Photography, the Continuity of Modern Iconography*

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Abstract

Iconography has profound origins in human's perspective and understanding of the world. Ancient murals, Christian religious icons, and eventually the manifestations of the modern age, have been created and used in the same quality in human cultural life. They have almost the same ultimate destination and goal that can be detected in them. Iconography has constantly been accompanied by a kind of fear, to dominating what can happen in the future, and, in order to avert disasters and death, and to achieve forgiveness, prosperity and bliss. After the invention of photography, by putting the photographs alongside the icons which in some cases are derived from religious texts, not only does photography introduce itself as an iconography device, but it has also been influential in producing paintings iconographies with creation of the photographic realism. The main question is that how photography especially those about the social issues and among them the private and family photos, as a modern medium has an iconic origin, and how photography is able to have an unrealistic and metaphysical usage in the context of today life with its inherent characteristics being clarity, accuracy in details, signifying the being-there (dasein) of the referent and as a result, the photographic realism? This issue can be studied based on the most important theories of photography in the twentieth century. It is concluded that photography, in its philosophy and existential position, not only has carried on the iconic characteristics of the past, but has also has emphasized its originality and textual identity more broadly, so that it has given a photographic originality to modern iconography.

Keywords: *Icon, Iconic photos, Photographic iconography, Digital iconoclasm.*

Introduction: photograph and Iconography

Iconic paintings have always had particular functions among the believers since their creation. The general role of icons (commonly in the European and Christian tradition) was to sanctify the space, mystify the sacred, to get across with the divine world and to repel and repulse the calamity. After the appearance of photography, in most situations, especially in private and personal spaces of individuals, the paintings have been replaced with photographs that are specifically selected and placed on the wall, in a niche, in a family album and even in wallets.

Despite the clarity and lucidity of the way that photograph present its subject on the frame, its philosophy of creation has been mysterious: the word "camera" means a vaulted chamber or room in Latin. Therefore, the medieval camera obscura was a dark and closed space which led some of the scholars of photography to the idea of the possibility to reflect the shadows and ghosts by light into a dark space (plato's cave) (Wells, 2013: 22). The reflection of light and shadow has always been an obsession in the human's mind until the time photography could prove it on sensitive surfaces and caused a dramatic change in the aesthetics of image perception which was very mysterious and vague. The essence of two raw materials of photography, light and time, makes it so amazing and strange,. "Every photograph presents us with two messages: a message concerning the event photographed and another concerning a shock of discontinuity. Between the moment recorded and the present moment of looking at the photograph, there is an abyss" (Berger & Mohr, 2004: 86). The insistent photography confirms all of these through its apparently direct relationship with the reality of what the camera records, but in many cases, that declines and denies all clearly in front of the viewer. "Something we hear about but doubt seems proven when we're shown a photograph of it" (Sontag, 2013: 10). Therefore, this testimony turns to be complicated in meaning when the viewer becomes aware of the direct intervention of the photographer in "constructing the reality". Like the new awareness achieved recently from

Figs. 1&2. Valley of the Shadow of the Death; Roger Fenton, 1855. "Valley of the Shadow of the Death" was a region under constant shelling. These photographs are related to this place only in the title. The right photograph (not published) was taken first and after that, to simulate the scene similar to the valley of the shadow of death, Fenton's assistant placed the cannonballs on the road, then the second famous photo was taken, the one broadly published. Source: Morris, 2015: 10.

the new evidence which proves the artificiality of the war scenes in Fenton photographs of the Crimean War which was 150 years ago. If we consider the photography as an iconography device for the masses in their modern life, we have to accept that the photograph stays between on the reality and constructed reality borderline; and in spite of its attesting to "being-there of its referent" it leads the viewer to a direction that creates its iconographic aspect in the ambiguous and complicated atmosphere between its especial beholders and itself.

Research Background

In recent literature on photography, there have been sidelight, coherent or scattered discussions about the iconic content of photography since its appearance. For instance Geoffrey Batchen (2004) in his relatively small book "Forget Me Not", pointed out that family photographs and especially the iconic aspects of these works are like a catalyst for the memory. More than ever, he looks for effects of iconic (and then, indexical) functions in family photographs. Aron Vinegar in his very important essay: "Ed Ruscha, Heidegger, and deadpan photography" (2010), refers to the iconic aspects of photography that have created in a cold and inanimate mood, and put it into the "Heideggerian philosophy of being". In his essay, Vinegar analyzes the implicit aspect of this conceptual Interference. Christopher Pinney in his book, "Photography and Anthropology" (2011), discusses in the iconic functions of photography in human studies. he argues that anthropologists consider photography's indexical aspect are more important than iconic functions. Lots of nineteen century's anthropological photographs are blurry, colorless, unknown with lack of details; but these photographs are at least indexical images of their subjects, anthropologists say. These and some other examples of more popular books in Persian, such as the Goran Sonesson in his book, "Semiotics and photography" (translated by M.

