191).

It is an obvious fact that today people have their cameras always with them (most of us have a camera in-built in a phone, along with technical support of different mobile applications), hence these cameras play a role of recorders of everyday (in our case city streets) life mundanity. There is a solid relationship between ubiquity and mobility of digital devices that help to not to miss a moment and to properly capture the uncommon in very common conditions, plus memorizing nowadays evolves into sharing by means of social media.

3.4. THE AGE OF THE AMATEUR.

The new era of wide-spread new technologies, including digital cameras and camera phones, popularity of social networks and photo communities and groups with absolutely user-generated content led to the era named 'Web 2.0 – the Age of the Amateur' (Larsen, Sandbye, 2014, p. 2). If analogue photography was made for the future public, digital photography is

made for almost up-to-the-minute users, regardless the distance between them . Today private snaps of daily life are opposed to traditional press photography, as the access to cameras is easy and cheap for everyone now, and even the concept of 'breaking news' is changing now, implying the amateur mobile-phone recordings (Larsen, Sandbye, 2014, p. 2-4).

However, taking into consideration photography as a medium which was established and has always been effected by the users of the camera, we can speak about photography as about generally and historically (since the end of XIX century) “user-generated” medium. Here I share Lister's opinion that this was the technology that put the process of image-making in everyday discourse, unlike the coeval less accessible technologies. The recent technological jump makes all people not only consumers but producers of media, and it concerns photography, video-content, journalism and music. In this aspect, photography has been in a forefront of such development for more than a hundred years (Lister in Larsen Sandbye, 2012, p. 30). Thus, in a way, there is nothing new happening to photography in general, nonetheless, it experiences much bigger pressure than it's been 40 years ago, due to digital photography ubiquity.

As it was already discussed, digital photography now, as a result of its collaboration with other evolving technologies, is not just about the quality of the image but more about the ways of distribution, manipulation and different modes of display. This characteristics established the major trends in digital photography in regard to 'prosumption' – the idea that consumers have either become more professional in their consumption, perhaps creating content and taking control over parts of the production process, or increasingly engaged in the laboring of cultural production through consumption practices” (Hand, 2016, pp. 116-117). For example, a number of scholars (Lister, Dovey, Giddings, Grant), by giving the characteristics to the New Media, state the fact that a tight cooperation between modern broadcast technologies with networked communications results in completely new ways of media production, therefore the borders between different media are being erased or transformed. If media technology skills were rather expert or, in a way, individual during the twentieth century, in the age of Web 2.0 such competence becomes wide-spread through out the population “in the form of a widening baseline of ‘computer literacy’, information technology skills, and especially the availability of software that increasingly affords the production of ‘user-generated content” (2009. p. 33). Their thoughts rest upon the earlier suggestions of Rubisntein and Sluis, according to whom the appearance of digital photography did not rapidly change popular photography but influenced and transformed the habits of amateurs,

hobbyists and other enthusiasts (2008, p. 11), hence domestic photography was revolutionized by “digital cameras, post-production processes, and distribution through file compression and networks” (Lister, 2009, pp. 33-34). The vanishing of borders between the professional and the amateur are obvious. Murray just mentions that such social networks on the base of photo-sharing as Instagram and Flickr are bombarded everyday with the images of all kinds. Murray continues “snapshot hobbyists, serious amateurs, and professionals all post photos on Flickr, and it can often be difficult to tell the difference between the latter two groups as most people do not self-identify either way” (Murray, 2008, p. 155).

According to Keen Web 2.0 has established the culture of amateurishness, rather than the democratic 'creativity', “an endless digital forest of mediocrity” (2007, p. 2). So he thinks that “professional” is much harder to find now than it used to be due to a number of amateurs and their massive productivity in digital media.

Lister states that the huge amount of imagery in the digital universe today changes photography as we know it, and propose to call this phenomena 'the malaise of photography as information'. Some scholars (Taylor and Harris, 2005) following the Sontag's criticism towards 'superficial democracy' (1979) insist on the fact that the enormous amount of photography material promotes the disappearance of any critical acceptance to the world.

Rubinstein and Sluis, however, have much more positive point of view on this so-called “mass-amateurization of photography”, explaining it by the brand new online visibility which increases the value of photographic culture. If the past of photography was dictated by the professionals and individuals with sufficient expertise, contemporary photography specialists work shoulder to shoulder with the photography enthusiasts and hobbyists, who do not invest professionally in photography. However, several studies conducted by Van House and her colleagues (2005, 2007) and by Okabe and Ito (2006) suggest that actually the use of mobile phone camera allowed to discover the new paradigms of visual narratives and personal expression (Rubinstein & Sluis, 2008, p. 24). These complex process yields the proposition that the roles of the professional image and the snapshot are evolving and shifting as well.

These researches tend towards the thought of ubiquity of digital photographs as to phenomenon which destroys the aspects of authenticity and originality “in a condition of generalized simulation in line with the experience of postmodernity” (Hand, 2016, p. 79). Also, Bate argues, in contrary to Sontag's idea of the disappearance of any critical acceptance,

that such overproduction, ubiquity and amateur dominance in photography today may establish the new audience with the more critical approach to the everyday alteration, which, however requires a transformation of the appropriate and acceptable values of aesthetics and the agreement of opinion upon that (Bate, 2009, p. 156).

On this issue Murray brings up the brilliant idea, as she proposes that the usualness and regularity of the contemporary digital photographs, its enormous quantity and their absence of the context of network media make them rather inconvenient for the textual analysis preferred by scholars and photography historians and critical theorist. Murray, by the remarking of the new genres emerging, submits that now the significant transformation is observed, it constitutes the shift from the prevalence of rare and unique moments to the mainstreaming of everyday in narrative construction (Murray, 2009). After the content analysis of images on Flickr, she states the following, very closely related to the theme of street photography:

the content of some of the most popular pages has little relation to traditional snapshot photography and is, in many ways, the opposite of pictorialist amateur photography (with its focus on realism, urbanization, and the small objects in life that often go unnoticed). It has little to do with studio photography. It seems to speak to a new aesthetic and function – one dedicated to the exploration of the urban eye and its relation to decay, alienation, kitsch, and its ability to locate beauty in the mundane. Some have claimed that it is indeed a new category of photography, called 'ephemera'(Murray, 2008, 155)

It is worth noting that the quantity of images makes photography face an issue of originality and distinction. Hand who conducted the research among young people who use digital cameras or camera phones everyday, says that for them the originality of the picture is a form of ownership, in other words, their style or the way of seeing things means to “own an image” (Hand, 2016, p. 83).

