Photo-Textual Relationships in Early Photobook Making

[Re]Tracing the Roots of Photobook Syntax

José Neves

University of Northampton

jose.neves@northampton.ac.uk

ORCiD: 0000-0002-4004-082X

ABSTRACT:

This paper proposes to analyse the first stages of the relationship between textual matter and photographic images in nineteenth-century photobook practice, investigating how these two elements interacted within several books created during that period of photobook history. The examination aims to demonstrate how those photographic books embody an unexpected duality in which text and photographic images can be divergent or harmonious, questioning established academic perceptions that defined photographs as exclusively secondary in relation to text or categorically central in the construction of photographic books. In its second part, the paper examines how these different intersemiotic relationships did not immediately sustain the type of photo-textual narrative this article attributes to photobookworks, a type of photographic book defined by a complex suprasegmental, multi-layered and relational narrative predominantly based on a multimodal discourse that traverses the entirety of the book.

RESUMO:

Este artigo propõe analisar a interacção entre matéria textual e imagens fotográficas na prática do livro de fotografia oitocentista, avaliando a forma como estes elementos interagiram em vários livros produzidos durante esse período inicial da história do livro de fotografia. Essa investigação expõe uma dualidade em que a relação entre texto e imagem fotográfica é, em alguns casos, harmoniosa e noutros divergente, uma dicotomia inesperada que coloca em causa percepções académicas instituídas onde a imagem fotográfica é descrita como sendo exclusivamente secundária em relação ao texto ou que, por outro lado, propõe a primazia absoluta das imagens no contexto da construção do livro fotográfico. Na sua segunda parte, o artigo analisa a forma como essas diferentes relações intersemióticas não sustentaram de imediato o tipo de narrativa fototextual que este artigo atribui ao "photobookwork" [livro-obra fotográfico], um tipo de livro de fotografia caracterizado por uma narrativa supra-segmental, estratificada e relacional predominantemente sustentada por um discurso multimodal que percorre a totalidade do livro.

I. Introduction

What are the primary buildings blocks of a photobook's narrative? Photographs? Text? A combination of both? Martin Parr and Gerry Badger have argued that the primary message of the special type of photobook canonized in their influential survey "The Photobook: A History", whether combined with text or not, must be carried by the photographs (2004: 6). However, as will hopefully become apparent in the following sections, this characterisation is somewhat rigid and raises significant interrogations about the nature of this intersemiotic affiliation and what constitutes a "photobook". Is it possible to talk of a photobook narrative purely carried by photographs? How do photographic and textual interact in a book? Are they symbiotic or dissonant? Does this relationship affect the construction of narratives? Based on material previously published in modified form in my doctoral thesis (Neves, 2017), this essay will attempt to answer these questions by examining key examples of early photobook practice while simultaneously uncovering a potential starting point of what this article calls photobookworks.

II. Early Photo-Textual Practices

A substantial amount of early photobook production seems to have been defined by a persistent multimodal discourse either through the combination of photographic images and different forms of paratextual (prefaces, introductions, title page, etc.) and paravisual[1] (captions and explicative texts) matter or the association of photographic images and a central literary discourse, for instance, prose and poetry. According to Clare Bustarret:

> The overwhelming majority of published albums[2] have only one photographic print with an average size of 20 x 24 cm per page spread. Apart from the more or less

---

[1] In this paper, the term "paravisual" describes the semiotic function of captions and explicative texts in relation to photographic images. The designation is a variation of the term "paratext", created by Gérard Genette to define codes and strategies located at the threshold of the text, that is, elements (titles, subtitles, prefaces, notes, forewords, etc.) used by authors to mediate the reader's reception of the book. According to Genette, paratextual elements can also assume "iconic" forms (Genette, 1997: 7). However, the examination of the potential paratextual role of book illustration carried out by Genette is very brief (Genette, 1997: 406). In fact, Genette explains that the omission of such an "immense continent" of paratextual practice is linked to his deficit of "technical and iconological skill" and lack of "historical information" concerning the subject (Genette, 1997: 406). On the other hand, the study of captions, expanded captions or explicative texts, and their inherent affiliation with images is absent from *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Genette, 1997). Although potentially part of Genette's paratextual universe, I consider that the latter elements embody a "paravisual" function that is intrinsically activated by illustration. Therefore, in this paper, I propose a clear distinction between paratexts (introductions, prefaces, dedications, etc.).

[2] Bustarret uses the term "albums photographiques" (photographic albums) to describe all the photographically illustrated titles featured in her essay. Within the scope of this paper, echoing the terminological analysis carried out in my dissertation (Neves, 2017), the ontological ambiguity between nineteen-century "photographic albums" and "photobooks" is resolved by establishing a separation based on the commercial (photobook) and non-commercial (photographic album) nature of these titles. Therefore, the books described by Bustarret, although referred to as "photographic albums", correspond

ornamented title page, a foreword, and a summary that generally reproduces the printed captions placed below each photographic print (printed elements that may suffice to characterise a photographic publication), these albums may also feature a more or less developed explicative text below each photographic print (a detailed caption or one or two paragraphs of text). The latter elements usually precede a succession of numbered photographic plates, either placed systematically opposite a page of text or interspersed between pages with written text. (2003: 57; my translation)

It should be noted that Bustarret acknowledges the existence of volumes containing no text (2003: 57). Nevertheless, she attributes this absence to production issues that prevented the completion of those publications and not the agency of the bookmaker. Importantly, she also indicates that the nineteenth-century "[photographic] album very seldom adopts a narrative structure that reduces the function of the photos to the status of illustration of a text" (58; my translation). This suggestion inevitably clashes with Roland Barthes's proposition that during a specific historical period, the photographic image was intrinsically parasitic in relation to the linguistic message (1977: 25). Barthes indicates that this conventional model of photographic illustration, in which the photographic image elucidates the text, was eventually reversed, generating a new relationship between photographic image and text. However, the French author does not provide a specific date or period for this key semiotic transformation, nor does he discuss any potential authors or scholarly material examining this shift. When did this reversal take place? Was this semiotic shift immediate or incremental? Did this semiotic shift occur only in photographically illustrated periodicals — the central subject of Barthes's essay — or can it be extended to include photobooks? Regrettably, none of Barthes's subsequent analytical work provides an answer to these questions.

