PALGRAVE STUDIES
IN THE HISTORY OF EMOTIONS

Making Humanitarian Crises

Emotions and Images in History

Edited by Brenda Lynn Edgar
Valérie Gorin · Dolores Martín-Moruno

OPEN ACCESS

Swiss National
Science Foundation

palgrave
macmillan

Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions

Series Editors
William M. Reddy
Department of History
Duke University
Durham, NC, USA

Erin Sullivan
University of Birmingham
Birmingham, UK

Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions includes work that redefines past definitions of emotions; re-conceptualizes theories of emotional 'development' through history; undertakes research into the genesis and effects of mass emotions; and employs a variety of humanities disciplines and methodologies. In this way it produces a new interdisciplinary history of the emotions in Europe between 1100 and 2000.

Brenda Lynn Edgar
Valérie Gorin • Dolores Martín-Moruno
Editors

Making Humanitarian Crises

Emotions and Images in History

palgrave
macmillan

Editors
Brenda Lynn Edgar
University of Geneva
Geneva, Switzerland

Valérie Gorin
University of Geneva
Geneva, Switzerland

Dolores Martín-Moruno
University of Geneva
Geneva, Switzerland

ISBN 978-3-031-00823-8 ISBN 978-3-031-00824-5 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00824-5

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2022. This book is an open access publication.
Open Access This book is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence and indicate if changes were made.
The images or other third party material in this book are included in the book's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the book's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.
The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.
The publisher, the authors, and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Cover illustration: Ingolf Pompe 85 / Alamy Stock Photo

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG.
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Acknowledgements

This book would not have been possible without the financial support of the Swiss National Science Foundation (hereafter SNSF), which has supported our work since 2017 through various grants: the SNSF Professorship project 'Those Who Performed Humanitarian Action: A Gendered History of Compassion from the Franco-Prussian War to WWII' and its extension 'Lived Humanitarianism: Gender, Experiences and Knowledge(s) (1853–1945)', as well as the scientific communication project 'Beyond Compassion: Gender and Humanitarian Action'. The SNSF also financed in part the conference 'Regarding the Pain of Others: What Emotions Have to Do Within the History of Humanitarian Images', the starting point for this book, which took place at the Louis Jeantet Auditorium Foundation on 4 and 5 July 2019. We have also benefitted from the support of the Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies, which is affiliated to the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Geneva and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. We are grateful for the support of these institutions, which has allowed us to engage with excellent scholars, humanitarian representatives and activists, as well as museum curators in order to discuss the historical agency of both images and emotions in the making of humanitarian crises.

Our gratitude also goes to the colleagues who kindly accepted our invitation to attend—whether in person or virtually—our 2019 conference: Jason Bate, Marie-Laure Berthier, Roland Bleiker, Paul Bouvier, Luís Calvo Salgado, Anaïs Claire-Bedouet, Jaana Davidjants, Paula Dies Leite, Ariela Freedman, Pascal Hufschmid, Emma Hutchison, Sonya de Laat, Marie Leyder, John Manton, Jo Labanyi, Davide Rodogno, Dolors

Palau-Sampio, Moisés Pietro, Sandra Sunier, Devika Sharma, Gian Marco Vidor and Michaela Zöhrer. We would also like to remember Patrizia Lombardo (1950–2019), who alas was not able to join us but whose presence accompanied us throughout this international meeting as the true incarnation of Roland Barthe's *ça-a-été*. May her work continue to open new directions for future scholars interested in carving out a space in emotion research and visual culture.

This book is also dedicated to all the colleagues who have enriched our research during the last five years by becoming part of our scientific network: Sigiriya Aebischer-Perone (University of Geneva/International Committee of the Red Cross), Jon Arrizabalaga (Spanish Scientific Council), Roland Bleiker (University of Queensland), Rob Boddice (Tampere University), Rony Brauman (Centre de Réflexion sur l'Action et les Savoirs Humanitaires—Médecins Sans Frontières [MSF] France), Guy Eckstein (WWII survivor), Delphine Gardey (Institute of Gender Studies/University of Geneva), Rebecca Gill (University of Huddersfield), Laure Humbert (University of Manchester), Emma Hutchison (University of Queensland), Àlvar Martínez-Vidal (University of Valencia), Stephanie Olsen (University of Tampere), Beatriz Pichel (De Monfort University) and Bertrand Taithe (University of Manchester).

We truly hope this book will be useful to those students who frequently ask themselves how they should critically regard—and react to—the pain of the others. As we have tried to demonstrate in this volume, feelings matter because sympathy, compassion, empathy, shame, indignation, resentment, anger and outrage are always at the roots of a politics of emotions. To acknowledge the political, social and cultural dimensions of emotions in the *longue durée* is extremely important in order to become aware that we can also exercise our disobedience against the normative affective regimes imposed by these aid agencies, which compel us to feel a certain way when looking at images representing others' suffering.

Contents

1 Crisis? What Crisis? Making Humanitarian Crises Visible in the History of Emotions 1
Dolores Martín-Moruno

2 'Especial Outrage to Humanity and Civilisation'. The Atrocities of General Juan Manuel de Rosas and the Pursuit of Empathy 29
Moisés Prieto

3 Projecting Guilt and Shame in Wartime: How British State and Philanthropy Lectured on the Benefits of Retraining Schemes for Disabled Veteran Workers, 1914–1919 53
Jason Bate

4 The Touch of the Image: Affect and Materiality in Photojournalism of the Spanish Civil War 79
Jo Labanyi

5 Archiving the Trauma of Internment Camps in Film: Jacqueline Veuve's *Journal de Rivesaltes, 1941–1942* (1997) 101
Brenda Lynn Edgar

6 Empathy, Irony, and Humanitarian Witness in *The Photographer* 127
Ariela Freedman

7 From Empathy to Shame: The Use of Virtual Reality by Humanitarian Organisations 147
Valérie Gorin

8 Afterword: Humanitarian Visual Practices: Emotions, Experience 171
Brenda Lynn Edgar and Valérie Gorin

Index 177

Notes on Contributors

Jason Bate is a research fellow at Birkbeck College University of London, UK. His research focuses on photographic history, ethics, medical humanities, image-making and photographic processes, archives, Edwardian periodicals and the First World War. He has had his work published in the journals *Visual Culture of Britain*, *History and Technology*, *Social History of Medicine* and *Science Museum Group Journal*, and contributed a chapter to *Approaching Facial Difference: Past and Present*. His first book, titled *Photography in the Great War: The Ethics of Emerging Medical Collections from the Great War* for Bloomsbury's History series, has been released in December 2021.

Brenda Lynn Edgar is a senior teaching and research associate at the Institute for Ethics, History and Humanities, University of Geneva. Her research focuses on the material culture history of photography and architecture and its intersection with the history of medicine in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She has published on decorative practices of photography, including the first comprehensive history of the subject, titled *Le motif éphémère: l'ornement photographique et architecture au XXe siècle* (2020). She is working on the use of landscape photography in clinical environments.

Ariela Freedman is a professor at Concordia's Liberal Arts College at Concordia University, Montreal. She is the author of *Death, Men and Modernism* (2003), the novels *Arabic for Beginners* and *A Joy to Be Hidden* (2017 and 2019, respectively), and numerous articles on modernism,

graphic novels and the medical humanities. Her current Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Government of Canada) (SSHRC) grant explores representations of pain and pathos in comics and graphic novels.

Valérie Gorin is a senior lecturer and researcher at the Geneva Center of Humanitarian Studies, a joint centre of the University of Geneva and the Graduate Institute. A historian and media scholar, she has had her research published extensively on humanitarian history, visual culture and digital communication since a decade. Her most recent publications include a special issue on 'Humanitarian Action in the Age of Global Media. Visual Histories (1920s–2000s)'; she co-edited for the *Journal of Humanitarian Affairs* (2021), as well as 'The Visual Politics of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Posters' for the International Museum of the Red Cross (2019).

Jo Labanyi is a professor emerita at New York University. Her research interests are in modern Spanish literature, film, photography, popular culture, gender studies, memory studies and the history of emotions. She is writing a cultural history of the Spanish Civil War for Reaktion Books.

Dolores Martín-Moruno is an assistant professor at the Institute for Ethics, History and the Humanities, Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva. Her research project 'Those Women Who Performed Humanitarian Action: A Gendered History of Compassion from the Franco-Prussian War to WWII' has been awarded in 2017 with a Swiss National Science Foundation Professorship. Her publications include *Emotional Bodies. The Historical Performativity of Emotions*, 'Feminist Perspectives on the History of Humanitarian Relief' and 'Feeling Humanitarianism During the Spanish Civil War and the Republican Exile'. She is preparing the book *Beyond Compassion: Gender and Humanitarian Action*.

Moisés Prieto is an adjunct researcher and lecturer at the University of Bern. His focuses include the history of dictatorship since 1800, media history, visual history, migration history and the history of emotions. His project treats the narratives of dictatorship in the Transatlantic space (c.1780–1850). He has published two monographs as well as several articles in peer-reviewed journals.

List of Figures

Fig. 2.1 Unknown author, La Patria, *El grito arjentino*, 24 February 1839 (Creative Commons 2.0) 36

Fig. 2.2 Anonymous, *El grito arjentino*, 28 February 1839 (Creative Commons 2.0) 37

Fig. 2.3 Anonymous, Midnight in the street of the Restorer, *El grito arjentino*, 14 March 1839 (Creative Commons 2.0) 39

Fig. 2.4 Francesco Augero, *La ejecución de Camila O'Gorman* (1858), oil on canvas, 49 cm × 63 cm, courtesy of the Mario López Olaciregui Collection 42

Fig. 3.1 Group of disabled ex-servicemen training as cinematograph operators at the Regent Street Polytechnic, Westminster, circa 1918. Photographer unknown. From an album of photographs of disabled ex-servicemen receiving training in various workshops in London, 1918–29. RSP 9/49. (Reproduced by kind permission of the University of Westminster Archive) 59

Fig. 3.2 'Wrench' series lanterns, cinematographs, and accessories (1908): 167. EXEBD 36621/3. (Reproduced by permission of the Bill Douglas Cinema Museum, University of Exeter) 61

Fig. 4.1 Gerda Taro. Air raid victims in a Valencian morgue, May 1937. © International Center of Photography/Magnum Photos TEST Pictures (rights managed) 88

Fig. 4.2 Agustí Centelles. Militiawomen, Aragon front, October 1936. © Ministry of Culture and Education, Spain/Centro de Documentación de Memoria Histórica. Archivo Centelles, Foto 6452 91

Fig. 4.3 Robert Capa. Republican refugees, Le Barcarès internment camp, southern France, March 1939. © International Center of Photography/Magnum Photos TEST 02-Stock (Estate) 94
Fig. 4.4 Kati Horna. Maternity centre, Vélez Rubio, Almería, August 1937. Archivo Horna, Foto 103 96
Fig. 5.1 Excerpts from the film *Journal de Rivesaltes, 1941–1942* showing Bohny-Reiter revisiting the camp's ruins © Cinémanufacture 102
Fig. 5.2 Page from Bohny-Reiter's photo album showing the Swiss Aid to Children barrack in Rivesaltes. Friedel Bohny-Reiter Collection, ETH Archives of Contemporary History, Zurich: NL Friedel Bohny-Reiter/12 111
Fig. 5.3 Page from Bohny-Reiter's photo album showing Jews awaiting deportation from Rivesaltes. Friedel Bohny-Reiter Collection, ETH Archives of Contemporary History, Zurich: NL Friedel Bohny-Reiter/12 113
Fig. 5.4 Filming at Rivesaltes camp in November 1996. From left to right: Bohny-Reiter, Veuve and one of the sound technicians. Photo: Cinémathèque Suisse, Penthaz, CSL 119, box 25 118
Fig. 6.1 Guibert Emmanuel, Didier Lefèvre, and Frédéric Lemercier. 2009. *The Photographer*. Trans. Alexis Siegel. New York: First Second, title page 136
Fig. 6.2 Guibert Emmanuel, Didier Lefèvre, and Frédéric Lemercier. 2009. *The Photographer*. Trans. Alexis Siegel. New York: First Second, 27 138
Fig. 7.1 Two armed combatants entering a family house. *The Right Choice*, 2018 (©ICRC/Don't Panic) 158
Fig. 7.2 A doctor greets the viewer/patient in a wheelchair before the blast. *Not A Target*, 2016 (©MSF/Romain Girard) 161
Fig. 7.3 An elderly man carries a wounded baby as civilians run into the hospital after the blast. *Not A Target*, 2016 (©MSF/Romain Girard) 162

CHAPTER 1

Crisis? What Crisis? Making Humanitarian Crises Visible in the History of Emotions

Dolores Martín-Moruno

Early March 2020—just a few weeks before Europe went into lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic. I was struggling to finish the contents of a course where I invited medical students to think about contemporary humanitarian crises by triggering flashbacks to previous emergencies, such as the 1918 influenza pandemic, the Republican exile that followed the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), as well as the Ethiopian famine (1983–1985). To make students feel an emotional experience, I decided to select a wide range of images exhibiting the spectacle of suffering which had fuelled the humanitarian movement since its beginnings. In the end, my PowerPoint presentation appeared to resemble an obscene repository of visual materials compiling corpses, as well as wounded, diseased and starving bodies. It looked like—what Susan Sontag (2003, 86) referred to as—an archive of horror. While, at first, I felt quite satisfied with the outline of my course, a further conversation with Rony Brauman—President of Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières, hereafter MSF) from 1982 to 1994—strongly discouraged me from using the expression

D. Martín-Moruno (✉)
University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland
e-mail: Dolores.MartinMoruno@unige.ch

© The Author(s) 2022

B. L. Edgar et al. (eds.), *Making Humanitarian Crises*, Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00824-5_1

'humanitarian crises' in order to name emergencies of such different nature. Then, he told me something that I was not expecting to hear:

> Crisis? What Crisis? I have publicly advocated for removing this term from the humanitarian vocabulary on several occasions, because it has been used to refer to such disparate situations such as wars, massacres, genocides, forced displacement, famines, epidemics, earthquakes, floods…. What you call humanitarian crises are rhetorical constructions mostly produced by media dramatisation in order to exploit the emotions of audiences.

Late March 2020—a state of emergency had been declared in most Western countries. Then, in the end, when the COVID-19 epidemic became a *real global crisis*, my course was cancelled. Although I could not test the emotional reactions of students to my visual history of human-made and natural disasters, I learnt an important lesson myself from Brauman's words. Humanitarian crises have no ontological status. They are historically contingent constructions produced by governments, international organisations and journalists which have dissimulated the political dimensions of suffering and violence under a generic denomination, as in the case of the Rwanda genocide (Brauman 2001, 2009). Most importantly, wars, famines, pandemics, earthquakes and so on only become crises through the alchemical transmutations that have operated between images portraying distant suffering and the audiences who have performed their emotional effects. Put in other words, 'disasters *do not exist*—save for the victims—unless publicized' (Benthall 1993, 27; Calhoun 2008, 82–89; Käpylä and Kennedy 2014, 270).

As indicated in its Greek etymology, a crisis is always a matter of choice, decision and judgement. Therefore, a *crisis* necessarily involves some *criticism* from the point of view of the spectator to evaluate and comprehend why, how and when others' suffering deserves to be represented in order to mobilise their emotions (Suski 2012, 135; Martín-Moruno 2020a, 449). One can only wonder why the pain of certain populations has been widely covered by the media to convey the urgent need for delivering international aid—as in the case of the 2010 Haiti earthquake—whereas other human calamities have remained largely ignored by Global North audiences. The cover of Supertramp's album *Crisis? What Crisis?* (1975) perfectly shows to what extent the Western gaze establishes hierarchies of pain in our world, by ironically caricaturising a white, middle-class and middle-aged man relaxing in a beach chair while failing to see the

apocalypse all around him (Bourke 2011, 71–92; Boddice 2017a; Martín-Moruno 2016, 142).[1]

Besides Brauman's reflection about the rampant banalisation of humanitarian crises and Supertramp's hit, this book is the result of the work that I have had the pleasure of carrying out with my colleagues Brenda Lynn Edgar and Valérie Gorin during the last three years. Our desire to carve out a place for the history of emotions within humanitarian visual culture led us to organise the international conference 'Regarding the Pain of Others: What Emotions Have to Do with Humanitarian Images' in July 2019. Taking the title of Susan Sontag's seminal work as a departure point, our aim was to reopen an old debate about the potentialities of exhibiting human suffering for raising awareness amongst civil society, promoting a culture of peace, advocating for human rights, denouncing warfare or alleviating its consequences. By addressing this topic with historians, political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, scholars working on cultural and media studies, as well as NGO workers, activists and museum curators, we particularly sought to discuss the ways through which humanitarian images have connected the affective responses of audiences, thus, leading, to the establishment of transnational networks of solidarity (Martín-Moruno and Pichel 2019, 195).

Rather than answers, the intellectual exchanges we maintained during this meeting stimulated the questions which are at the origins of this book. Is there a well-defined visual corpus which can be properly labelled as 'humanitarian'? What kind of emotions are supposed to be felt by a spectator who looks at these representations of distant suffering? Has disaster imagery involved radically different experiences and expressions of emotions across time and space? In which particular contexts have humanitarian images revealed a historical agency contributing to the formation of communities of feeling, bringing together NGOs, governmental bodies, audiences, aid workers, civil society activists and the beneficiaries of aid? And last, but not least, can we consider these visual representations as material objects which have affected audiences beyond vision, by engaging other senses, such as touch, hearing, smell and taste? This introductory chapter will provide us with some clues in order to better contextualise

[1] *Crisis: What Crisis?* is the fourth album of the British music band Supertramp. The vocalist of the group, Rick Davies, was at the origins of the design of its ironic album cover. The image can be consulted at https://townsquare.media/site/295/files/2015/09/Crisis.jpg?w=980&q=75 (accessed 5 October 2021).

these interrogations, which constitute the main themes discussed by authors in the chapters of this book.

Feeling Humanitarian Images

The images studied in this volume are as multifarious as humanitarianism has been itself throughout history, as shown—for instance—by its intricate affiliations with the human rights movement (Barnett 2020, 1–6). Certain images included in this book were created by humanitarian workers as evidence of traumatising events and the violence they experienced in the course of their work. Others were captured by bystanders and independent actors not directly involved in humanitarian assistance, such as photographers, filmmakers, journalists and political commentators as eyewitness and advocacy discourses. Contributors to this volume also analyse more anonymous images, which were collectively produced and disseminated by humanitarian organisations in order to encourage donations. Contextualised in a wide range of historical settings, such as the Uruguayan Civil War (1839–1851), the First World War (1914–1918), the Spanish Civil War, the Second World War (1939–1945), the Soviet-Afghan War (1978–1992) and the ongoing civil war in Syria (2011–), the chapters gathered in this volume reveal that illustrated pamphlets, cinema talks, posters, photo albums, documentary films, graphic novels and virtual reality environments have been frequently produced through the combination of various media technologies. Thus, humanitarian images can be understood as a kind of montage, in which each visual composition echoes the emotional effects of other textual and artistic materials through their appropriation by specific cultural, social and political audiences (Zucconi 2019, 17). As the case studies included in this book demonstrate, humanitarian images should not be exclusively considered as the cultural property of aid agencies, but rather as a broader visual corpus which has focused on the representation of human suffering in order to appeal for a collective response to palliate its consequences (Rosón and Douglas 2020, 461).

As proxies for violence, injustice and suffering, humanitarian images are specifically meant to act on people's feelings, especially when used in fundraising campaigns or to rally foreign political support. Several works have already shown the impact of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century narratives on the emergence of a humanitarian sensibility and its further evolution in the Western world (Laqueur 1989; Wilson and Brown 2008; Festa 2010). However, little is known about the complex interactions

established between disaster imagery, the changing emotional responses of the spectators and the making of humanitarian crises. While humanitarian actors and organisations have 'tended to reify the concept of compassion as (…) a constant devoid of history', this book will demonstrate how humanitarian images have in fact shaped shifting emotional responses from the nineteenth century onwards, giving rise to complex dilemmas that are still far from being resolved in the present (Taithe 2006, 38; Kennedy 2009; Calain 2013). We argue that a history of emotions perspective is a much-needed approach, in order to avoid presentist conceptions of pain, compassion, pity, sympathy and empathy, as well as to question whether these emotions have been the natural reaction of spectators regarding the pain of others. As Sontag (2003, 7 and 101) pointed out, no 'we' should be taken for granted when the subject is looking at other people's pain, because 'compassion is an unstable emotion' which frequently comes into conflict with feelings of revolt, indignation, shame, rage, revenge and resentment, as well as even being able to provoke a numbing effect.

Some scholars have referred to this collateral damage—which humanitarian images are said to provoke—as 'compassion fatigue': the apathy and the indifference felt by the public when it is repeatedly exposed to images of atrocities (Moeller 1999, 2018). Although the inability to empathise with distant sufferers seems to have become a characteristic mode of feeling in our media-saturated world, authors—such as David Campbell (2014, 102)—have demonstrated that compassion fatigue is more an 'empty signifier' than an experience actually felt by present-day audiences who continue to economically support humanitarian organisations. For Campbell, the so-called compassion fatigue phenomenon hides an accusation addressed to the global visual economy marketed by mass media: the promotion of a disaster porn culture, which elicits an aesthetic pleasure in the spectator—also known as the 'pornography of pain'—when images of suffering are sadistically consumed (Halttunen 1995). Campbell (2014, 119) further insists that it is not just compassion fatigue that functions as a myth in current debates about humanitarian visual culture, but the very notion of compassion itself. According to Campbell, compassion is a fragile and vicarious experience and as such, cannot be understood as the catalyst for collective action. Thus, compassion seems to represent the official image held by humanitarian organisations more than the complex lived experiences of people who have been confronted with others' pain (Martín-Moruno 2020b, 153).

Echoing this criticism, scholars working at the crossroads of visual culture, media and humanitarian studies have recently explored emerging counter-strategies that appeal more to sentiments of irony and self-reflection than to compassion, in order to promote solidarity in the spectator (Chouliaraki 2010; Sharma 2017). In contrast to the compassionate model symbolised by the parable of the Good Samaritan, the twenty-first-century global citizen has the responsibility for denouncing the 'symbolic inequalities and representational hierarchies in the mediation of disasters' (Paulmann 2019, 5). These inequalities, which are the result of a 'politics of pity', have been at the roots of the portrayal of those persons who suffer as an undifferentiated mass of powerless victims (Boltanski 1999, 3; Martín-Moruno 2013, 4). Unlike compassion, pity has historically evolved as a sentiment of condescension towards others' misfortunes, which has come to mean 'to be sorry without being touched in the flesh' (Arendt 2016, 84). Thus, pity has allowed the fortunate to contemplate the misery of the unfortunate in a detached way, reinforcing a hierarchical relation between these two groups of people (Hutchison 2014, 8 and 2019, 229).

Conversely, the exploitation of an imagery of victimhood by aid agencies has fuelled resentment amongst aid beneficiaries, who do not recognise themselves in visual representations that have reproduced gender, class, racial and, even, colonial tropes, such as those that tell us about 'white men saving brown women' (Spivack 1988, 297). To rectify the unequal donor-recipient relationships, some researchers have recommended developing an ethics of care in media culture, which could increase our emotional ability to embrace distant strangers as nearer and dearer people (Silk 2004; Lawrence and Tavernor 2019, 3). However, benevolent attitudes still remain suspicious for other authors, who remind us of the virtues of cultivating indignation and anger rather than compassion in order to denounce the political causes that are at the roots of human suffering (Käpylä and Kennedy 2014, 284).

All these vivid discussions reveal to what extent scholars have not yet managed to solve the dilemmas, paradoxes and tensions resulting from the portrayal of human suffering and the emotions that the spectator is expected to feel when faced with these symbolic representations. This book seeks to contribute to these ongoing debates by challenging presupposed affective responses about how humans should react in the face of others' pain, which are largely based on a behaviourist interpretation. As explained in the next section, the history of emotions is the most effective antidote against all these theories whose ultimate political goal is to nudge

our feelings, because it shows us the colourful palette of affective experiences that have nurtured the humanitarian movement since its early origins.[2]

The History of Humanitarian Emotions

As authors in this book argue, a long-term historical perspective of humanitarianism can help us to better understand the plasticity of what it means to *look like* and to *feel like* a human, as our notion of a shared humanity has evolved in close relation with different conceptions of pain and allied emotions, such as compassion, sympathy and empathy (Bourke 2011; Boddice 2017b). These emotions have been labelled as humanitarian because they have crystallised the driving force that lies behind altruistic action (Taithe 2016; Martín-Moruno 2018, 2020a). In particular, compassion has been considered as the humanitarian feeling par excellence, as this emotion involves not only empathising with others' pain, but also a gesture aimed at relieving their suffering (Fassin 2010; Martín-Moruno 2022). Therefore, historians of humanitarianism have situated the beginnings of this movement—'the humanitarian big-bang'—in the late eighteenth century, when the notion of compassion expanded to the public realm 'and the alleviation of human suffering became a defining element of modern society' (Barnett 2011, 49; Salvatici 2019, 22). At that time, abolitionists started to condemn the cruelty of slavery by cultivating a growing sentiment of sympathy for those colonial subjects who suffered this inhuman treatment within the confines of Western empires (Abruzzo 2011).

As Adam Smith put it in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1761, 71), sympathy denoted 'our fellow-feeling with the sufferings, not that with the enjoyments of another' and established mutual cooperation as the basis of eighteenth-century Western societies in order to propel their

[2] The Nudge theory results from the combination of economic and political theory with behavioural sciences. Popularised by Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein (2008), its main aim is to alter the behaviour and decision-making of targeted groups. Nudge theory has been recently adopted by NGOs, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross. For further information, see https://blogs.icrc.org/inspired/2019/07/01/nudge-towards-better-behaviour/ (accessed 5 October 2021). Research groups, such as 'The Behavioural Philanthropy Lab' based at the University of Geneva, are also working on the development of humanitarian marketing strategies from a behaviourist approach to emotions. For further information, see https://www.unige.ch/BehavioralPhilanthropyLab/en/ (accessed 5 October 2021).

economic welfare. A great visual example showing the relevance of sympathy in the anti-slavery movement are William Blake's engravings for John Steadman's *Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam* (1796). In this work, Blake illustrated the brutality of Dutch colonial troops against enslaved people of African descent in order to proclaim his abhorrence of these acts of violence.[3] Despite the noble aspirations of the initial humanitarian impulse, we should not forget its Imperialist roots. Fellow-feelings—such as sympathy and compassion—have actually legitimised the presence of Western powers in their colonies for civilising indigenous populations (Krauel 2013, 86; Lydon 2020, 2–3). When abolitionists claimed the virtues of these emotions did not contest the racial inferiority of slaves, only their unchristian treatment. This showed to what extent altruistic actions are not necessarily disinterested. Indeed, the rise of a humanitarian sensibility was not free of economic interest, as anti-slavery campaigners understood that it functioned as a kind of moral economy, which went hand in hand with the development of the capitalist market (Haskell 1985). The production of both humanitarian narratives and images has not been in vain, as they have historically played a decisive role in the expansion of this charity business by selling the distant other to Western audiences (Roddy et al. 2020).

From a history of emotions perspective, the emergence of this culture of compassion also showed a major shift in the history of pain which was no longer considered as a necessary punishment from God or a natural reaction within the healing process, but rather as an uncomfortable experience that should be progressively eliminated by professionals such as doctors, in the name of humanity (Moscoso 2012; Boddice 2021). This change of attitude explains the gradual adoption of anaesthetic techniques for performing surgical operations, as well as the use of opiates, such as morphine, for dealing with the chronic pain of patients throughout the nineteenth century (Rey 1993; Bourke 2014). Besides the medical context, the wounds inflicted by warfare were not easily tolerated either and an increasing number of voices were raised to denounce the heroic image of armed conflicts. Amongst these humanitarian representatives, Henry Dunant (1828–1910) recast the meaning of compassion in his novel *A*

[3] For more on William Blake's engravings, see the website of the British Library's collection, https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/john-stedmans-narrative-of-a-five-years-expedition-against-the-revolted-negroes-of-surinam-with-engravings-by-william-blake# (accessed 5 October 2021).

Memory of Solferino (1862) by identifying this emotion with the relief mission of nascent charitable societies, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (hereafter ICRC) (Rieff 2013, 68; Taithe 2016, 80). Originally created to assist sick and wounded soldiers in the battlefield, the Red Cross movement—which gradually included the ICRC, the national Red Cross societies and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies—would reshape the recipients of its compassion throughout the twentieth century by providing aid to war prisoners, civilians and refugees, as well as those victims affected by epidemics and natural disasters. As a historically contingent emotion, compassion should be, therefore, carefully contextualised within gender, class, ethnic and religious power relations in order to examine who has remained inside and outside of its scope (Pernau 2017; Barnes and Falconer 2020; Martín-Moruno et al. 2020; Möller et al. 2020). In this book, authors—such as Brenda Lynn Edgar and Moisés Prieto—explore the exclusive nature of compassion by looking for less evident affiliations with emotions, such as anger, hate and indignation, which have been central to shaping the identity of these communities that have been considered as the perpetrators of atrocities.

Contributors to this volume do not only explore the historical vicissitudes of compassion in relation to the construction of humanitarian crises, but also explore those of neighbouring emotions such as empathy. Coined in 1858 by the Idealist philosopher Rudolf Hermann Lötze (1817–1881) in order to translate the German notion of *Einfühlung* (literally 'into feeling' in English), empathy appeared as a neologism in the late 1870s. Used at the time amongst German intellectuals, such as Friedrich Theodor Vischer (1807–1887), Theodor Lipps (1851–1914) and later Wilhelm Worringer (1881–1965), empathy referred to the ability of the spectator to project their own emotions into a work of art. This aesthetical process involved a conscious entanglement of the senses that went beyond the strictly visual to encompass subjective experience. Appropriated by American psychologists in the first decades of the twentieth century, the term empathy had multiple meanings from the start, none of which correspond to today's understanding of empathy as an identification with the thoughts of another (Lanzoni 2012, 2018). Although, today, our empathic abilities are associated with the biological equipment which provides us with mirror neurons, humans should be able to interpret 'what is painful' within 'an intricate web of cultural signs and symbols' in order to make them function (Boddice 2017a, 61).

As the chapters of this book illustrate, images from the mid-nineteenth century were made in a completely different context of empathy than recent visual productions. By taking a critical look, authors—such as Ariela Freedman, Valérie Gorin and Jo Labanyi—question in their chapters the ubiquitous role of empathy, by showing how this emotion works as a kind of *ersatz* in contemporary debates about humanitarian visual culture, as viewers actually felt more complex affective and cognitive processes when they were looking at images representing human suffering. As explained in the following section, fluctuating affective responses to humanitarian images are due to the fact that visual representations only acquire a meaning when they are able to touch historically situated audiences. In this sense, humanitarian images are performative: they are able to *do things*, such as mobilise international public opinion when they are appropriated by specific groups of people (Labanyi 2010, 223–224). This performative approach to both humanitarian emotions and images will allow us to link visual representations with their production-related and dissemination practices in order to shed light on the material conditions which have historically shaped the changing affective responses of audiences.

Performing Humanitarian Images

By acknowledging the affective powers of visual culture, the present volume is very much in debt to contributions which have already stressed the pivotal role of 'images and emotions in the globalization of humanitarian agendas.' As Heide Fehrenbach and Davide Rodogno (2015, 1) have remarked, the expansion of the humanitarian enterprise only became possible through the adoption of new advocacy strategies in the mid-nineteenth century, such as photography. Introduced as a scientific technique, the camera promised to capture reality in a mechanical and objective way producing, thus, visual evidence of remote disasters. However—as these authors highlight—humanitarian photography has in no case been neutral in representing others' sufferings. It has functioned as a kind of 'moral rhetoric', which has revealed its connections with the expansion of liberal ideology, the histories of Imperialism and colonisation, as well as with the civilising missions led by Christian movements. Fehrenbach and Rodogno (2015, 6) conclude by pointing out that the effectiveness of this humanitarian visual strategy has been mainly due to the apparent 'simplicity' and 'directness' through which it has conveyed an emotional message to Global North audiences.

Making Humanitarian Crises broadens the scope of the research conducted by our colleagues, by examining the emotional agency of images produced as a variety of visual mediums, such as drawings, printed or projected photographs, posters and moving images. Going beyond focusing on what is represented, contributors explore how humanitarian images have built ephemeral 'emotional communities' from the nineteenth century to the present (Rosenwein 2006). Regardless of the form they take, the emotions attending humanitarian images have also been contingent upon their conditions of production, how they have circulated and how and where they have been displayed and viewed. By considering images as 'emotional objects' whose production and dissemination have been crucial to the construction of humanitarian crises, this book highlights the entanglement of emotions with their material conditions of possibility (Downes et al. 2018, 11). As physical objects, images also 'reveal something about the material world of the people who interacted with them' (Boddice 2018, 38). Therefore, the technology of a given era is a crucial element in the embodiment of these emotions by audiences (Fernández and Matt 2019). This means that the way in which images were made dramatically changed audiences' perceptions of humanitarian crises.

To explore the material dimensions of emotions, authors analyse how the perception of images has been conditioned by their scale, mode of transmission and circulation. In particular, contributors examine how practices such as hand-drawing, photographing, filming and computer-generated simulation have solicited a different 'constellation of emotions' in both individuals and social groups (Rosenwein 2006, 26; Plamper 2015, 69). Beyond the visual realm, authors explore how images have engaged the whole body and its senses in very different ways throughout the history of humanitarianism (Sullivan and Herzfeld-Schild 2018). In so doing, the following chapters seek to expand the horizons of the histories of emotions and the senses by including the study of visual sources in their agendas, as they appear as a promising way to open new directions within these fields of research (Burke 2005, 39).

By looking at images as objects, this volume also has the ambition to contribute to the material turn which has been recently claimed in humanitarian studies by both scholars and activists, who have analysed the commercialisation of commodities, such as textiles, to support humanitarian campaigns (Barber et al. 2022). Mainly concerned with the evolution of medical technologies, historians working in this area of research have neglected the epistemic value of other artistic practices, such as drawing,

taking photographs or filming documentaries in the configuration of the humanitarian enterprise. This book fills this gap, by exploring both the experiential and the material aspects of humanitarian images in order to provide future researchers with a clear picture about how they have contributed to making crises visible in world history.

In order to rethink the active role of audiences, this book also takes inspiration from insightful International Relations and Feminist Theory works, which have highlighted the cultural, social and political dimensions of the emotions provoked by images depicting others' suffering. In particular, Roland Bleiker and Emma Hutchison's article 'Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics' (2008, 130) provides a fruitful theoretical ground for approaching visual representations as documents allowing the study of 'the process by which individual emotions acquire a collective dimension and, in turn, shape social and political processes'. From this perspective, humanitarian images are not just passively received by audiences; they are also actively fabricated by them. In this sense, humanitarian images have defined—what Judith Butler calls—political frames through which spectators have distinguished those lives that are valuable and, therefore, *mournable* from those other lives that are *ungrievable*, because they have 'never counted as life at all' (Butler 2009, 38).

Through Butler's eyes, Sontag's reflections on photography take a new meaning for historians of emotions. While for Sontag feeling images seemed to be an obstacle for reasoning on the violence of warfare, for Butler the fact that people are affected by images does not mean that they are not able to critically think about geopolitical order. Indeed, it is the capacity of images for *wounding* and *troubling us* which reminds us that we share collective emotional norms in order to *give face* to those lives that are regarded as human and to *efface* the lives of those others who do not look like us. By understanding that humanitarian images are both ways of feeling and of knowing, this book interrogates these images which have revealed the power of communicating suffering by affecting viewers and providing them with an understanding of what they see (Butler 2009, 66). These are the images that have shown the extent to which their emotional agency has been essential to the construction of these humanitarian crises, which have changed the course of international history.

Making and (Un)making Humanitarian Crises

Chapters of this book are organised in chronological order to emphasise both the long-term history of humanitarian images and the significant shifts in their material characteristics and uses over time. Adopting a critical stance, the chapters presented here challenge universalist conceptions of emotions when looking at, touching, tasting, listening to and feeling the pain of others. To this end, contributors have paid particular attention to identifying unexpected affective reactions which have been frequently classified in present-day psychological theories as negative, by investigating their transformative power in the history of humanitarian images. As the American cultural theorist Sianne Ngai (2005, 1–3) has shown, 'ugly feelings', such as envy or disgust, have played a positive role when they have become the source of inspiration amongst artists and intellectuals for representing non-violent political activism under late capitalism. Following this argument, these chapters explore the creative potential of emotions, such as horror, abjection, shame and guilt in the construction—as well as in the deconstruction—of humanitarian crises contextualised in such disparate geographical sites as Latin America and North, Central and South Europe, as well as East Asia.

In Chaps. 2 and 6, Moisés Prieto and Ariela Freedman deal, respectively, with nineteenth-century drawings and twenty-first-century graphic journalism in order to address the specificity of hand-drawn illustrations, how they circulated and how they have been received by audiences across the globe. In contrast to other technologies, drawing openly exhibits the active participation of its author's subjectivity and—to some extent—their liberty to express their emotions, because this medium does not 'extirpate human intervention between the object and representation' (Daston and Galison 1992, 98). By adhering to a partial vision, different generations of illustrators and cartoonists have thus been able to translate their experiences through this aesthetic form as a humanitarian commitment. Though one could imagine that drawings are an old-fashioned medium, they are currently used more than ever as advocacy strategies. Powerful examples of this artistic tendency are Jovcho Savov's *Aegean Guernica* (2015) and Vasco Gargalo's *Alleponica* (2016), which went viral on the internet as

readaptations of Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) denouncing, respectively, the Mediterranean refugee crisis and the Syrian civil war.[4]

Looking back to nineteenth-century hand-made illustrations, in his chapter Prieto retraces the origins of humanitarian sensibility by exploring the historical relations of emotions such as empathy and compassion with horror, indignation, abjection and outrage, in order to comprehend how the Siege of Montevideo (1843–1851) turned into a humanitarian cause. Perpetrated by conservative Uruguayan supporters and the troops of the Argentine confederation led by the General Juan Manuel Rosas during the Uruguayan Civil War (1839–1851)—also known as *la Guerra Grande* (literally the Great War)—this historical episode inspired a great number of political cartoons depicting the atrocities committed against the people of Montevideo. Echoing famous contemporary novels, such as Alexandre Dumas' *Montevideo, or the New Troy* (1850), these illustrations were disseminated through Latin American pamphlets and newspapers, such as *El Grito Arjentino* (The Argentine Cry). Published by anonymous authors, as well as by leading anti-rosist painters and intellectuals, such as Antonio Somellera (1812–1889), these drawings were accompanied by captions, in a similar fashion to Francisco de Goya's *Disasters of War* (1810–1815).[5] As Prieto remarks, these visual compositions were structured according to a series of allegorical figures portraying helpless widowed and pregnant women, orphaned children, as well as civilians assassinated by Rosas' troops as martyrs. Intended to arouse the empathy and compassion of French and British audiences, these representations were widely disseminated by Rosas' detractors in order to force military interventions in the River Plate region. As Prieto concludes in his case study, the logic of compassion and empathy worked in intimate connection with that of horror and abjection, because the representation of Montevideo's people as innocent victims involved—at the same time—the dehumanisation of General Rosas. Portrayed as a cruel Robespierre, Rosas could only provoke disgust in those civilised Europeans who dared to look at his atrocities.

[4] For more information about Vasco Gargalo's *Alleponica* and Jovcho Savov's *Agean Guernica*, see https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/kassycho/this-cartoonist-came-up-with-a-heartbreaking-and-perfect-res#.pdBrz4e2G and https://guernica.museoreinasofia.es/en/document/aegean-guernica (accessed 5 October 2021).

[5] On Goya's *Disasters of War*, see the website of La Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, https://www.realacademiabellasartessanfernando.com/es/goya/goya-en-la-calcografia-nacional/desastres-de-la-guerra (accessed 5 October 2021).

On her part, Freedman examines the mobilisation of emotions in non-fictional graphic novels, such as *The Photographer: Into War-torn Afghanistan with Doctors without Borders*, first published in French from 2003 to 2006. This collective and hybrid work combines the black-and-white photographs taken by the MSF photo-reporter Didier Lefèvre with the drawings, captions and word balloons sketched by his friend, the cartoonist Emmanuel Guibert, and the coloured sepia scenarios conceived by the graphic designer Frédéric Lemercier. Starting in Pakistan in 1986, the three-volume book describes Lefèvre's traumatic experiences when he joined MSF's medical mission during the Soviet-Afghan War. Although graphic novels have been claimed as instruments for promoting empathy amongst civil society, Freedman alternatively identifies the affective force of *The Photographer* in its capacity for troubling and, even, disrupting the reader. Freedman argues that rather than creating an immersive experience, the use of overtly subjective cartoon establishes an ironic distance between Lefèvre's photographs and the description of his own feelings expressed in the speech bubbles, thus encouraging readers to develop a meta-critical reflection about the humanitarian adventure. In Freedman's eyes, feeling photographs through drawings appears to be a powerful way to desacralise the myth that the photographer is a neutral observer, whose work will effectively constitute a neutral testimony against warfare.

On the contrary, the disenchantment of the humanitarian world evoked in *The Photographer* enables the authors of this comic novel to fiercely criticise the structural inequalities which are at the roots of this movement. For instance, Guibert did not hesitate to caricaturise Lefèvre, the photographer, as a kind of Tintin in order to denounce the imperialists dimensions of French medical humanitarianism, as represented by MSF. As Freedman explains, the success of this graphic novel lay in the reflexive empathy solicited in readers through the interplay of drawings and photographs. Beyond French-speaking audiences, *The Photographer* reached global recognition before the publication of its English translation in 2009 and before Afghanistan became the global crisis centre for traumatised North American audiences after 9/11.

Chapters 3 and 4 move into the age of mechanically produced images, addressing the industrialisation of images, their polyvalence and ultimately their ability to solicit senses other than vision alone. Jonathan Bates' and Jo Labanyi's contributions demonstrate how techniques related to photography literarily reshaped the First World War and the Spanish Civil War as humanitarian crises by moving both national and international

audiences. To this end, these chapters invite us to think about the relationships between feeling photography and the making of humanitarian crises. Although Roland Barthes (1981, 27) considered that photography involved an essential 'affective intentionality'—which he identified as the 'punctum'—it has not always been considered as a form of art capable of expressing photographer's emotions and conveying them to the viewers. As Elspeth H. Brown and Thy Phu (2014, 10) have pointed out, for a long time the camera was regarded as a scientific device that could not provoke intense feelings, contrary to the case of paintings. Beatriz Pichel (2021, 1–23) has recently shown how the emotional potential of photographs has been intimately related to the history of warfare since the Crimean War (1853–1856), when Roger Fenton poetically documented the fate of the British troops in his famous *Valley of Shadow and Death* (1855). In particular, photographing warfare became a central emotional practice for articulating the experiences of both combatants and civilians during the First World War following the commercialisation of cameras, such as the Kodak Brownie Box and the Kodak Vest Pocket.

Also contextualised during the Great War, Jonathan Bates' chapter examines domestic philanthropic initiatives, such as those led by Arthur B. Malden, a travelogue lantern lecturer who organised a series of talks in British theatres and cinemas in benefit of disabled ex-service men. Illustrated lectures, combining the projection of coloured photographic slides with short films and music, had been performed since 1920 by members of the Royal Polytechnic Institution, such as Arthur B. Malden's father who had been one of the pioneers of this new travelling cinematographic movement. The projection of lantern slides also had a longstanding tradition in the Anglican church, which used this technology to perform rituals, such as sermons, as a way of strengthening the sense of religious community. During the Great War, Malden transformed this type of animated photographic session into charity shows which aimed to gather funds for creating rehabilitation programs for disabled veterans; a sector of the population which became the target of humanitarian compassion amongst local British audiences. Malden's lectures—which were symbolically entitled *Recalled to Life*—were displayed as the visual proof that disabled soldiers, namely those belonging to the working-class, were able to return to the labour market, after receiving health-care treatment and training in workshops where they acquired manual skills.

As Bate demonstrates, these performances were intended to create a culture of sympathy amongst the civilian community by making war

disabilities visible, as healing these victims became a metaphor for the physical and moral recovery of the British nation. Resulting from a collaboration between the British cinema industry, charities and the state, Malden's philanthropic initiative revealed to what extent boundaries between domestic politics and humanitarianism were blurred during the First World War. Within this political humanitarianism, photographic and early cinematographic practices became a patriotic instrument for shaping the emotional attitudes of audiences, who felt mixed sentiments towards disabled ex-service men that ranged from compassion to pity and guilt. For their part, veterans also expressed changing emotional reactions towards British authorities during the course of the war, which went from shame and frustration to anger, as they gradually realised that their fate had been put in the hands of charity. As Bate concludes, Malden's cinema talks perfectly reveal the performative effects of humanitarian images, because they turned the social reintegration of disabled ex-service men into a legal and economic priority throughout the Great War and its aftermath.

In her chapter, Jo Labanyi takes us on a journey through the golden age of photojournalism, the Spanish Civil War, in order to show us how photographs depicting civilians' corpses and the exodus of refugees entered into the history of humanitarian images. As Susan Sontag (2003, 18) has already pointed out, this 'war was the first conflict to be covered by a corps of photographers', such as Robert Capa (1913–1954), Gerda Taro (1910–1937), David Seymour (also known as Chim) (1911–1956), Kati Horna (1912–2000) and Augustí Centelles (1909–1985). Labanyi examines not only the visual production of these renowned photojournalists, but also other images disseminated by the Spanish Republican Government Ministry of Propaganda, which Sontag discussed in *Regarding the Pain of Others*, echoing the reflections on war written by Virginia Woolf during the fascist insurrection in Spain, also known as *Three Guineas* (1938). These shocking photographs show corpses of children killed in the aerial bombardments of Madrid perpetrated by General Francisco Franco's Nationalist forces with the help of the Nazi Germany Condor Legion in late October 1936. As Labanyi details, these images were widely reproduced in the United States by the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy's organisation, as well as by European newspapers, such as *The Daily Worker*, in order to criticise the non-intervention agreement which had been signed by the main Western powers to prevent foreign participation in the Spanish Civil War. Therefore,

Labanyi considers that the circulation of photographs denouncing war atrocities in Spain became the main affective strategy for gathering humanitarian funds in favour of the Republican cause. Although these images were not politically neutral, for Labanyi they should be considered as indisputably humanitarian because they were intended to protect human rights against the global advance of fascism.