3.5 CONCLUSION.

The most important characteristics of modern digital photography were mentioned. The first one is malleability, or the ability to be interwoven into other different media, tight connections and interlinking between the camera, mobile phone and social networks in the context of photo-sharing. The other one is ubiquity of mobile devices, wherever we go and whatever we do, all our actions can be easily recorded with the help of mobile camera. Same concerns people interested in art or journalism and who want to present their creativity or

photojournalistic work. These socio-technological processes of total digitization are more than ever relevant to the genre we are discussing. Street photographer's first rule is to be invisible and to blend in the crowd, and the phone with the in-built camera is the device which perfectly suits this job. Moreover, now everyone is a street photographer, both dedicated and unaware. The access to camera and urban area make people create in the genre of street photography. Such omnipresence of digital devices and their inter connection with other media is definitely transforming the genre, which has always been exposed to internal (documentary style, photojournalism and Surrealism) and external interferences (consumerism, loss of interest in the genre in a favour to other styles, lack of supervision). Now the major challenge to street photography is the most important external influence which is the digital photography ubiquity, expressed in the total vanishing of boundaries between the professional and the amateur.

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.

This chapter gives the detailed overview of the methods I use to conduct the research and eventual analysis.

The place of street photography in the world of art is still very indefinite, and even though I examined a number of outlooks made by critics, art and photography historian and photographers themselves, there is still uncertainty about the concrete technical features of the genre that would strictly strip it from the realm of documentary. Opinions differ, and street photography is one of those phenomena where every practitioner and every theorist have their own perspective, and what is more distracting, regardless the fact that many of them contravene each other, none is completely wrong in this thorny question.

Street photography offers so many definitions and meanings because it is very photographer-dependent practice, which means that every single artist working in the field of street photography add a new detail to the definition of the genre, moreover every photographer has different series of works, which can be also made in their own independent style. Perhaps, that is why one of the greatest street photographers of today, Nick Turpin came to a conclusion that the best definition for Street photography is “just photography in its simplest form”, taking into consideration that even the first photographs ever taken were technically street photographs. And, if all people with camera phones, according to Turpin, are street photographers before the moment when we narrow down our interest to, for example, portraits, landscapes or fashion, which by the way also can be expressed through street photography, then there is no even such genre whatsoever and then the whole study of does not make sense.

But as I have already told, the whole concept of street photography is very blurry and non-solid, and there are several reasons why we still cannot observe the genre of street photography as a completely independent discipline. I also suggest that street photography is much more sophisticated and multifaceted discipline. So I, instead, found the ideas of Blumenkrantz noteworthy, as he thinks that the place of street photography is located between art and documentary. I mentioned though that this notion might sound perfect for the discipline in its early days in the 1920s and the 1930s, when such term as “street photography” did not even exist yet, and the masters of social documentary and photojournalism (Henri Cartier-Bresson, Walker Evans and others) applied own creative approaches to their work. Today there are perhaps as many sub-styles of street photography as there are photographers, and definitely

some of them lean towards documentary and some tend to be more artistic, thus, it is very conditioned upon a particular photographer and a style he follows.

Therefore, the placement of street photography on the scale between Documentary and Art in the conditions of total digital ubiquity is of primary importance for me as for researcher, because thereby I can localise a sphere of influence, which makes it easier to provide a decent research.

I have already written that at the turn of the century, almost simultaneously with the advent of the global information space, there was an avalanche in the number of people photographing, or to some extent interested in photography. A digital camera became an essential attribute of almost every citizen, and the Internet gave the opportunity to publish their works, to write and receive feedback on them, and, as a result, to form a group opinion and criteria for perception. This process, however, also touched upon the professional photography, as many professionals began to focus on the new unambiguously expressed criteria.

The research is aimed to highlight the major trends in street photography in terms relations between the photographer and the objects, in terms of aesthetics and in terms of content of the images. This tendencies eventually are supposed to divide the over-inclusive style of street photography into its sub-styles in regard to several criteria and to place those sub-genres on the scale between art and documentary, thereby outlining the overall position of contemporary street photography.

I plan to apply the method of observation which implies the thorough search through a significant amount of digital imagery via the most popular and acknowledge photography-based websites and social networks. The empirical material determination is provided by means of digital platforms (social and photo-sharing network Instagram, and image-sharing website Flickr and 500px), due to easy and convenient navigation with the help of tagging and hashtags through the enormous quantity of imagery, and also due to very simple search by the name facility, which allows to check and subscribe for the relevant street photographers accounts.

I use the tagging system on 500px and Flickr for the faster navigation and filtering the necessary material. The following tags are used for filtering: street, photography, urban, mobile, digital. Furthermore, the combination of mentioned word are used as well.

The filtering with the help of hashtags is rather similar, the following hashtags were used in order to get the distinguished search results: #streetphotography, #streetphoto, #streetphotos, #urbanphoto #urbanphotography #mobilestreet, #mobilestreetphotography, #digitalstreetphotography, #streetphoneography, #phonestreetphotography #streetphonecamera, Unfortunately, Instagram does not allow the search by several hashtags, that is why combinations of hashtags could not be applied on this digital platform. However, there is a service called mulpix.com (Instagram advanced search engine) which lets provide the search through Instagram with a number of hashtags, by which filtering necessary material, so I applied this service too.

In addition to that, I enlisted the help of several print media which showcase over hundred different photographers, both already established and just debuting, from all over the world, representing widely different cityscapes and urban environment but still all rolled into one notion of street photography.