Walter Benjamin's discussion of *New Objectivity* photobooks in his 1934 essay "The Author as Producer" demonstrates that the intersemiotic shift described by Barthes in 1961 was present in 1920s photographic illustration. In the essay, Benjamin draws the reader's attention to captioning and how it can be used to control the polysemic nature of photographic images, a subject he discussed for the first time two years earlier in "A Short History of Photography" (1932). In 1936, Benjamin returned to the same subject in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", this time describing captions within the context of early twentieth-century photographically illustrated periodicals as "signposts" that allowed viewers to apprehend the "hidden political significance of the image" and that simultaneously signalled the end of an apparent "free-floating contemplation of the photographic image" (14). Like Barthes, Benjamin also did not propose an exact historical compartmentalisation. His very brief analysis of text and image affiliation in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936) only suggests the existence of a historical period in which captions did not embody an anchoring function. Bearing in mind Barthes and Benjamin's implicit historical compartmentalisations — suggesting a shift in the semiotic relationship between photographic image and text that solely occurred in the twentieth century — would it then be possible to argue that the photographs included in early photobook practice

---

to what this paper designates as "photobooks". It should also be noted that within the context of this paper, the term "photobook" describes any book containing photographic images.

— in contrast to Parr and Badger's characterisation of nineteenth-century "photobooks" in "The Photobook: A History. Vol. I (2004) — were not the primary carrier of the book's message?

In his comprehensive study of the evolution of illustration, art historian Michel Melot suggests that by the mid-nineteenth century, "text and image no longer had any distinct frontier between them" (1984: 145). As further argued by the latter author in *The Art of Illustration*, pre-photographic illustration in book form had already been able to develop "a system of its own, supported by new reproductive techniques and the demand of a widening readership" (Melot, 1984: 145). In turn, this allowed "the image, the illustration" to be "projected beyond the text" (Melot, 1984: 129). As Jean-Marc Chatelain and Laurent Pinon suggest, this semiotic inversion materialised around the 1530s, partly due to the technical refinement of wood-engraved illustration (2000: 254). Furthermore, Chatelain and Pinon maintain that the duplication of images — using the same wood engraving to illustrate different titles — represents an explicit shift towards the primacy of images in books. As noted by the latter authors:

> These duplications […] attest to the centrality of images in scholarly discourse from the 1530s onwards. There are many examples of fragments of text visibly constructed around an image used previously by other authors, a gesture that shows how images seem to have been at the very heart of those discourses. (2000: 257; my translation)

This semiotic unmooring of wood-engraved images was reinforced in the late sixteenth century by the publication of volumes (anatomy and botany studies) sitting at the intersection between illustrated books and albums of images (Chatelain and Pinon, 2000: 261). Generally accompanied by captions, book illustration was either featured *in-text* or placed in an appendix *hors-text*. According to Chatelain and Pinon, the latter illustration model transformed images into shortcuts and allowed a faster and more open reading process (2000: 265), and, as they observe:

> These collections, in which the reading process is much more open, helped erase the traditional boundaries of the fields of knowledge and propagated wood engraved representations far beyond the usual reading circles of these works. In the scientific field, they were part of a standardisation process of representations gradually imposed by printing. Above all, they enabled the image to free itself from the text and even to escape from the book. (Chatelain and Pinon, 2000: 267-268; my translation)

Therefore, it becomes clear that photography in book form materialised when book illustration was no longer solely defined by the secondary nature of the image in relation to the linguistic message. The latter potentially means that text, particularly paravisual matter, in contrast to Barthes's assertion in "The Photographic Message" (1977: 25), began immediately to be structurally parasitic in relation to the photographic image.

Figure 1. Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, "Plate II — View of the Boulevards at Paris", London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1844-46. (Source: http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/teach/Bande/photography.html / University of Glasgow. Accessed: 11 September 2022).
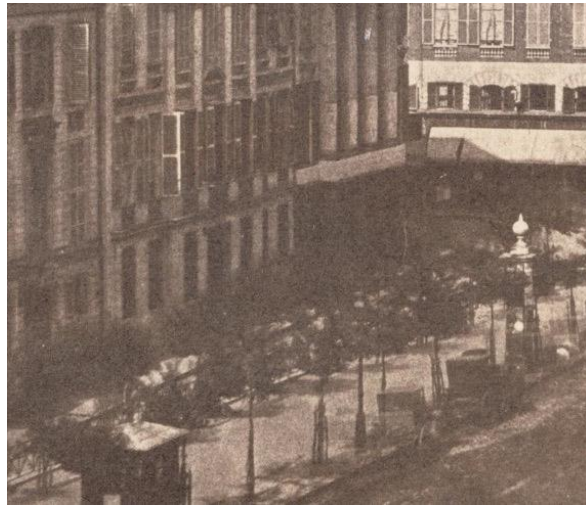
Figure 2. Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, "Plate II – View of the Boulevards at Paris" [Detail], London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1844-46. (Source: http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/teach/Bande/photography.html / University of Glasgow. Accessed: 11 September 2022).

This parasitic process between paravisual elements and photographs can be observed in William Henry Fox Talbot's *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-46). Fox Talbot's use of an explicative text to enhance "Plate II — View of the Boulevards at Paris" (fig. 1) is a clear example of that process. At a certain point in the text, he draws the reader's attention to an open window in a specific building in the image (fig. 2) by describing how "the sun is just quitting the range of buildings adorned with columns: its facade is already in the shade, but a single shutter standing open projects far enough forward to catch a gleam of sunshine" (Talbot, 1844-46). This textual layer guides the reader's interpretation and, to a certain extent, elucidates the photographic image, presenting to the reader what Fox Talbot deems as being crucial in the photographic composition. This intersemiotic strategy — in which an explicative text follows every photographic plate — is reiterated throughout the fascicles that compose *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-46). Taking this example into account, one could argue that, as postulated by Barthes in his discussion of the intersemiotic affiliation between text and photographic image in mid-twentieth century press photography, the recurrent explicative texts in *The Pencil of Nature*

(1844-46) also "realize" the photographic images and load them with "an imagination" that amplifies "a set of connotations already given in the photograph" (1977: 27).