Moghimnejad) which consider photographs as iconic symbol, or Roland Barthes who has some mentions about this iconic photographs in "Camera Lucida" (translated by N. Motaref), all are pointing to the iconic aspect of photography, but generally follow it with other aspects of cognition beside the general and private functions of photography in different sciences and human social space. assuming that photography is considered as a modern iconic device, in this paper, try to explore the iconic aspect of photography deeply and analyze the causes and importance of that, especially in the present era.

Theoretical Principles and research methodology

The iconinc aspect of photographs is completely clear and scrutinized, in the view of constructivists and semiotics. Peirce, Bazin, Barthes, Metz and other constructivists and semiotics wrote and thought about photographs and icons. Peirce believed that iconic aspect of photographs has visual, graphical and metaphorical aspects and said that "those ones benefit from simple quality are photographs, Those ones represent relations of something by comparative relations are graphs, and those ones specify the representational feature of a representation are metaphors" (Moghimnejad, 2015: 50). Bazin acknowledged the similarity principles in iconic photographs and declared that "photographs are painting the subject itself; unbounded of spatial and temporal limits. No matter that photographs are blurry, deformed, pale of valueless, the taking photos itself shares it in the model universe from which it is taken" (ibid: 53). Barthes also in some of his texts refers to the photographs as an icon and the object. He, in the Camera Lucida, said: "it is as if the Photograph always carries its referent with itself, both affected by the same amorous or funereal immobility, at the very heart of the moving world: they are glued together, limb by limb... like those pairs of fish". (Barthes, 2005: 18). Goran Sonesson by referring

to the indexical characteristic as a secondary thought in the photograph , said that in order to understand the photo's meaning "if we can be sure of it to be a photograph, it can make the reason for us … a photograph more or less is an iconic symbol." (Sonesson, 2009: 136-137). Panofsky, also scrutinized the concept of iconography and iconology in the art. In the current paper, with considering the semiologist's comments based on the modern hermeneutics method, the iconic quality of photographs has been investigated from the perspective of public and private beholder; We would like to explain the modern photographic iconography mechanism and introduce the functional iconic aspects of photographs (by mentioning certain examples) and review the literatures in this context. This means that the way of facing with photography works is not merely focused on the photographs and their structures; but also we have to pay attention to the ways of the reader encountering and conceptualizing through the photographic iconic aspect.

Photography, and the modern iconography
The word "icon" in the strict meaning of the word is known to belong to oriental and Byzantine Christianity, and after the collapse of the Byzantine Empire, it survived in the religious art of the Orthodox Russians. Therefore, the word "Icon" is used with negligence in other religious rituals, and its use is in general sense of the word. But iconography "is not dedicated only to a specific religion or ritual. All the arts and most of the religions and rituals has benefited from iconography since the old ages to the present time, even in Judaism which prohibits the use of icons, we can see the iconographic approach." (Nasri, 2014: 8). What is known as iconographic paintings are related to the First Golden Age of Byzantine period in which "the physical shifts and political and cultural changes were formed, and showed their influence in arts with the form of new artistic objects and intermediaries such as

icons" (Ayatollahi & Beheshti, 2011: 40). The art of iconography in Byzantine was one of the most important artistic forms which was derived from Christianity that had been developed and published during the whole thousand years of the establishment of the Eastern Roman Empire; therefore, it was able to well reflect the many aspects of the political, social and religious life of the people in its period, which naturally had religious and devout backgrounds. Indeed, the deep relation of this art to the Holy text throughout this period, did not mean that there was a separation between people and iconography (Ouspensky & Lossky, 2009: 36); Therefore it also has had its impact on other cultural and political geographies, and other arts than painting. After the photographic images emerged and the advent of the clarity made by photography in pictures, the intellectual origins of formalized iconographies in the mind of ordinary people was changed and exposed in a new way in concordance with photographic qualities. As far as many believe the first images made by daguerreotype cameras are very similar to religious iconographies: "This faces, face to face with the camera, have been glaciated in one moment, their details are created with an unparalleled elegance and speak to us with the power and dignity of a religious icon" (Morris, 2015: 112). In the era of photography, the new technology of producing image, was very strange and ambiguous, and yet incredibly was available for people. So that people from any social class could stand in front of the camera and create a smileless and motionless image of themselves, which were very similar to the religious iconographies that they remembered.
From another perspective, iconographies just like paintings are objects to look at, to contemplate upon and perceive their implicit and explicit religious meanings impliedly. Naturally looking at iconic paintings and perceiving its meaning happens in the short time of watching and the extended time after that. But concerning