Moreover, I apply the method of comparison, without which the research would be incomplete, because the comparative study of the great amount of images helps to indicate the key differences and similarities, which, in turn, help to define the major common trends in street photography so that they would come under the sub-categories of street photography. Also I apply such benchmark study for the works of XX century master, who are now considered as “the fathers” of street photography, because they formed this controversial and ambiguous discipline as a result of their different approaches to the photography process, and the observance and comparison of those photographers promotes determination of modern tendencies, due to their influential status.

The relevance of this type of research lies in the lack of studies conducted on the topic of street photography in terms of approaches applied during the creative process. Instead, there is a significant amount of websites which contain some sort of manuals and instructions, for example, “How to shoot street photography?” or “Street photography, where to start?”, “How to find your style in street photography” and many other articles with the guidelines for practice. Thus, I consider it is important to highlight the most prominent types of street photography and organise them into sub-categories with their own specific features in regard to different criteria.

4.1. CRITERIA FOR ANALYSIS.

Different features of the images were narrowed down to the following criteria of analysis criteria with the help of which I provided the analysis:

- The level of photographer's engagement into the scene, or in other words the degree of demonstrativeness which photographer confronts the scene. As many practitioners of the past same as modern photographers follow their own understanding of depicting the reality. Whether they wanted to be the observer or the participant, or in some cases the causes of the shots.
- The degree of aesthetics to which photographer is reaching to. It can be explained by the spectator's perception, hence this criterion is too subjective, but so is art in general. Nevertheless, I observed the works of many street photographers and judged from the notion of common sense of what to consider "ugly" or "beautiful", according to the level of aesthetic appeal.
- The content of the photograph. This criteria may include too many nuances, however I narrowed down to the most obvious and, by the way, most popular motifs and patterns and categorized them into several groups.

The results I came up with are divided into several sub-categories or sub-genres of street photography, each of them is described and illustrated in detail. The main characteristics that single out the sub-genre from the others are given. In order to provide visual imagery of the described category I exemplify each of them by photo-works of artists who are the dedicated adherents of the examined style and also by the images from photography-based social and sharing networks made by predominantly by the amateurs and novice users.

4.2. LEVEL OF DEMONSTRATIVENESS.

This chapter demonstrates my overview of street photography approaches among different practitioners in the context of how they are engaged into the scene depicted. I called them traditional or classic style and aggressive style. If the former one is more intelligent and consistent and does not include intervention from a photographer, the latter one is, vice versa, provocative and rude and the influence of the photographer is obvious on the final picture. Furthermore these kinds of street photography also own a number of specific features that are only partially can belong to such a dichotomy, however these attributes are indicative to the styles, hence need to be mentioned.

4.2.1. TRADITIONAL OR CLASSIC STYLE.

The first style of street photography I propose to call Traditional. With this type of photography we can easily connect the biggest representative of the genre Henri Cartier-Bresson, and anyone who tries to follow the same rules in modern time with modern devices. There is a clear and significant trace of documentary on this discipline, and due to the fact that Cartier-Bresson never called himself a 'street photographer', but rather a photojournalist, this style includes photojournalistic features of observation the environment, or some particular event. The photographer usually stays invisible or at least inconspicuous to the surrounding people (who become his objects), and this ability allows him to shoot candidly, using the well-known notion of 'decisive moment'. Phone camera is a perfect match to the traditional way of street photography, as the artist can easily shoot candidly while pretending of having a phone call or, with the help of earphone, pretending to fix the volume of the music.

In addition, concerning the visual part it should include emotions or feelings, or the narrative component, which is of primary importance here, it can be not only a paraphrase of the depicted, but also can be a brand new story limited by the photo frame. Therefore this kind of photography is, in a way, a quintessence of 'decisive moment', hence 'traditional'.

When it comes to the name, I called this kind - 'traditional', because it has the inherent features of 'old-school' street photography which makes it close to reportage on the everyday issues. Even though the photographs under this category are supposed to be a perfection, much of the imagery, examined during the research in social media, is rather boring and does not transmit any message or tell any story, mostly it concerns the pictures of the novice and amateur photographers in Instagram, who try to claim something mundane in the reality for a new story on a photo, while practically it stays mundane either way. Nonetheless due to a thorough research process and applied attention to details I found the following works of well-recognized artists in the field of street photography deserving attention.



Figure 2. Matt Stuart, Trafalgar Square (Somersault), London, 2009.



Figure 3. Matt Stuart, Hyde Park, 2004.

One of them is Matt Stuart, who is an acknowledged adherent of traditional or standard style of photography. He even considers Henri Cartier-Bresson and Robert Frank, as well as Joel Meyerowitz as his mentors, in addition to that his images are pure in his denying of Photoshop or any other digital adjustments to the picture, and the only manipulation in his photographs is the frame, and furthermore his noninvolvement into the scene is obvious, because he plays the role of a bystander. Concerning narrative, his pictures usually tell the story in ‘behind the scenes’ way, and as he admits himself spectators make their own assumption on the story around the image, which, however, can be quite the opposite of what really happened. The features of his images mentioned above make him the perfect representative of the traditional genre.

As I have told Matt Stuart is one of the most recognizable British photo-artist, but there is a great number of Instagram users or serious amateurs on Flickr who also deserve the attention due to their loyalty to the classic was of expressing street photography. Here I present the the

works of several amateur level photographers whom I consider the perfect examples of the this style.



Figure 4. Demid Lebedev (@demidism), New York, 2014.

Demid Lebedev's photograph is the perfect implication of decisive moment and the element of juxtaposition at the same time. This picture is one of the hundred pictures which meet the definition of good street photography, however his creativity ranges significantly from sub-category to another within the street photography discipline.

Another example is Ryan Tacay (@phraction_street), whose signature is seen in the way that he depicts too much, and there is too much action and motion going on most of his works, however he is capable of catchin a decisive moment out of the mess of the crowded streets and public spaces.