Crucially, this symbiotic and multimodal intersemiotic relationship seems to have been present in most nineteenth-century photobooks. An analysis of the thirty-seven nineteenth-century titles in Parr and Badger's *The Photobook: A History, Vol. I*, for instance, demonstrates this ubiquity. Although Parr and Badger do not always acknowledge the presence of textual matter in their analysis and description of the volumes included in the study, a more detailed examination of those titles reveals that all of them contain some form of printed text, particularly paravisual and paratextual elements. Victor Albert Prout's *The Thames from London to Oxford in Forty Photographs* (1862), featured in "Chapter 3 — Photography as Art. The Pictorial Photobook", for instance, includes two indices listing the titles of all photographs included in the book. Roger Fenton's *Photographs Taken Under the Patronage of Her Majesty the Queen in Crimea* (1856) features a handwritten title page. According to Jeff Rosenheim, George N Barnard's *Photographic Views of the Sherman Campaign* (1866) comprises an introduction by Theodore R. Davis, which seems to be absent in all the existing records of this book (248-49), perhaps explaining Parr and Badger's omission of this textual element. Furthermore, the latter authors also fail to mention the presence of captions in Barnard's volume and Timothy O'Sullivan's *Photographs showing Landscapes, Geological and other Features of Portions of the Western Territory of the United States* (1874-75) and Philip Henry Delamotte's *Photographic Views of the progress of the Crystal Palace, Sydenham* (1855). According to Gernsheim, the latter title also contains "a printed title and contents page" (1984: 21).

Lastly, John Beasley Greene's *Le Nil: Monuments — Paysages. Explorations Photographiques / par J.-B Greene* (1854) contains a letterpress title page crediting its production to "Imprimerie photographique de Blanquart-Evrard, a Lille, 1854", a subsequent title page provides the full title of the book and a final title page contains an expanded title — "Le Nil. Monuments". Interestingly, the photographic plates included in the volume have no captions or explicative texts. Despite the artisanal nature of the handwritten title page included in Fenton's *Photographs Taken Under the Patronage of Her Majesty the Queen in Crimea* (1856), one can safely suggest that nineteenth-century photobooks contain, even if in some instances that presence is somewhat tangential, some form of paravisual matter attached to the photographs. Most early photobooks, as demonstrated above, feature a combination of photographic images and paravisual matter that echoes the intersemiosis established by Fox Talbot in *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-46) described earlier.

Notably, some titles altogether dispensed the presence of a central literary discourse within the body of the book and solely based their discourse on the juxtaposition of photographic images and paravisual and paratexual elements. That occurs in John Beasley Greene's *Le Nil: Monuments — Paysages. Explorations Photographiques / par J.-B Greene* (1854), for instance. The first volume of Maxime Du Camp's *Égypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie* (1852) is another perfect example of this practice. The volume opens with a "prospectus" written by the publishers Gide et J. Baudry praising the advantages of photography in relation to lithography, more

specifically, the former medium's capacity to reproduce monuments with unprecedented fidelity and valuable information concerning the subscription model that sustained the production of the twenty-five fascicles composing Du Camp's *chef-d'oeuvre*. A "List of Figures" detailing the title/caption of each plate follows this introductory text. The subsequent pages present a title page, a dedication, information concerning the printer that produced the book's letterpress sections, and a forty-six-page "texte explicatif" written by Maxime du Camp. This set of introductory paratextual matter is followed by the sixty-seven photographic plates that compose the core of *Égypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie* (1852), a predominantly photographic discourse only interrupted by the insertion of two maps. In contrast to John Beasley Greene's *Le Nil. Monuments — Paysages. Explorations Photographiques* (1854), each photographic image in Du Camp's photobook is accompanied by a layered set of paravisual matter (figs. 3 and 4), including titles describing the region and area where the photograph was taken, a caption describing the subject depicted in the image, and three sub-captions, one crediting "L'Imprimerie Photographique de Blanquart-Evrard, à Lille", another displaying Maxim du Camp and Gide et J. Baudry signatures, and a final caption stating the number of each photographic plate.
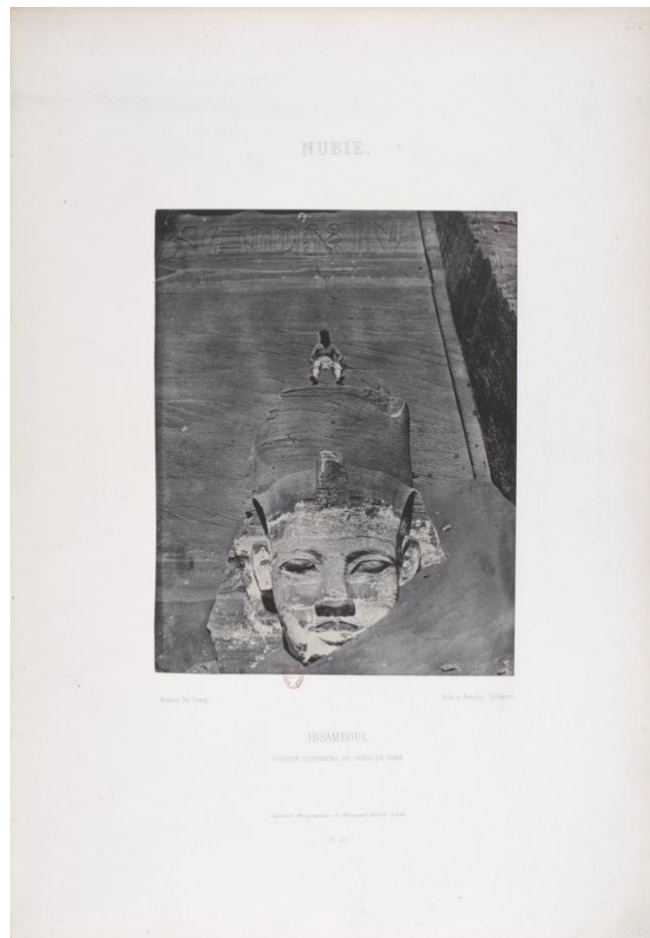
Figure 3. Maxime du Camp, *Égypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie : dessins photographiques recueillis pendant les années 1849, 1850 et 1851. T. 1 / accompagnés d'un texte explicatif et précédés d'une introduction par Maxime Du Camp chargé d'une mission archéologique en Orient par le Ministère de l'Instruction publique*, "Plate 107 — Ibsamboul — Colosse Occidental Du Spéos de Phré", Paris: Gide et J. Baudry Editeurs, 1852. (Source: gallica.bnf.fr / https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b86260711 / Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Accessed: 11 September 2022).
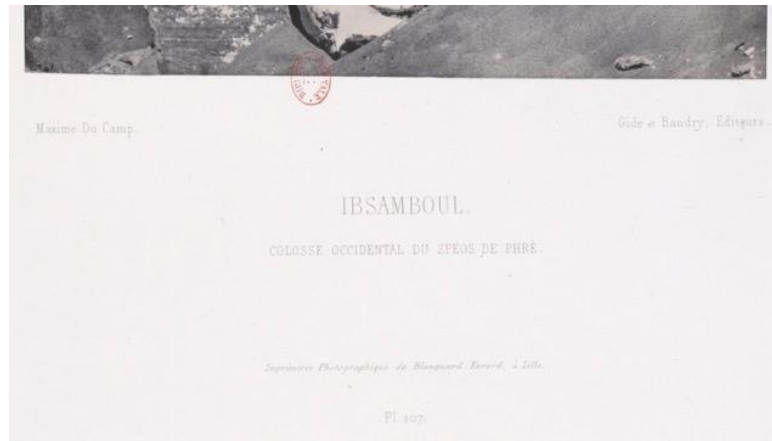
Figure 4. Maxime du Camp, *Égypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie : dessins photographiques recueillis pendant les années 1849, 1850 et 1851. T. 1 / accompagnés d'un texte explicatif et précédés d'une introduction par Maxime Du Camp chargé d'une mission archéologique en Orient par le Ministère de l'Instruction publique*, "Plate 107 — Ibsamboul — Colosse Occidental Du Spéos de Phré" [Detail], Paris: Gide et J. Baudry Editeurs, 1852. (Source: gallica.bnf.fr / https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b86260711 / Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Accessed: 11 September 2022).