Fig. 3. Susan Brownell Anthony, American social reformer (1820-1906): Albert Southworth & Josiah Johnson Hawes, between 1850 and 1871, a daguerreotype between1850 and 1871. In all primitive daguerreotypes and most of the later photos, the solemn gesture without smile in front of the cameras, was based on one's intellectual background of painting's iconographies. The mysterious quality of camera and the way it worked and its stunning clarity, made these images as painting icons to their owners. Source: museumsyndicate.com
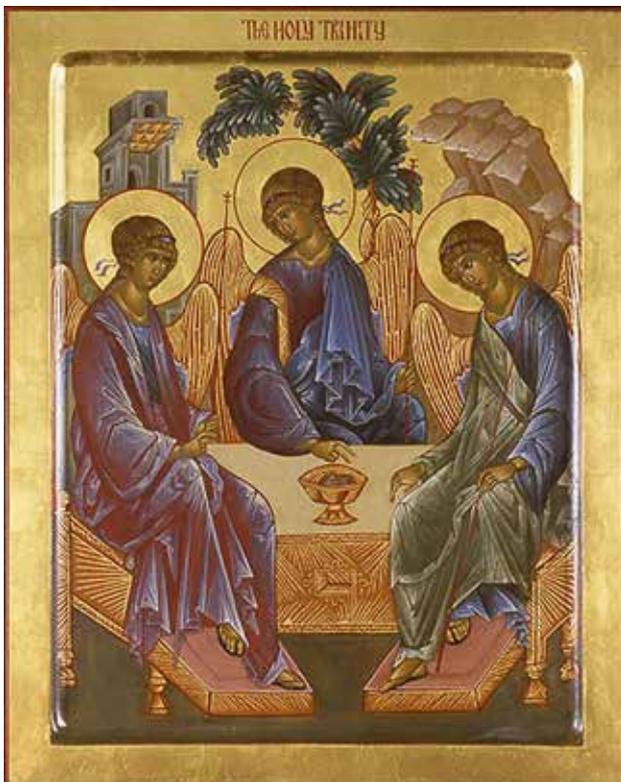
Fig. 4. Holy Trinity, the original work by Andre Robulf. Source: pinterest.com

photography, something else happens too. By contrast, something takes place in front of the photograph. As we look at the photograph in the albums, on the walls and in the niches of private spaces, on one hand, we encounter with more details than what a painting offers, and also with its hints, that the reality is what the photo shows; On the other hand, because of the nature of the private space, it takes more, pause and contemplation in photos viewing, which leads us to the perception of the meanings similar to our tendency or understanding in front of the holy icons in sacred places. Just as icons hide the divine being, photographs -especially the private and family photos when they are seen with pondering in private spaces- put a mask on the understanding of their visual cues.

Photography is a modern iconography device and the traditional function of iconographies confirms this very fact. Keeping ritual iconographies in public places and particularly in private spaces in the past and the present time is indicative of a hidden and internalized fear in human's mind. For instance, at the heart of historical events in Byzantine and especially after the death of Emperor Justinian I, which led to the prohibition of iconography, furthermore natural disasters, war, plague, and famine caused many deaths and consequently redoubled the tendency to iconolatry; In other words it was the fear of death, forgetfulness and amnesia that made increased the propensity to iconography and iconolatry (Ayatollahi & Beheshti, 2011: 39). Nowadays photographs have widely taken this ritual task! Photographic iconographies with such feature and quality limited to medium, reconstructing and representing they show in photographs, on one hand creates a close relationship with the nature of photography and the complicated way of its connection with those things located (or constructed) in front of the camera, and on the other hand with the general and especial beholder, and also with the origin of iconographies in the