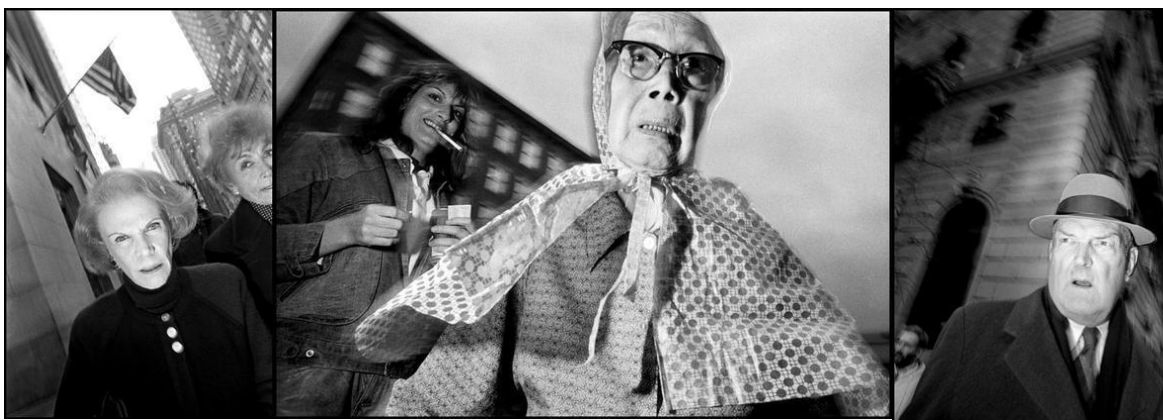
Figure 5. Ryan Tacay, Germany, 2014.

4.2.2. AGGRESSIVE STYLE.

The next style that I distinguished is an aggressive style, it can be also called brutal, harsh or impolite. This is the approach that implies a rude interference of personal space of the objects. When it come to technical side of the style, the flash can be used, which makes photographer's work indiscreet and obvious, but the main credo of these photo artists is to reach the new expressions of the object. In contrast with the Traditional approach explained above, this style is definitely too far from documenting of life, whilst it appeals to unexpected emotions and different face and behavior expressions. Such characteristics make the Aggressive sub-genre closer to artistic realm.

This approach is quite unique, because it contradicts with the "invisible observer" characteristic of general street photographer and the artist becomes a participant, or in most of the cases even a cause of the event he is illustrates, however it elaborates the discipline with more expressionist techniques.

I found it important to highlight that this style is a result of works of two street photographers (Bruce Gilden and Charlie Kirk) who might be considered as the inspirational figures to the amateurs (such as Allen Hammer, Jiwei Han, Dirty Harry and partly Trond Lindholm) due to their aggressive, "in-your-face" style of photography, and even though it is not very popular among the practitioners nowadays (as it requires some bravery and breach of etiquette), it is definitely worth noting and registering as a separate sub-genre, plus this is the perfect opposition to the polite and consistent Traditional sub-genre.



Figures 4. Bruce Gilden, Women walking on Fifth Avenue. New York City. 1992.

Figure 5. Bruce Gilden, Feast of San Gennero, Little Italy USA. New York City. 1989.

Figure 6. Bruce Gilden, Businessman on Fifth Avenue USA. New York City. 1993.

Bruce Gilden is one of those infamous street photographers who apply the invasive approach to receive and capture the real emotions and was already called an “enfant terrible” of street photography due to his provocative attitude to the profession and to the object of his profession. His style is very expressive and makes him an artist rather than a documentarian. nonetheless he was the one who since the beginning of the 1990s established the signature and recognized tradition of the rude street photography which is still can be easily observed now. The further analysis of the series of imagery from different serious amateurs of photography indicates that some of them embrace similar artistic behavior in their work. Due to accessible digital devices many people who suddenly became photographers got on the streets with the personal purposes of confrontation with random people for the art's sake. Hence many amateurs follow this style in order to take impudent street photographs, irritating for the wider public and especially for the objects.

For example, Norwegian street photographer, Trond Lindholm, based in Oslo, works on his “never ending project” on the subject of taking candid shots in Oslo. He applies a series of different methods, but one of them is such candid, intrusive way. The examples below are taken from Lindholm’s Instagram account. He as well as Gilden crosses the line of personal space and ethical norms to capture the emotional side of people in the urban environment.



Figure 7. Trond Lindholm, Oslo, 2016.

Figure 8. Trond Lindholm, Oslo, 2015.

For fairness' sake I have decided to elaborate this genre with the Asian photographer, otherwise the representatives are all either American or European. Chinese documentary photographer, Jiwei Han, produced a series of work called 'NO!', in which he applies the described approach of aggressive image taking without permission and making people irritated. In a way,

he refers to the words of Blumenkrantz and Sontag (Chapter 2.2.), who compare the act of photography with the act of aggression or even hunt in the way that photographing means violating).



Figure 9. Jiwei Han, Beijing, 2016.

4.3. LEVEL OF AESTHETIC APPEAL

This criteria of analysis is used to distinguish between two sub-genres in regard to their aesthetic appeal, their attractiveness and aesthetic influence on the spectator. In the simplest terms, the division is provided by the conventional belief of what is beautiful and attractive and what is unfavorable and unpleasant to see.

4.3.1. DARK SIDE OF PHOTOGRAPHY. RUGGED OR HARSH STYLE.

This style I distinguish due to its 'savage' character. The narratives of such images can be provocative and shocking, so that this sub-genre breaks all the restriction or ethical standards of not only what to photograph but also what to eventually show to the spectators. It should be noted though that technically street photography does not prohibit anything, hence such behavior in the framework of photography is actually acceptable.

The pictures in the realm of harsh street photography may contain the scenes unsuitable for showing to the wide audience. They may include an act of harassment, a scene of a crime, and the consequences of societal inequality. The main characters are usually the lower social strata and underclass, people pushed to the brink, prostitutes and hard drug users.

Rugged manner takes the content, or a story depicted, as an essential part of the image, which means it usually neglects any kind of technical aspects of the photographing.

