Original Research Article

The Social Analysis of Absence in Historical Narratives of Photography

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Abstract

Problem Statement: The quality and meaning of life are continuously attached to the presence of elements, objects, things, people and concepts; the absence means denying and depriving the presence, has strengthen this concept, hence has been frequently presented in philosophy and art fields. The concept of absence as an art strategy has been presented at the context of many artworks, especially in the present century. In photographic contexts due to introducing the previous presence of things, 'absence' finds a referral function. But the main question here is that, how in the photographic contexts, we might be able to find the existence of historical narratives behind them, through the absence of elements and things?

Research objective: Photographs as the ever-present contexts, whether on private albums or in art/ news studios, even on virtual social spaces, offer a variety of absences with different origins, and [therein] the historical analysis arising from it in these works would lead to a better understanding of the human social context. The research hypothesis here is that photograph as a historical context, when linked to and analyzed by the narratives surrounding it, would present the 'absence' as a means of denying the presence of suppressed forces in the social context, that potentially have the power to participate and alter the actions of every day's life.

Research Method: was done based on the social history of the photographic contexts, as in this approach, behaviors, events and beliefs, besides being part of daily life context, are also important in the process of historical research.

Conclusion: Absence in the picture frame, is able to represent the latent power behind the different social classes; Moreover, the standpoint of elements related to absence within the historical context and its continuation at photograph scale will be discussed and explained the way that photography exploits the absence as a modern concept to represent a different content and various readings.

Keywords: *Absence in Photography, Historical Narrative, Social History, Absence and Presence, Social Photographs.*

Introduction: Absence and Historical Narrative

Confronting the concept of absence is entangled with the network of thought and the perceiving of life. Any presence or existence implies an absence; for this reason, the philosophy of absence, especially since the middle of the last century, has become the subject of thought in many philosophical and artistic contexts. How we perceive the presence of

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elements, objects, and things through the absence, and how, the means of presence permits the absence of content to be considered as something that does exist?

'Richard Shusterman'[1] in his article entitled "Urban Aesthetics of Absence: Pragmatist Reflections in Berlin (1997) writes:Absence is, of course, a very difficult, elusive concept with a very long and complex philosophical history. Even its etymology (ab+sence-away from being) reveals its link to the ancient philosophical puzzle of nonbeing, the paradoxical nature of "things" that don't exist or simply fail to be "here and now" (that is, present). Yet absence has also been regarded as something at the core of all being, as the crucial ground for whatever exists or is present (Shusterman, 1997, 742).

The behaviors, beliefs, and memories that constitute the social history of our daily life are entangled with the concept of absence.'Rosana Pimm'[2] writes: The first time I can remember recognizing or being aware of the presence of absence, was after my grandfather died when I was a young girl of seven or eight. Though technically, from then on, he was no longer in my grandparents home, his not being there hung so heavy within the space that it almost became a physicality in itself. As time has gone by, I have felt ever less able and comfortable to spend time within their home for my own perception of the sizable weight of his absence there has grown suffocating (Pimm, 2017, 68).

The Philosophical precedents of absence and presence in the 20th century would be triggered by the studies of 'Jacques Derrida'[3] on "metaphysics of presence", where he considered the concept of presence, and pointed to its superiority and preference over the absence. Derrida criticized the ever-preference of presence over the absence, pointing out that the Western philosophy`s constant imprisoning in two opposites where the value of one is superior to the other, and considering the that Western philosophy has always been confined by bipolar concepts that has made it itself and then supposed it as a real concept (Ahmadi, 1991, 384), make the presence have a higher

value than the absence. Derrida believes the absence element in a written text as below:This absence is not a continuous modification of presence,it is a rupture in presence, it refers to "death" or the "possibility of death" of a receiver that encompasses the structure of sign. The death of the receiver and the sender or producer occurring in the structure of the marks. There is no experience consisting of pure presence but only of chains of differential marks (Wike, 2000, 2).

In the 20th century, the artworks, specifically photographs, have frequently been basis for presenting the concept of absence and its philosophical connection with the present. Photographs, whether in the form of artistic artwork or, specifically, as a historical document, represent absence-based narratives in the form of the photographical contexts.

The storyline of the photographs, of course, never matches 'point to point' of what we call the represented event. Photographers tell stories, but their own stories. In other words, the quality of the presence, which a photograph presents an iconic symbol or an indication of its case, merges with kind of an implied absence, which not only refers to the media function of photography (the issue of adopting and selecting the frame, composition, and interference of notions, and the presumptions of a photographer) but rather in a deeper sense of meaning refers to the deprived visual aspects which are presented in the context of an artwork.

The question here is, if the context of the photograph is considered as a historical document, how it would be benefited from its visual possibilities to present the concept of absence? And how the narratives out of a photographic context would be participated in its historical interpretation and let their viewer comprehend it? Basically, how it could be possible to explore the presence of an event in the past, which is represented by a photograph through the absence of it? Photographs have an inseparably linked with the history in the general sense, and especially to social history (as an approach that analyzes and explores the quality of everyday life); Studying the

concept of absence in the context of a photograph, which is presented almost everywhere following the expansion of virtual social networks, provides this possibility for the historian and researchers to do consider the covered social forces and powers hidden among the public demands in their studies mediated by photographs. Therefore, in the present study, the position of the missing elements in the photographs will be discussed here. The authors explain how photography exploits absence to put different content and various readings of an event in front of the eyes of historians and researchers through the absence of a historical element within the context.

Research Method

The photographs, as modern historical contexts, reveal the social events of the environment which the photo has taken from, besides the intentions and desires of their committers.