Not surprisingly, since much of the key contextual information concerning *Égypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie* (1852) is provided in its first volume, the second tome of Du Camp's photobook features fewer paratextual elements. It opens with a title page, followed by information concerning the company that printed the letterpress elements in the book, a seven-page "texte explicatif" by Du Camp, and a List of Figures followed by a map. The central section containing fifty-nine photographic plates is accompanied by the same paravisual elements present in the first volume of *Égypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie* (1852).

Another key example of nineteenth-century photobook practice predicated on a verbal-visual discourse is Francis Frith's *Egypt and Palestine Photographed and Described by Francis Frith* (1858-60). Extensive explicative texts accompany the photographic plates in this early photographic travel guide. Both volumes of Frith's photobook open with a title page, followed by a "Contents" list featuring the titles of each photographic plate. Interestingly, the first volume of *Egypt and Palestine …* (1858-59) features a two-page introduction in which Frith acknowledges the secondary nature of his explicative texts.

> Scarcely any one ever *does* read the letter-press which accompanies a series of views, any more than one thinks of scrutinizing the "gold sticks" who shuffle, as a matter of course, after a royal pageant. Doubtless I am indebted for this security to the learned dullness of the great men who have hitherto invariably written for illustrated works; not one of whom, as far as I recollect, has been personally acquainted with the scenes which he undertook to describe: I am perfectly content that my own descriptive matter should thus be considered as entirely subordinate to the views. I have neither had time for elaborate investigations on the spot, nor is present space afforded for much topographical or critical detail: upon such points I shall often prefer simply to quote the opinions at which other and more useful investigators have arrived. (Frith 1858-59)

Although much more detailed than captions, Frith's one-page explicative texts, as he acknowledges in his text, still perform a paravisual role, enhancing and anchoring the reader's interpretation of the photographic images that precede them.

On the other hand, and echoing Du Camp's *Égypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie* (1852), the second volume of *Egypt and Palestine Photographed and Described by Francis Frith* (1858-60) does not feature an introductory text. The photographic plates and explicative texts are only preceded by a "Contents" list and a title page.

Taking into account the photographic books examined thus far, one could argue that early photobook production seems to have been predominantly composed upon a permutation of paravisual matter and photographs in which images tend to be at the centre of the photobook's discourse. There are, however, some exceptions. William Bradford's *The Arctic Regions: Illustrated with Photographs Taken on an Art Expedition to Greenland; with Descriptive Narrative from the Artist* (1873), for instance, features a central literary statement accompanied by photographic images. One could argue that in Bradford's photobook, the photographic plates are not essential for the development of the book's central narrative since they appear intermittently throughout the book and are generally used to "illuminate" the textual message. The photographic image shown in figure 5 is described in its caption as an "iceberg which, from its peculiar shape, would be selected to make fast to", and it anchors the passage in the main text concerning the unmoored state of a ship and how "the only resource left" to resolve that situation "was to make fast to an Iceberg" (Bradford, 1873: 10).
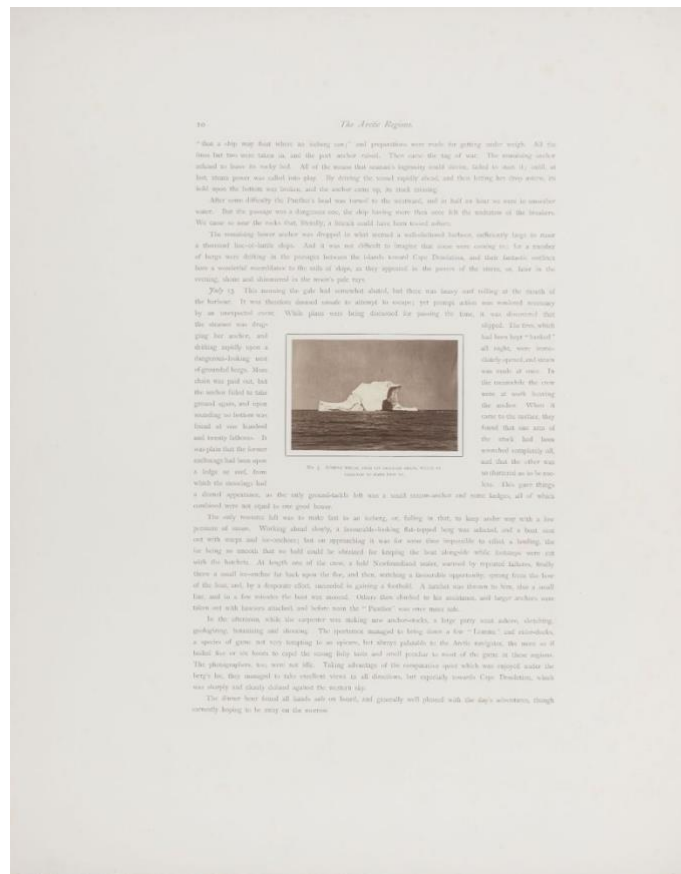
Figure 5. William Bradford, *The Arctic Regions: Illustrated with Photographs Taken on an Art Expedition to Greenland; with Descriptive Narrative from the Artist*, Page Layout, London: Sampson Low, Marston Low, and Searle, 1873. (Source: Digitale Sammlungen der Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek. https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:gbv:32-1-10015394393. Accessed: 11 September 2022).