Deeply inspired by Ariella Azoulay's civil contract of photography (2008, 2012), Labanyi shows the limits of empathy and compassion for developing a critical outlook of the visual corpus produced during the Spanish Civil War by both photojournalists and the Republican government. The materiality of these photographs, whose spectral presence still touches present-day audiences, leads this author to plead for the active role of our imagination as viewers with an ethical responsibility for reconstructing the experiences which have remained out of the frame of these images. Therefore, to comprehend these photographs it is necessary to advocate against empathy in order to reconstruct the emotions and the ideas embodied by these international audiences who witnessed the Spanish Civil War, taking into account that they were radically different to one's own.

Moving the focus from photography to cinema, Chap. 5 explores the potentialities of films as sources that can enrich the history of emotions by examining how filmmakers have constructed—as well as deconstructed—humanitarian crises by negotiating collective affective experiences with audiences. As Tarja Laine (2011, 1) has pointed out, 'cinematic emotions' should not be considered as indicators of object properties, but the result of 'processes that are intentional in a phenomenological sense, supporting the continuous, and dynamic exchange between the film's world and the spectator's world'. In contrast to photography, cinema promises audiences will not only see, but also hear and, even, touch the skin of the film (Marks 2000). To investigate this multisensorial experience, Edgar takes Jacqueline Veuve's *Journal de Rivesaltes* (1997) as case study: a documentary film, which is a retrospective *mise en image* of the journal kept by the Swiss nurse Friedel Bohny-Reiter (1912–2001) during her humanitarian mission at the internment camp of Rivesaltes in the midst of the Second World War. As a female volunteer of the Schweizerisches Rotes Kreuz/Kinderhilfe (Swiss Red Cross/Aid to Children organisation), Bohny-Reiter worked assisting resettled Spanish Republican refugees who had fled their country at the end of civil war, as well as other persecuted ethnic populations, including Jews, Roma and Sinti.

More than fifty years later, a eighty-four-year-old Bohny-Reiter returned to this camp situated in the French Roussillon—which was by then in ruins—with the Swiss filmmaker Jacqueline Veuve (1930–2013) in order to relive her traumatic memories from when she had desperately tried to save refugees from famine and contagious diseases, as well as from the deportations organised by the French Vichy government to German Nazi camps.[6] Although Bohny-Reiter should have acted in strict compliance with neutrality—as officially imposed by the Swiss Red Cross—she actually defied this humanitarian principle by hiding numerous children from the French authorities and facilitating the escape of others from the camp. Strongly moved by Bohny-Reiter's account, Veuve decided to save her story from oblivion as a part of a larger cinematographic project in which she reconstructed the history of other Swiss female humanitarians who consciously refused to collaborate in the deportations of Jews to Nazi Germany camps, including Anne-Marie Imhof-Piguet (1916–2010) and Rösli Näf (1911–1996). As a rare feminist representative of Swiss cinema—who had been trained in anthropological cinema in Paris with Jean Rouch (1917–2004)—Veuve regarded her documentaries as an emotional space where she should shape her own subjectivity in close dialogue with the main characters of her films.

As Edgar explains, the encounter between Bohny-Reiter and Veuve was not a coincidence, but the result of raising collective awareness about the involvement of France and Switzerland in the crimes against humanity that were committed during the Second World War. In this sense, Jacqueline Veuve's *Journal of Rivesaltes* can be understood as a film which helped to deconstruct the idea that what happened in that internment camp was a humanitarian crisis, by revealing to international audiences the involvement of French and Swiss governments in the Holocaust fifty-four years before. Visually recreating passages of Bohny-Reiter's journal, taking shots of her photo-album, paintings and drawings, as well as reproducing interviews with camp survivors, Veuve conveys to the spectator the emotions which were at the roots of the notion of trauma after the Second World War, such as frustration, guilt, rage and fear. Edgar interprets the complex affective repertoire evoked by Veuve's documentary in the light

[6] Today, part of the Rivesaltes camp is preserved at the Rivesaltes' Camp Memorial. https://www.memorialcamprivesaltes.eu/en?gclid=CjwKCAjw9aiIBhA1EiwAJ_GTSmPcufyjI6Ryabckjh4HGulUs9O_bKMJ_PM55dL2k0VsG8dvR-CKEhoCUxIQAvD_BwE (accessed 5 October 2021).

of the theories that emerged in the 1980s on post-traumatic stress disorder. As she concludes, trauma is cinematically performed through those past images that continue to haunt us in our present memories 'in the form of flashbacks, dreams, and other intrusive repetitions' (Leys 2007, 93).

In Chap. 7, Valérie Gorin retakes up the sensory experience of trauma in the contemporary context of virtual reality movies, such as the one produced by MSF Switzerland to recreate the bombardment of one of its hospitals settled in the province of Kunduz in North Afghanistan on 3 October 2015. This film, at the origins of the MSF campaign #*NotATarget*, shows a major shift to digital media in humanitarian advocacy. By promising a total immersive experience, virtual reality is supposed to make the viewer feel as if they were a doctor in a hospital during a military attack, a civilian in war zone who should decide whether to stay or flee their country and, even, like a refugee resettled in a camp who hopes for a better future in the Global North. Directors, such as Chris Milk (2015), who produced the virtual reality movie *Clouds over Sidra* in collaboration with the United Nations (hereafter UN) and UNICEF, had not doubt about publicising this medium as the 'ultimate empathic machine'. Featuring a twelve-year-old Syrian refugee in the Za'tari camp in Jordan, Milk's production had the ambition to erase the affective distance between the viewer and the recipients of humanitarian aid and, therefore, to encourage a relation of empathy between them, rather than one bound in pity.

By analysing Milk's film and other virtual reality movies, such as *Forced from Home* and *The Right Choice*—produced, respectively, by MSF and the ICRC in 2018—Gorin questions the fetishisation of empathy in humanitarian visual culture; namely, by examining the central notions around which the experience of virtual reality is legitimised: immersion, presence, engagement and emotional resonance. As Gorin explains, virtual reality theorists associate immersion with the sensorial experience of the spectator while they are diving into a virtual world, which includes 3D sight, sound, smell and, even, touch aspects when the spectator is equipped with headsets and gloves. As a technology which is said to replicate a true physical experience of being there—whether *being there* refers to a real or a fictional world—virtual reality is supposed to be performative, as it aims to create an affective outcome in the spectator. Nevertheless, Gorin reminds us that immersion is often reduced to a passive reception of digital images, which does not allow the viewer to interact with the virtual

environment or the characters of the film and so they are, thus, unable to develop an agency.

Seen in this light, virtual reality films do not provide any revolutionary experience in relation to those offered by other mediums—which have been used in the history of humanitarianism—such as painting, photography or cinema. Although digital moving images are frequently presented as a hyperreal representation of disasters, their alleged technological superiority does not ensure that the viewer will actually feel a humanitarian experience, which will naturally bring them to express an ethical response in the face of others' suffering. It may also occur that the spectator visits a virtual world as they were a kind of—what Susan Sontag (1973, 6) referred to as a—warfare tourist: 'people' who 'regularly travel out of their habitual environments for short periods of time' and take a 'camera along' to 'offer indisputable evidence that the trip was made'. Therefore, being exposed to computer simulated humanitarian emergencies cannot be automatically associated with the active participation of the viewer, who could also choose to contemplate these spectacles of suffering as detached aesthetic experiences.

Gorin interprets the affective politics of virtual reality as being conceived by contemporary aid agencies under a technological determinism. This is an ideology which celebrates 3D images as a kind of brave new world, where humans are expected to become a sort of android programmed to feel empathy or compassion: the central emotional capital that humanitarian organisations have exploited since the late nineteenth century in order to raise funds amongst audiences. Looking for other emotional regimes which could inspire humanitarian storytelling, Gorin suggests exploring feelings such as shame, anger and frustration. For instance, the former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recognised that—after having watched *Clouds over Sidra*—he felt disgusted and outraged, because the images performed in this movie were evidence of the lack of an orchestrated solution to the Syrian refugee crisis. Beyond empathy and compassion, Gorin advocates for a human-rights approach to virtual reality which could promote a regime of justice, rather than a moral economy of care exclusively destined to delivering aid. Inspired by a sentiment of solidarity in the age of post-humanitarian communication (Chouliaraki 2013), Gorin suggests developing virtual reality as an instrument that could allow to the spectator to deconstruct humanitarian crises by recognising the specific political causes of suffering which lay behind each disaster.

As shown by authors in the case studies gathered in this volume, the history of emotions reveals a great potential for examining the making and (un)making of humanitarian crises by shedding light on the shifting affective responses of audiences, which have been created around these images that have crystallised the pain of the others. However, what I have learnt myself from the studies presented in this volume is that using emotion as a historical category of analysis also reveals some conceptual limits when it is mobilised to scrutinise humanitarian images. Although the main objective of the history of emotions is to demonstrate that the division of emotion and reason is a recent construction, the use of emotion as a meta-concept still reinforces a dichotomic vision of affective and related rational phenomena when humans look at others' suffering. As my colleagues Brenda Lynn Edgar and Valérie Gorin suggest in the afterword of this book, scholars may orient their future research towards the horizon provided by the 'new history of experience' (Boddice 2019; Boddice and Smith 2020; Hoegaerts and Olsen 2021); a more malleable notion which allows thinking about how people have been able to critically look at images of atrocities while being moved—at the same time—by their affective power.[7] All we need now is to conjure Sontag's words (2003, 115) and let 'the atrocious images'—which are at the heart of the following chapters—'haunt us'!

Works Cited

Abruzzo, Margaret. 2011. *Polemical Pain: Slavery, Cruelty, and the Rise of Humanitarianism*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Arendt, Hannah. 2016. *On Revolution*. New York: Penguin.

Azoulay, Ariella. 2008. *The Civil Contract of Photography*. New York: Zone Books.

———. 2012. *Civil Imagination: A Political Ontology of Photography*. New York: Verso.

Barber, Claire, Helen Dampier, Rebecca Gill, and Bertrand Taithe, eds. 2022. *Humanitarian Handicraft: History, Materiality and Trade*. Manchester University Press (forthcoming).

Barnes, Diana, and Delia Falconer. 2020. Compassion, a Timely Feeling…. *Emotions: History, Culture, Society* 4 (1): 91–108.

[7] For more information about this new history of experience, see the initiative launched by the Academy of Finland Centre of Excellence in the History of Experiences and hosted by the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Tampere, https://research.tuni.fi/hex/ (accessed 5 October 2021).

Barnett, Michael. 2011. *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

———, ed. 2020. *Humanitarianism and Human Rights. A World of Differences?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barthes, Roland. 1981. *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Benthall, Jonathan. 1993. *Disasters, Relief and the Media*. London and New York: I. B. Tauris.

Bleiker, Roland, and Emma Hutchison. 2008. Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics. *Review of International Studies* 34: 115–135.

Boddice, Rob. 2017a. *Pain: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2017b. The History of Emotions. Past, Present, Future. *Revista de Estudios Sociales* 62: 10–15.

———. 2018. *The History of Emotions*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

———. 2019. *A History of Feelings*. London: Reaktion Books.

———. 2021. *Humane Professions: The Defence of Experimental Medicine, 1876–1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boddice, Rob, and Mark Smith. 2020. *Emotion, Sense and Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boltanski, Luc. 1999. *Distant Suffering: Morality, Media and Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourke, Joanna. 2011. *What it Means to be Human. Reflections from 1791 to the Present*. London: Virago.

———. 2014. *The Story of Pain. From Prayer to Painkillers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brauman, Rony. 2001. Vous avez dit crise humanitaire? CRASH. https://www.msf-crash.org/fr/publications/guerre-et-humanitaire/vous-avez-dit-crise-humanitaire. Accessed 26 June 2021.

———. 2009. Vive la crise (humanitaire)! CRASH. https://www.msf-crash.org/fr/blog/acteurs-et-pratiques-humanitaires/vive-la-crise-humanitaire. Accessed 26 June 2021.

Brown, Elspeth H., and Thy Phu, eds. 2014. *Feeling Photography*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Burke, Peter. 2005. Is There a Cultural History of the Emotions. In *Representing Emotions. New Connections in the Histories of Art, Music and Medicine*, ed. Penelope Gouk and Helen Hills, 35–48. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Butler, Judith. 2009. *Frames of War. When is Life Grievable?* London and New York: Verso.

Calain, Philippe. 2013. Ethics and Images of Suffering Bodies in Humanitarian Medicine. *Social Science & Medicine* 98: 278–285.

Calhoun, Craig. 2008. The Imperative to Reduce Suffering: Charity, Progress, and Emergencies in the Field of Humanitarian Action. In *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, ed. Michael Barnett and Thomas Weiss, 73–97. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Campbell, David. 2014. The Myth of Compassion Fatigue. In *The Violence of the Image. Photography and the International Conflict*, ed. Liam Kennedy and Caitlin Patrick, 97–124. London and New York: I. B. Tauris.

Chouliaraki, Lilie. 2010. Post-humanitarianism: Humanitarian Communication Beyond a Politics of Pity. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 13 (2): 107–126.

———. 2013. *The Ironic Spectator: Solidarity in the Age of Post-Humanitarianism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Daston, Lorraine, and Peter Galison. 1992. The Image of Objectivity. *Representations* 1 (40): 81–128.

Downes, Stephanie, Sally Holloway, and Sarah Randles. 2018. *Feeling Things: Objects and Emotions through History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fassin, Didier. 2010. *La raison humanitaire. Une histoire morale du temps présent*. Paris: Gallimard/Seuil (EHESS).

Fehrenbach, Heide, and Davide Rodogno, eds. 2015. *Humanitarian Photography. A History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fernández, Luke, and Susan J. Matt. 2019. *Bored, Lonely, Angry, Stupid. Changing Feelings about Technology, from the Telegraph to Twitter*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Festa, Lynn. 2010. Humanity without Feathers. *Humanity* 1 (1): 3–27.

Halttunen, Karen. 1995. Humanitarianism and the Pornography of Pain in Anglo-American Culture. *American Historical Review* 100 (2): 303–334.

Haskell, Tomas L. 1985. Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility. *The American Historical Review*, Part 1 90 (2): 339–361, Part 2 90 (3): 547–566.

Hoegaerts, Josephine, and Stephanie Olsen. 2021. The History of Experience: Afterword. In *Lived Nation as the History of Experiences and Emotions in Finland, 1800–2000*, ed. Ville Kivimäki, Sami Suodenjoki, and Tanja Vahtikari, 382–384. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hutchison, Emma. 2014. Global Politics of Pity? Disaster Imagery and the Emotional Construction of Solidarity after the 2004 Asian Tsunami. *International Political Sociology* 8 (1): 1–19.

———. 2019. Humanitarian Emotions Through History: Imagining Suffering and Performing Aid. In *Emotional Bodies: The Historical Performativity of Emotions*, ed. Dolores Martín-Moruno and Beatriz Pichel, 219–241. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Käpylä, Juha, and Denis Kennedy. 2014. Cruel to Care? Investigating the Governance of Compassion in the Humanitarian Imagery. *International Theory* 6 (2): 255–292.

Kennedy, Denis. 2009. Selling the Distant Other: Humanitarianism and Imagery: Ethical Dilemmas of Humanitarian Action. *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance* 28: 1–25.

Krauel, Javier. 2013. *Imperial Emotions. Cultural Responses to Myths of Empire in Fin-de-Siècle Spain*. Lancaster: Liverpool University Press.

Labanyi, Jo. 2010. Doing Things: Emotion, Affect, and Materiality. *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 11 (3–4): 223–233.

Laine, Tarja. 2011. *Feeling Cinema. Emotional Dynamics in Film Studies.* New York: Continuum Books.

Lanzoni, Susan. 2012. Introduction: Emotion and the Sciences: Varieties of Empathy in Science, Art, and History. *Science in Context* 25 (3): 287–300.

———. 2018. *Empathy: A History*. Michigan: Yale University Press.

Laqueur, Thomas W. 1989. Bodies, Details, and the Humanitarian Narrative. In *The New Cultural History*, ed. Lynn Hunt, 176–204. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lawrence, Michael, and Rachel Tavernor. 2019. *Global Humanitarianism and Media Culture*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Leys, Ruth. 2007. *From Guilt to Shame: Auschwitz and After*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Lydon, Jane. 2020. *Imperial Emptions: The Politics of Empathy across the British Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Marks, Laura U. 2000. *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses.* Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Martín-Moruno, Dolores. 2013. On Resentment: An Introduction. In *On Resentment: Past and Present of an Emotion*, ed. Bernardino Fantini, Javier Moscoso, and Dolores Martín Moruno, 1–18. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishers.

———. 2016. Pain as Practice in Paolo Mantegazza's Science of Emotions. In *History of Science and the Emotions* (special issue), ed. Otniel E. Dror, Bettina Hitzer, Anja Lauköter, and Pilar León-Sanz, 137–162. Osiris: Chicago University Press 31 (1).

———. 2018. Humanitarian Emotions: A History of the Present. Lecture presented at the Conference Humanities in Transition, October 24, 2018. Palau Macaya: Barcelona.

———. 2020a. Feeling Humanitarianism during the Spanish Civil War and Republican Exile. *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 21 (4): 445–457.

———. 2020b. Faut-il brûler l'histoire des émotions? *Traverse* 2: 147–156.

———. 2022. Compasión. In *Atlas político de pasiones*, ed. Gonzalo Arias Velasco and Antonio Gómez Ramos. Madrid: Trotta (forthcoming).

Martín-Moruno, Dolores, Brenda Lynn Edgar, and Marie Leyder. 2020. Feminist Perspectives on the History of Humanitarian Relief. *Medicine, Conflict and Survival* 36 (1): 2–18.

Martín-Moruno, Dolores, and Beatriz Pichel. 2019. *Emotional Bodies: The Historical Performativity of Emotions*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Milk, Chris. 2015. How Virtual Reality Can Create the Ultimate Empathy Machine. Ted Talk. https://www.ted.com/talks/chris_milk_how_virtual_reality_can_create_the_ultimate_empathy_machine. Accessed 19 September 2021.

Moeller, Susan. 1999. *Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sell Disease, Famine, War and Death*. New York: Routledge.

———. 2018. Compassion Fatigue. In *Visual Global Politics*, ed. Roland Bleiker, 75–80. London and New York: Routledge.

Möller, Esther, Johannes Paulmann, and Katharina Storning. 2020. *Gendering Global Humanitarianism in the Twentieth Century: Practice, Politics and the Power of Representation*. The Netherlands: Springer Nature.

Moscoso, Javier. 2012. *Pain: A Cultural History*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ngai, Sianne. 2005. *Ugly Feelings*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Paulmann, Johannes, ed. 2019. *Humanitarianism and Media. 1900 to the Present*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Pernau, Magritte. 2017. Feeling Communities: Introduction. *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 54 (1): 1–20.

Pichel, Beatriz. 2021. *Picturing the Western Front. Photography, Practices and Experiences in First World War France*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Plamper, Jan. 2015. *The History of Emotions: An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rey, Roselyne. 1993. *Histoire de la douleur*. Paris: Éditions la Découverte.

Rieff, David. 2013. *A Bed for the Night. Humanitarianism in Crisis*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Roddy, Sarah, Julie-Marie Strange, and Bertrand Taithe. 2020. *The Charity Market and Humanitarianism in Britain, 1870–1912*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Rosenwein, Barbara H. 2006. *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Rosón, María, and Lee Douglas. 2020. The Things They Carried: A Gendered Rereading of Photographs of Displacement during the Spanish Civil War. In *Feeling Humanitarianism During the Spanish Civil War and Republican Exile* (special issue), ed. Dolores Martín-Moruno, 459–483. *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 21 (4).

Salvatici, Silvia. 2019. *A History of Humanitarianism, 1755–1989: In the Name of Others*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Sharma, Devika. 2017. Doing Good, Feeling Bad: Humanitarian Emotion in Crisis. *Journal of Aesthetic & Culture* 9 (1): 1–12.

Silk, John. 2004. Caring at a Distance: Gift Theory, Aid Chains and Social Movements. *Social and Cultural Geography* 5 (2): 229–251.

Smith, Adam. 1761. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments.* London: A Millar, A. Kincaid and J. Bell.

Sontag, Susan. 1973. *On Photography.* New York: St Martin's Press.

———. 2003. *Regarding the Pain of Others.* New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.

Spivack, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1988. Can the Subaltern Speak? In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, 66–111. London: Macmillan.

Steadman, John. 1796. *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam: In Guiana, on the Wild Coast of South America; from the Year 1772, to 1777.* London: J. Johnson and J. Edwards.

Sullivan, Erin, and Marie Louise Herzfeld-Schild, eds. 2018. Introduction: Emotions, History and the Arts. *Cultural History* 7 (2): 117–128.

Suski, Laura. 2012. Humanitarianism as a Politics of Emotion. In *Emotions Matter: A Relational Approach to Emotions*, ed. Dale Spencer, Kevin Walby, and Alan Hunt, 124–136. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Taithe, Bertrand. 2006. 'Cold Calculation in the Faces of Horrors?' Pity, Compassion and the Making of Humanitarian Protocols. In *Medicine, Emotion and Disease, 1700–1950*, ed. Fay Bound Alberti, 79–89. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

———. 2016. Empathies, soins et compassions: les émotions humanitaires. In *Histoire des émotions. De la fin du XIXe siècle à nos jours*, ed. Alain Corbin, Jean-Jacques Courtine, and Georges Vigarello, 364–381. Paris: Éditions du Seuil.

Thaler, Richard, and Cass Sunstein. 2008. *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth and Happiness.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Wilson, Ashby, and Richard B. Brown, eds. 2008. *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Woolf, Virginia. 1938. *Three Guineas.* London: Hogarth Press.

Zucconi, Francesco. 2019. *Displacing Caravaggio. Art, Media, and Humanitarian Visual Culture.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

CHAPTER 2

'Especial Outrage to Humanity and Civilisation'. The Atrocities of General Juan Manuel de Rosas and the Pursuit of Empathy

Moisés Prieto

> The terror and hatred inspired by Rosas were stronger than the means he invented. The emigration was growing by the hour, by the minute. All that was needed to make a whole family escape was to find a boat. When the boat was found, father, mother, children, brothers, and sisters piled into it in confusion, abounding in house, goods, and fortune, and every day some of these boats loaded with passengers arrived in the Oriental State [of Uruguay], with nothing remaining but the clothes they wore.[1] (Dumas 1850, 60–61)

> Compassion is an unstable emotion. It needs to be translated into action, or it withers. (Sontag 2003, 101)

[1] Unless otherwise noted, all translations are the author's own.

M. Prieto (✉)
University of Bern, Bern, Switzerland
e-mail: moises.prieto@hist.unibe.ch

© The Author(s) 2022

B. L. Edgar et al. (eds.), *Making Humanitarian Crises*, Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00824-5_2

Introduction

In 1824, French painter Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863) completed the famous canvas entitled *The Massacre at Chios*, a painting epitomising the suffering of the Greeks in their struggle against Ottoman occupation. Philhellenism was a particularly strong sentiment in France but no less in Britain and Germany, raising a heated international humanitarian debate. In France, public interest for the Greek struggle was prompted by their fight against an absolutist despot, which resonated with the French Revolution and France's condition after the Bourbon Restoration. Furthermore, the Greeks were fellow Christians who were being oppressed by a Muslim power (Baldassarre 2015, 216–229).

The massacre of the Greeks bore a special meaning in Britain as well:

> The massacre of Chios transformed the disparate philhellenic movement into a more focused and coherent advocacy community. Lord Byron and the Romantics led the campaign to challenge the British government's indifference to the Greeks. Their effort was not cast simply as an appeal to support the Greek insurgents but as a broader appeal to recast the Greek struggles as one in which humanity was fighting against both liberalism and conservatism. (Western 2016, 176)

Although, as noted above, Lord Byron (1788–1824) was at the forefront of the philhellenic movement in Britain, Delacroix's painting demonstrated that the Greek struggle was making sympathetic waves throughout Europe. Alexandre Dumas *père* (1802–1870), having observed Delacroix's work, described in his later memoirs the general enthusiasm for the heroic struggle of the Greeks as follows:

> All eyes were turned towards Greece. The memories of our youth made propaganda and recruited men, money, poetry, paintings, concerts. One sang, painted, wrote poetry, begged in favour of the Greeks. Whoever dared to declare himself Turkophile would have risked to be stoned to death as Saint Stephen. (Cit. in: Baldassarre 2015, 223)

The struggle for Greek independence was not the only occasion on which Dumas was to show political commitment. Another conflict—one on a transatlantic scale—became the topic of an international debate on military intervention. Several decades before Henry Dunant's *Un Souvenir de Solferino*, and long before more notorious and highly mediatised wars

such as the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) or the Vietnam War (1955–1975), an armed conflict in Latin America inspired a lively political debate in Europe—a debate where emotions helped to transform a distant struggle into a crisis of international dimensions. Approximately twenty years after the massacre at Chios, conservative Uruguayan generals, with the support of federalist leaders of the Argentine provinces, launched a siege against Montevideo, the capital of the independent Oriental Republic of Uruguay. In 1849, Uruguayan Ambassador and soldier Melchor Pacheco y Obes (1809–1855) approached Dumas in his desperate search for support for the Montevidean cause. This resulted in the 1850 book *Montevideo ou Une nouvelle Troie* (*Montevideo or the New Troy*), written by Dumas but chiefly inspired by Pacheco's accounts. Again, ancient Greece serves as a metaphor, although the roles were reversed from the Greek war of independence; the Greeks in this case were the Argentine aggressors (the troops of the Argentine Confederation, led by General Juan Manuel de Rosas), while the Trojans were the vulnerable people of Montevideo, a city under siege since 1843.

As with the philhellenic movement of the 1820s, European perception of the dichotomy was very much the same: Montevideo was perceived as a European-like city and a beacon of civilisation and freedom, under ruthless attack and oppression by despotic barbarians. Unlike the philhellenic mobilisation, however, in this case there was vocal European support for the aggressors as well, whose legitimacy they promoted by means of pamphlets.

This chapter aims to explore the realm of emotions and their relevance in shaping humanitarian sensibility in the context of the Siege of Montevideo. Hence, positive and negative sentiments, such as compassion and sympathy or horror and abjection, might provide a further layer of plausibility for the sake of legitimising or forcing a particular action. For this purpose, I will examine pamphlets, essays by anonymous or eminent anti-Rosists in exile—such as Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811–1888) or José Rivera Indarte (1814–1845)—as well as newspapers and political drawings depicting the vulnerability of those suffering under the iron rule of Rosas and the cruelty of his regime. This chapter will focus on particular *topoi* such as the fate of widows, abandoned orphans and the copious number of victims. Those images, both literal and metaphorical, were passed from anti-Rosist dissidents in Buenos Aires and Montevideo to Europe, in an effort to garner political and military support. For Britain and France, the River Plate region, that is, the region surrounding the

estuary of the rivers Uruguay and Paraná, held a particular 'geopolitical' interest in terms of informal empire building. According to Juan Francisco Baroffio, the drama of the conflict attracted the attention of a vast public whose interest was sparked by tales of heroic battles, aberrant betrayals, the intervention of great powers, *pasquinades*, cruelties, ambitions, mercenaries and a plethora of other circumstances (Baroffio 2014, 67). Furthermore, the French were the largest foreign community in Montevideo, a fact which the government of the July Monarchy simply could not ignore (Shawcross 2015, 645). Hence, the configuration and the intertwining of political and economic interests, and the humanitarian cause *avant la lettre* favouring mainly (but not only) fellow citizens, became the focus of various discourses involving prestigious members of the European literary elite. If Alexandre Dumas understood Montevideo as the 'new Troy', as the title of his work suggests, we must in turn ask: who was the 'Platine' Agamemnon?

General Rosas and His Thorns

Juan Manuel de Rosas, still considered today a controversial figure in Argentine history,[2] was born in Buenos Aires in 1793 to a family of wealthy landowners called *estancieros*. After his marriage in 1813, he devoted himself to the expansion of his own *estancia* and to cattle-breeding. In the 'anarchy year' of 1820, Rosas's military proficiency in repelling the armies attacking the Province of Buenos Aires gained him great prestige and governmental land grants (Lynch 1981, 29). By the end of the decade, Rosas was the wealthiest and most powerful landowner in the province.

In November 1829, he was proclaimed governor of Buenos Aires, giving him extraordinary powers. His ambition was to create a province with well-defined estates and a rigorous rule of law. He became the leader of the federalists, who fought to maintain the sovereignty of individual provinces. With a political programme consisting of a return to order (his epithet would be 'the Restorer of the Laws'), Rosas targeted enemies of the State amongst the unitarians, the liberal party embodying European values of enlightenment and modernisation (Lynch 1981, 31–32). In 1835, he was again appointed governor, this time with complete power over the strategic province of Buenos Aires, thus becoming the *de facto* ruler over the Argentine Confederation. State terror became a particular trait of his

[2] For an alternative interpretation of Rosas's dictatorship, see, for instance, Ruderer (2021).

second term, especially in the early 1840s. With the help of the governor's fanatical supporters, forming the *Sociedad Popular Restauradora* (Popular Restoration Society) and its armed wing, the *mazorca* (corn cob), Rosas was able to rid himself of his enemies and political opponents. After the defeat in the Platine War at the Battle of Caseros in 1851, he was exiled to southern England, where he died in 1877, at age 84.

The region of the River Plate became a contested territory in the decades after Latin American independence. Increasing hostilities between the urban and liberal elites of Montevideo and the conservative protectionists of the countryside led to the Uruguayan Civil War or *Guerra Grande* (1839–1851), in which Brazil, France, Britain and the Argentine Confederation were also involved. General Rosas supported the Uruguayan conservatives. The Great Siege of Montevideo, which lasted from 1843 until 1851, was a monumental event of the Uruguayan Civil War playing out between the conservative faction, led by generals Manuel Oribe and Juan Antonio Lavalleja, and the liberals, led by General Fructuoso Rivera, who controlled the city of Montevideo and who was supported by Argentine anti-Rosist dissidents and legions of European volunteers from France, Spain, Britain and even Italy, among them Giuseppe Garibaldi. Furthermore, the conflict took international proportions with the Anglo-French blockade of the River Plate in 1845. In terms of foreign policy, Latin America became the focal point of a clash between French and British imperial interests (Shawcross 2018, 37–39). From 1838 until 1852, the so-called *Affaire du Rio de la Plata* moved through various stages, including a naval blockade (1838–1840), as a means to pressure Rosas into equitable treatment for French and British commercial interests and citizens, especially concerning the exemption of military service (Avenel 1998, 16–27; McLean 1995, 20). Subsequently, between 1841 and 1845, the French took an active role in the Uruguayan Civil War, offering naval support to Montevideo, thus favouring Fructuoso Rivera against Manuel Oribe, who was supported by Rosas. Particularly during the Great Siege of Montevideo, the fate of the French expatriate community in the capital—numbering approximately 5000 in 1843 (Shawcross 2015, 645; Avenel 1998, 59)—justified frequent debates in the French Parliament, with proponents championing a bellicose intervention against Rosas in order to guarantee the security of French citizens. The failure of a united Anglo-French diplomatic mission to Buenos Aires in 1845 led to subsequent military action in order to secure open navigation on the rivers Paraná and Uruguay. After 1847, Britain lost interest in Montevideo,

while prestige forced France to justify its intervention in the name of humanity (McLean 1995, 128–146). According to Edward Shawcross, the liberal values which the Montevideans and the anti-Rosist dissidents embodied were a key argument for French support: 'Thus, […] the July Monarchy similarly backed factions in Mexico and the River Plate with the hope of bringing to power regimes that would be more favourable to French interests and influence' (Shawcross 2018, 60). The affair continued to inspire French foreign policy during the Second Republic, when in April 1850 the government of President Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte decided to bolster the French naval presence on the River Plate (Avenel 1998, 110–115; Lynch 1981, 291).

Thus, Montevideo became a stronghold for anti-Rosist dissidents attacking the *Porteño* dictator in pamphlets and newspapers which were disseminated outside Uruguay, even in Buenos Aires. Those newspapers were edited primarily by liberal intellectuals who promoted a thoroughly European idea of civilisation.

At that moment, Europe was experiencing an awakening of compassion and sympathy post-Enlightenment. Prior to the French Revolution, the *âme sensible*—the sensitive soul—became the ideal of the civilised bourgeois moral character (Reddy 2001, 154–161; Delon 2016, 11–20). Terms such as 'irresistible compassion', 'sympathy' or 'humanity', which became commonplace during the eighteenth century, demonstrate a nascent tendency towards humanitarianism, considerably impregnated by Christian values (Fiering 1976). Most prominent among expressions of humanitarian sensibility at this time were discourses in favour of the abolition of the slave trade. Voiced successfully at the Congress of Vienna (1814/15) (Klose 2016), abolitionist discourse was not only an unprecedented expression of compassion, it was also accompanied by new conceptions of capitalism (Haskell 1985, 353). These publicly expressed sentiments were underscored with pictorial representations of pain. In fact, according to Bertrand Taithe (2007, 126–127; 2017, 368), there is an intrinsic link between aesthetic representations of suffering and the emergence of humanitarian sentiment. Indeed, through a plethora of visual techniques in use during the eighteenth century, 'suffering groups were brought to light as they had never been before' (Hutchison 2019, 223–224).

Some of the visual techniques implied the use of drawings and cartoons in newspapers, such as *El grito arjentino* (The Argentine Cry), which appeared in 1839 in Montevideo, followed shortly by another entitled

Muera Rosas (May Rosas Die!) between the years 1841 and 1842. *El grito arjentino* comprised thirty-three issues, from 25 February until its suppression on 30 June 1839 (Pradère 1914, 163). Among its editors was the writer and unitarian dissident Juan Bautista Alberdi (1810–1884) who belonged to the intellectual movement called the '1837 generation'. In order to reach an illiterate public, both periodicals included full-page drawings or political cartoons, often depicting the atrocities of General Rosas (Fradkin and Gelman 2015, 266). Although there is no known record of their circulation in Europe, their powerful messages may well have inspired the writings of eminent dissidents such as Sarmiento and Rivera Indarte.

The first issue of *El grito arjentino* features a drawing entitled 'La Patria' (The homeland or fatherland) depicting General Rosas on the left, in white and holding a poniard, along with his two cousins, the Anchorena brothers (Fig. 2.1).[3] Rosas is standing on the flag of the Argentine Republic displaying two sky-blue stripes, which was forbidden under his rule. Here Argentina is allegorised as a young woman, gagged and bound by handcuffs and shackles, at the mercy of her three aggressors. Although the image's caption does not specifically refer to rape, the drawing would undoubtedly have evoked sexual aggression in terms of nineteenth-century sensibilities and moral codes.[4] The illustration depicts a scene of female vulnerability and bondage in the face of three marauding men, which recalls somehow an early modern scene of torment applied by the inquisition. The caption states: 'Yes, I hate you, damn mother country … Wait, mate, she still has some jewels to tear out—Then he will finish her off'. Further comments on the illustration clarify the identities of the figures:

> There is the beloved homeland of the Argentines, bathed in tears and lying on the iron hook made by the tyrant. There is the unhappy one with shackles, handcuffs and a gag. Rosas and his worthy cousins the Anchorenas are going to finish tearing off the few clothes she has left, before the evil one gives her the last stab. Let the Argentines say if this is not the horrible and true image of the fatherland.[5]

[3] The Anchorena brothers actually numbered three in total: Juan José Cristobal, Mariano Nicolás and Tomás Manuel Anchorena. They belonged to one of the richest families of Buenos Aires and were related to Rosas through his mother (Lynch 1981, 12 and 97).

[4] On the other hand, Joanna Bourke (2007, 6) rejects the metaphorical allusion to 'rape', arguing the exclusively bodily implications as 'the embodied violation of another person'.

[5] *El grito arjentino*, no. 1, 24 February 1839.

Fig. 2.1 Unknown author, La Patria, *El grito arjentino*, 24 February 1839 (Creative Commons 2.0)

A similar image appears in the issue from 25 May 1839, in a drawing structured with before and after examples. On the left side, it shows the state of the motherland in 1810, when independence was proclaimed. An allegorical Argentina sits on a throne, holding the national flag in one hand and broken chains in the other. A lion lays at her feet while General Manuel Belgrano (1770–1820) is crowning her with a laurel wreath. The right side then shows the situation as it stands in 1839, from the perspective of the unitarian enemies of Rosas. He is again depicted in the company of the Anchorena brothers, acting as his hangmen (Pradère 1914, 180).

Once again, the vulnerability of the country is symbolised by means of a woman's helplessness. Since the Age of Revolution, it was commonplace to utilise female figures such as *Britannia* to represent Britain, *Columbia*

for the United States or *Marianne* for Republican France (Braun 1999, 64–65); however, in this particular case, the female figure serves to draw attention to grievances and, in this way, functions to inspire humanitarian sensibility. As Taithe has shown in his focus on visual representations of the 1860s, 'women and children had key symbolic roles in representations which sought to define open-ended humanitarian aims' (Taithe 2007, 126; see also Hutchison 2019, 224). This aspect was emphasised in particular through the *topos* of widows and foundlings and their fate under Rosas's rule. War casualties and the mass executions of opponents resulted in a considerable number of widows and orphans without means of subsistence. Rosas had closed foundling hospitals, apparently due to a budget shortage (Prieto 2021). *El grito arjentino* raised this topic at least twice. In the second issue from 28 February 1839, an engraving represents the *Casa de expósitos* which women and children were forced to leave. The engraving shows toddlers lying in the street, naked (Fig. 2.2). The caption reads:

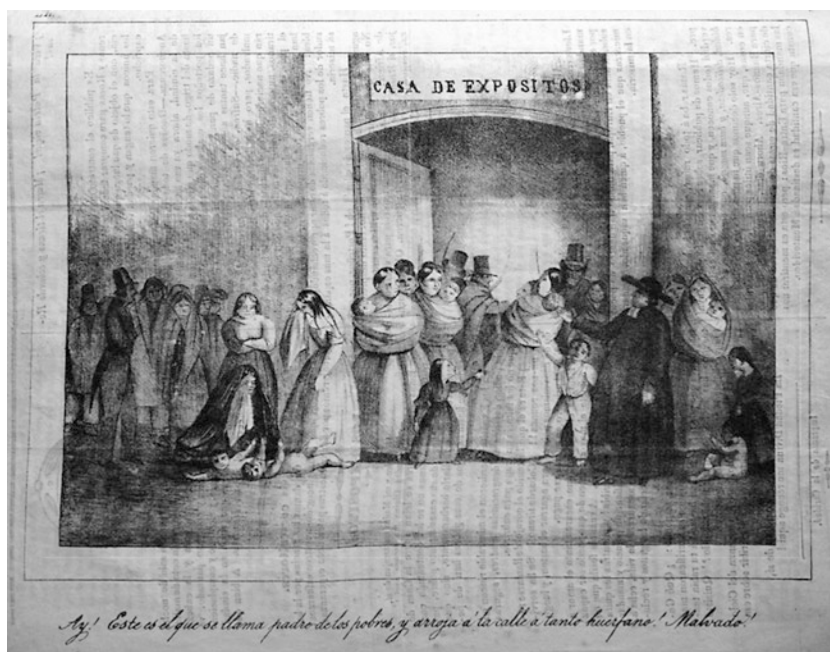


Fig. 2.2 Anonymous, *El grito arjentino*, 28 February 1839 (Creative Commons 2.0)

> [The] coward Rosas has not contented himself with tearing away from their ranches and from their homes so many of their fathers, to don uniforms, or to shoot them barbarously, but he has sworn that even the children of these poor people must perish.
>
> Now the foundlings have lost the miserable corner where their unfortunate mothers could leave them, sure that they would not lack clothing to cover themselves. […]
>
> He shoots so many who have not committed any horrible crime! And while he takes away these poor people's bread in order to build a palace, and send ounces of gold to England to ensure his own life, he throws these creatures onto the street, disregarding the cries and appeals of a charitable priest.[6]

The last lines of this comment evoke the *Massacre of the Innocents* as narrated in the Gospels. As Francesco Zucconi (2018, 107, original emphasis) recalls, '[t]he Massacre of the Innocents is an iconographic theme that has persisted across centuries and styles, in the "high" and "decorative" arts alike'. In line with this biblical theme, Rosas here is being portrayed as a modern-day Herod. The topic of abandoned orphans re-emerges in the issue from 14 March 1839. This time, the illustration employs a shocking and macabre style, depicting naked toddlers on the street being bitten and eaten by stray dogs (Fig. 2.3).

> How often have mothers preferred to die, not having that asylum in which to place their children, whom poverty or shame oblige them to abandon! How often have children in the streets been eaten by dogs! How often have these innocents perished without having received the water of baptism!
>
> Meanwhile: that cruel and ferocious man takes pleasure in these disasters […].
>
> Evil Rosas! […] Among your many victims, the most agonizing are the orphans: but the day will come when the wailing of those innocents will rend from heaven the lightning that will consume your infernal entrails.[7]

As an additional sinister element, the illustration depicts Rosas as watching the atrocious scene from the window of his headquarters while a watchman on the right observes the scene as well. Rosas appears to enjoy the

[6] *El grito arjentino*, no. 2, 28 February 1839.
[7] *El grito arjentino*, no. 6, 14 March 1839.

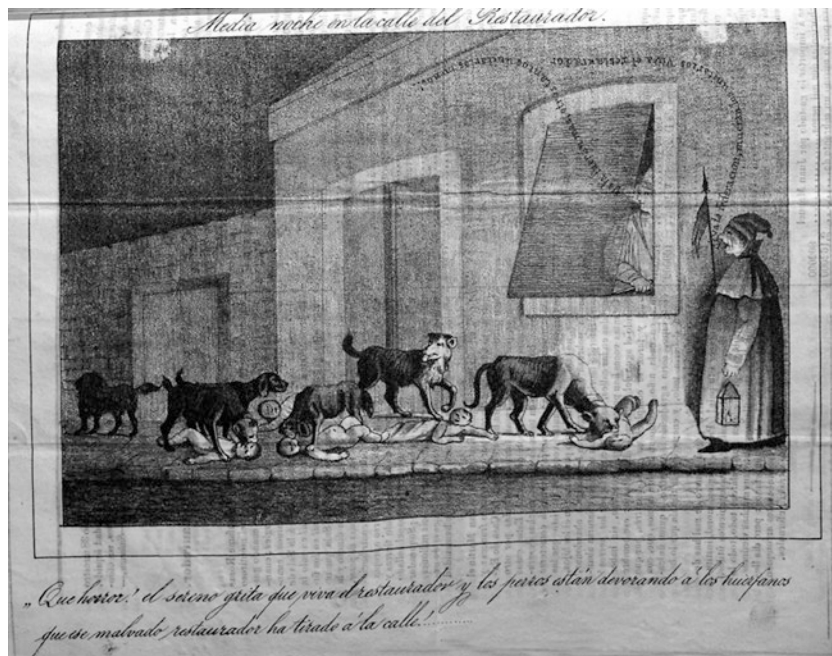


Fig. 2.3 Anonymous, Midnight in the street of the Restorer, *El grito arjentino*, 14 March 1839 (Creative Commons 2.0)

'martyrdom' of those children—a massacre for which he is directly responsible—in a sadistic, voyeuristic or perhaps even pornographic way. The 'love of cruelty' assigned to Rosas has nothing to do with 'a view of suffering, of the pain of others, that is rooted in religious thinking, which links pain to sacrifice', as Susan Sontag (2003, 98–99) claims. Rather, the focus is entirely on his own personal, sadistic enjoyment of the atrocities he perpetrates, shown in an a-religious and even pathological light.

The topic of orphans and widows brings us to another common motif in the anti-Rosist propaganda: the assassinations and executions ordered by him or committed in his name. The weekly newspaper *Muera Rosas*, which had Alberdi and other eminent liberal writers like José Mármol and Esteban Echeverría among its editors, appeared only thirteen times between December 1841 and April 1842. Like *El grito arjentino*, this periodical was printed in Montevideo and secretly disseminated in Buenos

Aires. The illustrations were created by navy officer Antonio Somellera (1812–1889) (Pradère 1914, 189).

Its first issue opened with an unmistakable image of the governor of Buenos Aires, depicting a feline-faced Rosas on a pile of human bones with a poniard in his right hand. Death stands by his side, with the words 'Rosas o Muerto' [sic] on its black robe. The caption reads: 'Buenos Aires and its horrendous tyrant Juan Manuel de Rosas'.[8] As in the previous figures, Rosas wears informal attire, highlighting his role as *estanciero* and leader of the gauchos (Rosa 1972, 135–137). Just as with this opening illustration, the drawing that appears in the tenth issue once again evokes the iconography of skulls.[9] Here, Rosas is wearing his general's uniform, although a closer inspection shows that the fringes of this epaulettes are made of small daggers. The dictator is quite literally submerged in human skulls, while a disembodied arm holds a fistful of writhing snakes over his head. A third plate reiterates the illustrator's macabre trend, as it shows both Rosas and Uruguayan general Manuel Oribe sitting at a table and drinking the blood poured from the heads of their decapitated enemies.[10]

All of the illustrations mentioned here take part in a larger discourse of otherness built upon a combination of textual and aesthetical arguments. Rosas's 'gauchoesque' representation suggests his estrangement from European values of civilisation and progress. His tyrannical nature underscores his representation as a sort of oriental despot from the distant past. In particular, the horror of his deeds, his shockingly cruel behaviour as reported in the above newspapers and his lack of charity, pity or sympathy suggest that he exists outside of the emotionally enlightened community of Francophile and liberal *hommes de lettres*. This is particularly true for anti-Rosist dissidents, who base their judgements on an evaluation of their enemies' emotional limitations (Rosenwein 2002, 842).

While these published illustrations certainly made a concerted effort to excite humanitarian sympathies among the popular masses, according to historians Fradkin and Gelman (2015, 266), the actual success of these ephemeral newspapers was very limited. While the drawings bear a somewhat elusive allegorical meaning with disappointing engagement on the part of the public, another *cause célèbre* later in the decade circulated widely and managed to penetrate the collective memory. Camila O'Gorman was a

[8] *Muera Rosas*, 23 December 1841.

[9] *Muera Rosas*, 5 March 1842.