In the contemporary time, when the events and their informative outcomes are happening at high rate and absence of the events is being interpreted more than their presence due to both their influence on people's daily lives and the related consequences, the photographs, especially those related to people's daily lives, can provide important information about their missing concepts hidden through social history-based interpretations, in the form of specific population samples. Therefore, the field of social history as a way of studying the context of everyday life and studying the actions of ordinary people, in the geographical context of their daily activities, can place the origins of absence in the context outside the frame of the photograph, concerning the social factors and provide a more accurate interpretation of it.

A Review on Some Recent Works

'Patrick Fuery'[4] in 'The Theory of Absence: Subjectivity Signification and Desire' (1995), studies the relationship between absence and poststructuralist idea. He shows that how post-structuralism can be considered as a basis for the conceptual study taken from the absence theory, and through this, the context

of artworks can be classified; So the conceptual consequences of each of this classification can be followed in the context of a variety of psychological theories, deconstruction, and power relations.

In an article written in (2012), entitled 'Between absence and presence: geographies of hiding, invisibility, and silence', the absence is being referred to as a concept that is applied today in a wide range of social or geographical behavioral processes (specifically for adopting dramatic features that appear on national occasions); Their authors put absence in the physical structure of 'place' and 'time' and measure its quality as an influential concept in everyday political and social actions (Dafydd Jones, Robinson, Turner, 2012, 264).

'Elizabeth Wallace' in her doctoral dissertation, entitled 'The Presence of Absence, Conceptual Absence in the City through Contemporary Art Practice' at RMIT University in 2015 discussed the concept of absence in three cities including 'New York' (The United States), 'Varanasi' (India) and 'Shanghai' (China) and analyzed them by characterizing the concept of presence, first by focusing on physical structures or objects, contents, systems or the order of information and constitution of dominant discourses in each city, and secondly, by allocating a preference to visual sense compared to other senses when experiencing the city (Wallace, 2015, 9).

The Philosophy of Absence in the Context of an Artwork

In the current study, "absence" generally refers to the whole concept that appears opposite to the 'presence' and points to the negation and denial of it; However, as a conceptual word it also points to the metaphorical and artistic use of an object that is 'not being available' in an artwork`s context any longer, and in particular to a missing object in the photographs that are the subject of the present discussion.

By addressing the history of art and absence, the German historian 'Rudolf Wittkower'[5] (1901-1971) refers to "The visual desire to emerge the presence"

and uncovers a tactic in illustrative texts in which the presence of an image along with the text, is implicated for clarifying what remained unclear and confusing in the text; therefore, presenting an image can be supportive for anything whose meaning has remained ambiguous within the text.

In some studies, on visual representations of Europeans artworks, it can be seen that in what is related to the visual power, "negation" and "deprivation" are considered as the missing expressive tools ... In the visual arts, representing the concept of denial and deprivation are impossible:

in the visual, negation as a means of expression is lost… in the visual arts, negation is impossible: It is impossible to portray a thing by what it is not: it is present or absent, and if it appears, it is always positively, in a certain shape… This in turn points to the positivity of presence – the art of the concrete – mobilized by visual mimesis (Pinney, 2011, 80).

However, in this regard, the emphasis on the concept of presence in artworks based on the metaphysical philosophy that Derrida precisely uncovered it, has placed the concept of "absence" in the center of artists' attention, as a philosophical approach in the last century`s work. The "presence" requires "absence" capabilities. The power of this communication link (which exists between absence and presence) has been resulted in the formation of a new concept of absence. Thus, absence will be existed only through the presence and its indications. Absence, just as it is called denial of presence, is also a derivative of it (Fuery, 1995, 1).

Philosophers generally have a not-so-optimistic view toward the concept of negation and absence, and always theorize existence and everything related to it by emphasizing on the presence and the positive structure in the living space and the [whole] world.

'Davor Džalto'[6] (1980), in the article entitled 'Art: A Brief History of Absence' in 2015 claims that the aesthetic reasoning in the 18th century used a conceptual means to formulate the nature of modern art (fine arts), and the formulation of the "aesthetic nature" of art led to the process of the gradual disappearance of all of the formal elements that had previously characterized the visual arts; the result was "emptiness" or "nothingness" as art. The author refers to this process in terms of "vanishing acts" that allow for the formulation of aesthetics of absence in connection to twentieth-century art (Džalto, 2015, 652).

The artists, especially from the 20th century forwards, have frequently exhibited the content of absence in their works. In addition to absence, other similar terms such as "Void," "Invisibleness," "Emptiness", "Silence," and "Negation" were used in the artwork to describe similar content attention[7] (Wallace, 2015, 45).

Therefore, the absence is placed in the works of conceptual artists, at similar positions as philosophical or conceptual ideas in making, presentation, and demonstration of an artwork: A musical work composed by 'John Milton Cage's' known as "4:33", which included 4 minutes and 33 seconds of silence; 'La Disparition[8] a book by 'Georges Perec'[9] (1936-1982), in which the letter "e" is missing throughout the text. 'Robert Rauschenberg's'[10] artwork (1925-2008), which was created by erasing [some parts of] the painting by 'Willem de Kooning'[11] and 'Michael Heizer'[12] (1944-), who created sculptures in his great work, called 'North, East, South, West', entirely by large, hollow holes in the earth's surface (Mikeal, 2017, 256). One of the best recent examples is the paintings of 'Jose Manuel Ballester'[13] (1960), who represented the great works of art history in such a way that only the background of the works was presented in his work and the main elements presenting the content of the work were absent in his painting (Fig. 1). Today, the artists use absence as a concept that turns a work of art into a piece of poetry which is perceived by the viewer and based on his or her worldview. According to' Arthur Danto'[14] (1924-2013), the Art today is a 'transfigurative metaphor' [that has been emerged] by using the capabilities of the absent element (Horvath, 2012, 175).