Compositional phase of the subject is for nothing in these images, whilst the plot of the story is of primary importance. Moreover, the plot is never of something beautiful or positive, contrary, the images show social instability and inequality, featuring people in despair who have nothing to lose. In fact, such street photography fulfills a very important function, it disillusion the spectators, being made as a means of transmitting a picture of another side of life, including its much darker, tragic and unwelcoming environments. The features highlighted above, in turn, are the indicatives of the documentarian and photojournalistic component in this sub-genre.

Even though this sub-category is lacking the aesthetic appeal due to the scenes it may include, the documentarian component of it is actually made it very popular among street photographers. Historically, Diane Arbus or Walker Evans could be described as the 'dark-side street photographers', taking into consideration their interests in depicting life of the poor (Evans's farmers during Great Depression) or the people with abnormal appearance and general marginal aesthetics. Nowadays, though, the plots of this sub-genre can easily be found in Instagram and Flickr. I consider that this easy accessibility is caused by the popularization of street photography and the subsequent false acceptance of the notion that street photography is all about the social inequality, expressed on the city streets. Regardless the geographical location, whether it is in the US, Europa or in Africa, there is a common trend which became ubiquitous of depicting harsh scenes of city life. And as I have mentioned, picture set-up is the least important element of photographing, hence it attracts many novices. However despited a vast number of trivial material it was possible to find the photographers among professionals and amateurs who represent the given style.

One of the most iconic figures in the dark-side street photography is Trine Søndergaard, who dedicated the whole series of images to the rough part of Copenhagen, Vesterbro, which became “the hub of street prostitution” (Higgins, 2014, p. 201). This is the perfect example of capturing the life of mean street of the city, where the dark side is expressed with prostitution.

Furthermore the other indicators of societal bottom, such as bruises, and needle wounds. She apparently pays attention to composition of the picture, hence her works are worth noting and discussing.



Figure 9. Trine Søndergaard, from the series 'Now That You Are Mine', Copenhagen, 1997-2000.



Figure 10. Trine Søndergaard, from the series 'Now That You Are Mine', Copenhagen, 1997-2000.

Her series of photography meets the definition of documentary genre, however as she argues herself her views are very subjective and personal towards the objects. The artist applied her personal interest in this work, the photojournalistic observation of event or phenomenon is

present here, but Søndergaard, as a street photographer, first of all shows the pictures of the reality but not the reality itself, because she does not advocate for the changes in social environment. But it should be noted that her oeuvre is very close to the thin line between street photography and photojournalism.

There is another example of a photograph that can be a perfect example of this style is an image taken by Alex Webb, a member of Magnum¹¹, who captures the moment of death of a man in Tenosique in Mexico.



Figure 11. Alex Webb, Tenosique, Mexico, 2007.

This is the example of how street photography can break the rules of ethics, as this sub-genre allows the depiction of the disturbing things. Moreover this genre functions as an epiphany to the rest of the world, and shows its gloomy part.

In Instagram I came across the account of the photographer whose primary objects are the people of the 'third world' countries, which imply the narratives of poverty, hunger and diseases. Arthur Renoir Thyssen (@artagonis) uses only his phone as a camera and provides every picture with the self-penned texts that invite the assumptions on the social and overall injustice, nonetheless his photographs are just depiction of the issues, not the documents about that.

¹¹ An international photographic agency founded by Henri Cartier-Bresson and includes the most significant photographers of modernity



Figure 12. Arthur Renoir Thyssen, 2015.

4.3.2. PURE ART STYLE.

This is completely opposite to the previous one sub-genre. Street photography here serves as the artistic representation of reality that is not supposed to depict the event or some social problem to bring up any awareness, rather than just trigger emotions of aesthetic pleasure. This genre is the actual visual art expressed through the lens of the camera. Photographer has to be aware of the balance between the dark and bright parts in the frame to reach the perfection in terms of composition. Concerning narrative artistically pure street photographer is not seeking for a story to feature but he composes the story within the shot, which makes it important to apply such notion as 'decisive moment' if the particular picture includes motion. On the other hand, the pure art sub-genre can be applied to the motionless environment of empty streets and panoramic views, which makes it close to the landscape and cityscape photography. These photographs are taken with the implementation of aesthetic features to make them possible to be purchased and hung up on the walls in living rooms.

Usually this genre is peculiar for the professional photographers and to find a purely artistic street photography among the amateurs is not as easy as the representation of the previously discussed genre. It might be explained by the years of experience and complete photographic expertise, unaccessible to the novice and amateurs.

However the detailed careful examination of visual material let to provide several examples of modern street amateurs whose creativity can be easily considered as the pure art street photography. There is a list of names such as Paola Franqui (@monaris_), Cocu Chen Liu (@cocu_liu), Jomayra Texeira (@visualmemories_), Ryan Postel (@ryanpostel), Robert Warhurst (robinthesky) and many others.

Paola Franqui developed her own positive and bright style of photography while capturing the moment on the street all over the world. She travels a lot and despite the country and part of the world, her own personal approach of expressing the reality is obvious. Moreover her photos qualify as the real fine art photography, aesthetically attractive, they exclude any nihilistic or negativistic elements unlike the previous genre.



Figure 13, Paola Franqui, New York 2016

Figure 14, Paola Franqui, New York 2016.

One more fine art street photographer is Cocu Liu, based in San-Francisco and Chicago, who uses his phone to promote the aesthetically appealing images of two completely different cities. His picture are all so perfect that it was extremely hard to mark the best, because Cocu Liu follows all the rules to provide the ideal picture of the moment, including a play of light and shadow, the lines and shapes which form the depth and he also uses 'decisive moment' to show the objects on the apogee of the motion.



Figure 15, Cocu Liu, San-Francisco, 2017.



Figure 15. Cocu Liu, Chicago, 2015.