[10] *Muera Rosas*, 9 April 1842.

nineteen-year-old daughter from a wealthy family of Buenos Aires. Her father was a supporter of Rosas. She fell in love with her chaplain Ladislao (or Uladislao) Gutiérrez, her elder by four years, and they eloped and escaped to the province of Corrientes. This scandal enraged the dictator due to the moral values he aimed to instil, while the unitarians blamed him for his bigotry. After some months, Camila and Ladislao were caught, arrested and imprisoned in Santos Lugares. The conservative society of Buenos Aires proclaimed the need for exemplary punishment, but they did not advocate for the death penalty. However, Rosas condemned the couple to the firing squad without trial. When Camila pleaded for the Governor's mercy, citing her pregnancy, Rosas remained firm (Graham-Jones 2014, 21–28).[11] Both were executed on 18 August 1848. This episode shocked even the governor's supporters (Fradkin and Gelman 2015, 336–337; Lynch 1981, 239–240). In the words of historian John Lynch (1981, 241): 'People were overcome not simply by sympathy for the victims but by the fear that […] Buenos Aires was returning to the terror of more barbarous times'.

At times the visual representation displaying an act of gross injustice appears not so much as a medium to transport a message for an immediate purpose, but rather as a consequence of the message's embedment in the collective memory or as a medium in the diachronic sense. Ten years after this unfortunate incident, Italian painter Francesco Augero (1829–1882) completed his canvas titled *The execution of Camila O'Gorman* in Turin (Fig. 2.4), prior to his relocation to Argentina (Graham-Jones 2014, 188, note 37). Augero's work represents Camila and Ladislao as Christian martyrs at the hands of a barbarian and sanguinary ruler. This portrayal recalls anew the religious roots of humanitarian sensibility. Particularly noteworthy is the soldier standing behind and to the right of Camila. He covers his face while holding the blindfolds for the two condemned. This gesture, displaying his desire not to witness the cruelty about to take place, renders him an antithesis to the voyeuristic Rosas who enjoys watching the children devoured by dogs (cf. Fig. 2.3). The soldier's chagrin recalls just how much the execution shocked even the staunchest supporters of the governor.

[11] On the question of whether Camila was really pregnant, see especially Graham-Jones (2014, 26–28).

Fig. 2.4 Francesco Augero, *La ejecución de Camila O'Gorman* (1858), oil on canvas, 49 cm × 63 cm, courtesy of the Mario López Olaciregui Collection

'On Grounds of Humanity and Public Justice'

If Augero's canvas seems to imply a transfer of accounts and narratives from the River Plate to the River Po, we can assume that such a transfer occurred in other ways as well, for instance, through pamphlets, newspapers and dispatches. But what impact did those accounts about Rosas's cruelties have on potential readers, on the consumers of this news? While the effect of the two Montevidean newspapers was notably modest, I nonetheless argue that the original images along with the figurative language in their accompanying commentary were given a 'second life' in later pamphlets and essays, reappearing as metaphors in various anti-Rosist texts.

In 1843, José Rivera Indarte, Argentine poet and a former supporter of the governor, published in Montevideo a pamphlet titled *Rosas y sus*

opositores (Rosas and his opponents); a *cahier de doléances* containing a compendium of crimes perpetrated by Rosas and his followers, including the famous *Tablas de Sangre* (Blood Tables), along with an appeal for the assassination of Rosas (Prieto 2020, 238–240). In his pamphlet, Rivera Indarte (1843, 38–39) recalls the former military interventions of France and Britain in the name of religion and humanity, as in the case of Greece. As for the fate of the orphans, the author quotes *El grito arjentino* and refers more than once to the closure of the foundling hospitals (Rivera Indarte 1843, 140, 307–308 and 339).

The *Blood Tables* comprised the (disputable) alphabetical catalogue of Rosas's victims,[12] including macabre details of their deaths or the display of their bodies: 'At the base of it [the Plaza Mayor of Catamarca] stood a pyramid of 600 heads of slaughtered prisoners' (Rivera Indarte 1843, 329). The blood-drinking *topos* again finds mention in Rivera Indarte's libel:

> There is not an act in the public life of Rosas, and few in his private life, which are undeserving of capital punishment; and the sum of one and the other place him in the category of atrocious tyrants, who are considered as dangerous and detestable as ferocious tigers fed with human blood, as serpents and venomous reptiles. (Rivera Indarte 1843, xxx)

The dehumanisation of the political adversary by means of his animalisation in texts and images seems to go hand in hand with what Julia Kristeva (1982, 12–13) argues of 'primitive' societies and their abjection of the animal 'as representatives of sex and murder'. In the anti-Rosist discourse, Rosas held the status of a pre-civilised brute, or what might be termed a 'relapse into barbarism' (Baberowski 2018, 60). The Argentine ambassador to Britain, Manuel Moreno, had already in 1843 approached a certain Alfred Mallalieu, asking him to write a defence of Rosas's policies against such calumnies (Lynch 1981, 279). In his open letter to the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Aberdeen, Mallalieu (1844, 8) presented General Rosas as a respectable ruler and a trustworthy partner of Britain. The author exhorts the chief of diplomacy not to interfere in the River Plate conflict by citing lessons learned from the recent past:

> Popular sentimentalism exercises, doubtless, no small action in national policy for woe or for weal, as the case may be; but there is no denying, that,

[12] On the liability of the *Tablas de Sangre*, see Lynch (1981, 242–245).

> for many years, and on many occasions, to begin only with Greece and the 'untoward' battle of Navarino, it has plunged this nation [Britain] in a sea of troubles. (39)

A response to Mallalieu came in the same year from an anonymous British citizen residing in Montevideo, reiterating the arguments against Rosas whose list of deeds showed 'especial outrage to humanity and civilisation' (Anonymous 1844, 23). The abandoned foundlings are mentioned as he alludes to the suppression of the national hospitals in Buenos Aires (32). The author states that 'the object of the publication [...] is nothing more than an appeal to the moral and Christian sentiments of the British people on grounds of humanity and public justice' (37). Unlike Mallalieu, he praises the 'interference of Great Britain', for the Oriental Republic of Uruguay 'owes her political existence solely' to this intervention (29). Liverpudlian journalist Thomas Baines (1845, 18) likewise justified English interference 'not [...] merely on grounds of policy and humanity'.

It was then Mallalieu's turn to rebut those terrible accusations. In 1845, he insisted on Rosas's reputation as the 'constitutional chief [...] of a State maintaining friendly alliance and relations with [Britain]' (Mallalieu 1845, 11). He further discredited the *Times* for its calumnious treatment of the governor and for relying on Rivera Indarte's *Tablas de Sangre* (14–15). Mallalieu further claims: 'Reams of the paper containing the series of these impostures were dispatched by every packet and trading vessel to Europe and the United States. Not a newspaper of any pretensions which was not inundated with packages of them' (43).

That same year, unitarian dissident Domingo Faustino Sarmiento published what would become one of the most influential nineteenth-century Latin American works of literature, politics, sociology and geography. *Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism* portrays the life of Juan Facundo Quiroga, a ruthless Argentine caudillo murdered in 1835, and then provides an account of General Rosas and his regime.

Sarmiento (2003, 155) mentions the 'pyramids of human heads' when referring to the atrocious practices of Quiroga. The same *topos* reappears later in the text, when Sarmiento compares Rosas to Maximilien Robespierre: 'The Terror in France in 1793 was not a means, but an effect. Robespierre didn't guillotine nobles and priests to create a reputation for himself, or to elevate himself on top of the bodies he piled up' (176). He then refers again to Rosas when he states that 'no monster has risen up who surrounds himself with bodies, suffocates all spontaneity and all

virtuous feeling' (246). The use of this figurative language is meant to emphasise the regime's immense death toll. In fact, the pyramid does not only suggest the despotism of his rule, but the fact that he owes his own power and position to the masses of murdered civilians (cf. Constant 1988, 147).[13] Hence, the reader-viewer would identify with those severed heads, thus experiencing compassion for the victims and contempt for the perpetrator.

The assassinations committed in the name of the governor inspired another anonymous Montevidean publication in 1849. The *Efemérides sangrientas* (Bloody Ephemerides) was a selection of Rosas's victims configured as a calendar, creating, thus, a sort of modern unitarian martyrology. The day of 18 August is devoted to Camila O'Gorman's execution.

> The chief of the post, Lieutenant Colonel Pedro Cano, an Oriental, ventured to represent the state of the girl to the tyrant: he received a bestial reprimand and the order that, after a burlesque and horrible ceremony of baptism in the womb, the order should be carried out immediately. This was done, and today at 10 o'clock in the morning, Gutiérrez and Camila, *eight months pregnant*, were shot. [...] The horror of this great crime seized even the rude soldiers, in spite of being so accustomed to shooting and slitting throats. (Anonymous 1849, 61–62, original emphasis)

Such a dramatic account could not escape Alexandre Dumas's plume in his own account of *Montevideo or the New Troy*,[14] a text completed in the middle of the year 1850, when the war was still ongoing (Rocca 2016, 124). He concludes the account on Camila and Ladislao: 'Now, how is it that France makes enemies like Garibaldi, makes friends like Rosas? It is because the friends and enemies of France are imposed on her by England' (Dumas 1850, 101). This final remark reveals in no uncertain terms Dumas's critical stance on French policies in the River Plate. There had been differences even between the two most influential politicians of the late July Monarchy, François Guizot and Adolphe Thiers. The first pleaded for a moderate commitment, while the latter was in favour of a more forceful intervention (Shawcross 2018, 59–60). Britain had withdrawn from all hostilities with the Argentine Confederation after the treaty of

[13] The same *topos* was used in an 1813 caricature of Napoleon Bonaparte (Mikaberidze 2020, xxxvii).

[14] Considering Dumas's notorious practice of resorting to ghost writers, it is plausible to believe that the book was (primarily) written by Pacheco y Obes himself (Rocca 2016, 127).

November 1849, leaving France to battle on her own. Finally, the newly republican France signed her own treaty with Rosas in August-September of 1850, stipulating the mutual demobilisation of troops in Montevideo (Lynch 1981, 291).

Several aspects of Dumas's account show inspiration from Rivera Indarte's *Tablas de Sangre*, including the *topos* of piled heads:

> The carters who drove these deplorable remains announced their arrival with atrocious jokes, which shut down the doors and drove the population away. We saw them detach their heads from the corpses, fill baskets with them, and, from the usual cry to the country fruit merchants, offer them to the frightened passers-by, shouting;—Here are unitarian peaches! Who wants unitarian peaches? (Dumas 1850, 59)

The sixth and final chapter describes the deplorable situation of Montevideo as a consequence of the long-lasting siege, criticising the passivity and inefficiency of the French policies towards Montevideo and General Rosas, while in the same breath offering a panegyric of the besieged city: '[T]hey [the besieged people of Montevideo] have called civilization to the rescue of civilization. Shall we abandon them to barbarism? And shall the last cry they utter through my voice be a useless and lost cry? Yes, no doubt, useless and lost!' (167).

Yet, not even in France was solidarity with the besieged Montevideans and those discourses aimed at instilling compassion towards them completely free of controversy. For instance, Auguste Bourguignat, a judge at the *Cour de Cassation* in Paris, questioned the common arguments deployed in favour of Montevideo and against Rosas, whom he called the constitutional ruler of Argentina and the defender of French citizens residing in Buenos Aires (Bourguignat 1850, 34–36). Furthermore, two eminent newspapers—the *Journal des débats* and the *Revue des Deux-Mondes*—had argued that agents from Montevideo had forged fake news in order to compromise the treaty between France and Buenos Aires. These allegations led to a libel suit at the *Cour d'Assises* (Pacheco y Obes 1851). The mutual accusations reveal that the search for compassion had entered the realm of public honour, and the news of suffering in distant Montevideo was far from being considered indisputable.

The discourses, which were based on humanitarian arguments, yet often not free of political interests, also failed due to political calculations, thus unleashing a dispute spanned over a global public space. Nevertheless,

many still believed passionately in the humanitarian cause, and sympathies still ran high, as Dumas's impassioned pleas reveal.

Conclusions

For the purposes of soliciting compassion and sympathy in British and French public opinion, the enemies of General Rosas in Buenos Aires and Montevideo resorted to a Manichaean dichotomy, presenting the governor as a brutal and barbaric despot, and the suffering victims as enlightened and civilised people at his mercy. Particularly powerful were the gendered representations of vulnerability which they used to great profit: allegorical iconographies of women in bondage, helpless widows forced to abandon their children or the martyrdom of a pregnant woman in the case of Camila O'Gorman, flanked by the representations of human beings with unspecified gender such as children and skulls. Hence, the more innocent and helpless were his victims, the more guilty and depraved was the dictator who violated the most sacred taboo. Robespierre, who served as a model of comparison for Rosas in terms of bloodlust, also provides a consistent logic for compassion: to feel compassion for the victims inevitably means to be inflexible with the perpetrators.[15] This line of thought would explain both Rivera Indarte's appeals for Rosas's tyrannicide and Pacheco y Obes's demands for a more decisive military intervention in the River Plate region. This dichotomy results in a moral double standard in terms of political violence. As Margrit Pernau (2014, 256) has convincingly demonstrated, the concept of civilisation implies that war is 'one of the most important elements of civilization'. Therefore, it would be too simplistic to take for granted the dichotomy within these sources. If the liberal and enlightened unitarian party abhorred Rosism for its tyrannical character, its use of physical violence and the moral corruption of its leader, there were among its enemies those who supported a less physical but no less terrible structural violence, truly one of the darkest sides of the Enlightenment. Like many European liberals of his time, Sarmiento himself was an adherent of racist theories and regarded racial mixing as a serious problem (Hooker 2017, 70; Garrels 1997). One may wonder at Dumas's own sentiments on the topic, having grappled all his life with

[15] I am referring here to Robespierre's plea for Louis XVI's execution. See Arendt (2006, 81).

racist offenses from friends and adversaries for being the grandson of a black slave from St. Domingue (Martone 2011, 4–6).

Although the memory of the Greek Revolution from the 1820s was evoked both by Rosas's detractors (Rivera Indarte) and sympathisers (Mallalieu), the parallels were uneasy at best, for the conflict in the River Plate was at its core a civil war between two ideological parties, both of which found support among players in Europe. Within this war of ideals, the anti-Rosists utilised the strategies of resemblance and detachment in order to generate public sympathy for their cause. Resemblance—inducing the public to feel a strong sense of empathy and commonality with one particular group—worked to strengthen compassion by emphasising shared values, racial orientation and ideology between the victims and the public. Detachment, on the other hand, had the opposite effect and depicted the enemy in terms of his otherness, making him thoroughly unworthy of compassion or mercy (Frevert 2016, 82–83). Consequently, the anti-Rosist propaganda was not free of moral contradictions. The mobilisation of these sentiments of compassion for the victims and of horror towards their tormentor pursued a clear political goal, that is, providing arguments and legitimisation for (renewed) European military action, which came to a definitive end in 1849 (Britain) and 1850 (France). This fact raises a fundamental point. Despite the consideration that a lack of empathy in fact belongs to the realm of pathology (Taithe 2017, 366), it is important to point out that humanitarian sensibility and empathy are frequently a matter of choice (Berlowitz 2016, 41–42). Readers and spectators choose to call one party the aggressor and the other the victim, to frame the first as barbaric and the second as civilised. It is, in the end, a political rather than an emotional distinction.

Works Cited

Anonymous. 1844. *Rosas, and Some Atrocities in the River Plate in a Letter to the Earl of Aberdeen*. London: Simmonds & Clowes.

———. 1849. *Para la historia. Efemérides sangrientas de la dictadura de Juan Manuel de Rosas*. Montevideo: Imprenta del "Comercio del Plata".

Arendt, Hannah. 2006 [1963]. *On Revolution*. London: Penguin Books.

Avenel, Jean-David. 1998. *L'affaire du Rio de la Plata (1838–1852)*. Paris: Economica.

Baberowski, Jörg. 2018. *Räume der Gewalt*. Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer.

Baines, Thomas. 1845. *Observations on the Present State of the Affairs of the River Plate*. Liverpool: Liverpool Times Office.

Baldassarre, Antonio. 2015. The Politics of Images. Considerations on French Nineteenth-Century Orientalist Art (ca. 1800—ca. 1880) as a Paradigm of Narration and Translation. In *Narrated Communities—Narrated Realities. Narration as Cognitive Processing and Cultural Practice*, ed. Hermann Blume, Christoph Leitgeb, and Michael Rössner, 185–247. Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill Rodopi.

Baroffio, Juan Francisco. 2014. Rosas el Agamenón del Plata. *Todo es historia* 562: 66–76.

Berlowitz, Shelley. 2016. Unequal Equals: How Politics Can Block Empathy. In *Empathy and Its Limits*, ed. Aleida Assmann and Ines Detmers, 38–51. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bourguignat, Auguste. 1850. *Question de La Plata, troisième notice: Le général Rosas devant la France*. Paris: Imprimerie Lacourt et Cie.

Bourke, Joanna. 2007. *Rape. Sex, Violence, History*. Berkeley, CA: Shoemaker Hoard.

Braun, Christina von. 1999. Der Frauenkörper als Norm und Anomalie des Gemeinschaftskörpers. In *Multiple Persönlichkeit. Krankheit, Medium oder Metaphor?*, ed. Christina von Braun and Gabriele Dietze, 60–85. Frankfurt a.M.: Verlag Neue Kritik.

Constant, Benjamin. 1988. *Political Writings*. Trans. and ed. Biancamaria Fontana. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Delon, Michel. 2016. L'éveil de l'âme sensible. In *Histoire des émotions*, ed. Alain Corbin, 3 vols., 2: 11–42. Paris: Seuil.

Dumas, Alexandre. 1850. *Montevideo, ou Une nouvelle Troie*. Paris: Imprimerie centrale de Napoléon Chaix et Cie.

Fiering, Norman S. 1976. Irresistible Compassion: An Aspect of Eighteenth-Century Sympathy and Humanitarianism. *Journal of the History of Ideas* 37: 195–218.

Fradkin, Raúl O., and Jorge Gelman. 2015. *Juan Manuel de Rosas: La construcción de un liderazgo político*. Buenos Aires: Edhasa.

Frevert, Ute. 2016. Empathy in the Theater of Horror, or Civilizing the Human Heart. In *Empathy and Its Limits*, ed. Aleida Assmann and Ines Detmers, 79–99. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Garrels, Elizabeth. 1997. Sobre indios, afroamericanos y los racismos de Sarmiento. *Revista Iberoamericana* LXIII: 99–113.

Graham-Jones, Jean. 2014. *Evita, Inevitably. Performing Argentina's Female Icons Before and After Eva Perón*. Anne Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Haskell, Thomas L. 1985. Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility, Part 1. *The American Historical Review* 90: 339–361.

Hooker, Juliet. 2017. *Theorizing Race in the Americas. Douglass, Sarmiento, Du Bois, and Vasconcelos*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hutchison, Emma. 2019. Humanitarian Emotions through History: Imaging Suffering and Performing Aid. In *Emotional Bodies. The Historical Performativity*

of Emotions, ed. Dolores Martín-Moruno and Beatriz Pichel, 219–241. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Klose, Fabian. 2016. Enforcing Abolition. The Entanglement of Civil Society Action, Humanitarian Norm-Setting, and Military Intervention. In *The Emergence of Humanitarian Intervention: Ideas and Practice from the Nineteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Fabian Klose, 91–120. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kristeva, Julia. 1982. *Powers of Horror. An Essay on Abjection*. Trans. L.S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press.

Lynch, John. 1981. *Argentine Dictator: Juan Manuel de Rosas 1829–1852.* Oxford: Clarendon.

Mallalieu, Alfred. 1844. *Buenos Ayres–Montevideo and Affairs in the River Plate.* Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons.

———. 1845. *Rosas and His Calumniators.* London: Effingham Wilson.

Martone, Eric. 2011. Introduction: Alexandre Dumas as a Francophone Writer. In *The Black Musketeer: Reevaluating Alexandre Dumas within the Francophone World*, ed. Eric Martone, 1–30. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.

McLean, David. 1995. *War, Diplomacy and Informal Empire. Britain and the Republics of La Plata, 1836–1853.* London: British Academic Press.

Mikaberidze, Alexander. 2020. *The Napoleonic Wars: A Global History.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pacheco y Obes, Melchor. 1851. *Rosas et Montevideo devant la Cour d'Assises.* Paris: Imprimerie de Madame de Lacombe.

Pernau, Margrit. 2014. Civility and Barbarism: Emotions as Criteria of Difference. In *Emotional Lexicons: Continuity and Change in the Vocabulary of Feeling 1700–2000*, ed. Ute Frevert et al., 230–259. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pradère, Juan A. 1914. *Juan Manuel de Rosas. Su iconografía*. Buenos Aires: J. Mendesky e hijo.

Prieto, Moisés. 2020. "History's So Strong": The Topos of *Historia Magistra Vitae* and the Rediscovery of Dictatorship in Latin America. *History of Humanities* 5: 225–249.

———. 2021. Corrupt and Rapacious: Colonial Spanish-American Past through the Eyes of Early Nineteenth Century Contemporaries. A Contribution from the History of Emotions. In *Corruption, Empire and Colonialism in the Modern Era: A Global Perspective*, ed. Pol Dalmau, Ronald Kroeze, and Frédéric Monier, 105–139. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.

Reddy, William M. 2001. *The Navigation of Feeling. A Framework for the History of Emotions.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rivera Indarte, José. 1843. *Rosas y sus opositores.* Montevideo: Imprenta del Nacional.

Rocca, Pablo. 2016. ¿Traducir o Transcribir? Ficción y materialidad en *Montevideo ou Une nouvelle Troie* (1850), de A. Dumas. In *Print Culture through the Ages:*

Essays on Latin American Book History, ed. Blanca López de Mariscal, Donna Kabalen de Bichara, and Paloma Vargas Montes, 124–138. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.

Rosa, José María. 1972. *Historia argentina. Unitarios y federales (1826–1841)*. Vol. iv. Buenos Aires: Editorial Oriente.

Rosenwein, Barbara H. 2002. Worrying about Emotions in History. *The American Historical Review* 107: 821–845.

Ruderer, Stephan. 2021. Tyrants or Fathers in the Bosom of the Family? The Argentine *caudillos* of the Post-Independence-Era as "Good Dictators". In *Dictatorship in the Nineteenth Century: Conceptualisations, Experiences, Transfers*, ed. Moisés Prieto, 85–97. London: Routledge.

Sarmiento, Domingo F. 2003 [1845]. *Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism*. Trans. K. Ross. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Shawcross, Edward. 2015. When Montevideo Was French: European Civilization and French Imperial Ambitions in the River Plate, 1838–52. *European History Quarterly* 45 (4): 638–661.

———. 2018. *France, Mexico and Informal Empire in Latin America, 1820–1867*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sontag, Susan. 2003. *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Taithe, Bertrand. 2007. Horror, Abjection and Compassion: From Dunant to Compassion Fatigue. *New Formations* 62: 123–136.

———. 2017. Empathies, soins et compassions: Les émotions humanitaires. In *Histoire des émotions*, ed. Jean-Jacques Courtine, 3 vols., 3: 364–381. Paris: Seuil.

Western, Jon. 2016. Prudence or Outrage? Public Opinion and Humanitarian Intervention in Historical and Comparative Perspective. In *The Emergence of Humanitarian Intervention: Ideas and Practice from the Nineteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Fabian Klose, 165–184. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zucconi, Francesco. 2018. *Displacing Caravaggio. Art, Media, and Humanitarian Visual Culture*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

CHAPTER 3

Projecting Guilt and Shame in Wartime: How British State and Philanthropy Lectured on the Benefits of Retraining Schemes for Disabled Veteran Workers, 1914–1919

Jason Bate

The First World War induced a fundamental change in Britain's treatment of disabled ex-servicemen. The newly created Ministry of Pensions established legal pension rights and acknowledged accountability for the medical treatment and professional rehabilitation of disabled veterans. During the war, what it meant to endure disability and to suffer as a result of war service underwent a radical transformation. Being incapacitated from returning to one's own trade or occupation and rendered unfit for work became unacceptable. Thus the disabled ex-service community became objects of compassion. Consequently, the moral norms and social customs around war disability also changed. Rehabilitation and charitable fundraising became something to feel for rather than something to be taught or learnt in a bureaucratic way. With an emotional culture of sympathy for

J. Bate (✉)
Birkbeck College, University of London, London, UK
e-mail: JB110891@falmouth.ac.uk

© The Author(s) 2022

B. L. Edgar et al. (eds.), *Making Humanitarian Crises*, Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00824-5_3

war disabled victims growing, as a result of a close relationship between industry, charities, and the state, newspaper editors and picture-house proprietors generously placed their services at the disposal of the government to bring that suffering directly into the civilian community. Ever-larger audiences and readers became emotionally attached to the disabled ex-servicemen's plight and felt a collective responsibility for their transition back into civil and domestic life, not just leaving philanthropy to the social leaders.

Emotions have been considered fundamental to humanitarian narratives and practices since their inception. Historians, for instance, speak of 'the guilt and shame' (Leys 2007), and 'arousing sympathy' (Wilson and Brown 2009, 10), and the 'irresistible compassion' that so moved people in modern times; they rethought ideas of vulnerability and sought to eradicate human hardship. In this sense, scholars hint that the history of humanitarianism can be conceived of through an increasingly organised ethic of 'compassion across boundaries' (Barnett 2011; Gill 2010). Yet while emotions are seen to pervade humanitarian sentiments, motivations, and actions, we know surprisingly little about how the emotions and collective bodily affects felt in response to experiencing and, in particular, to witnessing the suffering of disabled Great War ex-servicemen have functioned to shape and support the rise of humanitarianism in Britain.

With a renewed impetus given by many varied philanthropic initiatives, a new form of action to overcome helplessness through projection media and narratives in the press served as a collective body of humanitarian sensibility to bring the British nation together and shape the role of emotions in aiding the victims of war and their sufferings (Crossland 2018). In these narratives and practices, active compassion differed from the passive compassion that referred to viewing disasters from faraway and doing very little to help other than sympathise and pity. In 1914, The British Red Cross Society asked the public to donate money to what would soon come to be known as the 'Compassionate Fund' to financially support war hospitals. This was an act of compassion, in other words, which was visible in the public domain and sponsored and maintained by the generosity of the public to aid the recovery of sick and wounded ex-service patients (1917g, 11). In thus organising a domestic humanitarian campaign, the Society fostered the development of a modern network by facilitating a form of collective participation in caregiving associated with war hospitals: intrinsically forging kinship bonds between wounded ex-servicemen and those who set about helping them (Bate 2020). This space, I argue, created the

conditions for the government to appeal to a 'humanitarian sensibility' because the 'victims' were war veterans and thus associated with a military conflict. Were they domestic famine victims or the urban poor, it might have been otherwise. In redeploying local cinemas and theatres to their own ends, government experimented with the cinematograph as a propaganda tool. In this sense, the moving image became a powerful instrument in that it facilitated the emergence of a modern, networked, sense of participation that, in turn, the Pensions Ministry was hopeful that they could use to prompt (and ideally, enact) compassion of movie-going audiences.

Philanthropy and voluntary action provided Britain with a reservoir of social capital on which it was able to draw and acted as an integrating network of guilt between social classes that helped initiate changes in the relationship between 'top-down' philanthropy and 'bottom-up' mutual aid, and this trend continued into the post-war period. Fundraising was vital to allow the government to carry out its work, which included money and gifts in kind received from the public—through a variety of funds, collections, and donations—to supply services and machinery in Britain and in the conflict areas abroad. The innovations in caregiving carried out during the Great War were either initially or entirely by voluntary organisations rather than the government. As Deborah Cohen, for example, has noted, 'philanthropists ran most initiatives for the long-term treatment or rehabilitation of wounded servicemen, from the country's largest artificial limb-fitting centre at Roehampton to the comprehensive program for the war blinded administered through St. Dunstan's Hostel' (2001, 7). Voluntarism brought about reconciliation between disabled veterans and the public for whom they had suffered (Cohen 2001, 7).

A fundamental change both in the nature of philanthropy and in the role of the state seems to have taken place specifically because of the war. Understood here is that imagery of suffering can be instrumental in communicating humanitarian meanings and enabling collective feelings about those 'suffering amongst' the British public as opposed to distant disasters. For the first time in British history, philanthropy experienced a cultivated change which involved the whole of society over an extended period and under the emotional stimulus of wartime, developing from the preserve of the well-to-do and religious leaders, as had been the case, into a mass voluntary activity with patriotic meanings.

The emotional dimensions of witnessing suffering through images remain essential to contemporary humanitarianism (Barnett and Weiss

2011; Käpylä and Kennedy 2014). By drawing attention to war and suffering, in often graphic and emotionally distressing ways, images help to summon necessary humanitarian actions (Hutchison 2019). Some scholars even go as far as to suggest that images are fundamental to summoning intervention or aid. Denis Kennedy (2009), for example, contends that images have become the 'public face' of humanitarianism, 'images of suffering are a means towards a set of humanitarian ends'. Similarly, Michael Barnett and Thomas Weiss claim that '[t]he more graphic the image and the more it screams innocent victim, the more effective it will be in mobilising compassion, action, and money' (2011, 119). Though there were moves in the direction of state control of charitable activity in support of the war effort, the role of photographic and moving images in the government's domestic humanitarian campaign in wartime Britain brings to the forefront the compassion that was rallied for the disabled war veteran and also just how much definitions of domestic compassion can change from one humanitarian context to the next within the same culture and in the same historical time period.

Emotions associated with humanitarian and fundraising imagery are often seen to present a significant 'humanitarian dilemma' (Kennedy 2009; Vestergaard 2008). The types of images that most effectively solicit solidarity in times of human need and garner the most humanitarian assistance are also those that enact what is termed a 'politics of pity' (Arendt 1990).[1] A politics of pity suggests that while audiences feel grief and deep sympathy for the suffering before them, they still remain quietly and safely detached. As Hannah Arendt argues, pity meant 'to be sorry without being touched in the flesh' (Arendt cited in Naylor 2001). In this sense, pity is perceived to maintain a distance or 'passive compassion' between viewer and victim and, in turn, fosters viewers' incapacity or unwillingness to engage in a deeper, potentially more reflective form of empathic identification or understanding. Sufferers are framed not as resilient actors but as vulnerable and disempowered victims, waiting, passively and powerless, for the arrival of aid, instead of actively helping themselves and their communities. In other words, suffering individuals are thereby disempowered and appropriated through visual practices; bodies in pain become objects of viewers' pity. Significant here is that the images most likely to mobilise

[1] For an articulation that discusses the links with humanitarian imagery, see Chouliaraki (2010).

humanitarianism are also those that focus on victims' vulnerability and dependence.

Dudley Myers, secretary to the Employment Bureau, posited the logic of self-help inherent to disabled ex-servicemen as an alternative to the view of the country being saddled with thousands of untrained idle pensioners. The Ministry's self-help practice can be seen as a palliative photographic treatment of 'their ignorance of their rights' as pensioners, working to heal the wounds of a maimed body politic and serving 'lectures as a means of education' as a prophylaxis against their future dependence on state benefits and charity (Myers 1918, 258). Through what Emma Hutchison (2019) describes as an explicit plea for consideration, whereby an emotional appeal is made to audiences through a victimhood that increasingly necessitates compassionate feeling, here the disabled ex-service community was presented to themselves as 'shameful' sufferers to encourage them to overcome their perceived helplessness, disadvantage, and reliance. For Myers, it was clear that lectures on 'the subject of pension provisions, training, employment' garnered more publicity and schooled the disabled ex-servicemen on 'everything that touches their future welfare and interests'. Myers' vision for educational lectures as an effective way to prepare a soon-to-be-enfranchised ex-service population for rejoining civil and domestic life was a complex intersecting politics of labour, capital, nation, and local identity where 'the facilities and the machinery at their disposal for training' had to be 'properly visualised and handled', and he urged 'the desirability of lectures being given in all hospitals to men about to pass their Invaliding Boards' (Myers 1918, 259). The Ministry's projection services and distributing practices thus addressed itself to the crisis of disabled ex-servicemen from the perspective of a post-war economy.

More controversially, this chapter will show that during the Great War, the concept of compassion, whether it intended to describe a physical war disability and a veteran stripped of his 'use value' and social class and to be pitied or was intended as a metaphor considered potentially disruptive of social order by the government and ruling classes, served political and organisational purposes for the British government. In this sense, compassion performed a key role in the debates on the nature of a domestic humanitarian campaign, its effects on communities, their emotions, and their bodies. Responding to the rehabilitation of disabled veterans' 'use value' became a preoccupation of the government and its Ministries. Compassion, as a concept, portrayed and evoked different emotions but it also performed specific roles. It explained and justified state failure and

alone could evoke the relief of the war victims' individual injuries. As a form of action to overcome helplessness and state reliance, active compassion performed a key role to explain or justify caregiving aid, shape or condition responses to genuinely observable hardship and economic disadvantage, and allow social reintegration and reemployment to be defined by embodied emotions.

Moving the British Public Towards Guilt

Between 1917 and 1919, a series of *Cinema Talks* titled 'Recalled to Life' were presented by the travelogue lantern lecturer Arthur B. Malden, which combined films with slides illustrating all aspects of the rehabilitation methods and benefits of training schemes overseen by the Ministry. Malden's movements across Britain were facilitated by the transport technology of the railway, which brought more locations within the government's reach and allowed the Ministry to move the lecturer and heavy boxes of glass slides and films. Malden addressed audiences in a vast range of provincial towns and gained fulsome reviews in local papers. The development of a network of *Cinema Talks* was closely entangled with a range of other technologies and infrastructures. These included a wide range of linked endeavours with charitable associations and local communities serving to supplement government pensions and allowances through the polymorphic activities of voluntary workers, War Pensions Committees, technical institutes, and local business.

Figure 3.1 depicts one such training workshop for disabled soldier-patients established at the Regent Street Polytechnic in Westminster circa 1918 (see Fig. 3.1). Malden delivered his first lecture on behalf of the Ministry at the Kingston Public Library on Monday 10 December 1917, under the auspices of the Surrey War Pensions Committee, followed by reviews in the *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*. One local reporter told readers, 'a series of photographs showing various training centres' and 'disabled men that were being or had been trained in occupations' demonstrated how veterans could earn a comfortable living, 'over and above the pensions to which their sacrifices in the war had entitled them' (1917a, 4). The trades being taught in the shops were those that the authorities saw as providing long-term employment and a decent wage and thus ultimately spurred Malden along new inventive trajectories of persuasion. The job opportunities embodied by the carefully orchestrated slides and films are founded on a jointly patriotic sense of civic rights, whereby 'the

Fig. 3.1 Group of disabled ex-servicemen training as cinematograph operators at the Regent Street Polytechnic, Westminster, circa 1918. Photographer unknown. From an album of photographs of disabled ex-servicemen receiving training in various workshops in London, 1918–29. RSP 9/49. (Reproduced by kind permission of the University of Westminster Archive)

training programmes were not considered to be complete until a man had actually been placed in a job'.[2] This narrative thus opened up the opportunity to envision a classroom environment where disabled soldiers

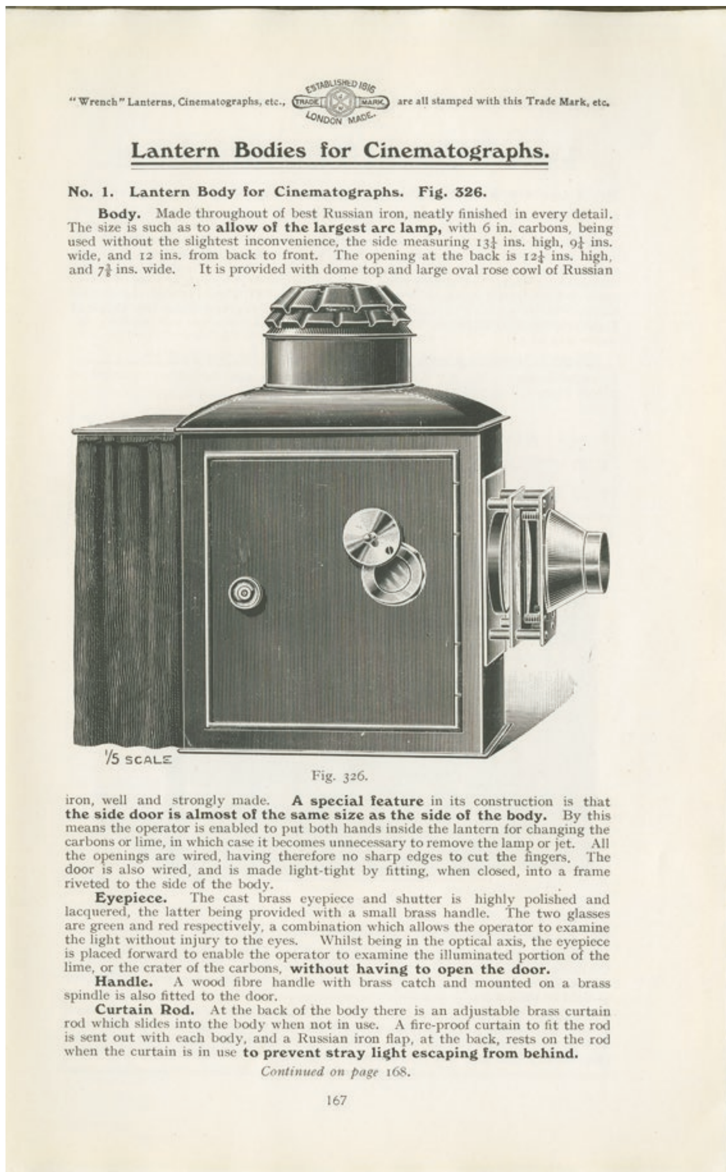
[2] 'The figures up to May 1917 showed that over 1,600 had been found employment, over 2,600 had returned to their employers, while, besides the 2,700 who had availed themselves of the Roehampton workshop facilities, nearly 1000 others had been passed on for training to technical and commercial colleges. Up to the end of May 1917, 7,230 men had been discharged from Roehampton, fitted with their artificial limbs, and of these 6,472 or nearly 90 per cent, had been dealt with for employment (applause)' (see 1917c).

could feel and be productive and useful, where they 'received their full pension, and this remained permanent after they had got their final certificate' (1917d, 4). Malden's touring lectures also served to counter the idea among many disabled ex-servicemen and the public that they would never again be able to work or earn their living when they were discharged from the army and thus constituted a performance that worked to emphasise their role as productive citizens in the community.

With the introduction of film projection as a new screen technology from 1895 onwards, the relationship between lantern and cinematograph was characterised as continuity in practice (see Fig. 3.2).[3] The moving image was quickly absorbed into a fluid interchange of shared practices and musical performance networks. These integrated media technologies thus built the relationship of the public with the moving image and the immersive nature of the spectacle. Following a talk delivered at the Cheltenham Hippodrome on 12 December 1917, one reporter wrote in the *Gloucestershire Echo*, '[t]he tragic sadness of seeing groups and processions of men who have lost a leg or arm, or in some cases both legs, was in a measure relived by the motion films exhibiting the great advance, if not perfection, of artificial surgery to date' (1917d, 2). The Ministry valued moving pictures for their inherent mechanistic worth over lantern slides, the films were screened only after the slides had been projected and thus 'saved for last' as the most effective part of the spectacle. The value of film within this narrative lay in the way it was used as animated versions of the previous still images, which increased the impression of 'progress' with ex-servicemen's regained bodily function by bringing them (back) to life. While lantern slides were useful, when it came to questions over the men's independence to 'earn a good livelihood', a film had more of an emotional use value because the moving image was better at moving audiences. Disabled ex-service workers learning new job skills thus relied on cinematography in making them fit to take a position in civil and industrial life (1918g, 4).

In the nineteenth century, European churches adopted the projection lantern as a means of education and propaganda, and these shows became a small sub-industry in the charity sector. With slide projections being

[3] The *Cinema Talks* blended both old and new media and old and new stage and screen practices. Throughout the war, photography and cinema were inextricably linked in the minds of contemporaries. From the time the cinematograph was first made public in 1895, it was frequently called 'animated photography' (Timby 2018, 185).



"Wrench" Lanterns, Cinematographs, etc., [ESTABLISHED 1815 TRADE MARK LONDON MADE.] are all stamped with this Trade Mark, etc.

Lantern Bodies for Cinematographs.

No. 1. Lantern Body for Cinematographs. Fig. 326.

Body. Made throughout of best Russian iron, neatly finished in every detail. The size is such as to **allow of the largest arc lamp,** with 6 in. carbons, being used without the slightest inconvenience, the side measuring 13¾ ins. high, 9¼ ins. wide, and 12 ins. from back to front. The opening at the back is 12¼ ins. high, and 7⅞ ins. wide. It is provided with dome top and large oval rose cowl of Russian

Fig. 326.

iron, well and strongly made. **A special feature** in its construction is that **the side door is almost of the same size as the side of the body.** By this means the operator is enabled to put both hands inside the lantern for changing the carbons or lime, in which case it becomes unnecessary to remove the lamp or jet. All the openings are wired, having therefore no sharp edges to cut the fingers. The door is also wired, and is made light-tight by fitting, when closed, into a frame riveted to the side of the body.

Eyepiece. The cast brass eyepiece and shutter is highly polished and lacquered, the latter being provided with a small brass handle. The two glasses are green and red respectively, a combination which allows the operator to examine the light without injury to the eyes. Whilst being in the optical axis, the eyepiece is placed forward to enable the operator to examine the illuminated portion of the lime, or the crater of the carbons, **without having to open the door.**

Handle. A wood fibre handle with brass catch and mounted on a brass spindle is also fitted to the door.

Curtain Rod. At the back of the body there is an adjustable brass curtain rod which slides into the body when not in use. A fire-proof curtain to fit the rod is sent out with each body, and a Russian iron flap, at the back, rests on the rod when the curtain is in use **to prevent stray light escaping from behind.**

Continued on page 168.

167

Fig. 3.2 'Wrench' series lanterns, cinematographs, and accessories (1908): 167. EXEBD 36621/3. (Reproduced by permission of the Bill Douglas Cinema Museum, University of Exeter)

performed in various entertainment and educational contexts and attracting targeted audiences, the network of religious and missionary services was well prepared for the cinematograph (Kember 2009, 2019). Besides the Salvation Army, which was based on Methodist traditions, there had been several large welfare and charity organisations in Anglican church networks engaged in poor relief, youth work, and the temperance movement. The Church Army, founded in 1882, had introduced musical bands and lantern slides into Anglican services to return poorer groups to the fold of the church.[4] In 1892 the Church Army had established a Lantern Department and produced around a thousand slides per week and lending out around 1.5 million slides for projection each year (Loiperdinger 2014). Starting the same year, the Church Army began using horse-drawn mission vans in rural areas, travelling from village to village to proclaim the Gospel with the aid of the lantern. By 1898, a fleet of sixty-five vans were in service (Gärtner 2008; Kessler and Lenk 2019). The United Kingdom Band of Hope Union, devoted to complete abstinence from alcohol, counted 3 million school pupils in their Sunday schools in Britain even after the introduction of religious instruction in schools. Band of Hope and the Sunday School Union favoured using lantern slides to make their performances attractive for their target audiences.[5]

In these illustrated lectures offered by charities, educational associations, and the labour movement, a speaker's oral commentary articulated the emotional experience of the projected images. The lecturer achieved this by explaining or commenting on the projected views. The large charity organisations had professional lecturers with their own repertoires to perform their illustrated lectures. Most lantern shows, commercial as well as persuasive, were performed by individual travelling town hall showmen (Kember et al. 2012). These shows were literally theatrical performances and so they had to appeal to commonly accepted notions of emotions.

[4] See, among others, Bottomore (2002) and Gray (2012).

[5] These organisers paid close attention to the appropriate mixture of instruction and entertainment. If there was no occasion such as Harvest Festival, a procession, or a parade available, the organiser had to provide a fitting activity, through religious rituals such as prayer service, sermon, hymn singing, or accompanying music. For an audience of poorer population, the serving of food and drink was especially attractive. Organisations such as the Co-operative Movement or the Salvation Army customarily distributed samples of food at the conclusion of their lantern shows. From around 1903, the Co-operative organisation also made and exhibited films to promote their ideas of mutual aid and to condemn low wages. See Eifler (2014).

Charity and welfare organisations in Britain engaged professional lecturers who earned their livings with lantern shows. This demand for slides for lecturers by non-commercial religious, educational, and political organisations constituted a relevant, if not predominant, sector of the market.

The use of projection media by welfare organisations was a mass phenomenon in Britain. For charity and welfare associations, the value of projection services came not only in instructing the poor and preparing beneficial and affordable entertainment and education, but also the affective practices through which they captured the conditions of the poor and offered responses to poverty. The overall effect of all these addresses to the social question was to promote it as a matter for public concern. Presenting a question or dilemma to an audience was an invitation to all members of the group or community, to act collectively and participate in the issues presented. While there were other methods of doing this, the projection services occupied its own place in this context, using spectacle to impress serious points on its audience. Hugo Münsterberg, writing in *The Photoplay* in 1916, noted that the sensorial properties of moving images 'has taken a stronger hold of us or, as we may say by way of metaphor, it has come into the centre of our consciousness. […] Our ideas and feelings and impulses group themselves around the intended object' (Langdale 2002, 36–37). Thus the audience in turn projected itself into the social problems that were being presented to them, stimulating debates around social prevention in the context of healthcare and wellbeing in the public domain and facilitating communal responsibility.

Activities of social intervention like the ongoing temperance campaigns fed directly into the Ministry of Pensions' projection services and were an established network to combine beneficial entertainment with propaganda and emotionally engage the community and local businesses in their potential role as humanitarian actors. Yet the Ministry's rehabilitative project was embarked upon at the very moment when ideals about convalescing ex-servicemen had never appeared more drastically divorced from the smooth surface of propaganda. The fraught question of disabled ex-servicemen's future employment had been raised publicly by the Ministry, which formally announced the career benefits of retraining schemes to local industry, while promising the British public to place these 'discharged soldiers […] in remunerative occupations' (1917b). Such conciliatory political sentiments strongly informed the British Red Cross Society's and Ministry of Pensions' vision. By promoting the British relief initiatives on the aftercare of disabled ex-servicemen—those caregiving narratives and practices and retraining and

employment schemes that stimulated active compassion towards the sick and wounded victims of the war—the Red Cross and the Ministry locates public sympathy at the heart of rehabilitating these soldiers and returning them to their communities as fully functioning citizens.