Fig. 4: Ernest; Andre Kurtz 1931. Roland Barthes wrote under the photograph in Camera Lucida: "Is it possible that Ernest be still alive today? But Where? How? What a novel!". Source: Barthes, 2005: 105.

history of art and the way they are presented and the positive quality of their existence in the cultural and artistic context of people in the past. Indeed it can be said that iconographed paintings provided a proper philosophical context for photography so that today we can discuss and challenge the represented real, the way reality is explained in the eye of beholder, and the fetishism of the object in the context of photographs, especially the private ones. For example, in continuing the intellectual tradition of holy iconographies shaped particularly in the Byzantine period, presenting the photos of dead people decoratively can be related to an understanding of the death visible in "their" faces and photos and reassure us that "we" are alive and in front of those who have died. Iconographies, as we'll discuss later, benefit from the absence of those they mention in their context as a means to reach the welfare and blessing, and apparently photos of the dead and deceased ones simply

contain this iconic aspect. Such photographic icons evoke endless questions while one looks at them: How did these people live? What culture did they belong to and how culture could direct their valuation? What did they do and how was their lives behind their serious or smiley gestures in front of the camera? These are the results of the absence of all the things that photography had mentioned in the context of the photo. Amidst the photos of nineteenth century we see some photos in which the deceased member of the family is among other members in a lively way, and they all posed to create an icon of immortality and perpetuity of the life.

Photography has a profound kinship with death. The stillness and silence are not only two objective aspects of death, but they are also the fundamental symbols of death."Photography is linked with death in many different ways. The most immediate and explicit is the social practice of keeping photographs in memory of loved beings who are no longer alive. But there another real death which each of us undergoes every day, as each day we draw nearer our own death. Even when the person photographed is still living, that moment when she or he was has forever vanished. Strictly speaking, the person who has been photographed-not the total person, who is an effect of time- is dead: "dead for having been seen" as "Dubois" says in another context. The snapshot, like death, is an instantaneous abduction of the object out of the world into another world, into another kind of time. The photographic take is immediate and definitive, like death (Metz, 1985: 84). Recalling and remembering the death is obvious in many of the human behaviors such as funeral rites that naturally contain a dual and dialectical significance: remembering the memory of dead ones and also the fact that they are dead but life is still going on. Some of the photography semioticians explain this very iconographic quality of photography and its complicated relationship with the beholder as the fetishism of photography.
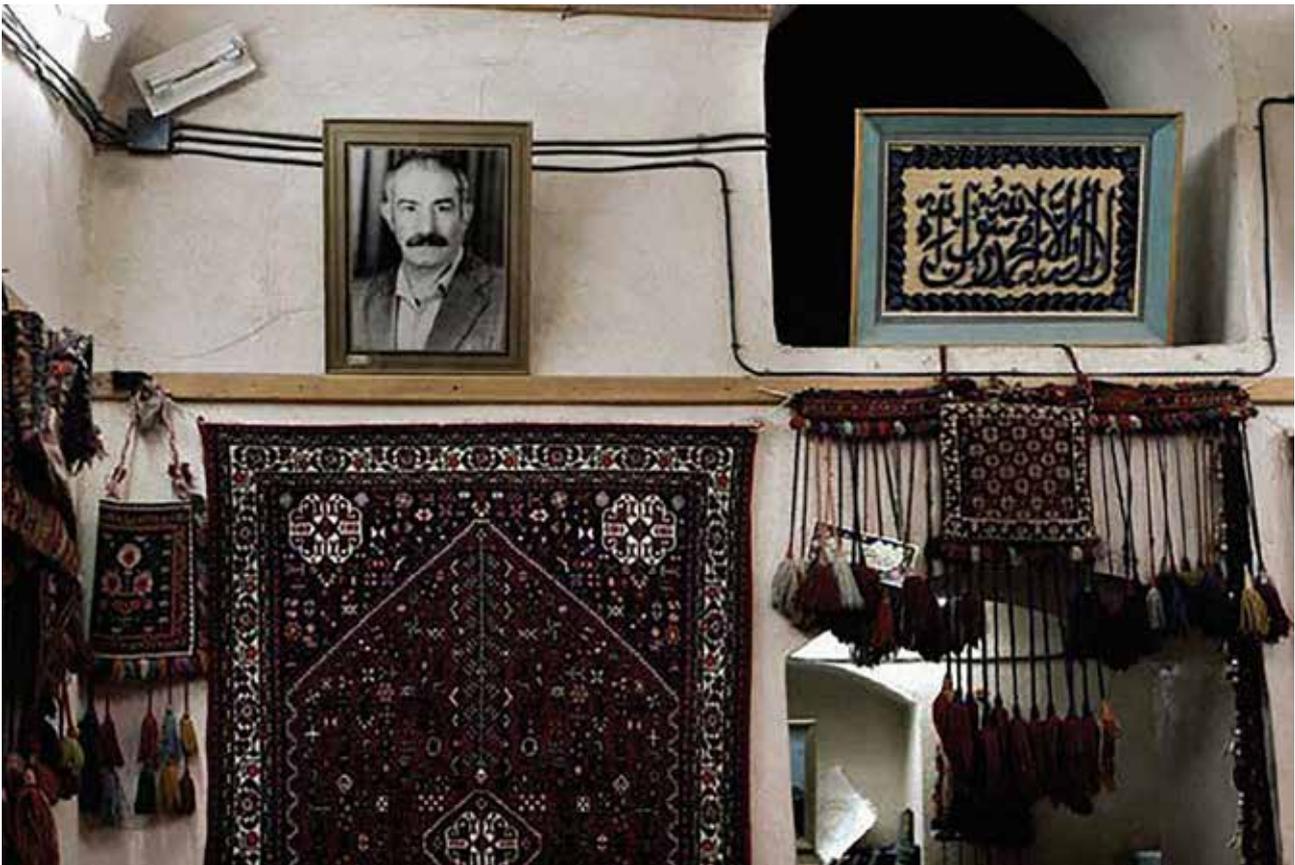
Fig. 5: inheritance; Omid Salehi (The photograph acceded in eleventh biennial of Iranian photography). Source: akkassee.com