Naturally, presenting the concept of absence in artworks is related to predefined or precedent factors

in the artist's thoughts and ideas, which are in turn taken from the events of life.

 Absence can imply a kind of suppressive force. A force that appears in a work context through ideology, the domination of ruling powers, media determinism, and so on. Thus, even some of the photographs taken from the horizon of the 'Manhattan' city after September 11, 2001, can represent photographs that are pointing to the absence of twin towers (Mikeal, 2017, 256).

Anything whose presence in the context of an artwork signify the artists` attention toward the subject matter, would be removed from the work and due to the exact representation of its absence, and leaving the interpretive approaches to the narratives out-of-context, pushes the issue of presence forward in a more completely way. This interpretation is brilliantly

presented in 'Rebecca' by Alfred Hitchcock[15] (1940). During the whole screens of the film, the main character, who come into the palace of a wealthy man as his second wife, after the death of Rebecca (his first wife), is being placed in the position of comparison, adaptation and mental confrontation with Rebecca who has never been shown during the movie; But showing her characteristics, the personal belongings she used, and the hostile and adverse behavior of the staff because of the replacement of the second wife in the palace environment, where Rebecca now is absent there, will make the viewer prejudge Rebecca's character. An imaginary presumption that, due to lack of her presence on the stage, allows for any exaggeration even in the viewer's mind: proposing a kind of statement about the absent object on the stage by the writer and director of the movie. In

Fig 1. José Manuel Ballester; The Hidden Spaces; 2017. Although the most focus of Balster is studying the qualities of background light, in reproducing the collection of paintings drawn on the 'history of world art', but what he represents in these works is arising from the absence of elements in the original work.
The painting that is a representing work of 'The Third of May 1808', shows the elements of 'absence', 'missing', or trace of the remaining event out of the original painting; due to presenting absence in his work, he creates a new content that confronts the viewer with at least two basic questions as below, that are the main purpose of representing absence in artworks:
First, how 'The Third of May 1808', receive its validity through the heart of its historical narrative text? (the way it follows the historical subject simply based on absence); Second, which special character does the absence of original work put in front of the viewer? Image Source: guggenheim-bilbao.eus.

another example, "The Mystery of the Street (1928)", that is a series work by 'Umbo[16] the main subject of the photos is simply the shadows of the people, and apparently, this collection is a photography of the shadows, which is presented in a very creative style. Considering the shadow is formed in the lack of light, then Ombo's photographs are then images representing the "absence" of light.

Photography and the Concept of Absence

The issue of encountering the concept of "absence" has always been linked with photographs since the beginning of photography. 'Louis Daguerre' called his new invention as the recording of 'shadows on objects', and 'Talbot' used the "art of fixing shadows" to describe his invention. The photographers have frequently used shadows to shape their main subjects in front of the camera. The shadows photography deeply is photography of "absence": shadow is created when something blocking light; it is the absence of light. The shadow does not block the light itself, and does not even absorb it; Shadows are 'holes in the light' and are therefore immaterial (Mikeal, 2017, 260-261). The connection between photography and absence can be extended through this deep connection between photography and shadow, to the "conceptual photography".

 If the causal relation in photography is considered as one of its main features (photographing an object is recording the impact of it on a sensitive screen by the reflection of light); therefore, the absence should be considered as one of the "causes" of creation of some photos. Pointing to absence in photography, it should be emphasized that the implication of 'The absence of a subject' in a photograph does not necessarily mean that it is considered as an integrated part of the photograph`s scene; Rather, significantly implies supposing the presence of an object exactly where it is expected to be; In other words, one of the most important reasons for considering absence in the photographs, is to record the absence of 'expected' events among them. This concept in photography means that:"How one might analyze the cause of

'absence, and how one might think of the ability of photography to record "what is not there [any longer]" (ibid, 268).

Photography always emphasizes the certainty of presence. Their referral quality also lies in this fundamental concept, as "every photograph was indisputably a document of an event, an event that could not be denied. In photography, as Roland Barthes observed, 'I can never deny that the thing has been there" (Pinney, 2011, 81). Photography, according to 'Roger Scruton'[17] (1944-) is an issue that lacking the quality that is available in painting under the title of "The Intentional inexistence". The first of these features is an immediate consequence of the fact that the relation between a photograph and its subject is causal. If a is the cause of b, then the existence of b is sufficient for the existence of a. The photograph lacks the quality of "intentional inexistence" which is characteristic of painting. The ideal photograph, therefore, is incapable of representing anything unreal (Scruton, 1981, 588).

Absence is considered as an unrealistic issue, which, opposite to the idea of Scrotton, is carefully designed and similarly is presented in photography. In everyday life, it frequently happens that "absence" itself is the root cause and basis of things:When I say "I caused my plant to die by not watering it," I am claiming that something I did not do (water my plant) caused something to happen (my plant's dying). In this explanation of why my plant died, an absence is cited as occupying the role of cause. Absences may also figure in our causal explanations by occupying the role of effect, or as disconnections in a causal chain (Deery, 2013, 309).

A History-based Interpretation: Two types of absences in Photograph

The social history is known as the history of "the forgotten", which is based on the everyday life of the common people (Boroomand, 2014, 2), and therefore in a narration of social history, in somehow we are facing with the concept of absence in the historical text (in the general definition of social history, it

means that in the common historical narratives, the role of subaltern and ordinary and people has been usually forgotten, and the "absence" of 'the textual narratives of their lives' has always been existed in the history).