While these educational lectures illustrated by lantern slides and films transformed the ex-service pensioner into a legal and economic object of compassion, the performative function had to circulate across popular networks to build partnerships with local relief associations, and the element of entertainment had to be present. Numerous reviews, while declaring that the overall purpose was instructive, noted the attractions and theatrics of animated photography, music, and song as key features of the programme. For those audiences who reacted the most intensely, the popularity of entertainment spaces like the cinema, theatre, and public assembly hall made it easier to connect with and immerse community spirit. The local community's participation was explicitly desired, and cultivated, especially from company managers and employers. The Ministry's specific aim was to generate local solutions to restoration by implementing regional help to secure jobs for disabled and discharged men. Crucially, it was not the disabled men themselves who were seeking help, but the government. As Major Robert Mitchell, the London-based Regent Street Polytechnic's Director and Adviser of Training for the Ministry, put it in 1918, 'it is certain that thousands of men, who at present do not realise it, will at the end of the war find themselves in a very precarious position unless they can acquire new trades' (Mitchell 1918, 326). Such guilt and shame, and even blame, for help—moulded, ultimately, into one that imagined discharged and disabled ex-servicemen overcoming their war disabilities and reliance on the state or private philanthropy and actively learning new trades and industrial skills—was symptomatic of an underlying anxiety that viewed the physical and economic rebuilding of British veterans as tantamount to the aftercare of the nation itself (Mitchell 1918, 325).

What this shows, then, is that the government wanted disabled ex-servicemen to look forward. 'The young, happy-go-lucky man, said, "Well, here I can earn 47s. a week right away, and there, in training, only 27s.; I'll take the 47s." But that ready-to-hand £2 or £3 a week job would not last forever, while the training would fit him for the better and permanent jobs' (1917a, 4). In other words, the Ministry's performance created a palliative political shame through multimedia form, within a context of a 'localised' embarrassment towards war disability, unemployment, and dependency on state support and charity that simultaneously worked to undermine the government's ideals.

Proving Worthy of Compassion

The government assigned the local community a crucial role in dealing with the physical, financial, and emotional needs of its citizen soldiers on the alleged basis of 'a chance to return to a life of industrial activity, able in spite of his disablement, whatever it may be, to earn a comfortable livelihood' (Mitchell 1919, 400). Through the appointment of trade advisory committees to safeguard the interests of employers and works, small firms and businesses involved with the Ministry's local committees contributed to shaping a capitalist conception of compassion for war disabled victims. However, the government's campaign of compassion did not work. Feelings of hostility between the disabled ex-service community and the government became more pronounced towards the end of the war. Because the government left the subsequent hiring of these disabled ex-servicemen to the initiative of civilian employers, not only did the public begin to feel anger, agitation, frustration, and antagonism towards state authorities and the British Army for relinquishing their duties and laying responsibility on to wider society but pensioners also felt disgusted for being blocked from pursuing their goal of full citizenship, for the injustice of a lack of compensation, betrayal with unfair pensions, and fearful of state abandonment and being swept out of the labour market (1918e, 3).

One of the main motives of the British Red Cross Society's and Ministry of Pensions' narratives and practices was grounded in a political conception of the British public's guilt, a guilt that could be aroused and ripened into being via the implementation of relief funds and retraining programmes and increasingly inclusive local initiatives. The 'regained self-reliant citizenship' that the Ministry alludes to was not a firm pensionable category but stood instead for a more nebulous political aspiration for mobilising support and, ultimately, playing on the public's empathy and sense of shared responsibility (1917d, 4). This is very revealing of what pity and compassion meant at the time and in this context. It would seem that these emotions were solicited by a community who could not help itself, who needed the help of others, notably the government, who had no qualms about asking for help, as shown from the recruitment drives for volunteers at the beginning of the war in Kitchener's call. Thus political ideals exerted considerable pressure on governmental and charitable thinking in Britain to keep the Local War Pensions Committees running. The confirmation of relief efforts worked to reinforce politicians' and philanthropists' humanitarian goals. Repeatedly, 'blue boys' in convalescence

emerged in photography as a means of spreading the news of the Red Cross' and Ministry of Pensions' good caregiving schemes. The camera lent significant support to extending the scope of their recuperative projects, which sought to concretise a sense of artificial kinship based on prescriptive altruism (Winter 1995, 30).

On 3 January 1918, at the Congregational Hall, Guildford, councillor Shawcross reiterated the functioning and commitments of the Ministry's programme. He reminded Guildford residents of their responsibility to repay the ex-servicemen for the sacrifices they had made. 'Although seriously injured, the patient was anxious to return to his work' and 'those men who were disabled and unable to resume their own employment were going to be trained to be useful members of the community in some other direction' (1917e, 1 and 12; 1917f, 1). Malden validated Shawcross' claim, taking the audience on an 'imaginary tour through the different workshops where disabled soldiers were being trained' and pointing out the trades 'which they were likely to be able to follow' (1917e, 1 and 12; 1917f, 1). The Ministry took the industrial economy of wartime Britain as a model and focused on stimulating rapid growth locally, encouraging small outfits and larger businesses to start up or develop.

On 24 January 1918, at the Rink Theatre in Wrexham, Lady Trevor, president of the Denbighshire Red Cross, 'announced amid applause that a disabled man belonging to Wrexham had been trained as a cinema operator, and was now employed at the Rink Theatre, and would operate the machine for the purposes of the lecture' (1918f, 2). Among the films exhibited were those depicting the training offered at Roehampton, Brighton, Lord Roberts' workshops, and St Dunstan's, together with slides showing Acton Park in Wrexham, where local soldiers were being taught the industry of diamond cutting and polishing. Malden detailed the various trades to which the men were trained. He declared that it was not sufficient merely to give a man a chance but that every effort should be made to give him an opportunity to once more take up his position in civil and industrial life. There was no use of training a man if he were not to get employment; the employment question must always be kept in the forefront. Indicative of the rigid social classes in British society, those with no social status were to be pitied and helped. Also, it is revealing of how British society would not tolerate individuals who did not conform to the standards of a given class—for instance, the working classes must work, and the government was perhaps more appealing to this than to anybody's putative 'compassion'.

Jobs for All

Much like a government-led venture project, the Ministry began promoting local business initiatives using the slides and films. The production Malden proposed consisted of cheap commodities like boot and shoe making or leather and fancy goods manufacturing to help kick start the economy. While the government were not concerned with rehabilitating the upper classes that had served as officials and were not expected to work, they were clearly attempting to control the working and poorer classes. Central to this particular element of humanitarian compassion was that it was reserved for the poor and had to be rallied, whereas other classes were simply entitled to the support. Large numbers of disabled veteran workers were being directed to domestic industries, and the use of hand tools was promoted for the economy against the large-scale factories employing workers in munitions manufacturing or operating steam-driven machinery. In many regions in Britain, factory work was a minority occupation and handicrafts and cottage industries persisted alongside manufacture. Industrial regrowth in Britain thus hinged on a broad base of small- and middle-sized business concerns. The technologies of lantern, photography, and cinematography were transformative of production relations without requiring huge investments in motive power or large concentrations of labour. The Ministry focused in particular on the trades serving local markets, promoting initiatives which would expand these markets through making a number of commodities faster and cheaper than international rivals. Malden regularly showed pictures depicting men making fancy leather bags, an industry which:

> [B]efore the war was almost entirely confined to Austria and Germany. There was no reason why it should ever go back. If the ladies asked for a cheap bag the importer was obliged to get it from Germany or Austria, but if they were prepared to give a little more to allow of these men getting a decent wage, they would get a bag of English leather and manufacture. (1918g, 4)

The trades or firms that the government advocated were intended to operate in localised and specialised markets, whereby personal contacts with companies and businesses were essential, especially for obtaining financial support and job placements.

In February 1918, Malden gave a series of afternoon and evening talks in Scotland and a weeklong tour of Wales. Other bookings soon followed, and by the end of the month, he had visited Portsmouth, Bristol, Exeter, Plymouth, and Torquay in the southwest of England. On 17 February, at the Picture House in Portsmouth, one of Malden's main points of attention was the generous support of the local community. 'It did one's heart good to see the way in which the men had "tackled to" and carried on with the trades in which they were being instructed'. Malden showered praise on Portsmouth in terms of moral and material care, as well as fundraising, and thanked 'the proprietors of the Picture House for the use of the building'. He hoped that these 'lectures would encourage not only the men to do the work, but to further the efforts by assisting with money and in other ways to get more of these workshops established' (1918b, 2).

Guilt, Shame, and Blame

There were less favourable opinions on the training schemes than this, however. When a large audience of mainly discharged ex-servicemen gathered at the City Palace Electric Theatre in Exeter, on Tuesday 26 February 1918, pensioners raised dissatisfaction with the government's outfitting of artificial limbs and the training centres being offered (1918a, 1). So emotional was the outpouring of response in Exeter that one disabled veteran in the audience declared the training schemes 'exploitation', in the sense that war pensioners were being forced to sell their labour power to the government for less than the full value of the commodities they produced with their labour (Wolff 1999). 'The training given at Roehampton and other centres', Mr C. Oswald declared, 'was not adequate to enable a man to pick up a new trade thoroughly'. Oswald was not alone in this opinion and other protestors 'followed in the same strain' (1918c, 4). What someone like Oswald felt as dissatisfaction towards the government, however, showed that war veterans shared much the same notions of class and their own 'use value' in society. In response to Oswald's outcry, Malden, for instance, described how 'the training at Roehampton was of a preparatory character before the men were sent to a [regional] training centre' (1918c, 4). One disabled soldier in the audience credited his own training and 'at once recognised his likeness in one of the film scenes of the Roehampton workshop. He is Mr. C. W. Jenkins, operator at the Empire Theatre', a rival venue in the city,

'a post which he holds as a result of the scheme, which he enthusiastically applauds' (1918h, 1). However, if the government's judgement differed in value from what the disabled ex-service community was noting, their message of Roehampton and the other flagship workshops was largely the same: they were merely clearing houses, it also rested with local committees to continue the Ministry's work. In other words, the local authorities were expected to carry out, at their discretion, the job placements which were promised to disabled British veterans at the time of their discharge from the army (Roberts 1917, 15).

In March 1918, Malden travelled back to Scotland to address a crowded Sunday evening audience at the Pavillion Theatre in the town of Hawick in the southeast Uplands. As the audience assembled, 'selections were played by the Pavillion orchestra', opening 'with the singing of the hymn, "our god, our help in ages past", led by Hawick saxhorn band' (1918d, 1). In the course of the evening, 'at an interval, and at the close of Mr Malden's address', several 'musical numbers were rendered, and were much appreciated, the audience insisting on encores'. Malden brought with him the official Ministry films supplied for the Roxburghshire region. He was 'glad to be able to tell them that he had brought with him a new film which had never been exhibited before, showing what was being done in the south-eastern district of Scotland', where two Hawick men were being trained (1918d, 1). Hawick's manufacturing plants and mills were 'thrown on the screen, and were followed with the most profound interest'. A combination of 'agriculture and craft skills' that showcased 'the best of the new, symbolised by democracy and industry, and the traditional, as expressed in rural village life' (Mitchell 1918, 325). Crucially, the interrelated performativity of images, hymns, classical music, and the national anthem stimulated in conjunction with the luxury knitwear industry shaped religious ideas and strong feelings of regional belonging. The proprietor of the Pavillion Theatre understood that a fitting selection of acoustic accompaniments to Malden's live attraction would intensify loyalties to local business. Rather, the prayers and group singing characterised a remediation of earlier variety entertainments and media forms, which the community obviously knew from religious services and prayer meetings. The entire congregation, experiencing the confession of faith actively and seeming to initiate it, contributed to the creation of a collective feeling of Christian cause towards the disabled ex-servicemen's needs and instruction on financial, social, and moral support.

Anger, Frustration, and Shortcomings in State Provision

By the end of 1918, training classes slowly started being established in various regional institutions across Britain. In October and November 1918 with visits to Horsham, Southwick, and Bognor Regis in the south and a return to large urban centres in the Midlands and the north of England, for example, Malden addressed ever-larger audiences to recruit the growing numbers of discharged disabled ex-servicemen on to new courses. In November 1918, Robert Jones received from the War Office 'an unlimited sum for maintenance' of workshops established at sixteen regional orthopaedic facilities, which by the end of the year were caring for nearly 15,000 disabled ex-servicemen (Jones 1918, 42). From the perspective of government officials, this cluster of localised orthopaedic centres and associated businesses was an essential component in stimulating rapid economic growth. Perhaps unsurprisingly, though, the scheme of training began to generate dissatisfaction amongst Trade Union members against the government's motives and spread to the public and the disabled ex-service community. The main factor contributed to the loss in popularity for the scheme was the low wages and the haste with which the trainees passed through the courses. While some 'men demanded a minimum wage of £3 per week irrespective of allowances and pensions', others were anxious and concerned as they found themselves 'out of work and drawing unemployment benefit from the state' following their three-month preliminary training (1919a, 4).

What is particularly interesting in these comments—which, in turn, can help us understand the pronounced change in public mood for the national scheme more generally—is the recognition that confidence and donations began to wane. The main point of contention was not whether disabled ex-servicemen could be placed with local employers on completion of a course. Rather, as both these examples indicate, some ex-servicemen felt disappointed with, and even discouraged by, temporary training courses which did not equip them with the necessary skills to secure a trade job at all. Delivering an evening talk in Coventry on 4 February 1919, Malden found himself on the defence. First, he apologised to his audience 'for not being able to show cinematograph films' (1919b, 2). While Coventry was one of the few places where one of the picture palaces had not allowed the use of their hall for an hour for the films to be shown, Malden pressed ahead with his message that disabled ex-servicemen who did not take

advantage of the training courses being offered were effectively remaining unskilled workers:

> [W]hile […] unskilled jobs and high paid work in factories may seem attractive, and required no training at all, after the war, when the employer's requirements would alter, and able-bodied and un-pensioned soldiers would return home and seek work, those disabled would find themselves pushed out of the workplace and unemployed. (1919c, 2)

One veteran in the audience rebuked Malden's claim, expressing his anger towards the government for having 'to make a quarterly return as to the amount of his pension to his department' during training. A rebuttal came swiftly. One Ministry representative advised the frustrated veteran to communicate with his Trade Union: that matter was 'too difficult to be discussed at that meeting' (1919c, 2). 'No matter how earnest the local committee were in their efforts to remedy his difficulty', the veteran was told, 'it was also his own duty, through his Union, to bring pressure on the government to support discharged and disabled men like him in a proper way' (1919c, 2). Through both the projection and discussion of disabled veteran workers in broader economic terms, the Ministry cast blame by presenting ex-servicemen who did not take up training as not only unskilled and unemployable but also helpless and lacking control while ascribing a hegemonic masculinity and greater emotional wellbeing to retrained veterans who earned their own living. While this rhetoric emphasised the usefulness of disabled ex-servicemen to society, it also shows how compassion can be exploited in power struggles, especially asymmetrical relations.

In March 1919, a large number of disabled ex-servicemen convened at La Scala Photo-Playhouse in Aberdeen. Malden showcased local courses in agriculture, horticulture, forestry, bee and poultry keeping and reported over 1000 recruits for boot and shoe making and repair. Five hundred men had already passed through the course and had obtained suitable jobs (Mitchell 1919, 396).[6] Malden screened two films that afternoon, 'the first film illustrated treatment at one of the large orthopaedic hospitals at St Helen's, Lancashire'. The second film exhibited men learning new

[6] It is important to note that Mitchell also wrote, 'training in cinema operating has met with conspicuous success, and the prospects are especially bright in view of the development in the industry. The use of both arms and good eyesight are essential, but the work is not suitable for men with a tendency to tuberculosis' (1919, 397–398).

trades, including 'motor mechanics, fancy leather work, poultry farming, diamond cutting and finishing, hand-loom weaving, carpentry, commercial classes' (1919a, 4). This was the last lecture to be delivered by Malden, and the Ministry's talks trickled out of the pages of the local press, the responsibility for training disabled British ex-servicemen was transferred to the Ministry of Labour in June 1919, in a further attempt to streamline Ministry policy and reduce the department's hectic workload (Reznick 2004, 129; Kowalsky 2007a, 98–99). Two months later marked the onset of strike action, as disabled ex-servicemen in training across Britain demanded a minimum of £3 per week, irrespective of allowances and pensions (1919b, 4). The King's National Roll scheme exemplifies this dilemma. The King's National Roll was launched in September 1919, a British state programme which encouraged employers to ensure at least five per cent of their workforce were ex-servicemen in receipt of a disability pension. This indicates, then, that voluntarism and the incorporation of societal schemes to reintegrate the disabled Great War veteran remained central to Britain's rehabilitation philosophy and, consequently, employers who participated were included on a national 'Roll of Honour' and able to use the King's Seal in correspondence. Previous research into the scheme highlights its worthiness as almost 24,000 employers participated in helping 259,000 disabled ex-servicemen attain employment in 1921 (Kowalsky 2007b, 575). The newspaper reports on the *Cinema Talks* offer an intriguing example of a national sense of duty and appreciation to the disabled ex-service community for the sacrifices they had made for their country. The need for emotional and moral support, in addition to financial assistance, was never so intense as when faced with the ethos of self-sacrifice in wartime Britain, people could do no more than turn to their faith in their search for meaning to the heroic soldier of valour who gave his life for the defence and the victory of the British Army, in which narrow, immediate self-interest was subordinated to the needs of the war, and the good of the country (Bourke 1999, 25). This notion of sacrifice also had religious, and particularly Catholic, connotations.

Conclusion

Pointing to the problematic undersides of humanitarian politics is not to devalue the humanitarian impulse and political imperative altogether. Rather, it is to emphasise that while the state failed to fully provide for its disabled ex-service community, the very strength of British voluntary

action ensured that philanthropic organisations reintegrated the country's veterans. As I have argued, the British government presented a return to industry and the workforce as a symbol of physical and moral recovery and the means by which the disabled would regain their place in society and reassert their hegemonic masculinity. By considering cinemas and theatres as a modern network that enabled a collective participation in caregiving associated with a domestic humanitarian campaign thus illuminates how the rehabilitation and policy of disabled ex-servicemen's rights as workers in which the Ministry immersed itself also laid blame directly on to the disabled ex-service community if they failed to help themselves and were unwilling to take up training and new job opportunities. Crucially, not over-regulating charitable organisations during the war was a strength rather than a weakness and supported civil society in Britain (Grant 2014, 165). Deborah Cohen rejects the idea of ex-servicemen being alienated from post-war society in Britain. Hers is a more nuanced argument that the failure of the state to provide for disabled veterans may have led to disillusion with regard to politicians, but it actually bound them more closely to the rest of society where 'British philanthropists brokered a lasting peace between a public eager to prove its gratitude to soldiers and a conservative ex-service movement looking for signs that the country cared' (Cohen 2001, 7–8). Furthermore, this demonstrates that shoddy treatment at the hands of the state did not shake disabled veterans' belief that the public had appreciated their sacrifices.

Voluntarism shielded the British state from the consequences of its unpopular policies, binding veterans closer to their society (Cohen 2001, 8). In 1938 the British Treasury and Ministry of Pensions discussed the possibility of transferring financial responsibility of British ex-servicemen on to the British taxpayer: with no change in the pension infrastructure, the Ministry estimated that the cost of expenditure with regard to Great War pensioners would continue well into the second half of the twentieth century. The case of the government's domestic humanitarian campaign can then be understood as a practice that was pulling towards the diversification of compassion from one context to the next.

Works Cited

1917a. An Illustrated Lecture. Entitled: Recalled to Life. *The Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, December 1: 4.

1917b. Miscellanea. *Recalled to Life* 1, June 1: 69–87.

1917c. Recalled to Life. Training for the Disabled Soldier and Sailor. *The Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, December 12: 4.

1917d. Recalled to Life. What the Pensions Department is Doing. *Gloucestershire Echo*, December 13: 2.

1917e. Recalled to Life. *The Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, December 22: 1 and 12.

1917f. Recalled to Life. *The Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, December 29: 1.

1917g. The Times Nearing the Eighth Million. *The Times*, November 15: 11.

1918a. A Fresh Start in Life. The Scheme for Training Disabled Soldiers Lucidly Explained. *The Western Times*, February 27: 1.

1918b. Our Disabled Men. Opportunities for Training: An Instructive Portsmouth Lecture. *Hampshire Telegraph*, February 22: 2.

1918c. Recalled to Life. How Disabled Heroes are Trained in Useful Trades. *The Devon and Exeter Gazette*, February 27: 4.

1918d. Recalled to Life. How Disabled Men are Being Trained. *The Hawick News & Border Chronicle*, March 28: 1.

1918e. The Training of Disabled Soldiers and Sailors. Recalled to Life: A Cinema Talk. *Hamilton Advertiser*, February 9: 3.

1918f. Training of the Disabled. A Film Demonstration. *Liverpool Daily Post*, January 24: 2.

1918g. Treatment of the Disabled. Lecture in the Lyceum. *Dumfries and Galloway Saturday Standard*, February 9: 4.

1919a. Cinema Talk on Training of Disabled. *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, March 29: 4.

1919b. Latest in Strikes. 500 Disabled Men in Training Demand £3 Minimum. *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, May 31: 4.

1919c. Repairing War's Ravages. Training Disabled Men. Instructive Coventry Lecture. *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, February 5: 2.

Arendt, Hannah. 1990. *On Revolution*. London: Penguin.

Barnett, Michael. 2011. *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Barnett, Michael, and Thomas G. Weiss. 2011. *Humanitarianism Contested: Where Angels Fear to Tread*. Milton Park, UK: Routledge.

Bate, Jason. 2020. Bonds of Kinship and Care: RAMC Photographic Albums and the Making of "Other" Domestic Lives. *Social History of Medicine* 33 (3): 772–797.

Bottomore, Stephen. 2002. Projecting for the Lord—The Work of Wilson Carlile. *Film History* 14 (2): 195–209.

Bourke, Joanna. 1999. *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War*. London: Reaktion Books.

Chouliaraki, Lilie. 2010. Post-humanitarianism: Humanitarian Communication Beyond a Politics of Pity. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 13 (2): 110–112.

Cohen, Deborah. 2001. *The War Come Home: Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany, 1914–1939*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Crossland, James. 2018. *War, Law and Humanity: The Campaign to Control Warfare, 1853–1914*. London: Bloomsbury.

Eifler, Karen. 2014. Feeding and Entertaining the Poor: Salvation Army Lantern Exhibitions Combined with Food Distribution in Britain and Germany. In *Screen Culture and the Social Question 1880–1914*, ed. Ludwig Vogel-Bienek and Richard Crangle, 113–123. New Barnet: John Libbey.

Gärtner, Torsten. 2008. The Church on Wheels. Travelling Magic Lantern Mission in Late Victorian England. In *Travelling Cinema in Europe: Sources and Perspectives*, ed. Martin Loiperdinger, 129–141. Frankfurt and Basel: Stroemfeld.

Gill, Rebecca. 2010. Networks of Concern, Boundaries of Compassion: British Relief in the South African War. *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40 (5): 827–844.

Grant, Peter. 2014. *Philanthropy and Voluntary Action in the First World War: Mobilizing Charity*. London and New York: Routledge.

Gray, Frank. 2012. Mission on Screen: The Church Army and its Multi-media Activities. In *Beyond the Screen: Institutions, Networks, and Publics of Early Cinema*, ed. Marta Braun, Charles Keil, Rob King, Paul Moore, and Louis Pelletier, 27–34. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Hutchison, Emma. 2019. Humanitarian Emotions Through History: Imaging Suffering and Performing Aid. In *Emotional Bodies: The Historical Performativity of Emotions*, ed. Dolores Martín-Moruno and Beatriz Pichel, 219–241. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Jones, Robert. 1918. Orthopaedic Outlook in Military Surgery. *The British Medical Journal* 1 (2976): 41–52.

Käpylä, Juha, and Denis Kennedy. 2014. Cruel to Care?: Investigating the Governance of Compassion in the Humanitarian Imaginary. *International Theory* 6 (2): 255–292.

Kember, Joe. 2009. *Marketing Modernity: Victorian Popular Shows and Early Cinema*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press.

———. 2019. Introduction. The Magic Lantern: Open Medium. *Early Popular Visual Culture* 17 (1): 1–8.

Kember, Joe, John Plunkett, and Jill A. Sullivan, eds. 2012. *Popular Exhibitions, Science and Showmanship, 1840–1910*. London: Pickering and Chatto.

Kennedy, Denis. 2009. Selling the Distant Other: Humanitarianism and Imagery; Ethical Dilemmas of Humanitarian Action. *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance* 6 (2): 255–292.

Kessler, Frank, and Sabine Lenk. 2019. Fighting the Enemy with the Lantern: How French and Belgian Catholic Priests Lectured Against Their Common Laic Enemies Before 1914. *Early Popular Visual Culture* 17 (1): 89–111.

Kowalsky, Meaghan. 2007a. *Enabling the Great War: Ex-servicemen, the Mixed Economy of Welfare and the Social Construction of Disability, 1899–1930*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds.

———. 2007b. This Honourable Obligation: The King's National Roll Scheme for Disabled Ex-servicemen, 1915–1944. *European Review of History* 14 (4): 567–584.

Langdale, Alan, ed. 2002. *Hugo Münsterberg on Film: The Photoplay—A Psychological Study and Other Writings*. New York and London: Routledge.

Leys, Ruth. 2007. *From Guilt to Shame: Auschwitz and After*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Loiperdinger, Martin. 2014. The Social Impact of Screen Culture. In *Screen Culture and the Social Question 1880–1914*, ed. Ludwig Vogel-Bienek and Richard Crangle, 9–19. New Barnet: John Libbey Publishing.

Mitchell, Robert. 1918. The Present Position on the Question of Training. *Recalled to Life* 3, April: 325–341.

———. 1919. The Progress of Training. *Reveille*: 395–400.

Myers, Dudley B. 1918. Roehampton and its Lessons. *Reveille*: 251–259.

Naylor, Tristan. 2001. Deconstructing Development: The Use of Power and Pity in the International Development Discourse. *International Studies Quarterly* 55 (1): 177–197.

Reznick, Jeffrey. 2004. *Healing the Nation: Soldiers and the Culture of Caregiving in Britain During the First World War*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Roberts, E. 1917. The Statutory Committee. *The War Pensions Gazette*, June 1: 14–15.

Timby, Kim. 2018. Photography, Cinema, and Perceptual Realism in the Nineteenth Century. In *Photography and Other Media in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Nicoletta Leonardi and Simone Natale, 176–190. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Vestergaard, Anne. 2008. Humanitarian Branding and the Media: The Case of Amnesty International. *Journal of Language and Politics* 7 (3): 471–493.

Wilson, Richard Ashby, and Richard D. Brown. 2009. Introduction. In *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy*, ed. Richard Ashby Wilson and Richard D. Brown, 10. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Winter, Jay. 1995. *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wolff, Jonathan. 1999. Marx and Exploitation. *The Journal of Ethics* 3 (2): 105–120.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

CHAPTER 4

The Touch of the Image: Affect and Materiality in Photojournalism of the Spanish Civil War

Jo Labanyi

Susan Sontag's *Regarding the Pain of Others* starts by citing Virginia Woolf's observations—in her 1938 reflection on war, *Three Guineas*—on the photographs of air raid damage and victims, including dead children, that she was receiving twice a week from the Spanish Republican government during the winter of 1936–1937 (Sontag 2003, 3-7). It was at this time, starting in late October 1936, three months into the Spanish Civil War, that Madrid came under intense aerial bombardment from the General Franco's Nationalist rebels, supported by Hitler and Mussolini. This chapter will consider humanitarian photographs of the Spanish Civil War by Spanish and foreign photojournalists, three female (Gerda Taro, Kati Horna, and Ione Robinson) and three male (Robert Capa, 'Chim', and Agustí Centellles). I limit discussion to photographs circulated in support of the Republic, which organised sophisticated networks for the dissemination of images, whether via international press and aid agencies, or

J. Labanyi (✉)
New York University, New York, NY, USA
e-mail: jo.labanyi@nyu.edu

© The Author(s) 2022

B. L. Edgar et al. (eds.), *Making Humanitarian Crises*, Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00824-5_4

via its own propaganda departments. I will question what counts as a humanitarian image, as well as engage with the fraught debate on whether empathy is an adequate response to photographs of suffering. I will take literally the notion that humanitarian images 'touch' us by exploring their material impact on the viewer in the light of theoretical writing on affect, which over the past two decades has emerged as part of a broader interest in the history of emotions.

I use the term 'affect' in the sense it has acquired in contemporary affect theory, which draws on pre-modern understandings of feeling, prior to the emergence of the term 'emotion' in the Romantic period. The new term 'emotion', closely linked to the emergence of the liberal concept of the autonomous individual, signified a new understanding of feeling as the core of an authentic inner self. This differed radically from the pre-modern notions of 'passion' and 'affect' which were seen as entering the self from the outside. 'Passions' were 'accidents of the soul', suffered by the individual in the form of possession by outside forces. 'Affect' was famously defined by the seventeenth-century Sephardic Jewish philosopher in Amsterdam, Spinoza, as a two-way bodily process: the capacity to affect and be affected. Contemporary affect theorists have drawn on Spinoza's discussion of affect to undo the modern self-centred concept of emotion and to elaborate an understanding of feeling that is based on relationship—with others and with the material world.[1] Emotion, too, has been rethought, notably by Sara Ahmed (2004), as being the result of an encounter with the world rather than a property of the self. What distinguishes affect from emotion is that the former involves an intense bodily reaction to a material stimulus. This chapter will be particularly interested in the material component of the response to humanitarian photographs; that is, on the relationship between the materiality of what is depicted and the bodily impact on the viewer.

Analog photography, of course, gives us the literal imprint of material reality on the negative. It was this that allowed Roland Barthes—in his classic discussion of photography, *Camera lucida*—to theorise his concept of the 'punctum' as a detail in a photograph that 'wounds' or 'pierces' us in an intensely physical manner (1984, 26-27). Affect theory was also anticipated by the theorisation of hapticity—that is, tactile visuality—in

[1] Key works in affect theory are Ahmed (2004), Brennan (2004), and Blackman (2013). Massumi (2002), drawing on neuroscience, regards affect as a preconscious physiological response—a definition that does not lend itself to cultural or social analysis.

cinema studies. The concept was developed—by Steven Shaviro (1993), Laura Marks (2000, 2002), and Vivian Sobchack (2004)—as a reaction against the psychoanalytically driven 'gaze theory' that dominated cinema studies since it was first propounded by Laura Mulvey in the mid-1970s (Mulvey 1989). According to gaze theory, the gaze (that of the camera, which is also that of the spectator) is a form of mastery (constructing a male subject position) that reifies its object (frequently female or, if not, feminised). The proponents of hapticity, by contrast, insist on the vulnerability of the spectator, who is affected in a very bodily way by the image on screen. As Marks puts it, the haptic means 'Touching, not mastery'—vision not as cognition (the basis of Enlightenment empiricism) but as contact (2002, xii, xiii). It is the involvement of senses other than vision in our relationship with the world—and with images—that makes that relationship one of contact. The theorisation of hapticity rethinks vision as 'embodied and material' (Marks 2002, xiii). The key feature of the haptic image is not clarity (enabling us to identify what is depicted) but texture (the material 'feel' of the real) (Marks 2002, 8). As Marks insists, the embodied response generated by the haptic image involves an 'ethics of shared embodiment' (2002, 8), a response not of detached observation but of corporeal engagement. Sobchack notes that to be concerned with the ways in which images 'touch us' is to have a '*materialist* … understanding of *aesthetics* and *ethics*' (2004, 3; emphasis in original). Like Marks, she sees this as an ethics since 'response' means 'responsibility' (2004, 3).

What, then, is a humanitarian image? At the very least, it is an image that elicits a sense of responsibility in us. And it does so by touching us. Fehrenbach and Rodogno note that humanitarianism could not have emerged without the parallel development, in the mid-nineteenth century, of photographic technologies (2015, 3). Standard definitions of humanitarian aid—for example, those of the United Nations and International Red Cross—define it as politically neutral and impartial action to alleviate suffering in situations of man-made or natural disaster.[2] But in practice much humanitarian action has been in support of a particular cause; Michael Barnett, in his history of humanitarianism, points out that neutrality and impartiality 'were not part of humanitarianism's original DNA' until the 1960s (2011, 5). Sontag notes that the photographs Virginia

[2] See https://www.unocha.org/about-ocha/history-ocha and https://www.icrc.org/en/waccessedho-we-are (accessed 7 October 2021).

Woolf received from the Spanish Republican Government were not calls to end the war, as the pacifist Woolf seems to have supposed, but appeals to their recipients in the Western democracies to lobby their governments to abandon their appeasement of fascism by supplying arms to the Republic (2003, 8-9). In practice, the Western democracies' Non-Intervention Pact meant that donations to the Republic from those countries could only be for strictly humanitarian ends: ambulances and medical aid for the wounded in battle or the victims of Nationalist air raids; or money to support refugee centres, especially those for children. Such donations were explicitly partisan. When the same images were disseminated in Spain within the Republican zone, they were overt calls to take up arms in the Republic's defence. I will take 'humanitarian images' to mean both those aimed at relieving suffering and those designed to boost the Republican war effort, since defence of the Republic was seen as a war to protect human rights by defeating fascism.

The response of viewers to humanitarian images is, of course, historically situated, depending on their prior experience of seeing images of suffering and displacement. In the case of overseas viewers at the time of the Spanish Civil War of 1936-1939, the closest comparator—for those old enough to remember them—is the images that appeared in the Western press of soldiers killed or wounded in the carnage of World War I. But the images of the Spanish Civil War that circulated widely overseas were different, for this was the first war that saw the systematic bombing of civilian targets, producing a massive exodus of refugees. A curious feature of the coverage by photojournalists of military combat in the Spanish Civil War is the lack of emphasis on the wounded, for the function of such coverage was not to raise aid but to chart the progress of the war—for this reason, I do not include battle photographs in this discussion of humanitarian images.[3] The dead or wounded bodies that appear in photographs of the Spanish Civil War are those of civilians. This novelty increased their shock value for viewers accustomed to think of war as something that took place on the battlefield. War was now seen as something that could affect everyone; captions to photographs circulated overseas frequently stressed that, if fascism was not stopped in Spain, 'it will be your turn next'.

[3] The Spanish Civil War was extensively covered not only in photojournalism—the topic of this chapter—but also in newsreels, the principal film crews being from France, Germany, Italy, Britain, the USSR, and the United States (Sánchez-Biosca 2013, 522).

The blurring of the line between the two goals of relieving suffering and supporting the Republican war effort is illustrated by the multiple uses made of a set of photographs taken in a Madrid morgue on 30 October 1936, of children killed in Nationalist air raids that day. These photographs, which were certainly among those received by Virginia Woolf, deployed precisely such captions. The head of the Catalan Propaganda Commissariat, Jaume Miravitlles, described in a February 1937 interview how he set in motion a massive propaganda operation to print 10,000 sets of these photos, taken by one of his staff photographers, within forty-eight hours and to mail them all over the world, including to Hitler (Solé i Sabaté and Villaroya 2005, 130). The result was worldwide press coverage. The same photos were further circulated by international relief organisations, for example, the pamphlet *The Crimes of Francisco Franco* issued by the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy (Faber 2018, 48). Posters in English and French featuring a particularly photogenic dead child were mailed overseas; the caption on the English version read 'If you tolerate this, your children will be next' (Stradling 2008, 13, 141). The message that fascism must be defeated in Spain to prevent a future international conflagration is a clear appeal to lobby against the Non-Intervention Pact. The image of the same dead child was also printed on a Catalan postage stamp with the slogan 'Ajut a l'Espanya anti-feixista' (Aid anti-fascist Spain), a simple way of disseminating the message abroad (Lefebvre-Peña 2013, 155-157). A photo feature depicting several of the 30th October child victims appeared in the British Communist newspaper *The Daily Worker*, likely to have boosted the Communist Party's recruitment for the International Brigades, then at its height (Holmes 2018, 70-71). All this overseas propaganda served both to lobby for Western military support and to raise funds for air raid victims. The caption to a similar photo feature printed on a poster for display in the Republican zone in Spain had the explicit aim of boosting recruitment to the Republican army: '¡Asesinos! ¿Quién al ver esto no empuña un fusil para aplastar el fascismo destructor?' [Murderers! Who, seeing this, wouldn't take up arms to quash fascist destruction?] (Stradling 2008, 238).

The dissemination of this set of photos of child air raid victims gives some idea of the importance attached by the Republic to influencing overseas opinion. A photograph only becomes a humanitarian photograph if it circulates, of course. The principal Republican agencies responsible for circulating humanitarian photographs were:

1. the central Republican Government's Ministry of Propaganda (from May 1937, the Propaganda Subsecretariat of the Ministry of State), with a delegation in Paris;
2. the Propaganda Delegation of the Madrid Defence Junta;
3. the Catalan Propaganda Commissariat (the most effective), with over 300 employees and delegations in Paris, London, Brussels, Oslo, Stockholm, and Copenhagen; and
4. the Foreign Propaganda Office of the anarchist trade union CNT (National Workers Confederation).

In addition, international illustrated magazines—the 1930s was the great age of the illustrated magazine—hired foreign photojournalists like the Hungarian Robert Capa, the German Gerda Taro, or the Polish Chim to undertake assignments, or bought photographs taken by them as freelancers. Capa, Taro, and Chim sold their photos to around fifty international newspapers and magazines, chiefly in France, Britain, and the United States but also in the Soviet Union, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Mexico, and Japan, ranging in political affiliation from Communist to Catholic; they also sold their photos to Spanish Republican propaganda agencies (Faber 2018, 16, 36).[4] The Catalan photojournalist Agustí Centelles, employed by the Catalan Propaganda Commissariat, additionally sold his pictures to the top French, British, and American illustrated magazines, as well as the Barcelona press (Centelles 2011, 107-163).[5] The Hungarian anarchist Kati Horna was employed by the CNT's Foreign Propaganda Office and her photos appeared in the anarchist magazines *Mujeres Libres*, *Libre Studio*, *Tierra y Libertad*, *Tiempos Nuevos*, and *Umbral*, of which she was graphic editor (Horna 1992, 9-10, 16-17).[6]

[4] Young (2010, 1: 137-155) gives a year-by-year account of the reproduction in international magazines of photographs of the Spanish Civil War by Capa, Taro, and Chim. This two-volume publication reproduces the 4500 negatives by Capa, Taro, and Chim that were found in Mexico in 2007, known as 'the Mexican suitcase'.

[5] On returning to Spain from exile in France in 1944, Centelles left his negatives behind in a suitcase. Only in 1976, after Franco's death, did he feel it was safe to retrieve them and take his 'French suitcase' back to Spain.

[6] In 1979 Horna donated to Spain's Ministry of Culture the photographs she took with her into exile in Mexico. In 2019, over 500 negatives of Horna, believed lost, were discovered in the archives of the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam (see https://iisg.amsterdam/en/blog/margaret-michaelis-and-kati-horna, accessed 7 October 2021).

A key player in the dissemination in continental Europe of images of Republican civilian suffering was the Paris-based German exile and anti-fascist media entrepreneur Willi Münzenberg, who was quick to realise their political potential. Münzenberg, associated with the Comintern till 1937, created numerous pro-Republican aid committees as well as helping to set up the Agence Espagne in early 1937 to coordinate Republican propaganda in Europe (Gruber 1965; Cuevas-Wolf 2008). By contrast, Rose Holmes has shown how British press and aid agencies preferred to publish heart-warming pictures of Republican childcare facilities rather than images of atrocities; *The Daily Worker*'s display of child corpses was untypical (Holmes 2018, 70, 75-76, 82). Indeed, many of the photographs that were circulated both in Spain and overseas do not depict suffering and destruction but elicit support for the Republic by giving a positive image of life in the Republican zone. This is true of photos by Spanish and foreign photojournalists—even those celebrated as war photographers like Capa, Taro, and Chim. I include these positive images in the category of humanitarian photographs since they shared with images of suffering the dual aim of raising donations and campaigning against the Non-Intervention Pact.

The partisanship of humanitarian images is supported by Ariella Azoulay's concept of the 'civil contract of photography'—a contract that she regards as inherent in all photographs of political violence (2008; 2012). In proposing such a contract, she argues for a view of photography as not limited to the photograph as artefact, nor to the photographer as individual creator, but as a practice constituted by the confluence of the various persons involved in what she calls the 'event of photography': that is, all those involved in what was going on when the photograph was taken and in how the photograph circulates and is viewed subsequently. The spectator, she argues, is bound by an ethical duty to reconstruct what has remained off-frame: that is, the power relations that shaped the scene and leave their trace on the image even though they are not present in it.

Azoulay's insistence on the importance of reconstructing the off-frame can be related to Georges Didi-Huberman's theorisation, in *Images in Spite of All* (2008), of the role of the imagination on the part of the viewer. Rejecting the idea that the Holocaust is unrepresentable, Didi-Huberman argues for the imagination as a form of montage by which spectators establish associations between the image under view and other images familiar to them, in order to interpret an image of an event that lies outside their experience (2008, 120-150). This imaginative montage is what

makes the image ‘readable’. While photographs of the Spanish Civil War are not comparable to those of the Holocaust, the novelty of their depiction of civilian casualties would have required a similar exercise of the imagination in the overseas viewers at whom they were chiefly aimed; we can only hypothesise as to the associations they would have made, which will have been different from those we make today in our world saturated with global images of civilian suffering. As Didi-Huberman puts it, in agreement with Azoulay, ‘the image is not all’ (2008, 124); indeed, the very impulse to create an image is, he suggests, an impulse ‘to show what we cannot see’ (2008, 133). Thus, photographs can depict feelings, despite the fact that feelings are invisible. This is a crucial perception for an understanding of humanitarian images, which depict emotional scenarios in which the emotions may or may not express themselves in the facial gestures and body language of the persons depicted. Thus, Didi-Huberman insists, ‘images show *in spite of all* what cannot be seen’ (2008, 133). It is this imaginative montage that produces emotional intensity in the spectator—what he calls a ‘visual form of haunting’ (2008, 138); that is, being affected by something that is not ‘in’ the image but is evoked by it.

Didi-Huberman stresses that this act of imagination in the face of an image of suffering should not be confused with empathetic claims to share that suffering (2008, 159). Azoulay similarly develops her notion of the civil contract, which obliges us ethically to reconstruct the off-frame, in order to argue against compassion as the appropriate response to photographs of suffering, since compassion reduces the persons photographed to ‘objects’ of pity (2008, 17). Hence, her rejection of Sontag’s expression ‘regarding the pain of others’ (2012, 227). Sontag uses the term ‘others’ to remind us that any claim that we, as viewers, ‘feel with’ the victims depicted in atrocity photographs is hypocritical, for we do not and cannot occupy their position (2003, 102, 125-126). Azoulay rejects Sontag’s ‘othering’, insisting that photographic subjects, no matter how terrible their plight and regardless of whether they look directly at the camera or even know that they are being photographed, have agency in that they make demands on us to recognise that their situation is intolerable. The spectator’s gaze is a civil gaze in that it involves constructing a shared space of personhood. To quote Azoulay: ‘the photographic image is unlike any other image—it is the product of being together through photography’ (2008, 166). The ‘civil contract of photography’, which requires us to reconstruct what is off-frame, does not allow us to claim that we feel the pain of the persons depicted, but it helps us to understand what has

produced it. Didi-Huberman's conclusion is similar: 'the imagination [is] animated precisely by … our difficulty in understanding that which we don't understand but won't give up trying to understand—that which … we are bound to imagine as a way *of knowing it in spite of all*' (2008, 162; emphasis in original). In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Ahmed also argues against empathy, suggesting that it is the pain that 'cannot be shared through empathy' that calls for action (2004, 39).

I shall be concerned here with how humanitarian photographs 'touch' us through their materiality and also, in many cases, through what they evoke but do not show, inviting us to reconstruct the off-frame circumstances and to use our imagination to try to comprehend experiences that are not our own. My main point will be that the material and the off-frame are related, for it is the materiality of bodies and things—sometimes just of things—that refers us to what is beyond the image.

In humanitarian images that depict dead bodies, the materiality of corpses—living persons turned into inert matter—is evident. The photographs of child air raid victims mentioned previously illustrate the interplay between material presence (the bodies) and the unseen wider scenario that conditions the photographs' content; the labels on the bodies make us aware that these children are laid out in a morgue with many other victims. Despite the use of such atrocity photographs by Republican propaganda agencies, however, photographs of dead bodies represent a surprisingly small proportion of the output of foreign photojournalists. An exception is a series of photographs taken by Gerda Taro in a Valencian morgue after an air raid in May 1937. I will discuss just two of them. The first depicts a male body lying face up, at a diagonal, on a tiled floor, partly covered by a bloodstained sheet and with blood trickling from his head. The materiality of the tiled floor, as well as of the inert body and blood, impacts us at a physiological level—we know that tiled floors are cold. The sight of the corpse laid out on the floor additionally makes us aware that there are so many dead bodies that the morgue does not have adequate space for them. Indeed, we can make out another female body partly underneath the male body that is the central focus. The second image (see Fig. 4.1) is of a pair of corpses laid out on a table, photographed with the camera held at the level of their feet which occupy the foreground; we cannot see their faces. The focus on the corpses' feet, rather than on their faces, emphasises their conversion into inert matter. The bare feet of the body on the right function for me as the 'punctum': the detail that 'pierces' one. The disparity between the size of the feet of the two bodies, and what

Fig. 4.1 Gerda Taro. Air raid victims in a Valencian morgue, May 1937. © International Center of Photography/Magnum Photos TEST Pictures (rights managed)

little one can make out of their clothing, implies that this is a man and a woman—presumably laid on the same table because they are a couple. The black clothing suggests that they are from the popular classes. These material details become their identities in the absence of their faces. However, when printing several photographs from this series, the French Communist magazine *Regards*—part of Münzenberg's media empire—chose for the issue's cover picture a photograph by Taro that did not show any dead bodies but a crowd pressing against the bars of the closed gates of Valencia's main hospital after the same air raid, filmed from inside the gates so we see their distressed facial expressions. The impact of this image is all the greater for leaving off-frame the wounded or dead bodies that the relatives are so anxious to see, making readers want to turn the pages to see them too.