Photographic Iconology and the Fetishism of Private Photographs

Christian Metz describes fetish, in the special meaning of the word, an object which brings luck, and works as an amulet, it can be a fountain pen, cigarette, lipstick, teddy bear or a pet. He believes that fetish has a metaphoric and a metonymic function: on metonymic side, fetish signifies the lack and always alludes to the adjacent place of the lack; the lack of what we see through what is in our sight. (Freud considers that the child, when for the first time observes the mother's body and finds out that she does not have the male genital, is scared by the possibility that the human beings can be deprived of the penis; therefore to ward off the permanent danger of castration, all humans take the masculinity as a fetish in the lack of that [femininity]). On metaphoric side, fetish is an equivalent of an object (penis,

according to what Freud says), as the primary displacement of the look aimed at replacing an absence by a presence - an object, a small object, a part object- metaphorically, fetish entice and encourage the perception, and metonymically it has an apotropaic function, which means averting the danger (therefore, involuntarily attesting a belief on the danger, bad luck or permanent and common anxiety which sleeps or suddenly wakes up inside each of us). Metz continues: "Excluded", to use Dubois's term, excluded once and for all. Yet nevertheless present, striking, properly fascinating (or hypnotic) - insisting on its status as excluded by the force of its absence inside the rectangle of paper (Metz, 2004: 43-46). The off-frame space disturbs the beholder, whatever is not in the frame, is not present but the beholder can find it with dolorous feelings. Barthes calls it photograph's punctum; A pointed

Fig. 6: Saigon Execution, Murder of a Vietcong by Saigon Police chief; Eddie Adams, 1968. While the represented reality is exposing in the photograph, in any way it must approve the absence element: The photograph always substitutes and emphasises its represented reality; In such a way that: a- As the straight photographer take the exact reality with no caption or statement accompanying it, the represented reality, is a part of reality that a photographer has elected behind the camera, and stresses on the absence of what is eliminated from the frame; b- Or the represented reality requires a statement to explain a reality which is occurred but not framed; c- Or the photographer might change the represented reality by editing the photograph after shooting; d- Or a represented reality might be created in front of the camera(e.g. staged photographs); e- Or the presented reality is essentially made of nothing (e.g. the augmented reality in digital manipulated photos;).
In the original photograph of Saigon Execution (bottom), just a cutting part containing Police chief and executed man was published and distributed in media. Later Eddie Adams had regretted for blemishing Generals prestige because of publishing the photograph before explaining the fact that the executed man had cooperated in five Vietnamese murder.
Source: wordpress.com