Although photographic images are a significant element in *The Arctic Regions* (1873), Bradford's unfolding textual "descriptive narrative" could be considered the primary track of the book's discourse. Importantly, Bradford's volume reveals a specific photobook production in which images, although part of the book's overall narrative, function as secondary elements within that same discourse.

While the analysis in this article seems to demonstrate a prevalence of titles in which photographs are at the centre of early photobook production, that outcome can potentially be linked to Parr and Badger's limited selection of nineteenth-century material in *The Photobook: A History, Vol. I.* Therefore, a more comprehensive investigation of these different semiotic relationships is perhaps necessary to ascertain which practice was more common during this period. Nevertheless, the existence of these two types of photobook-making strategies seems to invalidate the "historical reversal" of photographic illustration suggested by Barthes (1977: 25). Furthermore, it also indicates that the semiotic and symbiotic relationship between photographic images and textual matter on the page has always been defined by a dual relationship in which text and the image, to quote Barthes, can be a "secondary vibration" or have a predominant role in the construction of a book's narrative (1977: 26).

II. Early Photo-Narratives

It is essential to note that the division described above does not expose the "specific kind of photobook and… particular breed of photobook producer" Badger and Parr uncovered in their general study (2004: 6). Although photographic images in early photobook production were already a central part of the book's discourse, it seems most of those titles did not embody the multi-layered relational photographic narrative my doctoral thesis associates with photobookwork[3] making (Neves, 2017). As discussed above, many early photobooks propose a visual discourse based on large groups of photographic images. Nevertheless, those clusters rarely establish a suprasegmental and reflexive narrative based on the interrelation of those images throughout the book that supersedes a thematic sequence. It could be argued that a photobook built upon a central photographic theme contains an overarching narrative. However, this photo-thematic consistency rarely generated a complex resonance between photographic images based on, as proposed by Robert Massin, a process of opposition and analogy that advanced a narrative (1991: 81).

The presence of a visual theme is not sufficient to create what Sweetman labelled as a photobookwork, a form of photobook predicated on an interpretation process in which the reader creates a narrative pathway based on the affiliation

---

[3] Alex Sweetman coined this term in his 1985 essay "Photobookworks: The Critical Realist Tradition" published in Joan Lyons' anthology *Artists' Books: A Critical Anthology and Sourcebook* to describe photographic books constructed upon the interrelationship of the narrative discourse present in the single photographic image and the juxtaposition of different images to generate an indivisible photographic sequence in book form. I have used the term in my research to describe the specific type of photobook examined, for instance, in Parr and Badger's *The Photobook: A History* (2004, 2006, 2014).

between individual photographic images and photographic sequences, which can also be in dialogue with text and other forms of visual expression. Despite Parr and Badger's suggestion that Du Camp's *Égypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie* (1852), for instance, "merits its reputation as the first completely realised photobook" (2004: 23), Du Camp's volume does not embody the relational and suprasegmental visual discourse described above. Despite its ample use of photography, the book suffers from a somewhat limited visual composition, as pointed out in *Égypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie*'s (1852) prospectus. A fact that also seems to have been a matter of concern for Gide et J. Baudry, the book's publishers.

> In order to break the monotony which a series of monuments, temples, palaces, porticoes, bas-reliefs, hypogea, necropolises, pyramids, obelisks, statues, hieroglyphic panels, cartouches, etc., might entail, and to generate a contrast with the persistent architectural elements in the book, we have inserted some landscapes, along with some typical, exotic and interesting sites, in an attempt to mix nature with monuments and link the present to the past for a greater clarity of this work and its sequence. (Baudry and Baudry, Prospectus; my translation)

Du Camp's main goal was to provide an overview of the architectural structures we see throughout the volume and not so much generate a visual narrative, a "monotone" quality that seems to be recurrent in early photobook practice. However, this does not automatically mean that the multi-layered visual discourse of the photobookwork is absent from nineteenth-century photobook-making. Using Emmanuel de Rougé's *Album photographique de la mission remplie en Égypte / par le Vte Emmanuel de Rougé,...accompagné de M. le Vte de Banville et de M. Jacques de Rougé,... 1863-1864*; *photographies exécutées par M. le Vte de Banville ; description des planches par M. le Vte Emmanuel de Rougé* (1865) as an example, Bustarret remarks that several plates (fig. 6) in this volume contain photographic composites that generate "a surprising visual impact, which far exceeds the purpose of a simple epigraphic survey. The structuring of images in sequences succeeds in making the reader's gaze travel" (2003: 59; my translation).