4.4. THE CRITERION OF THE CONTENT OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS.

This criterion for selection makes it easier to distinguish different motifs of street photography. Street photography due to absorbency and a tendency to be affected by internal and external influences is a very many-sided discipline, especially when it comes to the objects and motifs captured. In the process of careful examination of the great quantity of imagery on the photography-dedicated websites and networks I highlighted the major tendencies of what become the object. It ranges significantly and includes both motion and motionless objects. The

sub-styles discussed below also differ so much that the presence of the people varies from optional to mandatory. It has to be noted though that this classification is not a well-defined structure just due to the fact that these sub-genres are not mutually exclusive and in some cases can cross and match, this in turn brings us back to the discussion of street photography as a very loose and free from restrictions style.

4.4.1. GEOMETRY

According to my observation this kind of image-taking is one of the most popular types of street photography today. It is rather old as the very classics of photography applied this approach, implying either the use of golden ratio (Henri Cartier-Bresson) or depicting the strict lines and contours of shadows and light. Structure and composition are, definitely, of primary importance in this type. Architectural perspective, including all the possible sharp figures, lines, forms and geometrical figures is always present, hence the style is more artistic than documentarian, due to concentration on the form. Any urban environment is an easy field for the photographer who is in search of geometry and sharpness. Cities are filled up with the patterns that can be caught on the camera in both minimalistic and over-expressive form. Significant amount of the images I have observed were dedicated to architecture (different parts of the buildings, constructions and exterior design) and excluded human figures. However, there is a group of photographs that feature people on them but these people are serving as another motion geometrical figures, rather than playing a principle part on the picture.

As I have told this type is very wide-spread, if not ubiquitous, nonetheless it was easy to pick up the most interesting, in my point of view, amateurs out of the massive quantity of geometry photography in Instagram and Flickr. Most of the featured photographers are using mobile phones. Here is some of them: Jasper Tejano (@jaspertejano), Egil Andersen (@egil.andersen), Adam Senatori (@adamsenatori), Rui Palha (<http://www.ruipalha.com>),

On image-sharing website Flickr I came across a Portuguese photographer, Rui Palha is the great illustration of geometric photo-artist. The influence of Capa, Ervitt or Cartier-Bresson is quite obvious in his works. He shoots in black and white only and eventually the figure of a person is always important for him because it plays the contrasting role to the surroundings and hence is sometimes opposed to the environment. He uses geometric figures and shapes to show the depth of the picture, plus light and shadows composed in the frame and humans who are the most significant part in the end make his images 'mathematically precise'.



Figure 16. Rui Palha, Rainy Day, Lisbon, 2002.

Figure 17. Rui Palha, Lisbon, 2017.

In comparison to Rui Palha there are many Instagram artists who do not consider a human figure as a main character of the geometric picture, hence their photographs are rather lifeless and present only the pure geometrical forms of urban environment, sharp lines and corner. One of them is a Norwegian photographer, Egil Andersen who uses just his phone to produce his geometric street shots of Oslo and the cities he visits. His style can be also described as very minimalistic, because the shots usually do not contain too many details and little nothings but rather strict straight lines and corners of the buildings, pavements and patterns on the walls. Especially his style is vividly expressed when it comes to Oslo, Rotterdam or Frankfurt where the neo-modern style in architecture prevails (for example, Barcode Project etc.).

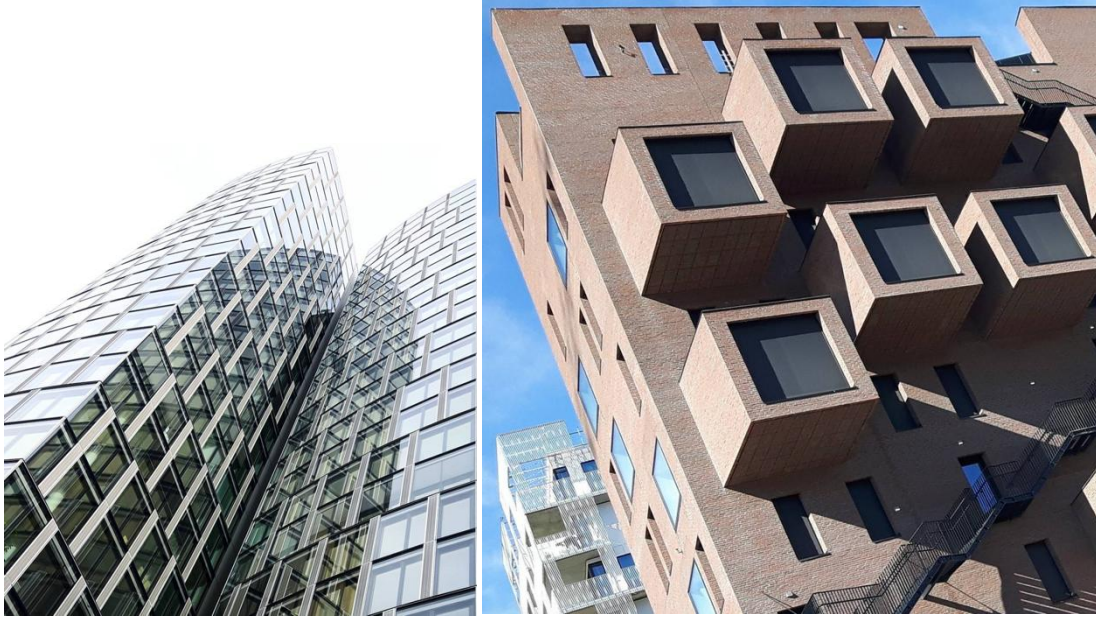


Figure 18. Egil Andersen, Frankfurt, Germany, 2017

Figure 19. Egil Andersen, Oslo, Barcode, Norway, 2017.

4.4.2. PORTRAITS.

Portraits were always an essential part of street photography, because the human component of the street is significant for the representation of urban reality. Portraits, both staged and accidental were used since the early days of the genre. Technically as long as the portrait photo was not taken in a studio, it became a street photography portrait. Throughout the entire history of street photography portraits were used by the masters, mostly candid, however nowadays the popularity of this sub-genre can be explained by the influence of fashion industry and the abundance of so called “street look” photography, rather than following the ideas of classic street portraits. Most of these pictures are characterized by completely staged or allegedly accidental and candid manner. They are used for modern fashion blogs or exploited in specially made street style Instagram accounts to promote the street outfit looks.

