

VISUAL NARRATIVES OF EXCLUSION AND INCLUSION IN PHOTOJOURNALISM: A CASE STUDY OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS IN HUNGARY IN 2015 AND 2016

Zs. Bátor

Kodolányi János Universidad / Budapest Universidad de Tecnología y Economía,

zsolt.batori@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

As the refugee crises in 2015 and 2016 unfolded in several European countries, Hungary also experienced an increased number of refugees crossing its southern borders. The reaction of the government, several political parties and other stakeholders was to construct narratives of exclusion or inclusion, depending on their political agenda. Print and online media played a significant role in this process, and the means of photojournalism in constructing these narratives were also heavily utilized. In my talk I will rely on a recent advance in the theory of pictorial communication in general and photographic communication in particular to present and analyze the visual narratives that were constructed in this process. The theory of pictorial communication has advanced through various traditions, relying on diverse research methodologies. A long forgotten advancement in the philosophy of visual communication has been recently revived, suggesting that the theory of speech acts can be successfully extended and developed for explaining the communicative processes involved in understanding and interpreting pictures and other visual phenomena. In the first part of my talk I will briefly introduce how the theory of pictorial illocutionary acts in general and the theory of photographic illocutionary acts in particular may explain the processes and photographic means involved in constructing and interpreting photographic visual narratives. In this part of the talk I will already use media images of the refugee crisis in 2015 and 2016 for the presentation of the theoretical framework of my analysis. In the second part of the talk I provide a number of examples of how the construction of visual narratives of the refugee crises in Hungary served different political agendas. At one end of the spectrum refugees were portrayed as being dangerous and narratives were constructed in order to make the viewers believe that they present some sort of real and imminent danger (to their jobs, to their properties, to the security of themselves and of their loved ones, etc.). At the other end of the spectrum visual narratives were constructed to elicit empathetic humanitarian responses to the predicament and suffering of other human beings in need of help and protection. Relying on the theory of photographic illocutionary acts introduced in the first part of the talk I will analyze the means of photographic narrative construction as the narratives unfolded during the refugee crisis in 2015 and 2016.

Keywords: refugees, representation, visual, narratives, exclusion, inclusion, photojournalism.

REFERENCIAS

Bátor, Zs. (2015). Photographic Deception. *Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics*, 7, 68-78.

Kjørup, S. (1978). Pictorial Speech Acts. *Erkenntnis*, 12, 55-71.

Kjørup, S. (1974). George Inness and the Battle at Hastings, or Doing Things With Pictures. *The Monist*, 58(2), 216-235.

Novitz, D. (1977). *Pictures and their Use in Communication: A Philosophical Essay*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

Novitz, D. (1975). Picturing. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 34(2), 145-155.