Rougé's diptych shown in figure 6, one of several other photographic pairings featured in *Album photographique de la mission remplie en Égypte* (1865), cannot be considered a photographic sequence in the full sense of the term. As suggested by Bustarret (2003: 60), the pairing could perhaps be better described as a proto-photomontage. There are, however, some concrete examples of photographic juxtapositions in early photobook production that seem to embody a visual syntax based on the interrelation of photographic images. Perhaps the most notorious example is "Plate II — Back of Hand & Wrinkled Apple" (fig. 7), featured in James Nasmyth and James Carpenter's *The Moon: Considered as a Planet, a World, and a Satellite* (1874).
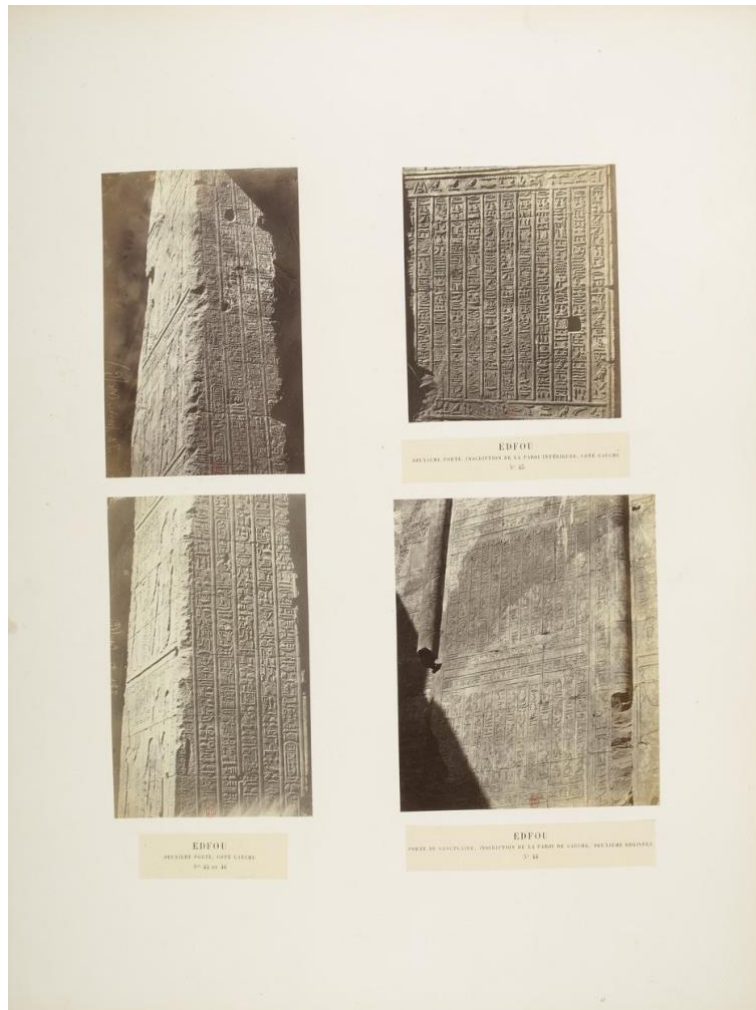
Figure 6. Emmanuel de Rougé, *Album photographique de la mission remplie en Égypte / par le Vte Emmanuel de Rougé,...accompagné de M. le Vte de Banville et de M. Jacques de Rougé,... 1863-1864; photographies exécutées par M. le Vte de Banville ; description des planches par M. le Vte Emmanuel de Rougé*, "Plate F. 26. Edfou. Deuxième porte, côté gauche ; Edfou. Deuxième porte, inscription de la paroi intérieure, côté gauche; Edfou. Porte de sanctuaire, inscriptions de la paroi de gauche, deuxième registre", Paris: L. Samson, 1865. (Source: https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b86260941 / Bibliothèque nationale de France. Accessed: 11 September 2022).
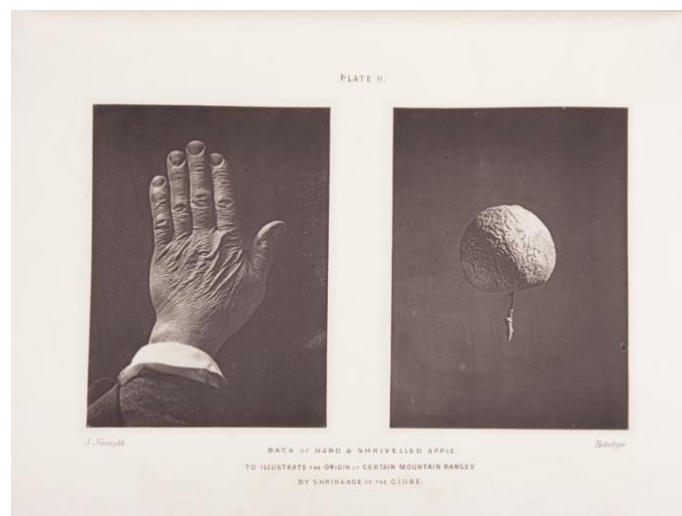
Figure 7. James Nasmyth and James Carpenter, *The Moon: Considered as a Planet, a World, and a Satellite*, "Plate II — Back of Hand & Wrinkled Apple", London: John Murray, 1874.

This sophisticated photographic pairing invites the reader to establish a symbolic association between the wrinkled textures of both photographic subjects and the moon's surface. However, this suggestive pairing is not interconnected with any other photographs in *The Moon: Considered as a Planet* (1874), a lack of reciprocation that prevents Nasmyth and Carpenter's photobook from being considered a photobookwork. Curiously, Parr and Badger included this volume in their "photobook" canon.

Although photobookworks seemed to have been rarely produced during the nineteenth century, it is possible to find examples of this practice. For instance, *The log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo* (1871), features what could be described as a multi-layered relational verbal-visual sequence in book form. Comprising a set of 13 albumen prints interspersed throughout the volume's textual matter, this anonymous keepsake proposes a straightforward photo-textual narrative. The book opens with a photographic frontispiece (fig. 8) that portrays three of the men involved in the maritime adventures described in the book.
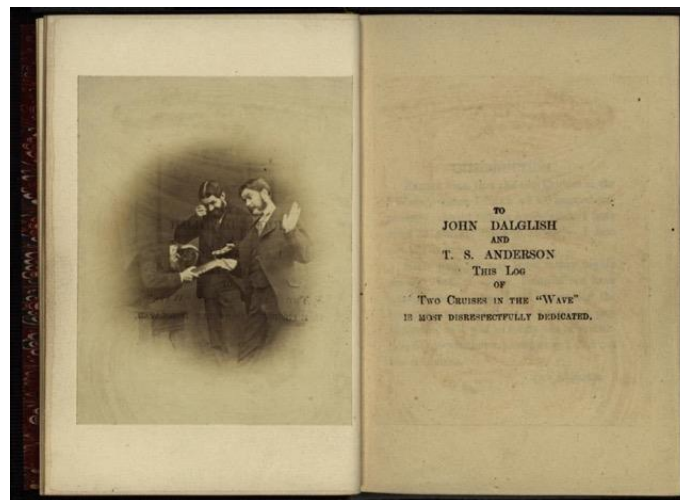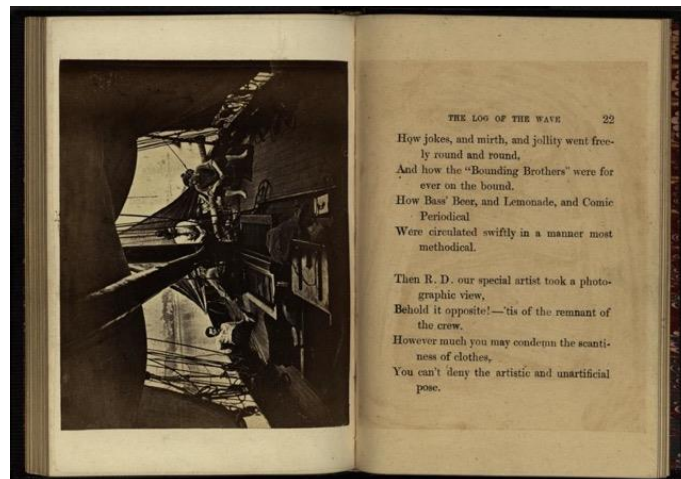

Figure 8. *The log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo,* Frontispiece, Glasgow, 1871. (Courtesy of the University of St. Andrews Library. Classmark: Photo DA880.M55L6).