By doing historical analysis, the issue of absence in everyday life through photographic documents can be evaluated, because photography in its general content is closely related to the narratives of social history. Everything that suppresses the presence of historical narrative elements by the exterior forces (outside the context of photography, and within the daily life) will be considered as a major subject in social history (Bnsidering any individual and social interaction as a main subject in daily life) and in the photographs, by using the historical narratives out of them, it appears as the "abscess of the subject". Such photographs display the places where people live in as if they are representing the various absences. Everything that is visible determines and emphasis on what no longer does exist: "You can see, it had been existed here, but it can no longer be observed. The signifiers represent an invisible identity: that includes the exact definition of a place" (Habib, 2018, 175). Simply, photographs (when they are related to our social life) can represent the requests, desires, wishes, and suppressed hopes of people in a frame and in the form of 'absence of daily objects and things'.For example, in collection of 'Postcards from Europe (since 2006)' by Eva Leitolf'[18] (1966), each photographs features stunning landscape of the orange gardens, the beautiful beaches and other European landscapes, which are apparently similar to the tourist postcards; but in fact, each of these works represents places that are marks of disastrous events in the past.Therefore, the absence of an event in the implied narratives, outside of the artwork, to which Leitolf has added textual reporting, points to an absolute presence within it, which is the existential cause of the photograph; The interpretation of place/ situation/ and event in this case is not dependent on the content within the frame, but rather is related to a reported text, outside it and to the mindset and analysis of its viewer (Fig.

2). Addressing this type of absence, which is inherent in the artwork and is independent of any sense of presence within the work, is called "primary absence", opposite to another type of absence, which are called "secondary absence" and are those which are always used as a form of presence and implicitly refer to the presence; Making affirm the communication context of presence; They achieve their epistemological and ontological content from it the context of presence and refer to the presence space; They preserve and even reinforce this constant conflict space between presence and absence (Fuery, 1995, 1), (Fig. 3). In other words, in the secondary absence, the absence of a concept is represented in presence of other elements within the text, and its addressing to the absent element is using "everything" that is presented within the frame. 'Hiroshi Sugimoto', a famous artist in the present century in the collection of 'Theater', uses the same practical concept within the secondary absence to uncover time throughout history. By placing his sizeable camera inside the old 'American Theater halls[19], which generally had a lot of interior decorations, and by opening the camera shutter during movie playback, he practically recorded all the movie scenes in a white frame (cinema screen). The result came out with the burning (intense glare) of the screen in the final photo, as well as the representation of the interior decorations of movie halls (due to the long reflection of the light on the screen) (Fig. 4).

The Absence and Forces outside the Photograph Frame

The analysis of absence in photography requires the screening of provisional and prepared places for concealment (in any way possible) that, through prepared and receptive awareness to things, make an eye shift from focusing on the ready objects to the critical aspect of them. This is the same expectation that will be emerged (crystalized) in what is not available there. There are several reasons for this "expectation of presence" toward absent elements in the context of the photograph. The social powers governing the individual and public interactions` space

of the photographer are those of 'suppressive' power that represents itself in the context of the photograph. One of the most objective examples here is the self-censorship of the photographer, who consciously or unconsciously is involved in it. In the history of art, many artworks have been stopped from public display for a variety of reasons; and so the artists have used the self-censorship of their work to make them available to the public. 'Richard Meyer'[20] in his article, entitled "Outlaw Representation: Censorship and Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century American Art" (2002) a history in which "absence" is important equal to "presence" (Hiro, 2010, 83). The self-censorship is generally the consequence of governing power and willing of the upper social

Fig. 2. The Orange Garden by 'Eva Leitolf' From the collection of 'Postcards from Europe'. 2010. In this collection, he has been working on for many years throughout Europe, deals with the issue of migration in Europe, and the difficulties and hardships that immigrants in different European countries face with. During his travels throughout Europe, he portrays scenes in which events such as deprivation, alienation, intimidation, or excessive violence take place. During this journey, he talks to people who are involved in these events including:
The immigrants, refugees, seasonal workers, activists, worker`s unions, local politicians, border guards, etc.; then represent them within the context beside the photographs. This iconic photo is showing a scene of intense conflict between the fruit picking migrant workers and local people, which remains in the memory of the local people. This kind of exploiting the absence of an event in the context of the photo is called 'primary absence'. Image source: evaleitolf.de

classes (governments, art agents, and the entertaining mass media) in preserving the texture and quality of the literary or artistic works` content, that imposes itself to the world of art, in the form of limiting rules and regulations. Such limitations, as a means to censorship, are important mostly because the artists (and those who are in charge of preparing and distributing their works) take them into consideration and use them for self-censorship to avoid dealing with possible issues" (Hall, 2012, 302).

The censorship and cutting have the power to grow firmly within the suppressed elements and to make the 'expectation of understanding' in its audience regarding the absent objects. In this case absence is kind of strategy for making sense in artwork in which it is activated in and through its variable relation with the presence, and censorship here is the contact point of this mutual relation. In other words, what the artist cuts and censors from the artwork, convey the concept of absence only when, in somehow, the viewer "expecting" for the censored subject (whether based on the available knowledge and awareness outside the frame- the primary absence - or through the interactive level of its elements (the secondary absence) and so finds active interaction with its absence.

It is the artist who creates absence as an activated element in an artwork, through addressing the "meaningful emergence of absence", and by manipulating the content, composition, materials, appearance, and other textual features (Wallace, 2015, 49).

