

Rethinking Iconicity:
Exploring the Iconologies of Apartheid-Era Documentary Photography and South
African Networked Social Movements

by

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SUMMARY

This thesis addresses the question of how political narratives are configured as aesthetic issues in selected images from apartheid, #AmINext and #FeesMustFall. The research questions are explored through iconological and hermeneutical interpretation. Sixty documents were collected for interpretation, thirty documentary photographs from the apartheid-era, fifteen images from #AmINext, and fifteen images from #FeesMustFall. The images were coded using the qualitative analysis software ATLAS.ti, and thematically curated using the online whiteboard platform Miro. Additional examples of what I refer to as “politically charged images” (PCI) were added to the Miro whiteboard to illustrate an aesthetics of politically charged imagery.

The study addresses three main objectives. Firstly, through a Rancièrian theoretical framework, I explore how an anti-apartheid narrative is configured in apartheid-era documentary photographs, primarily through interpreting selected photographs by David Goldblatt and Ernest Cole. Second, I examine how political images can communicate similar political, social and cultural issues despite distances in time and space. Third, I interrogate the movement of past political images to online platforms and their interactions with more recent politically charged images on online platforms. I put forward the idea that politically charged imagery are constructing imagic conversations on shared social issues through time and space. I offer a renewed perspective on iconicity as a category for interpreting the political messages read in images. In my determination of the word, iconicity refers to the underlying qualities of images that inspires a sense of likeness, resonance, recognition and memory-recall. Whereas previous uses of iconicity have focussed on the word as a category to interrogate the material basis of icons as culturally impactful, my determination of the word stresses the immaterial aspects of image communication.

Using Jacques Rancière’s concept of the aesthetic image, I position the selected apartheid-era photographs as constructing the politics of apartheid. The affective images of apartheid-era documentary photography contribute to an archive of virtual imagery that speak both to the local issue of apartheid and related universal issues connected to racial injustice, police brutality, and social inequalities.

The images of #AmINext and #FeesMustFall are also argued to be affective images that have the potential to speak to other related social movements. In both networked social movements, the activists engage in body politics that make otherwise hidden violences visible. Lastly, I argue that the iconologies of #AmINext and #FeesMustFall consist of several perspectives of the movement formed through machinic interventions, images from the past and images that point to an empowered future for the activists.

Title of thesis: Rethinking Iconicity: Exploring the Iconologies of Apartheid-Era Documentary
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Key Terms: aesthetic images; affect; affective images; #AmINext; apartheid;
#FeesMustFall; icon; iconicity; iconology; Jacques Rancière, immaterial

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

Student Number: 11136546

I hereby declare that “Rethinking Iconicity: Exploring the Iconologies of Apartheid-Era Documentary Photography and South African Networked Social Movements” is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Deneesher Pather", enclosed within a light gray rectangular box.

Deneesher Pather

24 July 2024

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The contents of this thesis have not been professionally edited.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

acquired immunodeficiency syndrome	AIDS
African National Congress	ANC
Anti-Apartheid Movement	AAM
Army of the Republic of Vietnam	ARVN
Black Lives Matter	BLM
Cable News Network	CNN
Cape Town International Convention Centre	CTICC
Cape Town University of Technology	CTUT
Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation	CSVR
Charity Organisation Society	COS
Council for Scientific and Industrial Research	CSIR
Data Control Language	DCL
Data Definition Language	DDL
Dictionary of South African English	DSAE
Economic Freedom Fighters	EFF
Farm Security Administration	FSA
#FeesMustFall	FMF
Gender-Based Violence	GBV
Human Immunodeficiency Virus	HIV
Inkatha Freedom Party	IFP
Johannesburg Stock Exchange	JSE
Museum of Modern Art	MOMA
My Stealthy Freedom	MySF
National Party	NP
New Black Panther Party	NBPP
New Social Movement	NSM
North-West University	NWU
Occupy Wall Street	OWS
Oxford English Dictionary	OED
Pan Africanist Congress of Azania	PAC
Photography Legacy Project	PLP
Politically Charged Imagery	PCI
Portable Network Graphic	PNG
Qualitative Data Analysis Software	QDAS
#RhodesMustFall	RMF
Social Networking Sites	SNS
South African Defence Force	SADF
South African Police	SAP
South African Police Service	SAPS