Several Republican propaganda images rely on photomontage to make a material impact. The 1930s was, of course, the great age of photomontage, associated particularly, thanks to its use by the 1920s Soviet avant-garde, with Communist anti-fascist propaganda. An elementary use of photomontage was used in the previously mentioned poster showing a single child air raid victim, in that case superimposed on a skyscape with the outlines of planes inked onto it. Sebastiaan Faber (2018) has researched the recycling of photographic images for pro-Republican propaganda purposes, both by the Republic's propaganda agencies and by foreign magazines and relief committees. It should be stressed that, once photojournalists sold or delivered their images to an agency or magazine, they had no control over their use (an exception is the photographs of Horna published in the anarchist magazine *Umbral*, where she was graphic editor). Faber's main example is a montage, printed as the cover to the 1937 photo album *Madrid* issued by the Madrid Defense Junta, whose bottom-left corner is occupied by a nursing mother, amid a crowd, looking anxiously skyward, superimposed on a dramatic sky with planes inked on it and, to the right, a large swastika-daubed bomb falling (2018, 49). The bottom-left image is, in fact, a detail from a photograph taken by Chim at a land reform meeting in impoverished Extremadura two months before the civil war's start: the woman suckling her baby is in fact craning her head to listen to the speakers on a raised platform. The juxtaposition of images transmits to us a fear of aerial bombardment that is not what the woman was feeling when photographed in May 1936. This cover picture is a perfect illustration of how photomontage creates new meaning by harnessing together disparate elements—it does not make visible an invisible emotion implicit in Chim's photograph; it creates an emotion that was not in the scene captured by the camera at all. The collision of the upward impulse of the nursing mother's skyward gaze and the downward impulse of the falling bomb enacts for us as spectators the explosion that the photomontage suggests is about to happen.

Azoulay notes the problem of images that become imagos: stock representations of particular types of suffering (here, that caused by aerial bombardment aimed at civilians, typecast in the mother-child dyad). Such stock representations impede the spectator's establishment of a civil contract—a 'shared space of personhood'—by lifting the human figures out of their circumstances. In the photograph just discussed, the Extremaduran peasants in May 1936 have become inhabitants of a Madrid under severe aerial bombardment in the winter of 1936–1937. The iconic October

1936 photograph of the child air raid victim suffered a similar decontextualisation when it was recycled in the 1937 Catalan Communist children's magazine *Mirbal* with a caption describing the child as the victim of an air raid in Almería (Mendelson 2007, 181-182). Whether these decontextualisations matter is debatable; for Azoulay, they do. The decontextualisation does not detract from the images' material impact, however.

I would like now to move to a very different set of images whose depiction of a vibrant materiality engages us sympathetically with the Republican figures portrayed. The impact of these photographs depends on the spectator's awareness of the wartime context off-frame, giving the vitality a particular affective charge. My first example is from a series taken by Taro on the Aragon front in August 1936, in which she departs from her usual focus on battle scenes (she would herself be killed at the battle of Brunete in July 1937), here focusing on peasants at harvest time. The material vibrancy is produced by the workers' energetic postures and above all by the grain caught in mid-air as it is tossed into the cart. This image achieves its effects through the contrast with the images of death and destruction expected of war photography, instead depicting the production of life in the form of food. My second example is another photograph of food, taken by the Catalan photojournalist Centelles outside Barcelona's El Borne market, also in August 1936. It depicts two women and a man, in working clothes, holding open a sack while another woman fills it with aubergines from another sack brimming with produce in the foreground. The photograph's message is that things are under control in Barcelona, despite the war. There is a kind of material symbiosis between the solidity of the human bodies and the glossy firmness of the aubergines that are the central focus.

My next example of an engaging vibrant materiality is also by Centelles. It depicts three militiawomen on the Aragon front in October 1936 (see Fig. 4.2). The women stand facing each other engaged in conversation, in baggy, wrinkled overalls, with their rifles slung over their shoulder or held in front of them. They are stocky and unglamorous. The photograph's refusal to idealise its women combatants is striking, given the tendency in many representations of Republican militiawomen to depict them as exotic novelties, at a time when women's membership of the military was unheard of. What strikes me in this photograph is the material solidity of the three women's bodies, which occupy almost the entire frame. A further example of material vibrancy was chosen by Susie Linfield to illustrate the chapter on Robert Capa in her book on photography and political violence (2010,

Fig. 4.2 Agustí Centelles. Militiawomen, Aragon front, October 1936. © Ministry of Culture and Education, Spain/Centro de Documentación de Memoria Histórica. Archivo Centelles, Foto 6452

174-177). She challenges Sontag's attack on feeling as a response to war photography on the supposition that emotion is incompatible with critical reflection (2010, xiv-xv). Linfield argues that this mistrust of emotion disregards the feelings that have motivated the practitioners of documentary photography. She notes that, although Capa was billed by *Picture Post* as 'the greatest war photographer in the world', his best photos are not of battles but of ordinary people in the Republican zone, whether soldiers or civilians; Capa's talent, she contends, is for communicating to spectators his own affective engagement with his photographic subjects (2010, 177). The photograph chosen by her shows a couple of POUM militiamen on the Aragon front dancing a lively Aragonese jota, with their comrades looking on enthusiastically.[7] She singles out this photograph for its ability

[7] The POUM (Partit Obrer de Unificació Marxista/Unified Marxist Workers Party) was a Catalan anti-Stalinist Marxist Party. George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* (1970) famously recounts his enrolment in a POUM militia.

to capture the vitality of the dancing soldiers, which impacts us because we know that these men were fighting in precarious circumstances.

These vibrant photographs need to be remembered since we have come to associate the Spanish Civil War with photographs of victims (refugees and those affected by air raid damage). Indeed, the many photographs of refugees taken during the Spanish Civil War established an iconography for the future: one that produces a symbiosis between the uprooted human figure and the bundle of material possessions he or she is carrying.[8] The symbiosis can work in two directions: as a reduction of the refugee to the status of material thing, or as the animation of the material possessions as a synecdoche for the refugee carrying them. Either way, what strikes us in such images is the materiality of the possessions being transported, which serve as traces of a life left behind. One particular image by Capa—of a young girl curled up on a pile of sackcloth bundles, taken at a refugee transit centre in Barcelona on 15 January 1939—has been used on the cover of countless books about refugees, becoming an imago. In the case of such iconic images, we should heed Azoulay's warning about the depersonalisation that occurs when an image is lifted out of its circumstances and comes to stand for a universal condition: in this case, that of the refugee. The context here is the advance of the Nationalist army on Barcelona, producing the exodus of half a million people over the Pyrenees to France. The fusion in this photo of the girl's body with the bundles on which she is huddled touches us literally through the materiality of both.

This photograph is particularly interesting because Capa commented on the circumstances in which it was taken. He wrote: 'She must be very tired, since she does not play with the other children; she does not stir. But her eye follows me, one large dark eye follows my every movement. It is difficult to work under such a look. It is not easy to be in such a place and not be able to do anything except record the suffering that others must endure' (cited in Faber 2010, 405). Azoulay, keen to downplay the importance of the photographer as artist in favour of 'the event of photography', feels that the photographer's attitude to what he or she is photographing is less important than what the spectator does with the image (2012, 47-54). There has, however, been endless controversy about whether photojournalists who sell their work for money are guilty of complicity with the suffering they depict. Here Capa shows himself to be sensitive to

[8] For an analysis of photoreportage depicting the possessions carried by Republican refugees, see Douglas and Rosón (2020).

the issue of 'regarding the pain of others' (though he does describe them as 'others'). In practice, his work played a large role in raising aid for the Republic. The head of the Republic's Propaganda Delegation in Paris, Jaume Vicens, testified to Capa's instrumentality in enabling the Republic to set this delegation up, and, while selling his photographs widely, Capa was a staff photographer for the Paris-based *Ce Soir*, created by the French Communist Party with Spanish Republican funding to raise support for the Republic (Lefebvre and Lebrun 2010, 77-78, 81-82). In 1938, also to raise support for the Republic, he published the photobook *Death in the making* in New York, accompanied by an exhibition at the New School for Social Research. A tribute to Taro, killed the previous year, it featured photographs by himself, Taro, and (uncredited) Chim; Capa wrote the captions (Young 2020). Capa's photos were widely disseminated on postcards by aid organisations; the British National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief and the North American Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign, for example, printed postcards featuring the photographs he took in March 1939, just before the civil war's end, of the detention camps where 200,000 Spanish Republican refugees were interned on the French Mediterranean coast (Faber 2010, 406). These photographs had been published widely in the international press, including an eight-page spread in the British magazine *Picture Post* (Faber 2010, 406). Capa himself donated money to the aid campaign of the French Welcome Committee for Spanish Intellectuals that was inspired by his photos of the French internment camps (Meléndez 2010, 398).

Capa took around 300 photos of the French camps, which are among those recovered in the 'Mexican suitcase' (see Note 3). The most striking, repeated feature is again the fusion of human bodies and precarious material possessions (see Fig. 4.3). Similar photographs were taken by the Catalan photojournalist Centelles of the camp at Bram, where he himself was interned as a refugee from March to September 1939, miraculously being allowed to keep his camera. During his internment he took some 600 photos (Centelles 2011, 101-106). Capa's visit to Bram coincided with Centelles' internment there, though he does not appear in any of Capa's pictures. Photographing the camp at Bram from an insider perspective, Centelles' images emphasise the materiality of the cramped conditions—as in a photo taken in his barracks at night, in which the human bodies and the blankets on the ground are barely distinguishable—or stress the internees' physical vulnerability and resilience, including a self-portrait of himself brushing his teeth in pyjamas outside his barracks.

Fig. 4.3 Robert Capa. Republican refugees, Le Barcarès internment camp, southern France, March 1939. © International Center of Photography/Magnum Photos TEST 02-Stock (Estate)

Particularly interesting, but much less well known, are the photos taken in the French camp at Argelès in May 1939, just over a month after Franco declared victory, by the American woman photographer Ione Robinson, on behalf of the Republican Emigration Service in France which was arranging boats to take Republican refugees to Mexico. Robinson avoids depicting the abject conditions of the camps, preferring to convey the bodily vitality of the Republican internees. One photo depicts a handsome young Republican leaning out of the window of his wooden barracks; another captures two athletic males, one with naked torso seated on a crate and the other in a vest leaning towards him, both of them smiling. When Robinson subsequently visited an internment camp for Spanish Republican refugees in Algeria, again for the Republican Emigration Service, she took only one photo because she did not want to convey the despondency into which the internees had fallen (Cate-Arries 2004, 414). Robinson may have felt it important to give a positive image of the

Republican detainees because the Republican Emigration Service needed to show that it was supplying Mexico with healthy citizens. Whatever the case, the result is a refusal of the pity that Azoulay has denounced for objectifying the human figures in images of suffering.

A number of photos of Republican refugees by foreign journalists use the diegetic gaze to draw viewers' attention to off-frame space. This is the case with a photograph by Taro of refugees who had fled Málaga on foot on its February 1937 fall to the Nationalists. Those who reached Almería, 200 kilometres to the east, had survived the aerial strafing and shelling by gunboats of the refugee trail, in one of the worst atrocities of the war. The photo's effect is produced by the gazes of the photographic subjects at off-frame spaces that condition their facial gestures and body language. The distraught mother surrounded by young children stands in the centre between an older woman and an injured man positioned on the ground, all of them staring at something off-frame to the right. In the lower foreground we see the head and shoulders of a boy who stares at the camera, interpellating us. This photograph, reproduced in a montage of photos of the Málaga refugees by Taro and Capa in *Regards* in March 1937, was re-used in cropped form on the cover of Willi Munzenberg's Prague-based Communist magazine *Die Volks-Illustrierte* in June 1937, just after the fall of the Basque Country to the Nationalists. As Faber has noted (2018, 49), it is a rather shocking case of recycling in which the excision of the wounded male to the right of the original photo allows the caption to present it as of a Basque mother widowed in the Nationalist capture of Bilbao. The materiality of the body language remains eloquent, but the attribution of the photograph to another place and time turns the image into an imago, divorced from the photographic subjects' circumstances.

Horna's photographs, in particular, make brilliant use of the diegetic gaze to direct us to off-frame space. In an undated photograph taken at a refugee centre in Alcázar de San Juan (Ciudad Real), two children, on the far left and right, interpellate us with their gaze at the camera. The gaze of the boy front right is hidden from us, arousing our curiosity. The boy in the centre stares avidly at something going on to his left that we cannot see; his bodily vitality, as well as giving him agency, draws our attention to the existence of an off-frame reality that explains what is happening. Something similar occurs in another photo by Horna of a teacher with young children crowding round her, all looking avidly ahead at something beyond the photograph's left edge. They are shot at an angle, with the camera's tilt giving the impression that they are being propelled towards

this invisible off-frame space. A similar effect is produced by a further photo by Horna, part of a set taken in August 1937 at a maternity centre at Vélez Rubio (Almería) for mothers-to-be evacuated from Madrid and reproduced in an October 1937 double-page photo feature in *Umbral* (see Fig. 4.4). The nursing mother in the centre gazes anxiously at something to her right that we cannot see but whose presence affects us through the transmission of her anxiety. Horna's ability to convey bodily vitality—in this photo, through the nursing mother's sturdy physique—allows her to affirm life in the midst of precarity.

Fig. 4.4 Kati Horna. Maternity centre, Vélez Rubio, Almería, August 1937. Archivo Horna, Foto 103

Apart from refugees, the next most iconic topic in photographs of the Spanish Civil War is that of air raid damage. Such photos have an obvious humanitarian function in soliciting aid. The address to the spectator is made by the material debris itself. Horna took several photos of air raid debris in Barcelona. A particularly striking photo merges the animate with the inanimate through the triangular composition to the left, formed by the seated policeman and standing soldier next to a statue of the Virgin salvaged from the bombing. But what most literally touches the viewer in this photo is the jumble of debris to the right, spilling out in an almost animate fashion onto the sidewalk. The merging of animate and inanimate becomes threatening when we spot the outstretched arms among the debris—until we realise that this is not a human body but what appears to be a life-size doll, in a posture reminiscent of the crucifixion.

Commenting on the many photos of air raid damage by Capa and Taro, Juanjo Lahuerta praises their understanding of how loss can be conveyed eloquently through images devoid of human presence, for the material objects depicted point to 'lives … suddenly abandoned' (2010, 173). This is illustrated graphically in a photo by Capa in which all that remains of human life in the bombed-out house is a rocking chair, which functions as an image of loss of home. Another photo by Capa, reproduced on the cover of *Regards* in December 1936, depicts air raid damage in the working-class district of Vallecas, to Madrid's south. A woman stands in front of the rubble that was once her home, pulling her jacket tightly round her (it is winter) and confronting the camera, and us, with a vacant stare. The debris overwhelms the human figure; the material remains speak to us, as they do to her. Perhaps the most subtle use of materiality to represent loss is found in a photograph by Horna of a bed in a field hospital on the Aragon front, taken in Spring 1937, whose evocation of absence through the lack of human figures combines with a life-affirming material solidity enhanced by the light pouring through the open window. The absent occupant of the bed—has he died, we wonder—makes his presence felt through the pin-ups of film stars on the wall and the suitcases and belongings on the shelving and bedside table. But what makes his absent presence tangible is the imprint of his body on the bed. I offer this photograph as a vivid illustration of how the materiality of things refers us to what is beyond the image, engaging our imagination to reconstruct a broader scenario that eludes us.

The impossibility of empathy—we are not and cannot be there, and our response to these photographs is coloured by ideas, emotions and

experiences that are very different from those of Spaniards in the 1930s—becomes acute when we look at these photographs today, more than eighty years after the end of the Spanish Civil War. Nonetheless, the materiality of the images I have discussed 'touches' us in a way that invites us to reconstruct—that is, to imagine—the historical circumstances that, even if we are scholars of the Spanish Civil War, we can never fully know but that, with Didi-Huberman, we want and try to know 'in spite of all'.

Works Cited

Ahmed, Sara. 2004. *The cultural politics of emotion*. New York: Routledge.

Azoulay, Ariella. 2008. *The civil contract of photography*. New York: Zone Books.

———. 2012. *Civil imagination: A political ontology of photography*. New York: Verso.

Barnett, Michael N. 2011. *The empire of humanity: A history of humanitarianism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Barthes, Roland. 1984. *Camera lucida: Reflections on photography*. Trans. Richard Howard. London: Fontana.

Blackman, Lisa. 2013. *Immaterial bodies: Affect, embodiment, mediation*. London: Sage.

Brennan, Teresa. 2004. *The transmission of affect*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Cate-Arries, Francie. 2004. *Spanish culture behind barbed wire: Memory and representation of the French concentration camps, 1939-1945*. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press.

Centelles, Agustí. 2011. *Centelles > in_edit_¡oh!* Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura.

Cuevas-Wolf, Cristina. 2008. Una España desafiante: Münzenberg, el montaje y los medios de comunicación comunistas en Francia y España. In *Revistas, modernidad y guerra*, ed. Jordana Mendelson, 53–72. Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.

Didi-Huberman, Georges. 2008. *Images in spite of all: Four photographs from Auschwitz*. Trans. Shane B. Lillis. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Douglas, Lee, and María Rosón. 2020. The things they carried: A gendered rereading of photographs of displacement during the Spanish Civil War. *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 21 (4): 459–483.

Faber, Sebastiaan. 2010. Documenting displacement: Capa, Taro, Chim, and the visual birth of the modern refugee. In *The Mexican suitcase: The rediscovered Spanish Civil War negatives of Capa, Chim, and Taro*, ed. Cynthia Young, vol. 2, 404–406. New York: International Center of Photography.

———. 2018. *Memory battles of the Spanish Civil War: History, fiction, photography*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Fehrenbach, Heide, and Davide Rodogno. 2015. *Humanitarian photography: A history*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Gruber, Helmut. 1965. Willi Münzenberg: Propagandist for and against the Comintern. *International Review of Social History* 10: 188–210.
Holmes, Rose. 2018. 'Make the situation real to us without stressing the horrors': Children, photography and humanitarianism in the Spanish Civil War. In *Humanitarianism and Media—1910 to the Present*, ed. Johannes Paulman, 67–89. Oxford: Berghahn Books.
Horna, Kati. 1992. *Fotografias de la guerra civil española (1937-1938)*. Salamanca: Ministerio de Cultura.
Lahuerta, Juanjo. 2010. Taro and Capa: Photographs of bombings, Madrid, February 1937. In *The Mexican suitcase: The rediscovered Spanish Civil War negatives of Capa, Chim, and Taro*, ed. Cynthia Young, vol. 2, 172–173. New York: International Center of Photography.
Lefebvre, Michel, and Bernard Lebrun. 2010. Where does the 'Mexican suitcase' come from? In *The Mexican suitcase: The rediscovered Spanish Civil War negatives of Capa, Chim, and Taro*, ed. Cynthia Young, vol. 2, 75–82. New York: International Center of Photography.
Lefebvre-Peña, Michel. 2013. *Guerra gráfica, Espagne 1936-1939: Photographes, artistes et écrivains en guerre*. Paris: Éditions de la Martinière.
Marks, Laura. 2000. *The skin of the film: Intercultural cinema, embodiment, and the senses*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
———. 2002. *Touch: Sensuous theory and multisensory media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Massumi, Brian. 2002. *Parables for the virtual: Movement, affect, sensation*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Meléndez, Marie-Hélène. 2010. Capa, internment camps, Southern France, March 1939. In *The Mexican suitcase: The rediscovered Spanish Civil War negatives of Capa, Chim, and Taro*, ed. Cynthia Young, vol. 2, 397–398. New York: International Center of Photography.
Mendelson, Jordana. 2007. *Revistas y guerra 1936-1939*. Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.
Mulvey, Laura. 1989. Visual pleasure and narrative cinema. In *Visual and other pleasures*, 14–26. London: Macmillan.
Orwell, George. 1970. *Homage to Catalonia*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
Sánchez-Biosca, Vicente. 2013. Nonfiction film during the Civil War. In *A companion to Spanish cinema*, ed. Jo Labanyi and Tatjana Pavlovic, 521–526. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
Shaviro, Steven. 1993. *The cinematic body*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Sobchack, Vivian. 2004. *Carnal thoughts: Embodiment and moving image culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Solé i Sabaté, Josep M., and Joan Villaroya. 2005. *Guerra i propaganda: Fotografies del Comissariat de Propaganda de la Generalitat de Catalunya, 1936-1939*. Barcelona: Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya / Viena Edicions.

Sontag, Susan. 2003. *Regarding the pain of others*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Stradling, Robert. 2008. *Your children will be next: Bombing and propaganda in the Spanish Civil War*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Young, Cynthia, ed. 2010. *The Mexican suitcase: The rediscovered Spanish Civil War negatives of Capa, Chim, and Taro. 2 vols*. New York: International Center of Photography.

———, ed. 2020. *Death in the making*. New York: International Center of Photography.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

CHAPTER 5

Archiving the Trauma of Internment Camps in Film: Jacqueline Veuve's *Journal de Rivesaltes, 1941–1942* (1997)

Brenda Lynn Edgar

Introduction

This chapter examines the film *Journal de Rivesaltes, 1941–1942*, a 1997 documentary film about Swiss paediatric nurse Friedel Bohny-Reiter (1912–2001) and her experience as a nurse for the Swiss Red Cross/Aid to Children organisation at the Rivesaltes internment camp[1] near Perpignan in southwest France. Made by Swiss filmmaker and anthropologist Jacqueline Veuve (1930–2013), the film focuses on the journal Bohny-Reiter kept while at Rivesaltes, recording daily her struggle to relieve internees amidst the daily onslaught of suffering and atrocities, which in

[1] Although its official name is Joffre Military Camp, I will refer to it as Rivesaltes, the name by which it was known when it served as an internment camp in the Second World War and by which it is remembered by survivors and former Red Cross Swiss Aid to Children workers.

B. L. Edgar (✉)
University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland
e-mail: Brenda.Edgar@unige.ch

© The Author(s) 2022

B. L. Edgar et al. (eds.), *Making Humanitarian Crises*, Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00824-5_5

1942 included the deportation of the camp's Jewish internees. In the film, an 84-year-old Bohny-Reiter revisits Rivesaltes for the first time in 54 years while the camera follows (Fig. 5.1), recording her unscripted comments and reactions as she wanders through the camp's windswept ruins. Interspersed with this footage are fictional reconstructions of selected passages from the journal, interviews with camp survivors, photographs taken by Bohny-Reiter and Swiss photographer Paul Senn (1901–1953), press films from the Second World War (1939–1945), as well as still shots of Bohny-Reiter's own paintings and drawings she made over the many years after her experience at Rivesaltes. The camp's architecture, with its seemingly endless rows of shoddy barracks, emerges as one of the film's principal antagonists, figuring prominently in the oral and written accounts given in the film as well as in the visual documentation shown from 1941 to 1942 and Veuve's own footage from 1996. *Journal de Rivesaltes* had a dual agenda, aiming to attribute Swiss women humanitarians their rightful place in the history of the Second World War, while still representing the complexity and subjectivity of their experiences, and at the same time, awaken public conscience to the existence of internment camps of France and the involvement of the French army and national guard in the deportations. In filigree is the humanitarian paradox of helping in a helpless situation, revealing a darker and less heroic side to organisations like the Swiss Red Cross Aid to Children.

This chapter will examine what the film adds to Bohny-Reiter's written account of her experience as a humanitarian, how it contributed to shaping a new understanding of Switzerland's role in the Second World War in the late 1990s, and its value as a source for the history of emotions. I will examine this documentary film not as formal exercise of establishing

Fig. 5.1 Excerpts from the film *Journal de Rivesaltes, 1941–1942* showing Bohny-Reiter revisiting the camp's ruins © Cinémanufacture

'resonances between … "historical reality" and "camera reality"' (Kracauer 1969, 3; Albano 2018, 188; LaCapra 2018, 24), but rather as an example of what Emma Hutchinson has described as 'representational practices' which make 'traumatic events collectively meaningful, including to those who do not experience trauma directly, but only bear witness, from a distance' (Hutchinson 2019, 3). Understanding distance here to be temporal, I propose to examine how Veuve's film retroactively constructs (or deconstructs) a humanitarian crisis by performing both the trauma of others in the past and that of herself and her projected public in the present. I will also discuss how Veuve's approach as an anthropologist makes her film an important source for the history of emotions.

Negotiating Political Emotions Through *Rivesaltes*

While Bohny-Reiter's journal is a historical source in and of itself, Veuve's film constitutes a document of the journal's reception in the specific emotional context of Switzerland and France in 1996 as both countries come to terms (after a significant delay) with their histories in the Second World War. The film's release coincided with a critical moment of reassessment of the Second World War. There was mounting international pressure to return stolen assets of Holocaust victims, especially after the revelations regarding the collaboration of Swiss banks with the Third Reich. In 1996, the same year Veuve began working on the film, the International Red Cross opened their archives related to their activities during the Second World War. It was also during this period that Swiss historians such as Jean-Claude Favez (1938–2013) began reassessing the putative 'neutrality' of Switzerland and the Red Cross during the Second World War (Favez 1988, 1998, 1999, 2015; Favez and Python 1998). Veuve was no latecomer to the game; *Rivesaltes* was almost finished when the Swiss parliament voted in December 1996 to appoint an independent commission of experts to examine the country's relationship with the Third Reich and the controversial policies regarding refugees fleeing the Nazis. Led by historian Jean-François Bergier, the commission began research in 1997 and published their findings two years later in what is commonly referred to in Swiss medias as the *Bergier Report* (Commission indépendante d'experts Suisse – Seconde Guerre mondiale et al. 1999). Veuve was well aware of the revelations regarding knowledge of the deportation of Jews to Nazi concentration camps and spoke openly about it in the extensive press coverage of the film. Interviewed by the French-Swiss journal *24 heures* Veuve

insisted: ‘At the time, prisoners knew they would not return from Poland. The opening of the [Swiss Red Cross] archives leaves no doubt, the [Swiss] Federal Counsel also knew’ (Chappuis 1997).

In France, the context was no less turbulent with the culmination of Maurice Papon’s trial for his role in the deportation of 1560 people in the Bordeaux region between 1942 and 1944. Not only was Papon the first Vichy official to be tried and convicted of crimes against humanity, but his paradoxical association with Gaullism and the French resistance, as well as his subsequent brilliant political career in successive French governments, would reveal deep divisions in French public opinion regarding the country’s implication in war crimes and genocide (Mouralis 2002). The long delay before Papon’s conviction in 1998 (some 17 years after the trial began), embodied the lack of re-examination of France’s Vichy government in the Second World War. Major historical studies began to appear on deportations in France such as Annette Wieviorka’s 1992 *Déportation et Génocide* (Wieviorka 1992) and on French internment camps, such as Anne Grynberg’s 1991 landmark *Les Camps de la Honte* (Grynberg 1991). Early in the prior decade, French historians had already begun to question the role of collective memory in the construction of national identities by analysing the ‘memory places’ (Nora et al. 1984) or ‘places in which the collective heritage of France was crystallized’ (Nora and Kritzman 1996, xv) such as Vichy and Jewish culture within French society. In early projects for the film, Veuve criticised both France’s reluctance to address the crimes of the Vichy government and its readiness to attribute hero status to those who resisted. While France had, ‘after 50 years of silence’, begun to ‘reckon with their guilty conscience’, press coverage, documentaries and historical studies only enabled camp survivors and former camp officials to ‘invent a glorious past for themselves while curiously, and systematically, neglecting to mention the work of the Swiss Red Cross Aid to Children in those camps’ (Veuve 1995a). For Veuve, Bohny-Reiter’s journal provided a ‘view of the camps [that] is closer to reality than those who are describing it from memory fifty years later in films and books and who depict themselves as faultless, guiltless heroes’ (Veuve 1995a).

Public debate around the reassessment of the history of the Second World War was also fuelled by the atrocities of the Bosnian War (1992–1995) and the ensuing armed conflicts which continued until 2001. Ethnic cleansing, mass rape and the 1995 Srebrenica massacre, stirred outrage and horror as traumas of the World Wars were reactivated in Europe and the United States, revealing the latent violence and

hegemony of Western civilisation and belying 'its claims to universality and leadership' (Weber 1997, 88). Protesting the 'insanity' of the Kosovo Crisis in 1999 (on the occasion of the 1999 *Journée de l'Europe*), Swiss confederation president Ruth Dreifuss declared that Europe had not witnessed such blatant violations of human rights since the Second World War (AP 1999). Elected federal councillor in 1993 and the country's first woman president in 1999, Dreifuss was a prominent socialist and feminist political figure. The year of her election, she famously returned from a humanitarian visit to the Macedonian refugee camp in Stenkovac with 20 refugees in her plane. Of Swiss-Jewish heritage, Dreifuss also spoke proudly of how her father had broken Swiss law in order to save Jews fleeing Nazi Germany (Hazan 1999).

It was within this context that Veuve framed her project for *Journal de Rivesaltes* as an urgent 'necessity' (Veuve 1995b, 53). Time was also of the essence; not only was the camp itself threatened with demolition but both Friedel Bohny-Reiter and Maurice Dubois (director of Swiss Aid to Children during the Second World War) were then 85 and 87 years old, respectively. Moreover, as Pierre Nora observed 'a need for memory is a need for history' (Nora and Kritzman 1996, 8). In seeking to preserve the memories of the actors in its sinister history, Veuve drew a great deal of attention to the history of Rivesaltes and to that of French internment camps. Reactions to her film brought additional testimonies from survivors (Veuve 1990a) with whom she corresponded regularly, sometimes requesting material for a future museum[2] (Veuve 2000b).

Jacqueline Veuve and Anthropological Cinema, a Nexus for the History of Emotions

Jacqueline Veuve was not only a major figure of the new Swiss cinema; she was the country's first woman filmmaker. When her first mid-length film came out in 1966 (Veuve and Yersin 1966), women still didn't have the right to vote in Switzerland and wouldn't until 1971. Compared to that of other countries, Swiss film production has always been small. Its beginnings were dominated by documentary films, due in part to federal funding schemes only available to this genre up until the late 1960s (Boillat 2010, 210). Fiction or *cinema d'auteur* became more prominent in

[2] The project for a museum was long in the making; the Rivesaltes memorial wasn't inaugurated until 2015.

French Switzerland in the 1970s with film makers such as Jean-Luc Goddard and the 'Group 5' (Alain Tanner, Claude Gorreta, Michel Soutter, Jean-Louis Roy and Jean-Jacques Legrange), a milieu from which Veuve felt largely excluded (Rohrbach et al. 2010, 17:47). However, Swiss fictional cinema remained heavily influenced by the documentary style and an interest in local ethnography, as can be seen in the films of Yves Yersin (Boillat 2010, 210), with whom Veuve made her first film. In addition to the usual obstacles faced by women filmmakers, Veuve also confronted the financial constraints specific to the Swiss market in which independent filmmakers must essentially produce their own films; a constraint which also accorded them a great deal of independence. The fact that Veuve made almost 60 films in her career attests not only to her tenacity as an independent woman filmmaker but also to her business acumen.

She was born Jacqueline Reber in 1930 in Payerne, an agricultural region in the French speaking part of Switzerland which counted approximately 5000 inhabitants and an important military training base. Brought up in a bourgeoisie family, Veuve trained as a librarian and documentarist of cinema and anthropology. At the age of 25, she left for Paris to work at the Musée de l'Homme as assistant to vanguard anthropologist-filmmaker Jean Rouch (1917–2004), analysing, documenting and classifying the museum's extensive collection of ethnographic films. Her work with Rouch is largely acknowledged as a turning point, her entrance into the world of cinema through the door of anthropology. For the rest of her life and career she would refer to herself an anthropologist filmmaker, an ethical and aesthetic position at the crossroads of two disciplines crucial to the history of emotions.

Both anthropology and anthropological cinema are a nexus for questions in the history of emotions. According to Jan Plamper, anthropology has, 'more than any other discipline', contributed most to 'debunking the myth that emotions are identical all over the planet', and was the first to demonstrate the cultural and temporal variability of emotions, developing auto reflexive practices regarding the anthropologist's own emotions and their influence on the analysis of those of others (Plamper 2017, 15–16). Jean Rouch was also one of the pioneering figures of *cinema vérité* in anthropology, an approach to documentary filmmaking started in the late 1950s, which sought to acknowledge the subjectivity of the filmmaker and the artificiality of the act of filming itself, often by rendering visible the camera's presence. Rouch also used the *cinema vérité* technique of inserting deliberately fictional constructions within the documentary in order to

highlight the plurality of truths and perspectives involved in any singular situation. Ethical issues of subjectivity, such as the 'intersubjective encounter' between the filmmaker and those being filmed (Grimshaw and Ravetz 2009, 546), are at the centre anthropological cinema. Rouch famously handed over the camera at times to those he was filming (Rouch 1958). He also contributed to technical developments that enabled synchronised recording of sounds and images, thus capturing multi-sensorial impressions that transcend a uniquely visual observation. A friend of the surrealists, perceived as an iconic yet unclassifiable figure, Rouch's ethno-fictional films 'dissolve the boundaries between fiction and reality, fantasy and truth, acting and real life' (Grimshaw and Ravetz 2005, 11). Veuve's cataloguing work at the Musée de l'Homme would have brought her in contact with other anthropological filmmaking approaches such as observational cinema. Unlike Rouch's approach, observational cinema excludes fictional constructions but similarly seeks to '[bring] one into intense engagement with the senses' questioning the limits of purely visual representations and 'involve[ing] the making of a certain kind of representational object, one that is not a surface copy of the original world but a new form revealed through its shapes and textures' (Grimshaw and Ravetz 2005, 15). Veuve also studied in the United States during the 1970s with British documentarist Richard Leacock (1921–2011), a pioneering figure of direct cinema who founded MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology's)'s film department.

Although she had conducted extensive historical research in preparation of *Rivesaltes*, Veuve described it as 'a film which privileges emotions over history' (Veuve 1995b, 53). The focus on psychological and affective aspects of individual experiences, especially traumatic ones, and the general political engagement of Veuve's documentaries are also representative of 1970s film theory. The medium of film itself has been considered a vector of emotions and empathy since its inception with the anticipation that viewers project themselves into the film just as much as the film is itself projected. As early as 1916, German experimental psychologist Hugo Münsterberg maintained that the primary interest in the earliest moving pictures was psychological and related to human perception. Pioneering figure of experimental and applied psychology, Harvard professor and influential intellectual in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century, 'Münsterberg was the first film theorist to seriously argue for the film medium as a model of the workings of the human mind', which would be the basis of highly influential film theorists of the 1970s such as

Jean-Louis Baudry (1930–2015) and Christian Metz (1931–1993) (Münsterberg and Langdale 2002, 9). Like proponents of *cinema vérité*, Jean-Louis Baudry also postulated that if 'cinema were to reveal the marks of its own inception, a knowledge effect could obtain, which would serve as denunciation and resistance to the dominant ideology' (Casebier 1991, 73–74). Veuve's *cinema vérité* reflected not only her feminist engagement (Veuve 1974; Veuve 1976; Veuve 1978; Veuve 2000a), but also her efforts to document social groups and practices that were marginalised or likely to disappear such as female workers (Veuve 1978), or agricultural communities (Veuve and Yersin 1966; Veuve 1990b). Of *Rivesaltes*, she expressed a desire to do justice to the all but forgotten '"little heroines" who worked in the shadow of the Swiss Red Cross Aid to Children' (Veuve 1995b, 53). Like her other films, *Rivesaltes* also reflects Veuve's own approach to anthropological cinema which she defined as a deliberate choice to examine her own culture through an anthropological lens, examining the roots of its institutions (Probst 1995, 28).

By the time she discovered Bohny-Reiter's journal, Veuve had already made three documentary films on subjects related to the Second World War, *La Filière*, *La Traversée* and *Lettres de Stalingrad* (Veuve 1972; Veuve 1986; Veuve 1987). Also, as a young trainee librarian at the Musée de l'Homme, she was exposed to the experiences of older colleagues of the Second World War including Jean Rouch. Rouch was fervently opposed to Pétain, colonialism and racism (Diop 2007, 186), and had avoided serving in the Second World War by enrolling in the French Engineer corps in Niger. Veuve's fellow librarian Yvonne Oddon was a survivor of the Holocaust who had been imprisoned at Ravensbruck and through whom Veuve believed to have discovered the 'suffering of others' (Rohrbach et al. 2010, 13:01). Two of her four films on the Second World War, *La Filière* and *Rivesaltes* (Veuve 1986; Veuve 1997), focus on Swiss women humanitarians and their defiance of the protocols which forbade them to prevent or hinder deportations. The 1986 short-length documentary *La Filière* was inspired by Anne Marie Imhof-Piguet's book about her experience as a Swiss nurse at Chateau de la Hille (Imhof 1985), a French colony run by Swiss Aid to Children where, along with her colleague Rösli Näf and the complicity of a handful of French and Swiss citizens, she organised the escape of 150 Jewish children into Switzerland between 1942 and 1944, saving them from deportation. The film features rare interviews with the ageing Imhof-Piguet and Näf, capturing how they narrate their memories and experience at a distance of over 40 years. By the time Veuve

began making *Rivesaltes*, she had thus already engaged in denouncing the invisibility of humanitarian women in historical records and secondary literature. Friedel Bohny-Reiter was no exception to this invisibility: the number of official documents concerning the humanitarian work of Friedel's husband August Bohny-Reiter (A. Bohny-Reiter) is considerably greater than those held in Friedel's archives. Prior to 1993 there was no printed, filmed or other published record of Bohny-Reiter's humanitarian experiences. Also, there was very little interest in academia in the 1990s for the history of humanitarian women (Fleury-Seemuller 2020). While the French edition is annotated and substantially introduced by Swiss historian Michèle Fleury-Seemuller, subsequent studies have been rare (Kanyar Becker 2010).

Gathering Emotional Documents

Veuve described *Rivesaltes* as a 'meeting between a place and a book' (Veuve 1995b, 1). In her accounts of the film's genesis, she mentions how during her many stays in Fitou, a village near Rivesaltes, her 'filmmaker's curiosity had drawn [her] to the "ghost town" of [the Joffre military camp in] Rivesaltes' where she sensed that 'something bad had happened' without knowing what (Veuve 1995a). It was in Fitou that she discovered the French edition of Bohny-Reiter's journal when it came out in 1993, which revealed to her what had 'happened' at Rivesaltes, at least in between 1941 and 1942.[3] This edition regroups entries from two journals, the first of which dates from 6 July 1940 during Bohny-Reiter's stay in Florence, where she worked in an orphanage for one and a half years, to 13 December 1941, shortly after her arrival at the Rivesaltes camp (F. Bohny-Reiter 1993, 5). The second (currently held at the ETH archives for contemporary history in Zurich[4]) dates from 15 December 1941 to 5 February 1943, is an unlined school notebook measuring 22 cm × 17.5 cm × 1.5 cm. Both journals might have slipped into oblivion were it not for the efforts in the early 1990s of Michèle Fleury-Seemuller, then an assistant to professor Jean-Claude Favez at the University of Geneva. Seeking new

[3] In fact, Rivesaltes would serve as an internment camp for German prisoners until 1948, then as a military camp (its original function) during French colonial wars in Indochina and Algeria. The French army still occupies part of the site. For a history of the Joffre military Camp see Husser, Beate. 2014. *Histoire du camp militaire Joffre de Rivesaltes*. Paris: Lienart.

[4] The first journal is not held at the ETH archives and could still be in possession of Bohny-Reiter's descendants.

sources on Swiss humanitarian work during the Second World War, Fleury-Seemuller attended an annual reunion of former Swiss Aid to Children workers where she inquired about anyone who might have kept a journal during that time (Fleury-Seemuller 2020). Someone suggested she ask Friedel Bohny-Reiter. Doubting the historical value of her personal experience, Bohny-Reiter had to be coaxed by the young historian to let her have a look at the journals, which had been lying untouched in the back of a drawer for nearly 50 years. Overcoming her initial reticence, Bohny-Reiter finally agreed to publish an edited version, first in French, translated by Fleury-Seemuller (F. Bohny-Reiter 1993), then in German (F. Bohny-Reiter 1995).

According to Veuve, Bohny-Reiter's journal provided testimony that was 'closer to reality' than the accounts given by witnesses or survivors over fifty years after the events (Veuve 1995a). She nonetheless sought testimonials from multiple witnesses, working with Michèle Fleury-Seemuller, who was co-author during the first stages of the project. They obtained a list of 11 names of camp survivors from August and Friedel Bohny-Reiter, five of whom would end up interviewed in the film (A. Bohny-Reiter and Bohny-Reiter 1994). Certain had already published memoirs and autobiographies which mentioned their stay in Rivesaltes, such as Dolorès Ortiz-Favier (Ortiz-Favier 1988, 1991), a refugee of the Spanish War and Fred Wander (Wander 1996), a German Jew sent to Rivesaltes after being refused entry into Switzerland and later deported to Auschwitz (after the war he became a writer by trade). Hannelore and Margot Wicki-Schwarzschild, who were saved from deportation with their mother by Friedel Bohny-Reiter (the father was deported to Auschwitz from Rivesaltes), took years to come to terms with their traumatic past and published their memoires after the film (Wicki-Schwarzschild and Wicki-Schwarzschild 2011). Veuve had sought other testimonies of Rivesaltes as well, interviewing German prisoners detained at Rivesaltes after the war (Veuve 1996). Although they are not included in the final version of the film, she had gone to some lengths to gather their accounts, publishing at least one call for witnesses in a German newspaper (Publicitas 1995).

Although no images are credited in the film (sources are only mentioned in the generic), many came from Bohny-Reiter's own album of photos she took while at Rivesaltes. It is a collection of alternately

commemorative and macabre souvenirs, including images of famished and ill internees, emaciated babies, Jews awaiting deportation, her dog, the vegetable garden she managed to cultivate in the camp, mealtimes in the Swiss Aid barrack (Fig. 5.2) and the gardens surrounding the Chateau La

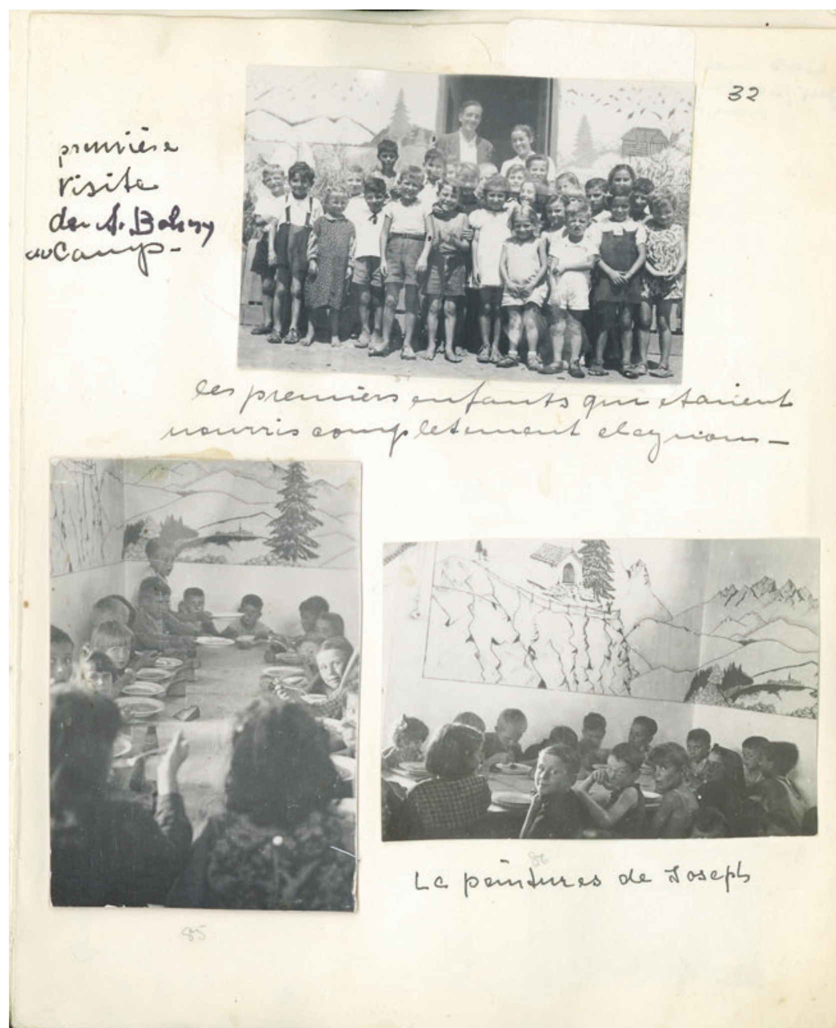


Fig. 5.2 Page from Bohny-Reiter's photo album showing the Swiss Aid to Children barrack in Rivesaltes. Friedel Bohny-Reiter Collection, ETH Archives of Contemporary History, Zurich: NL Friedel Bohny-Reiter/12

Hille.[5] All annotations are in French, the language she used while at Rivesaltes. On the title page, garnished with a small gouache painting by Bohny-Reiter of the barracks, is written 'de mon travail au Camp de Rivesaltes du 12. Nov. 1941-25. Nov. 1942 Friedel Reiter' (F. Bohny-Reiter 1941). The annotations are in Bohny-Reiter's hand, but are of two different qualities, one smooth and sure and well placed in respect to the photos, a second more shaky and in a thicker stroke that is sometimes squeezed into the margins, suggesting that Bohny Reiter made annotations later in life, revisiting her memories and adding key details. An image of a rudimentary wood and wire-framed cot with no mattress bears a first legend 'Lit du camp' (camp cot) to which is added underneath in the second handwriting 'I slept in this for one year', perhaps in retrospective disbelief that so crude a structure could serve such a purpose (F. Bohny-Reiter 1941, 6). A photograph of children in the back of a truck and another of a small group of adult internees surrounded by various parcels bears the (later) legend 'Saved from deportation' (F. Bohny-Reiter 1941, 37). Another showing a crowd of internees waiting in the middle of a barren field (Fig. 5.3) is labelled 'Before departure' and then 'for Poland? towards death?' (F. Bohny-Reiter 1941, 39).

Veuve conducted extensive research to understand 'what happened' at Rivesaltes, and her librarian's training shows through in the great quantity of documentation, correspondence and administrative papers she kept. In her archives held at the Swiss National Film Archive, there are nine boxes for the *Rivesaltes* film alone, including six of documents, two of photos and one of negatives. The two boxes of photographs (Veuve n.d.) contain mostly copies ordered from other archives and photographic collections relative to the Second World War including those of the International Red Cross, The Contemporary Centre for Jewish Documentation, Paul Sauvage and Paul Senn. Veuve also took photographic documentation herself on location for both *Rivesaltes* and another film she had planned to make on the nearby Elne maternity hospital (Veuve 1998).[6] Also run by the Swiss Aid to Children under the direction of Swiss nurse Elisabeth Eidenbenz, Elne took in pregnant mothers and malnourished babies from the internment camps in the region.

[5] A Swiss Aid to Children colony run by Bohny-Reiter's future husband August.