In urban spaces, absence plays a very active role; "In addition to physical voids, other types of absences that manifest in the city were identified as the traces of historical events, transient architectural and mobile vending structures, forms of surveillance, durational aspects such material patina and surface shadows, atmospheric qualities such as pollution and ash, death and social absences including women, widows and the floating population" (ibid, 215). The present things that insistently indicate the absence of other things and the concepts behind them. Urban spaces are full
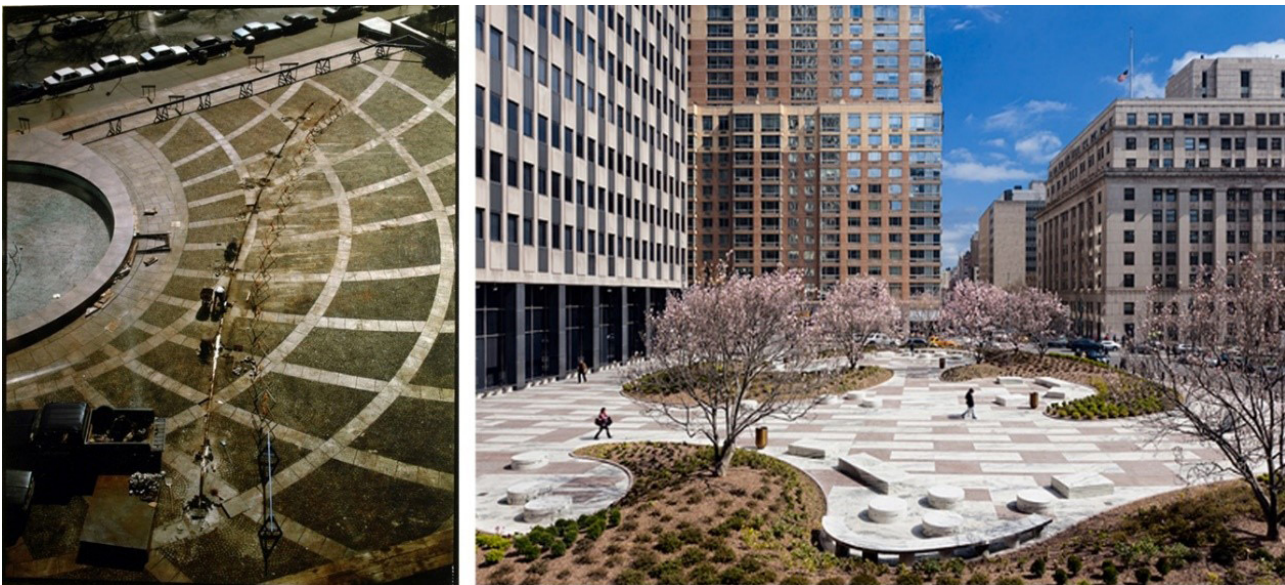
Fig. 3. Left: Removing the Tilted Arc status (1989) and the trace of its vacancy in the pavement of the 'Federal Plaza Square'. Addison Thompson. Right: Today's view of the Federal Plaza.
After several years of conflicts between proponents and opponents of building up status in the Federal Plaza Square, the Tilted Arc by Richard Serra (1938-) finally was broken into pieces in 1989 (9 years after its installation in the square) and removed from the square.
Long after the statue was removed from the square, the enthusiasts of the statue, who generally were academics people, students and artists, eagerly were presented at Federal Plaza Square and visited the remaining of statue on the pavement and introduced it to others (secondary absence). However, following the reconstruction of the general view of the square and its new design, there was no trace of the Tilt Arch remained; so introducing this piece of work devolved to the appendix text of art historians and writers (primary absence). The content of the absence in these two photographs (and also at the main square of Federal Plaza for visitors) is entirely dependent on a historical narrative available out-of-text (photograph/ square), and due to the attached narrative, it reveals the suppressive force available in the context. Image sources: left: artnet.com and right: papiro.unizar.es.

of social constraints (for example, for women) that can be encountered in the form of absences that evoke meaning. "Silences" are other signs of absence in urban spaces. Silence in a city map indicates what may have been overlooked, ignored, or repressed in the history of the city; The urban spaces are full of social limitations (for example, restrictions on women) that are the ability to be encountered in the form of absence which is associated with a meaning. "Silences" are other signs of absence in urban spaces. 'The silences' in a city map indicate what may have been ignored or repressed in the history of a city, and they point out to what may have constituted the today's appearance of the city. The place-based silences are often those spaces that were allocated for memorials and religious activities (ibid, 217) and also are places for death and burial ceremonies. In urban spaces where they are out of their silence position and their defined tasks are expanded over the other urban places and go through the streets, a kind of conflicting merge of life and death happens which causes the absence of everything related to life (just by taking a deeper look to the

mourning ceremonies, moving coffins in the streets, the pictures of deceased people on the city walls this issue would be clearly understood).
In politics of everyday practices, absence and presence have been, and continue to be, particularly potent political tools, utilized to reinforce particular power relations, narratives, and control over space. Absence, for example, has a long association of denying others' claims to spaces, places, and participation. Whether excluding particular ethnic groups from certain residential areas, young people from shopping centers at particular times, or homeless people from urban regeneration sites, making absent has been used as a stratagem of control that removes dissenting views and experiences from particular time-places (Dafydd Jones, etc., 2012, 257).