The short opening section of *The log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo* (1871), composed of an introduction and four pages of prose that log a preparatory cruise, is illustrated with a single photographic image depicting Gourock Bay in Scotland. On the other hand, the second cruise log consists of a humoristic poem that describes in detail several key moments of this expedition, including the recurrent heavy drinking on board the "Wave" by "R. D. the photographer / the drunken T.S.A. / R.W. proficient in a bacchanalian lay /… repulsive and arrogant J.D. / and a petty Irish Chieftain, whose name it was O'B" (O'Bingo, 1871: 10). The first photographic image in this long poem is a view of the Cloch Lighthouse in Scotland, followed by two photographs of an unidentified waterfall and a seaside view. The first individual portrait in the book, potentially depicting R. D. the photographer, emerges a few pages later, an image followed by three coastal views (fig. 9) that transport the viewer to the natural sites experienced by the characters in the narrative.
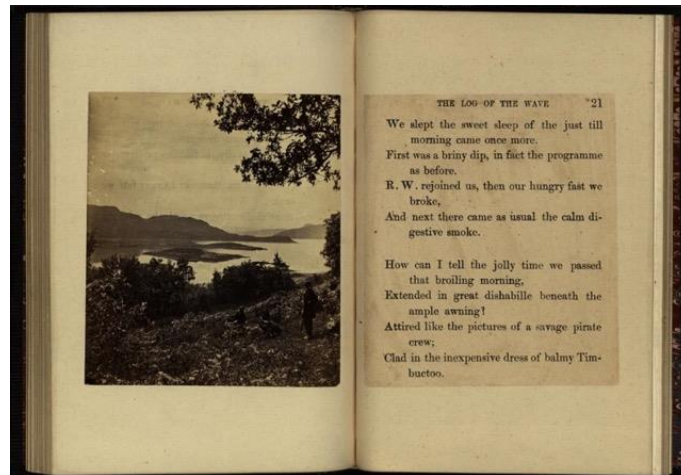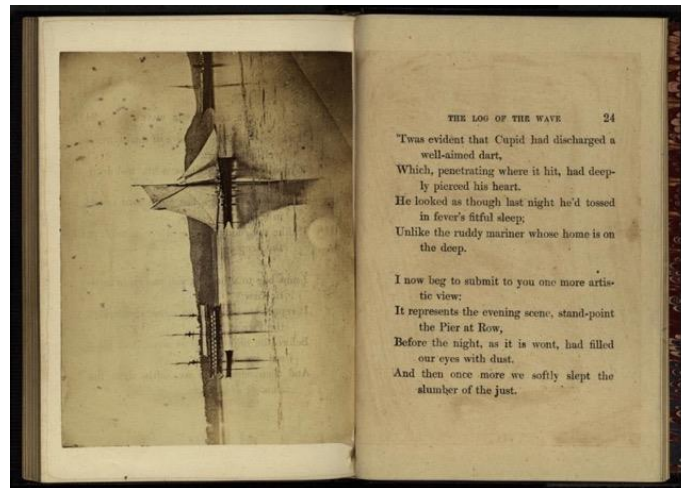
Figure 9. *The log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo*, Page 21, Glasgow, 1871. (Courtesy of The University of St. Andrews Library. Classmark: Photo DA880.M55L6).

The group portrait of "the remnant of the crew", a photograph taken by "R.D. our special artist" (fig. 10), is mentioned in the poem, establishing for the first time a direct connection between the textual and visual matter in the book (O'Bingo, 1871: 22).
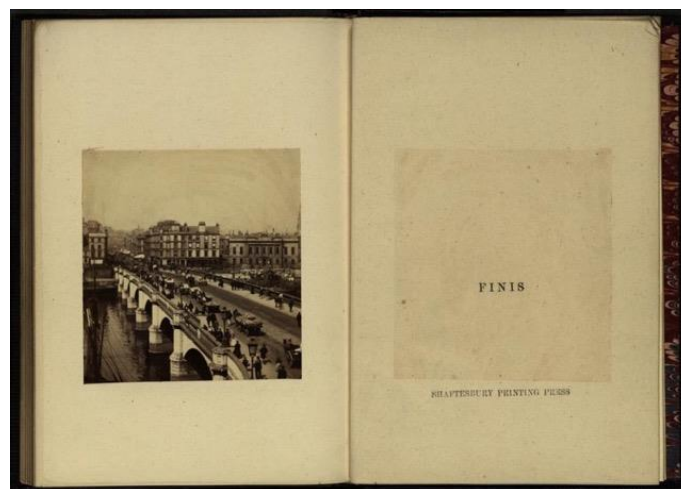

Figure 10. *The log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo*, Page 22, Glasgow, 1871. (Courtesy of The University of St. Andrews Library. Classmark: Photo DA880.M55L6).

A second individual portrait appears on page 23, followed by a photographic image also in dialogue with the text, an "artistic view" (fig. 11) that "represents the evening scene, stand-point the Pier at Row, / Before the night, as it is wont, had filled our eyes with dust" (O'Bingo, 1871: 24).

Figure 11. *The log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo*, Page 24, Glasgow, 1871. (Courtesy of The University of St. Andrews Library. Classmark: Photo DA880.M55L6).

As seen in Figure 12, the volume closes with a photograph of Albert Bridge in Glasgow. This urban landscape is the visual element that best denotes the presence of a relational visual narrative in *The log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo* (1871). The contrasting nature of this image, when compared to the sequence of idyllic landscapes that precede it, establishes a clear closure of the visual narrative presented throughout the book.