[6] The film was never made. She did make a short 10'26" documentary (co-directed with Eric Burnand) for French-Swiss television titled *Enfant caché, enfant sauvé*, which was aired on the programme *Mise au Point* on 13 December 1998.

Fig. 5.3 Page from Bohny-Reiter's photo album showing Jews awaiting deportation from Rivesaltes. Friedel Bohny-Reiter Collection, ETH Archives of Contemporary History, Zurich: NL Friedel Bohny-Reiter/12

Performing Trauma

Veuve's film can be understood as a performance of trauma in many different respects: that of Bohny-Reiter's and of survivors, but also that experienced by Veuve and, by proxy, the public, in learning of Rivesaltes and its

attendant horrors. In 1996, the French public remained largely ignorant of the extensive network of internment camps from 1938 onwards (Peschanski 2002, 15). Despite her documentary work for *La Filière*, Veuve claimed to have been ignorant of French internment camps prior to reading *Journal de Rivesaltes*, stressing both her own and her audience's surprise that internees suffered so terribly at the hands of the French and not the Germans (Chappuis 1997). The film's emphasis on Bohny-Reiter's haunting visual memories and flashbacks reflects contemporaneous discussions of trauma and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder that had been developing since the 1980s in American and European psychiatry which were centred on 'the notion of the traumatic image, conceived as an "iconic" memory that haunts the victim in the form of flashbacks, dreams, and other intrusive repetitions' (Leys 2007, 93).

Certain journal entries suggest Bohny-Reiter formed such images already while at Rivesaltes. These are also reproduced in Veuve's film, forming a mise en abime of the mnemonic qualities of cinema. In August 1942 when the deportation of Jewish internees began, Bohny-Reiter writes 'the film of the day's events play over and over again in my head' (F. Bohny-Reiter 1993, 144; Veuve 1997). The need to create physical images was also imperative for Bohny-Reiter. 'What a joy' she wrote when her camera and drawing supplies arrived from home on 13 January 1942, following with a phrase of self-encouragement 'Don't think, continue, help where help is needed, believe in peace' (F. Bohny-Reiter 1993, 74; Veuve 1997, 30:05–30:15) This passage in the film is accompanied by scenes which actually show the materiality of creating images: first a fictional reconstruction of Bohny-Reiter's table at Rivesaltes where a box of gouache paints, brushes and rags sits next to a drawing of internees, followed by a shot of similar clutter on the table where Bohny-Reiter's paints at home in Basel. Writing too is just as important: 'the need to write is at once a constraint and a deliverance' she observed in her journal (F. Bohny-Reiter 1993, 125; Veuve 1997, 48:03–48:40).

In the second scene, we see Bohny-Reiter sitting inside at a table before a blank journal in which she seems to have difficulty writing, while she speaks in voice-off:

> What gave me the courage to publish my journal and to accept to do the film is the memory of a woman who was already in the train for deportation. She called to me from the window: 'Sister Friedel, don't forget us!' and I

> think I have been faithful to that plea, to that woman, because even if I wanted to, I couldn't forget them. (Veuve 1997, 01:15–01:40)

Not without ambiguity, the statement implies that the publication of her journal and the making of the film are both testimony to the memory of the Jews deported from Rivesaltes and to the indelible mark left on her by the traumatic experience of being a helpless bystander to violence and cruelty and ultimately to a genocide she knew was under way. In this scene, she's shown attempting to write on a blank page, then giving up, suggestive of the fact that her story will now be told by Veuve, not in writing, but in images and sounds.

Bohny-Reiter seems visibly moved as she walks through the camp, unable to identify the barrack where she had worked. She remarks how the camp seems even more sad in its present state than before, and still just as cold (Veuve 1997, 02:59–03:10). Documents in Veuve's archive suggest that revisiting Rivesaltes had stirred even darker feelings in Bohny-Reiter. In a journal she kept during the 11 days of filming in November 1996 (during which she stayed at Veuve's house in Fitou), she wrote (in French) of being disturbed by the film crew's endless chaos and noise and questioned the validity of their enterprise:

> What are they looking for amongst the thousands who died here? Why relive all that? The suffering and the horrors? I worked here 54 years ago, I worked, slaved, fought against this incomprehensible destiny – But it's the past. Leave these people in peace! (F. Bohny-Reiter 1996, 1)

She wrote of wanting to 'run away from here and never come back' since the first day of filming, lamenting how memories of the place had never stopped haunting her and how the making the film was crushing her, concluding on the vaguely hopeful note that perhaps humanity might learn something from such horrors (F. Bohny-Reiter 1996, 2–3).[7]

A central preoccupation for Veuve in projects for the film was the separation of children from their parents (especially their mothers) which she described as a 'traumatism that one never recovers from' (Veuve 1995b, 55). By interviewing survivors, she aimed to 'film them while talking about this traumatism' (Veuve 1995b, 55). An earlier version of the film

[7] How this document, handwritten on three sheets of loose-leaf notebook paper, came to be in Jacqueline Veuve's possession is yet unknown.

describes the opening scene as 'an aerial view of the camp that will finish on the train station, an emotionally charged place where some 3640 people (of which many were parents who were seeing their children for the last time) leave for Auschwitz' (Veuve 1995b, 53). Dolorès Ortiz-Favier had fled Spain as a child with her parents, grandmother, older brother and younger sister. More than half of her family would perish (including a brother born during their flight), leaving only herself, her sister and her father. In the film she recounts how they arrived, filthy and starved, with so many other refugees: 'And then, it was incredible, the Secours Swiss came and these volunteers came to take care of all of these refugees …' she breaks off, closes her eyes, pulls her hair, gasps and exclaims: 'There were so many of us, we were so thin, so pitiful, so, so … I wonder if it was really … if it was really … really … I don't know anymore, I'm a bit lost' (Veuve 1997, 08:13–08:40). While this scene, incoherent, disturbing and unrehearsed, gives voice (and image) to the 'unique and somewhat incommunicable experiences of shock and pain' which reveal the social meaning of trauma (Hutchison 2016, 3), it is not only that of Ortiz-Favier. The scene can also be understood as mirroring the shock felt by both the filmmaker and the viewers to whom this trauma is revealed.

In her introduction to the French edition of the journal, Fleury-Seemuller suggests that the origins of Bohny-Reiter's unshakeable motivation to help others can be traced to her own childhood, marked as it was by the First World War (F. Bohny-Reiter 1993, 7). Born Friederika Augustina Reiter in Austro-Hungarian Vienna in 1912, Bohny-Reiter was but two when war broke out. Like many children, she was evacuated to the countryside. According to written accounts, her father was killed on the front in the beginning of the war (F. Bohny-Reiter 1993, 7), although there is no father named on the birth certificate for Bohny-Reiter held at the ETH archives (Geburts-und Taufschein, Wien, 14.7.1912). In 1919, Bohny-Reiter was sent from famine-stricken Vienna on one of the Red Cross's children's convoys to Switzerland, where she was taken in as a foster child by the Nägeli-Zöbeli family in Kilchberg, Zurich. Although Fleury-Seemuller stops there in her introduction to the French volume, in an interview I had with her in 2020, she specified that Bohny-Reiter had confided she was initially not meant to stay longer than a few months in Switzerland. However, this extended to several years until eventually, according to Fleury-Seemuller, her mother refused to take her back (Fleury-Seemuller 2020). At age 2, Bohny-Reiter was possibly too young to remember her father. However, at age 8 or 9 she would have been at

least conscious at the time that her mother had for whatever reasons essentially given her over to another family, and another country. Although her foster parents, Emma and Albert Nägeli-Zöbeli, did not officially adopt her (Fleury-Seemuller 2020) Bohny-Reiter seems to have been well integrated into the family, as suggested by the extensive correspondence she kept with her foster parents and siblings held in the ETH archives (part of which dates from 1941 to 1942) as well as the numerous references she makes to them in the journal.

In addition to the verbal performances of survivor's trauma, the film also uses montage to construct visual representations of iconic memories shared by both internees and Bohny-Reiter, such as hunger. Starvation and malnourishment are recurrent themes both in Bohny-Reiter's journal and in the survivor's narratives. Camp survivor Fred Wander describes the slicing up of the single daily loaf of bread as a 'magical ceremony' (Veuve 1997, 28:01–28:30). Bread had to be divided between up to seven or eight people and slicing was a task reserved for a well-trusted person whose every movement was carefully monitored by all (Veuve 1997, 32:03–32:22). Another survivor, Ernest Marx, speaks of how 50 years later he is still plagued by the fear of not having enough to eat (Veuve 1997, 36:50–37:03). Into these interview sequences is spliced a black-and-white photograph taken from Bohny-Reiter's Rivesaltes photo-album depicting one of the round bread loaves allotted to internees, neatly sliced into wedges (F. Bohny-Reiter 1941, 22). Iconic memories are also reconstructed through sound. Veuve's sound technician went to great pains to capture the noise of the wind which accompanies the scenes in which Bohny-Reiter is revisiting the camp, her hair blowing in all directions (Fig. 5.4). Other sounds such as the noise of bicycle wheels or the crunching of gravel underfoot, reconstruct auditive experiences Bohny-Reiter might have had during the numerous trips she made between Rivesaltes and the Elne maternity, some 30 kilometres away. Similarly, Veuve chose a Swiss-German actress to simulate as best as possible the accent Bohny-Reiter would have had when speaking French at Rivesaltes. Alternately, key moments of silence occur, for instance, when present-day Bohny-Reiter is sitting indoors at a table or when the young Bohny-Reiter is represented writing in her journal at night. The opening scene of the camp's ruins is accompanied by a piece for accordion reminiscent of both traditional Jewish and Romani music. Written by Swiss composer Thierry Fervant, it also creates a specific emotional register of melancholy and mourning, especially accompanied by the images of ruins.

Fig. 5.4 Filming at Rivesaltes camp in November 1996. From left to right: Bohny-Reiter, Veuve and one of the sound technicians. Photo: Cinémathèque Suisse, Penthaz, CSL 119, box 25

Press accounts of Bohny-Reiter's story also focussed on the lifelong effects of the trauma she endured during her time at Rivesaltes. Articles dating from the film's debut describe her journal as 'emotionally charged', distressing and overwhelming (Cuttat 1997) and in interviews, Bohny-Reiter stresses that it was impossible to speak of her experience afterwards because the memory was 'too atrocious' (Gasquez 1997). Through her lifelong artistic practice, Bohny-Reiter produced a considerable body of paintings and drawings inspired by memories of Rivesaltes well after leaving the camp in 1943. Speaking to a journalist covering an exhibition of her work in 1998, she stated: 'Even now as I'm speaking to you, I still see all that misery, all those faces' (Hurel 1998). She would remain haunted her whole life by her experience at Rivesaltes. In an interview with Veuve made in preparation for the film, Bohny-Reiter stressed that 'it was only through painting that I could liberate myself' (Veuve 1994–1996). Visual practices (and anything related to them) figure prominently in the journal as rare moments of respite: a box of watercolour paints or a camera received

in the mail, painting the frescoes on the walls and façade of the Children's Aid barrack with the aid of a Spanish internee named Joseph (F. Bohny-Reiter 1941, 32). The frescoes figure prominently in photos of the barrack, making it stand out in contrast to its unprepossessing surroundings.[8] While she painted numerous gouaches from her troubled memories (cachectic patients, mothers mourning separation from their children, the barracks) all her drawings and paintings made while at Rivesaltes had been lost. When she reported to the Red Cross centre in Toulouse after leaving the camp in February 1943, she had to turn over her belongings, some of which then disappeared including her sketchbook and numerous jewels given her by Jews and which she had promised to return to their families.

Perhaps the most iconic memory of traumatism at Rivesaltes is the physical environment of the camp itself. With its rigid orthogonal layout of monotonous, crude structures, the unapologetic brutality of the camp's architecture is somehow a metaphor for the relentless cruelties perpetuated there. Excerpts from Bohny-Reiter's journal that were selected for the film emphasise the extreme misery and physical hardship of the camp (starvation, illness, vermin, insects, heat, cold, filth). An earlier version of the film project shows she had initially intended to film the camp over four seasons, to capture its insalubrity and harsh climate all year round (Veuve 1995b, 53). On the title page of Bohny-Reiter's photo album from Rivesaltes is one of her small gouaches representing an alley of barracks, their bright red roofs contrasting with the green blue of the mountains beyond and the dull yellow-white of the buildings. The image recurs in her journal (but not in the film) 'In front of a line of red roofs that harmonise with the azur – the *camp*. Is it possible that this little stain of red could conceal so much misery, so much human suffering? Is it possible that the surrounding world can still be beautiful?' (F. Bohny-Reiter 1993, 117). Despite their being essentially new when internees started arriving in 1940, the barracks never provided adequate shelter. Planned in the wake of the First World War as a transitional camp for indigenous troupes from the French colonies, Rivesaltes, or 'Camp Joffre' as it was officially called, was built in an inhospitable, windswept plane meant to test soldiers' abilities to survive in hostile climates. Although planned in the early 1920s,

[8] Although attempts to locate the Swiss Aid's barrack during filming were unsuccessful, Bohny-Reiter did find it when she returned to Rivesaltes in 1998 with a group of high school students. Its frescos were still intact, albeit in a poor state (Lloubes 1998), and are held today in storage near the Rivesaltes memorial.

construction of the Rivesaltes camp did not begin until late 1939 when it was built up by convoys of Spanish War refugees brought from the neighbouring internment camps of Barcarès, Argelès and Saint-Cyprien (Husser 2014, 22–23). Contractors were unstable, volatile and struggled with wartime restrictions on building supplies. The most rudimentary materials and techniques were used for construction such as wood frame carpentry with hollow bricks, cement fibre panels and industrial roofing tiles. French officials (including one doctor) inspecting the camp in 1940 deemed it inadequate for housing military troops, citing faulty construction (roofs blown off by heavy winds, missing windowpanes, no insulation) and inadequate sanitation, water supply and evacuation (Husser 2014, 30–31).

Conclusion

Bohny-Reiter's experience with Swiss Aid to Children, as preserved in her journal and photo album, is emblematic of what Bertrand Taithe describes as the 'contrast between what would be desirable and what is socially and politically possible [that] defines humanitarianism throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries' (Taithe 2017, 478). If humanitarian discourse is more 'aimed at alleviating suffering than abolishing it' (Taithe 2017, 479), Bohny-Reiter's experience is testament to the high price humanitarian workers can pay in their own suffering while alleviating that of others. In addition to the seeming futility of their work, Swiss Aid to Children nurses like Bohny-Reiter were also placed in the position of bystanders, more often than not unable to prevent violence such as when camp guardians raped women and young girls with impunity (F. Bohny-Reiter 1993, 115). Legally obliged to maintain the 'neutrality' of the Red Cross's (and therefore Switzerland's) position, Bohny-Reiter would question her whole life whether she was acting in complicity with the Vichy and Nazi regimes.

Veuve's film gives us a moving image of humanitarian images, past and present. While she was inspired by a journal she felt was closer to the reality of the Rivesaltes camp in 1941–1942, her film is nonetheless an image of trauma as it is felt more than 50 years after the events, that of humanitarians and survivors as well as her own and that of the viewing public. The choice of journal entries for inclusion in the film reveals a preoccupation with certain themes (separation, hunger, physical hardship, deportations), while those excluded are equally suggestive. Why no mention of the rape of young women and girls by camp guardians? Also, while Bohny-Reiter's

religious faith is mentioned in passing in the film as something abstract that had been key to her survival, the journal contains numerous references to God and her deep conviction that her purpose at Rivesaltes was to do 'God's work'. A devout evangelist, she had copied out Luther's Hymn praising the force of God's word against Satan's conspirations (F. Bohny-Reiter 1993, 115) and even reproached herself at times for 'not having enough faith in He who holds us in his hand' (F. Bohny-Reiter 1993, 121). Yet it is this side of Bohny-Reiter that also reveals her standards of what would have been 'desirable' for her as a humanitarian. On the 16th of May 1942, Bohny-Reiter recounts a long conversation she has with fellow humanitarian Elsbeth Kasser from the neighbouring internment camp at Gurs about their work in the camps with children and youth, how their greatest pleasure was to see them happy and how at certain gatherings, they were like a 'large happy family'. They concluded that 'it would be difficult to find a more beautiful life' (F. Bohny-Reiter 1993, 125). While Veuve interprets moments such as these of respite and joy noted in the journal as signs of Bohny-Reiter's love of life and hope, one might also understand them as expressing a certain love of humanitarian life, especially in light of her continued engagement with Swiss Aid to Children after the war.

Veuve's Rivesaltes is a powerful film that is at times difficult to watch. Its emotional charge mirrors the shock felt at a particular moment in history when the traumatic memory of the Second World War was finally coming to light, both through historical research and through testimonies of survivors and witnesses who had finally found the courage to share their stories. The documentation and archival sources regarding Rivesaltes and survivors that Veuve amassed in preparation for the film (recently made available for consultation at the Swiss National Film Archive), also shows that films can be valuable sources for the history of emotions. Critics have cautioned that the emphasis on iconic images of trauma has resulted in a certain reliance 'on the image to tell us what violence is' (Weber 1997, 81–82; Leys 2007, 93). Yet Veuve's film *Rivesaltes* had the inestimable value of stirring the memories of numerous other witnesses and survivors as well as raising public awareness to the history of French internment camps. It points to the important role emotions have as catalysts for historical research.

Works Cited

Albano, Caterina. 2018. *Moving Emotions: Affect, the Archive and the Moving Image*. *Cultural History 7*, 187–204. Edinburgh University Press.

AP. 1999. Ruth Dreifuss dénonce la «folie perverse» de Belgrade. *Le Temps*, May 6.

Bohny-Reiter, August. August Bohny-Reiter Collection. ACH-ETHZ

Bohny-Reiter, August, and Friedel Bohny-Reiter. 1994. CSL119-04-34-04-04, File 6, Letter to Michèle Fleury 28 October 1994. Jacqueline Veuve Collection, CSP.

Bohny-Reiter, Friedel. 1941. Fotoalbum aus Rivesaltes, 12.11.1941–25.11.1942. Friedel Bohny-Reiter Collection, ACH-ETHZ.

———. 1993. *Journal de Rivesaltes : 1941–1942*. Carouge-Genève: Zoé.

———. 1995. *Vorhof der Vernichtung: Tagebuch einer Schweizer Schwester im französischen Internierungslager Rivesaltes 1941–1942. 1. Aufl.* Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre.

———. 1996. CSL119-04-34-04-05, File 1, Diary kept during filming of Rivesaltes, 3 pages, manuscript. Jacqueline Veuve Collection, CSP.

Boillat, Alain. 2010. *Le cinéma documentaire contemporain en Suisse romande: Jean-Stéphane Bron, figure de proue*. *French Forum 35*, 209–231. University of Nebraska Press.

Casebier, Allan. 1991. *Film and phenomenology: Toward a realist theory of cinematic representation*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Chappuis, Bernard. 1997. Jacqueline Veuve rouvre le Journal de Riveslates 1941–1942. *24 heures*, August 30.

Commission indépendante d'experts Suisse – Seconde Guerre mondiale, Jean-François Bergier, Marc Perrenoud, Valérie Boillat, Gregor Spuhler, and Thomas Busset. 1999. *La Suisse et les réfugiés à l'époque du national-socialisme*. Berne: Commission indépendante d'experts Suisse – Seconde Guerre mondiale.

Cuttat, Edmé. 1997. Jacqueline Veuve sort "Rivesaltes" de la nuit et du brouillard. *Tribune de Genève*, August 24, sec. Cinéma Culture.

Diop, Carmen. 2007. Jean Rouch: l'anthropologie autrement. *Journal des anthropologues* 110–111. Charenton-le-pont: Association Française des Anthropologues: 185–205.

Favez, Jean-Claude. 1988. *Une mission impossible? le CICR, les déportations et les camps de concentration nazis*. Lausanne: Payot.

———. 1998. La Suisse pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale. *Revue d'Histoire de la Shoah* 163. Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine: 18–24. Cairn.info.

———. 1999. *The Red Cross and the Holocaust*. Cambridge, U.K.; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2015. Faut-il revoir l'histoire du CICR durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale? *Revue dHistoire de la Shoah* N° 203. Mémorial de la Shoah: 149–162.

Favez, Jean-Claude, and Francis Python, eds. 1998. *Les relations internationales et la Suisse: actes du colloque du 3e cycle romand d'histoire moderne et contemporaine (Lausanne, 24-28 février 1997)*. Lausanne: Ed. Antipodes.

Fleury-Seemuller, Michèle. 2020. Interview with Michèle Fleury-Seemuller Interview by Brenda Lynn Edgar. Manuscript notes.

Gasquez, Antoine. 1997. Friedel Bohny-Reiter et son Journal de Rivesaltes. *La semaine du Roussillon.*

Geburts-und Taufschein, Wien, 14.7.1912. 1912. Vienna. Friedel Bohny-Reiter Collection. ACH-ETHZ.

Grimshaw, Anna, and Amanda Ravetz. 2005. Introduction: Visualizing Anthropology. In *Anna Grimshaw and Amanda Ravetz*, ed. Visualizing Anthropology, 1–16. Bristol, UK; Portland, Oregon: Intellect Books.

———. 2009. Rethinking observational cinema. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15: 538–556.

Grynberg, Anne. 1991. *Les camps de la honte: les internés juifs des camps français, 1939–1944.* Paris, France: Éditions La Découverte.

Hazan, Pierre. 1999. Ruth Dreifuss, 59 ans. La première présidente suisse veut bouger sans le brusquer un pays plombé par l'hégémonie du raisonnable. De la Suisse dans les idées. *Libération*, April 17, sec. Portraits.

Hurel, Sandrine. 1998. Rivesaltes 1941: Une infirmière du camp témoigne. *Midi Libre*, June 25.

Husser, Beate. 2014. *Histoire du camp militaire Joffre de Rivesaltes. Les cahiers de Rivesaltes.* [Rivesaltes] Paris: Mémorial du camp de Rivesaltes Lienart.

Hutchinson, Emma. 2019. Humanitarian Emotions through History: Imagining Suffering Performing Aid. In *Emotional bodies: The historical performativity of emotions*, ed. Dolores Martín-Moruno and Beatriz Pichel, 219–241. Urbana, Chicago and Springfield: University of Illinois Press.

Hutchison, Emma. 2016. *Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Imhof, Annemarie. 1985. *La Filière: en France occupée 1942–1944.* Suisse: Éditions de la Thièle.

Kanyar Becker, Helena. 2010. *Vergessene Frauen. Humanitäre Kinderhilfe und offizielle Flüchtlingspolitik 1917–1948.* Basel: Schwabe.

Kracauer, Siegfried. 1969. *History, the last things before the last.* New York: Oxford University Press.

LaCapra, Dominick. 2018. *History in Transit: Experience, Identity, Critical Theory.*

Leys, Ruth. 2007. *From Guilt to Shame: Auschwitz and After.* Princeton, N.J.; Woodstock, Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press.

Lloubes, Michel. 1998. Le camp Joffre s'ouvre aux lycéens européens pour un travail de mémoire. *L'independant*, June 22, sec. Autour de Perpignan.

Mouralis, Guillaume. 2002. Le procès Papon. Justice et temporalité. *Terrain. Anthropologie & sciences humaines.* Association Terrain: 55–68.

Münsterberg, Hugo, and Allan Langdale. 2002. *Hugo Munsterberg on Film: The Photoplay: A Psychological Study and Other Writings*. New York; Oxon: Routledge.

Nora, Pierre, Charles-Robert Ageron, Maurice Agulhon, and Christian Amalvi. 1984. *Les lieux de mémoire*. Paris, France: Gallimard.

Nora, Pierre, and Lawrence D. Kritzman. 1996. *Realms of memory*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Ortiz-Favier, Dolorès. 1988. *Sentier sous les amandiers fleuris*. Lyon: D. Ortiz Favier.

———. 1991. *Sentier sous les amandiers fleuris*. Paris: La Pensée Universelle.

Peschanski, Denis. 2002. *La France des camps: l'internement, 1938–1946*. La suite des temps. Paris: Gallimard.

Plamper, Jan. 2017. Les discours de l'anthropologie. In *Histoire des émotions*., Points, 15–45. Paris: Seuil.

Probst, Jean-Robert. 1995. Jacqueline Veuve: quand le cinéma a de la mémoire. *Générations: aînés*.

Publicitas. 1995. CSL119 04-34-04-04, File 6. Jacqueline Veuve Collection, CSP.

Rohrbach, Willy, Luthy, Pierre-André and Galland, Bertil, directors. 2010. *Jacqueline Veuve*. Association Films Plans-Fixes. 50 min. 16mm, colour.

Rouch, Jean, director. 1958. *Moi, Un Noir*. Films de la Pléiade, 1958. 1 hr. 10 min. 16 mm, colour.

Taithe, Bertrand. 2017. Empathie, Soins et compassions: les émotions humanitaires. In *Histoire des émotions, vol.3. De la fin du XIXe siècle à nos jours*, ed. Alain Corbin, Jean-Jacques Courtine, and Georges Vigarello, 364–381. Paris: Seuil.

Veuve, Jacqueline, director. 1972. *Lettres de Stalingrad*. TVCO Genève, 30 min. 16mm, b/w. Documentaire.

———, director. 1974. *Susan*. Aquarius Film Production. 15 min.,16 mm, colour.

———, director. 1976. *Mais, vous les filles*. TVCO Genève. 35 min. 16 mm, colour.

———, director. 1978. *Angèle Stalder ou la vie est un cadeau*. TVCO Genève. 30 min. 16 mm, colour.

———, director. 1986. *La traversée*. TVCO Genève, 34 min. 16mm, colour.

———, director. 1987. *La filière*. TVCO Genève, 37 min. 16mm, colour.

———. 1990a. CSL 119-04-34-01, Correspondance A-Z. Jacqueline Veuve Collection, CSP.

———, director. 1990b. *Chronique paysanne en Gruyère*. Aquarius, JMH Production.1 hr. 27 min. 16mm, colour.

———. 1995a. CSL119-04-34-01-03, file 1, De Rivesaltes à Auschwitz. Jacqueline Veuve Collection, CSP.

———. 1995b. CSL 119-04-34-02-02, File 2. Projet de film de *Rivesaltes*, avril 1995. Jacqueline Veuve Collection, CSP.

———. 1994–1996. CSL 119-04-34-04-04, File 2. Friedel VHS. Jacqueline Veuve Collection, CSP.

———. 1996. CSL119-04-34-04-04, File Knoetschke. Interview with Richard Knoetschke, September 1996. Jacqueline Veuve Collection, CSP.
———, director. 1997. *Journal de Rivesaltes: 1941–42*. Ciné Manufacture CMS SA, RTS Radio Télévision Suisse, 1 hr. 15 min. S-16/35 mm, colour.
———. 2000a. *Delphine Seyrig. Portrait d'une comète*. PCT Cinéma Télévision SA, Aquarius Film Production, FRP – Frédéric Robbes Productions, RTS Radio Télévision Suisse, Cityzen TV, 52 min. 16 mm, colour.
———. 2000b. CSL 119-04-34-04-03, File 'Lucie 2000', Letter from J.V. to Lucie Ragin, June 19, 2000. Jacqueline Veuve Collection, CSP.
———. 1990–2010. CSL 119-04-34, Journal de Rivesaltes, Documentation. Jacqueline Veuve Collection, CSP.
———. n.d. CSL 119-04-34-07. Jacqueline Veuve Collection, CSP.
———. 1998. CSL 119-04-34-08. Journal de Rivesaltes. Maternité d'Elne, reportage Enfant, caché, enfant sauvé (1998). Jacqueline Veuve Collection, CSP.
Veuve, Jacqueline, and Yves Yersin, directors. 1966. *Le panier à viande*. Milos Film. 24 min. 16 mm, b/w.
Wander, Fred. 1996. *Das gute Leben Erinnerungen*. Munich, Vienna: Hanser.
Weber, Samuel. 1997. Wartime. In *Violence, Identity, and Self-Determination*, ed. Hent de Vries and Samuel Weber, 80–105. Stanford University Press.
Wicki-Schwarzschild, Margot, and Hannelore Wicki-Schwarzschild. 2011. *Als Kinder Auschwitz entkommen: Unsere Deportation von Kaiserslautern in die französischen Internierungslager Gurs und Rivesaltes 1940/42 und das … Sammelband mit Texten, Fotos und Dokumenten*. Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre Verlag.
Wieviorka, Annette. 1992. *Déportation et génocide: entre la mémoire et l'oubli*. Paris, France: Plon.

Abbreviations for Archives

CSP: Cinémathèque suisse, Centre de recherche et d'archivage, Penthaz, Switzerland
ACH-ETHZ: Archives of Contemporary History, ETH Zürich

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

CHAPTER 6

Empathy, Irony, and Humanitarian Witness in *The Photographer*

Ariela Freedman

When Jake Halpern and Michael Sloan won the Pulitzer for editorial cartooning in 2018 for their *New York Times* serial, 'Welcome to the New World' (Halpern and Sloan 2017), it was the first time a longform graphic narrative was recognized by the committee under the category of journalism. Their win is part of a growing trend toward the recognition of the value of using graphic narratives for humanitarian purposes, one which includes a broad variety of texts: memoirs which mix personal narrative, social context, and testimony like Marjane Satrapi's two-part series *Persepolis* (2000; 2004) and Guy Delisle's conflict zone travelogues (2007, 2008, 2012); works of graphic journalism, including Joe Sacco's longform work on Bosnia and Palestine (2000, 2001) and Molly Crabapple's Guantanamo reporting (2013); books and pamphlets with pedagogic and activist mandates produced by non-profit organizations like *Positive Negatives*, whose mandate is human rights advocacy through graphic narrative by turning personal testimony about social and humanitarian issues into pamphlets, posters, and educational comics; and finally, works produced alongside humanitarian missions like Dr. Pascal Grellety Bosviel's

A. Freedman (✉)
Concordia University, Montreal, QC, Canada

© The Author(s) 2022

B. L. Edgar et al. (eds.), *Making Humanitarian Crises*, Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00824-5_6

mixed-media record of half a century of aid work, *Toute une vie d'humanitaire: 50 ans de terrain d'un médecin-carnettiste* (2013). While these works differ considerably in style, structure, and audience, the claims around the value of the medium of graphic narrative for the purpose of humanitarian testimony overlap: comics and graphic narratives mobilize the affective punch and concision of visual demonstration while adding narrative context and the voice of the depicted subject, and thereby generate empathy and identification in the reader.

Empathy is the keyword here. If graphic narratives have specific affordances to increase immersion and identification, then they are powerful instruments for empathy, a term which blurs aesthetic and ethical categories and has become increasingly central in human rights narratives, discourse, and even policy. As Susan Lanzoni tracks, the last century has seen an empathy explosion, as what was once a concept relegated to aesthetics and philosophy moved quickly through 'a stunning number of fields, from aesthetic psychology to social work and psychotherapy, to politics, advertising, and the media' (2018, 2). But while the term 'empathy' is everywhere, its meaning is nonetheless various and contested. Object of study or subject of critique, aspirational goal or neurological mirror, catchword or therapy, the many uses of empathy testify to its increasing prominence in contemporary technologies of the self in relation to the other. As comics become part of the empathy industry, the work of graphic artists increasingly rely on the assumption that the goal of their art is the production of empathy—feeling for and with the other—as both a political and an aesthetic aim.

Humanitarianism and Graphic Narrative

Advocates of humanitarian graphic narratives have often claimed comics have the ability to flatten the difference between reader and writer, and observer and participant, in order to increase engagement and magnify identification through the iconic simplicity and accessibility of the drawn image. In the frequently quoted words of Scott McCloud, 'the cartoon is a vacuum into which identity and awareness are pulled, an empty shell that we inhabit which enables us to travel in another realm. We don't just observe the cartoon, we become it' (1993, 36). 'When you look at a photo or realistic drawing of a face,' McCloud writes, 'you see it as the face of another. But when you enter the world of the cartoon you see yourself'

(8).[1] The claim that graphic narrative acts as means of focalizing empathy, creating immediacy, and engaging the reader in a mode of recognizing the other through the projection of the self is often foregrounded in critical claims for the aesthetic and political potentials of the medium in relation to humanitarian narrative. Charlotte Salmi's article, for example, 'Visualizing the World: Graphic Novels, Comics, and Human Rights,' makes sweeping claims for the value of graphic narrative in humanitarian discourse. Salmi argues that the intermedial mode of graphic narrative facilitates visibility, recognition, and the assertion of a rights-bearing subject through attention to both speech and image, the voice of the individual, the context-bearing narration of the situation, and the visual representation of trauma, which she claims thereby demands response. Salmi's article, expansive in its survey of comics advocacy, graphic narrative, biography, and graphic journalism, concludes with the intermedial potential of the comics form to 'trouble the spectacle of violence in visual culture' (2019, 187), present 'ways of viewing that enable the viewer to recognize their complicity in structural inequalities' (187), and finally, 'testify to the dehumanizing violence between people and states, and to their own obligation to make rights-bearing humans visible in the accounts of oppression and violence that we see and read' (188).

By contrast, Sidonie Smith is much less broadly celebratory of the role of graphic narrative in human rights discourse and, indeed, of the claims and techniques of rights advocacy itself. Instead of beginning, as Salmi does, with the history of comics as a medium preoccupied with justice, Smith centers 'the ways in which comics reproduce colonialist, racist, and anti-Semitic tropes of difference through crude visual stereotypes' (2011, 61), arguing that while rights advocates critique the frequent use of comics as propaganda and an apparatus of stereotype and oppression, they nonetheless 'exploit the capacities of the genre' (62). In the graphic pamphlets and comic books that Smith calls 'crisis comics,' the 'genre can be thought of as social action, contributing to the "social work" of publicizing rights discourse, distributing rights identities, and interpellating the reader as a subject of rights activism' (64). But as the scare quotes on

[1] McCloud's argument has also been challenged. As Charles Hatfield warns, 'The logical principles or signifying practices of comics, no less than film, militate against a thoroughgoing identification of observer and observed. While a limited claim might be made for reader empathy, positing complete identification stretches the case beyond credulity' (Hatfield 2005, 117).

'social work' indicate, Smith sees the production of comic books by human rights organizations and advocates as 'constrained' (64) through the 'management of such scenes of witness [which] involves a series of remediations that frame the story, the subject of rights, and the scenario of rescue' (64). Smith points to the largely invisible team behind the testimony, soliciting and framing what is misleadingly presented as unmediated first-person witness: 'an NGO that is functioning as a coaxer' and facilitates access to the humanitarian setting, 'an interviewer, a compiler, an editor, perhaps a translator,' 'a drawer who visualizes the story, distributing it in frames and gutters, figuring the avatar, attaching affect to the width of a line or the design of the page' (64). Smith clearly sees these occluded actors as manipulative stagers, who rather than providing voice to the voiceless, choreograph and exploit the subject, 'coproduce the personal story, reframing it as boxes of victimization,' and collude both in a savior narrative and in 'the commodification of contemporary life writing' (64). Here, Smith targets those who contend that the value of graphic narrative is the way it facilitates empathy in rights activism, writing that, 'In reaching for the identification of the reader with an avatar within the comic, the form reinforces the argument that rights activism is a matter of managing empathetic identification rather than targeting structural inequalities and formations of exploitation within and across nation' (65). In Smith's argument, empathy is not enough: graphic narratives should not provide the false equivalency of identification or the voyeurism of trauma tourism, but should advocate for structural change.

What about humanitarian graphic narratives which problematize empathic identification? If the aesthetics of empathy, as Sianne Ngai argues, can risk being both politically impotent and socially narcissistic—an 'imaginary symmetry' (2005, 82) and 'a mirror reflection of the subject's affective response, each confirming the other in an imaginary loop' (82)—we might then be well served to consider alternative forms of affective engagement with humanitarian subjects and spaces, embedded not in the projection-dynamics of empathy but in what Ngai calls 'ugly feelings' which block empathy: those affective encounters which resist, bristle, and irritate, rather than immerse and soothe. *The Photographer [Le Photographe]* (2003–2006), a hybrid non-fiction work which merges the conflict zone photography of Didier Lefèvre with the drawings of Emmanuel Guibert and design of Frédéric Lemercier, challenges the empathic stance of much graphic humanitarian discourse. The 'ugly feelings' produced in *The Photographer* provoke not immersion and identification but

meta-reflection and distance in the humanitarian encounter. In Ngai's account, 'ugly feelings can be described as conducive to producing ironic distance' (2005, 10). If Lefèvre's ironic distance as a photographer avoids the traps of empathic projection, however, he also troubles the claim that the graphic witness facilitates political change, emphasizing instead a considerable gulf between documentarian and subject and between the work of the graphic narrative and processes of humanitarian intervention.

Slow Time: Drawing and Photographing the Conflict Zone

The photographer Didier Lefèvre joined an *Médicins Sans Frontières (MSF)* mission to Afghanistan in 1986, during the Soviet War. Lefèvre took 4000 photographs on this mission. Upon his return, only six were published in *La Liberation* on December 27, 1986, in a two-page spread; the rest stayed in storage for over a decade until his friend, Emmanuel Guibert, proposed remediating them into a graphic narrative. The process of turning the photographs into a graphic memoir was collaborative. Lefèvre told Guibert stories, handed over the contact sheets, and left much of the work of curation, interpretation, and design up to Guibert, a cartoonist, and Lemercier, a colorist and graphic designer. Serialized between 2003 and 2006, *The Photographer* was a surprise hit. It sold 250,000 copies in France, was translated into 11 languages, and was featured, among other venues, on Rachel Maddow's talk show in 2009, who called it 'one of the most amazing publications I've ever read' (2009)—the word publications hedging her inability to designate the genre. The success of *The Photographer* had much to do with the timing of its publication. When Lefèvre first published photographs from the mission in 1986, Afghanistan seemed a distant crisis zone; after 9/11, it was the center of a global conflict. While on the one hand, *The Photographer* stages its justification and premise as bearing witness to the plight of the Afghans, the publication of the book long after the time in which the photographs were taken complicates the usual immediacy of war photography—printed in the heat of the moment—with the testimonial and reminiscent mode of the memoir, and the retroactive history of a conflict and country which became magnified long after the events the book documents. As Orbán writes, the temporality of graphic journalism necessitates slower time, which explains 'why graphic reportage is drawn to wars and conflict

particularly in the form of aftermath reportage: the long view of the consequences of complex and often lasting situations, geopolitical quagmires, long-term ecological processes' (2015, 124). But slow time complicates the claim to journalistic witness; by the time *The Photographer* was published, the conflict it charted had changed nearly beyond recognition, and some of the characters in his book were long gone.

The most original element of *The Photographer* is the amalgam of photographs, captions, and drawings. In his text and drawings, Guibert responds to Susan Sontag's critique of the floating and contextless quality of war photography with dialogue and captions that tether the images to meaning through emphasis and remediation in drawing and narrative. In *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Susan Sontag criticizes Virginia Woolf's premise that 'when we look at the same photographs we feel the same things,' writing, 'No "we" should be taken for granted when the subject is looking at other people's pain' (2003, 7). Here, as the title of *The Photographer* indicates, the 'we' is not taken for granted—it is the photographer who looks, whose feelings are positioned so as to solicit those Chaney calls 'the reader-viewer' (2016, 23). Throughout the graphic narrative, Guibert stays wedded to Lefèvre's point of view, what Sontag calls the war photographer as star witness (2003, 33). Lefèvre begins as a naïve idealist—'every now and again, I think about Tintin,' he writes (Guibert et al. 2009, 72)—and the style of drawing in Guibert's BD emphasizes this comparison, picking up on Hergé's simplified *ligne claire* and delineating detailed and sublime backgrounds and relatively cartoonish characters, in a style Bart Beaty humorously calls 'ragged Tintin' (2006). That resemblance is more than aesthetic. It suggests a deliberate trajectory from the age of French imperialism and the conquistadorial adventurousness of Tintin to organizations like *Médecins Sans Frontières*, the inheritors of the aftermath of the age of exploration, and to documentarians like Lefèvre himself.

As the book opens, we begin with a mix of photographs and drawn captions, anchoring the intermedial technique of the graphic narrative. Hillary Chute contrasts comics with other documentary images such as the photograph, writing that, because of its framing and placement in a network of images rather than a single picture or series of photographs, 'a comics text has a different relationship to indexicality than, for instance, a photograph does' (2016, 20). But in *The Photographer*, the frequent use of strips of photographs from contact sheets rather than curated singular images emphasizes instead the *resemblance* of the photo strip to the comic strip:

tiers of panels, in which repetition and difference spatially chart the passage of time. Guibert also cannily exploits the transition between the two mediums, moving deftly from photographs to comics panels. On the bottom of the first page, as Lefèvre boards a plane to Afghanistan, the long single panel of a plane taking off into a clear blue sky is drawn rather than photographed, cartoonish contrails leading the eye toward the unknown, signaling the shift of modality as the journey begins.

Despite initial similarities, the differences between the use of comics in the images and the use of photographs are substantial. The photographs in the text are in black and white. While captions are sometimes used above the photographs as a form of diegetic commentary, the photos are often left as silent. By contrast, the drawings are executed in color, though the clear blue sky of the first page is an anomaly: in general, Lemercier prefers sepia tones which evoke both the past and the desert landscape. Though representational, the drawings are flat and caricatural, with figures which stand out against simple, realistic backgrounds. Narration is integrated into the comics panels rather than floating above or beside them, and words enter into the images in the form of speech bubbles. Lefèvre, Guibert, and Lemercier are careful to continue to balance between photographs and comics drawings so that the reader does not settle into either modality, but keeps adjusting between them and the different forms of reality they represent and ways of reading that they require. Chute writes that 'Comics is about contingent display, materially and philosophically. It weaves what I think of as interstice and interval into its constitutive grammar, and it provokes the participation of readers in those interpretive spaces that are paradoxically full and empty' (2016, 17). The intervals, not only between comics panels but also between drawings and photographs, contribute to what Chute calls 'an ethics of looking and reading intent on defamiliarizing standard or received images of history while yet aiming to communicate and circulate' (31).

From Empathy to Irony

The tension between words and image, and between photographs and drawings, creates multiple levels of duality that suspend the reader and the observer between different kinds of aesthetic encounter and experience. Rather than leaning into empathy—the immersive projection into the experience of the other—the text employs a form of distancing which might be called ironic. In her appendix to the essay collection

Double-Talking: Essays on Verbal and Visual Ironies in Canadian Contemporary Art and Literature, Linda Hutcheon emphasizes duality—double talking, double meaning, and double voicing—as the central formal device of irony, distinguishing between deconstructive critical irony, which subverts, distances, and undermines, and what she calls 'constructive' irony, a liminal form 'always concerned with internally oppositional positions. Here marginality becomes the model for internal subversion of that which presumes to be central' (1992, 30). Through what Hutcheon calls 'the forked tongue' (29) of irony, the reader encounters 'those familiar rhetorical devices of understatement, hyperbole, anticlimax, and repetition; those modes of strategic positioning that provoke counter-expectation (incongruity, re-contextualization, defamiliarized or literalized cliché, parody)' (31). Liminal irony characterizes the stance of the observer and the outsider; in Hutcheon's terms, it 'opens up new spaces, literally between opposing meanings, where new things can happen' (31).

In her *PMLA* editor's column 'Collateral Damage,' Marianne Hirsch argues the affordances of comics facilitate the creation of these liminal spaces. As 'biocular texts par excellence,' Hirsch contends, asking 'us to read back and forth between images and words, comics reveal the visuality and thus the materiality of words and the discursivity and narrativity of images' (2004, 1213), comics become the liminal form par excellence. The effect of this double vision is political as well as aesthetic as comics 'highlight both the individual frames and the space between them, calling attention to the compulsion to transcend the frame in the act of seeing. They thus startlingly reveal the limited, obstructed vision that characterizes a historical moment ruled by trauma and censorship' (1213). In *The Photographer*, Lefèvre is the consummate outsider, a stranger to Afghanistan and attached to but not entirely part of the *MSF* mission. The biocular strategy of his text is twofold, the use of photographs and drawings adding an additional layer of distance to the mix of word and image. In Orbán's words, the 'ontological and functional split between the graphic and photographic explodes the narrative time and time again. As the narrative is followed, one keeps plunging into the silence of the photograph, then pulled back into narrative proper, slipping between modes of reading and viewing' (2015, 133). Both form and narrator are never entirely inside and never entirely outside the conflict here depicted. In the in-between space of constructive irony, incongruity, and understatement, we see the distance between his experience and the trauma he charts, rather than experience empathic immersion. Through this distance, we chart the

lucidity of his outsider's vision as well as the limits of his understanding and his inability to intervene in the conflict he records.

Some of this limitation is inherent in his very positioning as 'the photographer.' As Lefèvre arrives in Karachi en route to Peshawar, the drawings shift back to photographs again, identified as 'my first shots from the trip' (Guibert et al. 2009, 4). Lefèvre photographs himself in the mirror of the hotel room, his face obscured by the camera, his body fragmented by the frame. The use of the mirror evokes the projective assumptions of empathy, making visible what Ngai calls the 'affective reflexivity embodied in the dynamics of sympathy and empathy' (2005, 82). If empathy is, as Ngai claims, a mirror stage of intensification, then the depiction of the mirror itself makes the dynamic of empathy reflexive. Mirrors are liminal spaces, as Michael Chaney points out, 'the site of a threshold' (2016, 45) which 'forces reader-viewers to confront assumptions about the text's capacity to convey reality' (23). The mirror here reflects fragmentation and alienation, as Lefèvre's image is both cut off by the frame and obscured by the camera, which covers most of his face. As the photographer, he is the camera, his eye the lens. When Lefèvre introduces himself to the MSF team, he identifies them by their function in the mission: surgeon, anesthesiologist, mission chief. When it comes time for him to be introduced, the Afghan translator calls him 'the photographer.' The metonym of the role, which also serves as the title and is highlighted through the choice of image on the cover of the first French volume and in the English translation, implies not only a function but a stance. The ostensive objectivity of the photographer's position is challenged by his role as central character and narrator, which anchors the story, not in detached observation but in embodied, situated encounter. The photographer is centered in the frame, from which he is traditionally excluded. Rather than a detached record of what he has seen, the pictures become part of his sentimental journey.