Absence in Social Narratives of Photographs in Iran

Absence, like an enquiring power in the context of an artwork, directs the viewer's attention from what is present in the frame to factors relying on time and
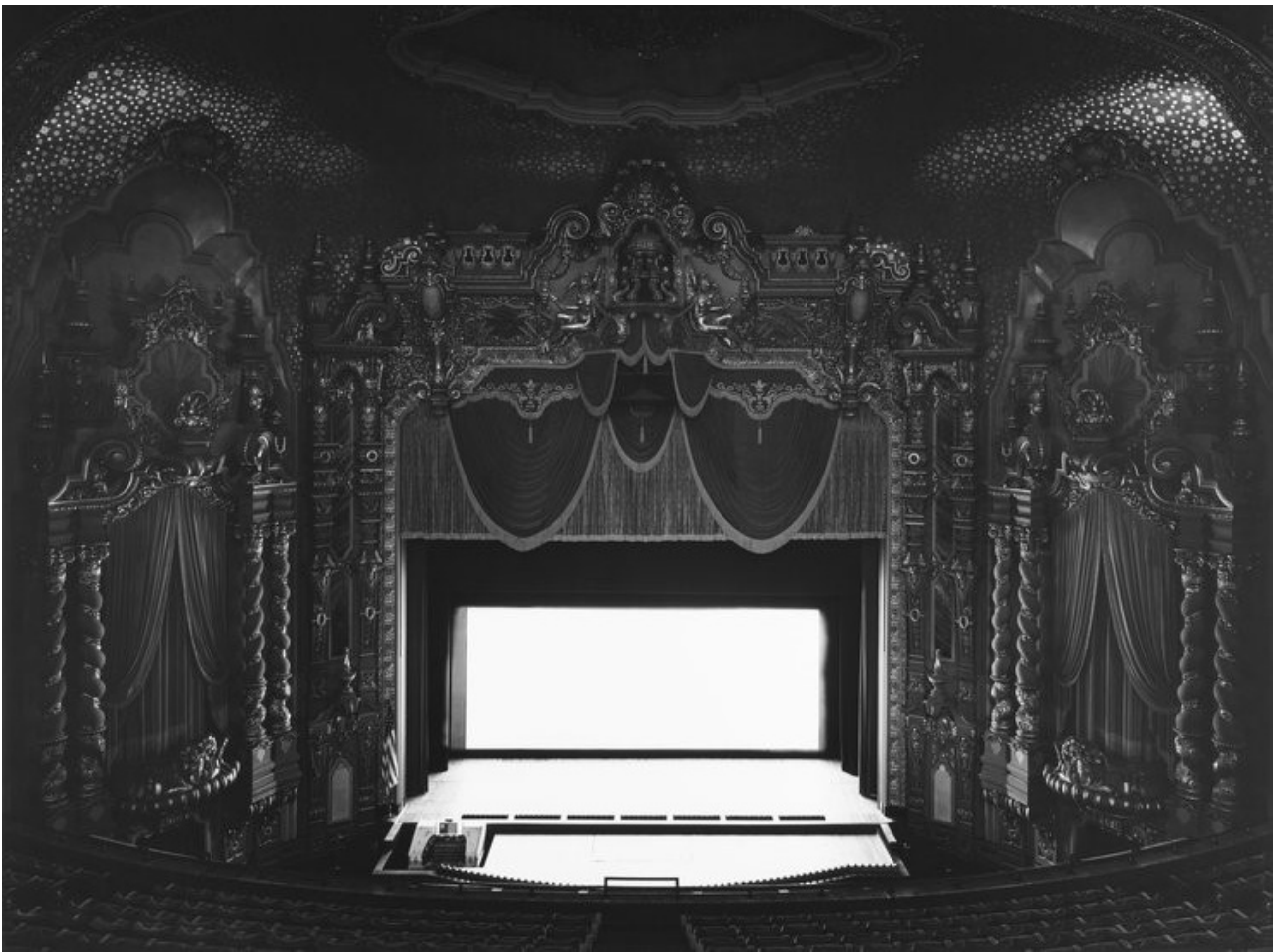
Fig. 4. The Ohio Theater Hall from collection of Theaters, 1980 by Hiroshi Sugimoto. He refers in many of his photographs collections to the presence and function of time in photographs. He describes and challenges the function of the camera in recording and fixing a moment, except in the early times of photography when the sensitivities of photographic materials were low. In theater halls, by using long exposures (as long as the movie was screening), the presence of whole movie -that was being naturally shown on the screen, due to leaving the shutter open, caused the burned scene on the photographed film- mixed with its absence in the final photograph, and in somehow shows the presence of the whole movie through the absence of visual elements on the screen. On the other hand, the movie halls that Sugimoto has chosen for this project includes a lot of decorations, which are generally out of sight of the spectators due to the darkness of the movie hall during the movie screening, and thus, with a long reflection of screen light on them are clearly recorded in the final photograph. The secondary absence put this game of presence and absence, that is available in context of the work, in front of the audience.Image Source: Museemagazine.com.

history outside it. Today, many social photographs take advantage of absence (consciously or unconsciously) to not limit the power of representing social events to the internal factors of the frame, and to expand their ability to analyze and interpreting (Fig. 5). From another view, the social photographs of Iran frequently offer daily lifestyles, in which 'absence' is one of the main consisting factors of the content. In other words, the social photography in recent decades in Iran, especially when it is more connected to the private and everyday life of people, and while emerging in private photo albums, personal profiles and virtual social networks, is highly associated and connected with the content

of absence. This omission and censorship puts the issue of absence in two different narrative position within the social photography of today's Iranian life. **A)** Absence in formal narrative of social photography in Iran: It consists what the government officials in photographic foundations follow and therefore exploit in various constructions and advertisements; it often "consciously" (generally), and sometimes unconsciously or even intentionally (among the theorist and photographers who are attributed to the cultural foundations), place the absence within the context of an artwork based on the restrictions and prohibitions. Absence in this way of representing, which is associated with kind of imposing a request andcultural

hegemony in ordering a desired type of cultural and behavioral patterns avoids an accurate representation of what is happening in the social context while defining and presenting a kind of lifestyle patterns; so it follows an ideal exhibition, that is promoted and presented by the legitimate cultural foundation, which generally does not provide a complete feedback due to being apart from the basic need of the Iranian social environment (usually in major cities).