instrument: something of the photo that picks the beholder, and also bruises him/her and is poignant to him/her. But since it is off the frame, I cannot name it yet, for "What I can name cannot really prick me. the incapacity to name is a good symptom of disturbance" (Barthes, 2005: 92). And this punctum makes the phptpgraph a fetish and loved object in the eyes of beholder. In fact, the thing that many scholars of photography mention as transformational object is related to the extended absence that each photograph implies behind the presence of its referent in the frame. Barthes in Camera Lucida is seemingly looking for a photo of his mother which enables him to deny her death; and he finds the photo of his mother when she was five in a winter garden, and he declares that at last he has found his mother! In a real precise image! " Ultimately I experienced her, strong as she had been, my inner law, as my feminine child... I who had not procreated, I had, in her very illness, engendered my mother" (Allen, 2006: 71). This photograph not only plays the role of a fetish object, it also appears as an object, with a profounder meaning, which scholars of photography call "A transformational object". "A transformational object is one through which the adult subject remembers an early object experience. The object here is the infant's primary love object- the mother" (Kember, as cited in Wells, 2013: 347). Photography, as a transformational object, reveals for its viewer the absence of all lives which seemed to be realized with "absolute certainty" while not stated, and invisibly attached to the present referent in its frame. Such moments have an unspeakable essence and completely unrepresentative nature. This is the off-frame space that emphasizes the fetishism of photographs. "The off-frame effect in photography results from a singular and definitive cutting off which figures castration and is figured by the "click" of the shutter. It marks the place of an irreversible absence, a place from which the look has been averted forever. The photograph itself, the "in-frame", the abducted part-space, the place of presence and fullness- although undermined and haunted by the feeling of its exterior, of its borderlines, which are the past, the left, the lost... The familiar photographs

Fig. 12. The woman next to her dead husband at the beginning of the New Year, private collection, 2017. The memorial photographs named "temsaal"(Persian language in Iran) in verbal tradition are extensively presented in religious and funeral ceremonies and celebrations in traditional style.

that many people carry with them always obviously belong to the order of fetishes in the ordinary sense of the word" (Metz, as cited in Wells, 2013: 232).

Icons on the side of metonymic function have a profound relationship with fetishism; just the same as a fetish object, averting the bad luck, bringing luck, blessings and welfare in life are of the main functions of a religious icon, and also confirms the loss of the sacred by emphasizing its materialistic two-dimensional representation on the canvas. Photograph like icons of painting, as a fetish is based on the absence—absence of the thing that presents as a referent in its frame, which picks the beholder for the fact that used to be there but now it is not; and also the absence of the things brought out of the frame by the photographer and no more are present in the frame. Similar to a third person who was actually standing just next to the parents in front of the camera, but is not present here in the frame. Each

photograph in place of a fetish not only indicates the fear of the loss, but also replaces those absent objects with a metaphorical presence: The presence of the referent in its context, and the presence of the photograph in a album, on the wall or in the wallet.

A photograph is a fetish object and a fetish photograph is naturally used to defend the subject against a danger already existed or to compensate a feel of loss felt or imagined. Sontag writes: "to take a photo means to own the photographed object" (Sontag, 2013: 9). For example, family photos "restate symbolically the imperiled continuity and vanishing extendedness of family life. They are not only forms of power/knowledge but also reactions to fear. They supply the token presence of that which is lost or absent and give people an imaginary possession of a past that is unreal" (Kember, as cited in Wells, 2013: 340).

More than other photographs, "being-there" in private and family photos, makes an iconic interpretation of referent for their special viewer. Despite their simplicity, sometimes family photos are so fascinating and pervasive in the ways of representation of their symptoms and referents, so that they enchant the viewer and open a interpretation on him/her, even if he/she does not have a relation to a past which is represented in the photos. This quality of influencing the viewers is very similar to the influentiality of the sacred (The deep fear that arises in front of the both (the photograph-the sacred), occurs because of placeless greatness which is opened to him/her, and as a result of lack of awareness, takes him/her with considering the sacred -photograph in now- in search of his identity); That's the reason this kind of photos offer the most possibility of interpretation by the viewer, and allow him/her to free in front of the photo which is a subdued icon of his/her loved referent, and reviews the memories and stories of the past, as they actually took place or as he/she liked that to be happened. The beholder, in front of the private and family

photos refers to his/her own identity and rebuilds it in his/her mind. This will have both a driving and a deterring influence on their social roles.