Although street fashion photography technically meets the definition of street photography, there are still the adherent artists who keep on shooting candid portraits of strangers on the streets, effectively following the rules of classic street photography. Portrait street photography is very diverse and hence has several trends of development.

There street photographers working in portraiture way who can be considered as successors of creativity Diane Arbus, Garry Winogrand and Lee Friedlander who were the masters of combining portraits and urban environment on one picture. One of successors is an Instagram artist Hannibal Renberg, who is only with the help of his iPhone recreates similar narratives. His photos are candid un-staged and can be easily considered as modern classic street portraiture.



Figure 20. Hannibal Renberg, Paris, 2017.

Figure 21. Hannibal Renberg, Paris, 2017.

The other direction of street portrait genre is quite the opposite in terms of planning and candidness. These images are staged and depict the people in their natural habitat, but they are not accidental as the major object of the picture is posing to the camera whilst the environment can be changing constantly. In many cases these are photos of travel photographers who are interested in representational picture of the place they are visiting, hence there is a lot of imagery from some exotic parts of the world, unlike Europe or North America. People depicted within the frame of reference of such places can express authenticity even though they are posing. One of the Instagram and Tumblr users who belong to this trend is @roetry. He is not a travel photographer though but features the life of his hometown Mumbai with the help of portraits of real everyday people.



Figure 22. Roetry, Mumbai, 2014.

Figure 23, Roetry, Mumbai, 2017.

The third tendency I have already mentioned, caused by the wide interest in fashion and street fashion outfit. This tendency can be also described as a fusion between fashion photography and street photography, hence the most important feature of street photography is evident here. Its loose nature, malleability and simple interweaving with another disciplines. There is a significant quantity of street fashion photographers who combine the rules of both genres to make posed yet naturally street photographs. Here are the examples:



Figure 24. Giuseppe Santamaria, 2014.

Figure 25. Adam Katz Sinding, 2014.

4.4.3. JUXTAPOSITIONS.

The amount of images with the element of juxtaposition is enormous in modern street photography, due to its erroneous perception and standardization of it as a major component of street photography. If in case of the “dark-side” street photography, a great amount of imagery on the topic of social inequality and injustice was caused by the misconception of the relations between street photography and social documentary, then in case of a large amount of juxtapositions in modern art, it was influenced by the facilitation of public access to street photography's ironic element, expressed in juxtaposition, as in visual metaphor. If historically juxtaposition played a significant role in the establishment of ironic and metaphoric genre of street photography, then today it actually backfired on the discipline in a form vulgarization and loss of originality.

The examples of this kind of street photography can be gathered under the notion 'on the right place at the right time', as technically such contrasting and opposition requires luck and fast reaction, however the latter one is a demand to any kind of street photography. Due to digital ubiquity and cameras omnipresence moments captured as juxtapositions that were used to be considered as unique and unrepeatable are now mundane and trivial and do not catch the eye as much.

However this is one of the major tendencies in modern street photography, hence it deserves attention and exemplification.



Figure 26. Ian Berry, The Royal Escott, London, 1975.

When it comes to the classics of street it is necessary to mention the image above. The photograph taken by Ian Berry in 1975 is an excellent example of juxtaposition, which contains the narrative and brings the message to the spectator. This picture is built on the contrast of lines: a perfectly straight figure of the man and a crooked bent worker, whom the aristocrat seems to bend to the ground with his left hand. But moreover it seen how the leg of a rich man is parallel to the trolley, and the crossing lines form a complex pattern. The meaning of photography is deeper than the simple underlining of contrasts - it is also express the commonality in the unity of opposites. The message is: "Britain is socially heterogeneous, but united".

Many well-recognized artists in the world of photography have their significant works done with the use of juxtapositions, for example Nils Jorgensen, Polly Braden, Richard Kalvar, Matt Stuart and many others. When it come to social networks, there are a lot of novice and amateurs who with the quick help of the mobile phone take the candid pictures with visual irony or contrast. Among them are Matthew Wylie (@m_mateos), Kiarang Alaei (@kiarang_alaei), Paul Russel (@paulrussell99) and many others, but they are modern street photographers who do not relate themselves to some particular style but rather are a street photographers in the broadest strokes. Due to omnipresence of juxtapositions in photography based digital platforms I demonstrate just the random examples of just three artists but in fact there is way much more examples on any of digital platforms.



Figure 27. Kiarang Alaei. 2017.

Figure 28. Paul Russel, 2017



Figure 29. Matthew Wiley, 2015.

4.4.4. ABSURD.

I have called the next style absurd, due to a very specific content the street pictures may include. This kind is rather photojournalistic by its nature of depicting the real however weird and strange it can be. But it also can also be described as the essence of street photography which its commenting on everyday life, or according to Bate who explains street photography it has this documentary gaze at the world, but it is not concerned with ordinary life but rather with extraordinary elements of it. Also it makes it close to photojournalism, with the intention to observe the everyday in case of its surprising happenings.

The extraordinary elements are built in narrative which is either described by a photographer or a spectator has to built it up around the picture, and furthermore these narratives are not obliged to cross or match. In the simplest words, the pictures taken in this style should make the viewers ask themselves a question of “What is going on here?” and then to find the answer on their own.

The two most distinguished figures of this sub genre are Martin Collar and Jeff Mermelstein.

The first one is from Slovak Republic and he depicts the bizarre and ironic moment of life in the Eastern and Central European countries in the photo project '*Nothing Special*', showing the mode of life of people who used to be affected by the Soviet power in the past and who became the new citizens of Europe just two decades ago. He tries to depict the ordinary actions but to put them in the extraordinary context, giving the pictures the trace of absurd and oddity, which in turn allows to interpret the happenings on the picture in the way they wish to do it.



Figure 30. Martin Kollar, Bratislava, 2003.



Figure 31. Martin Kollar, Kukz, Czech Republic, 2003.