Absence in this situation is usually represented and defined for the audience through kind of awareness outside the main context. The "Expecting for presence" has content only when people have knowledge and awareness about presence, and in facing with its absence look for the roots, causes, and reasons of negation and deprivation of the subject (for example, the absence of women in special social spaces such as sports stadiums (Fig. 6), would be taken as a serious issue and projected as a public willing, only when the consequence of women`s absence, its social impacts and the awareness of the basic rights of women will be recognized. So, absence in the formal narratives of Iranian social photography reveals many conflicts

Fig. 5. A pair of girl`s shoes, remained from the crash accident of Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752; An anonymous Photographer. Tehran, 2019. This photo, which is an example of using "primary absence" in the picture frame, was widely distributed on news and social networks within the days after the accident. A photo that contained massages for general and specific audiences much more than other related photos that were taken related to the fall accident. Image source: abccolumbia.com.

between official culture and daily lifestyles and represents the areas of confrontation and repression that consequently shows the social crisis.Some of these images, apparently represent a clear appearance of a routine daily issue including:

- Showing The 'Azadi Stadium' and the presence of numerous men cheering up their favorite team.

- No sign of any contact between men and women in a family in advertising and urban photography,

- Displaying women's covering as legitimate in dominant government in form of black veils (chādor) which is neither represent a common color variation of covering among young girls, especially in a major city, nor has no a prevalence acceptance especially in the decade 80 SH solar and after as favorite clothing chosen by women).

Showing Types of advertising photographs taken from urban environments and spaces emphasizing on city development, improvement and beautification (that especially in major cities, the advertising contents differs from the everyday life style);

These photographs, however, for many people as audiences represent kind of associations which are fully distinct with what is propagated and or presented.

B) The 'absence' related to the main actors of social photography in Iran, that represents itself in some different areas, such as highly private space of social photographs, through keeping itself out of any official representation of behavioral patterns and choosing a lifestyle different from what the legitimate culture is insisted on (the removal or fading the official ordered covering, or trimming the appearance, changing or replacing the traditional and "favorable" ethnic and tribal cover, removing or questioning the social connections derived from the traditional or ideological context). In other words, the suppressive power hidden in the absence of photograph context, through ordinary people and social actors, and from a sociological view can become an act that will try to bypass any interaction with legitimate culture (Examples can be seen in the photographs show attending the ceremonies and celebrations that have stronger national aspects, such as the birthday of Cyrus and the celebration of

Sepandārmazgān; However, a lot of Instagram photos showing attention and interest of most people to some non-Iranian customs such as Valentine as well).

If we consider absence as a kind of social manifesto that is formed by kind of restrictions, prohibitions and rejections, the related feedback and the case studies in some of the social photographs represent the restrained and eliminated forces in the context of daily life, which social actors, consciously or unconsciously, encounter with them in their daily behaviors, and put under questions the underlying reasons for their absence. Absence in the context of social photography represents the existing social challenges in expressing

Fig. 6. The Persepolis club fans in an official match. Tehran Azadi Stadium. 2018. Any photograph that represents kind of lacking presence of a social element/s, actually introduces a prospect of absence in the subject, which by itself expresses the desires, forces and social powers that are imposed on society by the legitimate cultural. The ban on women attending stadiums, which became a more serious social demand in the 1970s, can be seen in many photographs taken from football spectators. This absence focuses on forces that are confronted by social activists in the context of society from one hand (recent examples of it can be seen in concealing the female identity by women to enter stadiums); and on the other hand, represents the request for a formal cultural context that eliminates, denies and suppresses it. Absence in these types of photographs evokes the reasons for the formation of this type of communities based on lacking the presence in the mind of the aware audience: Which social forces prevent women from entering the stadium and what are their background implications? What kind of risks will be posed socially and in terms of people`s interactive level by women`s lack of presence in stadium and turning It from a public space to a masculine space? How do other forms of absence represent themselves at different levels and in other social behaviors? Image source: farsnews.com.

and presenting behaviors, habits and beliefs; and is also the place of confrontation with personal and social lifestyles of various interests and preferences. The sample photographs in this case can be seen not only in the central urban areas of Iran but even in distant and border areas such as 'Baluchistan' state. Women who have adopted 'black chador' as avail not only in front of the cameras, and in their family gathering (as a legitimate formal cover), but even in their local social spaces (Fig. 7). The absence of local dress in opposition to the formal dress, although does not differ from hijab in case of content, from the identical, local, or ideological position, however, in terms of the social and cultural functions, is very important among the various human tribes and communities.