The conventions of photography are obvious in family and monumental photographs more than ever, and this will better reveal the iconographic aspect of family photos, and give them a sacred place in the family. These photos hide the real and natural relationships the family have "behind the picture" and are specified by some of the climaxes in the family like marriage, party, celebration, holiday, but not divorces, quarrels, tensions, troubles and the inconsiderable events of everyday life. Social conventions give the family photos an iconic quality, however not completely in the form of historical iconographies (insomuch that the patterns of icons creating have been altered), since it is the social convention that rule while photographing, people gather together, make a pose, and "smile". Most of the time, a part of the body or refusal to look at the camera, reveals that somethings are different than they appear at first look (Wells, 2013: 606).

Artificial Icons, and Iconic Self-Portraits

The self-consious awareness of being in a camera-based and camera-bound culture is an essential feature of the conceptual aspects of contemporary photography (Grundberg, 2003: 170); Which that causes, the camera's presence likes eyes that are constantly observing people's lives, relationships, and moods, and subsequently, It provides accurate judgment in the discovery of truth, and brings justice to social life. Some critics have been terrified by the replacement of the camera lens with God's eye and declare that the capitalist culture has summed up God in photography! (Berger, 2001: 78). Prepending about this function of photography has been caused to shifting in the way of looking at some issues such as the power of memory, judgment and human justice. Such self-consious awareness in the scope of photography has incited some

Fig. 8. (top): Listener; Jeff Wall, 2015. The violence in the image is both quietly real and artificial. Wall tried several months to indicate how media and artists (newspapers, television, internet...) represent the violent moments and intercalated the common features of these anomalies in his image composition. This iconography is very similar to Christ crucified image; the painful body among the filthy people in an uncertain place. of course in a modern and photographic way!
Source: intelligentlifemagazine.com
Fig. 8. (bottom): Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian; Antonio Palau Yolo, About 1475. Source: Wikimedia.org

photographers to study the construction of photographic representation identity and the way it communicate with the beholder. For example, if the represented reality in photograph is based on the photographer's will, and his attempt to forge a "decisive moment" of photography, even if his work apparently ends in the actual recording of that, nevertheless, the following facts would direct functionally the photograph to photographic

iconography: The relationship between the photograph's referents and the content of what they show, as well as the apparently forthright function of media in relationship with the reality. For instance, in the artworks by one of the most famous contemporary photographers Jeff Wall, the iconographic relationship between the photographs and what are shown as the meaning in photographs are built and constructed based on what the photographer wants, not directly based on the reality in front of the camera. The iconic content of Wall's photos tries to purify the contents such as violence, war, aesthetics and even poverty and modern life's routine.

Some photographers not only present the construction of the frame and the controlled quality of the content, but also by placing their own body in front of the camera, put the photographer's sketch in the eye of beholder and simultaneously show what is in the back of the camera. For example, in some of Cindy Sherman's artworks, "the artist manufactures a series of masks for herself. In the process, Sherman unmasks the conventions … of woman-as-depicted-object. The stilted submissiveness of her subjects refers to stereotypes in the depiction of women and, in a larger way, questions the whole idea of personal identity, male or female. Since she uses herself as her subject in all her photographs, we might want to call these self-portraits, but in essence they deny the self" (Grundberg, 2003: 170). Sherman's self-portraits are crystalized form of cultural gestures, and through the photographer representing in the frame (an element -photographer- that is supposed to be behind of the camera, and who is forming and constructing the photograph's frame and eventually making the meaning and judgment), they place the "photographer" element as an icon in the center of the photograph's content. She confronts her beholder by a mixture of cultural myths which despite their strangeness is familiar with our contemporary look, they acquaint

us again, with the power of buried images in our common past.(Grundberg, 2010: 162) and meanwhile, she proves her ability as a woman who has constructed feminine icons in diverse social situations. Since in the western visual tradition, the social presence of woman is indicative of her attitude towards herself and shows what she can and cannot do for herself, her social position is recognized from her gestures, face, beliefs, dresses, taste, and the places she commutes to. whatever she does, plays a major role in determining his social status (Burger, 2011: 46). As icons that reflect on cultural relationships and inner human concerns, Cindy Sherman's self-portraits reveal her role to illustrate women's contemporary identity.

Digital Photography, Traditional Iconoclasm or Digital Iconography?