Jeff Mermelstein is another representative of the absurd sub-genre, who works since the 1990s. He works and photographs in New York, due to the neurotic character of the city which provides a great number of absurd candid moments that deserve to be shot. Out of the trivial and banal environment and surroundings he finds out an unusual moment and takes a picture of it. Even though his pictures are mostly analogue, he is a custodian of street photography classic traditions, and still forms one of the trends of modern street photography reflected in digital way.



Figure 32. Jeff Mermelstein, New York, 1995.



Figure 33. Jeff Mermelstein, New York, 1995.

Among Instagram street enthusiasts I came across Camilo Fuentealba, whose photos express irony and absurd narratives I described above. His works are colorful and bright and follows the traditions of street photography of telling the story, however in rather neurotic and hectic way. His works also resemble the vernacular photography of the 1980s and the 1990s, due to digital adjustments that he applies during post-production. Furthermore it is obvious that he uses very diverse manners of photography, most of his shots are candid, but in some cases he uses flash and intrusive approach to the objects. According to situation he is an observer or a participant. His attention to weird occasions around, the main objects of photography, the pre-sets he uses in post-production, the manner of taking pictures makes him a unique representative of modern street photography who absorbed many styles and approaches at the same time. However the majority of his work is made in absurd or grotesque style.

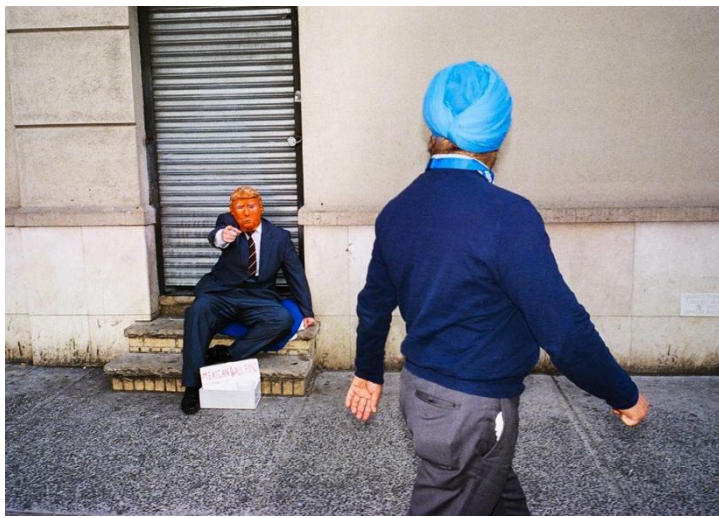


Figure 34. Camilo Fuentealba, New York, 2016.

Figure 35. Camilo Fuentealba, New York, 2017.



Figure 36. Camilo Fuentealba, New York, 2015.

CONCLUSION

The research I have conducted allowed to come closer to understanding of the street photography genre, which as it was observed a very complex phenomenon in art world. It has a very rich history and the development of this discipline has never been homogeneous due to a great number of internal and external factors. In addition to its very artist- and style- dependent nature, street photography experiences a new round of evolution thanks to digital revolution and digital camera ubiquity. Every one is technically a photographer now, hence this age of the amateur could not help affect such an absorbing and malleable discipline. Nevertheless I attempted to study the issue of location of street photography on the scale between art and documentary, in the context of digital camera omnipresence. In order to do that I have decided to observe and analyze a great quantity of imagery material in internet (social-networks and image-sharing sites) and a number of photo art books (both electronic and paper). Analysis included the determination of regularities, major similarities and differences by three main criteria.

The criteria of photographer's involvement, according to which an artist can be an invisible observer or an open intruder of the private space. First one is very close to documentarian observance of reality, whilst the second one calls for emotions, hence it is leaning towards art.

The criteria of aesthetic appeal, by which I distinguished two trends: the dark side street photography which stoops to anything (being very close to photojournalism), and includes featuring the lower social strata and even dead people, while the opposite to that is the pure art style causes aesthetic satisfaction with the ideal combination of form and content. And in my honest opinion the latter one hold the middle ground between art and documentary because can be equally characterized equally by both realms.

And the third criteria – what are the main motifs on the images. I distinguished the most obvious and numerous tendencies that I could highlight. Geometrical street photography makes this style the most precise and sharp out of all, the most important elements are figures, shapes and lines, whilst the figure of human has a secondary importance (although it depends on the photographer, who places the elements as he wants). This sub-style is almost purely artistic, because the main focus is the form, however the human figures may play an important documentary roles too. The next type of content is a portrait street photography, within which I observed the smaller tendencies. The common feature is that they all capture the individualities, whether it is a person in natural habitat, or candid pictures of passers-by or a staged street

style fashion photo of the model. In this case all of the presented portrait styles range significantly to a different degree between documentary and art, and it mostly depends on the environment of the objects. The next category is juxtapositions, the visual metaphors or visual irony and contrast, which seem to outlive itself thanks to its own mainstreamification and eventual vulgarization, but anyway it is actually one of the most obvious trends in modern street photography. It requires to be ready and lucky to catch the perfect contrast moment, but also a photographer has to notice that and this include artistic skills, so this kind is leaning towards art more than to documentary. And the final kind of content is absurd. This implies to weird coincidences, unexpected encounters and presence of some elements where they are not supposed to be present, something that makes the spectator surprisingly ask 'what is going on here?'. I consider this motif as the most 'street photography' ., due to depicting of the most extraordinary incidents in the most ordinary realms, at the same time it is a documenting on the real life so all in all it is artistic in terms of narrative and documentary in terms of approach to the objects.

To sum up I have to admit that it is not possible to limit street photography within some strict frameworks, because even those tendencies that I examined have their own specific nuances and exclusions which make them lean towards either documentary or art depending on combination of factors such as the artists, environment, techniques, devices etc. None of the described trends is purely artistic or documentarian. Digital age, due to its photo equipment abundance changed the face of modern street photography creating the new tendencies and maintaining the older ones, however concerns of some critics and theorists about the approaching “death” of street photography are devoid of meaning, because in terms of the adaptive nature of the genre it is going to be transforming further.

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