Conclusion

Absence, when it appears in the context of a photograph, can represent the causes of its happening to the viewer in a deeper way. Absence as a visual concept can be inserted in an artwork, either intentionally by the photographer in the context of the photograph (by deleting, preparing, erasing, or symbolically pointing to the subject) or unintentionally (through suppressive forces within the photographer's social living space, which emerges itself in the form of ideological and mental forms). Absence, as a visual concept, can be placed either purposefully in the photograph`s context by the photographer (using deletion, emptiness, removing, or symbolically referring to the subject) or by unintentional presentation (through the suppressive forces within the photographer's social living space, which represent itself in notion and imaginary form within the context of the photograph). The concept of absence, by replacing the destruction with creation, denial with confirming, lack of presence with presence and in the issue of "historical narrative" within the context, is created not simply based on the setting of ready objects within the frame, but rather by photographer and his/her intention in presenting correct narration, that is analyzed and perceived based on the factors outside the visual framework. In this way, the context of photographs opens up the pure research

Fig. 7. Baloch women in Konarak. Anonymous Photographer. 1970s. The style of people`s covering in social photographs can refer to the absence of hidden historical and social narratives. The original clothing of Baluch women is one of the most beautiful and expensive women's clothing among the Iranian local tribes and in the past it has been accompanied by colorful and traditional vail (chador). Today, however, beautiful and colorful clothes matched with Baluchi needlework are hidden under the black chador, and the most Baluch women who live in cities chosen the black chador as a symbol of hijab and a kind of suitable cover for formal gatherings. Such alterations in cultural patterns, which are naturally rooted in official advertising and is not that much related to the traditions and religion of these local tribes, represent the discourse of power and its presence in the most distant parts of Iran. Source: irna.Ir.

space of interpretation for the audience, without imposing the presence of the photographer's desired elements within the photograph context, to make the audience involved in an interpretive and explicit direction. Since The conceptual world of individuals is formed based on the presumptions and beliefs, so any representation of the world, will be interpreted based on his/her presumptions. These preconceived elements are represented at the first stage by the presence of textual signs within the work, as the absence of these elements alters theinterpretation based on artist mind and makes it related to the out-of-frame narratives (the audience presumptions, and the connection of work with the other fields such as historical written texts) more than before. In this way, the viewer`s attention shifts from focusing on the ready-made objects to their critical aspect, and so the "expectation" of perceiving what is not there will then make sense.

Endnote
1. Richard Shusterman (1949-). An American pragmatic philosopher and professor at the University of Philadelphia, Atlantic who has made significant contributions to the advancement of philosophical aesthetics.
2. Rosana Pimm (2017). Art student at the 'University of Southern Cross.'
3. Jacques Derrida (1930-2004). The French Algerian philosopher whose views and ideas influenced postmodern philosophy and literary criticism.
4. Patrick Fuery (1995). The Professor, Director and Founder of the Center for Creative and Cultural Industries at Wilkinson College. His latest book is Madness and Cinema. His research interests include psychoanalysis, semiotics, literary and cultural theory, gender studies, visual studies, movie, medicine and art studies.
5. Rudolf Wittkower (1901-1971). The German-American art historian specializing in Renaissance and Baroque history, and in Italian architecture.
6. Davor Džalto (1980-). The Yugoslav philosopher and art historian.
7. In years between 2009 and 2012, two major group exhibitions in Europe were demonstrating the expansion and diversity of absence. The two exhibitions, first the "Invisible: Art about the Unseen, 1957-2012" at the 'Hayward Gallery' in London, and the second: "Voids, A Retrospective (2009)" at the 'Pompidou Center' in Paris. In these exhibitions, absence was demonstrated in the form of an empty gallery, an invisible object, something removed, cut or edited from an object / context / image like an empty canvas and tripod, or with the use of invisible materials (air, radio waves and lasers). For further reading, see:
 Elizabeth Wallace. The Presence of Absence, Conceptualising absence in the city through contemporary art practice. p 45.
8. La Disparitio: Has written by Perk in 1969, in 'lipogram' style, which is kind of writing consisting of long paragraphs in which a particular letter or group of letters is avoided. The letter 'e', which is a widely used letter in English, is absent from the text). This book, entitled "A Void", was translated into English by 'Gilbert Adair' (1944-2011).
9. Georges Perec (1936-1982). A French novelist, moviemaker, documentary filmmaker, and essayist, who makes the reader encountered with kind of missing, loss, and Identity through games with words, in most of his works, influenced by losing his father in the early years of World War II, and his mother within the Holocaust genocide.

10. Milton Ernest "Robert" Rauschenberg (1925-2008). An American artist and painter who, at the early stages of his career, laid the groundwork for the pop art movement. He used innovative combinations of new and unfamiliar materials in his works.

11. Willem de Kooning (1904-1997). An influential American artist and painter whose main style was abstract expressionism.

12. Michael Heizer (1944-). An American-born contemporary artist best known worldwide for his large-scale and site-specific work. His "Double Negative" work in the Nevada desert of the United States (1970) is another of his most enduring works that he used the concept of absence in creating them.

13. Jose Manuel Ballester (1960). The Spanish painter born in Madrid, whose increasing attention to the presence of various qualities of light in his works, draw him to the architectural photography as well.

14. Arthur Danto (1924-2013). The critic, philosopher and professor at 'Columbia University School of the Arts'. Danto is known for his work in philosophical aesthetics and the philosophy of history.

15. Sir Alfred Joseph Hitchcock (1899-1980). The English director and producer, and one of the most influential filmmakers in the history of cinema.

16. Otto Umbehr known as "Umbo" (1902-1980). The German photographer who is well-known for his photos taken for the press.

17. Roger Scruton (1944-). The English philosopher and writer; An expert in aesthetics and political philosophy, and in particular in purifying and advancing the traditional conservative idea.

18. Eva Leitolf (1966). German artist and photographer.

19. Theaters, generally dating back to the early twentieth century, were strongly influenced by 'Baroque' and 'Rococo' decorations.

20. Richard Meyer (1934). The Professor of Art History at Stanford University, teaches the twentieth-century American art, history of photography and art censorship. Meyer's first book, 'Outlaw Representation: Censorship and Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century America Richard Shusterman (1949-): An American pragmatic philosopher and professor at the University of Philadelphia, Atlantic who has made significant contributions to the advancement of philosophical aesthetics.

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