The influence of photography is very efficient on the thinking and culture of the masses, to consuming holy relics and sacred icons. Photographs not only have universally surrounded the beholders and are presented in any situation, but also they provide the possibility of a sympathetic relationship with the beholders; In a way that their viewers consider the represented reality as the first condition for accepting the sympathy. Talking about digital photography and ease of possibility of their retouching and manipulating, has been converted to a seriously controversial subject. Digital technology of photography challenges the authenticity of relation between photographs and represented reality that have been expected of them traditionally. That is why the digital images seem to have an iconoclastic features according to the traditional interpretations; since they are neither realistic nor reverent. The digital photos can be easily manipulated in a way it seems to be actually real. This inversion in showing the reality or in other words producing the virtual reality is possible only in digital images. Because in the past, if a photograph was retouched and

manipulated, the alteration was evident and visible which is copmletely hidden from the beholder's eyes today.

Making fake images out of the images that apparently show the reality, has disturbed the iconic aspect of the photograph and committed somehow a photographic iconoclasm, for they disturb some aspect of the photographs related to our belief of the worlds. Digital images can simply reverse the reality without any trace of the alteration, and offer in the context of photography a "new and virtual object" as the then-being reality. This iconoclastic aspect of digital photography, along with its mass production and reproduction, places in contrary with innocent iconic truth which photography had been loyal to in the past, and although photography was a mass media available for everyone, iconic photos were able to revere its own referent very well. ?

Even though , the photography was traditionally considered to be directly related to the reality and representation of it, but the domination of digital photographs in media, has a sense of requiem for authenticity of the direct connection of photography and its representation with the reality. However, this digital iconoclasm resembles itself as a post-photographic iconography, which neither presents itself by a new form of the image out of the photography nor obeys the representation rules of traditional photography (analogue). As a matter of fact all the digital images that are been produced, present themselves as the production of photography work. So it can be acknowledged that the augmented reality which these images offer as a photo to us, have passed the limitation of human vision and the camera. This augmented reality of digital images is the result of a "computer-human vision": The computer-human hybrid vision that is already like a "future body of computer-human"; To realizing this fact, just take an exact look at the cosmetic surgeries, implant prosthetics, simulation, genetic engineering, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality! As the

old subject of human (in Descartes' sense in the center of the world) cannot accompany us in any stable and constant way, these images also belong to the future vision and will broaden the human horizons of vision by computer graphics (Wells, 2011: 427). Thus, eventually it can be said that the tendency of digital photography is not iconoclasm, rather that is digital iconography with broaden intellectual horizons.

However, in a historical way, by avoiding the use of any kind of digital updated technology in making images, some artists form a kind of iconolatry, to reach the unique and irreproducible quality of the early photographs in the history; Which is related to both the pre-digital and the primitive styles of photography constructions. Chuck Close revives the Daguerreotype style and in the twenty first century creates icons of celebrities and artists, which not only are irreproducible, but also relate the iconographic quality of photography directly to its previous period-painting- by sanctifying the famous portraits of the world.

Conclusion

As a product of modernity that is massively available to the masses, photographs expose their represented reality like the sacred iconographies. The iconographic function of photography seems to be strange and complicated due to its insistent relationship with common reality. Human of the photography world is lost in a unacculturated space of augmented icons, that is shown by photography as the culturally derived objects. Baudrillard says: heavenly fire no longer falls on corrupted cities, it is the camera lens that, like a laser, comes to pierce lived reality in order to put it to death (Grundberg, 2010: 287). This is the reason why photographic icons, which covertly show some traces of sacred iconic features of paintings from the past, simultaneously represent two different dominant aspects; on one side, due to their iconographical quality and their cultural origin and also the human memory of the holy

icons, photographic icons always emphasize the absence –metaphysics, intuition, Transcendent element. In this attitude, photographic icons find an apotropaic function, so that they relieve their special viewer from the forgetfulness and distance them from the fear of that. This functional aspect of photographic icons is observable especially in the private and family photos of people in their personal spaces, such as their wallet and their working or living place (The reason people keep the photos of loved beings in wallets is that, every time they look at them and remember them, photos create a behavioral safety in them and encourage them to do a better action. As well as photos of the deceased members are kept in the workplace of the family for gratitude and keeping their memories alive). On the other side, the photography medium rejects any metaphysical relation and emphasized merely the reality of the photographed image. The metaphysical understanding of the photographic icons by the viewer and the insistence of the

Fig 9. Brad Pitt; a daguerreotype by Chuck Close, 2009
Source: sansartifice.wordpress.com

photography about the physical and real referent indicates the mysterious and secretive nature of this medium, at least the iconic quality aspects more than any other functional aspects.

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