Figure 12. *The log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo*, Final page spread. Glasgow, 1871. (Courtesy of The University of St. Andrews Library. Classmark: Photo DA880.M55L6).

It could be argued that *The log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo* (1871) proposes a somewhat primary and disjointed visual narrative. Furthermore, in this particular case, it is the interrelation between the main literary text and photographic image that produces the suprasegmental narrative this paper attributes to photobookwork practice. However, as noted earlier, a photobookwork is not defined by the preponderance of the photographic image, whether semiotically or quantitatively, over the textual message. In fact, a photobookwork tends to be multimodal; that is, it usually combines textual matter and photographic images. Therefore, a photobookwork can be characterised either by its use of photographic images as a primary narrative track or through a symbiotic and equal use of photographic images

and text to develop its discourse. What structures the essence of a photobookwork is the multi-layered, suprasegmental and relational affiliation between the elements included in the title.

The log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo (1871) embodies the type of visual discourse this essay has associated with photobookwork practice and seems to be one of the earliest manifestations of this type of photobook making. However, it could be argued that this keepsake is an exception rather than the norm. We should not discard the potential existence of titles produced during the same period that express the type of visual narrative and syntax mostly present in twentieth and twenty-first-century photobookworks. Nevertheless, the number of such volumes is most likely negligible and would not alter the analysis proposed in this paper. One could perhaps describe *The log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo* (1871) as a proto-photobookwork since, as suggested in my doctoral thesis, it was the use of halftone printing in late nineteenth-century illustrated periodicals that generated a critical shift in photographic visual discourse and literacy (Neves, 2017). The rich visual discourse and syntax developed in the latter form of photographically illustrated printed matter gradually infiltrated photobook practice, particularly after the 1910s, and perhaps inevitably inspired European modernists to explore the book and page as a potential space for the creation of what this paper describes as photobookworks.

III. Conclusion

This essay aimed to expose some of the semiotic dynamics that govern the relationship between photographic images and text in early photobook and photobookwork production. The investigation carried out above has hopefully contributed to a preliminary breakdown concerning the central intersemiotic dynamics that shape the juxtaposition of photographs and textual matter in photobook practice. The findings in this paper suggest that most early photobook-making did not embody the key narrational characteristics currently used to define the special "photobook" canonised and conceptualised in Parr and Badger's (2004) study. Despite the existence of what we could call proto-photobookworks — as demonstrated in my analysis of *The log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo* (1871) — the first eight decades of photographic bookmaking seem to represent a primary stage of its history, a period during which photographic illustration in book form established what became its orthodoxy, that is, a practice predominantly shaped by the physical and conceptual boundaries of the page spread. Photobookworks, as proposed in my thesis (Neves, 2017), were only able to fully emerge in the mid to late 1920s when modernist art practitioners instituted a clear division between a traditional form of photographic illustration in book form (photobook) and a more reflexive exploration of the relationship between the book space and the photographic image (photobookwork). Ultimately, this article calls for a new terminological and conceptual classification that separates "photobooks" — an umbrella term that encompasses different types of photographic illustration in book form — from "photobookworks". By instituting this compartmentalisation, the essay offers a recalibration of the somewhat monolithic and nebulous perception of early photobook

history propositioned in general "photobook" scholarship while simultaneously proposing a clearer demarcation of the historical and ontological characteristics that define different forms of photographic illustration in book form produced throughout the history of this practice.

Works cited

BARTHES, Roland (1977). "The Photographic Message", *Image, Music, Text*. Translated by Stephen Heath. Hill and Wang.

BAUDRY, Gide, and J. BAUDRY (1852). "Prospectus". In Maxime Du Camp, *Egypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie: Dessins Photographiques Recuellis Pendant Les Annees 1849, 1850 et 1854, Accompagnes d'un Texte Explicatif et Precedes d'une Introduction*. Gide & J. Baudry.

BENJAMIN, Walter (2008). "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Penguin, pp. 1-50.

BRADFORD, William (1873). *The Arctic Regions: Illustrated with Photographs Taken on an Art Expedition to Greenland; with Descriptive Narrative from the Artist*. Sampson Low, Marston Low, and Searle.

BUSTARRET, Claire (2003). "L'Album Photographique. Avant l'ère photo-mècanique : une aventure éditoriale". In Michelle Debat (ed.) *La Photographie et Le Livre — Analyse de leurs rapports multiformes. Nature de la photographie, Statut du Livre*. Trans Photographic Press, pp. 52-65.

CHATELAIN, Jean-Marc, and Laurent PINON (2000). "L'intervention de l'image et ses rapports avec le texte à la Renaissance". In Henri-Jean Martin (ed.), *La naissance du livre moderne, XIVe-XVIIe siècles : mise en page et mise en texte du livre français*. Ed. du Cercle de la Librairie, pp. 234–69.

FRITH, Francis (1858-59). *Egypt and Palestine Photographed and Described*. James S. Virtue, City Road and Ivy Lane; 26, John Street.

GENETTE, Gérard (1997). *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. Translated by Jane Lewin. Cambridge University Press.

GERNSHEIM, Helmut (1984). *Incunabula of British Photographic Literature: A Bibliography of British Photographic Literature, 1839-75*. Scolar Press in association with Derbyshire College of Higher Education.

MASSIN, Robert (1991). *La mise en pages*. Hoëbeke.

MELOT, Michel (1984). *The Art of Illustration*. Skira / Rizzoli.

NEVES, José Luís Afonso (2017). *The Many Faces of the Photobook: Establishing the Origins of Photobookwork Practice*. Ulster University. *ethos.bl.uk*, https://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?did=4&uin=uk.bl.ethos.733979.

O'BINGO (1871). *The Log of the "Wave" / by the O'Bingo*. s.n.

PARR, Martin, and Gerry BADGER (2004). *The Photobook: A History, Vol. I*. Phaidon Press.

ROSENHEIM, Jeff (2013). *Photography and the American Civil War*. Metropolitan Museum of Art.

SWEETMAN, Alex (1985). "Photobookworks: The Critical Realist Tradition", *Artists' Books: A Critical Anthology and Sourcebook*. Visual Studies Workshop Press, pp. 187–205.

TALBOT, William Henry Fox (1844-46). *The Pencil of Nature*. Longman, Brown, Green, & Longmans, Paternoster Row.