The contrast between the first self-portrait in the book, the photographer in the mirror, and the drawing of the photographer on the cover is also worth noting. In the photograph, Lefèvre is still dressed from his flight, in a white button-down shirt and black pants. The camera obscures nearly all of his face, and the picture includes the lamp and curtain in the foreground, making the generic setting of the hotel room evident and emphasizing the strong verticals in the room: curtain, frame, standing figure. Two versions of the same image are included, the nuances so small they require close attention to realize the viewer is not looking at the same picture twice. There are small variations, the camera tilted just a little more

in the first picture, the bottom of the lamp cut off in one frame, hidden in the next. In the drawing on the cover, however, the photographer crouches on the ground. There is no pictured background, though the tan color which serves as backdrop evokes the desert. He is now covered in an Afghan *patu* and turban, but his camouflage is incomplete; trousers peek out from under the robe, and his circular glasses, his sneakers, and the camera itself identify him (Fig. 6.1). His sartorial metamorphosis is only ever provisional. Even inside the busy market, the photographer remains outside those he documents, a liminal figure and stranger in the middle of the crowd.

In the drawings in *The Photographer*, the juxtaposition of narrative and action creates ironic distance and layer speculation and evidence. When we shift from the comics to the double-page spreads of photographs, they are, by contrast, both more immersive and less informative. The photographs are silent, even silencing, compared to the drawings, which incorporate dialogue as speech bubbles, narration in boxes. The effect is, oddly, to

Fig. 6.1 Guibert Emmanuel, Didier Lefèvre, and Frédéric Lemercier. 2009. *The Photographer*. Trans. Alexis Siegel. New York: First Second, title page

make the photos seem more estranged than the drawings and to make the photos more prone to the voyeuristic traps of the romanticization and silencing of the subject, while the drawings are demystifying, humorous, and chatty. The photographs are occasionally interspersed with narration, but the narration is never part of their fabric, as in the case of the comic boxes. The photos create atmosphere and provide much of the aesthetic pleasure of the book—Lefèvre is a talented photographer, with an eye for haunted interiors, sublime landscapes, striking faces. It is in the drawings, however, that the characters and context come alive.

On Voyeurism and the Obscene Image

The use of drawing also calls into question the objectivity of photography. As Nancy Pedri writes,

> In *The Photographer*, the coupling of cartoon drawings with photographs repeatedly exposes photographic reference as faulty and points to the photographic image as falling short in its role as a sound verifier of reality—as an immediate, incontrovertible, complete record of experience. The drawings trouble the security of the photographic image, producing a differentiated space of representation that opens up a more complex articulation of the way in which photography cannot fulfill its promise to make the "real" or the "true" visible. (2011)

Guibert also uses drawing to navigate the potential obscenity of the voyeuristic photograph and video. Didier meets a war photographer whom he calls the Alsatian. The Alsatian, a man in his sixties, whom Lefèvre describes as 'a fascinating guy' (Guibert et al. 2009, 26), collects Leica cameras. He is also a connoisseur of violent images. 'I'm going to show you something,' he says (26), standing over Lefèvre with his arms crossed. 'You've never seen anything like it, right?' (27). The narration relays that these are 'films of executions of Russian prisoners. Badly filmed, but uncensored' (27). The repetition of scopic verbs—show, look, see—emphasizes the spectacle of violence, as well as the Alsatian's odd voyeuristic investment in their display. The photographer claims to have distributed cameras to Mujahideen commanders in order for them to record scenes of torture and to have returned six months later for the cassettes. It is unclear why he engaged in this project, what purpose the images are supposed to serve, or why he is so eager to share them. 'The images leave me

speechless' (27), Lefèvre records, refusing to describe them (Fig. 6.2). As importantly, Guibert does not draw them, so they are imageless for us, the readers. Lefèvre, Guibert, and Lemercier have decided to keep these executions off-camera. They are neither shown nor described but become part of an occluded archive of spectacular violence. We see Lefèvre sitting in front of the television, but our view is blocked by the screen and censored through the discretion of the text.

Fig. 6.2 Guibert Emmanuel, Didier Lefèvre, and Frédéric Lemercier. 2009. *The Photographer*. Trans. Alexis Siegel. New York: First Second, 27

At other points, however, Guibert and Lemercier are more explicit in the depiction of the impact of violence. As the *MSF* team come closer to the conflict zone, they pass refugees heading in the opposite direction and start to encounter the war-wounded. Didier learns not just to look but to read the situation. It is typical to see a grandfather looking after a child, he is told, because the men of fighting age are all missing. He learns about the diplomacy of the mission, not just its efficacy—the very limited powers of intervention of the medical team, illustrated when they operate on a cancerous toe though the sufferer will surely die, or when they spend extra time examining the chief of a tribe because they need his sponsorship, or when they repair a boy's foot only to show him limping into a landscape which the narration warns us is full of landmines. The humanitarian possibility of the mission—the hope it offers—is tempered by pragmatism and dwarfed by the scale of the conflict. When the team is shown in miniature marching into the endless desert, the futility of their intervention is emphasized.

The most graphic images in the book are in the photographs, not the drawings—16-year-old Amrullah, whose jaw has been torn off by shrapnel (119), and 2- or 3-year-old Ahmadjan, who dies soon afterward of internal bleeding (136). Sontag claims that humanitarian photography can exploit the suffering of the subject in a voyeuristic fashion, extracting trauma in what she calls a 'tropism towards the gruesome' (2003, 97). But Lefèvre resists decontextualization through balancing the blow-up with the contact sheet—that is, the isolated, monadic image with the network of photographs that provide context and call attention to the curation and isolation of the single shot. When the book moves from close-ups of images of wounds to the contact sheets which chart the operations (Guibert et al. 2009, 120), we zoom out of an immediate and shocking encounter to a mobile, dynamic representation of the field hospital as well as the work of the photographer in choosing the best frame, marked with a red X. In other words, we move from a representation of the traumatized individual to the network of care and representation which surrounds them. When Lefèvre photographs a man getting a bullet extracted, he once again includes a whole contact sheet of images, drawing out the excruciating experience of the treatment of even what is called in the text a 'minor wound' in the play-by-play of the photographs, so much more expressive of durational pain than the single frame.

The sight which Lefèvre finds most distressing, a girl who has been paralyzed by stray shrapnel during a bombing, is not photographed at all,

but only drawn. When the MSF team surgeon, John, tells Lefèvre to come and see the girl, we ourselves are shown almost nothing, only the headlamp on John's forehead in the darkness, a white circle against his black silhouette, in an image more abstract than representational (135). As Guibert writes of his choice to draw the scene with reticence, 'No speeches, no violins, no spilt blood. Drama is often something which hasn't the appearance of a drama: just a child lying on a bed, silent and still, but who won't get up anymore' (Lorah 2009). When there is nothing to see, there is nothing to photograph; when there is nothing to do, there is nothing to treat; Lefèvre collapses in futility, cries silently in despair, and when he rouses himself to photograph again, on Juliette's prompt, his perspective is birds-eye and transcendent outside and above the action. The pathos of the scene lies in the distance of what we are told and what cannot be shown, in an anti-dramatic, anti-cathartic record of loss.

Ugly Feelings

The Afghan subjects in Lefèvre's photographs mostly occupy a fairly limited emotional range: suffering, stoic, ridiculous, frozen in speechless frames, what Orbán calls 'a reserve of the unvoiced' and a 'hinterland of the unseen' (2015, 134). By contrast, the doctors are fully developed and distinguishable—they are funny, skeptical, hopeful, tenacious, strategic, ambivalent. The Afghans appear in limited and mostly transactional dialogue, perhaps inevitable for a photographer who does not speak Pashtun, but the medical team has long conversations. If there is an emotional relationship celebrated here, it is not the vertical one between sufferer and savior, but the horizontal one between these teammates turned friends. As Guibert wrote in an interview with Michael Lorah, '[T]he work of organizations like MSF is something irreplaceable. What we precisely wanted was to give back a face, a voice, a first name and a behavior to doctors who are generally faceless, nameless and voiceless for the public. The work Juliette, Robert, Régis, Sylvie, John, Évelyne, Ronald, Odile, Michel have done deserves respect and gratitude. This book is for them' (Lorah 2009). Though Lefèvre at times loses faith in the local people, in the prospects of an end to conflict, and in the possibilities of intervention, his admiration for the *MSF* team never falters.

As he approaches the end of his mission, Lefèvre becomes jaded, angry, sometimes cynical, afraid. Lefèvre decides to head back to Pakistan without his team and is escorted by four men who abandon him on the trail.

He tries to cross the mountains on his own in the snow. This section, entirely in silhouette, shows a man reduced in the blurry snowlit twilight. He wraps himself in his survival blanket and is no longer recognizable as a human form. He takes a final photograph of the gorgeous, pitiless, indifferent landscape, printed as the only double-page single image of the book, as a record: 'To let people know where I died' (Guibert et al. 2009, 219). Lefèvre does not die but is picked up by a band of rescuers who then blackmail him, is later held hostage by a rogue policeman, and barely survives a harrowing journey before eventually making it home. During his treacherous journey, he is less interested in taking photographs and takes only one—of an old man he calls 'a crippled baba,' which he deems 'a kind of self-portrait' (229). At this point in his travels, even when he encounters the other, he only sees himself, in his increasing precarity and withdrawal. He is no longer part of the mission, but on his own, and dangerously so. The loss of his teammates, the loss of protection, and his lack of access to translators mean almost all his interactions with the local population are embattled and hostile. He has almost run out of film, and he is increasingly haggard. This final volume is mostly drawn, not only because Lefèvre is running out of film, but also because he no longer feels like taking pictures. Having left the *MSF* mission, he finds himself lost, apathetic, sick, frightened, and resentful. 'They make me sick,' he writes of his blackmailers. 'I make myself sick' (232). The afterword in the English edition reports on the physical toll of his voyage: chronic furunculosis and 14 lost teeth, which the editors write was caused by 'his dreadful return, with its attendant exhaustion, lack of hygiene, malnutrition, and stress' (262).

'Those who stress the evidentiary punch of image-making by cameras have to finesse the question of the subjectivity of the image-maker' (2003, 26), Sontag writes, and *The Photographer* foregrounds that subjectivity by making the photographer himself the primary subject and his spectatorial, detached perspective our vantage point on the journey. This reflexive primacy of the storyteller is frequent in many works of longform graphic witness, from Joe Sacco to Guy Deslisle, Kate Evans, and Sara Glidden, where the narrator is both primary character and the filter through which we experience the story. This might overcorrect for the problem of the invisible subjective photographer or storyteller at the expense of the subject at hand, but it introduces a different problem. By the end of the story, our sympathies primarily attach to Lefèvre, and we identify with his despair and exhaustion. In the third volume, the Afghans are depicted as less sympathetic and more oppositional—they are dishonest, dangerous, an

obstacle to his journey home. At the end of the story, the graphic narrative doubles down on what becomes an empathetic gap, and what Ngai calls ugly feelings come to the fore. We look at Afghanistan through Didier's eyes, we hear his voice. The reader-viewer is invited to feel for him and with him—the fatigue, ambivalence, and complicated distance of the implicated and powerless voyeur. Guibert writes, 'At the time (1986), Didier certainly believed in the role and the efficiency of photographs as a testimony against war. As he grew older, the quick evolution of his job, of the medias, and of his own psychology made him more doubtful about that' (Lorah 2009). The book, as retrospective document, foreshadows that doubt and ambivalence.

Conclusion

Ngai argues that negative affect is frequently encountered in 'a general state of obstructed agency' and 'situations of passivity' (2005, 3). They can serve as 'allegories for an autonomous or bourgeois art's increasingly resigned and pessimistic understanding of its *own* relationship to political action' (3). In her article, 'Post-Humanitarianism,' Lilie Chouliaraki calls attention to the shift away from empathic identification in the messaging of humanitarian organizations, writing of campaigns which employ 'ironic double-voicedness' (2010, 12) and instead:

> refract grand emotions into, what we may call, low intensity affective regimes—regimes that insinuate the classic constellations of emotion towards suffering but do not quite inspire or enact them. Guilt, heroism and compassion re-appear not as elements of a politics of pity, partaking a grand narrative of affective attachment and collective commitment, but as de-contextualized fragments of such narrative that render the psychological world of the spectator a potential terrain of self-inspection. (16-17)

Chouliaraki writes that the shift from empathy to irony, and from savior politics to introspection and futility, is a mixed bag: while it 'manages to reflexively address the limitations of a politics of pity, detaching the communication of suffering from grand emotion, it has, in one and the same move, also suppressed the articulation of ethical discourse on public action' (20). As an affective regime of intimacy and identification, empathy can smother, blur difference, and overclaim, but the distance of irony risks the surrender of action and of agency. Lefèvre returns home to his

mother, his dog, and his native France, depicted on a contact sheet on the final page, and the prospects for intervention in Afghanistan remain unclear. The narrative ends with the familiar comfort of home and his temporary retreat from the humanitarian project. But these familiar images do not fill the page; the second half of the contact sheet is black, a record of photographs not taken, and an imprint of the problem of both representation and intervention raised by the text as a whole. If the photographer leaves us in darkness, it is also our darkness: the space between the impossibility of looking and the impossibility of looking away, which neither empathy nor irony seem sufficient to illuminate.

Works Cited

Beaty, Bart. 2006. Le Photographe Vol.3, Emmanuel Guibert. *The Comics Reporter*, December 14. https://www.comicsreporter.com/index.php/briefings/%20eurocomics/7106/ . Accessed 28 September 2021.

Chaney, Michael A. 2016. *Reading Lessons in Seeing: Mirrors, Masks, and Mazes in the Autobiographical Graphic Novel*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

Chouliaraki, Lilie. 2010. Post-humanitarianism: Humanitarian communication beyond a politics of pity. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 13 (2): 107–126.

Chute, Hillary L. 2016. *Disaster Drawn: Visual Witness, Comics, and Documentary Form*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Crabapple, Molly. 2013. Inside a Guantanamo Bay Prison Tour—Molly Crabapple Returns to Guantanamo Bay. *Vice*, October 9. https://www.vice.com/en/article/xd588d/guantanamo-bay-is-kafka-on-the-caribbean. Accessed 28 September 2021.

Delisle, Guy. 2007. *Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea*. Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly.

———. 2008. *Burma Chronicles*. Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly.

———. 2012. *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*. Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly.

Guibert, Emmanuel, Didier Lefèvre, and Frédéric Lemercier. 2003–2006. *Le Photographe*. Vol. 3. Belgium: Aire Libre Dupuis.

Guibert, Emmanuel, Didier Lefèvre and Frédéric Lemercier. *The Photographer*. 2009. Trans. Alexis Siegel. New York: First Second.

Halpern, Jake and Michael Sloan. 2017. Welcome to the New World. *New York Times*. January 26. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/10/26/opinion/sunday/welcome-to-the-new-world.html. Accessed 28 September 2021.

Hatfield, Charles. 2005. *Alternative Comics: An Emerging Literature*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

Hirsch, Marianne. 2004. Editor's Column: Collateral Damage. *PMLA/ Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 119 (5): 1209–1215.

Hutcheon, Linda. 1992. 'Speaking Canadian': The Ironies of Canadian Art and Literature. In *Double Talking: Essays on Verbal and Visual Ironies in Canadian Contemporary Art and Literature*, 11–38. Toronto: ECW Press.

Lorah, Michael C. 2009. Documenting Afghanistan: *Guibert* on *The Photographer*. 23 March. https://www.newsarama.com/2498-documenting-afghanistan-guibert-on-the-photographer. Accessed 1 May 2019.

Maddow, Rachel. 2009. *The Photographer* on The Rachel Maddow show on MSNBC. June 12. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSK_zN-Ne8Y. Accessed 28 September 2021.

McCloud, Scott. 1993. *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. New York: HarperCollins.

Ngai, Sianne. 2005. *Ugly Feelings*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Orbán, Katalin. 2015. Mediating Distant Violence: Reports on Non-Photographic Reporting. In The Fixer and The Photographer. *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* 6 (2): 122–137.

Pedri, Nancy. 2011. When Photographs Aren't Quite Enough: Reflections on Photography and Cartooning in The Photographer. *ImageTexT: Interdisciplinary Comics Studies* 6 (1): 1–18.

Sacco, Joe. 2000. *Safe Area Goražde: The War in Eastern Bosnia 1992–1995*. Seattle: Fantagraphics.

———. 2001. *Palestine*. Seattle: Fantagraphics.

Salmi, Charlotte. 2019. Visualizing the world: Graphic novels, comics, and human rights. In *The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights and Literature*, ed. Crystal Parikh, 178–190. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, Sidonie. 2011. Human Rights and Comics: Autobiographical Avatars, Crisis Witnessing, and Transnational Rescue Networks. In *Graphic Subjects: Critical Essays on Autobiography and Graphic Novels*, ed. Michael A. Chaney, 61–72. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Sontag, Susan. 2003. *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York: Picador.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

CHAPTER 7

From Empathy to Shame: The Use of Virtual Reality by Humanitarian Organisations

Valérie Gorin

Introduction: The Humanitarian Digital Revolution

On October 3, 2015, US airstrikes destroyed a hospital in the northern Afghan city of Kunduz. This trauma hospital was opened in 2011 by Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), the international NGO active in the country since the 1980s. In its online account of the attack, MSF highlighted that the hospital 'provided high-quality, free surgical care to victims of all types of trauma'.[1] In the ongoing fighting between government and opposition forces, the hospital was caught in the crossfire in September 2015. Based on reports sustaining that the hospital hosted active armed combatants, the US Army launched the attack and later admitted its responsibility by claiming it was an accident. The airstrikes resulted in the

[1] The whole history of the attack, as well as its political, legal and humanitarian aftermath, are exposed in detail in MSF's dedicated webpage: https://www.msf.org/kunduz-hospital-attack-depth (accessed October 6, 2021).

V. Gorin (✉)
University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland
e-mail: valerie.gorin@unige.ch

© The Author(s) 2022

B. L. Edgar et al. (eds.), *Making Humanitarian Crises*, Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00824-5_7

deaths of 24 patients, 14 staff and 4 caretakers. While the bombings prompted international media coverage and global outrage about their legal ramifications (Bouchet-Saulnier and Whittall 2018), MSF asked for an independent investigation by the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission that was never implemented. As a result, the NGO launched an international advocacy campaign to 'stop attacks on health-care workers, facilities and patients', called *#NotATarget*.[2] The Swiss section of MSF (MSF-CH) participated by producing a movie using virtual reality (VR) technology, which enables 3D and 360-degree immersive vision. Wearing a VR headset, the spectators found themselves projected in the trauma ward a few seconds before the attack and experienced the aftermath of the bomb explosion. In the mediascape of the campaign, which combined interactive social media events and public mobilisation, this VR movie stood out: it offered an immersion into the devastating consequences of the attack 'as if' the viewers were there and elicited emotional responses through the sensory experience of the trauma.

This strategic choice by MSF-CH relied on newly claimed performative and affective outcomes offered by virtual worlds and devices. As such, it highlights the shift to digital media among humanitarian organisations (Vilhalva de Campos 2021). Since 2015, the UN and international NGOs have turned to VR for raising funds or awareness, targeting different communities such as diplomats, military groups or decision-makers. VR technology is considered to induce behaviour change and emotional resonance, which offers considerable potential in education, sports, mental health and humanitarian aid (ICRC Innovation Unit 2019). By pretending to erase the distance, to humanise the story and to elicit empathetic connections between viewers and affected populations, immersive storytelling thus questions the well-known paradigms of distant suffering and compassion fatigue (Campbell 2014; Moeller 1999). However, despite its technological innovation, VR embodies deeply rooted cultural beliefs when it comes to stereoscopic view, illusion, immersion and mixed or extended reality, to name but a few. As seen in this chapter, VR has a long history within the science of the image: 'The idea of installing an observer in a hermetically closed-off image space of illusion did not make its first appearance with the

[2] See the online campaign on the website: http://notatarget.msf.org/ (accessed October 6, 2021).

technical invention of computerised virtual realities. On the contrary, VR forms part of the core of the relationship of humans to images' (Grau 2003, 4–5).

Indeed, the divergence between communication, media, video gaming and education studies—which tend to show similarities between virtual reality and real-life experiences (García-Orosa and Pérez-Seijo 2020, 2)—and visual scholars, film theorists and historians, and the few researchers in postcolonial studies—who relativise the illusory power of the VR perceptual experience and criticise its empathy claims—is growing since the 1980s. While this shows the extent to which 'this confusion of technological prediction with magical thinking has spread to academic discourse' (Murray 2020, 13), it also emphasises the need to move beyond the long-standing 'mobilization of empathy' (Wilson and Brown 2009) as a rhetoric inherent to the humanitarian sentiment since the nineteenth century. In line with this criticism, this chapter opens new lines of inquiry in the potential of immersive technologies to generate the 'mobilization of shame' (Keenan 2004; Leebaw 2020), a framework more prevalent in human rights campaigns. Through several examples of humanitarian VR films produced to denounce indiscriminate violence against civilians in war zones, such as MSF's *Not A Target*, this paper shifts the analytical focus from technological determinism and the use of VR for philanthropy to the exploration of the development of such movies to advocate for causes. Keeping with Chouliaraki's critique of the aestheticisation of suffering, it aims at questioning the 'regime of justice' instead of the 'regime of care' and the affective politics driven by such storytelling (2006, 266).

To do so, the first section of this paper builds on a historical perspective of the immersive spectacle and questions the most significant elements of the VR experience: immersion, presence, engagement and emotional resonance. The second section then explores the creation of VR films by aid agencies in relation to visual criticism of humanitarian representations, thus challenging the vision of VR as empathetic media. Building on the *Not A Target* case and similar attempts who draw on outrage and indignation, the third section examines the way shame is mobilised and offers an alternative to understand the performativity of emotions in VR storytelling and its illusory power. Finally, concluding remarks review the affective and visual politics offered by VR humanitarian films, insofar as these movies pose technological, cognitive, ethical and moral limitations.

Virtual Realities as Performative Devices

VR technology has gained substantial interest under the concept of immersive journalism or storytelling since a decade. VR has moved outside the niches of military experiment and video gaming to become a cultural phenomenon in mainstream media. It is now accessible to the public through art venues, educational projects, documentaries and exhibitions that feature consumer headsets. With this technology,

> Virtual reality (VR) is an immersive media experience that replicates either a real or imagined environment and allows users to interact with this world in ways that feel as if they are there. To create a virtual reality experience, two primary components are necessary. First, one must be able to produce a virtual world. This can either be through video capture—recording a real-world scene—or by building the environment in Computer Generated Imagery (CGI). Second, one needs a device with which users can immerse themselves in this virtual environment. These generally take the form of dedicated rooms or head-mounted displays. Cumbersome, largely lab-based technologies for VR have been in use for decades and theorized about for even longer. But recent technological advances in 360-degree, 3D-video capture; computational capacity; and display technology have led to a new generation of consumer-based virtual reality production. (Aronson-Rath et al. n.d.)

While historical accounts go as far back as the eighteenth century and the emergence of panoramic painting (Berkman 2018), VR's history emerged more generally in relation to the development of image culture in the late nineteenth century (Evans 2018). From lantern slides and their perceptual spectacles,[3] stereoscopes and their in-depth vision (1830s–1850s), kinetoscopes and other panoramic motion pictures (1890s),[4] to the 1962 sensorama, a 'one-person machine' providing 'an immersive, multi-sensory experience building on the novelty of 3D sight by adding sound, smell and touch aspects' (ICRC 2018a, 2), all were sensory media. These once-new pictorial media generated enthusiasm about the illusion of transparency enhanced through the mechanical image. Thus, the visual mechanics of VR are not revolutionary nor new and build on technological determinism, the old McLuhan's prophecy that 'the message is the

[3] See Jason Bates' chapter on WWI photography in this book.
[4] See Brenda Edgar's chapter on humanitarian cinema in this book.

medium' (1967). VR has simply brought visuality one step closer to the 'myth of total cinema' already present in early nonfiction films: that the experience of reality can be achieved beyond cinematic realism and that the naïve spectator confuses the illusion on screen with reality (Crawford-Holland 2018).

Technological determinism has turned into optimism or utopianism, on the promises that VR technology can make us feel 'what it is like'. It has prompted heated debates about its capacity to reproduce a true, authentic experience of 'being there' (Cizek 2016; Murray 2016; Uricchio 2016). The performative and perceptual environment provided by VR thus questions its four most significant attributes, sometimes used interchangeably: immersion, presence, engagement, and empathy. This chapter explores these attributes in relation to the visual practices of humanitarianism. First, immersion occurs 'as a perceptual response' when it is associated with a sensory experience, the feeling of being enveloped or surrounded by multisensory stimuli and multimodal representations delivered by words, images and sounds in the virtual environment (Nilsson et al. 2016, 110). In parallel, immersion also occurs 'as a response to narratives' when it is related to mental absorption in the worlds represented, and 'emotional attachment to characters' (111). Immersion is not typical of VR. Humanitarian photography has long displayed an immersive spectacle of distant suffering that combined an experience of the senses with a larger complex of settings and injunctions to care about and react to the injustice exposed. Transnational networks—such as the Congo Reform Association—and other human rights activists in the nineteenth century have confronted Western audiences to atrocity images displayed in magic lantern shows, books, lectures and exhibitions so they could authenticate and feel the horrors of colonial violence (Godby 2006; Grant 2001; Twomey 2012). Similarly, the whole cinematic set-up of movies made about famine, war and genocide in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1920s mixed perceptual stimuli with filmic narratives that involved the performativity of images. Positive emotions related to ameliorative actions could be watched on screen while listening to piano music and verbal accounts of guest speakers who witnessed suffering abroad, or on postcards and printshots available for people to share, whereas blame and indignation could be read in the supplications and prescriptive requests made in humanitarian appeals, bulletins and field reports (Gorin 2021a; Piana 2015; Tusan 2017).

Second, research has also focused on the concept of immersion as presence. It is now deconstructed as the combination of place illusion (being in another world, even though it is fictional) and body ownership (moving in the virtual environment; see de la Pena et al. 2010, 294). Embodied presence in the virtual world is based on first-person position, giving the illusion that distance is symbolically and technically annihilated. For instance, all the verbs used to describe presence in the virtual environment are verbs of motion: to 'enter', to 'be transported to', to 'follow the footsteps of', to 'navigate into', to 'travel to', to 'visit'. This questions the long-standing outside/inside position of the viewer in photography, as explored in Susan Sontag's historical critique:

> The whole point in photographing people is that you are not intervening in their lives, only visiting them. The photographer is supertourist, an extension of the anthropologist, visiting natives and bringing back news of their exotic doings and strange gear. The photographer is always trying to colonize new experiences or find new ways to look at familiar subjects—to fight against boredom. For boredom is just the reverse side of fascination: both depend on being outside rather than inside a situation, and one leads to the other. (1977, 42)

But where do we set boundaries between inside and outside? The notion of 'being inside' thus offers room for interpretation that cannot be limited to geographical proximity; a similar observation can be drawn for VR. Being inside an image involves an interaction with the people pictured—but in this case, what are the modalities of the interaction? To quote art historian Solomon-Godeau, the insider position 'is thus understood to imply a position of engagement, participation, and privileged knowledge, whereas the second, the outsider's position, is taken to produce an alienated and voyeuristic relationship that heightens the distance between subject and object' (1994, 49). Indeed, the inside/outside position of spectators had already been raised in the 1980s regarding controversial cases of humanitarian campaigns, criticising the objectification and aestheticisation of suffering and the voyeuristic gaze of the charity industry (Kennedy 2009; Lissner 1981). Since then, controversies over the stereotypical use of White saviorism and poverty porn bias in charity appeals regularly arise on social media (McVeigh 2018). Therefore, one can question whether the 'lived experience' of VR and the embodied presence in a humanitarian context is not just another form of supertourism in Sontag's

view. Even though the frame of photography totally disappears with the panoramic and 3D vision of VR, engagement does not draw naturally from sharing the diegetic space with characters in the movie. Being a 'visitor' who is briefly 'transported into' the virtual world might in fact reinforce contemplation, fascination and self-centeredness, rather than participation and other centeredness.

This leads us to the third attribute, i.e., engagement. In his seminal work on distant suffering, Luc Boltanski defines engagement as a situation in which 'the spectator occupies the position (…) of someone to whom a proposal of commitment is made', statements and images mix to form 'a description of suffering and the expression of a particular way of being affected by the suffering displayed by words and images, modes of linguistic, cognitive and emotional commitment' (1999, 149). Despite mechanical innovations, the level of participation in VR is still limited to vision and sound (and sometimes smell and touch), and viewers are at all times aware they have a physical connection with the actual world via technological devices (e.g., headset and gloves). Engagement, in this sense, relates more to narrative immersion and its spatial, temporal and emotional dimensions (Ryan 2001), rather than live conversations with characters in the film. At this stage, VR films could largely remain a tech-savvy form of 'chronotopic reversal'—an optical illusion that transports viewers to another space and time already emphasised by Chouliaraki in previous aid posters and human rights campaigns (2010, 116). In this case, the spectator adopts the position of a bystander, with limited agency except the capacity to observe, move and feel. Immersive reality, then, pertains to visual practices of the early twentieth century, during which 'witnessing publics' (Torchin 2006) were formed when aid agencies used cinema and eyewitness images to ask audiences to bear witness to war atrocities.

Among the narrative immersion lies, finally, the emotional dimension. Diving into a virtual world (immersion), being there and sharing a diegetic space with characters (presence), and being exposed to their suffering (engagement) naturally evoke an affective reaction in general and the notion of emotional intimacy in particular. It might trigger various forms of responses, though empathetic claims are largely associated with VR, with divergent results on the degree of empathy and resonance with the distant other (Archer and Finger 2018; McStay 2018). Often used as a synonym for immersion, the notion of empathy is not always clearly defined and is understood differently by VR proponents. According to

Susan Lanzoni's history of empathy, 'As many understand it today, empathy is our capacity to grasp and understand the mental and emotional lives of others' (2018, 14). These emotional and cognitive capacities to feel for someone are radically different from immersion as a presence or the feeling of just 'being there' with someone. Drawing from this observation, we will now turn to the use of VR films by humanitarian organisations and explore the ways they could open new lines of inquiry beyond the 'fetishization' of empathy 'as a revolutionary sentiment' (Crawford-Holland 2018, 20) and, more generally, beyond the governance of compassion or sympathy in humanitarian imagery (Käpylä and Kennedy 2014).

Humanitarian Virtual Movies

In 2015, the UNHCR launched *Clouds over Sidra*, the first VR movie in the humanitarian sector, which was filmed in the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan. A collaboration between the UN Millennium Campaign and UNICEF Jordan, it was written by Gabo Arora, UN special advisor for refugees, and Chris Milk, owner of the VR company WITH.IN.[5] Following an ordinary day in the life of Sidra, a 12-year-old Syrian girl living in the camp, the movie is a paradigmatic example of the politics of empathy (Irom 2018). Telling the story of refugeehood from Sidra's perspective, it aims to make the spectator feel good and act as a global citizen (Gruenewald and Witteborn 2020). Similarly, the well-known TED talk by Chris Milk has largely disseminated the motto that VR has 'become the ultimate empathy machine' (2015), thus prompting many criticisms about the capacity of digital media to generate empathy on demand (Bollmer 2017; Hassan 2020; Herson 2016).

Unsurprisingly, aid agencies have followed the technological optimism raised by VR's alleged ability to heighten emotional arousal. Since 2015, about a hundred films have been produced on topics ranging from natural disasters, infectious diseases, climate change, migration, war-related violence, women's rights and education. The sources of these films include organisations such as UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, MSF, Oxfam, Save the Children, World Vision, Islamic Relief, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the International Rescue Committee (IRC).

[5] Created in 2014 by Chris Milk and Patrick Milling-Smith, two filmmakers from the videogame industry, WITH.IN was formerly known as VRSE.

Some have entire innovation units dedicated to VR, such as the United Nations Virtual Reality (UNVR) programme, established in January 2015 in coordination with the UN Sustainable Development Goals Action campaign.[6] While *Clouds over Sidra* was initially launched at the 2015 World Economic Forum in Davos and further screened at other UN summits,[7] thus reaching out to decision-makers, UN representatives and policymakers, the other movies were promoted at international exhibitions, film festivals and public venues to reach a global audience. On specific occasions, technical set-ups were designed to enhance the virtual experience. For instance, MSF used a 9-m panoramic dome to screen the ten VR refugee movies produced for its travelling exhibition, *Forced from Home*.[8]

This leads to several observations. First, as mentioned above, empathetic claims are made without clear distinction between perceptual and narrative immersion, as can be seen in the organisations' promotional material: '[UNVR] uses the power of immersive storytelling to inspire viewers towards increased empathy, action and positive social change' (UNVR)[9]; 'VR is one of the best mediums out there to evoke genuine empathy (…). When you're watching a traditional video, you're able to multi-task. But once you don the virtual-reality goggles, the rest of the world around you disappears and you've entered into a completely simulated experience' (IRC 2016). These examples reflect a definition of empathy that 'leads one person to respond with sensitive care to the suffering of another' (Batson 2009, 9). Nonetheless, it precludes other emotional and cognitive capacities related to feeling and experiencing empathy, from knowing the thoughts or feelings of the other, imagining how one would react in a similar situation, to distress felt by witnessing the suffering of the other (2009). To experience these other dimensions in full, viewers of VR

[6] The UNVR website includes the list of all VR films produced by the UN until 2019. See: http://unvr.sdgactioncampaign.org/ (accessed October 6, 2021).

[7] Background information for the movie is available on the UNVR page: http://unvr.sdgactioncampaign.org/cloudsoversidra/#.YLPMBKgzZPZ (accessed October 6, 2021).

[8] The purpose of the whole exhibition, which combines live experience, 360-degree videos and a guided tour, is explained on the dedicated website. See https://www.forcedfromhome.com/360-videos/ (accessed October 6, 2021).

[9] 'About UNVR', http://unvr.sdgactioncampaign.org/home/#.YLO4pagzZPY (accessed October 6, 2021).

humanitarian films would need to have a full interaction and conversation with the protagonists and engage actively in the situation.

Second, the VR experience of humanitarian settings is merely visual and aesthetic, with the risk of the viewer being turned off by the visual exploration rather than having a discussion with characters in the movie. In her conceptual approach to distance and moral affordances in VR, Kate Nash shows that because spatial distance is abolished, 'VR runs the risk of producing improper distance (…) when it invites forms of self-focus and self-projection rather than a more distanced position' that would allow the viewer to analyse the situation and acknowledge the suffering of others (2018, 125). In simulating face-to-face encounters with distant others, VR films stimulate imagination and transportation to other places, at the risk of privileging visual and spatial exploration rather than offering genuine and attentive witnessing to the stories and words of suffering others. To enhance viewers' agency, the VR experience should offer more than 'shared space-time illusions' (Gruenewald and Witteborn 2020, 7).

For instance, the UN used VR portals inside containers when *Clouds over Sidra* was screened at the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2015. The setting allowed sensorial isolation, as viewers entered those containers after watching the film, and shared spatial proximity and full-body conversations in real time with refugees in camps on the other side of the interactive screen. Enhancing visual immersion, these VR portals created a sort of a 'wormhole'[10] or gateway to others' distant realities through symbolic physical transportation and interaction. Even if he did not visit the portal, Ban Ki-Moon, then UN-Secretary General, shared his experience of confronting VR to direct refugee witnessing. He watched *Clouds over Sidra* before the opening of the Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria on March 31, 2015, during which he stated:

> Last night, I saw a deeply moving video entitled *Clouds Over Sidra*. It is an amazing virtual reality production of the starkness of life in the Za'atari Refugee Camp through the eyes of a beautiful young girl by the name of Sidra. She says "I have been here a year and a half, and that is long enough … but no one knows when it will be safe to go home, nor what will be left for them when they return." I often think back on my visits in recent years to

[10] These VR portals were designed by the company Shared Studios. See Shared Studios, September 21, 2015. https://www.sharedstudios.com/press-list/2016/5/26/quartz-the-un-is-using-virtual-reality-and-an-immersive-wormhole-to-connect-diplomats-with-syrian-refugees.

> refugee camps in Turkey, Jordan and Iraq. Children asked: "Why am I here? What did I do wrong? When can I go home?" I have no answer. I have only *shame* and deep *anger* and *frustration* at the international community's impotence to stop the war.[11]

Without mentioning his reaction to the movie, he highlights his outrage against the international community and the lack of long-lasting political solutions for refugee resettlement. Empirical studies have shown that audience responses to visual representations of armed conflicts enhance frustration, resentment, outrage and shame but also resistance and enjoyment (Cohen 2001; Scott 2014; Seu 2010). Findings show that responses are complex and people have mixed feelings, especially because audiences experience various emotional stages when encountering visual evidence (Sacco and Gorin 2017). These feelings are born out of powerlessness, as a reaction against the figure of the oppressor, the political bystander or the policymaker, but they coexist with feelings towards the suffering of affected communities. This leads to subtler forms of compassion, as discussed in Birgitta Höijer's study of audience reactions to media reports of armed violence (2004, 522–524): tender-hearted compassion towards victims (pity or empathy); blame-filled compassion towards perpetrators (indignation and anger); shame-filled compassion towards ourselves (guilt); powerless-filled compassion (indifference or impotence).

Finally, the case reveals the need to assess the emotional resonance of VR movies within a larger experimental setting. While many organisations invest in VR for fundraising or outreach, the ICRC established its Virtual Reality Unit in 2014 to study behaviour change. The ICRC likes to consider itself 'a humanitarian leader through its training programs, urban combat simulations, and extended reality (XR) research' (ICRC 2020). Relying on academic findings and experiments to explore new operating models for VR, the organisation takes into consideration that immersive technologies can also trigger stress, anxiety, trauma or other physiological reactions similar to the real world (ICRC Innovation Unit 2019, 3–4). VR can thus induce strong physical and mental stimuli, which should be considered in the emotional response to the immersive experience. In 2018,

[11] Ban Ki-Moon Statement, UN Meetings Coverage and Press releases, March 31, 2015. https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sgsm16634.doc.htm. Author's emphasis.

the ICRC launched *The Right Choice*, a VR movie confronting viewers with the situation of civilians trapped in war zones (see Fig. 7.1).

Putting the viewer in an active role, the story simulates the experience of choosing to flee or to stay: 'The experience gives viewers a choice in the face of attack. But in the end none of the options leads to a *positive* outcome, underscoring how war gives civilians nothing but *bad* options'; Christopher Nicholas, the ICRC's project leader, hence underlines, 'Virtual reality transports viewers from the *comfort* of their homes to the *horrors* of the battlefield in a *visceral* and powerful way. (…) We want people who aren't familiar with urban conflict to get a sense of what it looks and feels like' (ICRC 2018b).[12] Without further explanation of the visceral reactions to the simulated experience of war (the ICRC has polled its viewers but results were not available as of June 2021—see ICRC 2018c), one can only assume the feelings sensed when exposed to the horrors of the battlefield, which could just as easily harden the viewer's

Fig. 7.1 Two armed combatants entering a family house. *The Right Choice*, 2018 (©ICRC/Don't Panic)

[12] Author's emphasis.

feelings against either side. Drawing from this observation, we will now explore the case of MSF's Kunduz attack simulation and the use of VR films to advocate, influence or change policies, which represent only 8.1% of the production (García-Orosa and Pérez-Seijo 2020, 8).

Not a Target

After the bombing of the Kunduz hospital in 2015, MSF President Joanne Liu took the matter to the international community. In her two speeches at the UN Security Council in 2016, she deplored the lack of control of hostilities and the systematic attacks against medical facilities and health workers in Afghanistan, Syria and Yemen. On May 3, 2016, she recalled that during her visit to Kunduz after the bombing, she met 'one of the survivors, an MSF nurse whose left arm was blown off during the relentless airstrike', who told her 'that when fighting erupted in Kunduz, MSF told its staff that its trauma center was a safe place'. This memory '*haunts*' her daily, in front of attacks against healthcare that 'amount to massive, indiscriminate and disproportionate civilian targeting in urban settings, and, in the worst cases (…) are acts of *terror*' (MSF 2016a).[13] Four months later, on September 28, 2016, she 'deplored the lack of control of hostilities. This free-for-all is a choice. There is a method in the *madness*. In both Yemen and Syria, four of the five permanent members of this council are implicated in these attacks' (MSF 2016b).[14] Her reckoning of haunting memories and the reference to madness and terror thus situate her affects around trauma and resentment, even though she was not present during the attack. Trauma, in this sense, should be considered as a 'wounding of the mind brought about by sudden, unexpected, emotional shock' (Leys 2000, 4), where 'terror and surprise caused by certain events' mix so 'the mind is split' and 'unable to register the wound to the psyche because the ordinary mechanisms of awareness and cognition are destroyed' (2). Trauma is reinforced here by accusations against the governments, exacerbating resentment as a social and political expression of the powerlessness of humanitarian and civilian communities against the oppressor responsible of their injury (Martin Moruno 2013, 4). With this accusatory rhetoric as a frame, MSF Canada's Executive Director Stephen Cornish launched the *#NotATarget* campaign in October 2016, one year after the attack.

[13] Author's emphasis.

[14] Author's emphasis.

MSF-CH joined the campaign by creating a VR movie in collaboration with the Swiss filmmaker Romain Girard. The 2.3-minute film was written by members of the communication and advocacy units and filmed at the Geneva University Hospital with MSF-CH staff as cast members. It first screened at the International Film Festival for Human Rights in Geneva in March 2017. Within this public arena, MSF-CH chose a rights-oriented media event on purpose. Human rights festivals are places where audiences anticipate their confrontation with the suffering of others as well as learning about social justice (Tascón 2017). Thus, without confronting the viewers directly with the perpetrators, MSF-CH uses resentment to situate the movie in a 'regime of justice', 'when violent action organizes the spectacle of suffering around feelings of indignation against those who are responsible for the misfortune of the sufferer' (Chouliaraki 2006, 266). Throughout the VR experience at the Geneva festival, viewers of *Not a Target* went through the same process: once equipped with VR headsets in a private room, they watched the movie without explanation. They then had a debriefing phase (between 15 and 30 minutes) with the communication unit, who asked about their cognitive and emotional reactions (Gorin 2021b). No further action, such as lobbying or petitioning governments, was proposed at this stage. However, MSF-CH moved to a more strategic use of its movie, i.e., influence and policy change. Since August 2017, the organisation has used it in behind-the-door roundtables, lectures and bilateral discussions with military groups, working closely with the Geneva Centre for Security Policy.[15] The VR movie was screened to sensitise pilots. This time, the dissemination process was a bit different, because contextual and legal frameworks were added to the experience: military viewers met the advocacy team, who explained the purpose of the movie and raised awareness about International Humanitarian Law.

The movie's story projects viewers in a trauma ward just seconds before a bomb blasts the hospital, through the perspective of a person with a broken leg, unable to move in a wheelchair (see Fig. 7.2). Although the location is easily identified as a hospital or healthcare facility, nothing indicates to which specific country or region it belongs. Unlike many other humanitarian VR films, no one tells the story, which leaves viewers in full

[15] The GCSP is a think tank that promotes dialogue and education to support peacebuilding and security. See https://www.gcsp.ch/ (accessed October 6, 2021).

Fig. 7.2 A doctor greets the viewer/patient in a wheelchair before the blast. *Not A Target*, 2016 (©MSF/Romain Girard)

confrontation with the audiovisual evidence without any explanation given or character to follow.

Immersion then works ‘as a perceptual response’ rather than ‘a response to narratives’ (Nilsson et al. 2016, 110 and 111). Without actually seeing the explosion itself, viewers are ‘transported’ into the heart of the shock wave. They observe the trauma and the chaos, they see doctors overwhelmed, civilians covered in blood and screaming in the dust and darkness of the explosion, a surgeon performing cardiac massage on someone with an open chest, an old man wandering with a dead baby in his arms (see Fig. 7.3). While ‘inside’ the simulated blast, some viewers reported signs of panic, anxiety or suffocation.[16] Hence, the MSF-CH’s purpose was to re-create a ‘traumatic experience’ (MSF 2017) to engage viewers’ powerlessness. This way, the NGO refuses to let the event be part of the historic past, but reenacts ‘the experience of the trauma, fixed or frozen in time’, to be shared as a legacy in ‘a painful, dissociated, traumatic present’ (Leys 2000, 2).

[16] MSF hasn’t released any official document or study about the use and evaluation of the movie. The author also interviewed the advocacy team on October 2018, including former MSF Senior advocacy Advisor Maria Guevara in December 2020.

Fig. 7.3 An elderly man carries a wounded baby as civilians run into the hospital after the blast. *Not A Target*, 2016 (©MSF/Romain Girard)

The performative and perceptual environment of the movie clearly relies on immersion and presence, but engagement is completely limited: viewers are not part of the story, unhurt and unable to help. Simply present as bystanders, many viewers mentioned a sensation of paralysis, not being able to do anything in the wheelchair. Some said they did not know what was expected from them (i.e., to move away or to help others) because they were not offered options. Without any explanation or choice given, the viewer is not a 'user-protagonist', as in *The Right Choice*, but adopts a position that fluctuates between the 'passive observer' (not visible to the protagonists in the movie) and the 'witness' (the user's presence is acknowledged by protagonists; see García-Orosa and Pérez-Seijo 2020, 10). In line with its identity, MSF-CH has thus used the movie as visual testimony to summon viewers to bear witness to the violence of the attack and make judgement about the chain of responsibility for the bombing. Transforming distant audiences into witnessing publics relies on 'the axiom of "seeing is believing"', for which prevails the idea that visibility brings to evidence; it relies 'on a kind of documentary visuality that characterizes the (…) communication infrastructure, with its emphasis on bringing that which is hidden into the light, and its realist insistence on the universal legibility of visual facts' (McLagan 2006, 192).

Interestingly, the movie raises questions about the way it elicits emotions. Rather than mobilising empathy, the movie mobilises shame, a model dominant in human rights activism. Although the film does not hold the United States accountable for the attack, it clearly aims at shaming the disgrace of the attack and the conduct of war. Shame is an emotion that arises from knowledge or consciousness, an embarrassment that comes from others. Synonyms are 'dishonour', 'disgrace' and 'ignominy'. According to Thomas Keenan (2004), 'Shaming is reserved for those without a conscience or a capacity for feeling guilty. Publicity and exposure are at the heart of the concept' (436). The mobilisation of shame is used when there is a lack of enforcement mechanisms, and it aims at 'exposing the gaps between self-professed norms and behavior' (437). Thus, without adopting a full confrontational strategy of 'naming and shaming', commonly associated with the human rights framework (Leebaw 2020), MSF mobilises shame in a subtler way, by stigmatising deviant behaviour and calling to a value that people should take for granted, i.e., the protection of healthcare. Avoiding the usual humanitarian appeals showing helpless victims and heroic benefactors, the movie focuses on an action that is morally reprehensible. However, the final outcome of the advocacy message remains ambiguous. Is it simply to condemn such acts? Is it to look for perpetrators? What can members of the general public do against such acts? While the visual evidence brought by the movie is undeniable, there is no clear designation of the side that should be ashamed. If viewers can feel ashamed for being passive bystanders, the systemic logic at work behind this violation of International Humanitarian Law remains rather blurred because death seems to simply fall from above.

To obtain information about the context of the attacks, spectators have to use 'mechanistic assumption' (McLagan 2005, 225) or build on their knowledge about what happened outside of the frame, as no one sees the plane dropping the bomb. However, even if the storyline involves the cognitive agency of viewers, the outcome seems very optimistic, not to mention naïve, especially for military purposes. Can soldiers or pilots refuse to obey an order because they have watched the consequences of an explosion inside a hospital? Moreover, how can the affective and emotional resonance last long enough to turn into bold, political action? Similar criticisms were raised about the use of VR for philanthropy and fundraising, in which 'the claim that billionaire bankers would experience a fundamental expansion in human sympathy by viewing a 360° film through a headset is pure wishful thinking' (Murray 2020, 13). This

perspective remains open though, because humanitarian agencies still struggle to define efficient evaluation tools. However, a campaign such as *#NotATarget* has pushed MSF to move 'beyond the implicit call to action located in the film itself, instead creating formal situations' such as human rights festivals or military venues that bring together the humanitarian sector, the civil society, the political world and other stakeholders (McLagan 2005, 227).

Conclusion: Limits of the 'Empathy Machine'

Adapting to media revolutions, aid agencies have capitalised on the immersive experience of the image since the nineteenth century. VR technology has increased the sensory experience and the embodied presence in a simulated virtual world. With claims of enhancing behaviour and changing attitudes, VR could provide a variation in the long-standing paradigm of the politics of pity (Arendt 1963). Far more than emotional and cognitive engagement, VR films used in humanitarian contexts could create a potential shift from contemplative, detached spectatorship to active spectatorship. Despite this promise, future assessments would help to understand whether actions envisaged with VR extend the 'paying and speaking' options offered to the humanitarian public so far (Boltanski 1999, 17). More empirical studies are needed to explore the potential of immersive and haptic technologies, as 'the advent of digital humanitarianism has yet to be contextualized in relation to the broader history of communication [and] its capacity to augment sensory and affective experience' (Ross 2020, 174). Nonetheless, VR movies produced by aid agencies reveal many limitations at this stage.

The first set of limitations are technological, because the viewers' engagement in the virtual environment is limited to space and time so far, unless specific hubs or digital installations are designed to propose full participation with the characters or real people in the movie. The intended purpose of VR is to close the gap between those who observe and those who are observed; as MSF underlines it, it is 'bringing home the horror of attacks of hospitals' (MSF 2017). Beyond empathic claims, VR humanitarian movies could further explore the regime of justice and the compelling affective responses raised by shame, outrage, indignation or resentment. Besides, these movies do not seem to challenge the visual politics of humanitarianism. Consequently, ethical implications form a second set of limitations. Many concerns are raised about the voyeuristic gaze

emphasised by the embodied presence in VR and the risk of grandiose spectacle where people look for movie-like sensations, thus reinforcing the 'supertourist' position of the viewer (Sontag 1977). Associated risks also include hopelessness if the viewer is emotionally overwhelmed by an 'improper distance' (Nash 2018), whereas affective immersion serves as 'a cathartic function that alleviates the ethical responsibility of witnessing' (Crawford-Holland 2018, 26).

Cognitive and moral limitations can also be brought in the balance. Does a movie such as *Not A Target* provide a true understanding of the situation? Or is it just another form of eyewitness testimony? If VR allows spectators to watch, perceive and even feel the characters' misfortune, then participation and engagement are limited and do not offer true listening to the needs of the affected populations or empowerment of these communities. These films are never fully participatory because editorial decisions are taken by NGOs and film companies. With protagonists being migrants, refugees or populations affected by all forms of violence, humanitarian VR films aim at giving a voice to people who have long been anonymised, rendered voiceless and disempowered in humanitarian imagery (Bleiker et al. 2013; da Silva Gama et al. 2013; Dogra 2012; Malkki 1996). Yet, critical confrontation with the movies reveals the need for more contextualisation of the experience to make meaning of the suffering and the emotional resonance to it. Perceptual, narrative and emotional immersion into the pain of others does not offer a more complete framing of the causes of the suffering and the will or capacity to act on them.

Works Cited

Archer, Dan, and Katharina Finger. 2018. Walking in Another's Virtual Shoes: Do 360-Degree Video News Stories Generate Empathy in Viewers? Columbia Academic Commons. 2018. https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/D8669W5C. Accessed 19 September 2021.

Arendt, Hannah. 1963. *On Revolution*. New York: The Viking Press.

Aronson-Rath, Raney, James Milward, Taylor Owen, and Fergus Pitt. n.d. Virtual Reality Journalism. Tow Center for Digital Journalism. https://towcenter.gitbooks.io/virtual-reality-journalism/content/. Accessed 19 September 2021.

Batson, Daniel. 2009. These Things Called Empathy: Eight Related but Distinct Phenomena. In *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy*, ed. Jean Decety and William Ickes, 3–15. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Berkman, Mehmet Ilker. 2018. History of Virtual Reality. In *Encyclopedia of Computer Graphics and Games*, ed. Newton Lee, 6–13. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Bleiker, Roland, David Campbell, Emma Hutchison, and Xzarina Nicholson. 2013. The Visual Dehumanisation of Refugees. *Australian Journal of Political Science* 48 (4): 398–416.

Bollmer, Grant. 2017. Empathy Machines. *Media International Australia* 165 (1): 63–76.

Boltanski, Luc. 1999. *Distant Suffering: Morality, Media and Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bouchet-Saulnier, Françoise, and Jonathan Whittall. 2018. An Environment Conducive to Mistakes? Lessons Learnt from the Attack on the Médecins Sans Frontières Hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan. *International Review of the Red Cross* 100 (907–909): 337–372.

Campbell, David. 2014. The Myth of Compassion Fatigue. In *The Violence of the Image. Photography and International Conflict*, ed. Liam Kennedy and Caitlin Patrick, 97–124. London and New York: I. B. Tauris.

Chouliaraki, Lilie. 2006. The Aestheticization of Suffering on Television. *Visual Communication* 5 (3): 261–285.

———. 2010. Post-Humanitarianism: Humanitarian Communication beyond a Politics of Pity. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 13 (2): 107–126.

Cizek, Katerina. 2016. Towards a VR Manifesto. Immerse. https://immerse.news/towards-a-vr-manifesto-b97aca901192. Accessed 19 September 2021.

Cohen, Stanley. 2001. *States of Denial: Knowing about Atrocities and Suffering*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Crawford-Holland, Sacha. 2018. Humanitarian VR Documentary and Its Cinematic Myths. *Synoptique* 7 (1): 19–31.

Dogra, Nandita. 2012. *Representations of Global Poverty: Aid, Development and International NGOs*. New York: I. B. Tauris.

Evans, Leighton. 2018. *The Re-Emergence of Virtual Reality*. London and New York: Routledge.

García-Orosa, Berta, and Sara Pérez-Seijo. 2020. The Use of 360° Video by International Humanitarian Aid Organizations to Spread Social Messages and Increase Engagement. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 31 (6): 1311–1329.

Godby, Michael. 2006. Confronting Horror: Emily Hobhouse and the Concentration Camp Photographs of the South African War. *Kronos* 32: 34–48.

Gorin, Valérie. 2021a. When "Seeing Was Believing": Visual Advocacy in the Early Decades of Humanitarian Cinema. *Journal of Humanitarian Affairs* 3 (2): 18–27.

———. 2021b. Witnessing and *Témoignage* in MSF's Advocacy. *Journal of Humanitarian Affairs* 3 (2): 28–33.

Grant, Kevin. 2001. Christian Critics of Empire: Missionaries, Lantern Lectures, and the Congo Reform Campaign in Britain. *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 29 (2): 27–58.

Grau, Oliver. 2003. *Virtual Art: From Illusion to Immersion*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Gruenewald, Tim, and Saskia Witteborn. 2020. Feeling Good: Humanitarian Virtual Reality Film, Emotional Style and Global Citizenship. *Cultural Studies* 36: 141–161.

Hassan, Robert. 2020. Digitality, Virtual Reality and the "Empathy Machine". *Digital Journalism* 8 (2): 195–212.

Herson, Ben. 2016. Empathy Engines: How Virtual Reality Films May (or May Not) Revolutionize Education. *Comparative Education Review* 60 (4): 853–862.

Höijer, Birgitta. 2004. The Discourse of Global Compassion: The Audience and Media Reporting of Human Suffering. *Media, Culture & Society* 26 (4): 513–531.

ICRC. 2018a. Extended Reality—Brief. Determining Needs, Expectations and the Future of XR for the ICRC. A study commissioned by the ICRC Innovation Board.

———. 2018b. War at the Front Door: A Virtual Reality Challenge Inside Urban Conflict. News Release. https://www.icrc.org/en/document/war-front-door-virtual-reality-challenge-inside-urban-conflict. Accessed 19 September 2021.

———. 2018c. What Would You Do? News Release. https://www.icrc.org/en/document/right-choice-virtual-reality-film. Accessed 19 September 2021.

———. 2020. Using Virtual Reality to Drive Public Engagement. ICRC Blog. https://blogs.icrc.org/inspired/2020/10/28/using-virtual-reality-to-drive-public-engagement/. Accessed 19 September 2021.

ICRC Innovation Unit. 2019. Review Article: The Current State of Virtual Reality on Behavior Change. Extended Reality & Behavior Change Series.

IRC. 2016. How Virtual Reality Lets Us See the Syrian Refugee Crisis with Fresh Eyes. https://www.rescue.org/article/how-virtual-reality-lets-us-see-syrian-refugee-crisis-fresh-eyes. Accessed 19 September 2021.

Irom, Bimbisar. 2018. Virtual Reality and the Syrian Refugee Camps: Humanitarian Communication and the Politics of Empathy. *International Journal of Communication* 12: 4269–4291.

Käpylä, Juha, and Denis Kennedy. 2014. Cruel to Care? Investigating the Governance of Compassion in the Humanitarian Imaginary. *International Theory* 6 (2): 255–292.

Keenan, Thomas. 2004. Mobilizing Shame. *South Atlantic Quarterly* 103 (2/3): 435–449.

Kennedy, Denis. 2009. Selling the Distant Other: Humanitarianism and Imagery—Ethical Dilemmas of Humanitarian Action. *The Journal of Humanitarian*

Assistance. https://sites.tufts.edu/jha/archives/411. Accessed 19 September 2021.

Lanzoni, Susan. 2018. *Empathy: A History*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Leebaw, Bronwyn. 2020. Mobilizing Emotions: Shame, Victimhood, and Agency. In *Humanitarianism and Human Rights: A World of Differences?* ed. Michael Barnett, 140–159. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leys, Ruth. 2000. *Trauma. A Genealogy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lissner, Jorgen. 1981. Merchants of Misery. *New Internationalist*. https://newint.org/features/1981/06/01/merchants-of-misery. Accessed 19 September 2021.

Malkki, Liisa H. 1996. Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization. *Cultural Anthropology* 11 (3): 377–404.

Martin Moruno, Dolores. 2013. On Resentment. Introduction. Past and Present of an Emotion. In *On Resentment. Past and Present*, ed. Bernardino Fantini, Dolores Martin Moruno, and Javier Moscoso, 1–16. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

McLagan, Margaret. 2005. Circuits of Suffering. *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 28 (2): 223–239.

———. 2006. Introduction: Making Human Rights Claims Public. *American Anthropologist* 108 (1): 191–220.

McLuhan, Marshall. 1967. *The Medium Is the Message: An Inventory of Effects*. New York: Bantam Books.

McStay, Andrew. 2018. *Emotional AI: The Rise of Empathic Media*. New York: Sage.

McVeigh, Karen. 2018. Comic Relief to Ditch White Saviour Stereotype Appeals. *The Guardian*, 23 March.

Milk, Chris. 2015. How Virtual Reality Can Create the Ultimate Empathy Machine. Ted Talk. https://www.ted.com/talks/chris_milk_how_virtual_reality_can_create_the_ultimate_empathy_machine. Accessed 19 September 2021.

Moeller, Susan. 1999. *Compassion Fatigue. How the Media Sell Disease, Famine, War and Death*. London and New York: Routledge.

MSF. 2016a. Address by Joanne Liu to United Nations Security Council. 3 May. https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/what-we-do/news-stories/research/address-dr-joanne-liu-united-nations-security-council-may-3-2016. Accessed 19 September 2021.

———. 2016b. Dr Joanne Liu Address to United Nations Security Council Regarding Hospital Attacks. 28 September. https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/what-we-do/news-stories/story/dr-joanne-liu-address-united-nations-security-council-regarding. Accessed 19 September 2021.

———. March 2017. MSF 360 Movie. Handout.

Murray, Janet. 2016. Not a Film and Not an Empathy Machine. *Immerse*. https://immerse.news/not-a-film-and-not-an-empathy-machine-48b63b0eda93. Accessed 19 September 2021.

———. 2020. Virtual/Reality: How to Tell the Difference. *Journal of Visual Culture* 19 (1): 11–27.

Nash, Kate. 2018. Virtual Reality Witness: Exploring the Ethics of Mediated Presence. *Studies in Documentary Film* 12 (2): 119–131.

Nilsson, Niels, Rolf Nordahl, and Stefania Serafin. 2016. Immersion Revisited: A Review of Existing Definitions of Immersion and Their Relation to Different Theories of Presence. *Human Technology: An Interdisciplinary Journal on Humans and ICT Environments* 12 (2): 108–134.

Pena, Nonny de la, Peggy Weil, Joan Llobera, Bernhard Spanlang, and Doron Friedman. 2010. Immersive Journalism: Immersive Virtual Reality for the First-Person Experience of News. *Presence* 19 (4): 291–301.

Piana, Francesca. 2015. Photography, Cinema, and the Quest for Influence. In *Humanitarian Photography: A History*, ed. Heide Fehrenbach and Davide Rodogno, 140–164. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ross, Andrew. 2020. Mediated Humanitarian Affect. In *Affective Transformations: Politics-Algorithms-Media*, ed. Bernd Bösel and Serjoscha Wiemer, 169–184. Lünerburg: Meson.

Ryan, Marie-Laure. 2001. *Narrative as Virtual Reality. Immersion and Interactivity in Literature and Electronic Media*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Sacco, Vittoria, and Valérie Gorin. 2017. Mediatized Conflict and Visual News Framing: How Swiss Audiences React to News Images from the Syrian War. *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication* 10 (2–3): 204–233.

Scott, Martin. 2014. The Mediation of Distant Suffering: An Empirical Contribution beyond Televisions News Texts. *Media, Culture & Society* 36 (1): 3–19.

Seu, Irene Bruna. 2010. "Doing Denial": Audience Reaction to Human Rights Appeals. *Discourse & Society* 21 (4): 438–457.

Silva Gama, Carlos Pereira da, Ana Paula Pellegrino, Felippe de Rosa, and Isadora de Andrade. 2013. Empty Portraits—Humanitarian Aid Campaigns and the Politics of Silencing. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 3 (19): 39–50.

Solomon-Godeau, Abigail. 1994. Inside/Out. In *Public Information: Desire, Disaster, Document*, 49–62. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. New York: Art Publishers.

Sontag, Susan. 1977. *On Photography*. New York: St Martin's Press.

Tascón, Sonia. 2017. "The Humanitarian Gaze", Human Rights Films and Glocalised Social Work. In *Social Work in a Glocalised World*, ed. Mona Livholts and Lia Bryant, 71–86. London and New York: Routledge.

Torchin, Leshu. 2006. Ravished Armenia: Visual Media, Humanitarian Advocacy, and the Formation of Witnessing Publics. *American Anthropologist* 108 (1): 214–220.

Tusan, Michelle. 2017. Genocide, Famine and Refugees on Film: Humanitarianism and the First World War. *Past & Present* 237 (1): 197–235.

Twomey, Christina. 2012. Framing Atrocity: Photography and Humanitarianism. *History of Photography* 36 (3): 255–264.

Uricchio, William. 2016. VR Is Not Film. So What Is It? *Immerse*. https://immerse.news/vr-is-not-film-so-what-is-it-36d58e59c030. Accessed 19 September 2021.

Vilhalva de Campos, Lucien. 2021. Exploring the Challenges of Digital Media for Humanitarian Activism in the Western World. *Revista Relações Exteriores*. https://relacoesexteriores.com.br/challenges-digital-media-humanitarian-activism. Accessed 19 September 2021.

Wilson, Richard Ashby, and Richard D. Brown, eds. 2009. *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

CHAPTER 8

Afterword: Humanitarian Visual Practices: Emotions, Experience

Brenda Lynn Edgar and Valérie Gorin

From illustrations in nineteenth-century political pamphlets to projected photographs, films and graphic novels, humanitarian images have regrouped a diverse range of visual practices throughout history. The choice of medium often reflects how aid agencies have eagerly exploited new technologies to create a convincing or immersive spectacle of suffering, from nineteenth-century magic lantern shows to the recent virtual reality 'empathy machines'. We have thus seen how institutional strategies for fundraising, raising public awareness or advocacy can have recourse to more sensationalist media and sensory experiences. Within circuits of production and dissemination, mass media have played a key role in reaching out to diverse communities, from national to international audiences, mobilising affects as well as mirroring new sensitivities towards pain, care,

B. L. Edgar (✉)
University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland
e-mail: Brenda.Edgar@unige.ch

V. Gorin
University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland
e-mail: valerie.gorin@unige.ch

© The Author(s) 2022

B. L. Edgar et al. (eds.), *Making Humanitarian Crises*, Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00824-5_8

atrocities or war. Thus, the images (widely) circulated are performances of human suffering, created to represent a specific context or event (documentary film, photojournalism, virtual reconstructions, graphic novels, posters) and destined for a target audience who is invited to actively project themselves into that context and react to it. For many viewing publics, humanitarian visual practices are the only representations they might see of distant wars, famines or genocides or the consequences thereof (such as with the current Mediterranean 'migrant' crisis).

The essays gathered here have shown how visual practices can be understood as actants in the history of humanitarianism whose affective value varies socially, geographically and temporally. This new approach points to a need for more historical studies of humanitarian images and the visual practices they relate to. Humanitarian images are ideal objects for the history of emotions whose methodology addresses the variability of humanitarian emotional regimes, demonstrating the elasticity of terms such as 'compassion' and 'empathy' over time and within different communities. Analysing their historical emotional context enriches the understanding of humanitarian visual practices beyond what a semiotic analysis of visual messages would yield. It also provides methodological tools by which complex processes of dissemination and reception can be analysed. Today, as mobile phone imagery creates an increasing volume of images of suffering that enters into immediate and viral circulation via social media (Blaagaard 2013; Zucconi 2018), there is a definite need to ground approaches to humanitarian images in the history of emotions. Images of disasters, war, famine, injustice, massacres, individual and collective tragedies are freely posted on web-based media (social, news, institutional, blogosphere) with little or no filtering or editorial control, by a large number of actors and citizens, professional and amateur. Likewise, motivations and intentions vary from genuine witnessing of events to sadistic voyeurism. While viral phenomena have been criticised for being confusing or destructive, they attest to individual and collective emotions constructed around specific historical events. The traces they leave, from Twitter feeds to blogs and online journal articles, constitute an important pool of historical sources for the history of emotions. Digital and traditional circulation of images of suffering also attests to the desire of individuals and groups to globally share their affect in the political sphere. A striking recent example, the image of Alan Kurdi's corpse washed up on Turkish beach in September 2015 was bluntly exposed on Twitter, prompting a wide

spectrum of emotional resonance (Fehrenbach and Rodogno 2015). The man who initiated the viral spreading was Peter Bouckaert—then emergency director of Human Rights Watch. On the NGO's website, he explained his difficult ethical decision 'to share a brutal image of a drowned child', mainly because he 'care[d] about these children as much as [his] own' (Bouckaert 2015). From this very personal affect, the picture was seen by 20 million people in 12 hours (Vis and Goriunova 2015) and increased donations, petitioning for refugees and political debates about asylum policies. This illustrates the 'transformative' power of emotions in politics, or the power of an image 'to provoke social change' (de Andrés et al. 2016, 30).

Such phenomenon requires analytical tools which go beyond binary oppositions of compassion and empathy *versus* indignation and outrage, or positive *versus* negative images. These oppositions are too limited to make meaning of the spectrum of emotions experienced by witnessing publics and 'ephemeral communities' (Gitlin 1996), such as those created around the online global concert 'One World: Together at Home'. Livestreamed for more than six hours on YouTube on 18 April 2020, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, it was organised on the impetus of an international community of artists to gather virtually to celebrate and raise funds against the pandemic. Not without precedent, 'One World' recalled the Live Aid concert organised in the wake of the 1984–1985 Ethiopian famine, which embodied a new era of live-broadcast music-based charity shows. With satellite television, global experiences of seeing, hearing, feeling and celebrating together became more commonly associated with humanitarian *entertainment* spectacles. Labelled as 'ceremonial media events', these monopolistic performances interrupt our daily lives through the screen in our living rooms, displaying a grandiose spectacle to an ephemeral audience: 'festive viewers [...] allow themselves great emotion: to cheer, to weep, to feel pride' (Dayan and Katz 1994, 129). Rather than taking these representations of collective emotions at face value, the history of emotions asks what they signify in their specific historical context. What does it mean to collectively and publicly weep in 2020 as opposed to other eras? What is the meaning and impetus for pride in the COVID-19 pandemic and what does that say of societal values? Similarly, the case of Kurdi raises questions regarding the emotions attending children and childhood in the early twenty-first century.

The pertinence of the history of emotions for humanitarianism can be seen in the recently emerged field of research on humanitarian experience,

which examines history ‘from below’ through sources such as personal accounts and testimonies of humanitarian practitioners (Taithe and Borton 2016; Ross 2019). It thus takes into consideration individual actors who not only experienced and shaped humanitarian responses and contexts, but also ‘felt’ them and recorded their feelings. This work also demonstrates the richness of the history of emotions when layered with other strata of analysis into an interdisciplinary approach. Indeed, the history of emotions is a relatively new field that calls for new interdisciplinary frameworks and methodologies that draw on social sciences and Cultural Studies in order to understand the performativity of images in an emotional environment. In the case of humanitarian images, which solicit emotional registers that relate to sensations of suffering such as pain, hunger, cold and fatigue, the recent appeal of historians to reunite history of emotions with history of the senses would seem apropos (Boddice and Smith 2020, 6).

In teasing out the complexity of emotions attending humanitarian visual practices, this book aims to contribute to both the emerging field of history of humanitarian experience and the evolution of the field of history of emotions as it expands towards broader horizons. The diversity of practices examined here and their inscription in a long historical perspective of humanitarianism demonstrates how individual feelings are also shaped by emotional regimes that situate the individual affective experience in larger visual, cultural, political and social environments.

Works Cited

de Andrés, Susana, Eloisa Nos Aldas, and Agustin Garcia-Matilla. 2016. The transformative image. The power of a photograph for social change: The death of Aylan. *Comunicar* 24: 29–37.

Blaagaard, Bolette. 2013. Post-human viewing: A discussion of the ethics of mobile phone imagery. *Visual Communication* 12: 359–374.

Boddice, Rob, and Mark Smith. 2020. *Emotion, Sense, Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bouckaert, Peter. 2015. Dispatches: Why I shared a horrific photo of drowned Syrian child. *Human Rights Watch*, September 2. https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/09/02/dispatches-why-i-shared-horrific-photo-drowned-syrian-child

Dayan, Daniel, and Elihu Katz. 1994. *Media Events. The live broadcasting of history*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Fehrenbach, Heide, and Davide Rodogno. 2015. "A horrific photo of a drowned Syrian child": Humanitarian photography and NGO media strategies in historical perspective. *International Review of the Red Cross* 97: 1121–1155.

Gitlin, Todd. 1996. Illusions de transparence, ambiguïtés de l'information. Remarques sur la mondialisation des communautés éphémères. *Réseaux* 14: 111–122.

Ross, Andrew A.G. 2019. Emotion and experience in international relations. In *Methodology and emotion in international relations: Parsing the passions*, ed. Eric Van Rythoven and Mira Sucharov. London and New York: Routledge.

Taithe, Bertrand, and John Borton. 2016. History, memory, and "lessons learnt" for humanitarian practitioners. *European Review of History* 23: 210–224.

Vis, Farida, and Olga Goriunova. 2015. *The iconic image on social media: A rapid research response to the death of Aylan Kurdi*. Visual Social Media Lab.

Zucconi, Francesco. 2018. *Displacing Caravaggio. Art, media, and humanitarian visual culture*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

Index[1]

A

Active/imaginative reception of humanitarian images, 12, 18, 54, 85–87, 97–98, 163
Aegean Guernica (Savov cartoon), 13–14
Affect theory, 80
Afghanistan, humanitarian images of, *see Photographer, The* (Lefèvre, Guibert and Lemercier graphic narrative)
Ahmed, Sara, 80, 87
Alberdi, Juan Bautista, 35, 39
Alleponica (Gargalo cartoon), 13–14
Anaesthesia, 8
Anchorena brothers, 35, 36
Anthropological filmmaking, *see Journal de Rivesaltes* (Veuve documentary film)
Anti-slavery movement, 7–8, 34
Arendt, Hannah, 6, 56
Aronson-Rath, Raney, 150
Arora, Gabo, 154
Augero, Francesco, 41, 42
Azoulay, Ariella
  on ‘civil contract’ of photography, 18, 85
  on decontextualisation of images, 89, 92
  on photographers’ personal attitudes, 92
  on pity, 95

B

Baines, Thomas, 44
Ban Ki Moon, 21, 156–157
Band of Hope Union, 62
Barnett, Michael, 56, 81
Baroffio, Juan Francisco, 32

[1] Note: Page numbers followed by ‘n’ refer to notes.

© The Author(s) 2022

B. L. Edgar et al. (eds.), *Making Humanitarian Crises*, Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-00824-5

Barthes, Roland, 16, 80
Batson, Daniel, 155
Baudry, Jean-Louis, 108
Belgrano, Manuel, 36
Bergier, Jean-François, 103
Blake, William, 8
Bleiker, Roland, 12
Blood Tables, The (Rivera Indarte pamphlet), 42–44, 46
Boddice, Rob, 9, 11
Bohny-Reiter, Friedel
  childhood, 116
  documentary film on (*see* Journal de Rivesaltes (Veuve documentary film))
  as humanitarian, 120–121
  journal of filmmaking experience, 115
  journal publication, 109–110, 114–115
  paintings and drawings by, 102, 114, 118–119
  stills from film depicting, 102, 118
Boltanski, Luc, 153
Bosnian War, 104–105
Bouckaert, Peter, 172–173
Bourguignat, Auguste, 46
Bourke, Joanna, 35n4
Brauman, Rony, 1–2
Britain, *see* United Kingdom
Brown, Elspeth H., 16
Brown, Richard D., 54, 149
Butler, Judith, 12
Byron, Lord George Gordon, 30

C

Campbell, David, 5
Capa, Robert, 17, 84, 85, 95
  Linfield on, 90–91
  photographs described, 92–93, 97
Centelles, Augustí, 17, 84, 90, 93
Chaney, Michael A., 132, 135
Children in humanitarian images, *see* Civilian casualty images
'Chim' (David Seymour), 17, 81, 84, 85, 93
Chouliaraki, Lilie, 142, 149, 153
Church Army, 62
Chute, Hillary, 132, 133
Cinema
  documentary filmmaking, 106–107 (*see also Journal de Rivesaltes* (Veuve documentary film))
  emotional potential, 18, 60, 107–108
  hapticity theory of, 80–81
  lantern slides projection, 60–63, 150 (*see also Recalled to Life* (Malden cinematograph lectures))
  VR films (*see* Virtual reality (VR) films)
'Civil contract' of photography (Azoulay), 18, 85, 86
Civilian casualty images
  Execution of Camila O'Gorman, The (Augero painting), 40–42
  Siege of Montevideo illustrations, 37–39, 47
  Spanish Civil War photographs, 82–83, 85, 86
  stereotypes (imagos), 6, 89–90, 92, 95, 129–130
  voyeuristic potential, 5, 137–140, 152, 164–165
  See also Refugee images; Women in humanitarian images
Clouds Over Sidra (Milk virtual reality film), 20, 21, 154–157
Cohen, Deborah, 55, 73
Comic books, *see* Graphic narratives
Compassion
  concept, 5
  empathy distinguished, 9–10
  fatigue, 5

for First World War veterans, 53–54, 57–58, 65
history of, 7–9, 34
pity distinguished, 6, 56–57
Sontag on, 5, 29, 86, 91
See also Empathy
COVID-19 pandemic, 2, 173
Crabapple, Molly, 127
Crawford-Holland, Sacha, 154, 165
Crisis term, 1–3, 19
Crisis? What Crisis? (Supertramp album cover), 2–3
Critiques of humanitarian images
politics of pity, 6, 56–57, 142, 164
by Sontag (*see* Sontag, Susan)
stereotypes (imagos), 6, 92, 95, 129–130
voyeurism, 5, 137–140, 152, 164–165

D
Daston, Lorraine, 13
Death in the Making (Capa photobook), 93
Delacroix, Eugène, 30
Delisle, Guy, 127, 141
Didi-Huberman, Georges, 85–86
Disasters of War (Goya painting), 14
Disgust, 14, 21
Doctors Without Borders, *see* Médecins sans frontières (MSF)
Drawings, 13–14
graphic narratives (*see* Graphic narratives)
of Siege of Montevideo (*see under* Montevideo, Siege of)
Dreifuss, Ruth, 105
Dubois, Maurice, 105
Dumas, Alexandre, 14, 29–31, 45–48
Dunant, Henry, 8–9

E
Efemérides sangrientas (calendar of Montevidean martyrs), 45
Emotions, *see* Compassion; Empathy; History of emotions; Negative emotions
Empathy
active/imaginative reception distinguished, 86–87, 97–98
choice over, 48
concept, 9–10, 128, 135, 153–154
graphic narratives to evoke (*see* Graphic narratives)
pity distinguished, 20, 56–57
virtual reality to evoke, 20–21, 153–159
See also Compassion
Execution of Camila O'Gorman The (Augero painting), 40–42

F
Faber, Sebastiaan, 89, 95
Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism (Sarmiento non-fiction text), 44–45
Favez, Jean-Claude, 103
Fehrenbach, Heide, 10, 81
Fenton, Roger, 16
Fervant, Thierry, 117
Films, *see* Cinema
First World War veterans
charitable fundraising for, 54–55, 72–73
emotional responses to, 16–17, 53–54; blame, 71, 73; compassion, 57–58, 65; guilt, 55, 65–66; pity, 56–57
King's National Roll scheme for, 72
self-help promotion to (*see Recalled to Life* (Malden cinematograph lectures))

Fleury-Seemuller, Michèle, 109–110, 116
Forced From Home (MSF virtual reality film), 20, 155
Fradkin, Raúl O., 40
France
Greek Revolution support, 30
Holocaust, Vichy regime collusion, 19–20, 103, 104
River Plate region, political interest in, 33–34, 45–46
Rivesaltes internment camp (*see Journal de Rivesaltes* (Veuve documentary film))
Siege of Montevideo, French intervention debated, 45–48

G

Galison, Peter, 13
Gargalo, Vasco, 13–14
Garibaldi, Guiseppe, 33, 45
Gaze theory, 81
Gelman, Jorge, 40
Girard, Romain, 160
Goya, Francisco de, 14
Graphic narratives
case study (*see Photographer, The* (Lefèvre, Guibert and Lemercier graphic narrative))
empathy claim, 127–129
empathy claim critiqued, 129–131
Grau, Oliver, 148–149
Great Britain, *see* United Kingdom
Greek Revolution, 30, 31, 48
Grellety Bosviel, Pascal, 127–128
Grimshaw, Anna, 107
Gruenewald, Tim, 156
Grynberg, Anne, 104
Guernica (Picasso painting), 13–14
Guibert, Emmanuel, *see Photographer, The* (Lefèvre, Guibert and Lemercier graphic narrative)
Guilt and shame, 17, 19–20, 55, 65–66, 149, 157, 163–164
Guizot, François, 45

H

Haiti earthquake (2010), 2
Halpern, Jack, 127
Hand-drawn illustrations, 13–14
graphic narratives (*see* Graphic narratives)
of Siege of Montevideo (*see under* Montevideo, Siege of)
Hapticity theory, 80–81
Hatfield, Charles, 129n1
Hirsch, Marianne, 134
History of emotions
of compassion, 7–9, 34
of ‘emotion’ term, 80
of empathy, 9–10, 128, 153–154
value of approach, 5–7, 22, 171–174
Höijer, Birgitta, 157
Holocaust
French and Swiss collusion with, 19–20, 102–105
images of, 85–86
trauma of survivors, 117
Horna, Kati, 17, 84, 95–97
Humanitarian crisis term, 1–3, 19
Humanitarian images
active/imaginative reception of, 12, 18, 54, 85–87, 97–98, 163
critiques of (*see* Critiques of humanitarian images)
emotions evoked by (*see* Compassion)
generally, 1, 3–4, 55–56
history of emotions approach applied to, 5–7, 22, 171–174
materiality of, 11–12, 80–82; case study (*see* Spanish Civil War photojournalism, ‘touching’ effect of)

passive reception of, 20–21, 56–57, 162
performative role, 10–12, 17, 151
subjects of (*see* Civilian casualty images; First World War veterans; Refugee images; Women in humanitarian images)
Hutcheon, Linda, 133–134
Hutchison, Emma, 12, 34, 57, 103

I
ICRC, *see* International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
Illustrations, hand-drawn, 13–14
graphic narratives (*see* Graphic narratives)
of Siege of Montevideo (*see under* Montevideo, Siege of)
Images of suffering, *see* Humanitarian images
Imaginative/active reception of humanitarian images, 12, 18, 54, 85–87, 97–98, 163
Imagos (stereotypes), 6, 89–90, 92, 95, 129–130
Imhof-Piguet, Anne-Marie, 19, 108
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
history of, 9
Right Choice, The (virtual reality film), 20, 157–159, 162
Virtual Reality Unit, 157
See also Red Cross/Crescent movement
Irony, 133–134, 142

J
Joffre (Rivesaltes) internment camp, *see Journal de Rivesaltes* (Veuve documentary film)
Jones, Robert, 70
Journal de Rivesaltes (Veuve documentary film)
genesis and development, 108–110
historical context of release, 103–106
images used in, 110–114, 117
introduction to case study, 18–19, 101–103
omissions from, 120–121
as performance of trauma, 113–122
Veuve's expressed aims for, 107–108

K
Kasser, Elsbeth, 121
Keenan, Thomas, 163
Kennedy, Denis, 56
Kristeva, Julia, 43
Kurdi, Alan, 172–173

L
La Filière (Veuve documentary film), 108, 114
Lahuerta, Juanjo, 97
Laine, Tarja, 18
Lantern slide lectures, 60–63, 150
See also Recalled to Life (Malden cinematograph lectures)
Lanzoni, Susan, 128, 154
Lavalleja, Juan Antonio, 33
Leacock, Richard, 107
Lefèvre, Didier, *see Photographer, The* (Lefèvre, Guibert and Lemercier graphic narrative)
Lemercier, Frédéric, *see Photographer, The* (Lefèvre, Guibert and Lemercier graphic narrative)
Leys, Ruth, 20, 54, 114
Linfield, Susie, 90–91
Lipps, Theodor, 9
Liu, Joanne, 159

Lötze, Rudolf Hermann, 9
Lynch, John, 41

M

Maddow, Rachel, 131
Malden, Arthur B, *see Recalled to Life* (Malden cinematograph lectures)
Male gaze theory, 81
Mallalieu, Alfred, 43–44, 48
Marks, Laura, 81
Marx, Ernest, 117
Massacre at Chios, The (Delacroix painting), 30
Massacre of the Innocents, 38
Materiality of humanitarian images, 11–12, 80–81
  case study (*see* Spanish Civil War photojournalism, 'touching effect' of)
McCloud, Scott, 128–129
McLagan, Margaret, 162–164
Médecins sans frontières (MSF)
  Afghanistan mission (*see Photographer, The* (Lefèvre, Guibert and Lemercier graphic narrative))
  Forced From Home (virtual reality film), 20, 155
  Not a Target (campaign and virtual reality film), 20, 147–149, 159–165
Milk, Chris, *Clouds Over Sidra* (virtual reality film), 20, 21, 154–157
Miravitlles, Jaume, 83
Mitchell, Robert, 64, 65, 71n6
Montevideo, Siege of
  affective strategies of anti- Rosist propaganda, 47–48
  background to, 32–34
  Blood Tables, The (Rivera Indarte pamphlet), 42–44, 46
  British and French intervention debated, 43–48
  defences of Rosas, 43–44, 46
  Efemérides sangrientas (calendar of martyrs), 45
  Execution of Camila O'Gorman, The (Augero painting), 40–42
  Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism (Sarmiento non-fiction text), 44–45
  hand-drawn illustrations, 14, 34–35; impact, 40, 42; Rosas in (*see* Rosas, Juan Manuel de); women and children in, 35–39, 47
  introduction to case study, 30–32
Montevideo, or the new Troy (Dumas novel), 14, 31, 45–46
Moreno, Manuel, 43
Movies, *see* Cinema
MSF, *see* Médecins sans frontières (MSF)
Mulvey, Laura, 81
Münsterberg, Hugo, 63, 107–108
Münzenberg, Willi, 85, 88, 95
Murray, Janet, 149, 163
Myers, Dudley, 57

N

Näf, Rösli, 19
Nash, Kate, 156
Negative emotions
  disgust, 14, 21
  of First World War veterans, 17, 65, 68–71
  generally, 13, 130–131, 142
  guilt and shame, 17, 19–20, 55, 65–66, 149, 157, 163–164
  pity, 20, 86, 95; politics of, 6, 56–57, 142, 164
  trauma, 19–20, 113–120, 159
Ngai, Sianne, 13, 130, 135, 142
Nicholas, Christopher, 158
Nilsson, Niels, 161

Not a Target (MSF campaign and virtual reality film), 20, 147–149, 159–165
Nudge theory, 7n2

O
Objects, humanitarian images as, 11–12, 80–82
  case study (*see* Spanish Civil War photojournalism, touching effect of)
Observational cinema, 107
Oddon, Yvonne, 108
O'Gorman, Camila, 40–42, 45
One World: Together at Home (concert), 173
Orbán, Katalin, 131–132, 134, 140
Oribe, Manuel, 33, 40
Ortiz-Favier, Dolorès, 110, 116

P
Pacheco y Obes, Melchor, 31, 45n14, 47
Pain relief, 8
Papon, Maurice, 104
Passions, 80
Passive reception of humanitarian images, 20–21, 56–57, 162
Paulmann, Johannes, 6
Pedri, Nancy, 137
Performative role of humanitarian images, 10–12, 17, 151
Pernau, Margrit, 47
Photographer, The (Lefèvre, Guibert and Lemercier graphic narrative)
  emotional distancing effect, 130–131, 133–137, 139–143
  genesis and development, 131–132
  image genres mixed in, 132–133, 136–140
  introduction to case study, 15, 127–131
Photography
  in Afghanistan (*see Photographer, The* (Lefèvre, Guibert and Lemercier graphic narrative))
  'civil contract' of (Azoulay), 18, 85, 86
  emotional potential, 10, 15–16, 80
  lantern slide lectures, 60–63, 150 (*see also Recalled to Life* (Malden cinematograph lectures))
  social media dissemination, 172–173
  in Spanish Civil War (*see* Spanish Civil War photojournalism)
  voyeuristic potential, 5, 137–140, 152, 164–165
Phu, Thy, 16
Picasso, Pablo, 13–14
Pichel, Beatriz, 16
Pity, 20, 86, 95
  politics of, 6, 56–57, 142, 164
  See also Compassion; Empathy
Plamper, Jan, 106
Positive Negatives (non-profit organisation), 127
Post-traumatic stress disorder, 19–20, 114
'Punctum' of photographs, 16, 80, 87

R
Ravetz, Amanda, 107
Recalled to Life (Malden cinematograph lectures)
  government policy behind, 57, 63–64, 73
  lantern slide lectures generally, 60–63, 150
  vacational training promotion, 55–56

Recalled to Life (*cont.*)
veterans' emotional responses, 17, 65, 68–71
vocational training promotion, 58–60, 66–68, 71–72
See also First World War veterans
Reception of humanitarian images
active/imaginative, 12, 18, 54, 85–87, 97–98, 163
passive, 20–21, 56–57, 162
Red Cross/Crescent movement
First World War fundraising by, 54, 63–66
history of, 9
neutrality commitment, 19, 81
Swiss Red Cross collusion with Holocaust, 19–20, 102–105
Refugee images
Aegean Guernica (Savov cartoon), 13–14
Clouds Over Sidra (Milk virtual reality film), 20, 21, 154–157
from Rivesaltes internment camp (*see Journal de Rivesaltes* (Veuve documentary film)))
social media dissemination, 172–173
Spanish Civil War photographs, 92–96
Right Choice, The (ICRC virtual reality film), 20, 158–159, 162
Rivera, Fructuoso, 33
Rivera Indarte, José, 31, 35, 47, 48
Blood Tables, The (pamphlet), 42–44, 46
River Plate region politics, 30, 33–34, 45–46
See also Montevideo, Siege of
Rivesaltes (Joffre) internment camp, *see Journal de Rivesaltes* (Veuve documentary film)
Robespierre, Maximilien de, 44–45, 47
Robinson, Ione, 94–95
Rodogno, Davide, 10, 81
Rosas, Juan Manuel de
biography, 32–33
defences of, 43–44, 46
illustrations depicting; dehumanising effect of, 14, 43; 'gauchoesque' depiction, 40; as sadist, 35–39
O'Gorman execution ordered by, 41, 45
Robespierre, comparison with, 44–45, 47
See also Montevideo, Siege of
Rosas y sus opositores (Rivera Indarte pamphlet), 42–44, 46
Ross, Andrew, 164
Rouch, Jean, 19, 106–108

S

Sacco, Joe, 127, 141
Salmi, Charlotte, 129
Salvation Army, 62
Sarmiento, Domingo Faustino, 31, 35, 44–45, 47
Satrapi, Marjane, 127
Savov, Jovcho, 13–14
Second World War
Holocaust, French and Swiss collusion with, 19–20, 102–105
refugees in (*see Journal de Rivesaltes* (Veuve documentary film))
Senn, Paul, 102, 112
Seymour, David ('Chim'), 17, 84, 85, 93
Shame and guilt, 17, 19–20, 55, 65–66, 149, 157, 163–164
Shaviro, Steven, 81
Shawcross, Edward, 34
Shawcross, William, 65

Siege of Montevideo, *see* Montevideo, Siege of
Slavery abolitionist movement, 7–8, 34
Sloan, Michael, 127
Smith, Adam, 7–8
Smith, Sidonie, 129–130
Sobchack, Vivian, 81
Social media, 172–173
Solomon-Godeau, Abigail, 152
Somellera, Antonio, 14, 40
Sontag, Susan
  on compassion, 5, 29, 86, 90–91
  on humanitarian images generally, 1, 21, 22, 39
  on photography, 12, 91, 132, 139, 141, 152
  on Spanish Civil War photojournalism, 17, 79, 81–82
Spanish Civil War photojournalism
  decontextualised images, 89–90, 95
  dissemination of images, 83–85
  fundraising aim, 85
  introduction to case study, 17–18
  introduction to case study, 79–80
  photomontages, 89, 95
  propagandist aim, 81–83
  'touching' effect of, 80–82, 97–98; diegetic gaze of subjects, 95–96; materiality of absence (air raid damage images), 97–98; materiality of corpses, 87–88; material possessions, 92–94; vibrant materiality, 90–92, 94–95
Spinoza, Baruch, 80
Spivack, Gayatri Chakravorty, 6
Steadman, John, 8
Stereotypes (imagos), 6, 89–90, 92, 95, 129–130
Sunday School Union, 62
Supertramp (rock band), 2–3
Swiss collusion with Holocaust, 19–20, 102–104
Sympathy, *see* Compassion; Empathy; Pity

T

Tablas de Sangre (Rivera Indarte pamphlet), 42–44, 46
Taithe, Bertrand, 34, 37, 120
Taro, Gerda, 17, 84, 85, 93, 95, 97
  photographs described, 87–88, 90
Thiers, Adolphe, 45
Three Guineas (Woolf essay), 17, 79, 81–83
'Touching' effect of humanitarian images, 80–81
  case study (*see under* Spanish Civil War photojournalism)
Trauma, 19–20, 113–120, 159

U

United Kingdom
  Greek Revolution support, 30
  River Plate region, political interest in, 31–33, 45–46
  Siege of Montevideo, British intervention debated, 43–44, 48
Uruguayan Civil War, 33
  See also Montevideo, Siege of

V

Veuve, Jacqueline
  career summary, 105-107, 108
  Journal de Rivesaltes (*see Journal de Rivesaltes* (Veuve documentary film))
Vicens, Jaume, 93

Virtual reality (VR) films
Clouds Over Sidra (Milk), 20, 21, 154–157
empathy claim, 20–21, 158–159
Forced From Home (MSF), 20, 155
introduction to case study, 20–21, 147–149
limitations of, 163–165
Not a Target (MSF campaign and film), 20, 147–149, 159–165
Right Choice, The (ICRC), 20, 157–159, 162
shame mobilisation by, 149, 163–164
VR environment, 151–154
VR technology, history of, 148–151
Vischer, Friedrich Theodor, 9
Voyeurism, 5, 137–140, 152, 164–165

W
Wander, Fred, 110, 117
Weiss, Thomas, 56
Wicki-Schwarzschild, Hannelore and Margot, 110
Wieviorka, Annette, 104
Wilson, Richard Ashby, 54, 149
Witteborn, Saskia, 156
Women in humanitarian images
allegorical depictions, 35–37
civilians (*see* Civilian casualty images)
Combatants, 90, 91
Woolf, Virginia, 17, 79, 81–83, 132
World War II
Holocaust, French and Swiss collusion with, 19–20, 102–105
refugees in (*see Journal de Rivesaltes* (Veuve documentary film))
Worringer, Wilhelm, 9

Y
Yersin, Yves, 106
Young, Cynthia, 84n4

Z
Zucconi, Francesco, 38