South African Student Congress	SASCO
Southern Christian Leadership Conference	SCLC
Special Anti-Robbery Squad	SARS
Stellenbosch University	US
Structured Language Query	SQL
Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee	SNCC
Student Representative Council	SRC
Televisi Republik Indonesia	TVRI
Tshwane University of Technology	TUT
University of Cape Town	UCT
University of Fort Hare	FHU
University of the Free State	UFS
University of Johannesburg	UJ
University of Pretoria	UP
University of Witwatersrand	WITS
Uyinene Mrwetyana Foundation	UMF
“White Wednesdays”	WWeds

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: IMAGES OF CHANGE

1.1 Background to the Study

One of the most defining moments in my life was a visit to *Yad Vashem*, the Holocaust Remembrance Centre in Jerusalem, Israel. The museum space is a virtual narrative. The tours relive the paths of Holocaust victims, from their displacement to ghettos, to their imprisonment in concentration camps and to their eventual liberation.¹ The labyrinth-like passages display blown-up photographs of events, locations, and victims of the Holocaust. The pathways are lined with real memorabilia from the era displayed in glass cases. Visitors are immersed in the nearly uncanny world of a person deemed *Lebensunwertes Leben*, or unworthy of life (Taylor 2011). The artefacts are material evidence of suffering, heartbreak, and loss.

Those who encounter the photographs of the Holocaust do not easily forget them. The photographs paint a world plagued with violence, isolation, discomfort, and heartbreak. Although the images of the Holocaust undoubtedly struck me, what I did not expect to encounter were the board games presented in display cases nestled among the exhibits. Many of the board games, along with other toys, were created by Jewish parents to entertain and comfort their young children. One of the displays includes a version of *Monopoly* by a young Hungarian father for his new-born daughter shortly before he was taken to a labour camp.² Yehudit Inbar, the curator of the exhibit, envisioned the exhibition as a reclamation of humanity.³ Her aim was to showcase acts of recreation and peace despite the uncertainty and anxiety. Referring to her inspiration for the exhibition, she states, “What interests me is how the Jews behaved during the Holocaust as human beings in a crisis” (Inbar, quoted in Arad 2014).

For Inbar, the children’s toys are visual evidence of everyday dignity despite the depravity of the Holocaust. The objects are stand-ins for untold stories; the contents of lives lost in the passages of time, and the parts of ordinary life overshadowed by narratives of suffering. Jewish humanity, and by extension, Jewish identity, is equated with the creation of toys in dire circumstances. The assertion of Jewish humanity and identity through the display of toys is not an explicit argument, but rather an argument borne from the imagination of the visitors. The presence of the board games in the virtual narrative of the Holocaust creates a

¹ More than ten million Jews, Roma, mentally disabled and homosexual people were killed in the Nazi concentration camps (Taylor 2011).

² *Monopoly* is a multiplayer board game that focusses on the buying and selling of properties. The game was founded by the Parker Brothers in 1935 (Parkin 2023).

³ Toys from Inbar’s exhibition, *No Child’s Play* (1997), have remained on display since its inception. Aside from board games, the exhibit includes puppets, teddy bears and toy-replacements such as knotted rags.

parallel account that counters narratives of abject suffering and loss. In South African culture, like the unearthed toys of the Holocaust, photographs have asserted humanity and identity in dire circumstances.

The documentary photographs of apartheid showcased the realities of life under an oppressive system. Collectives such as *Afrapix*, and individuals like Ruth Seopedi Motau (1968—), Alf Kumalo (1930-2012) and Bob Gosani (1934-1972), explored the absurdity, the violence, and the inequality that defined the era.⁴ Concurrently, their work marked the resilience of those who endured the horrors of being labelled less-than-human. Like the Holocaust, apartheid represents an era of human displacement, the repression of undesirable identities, and the normalisation of extreme acts of violence. Apartheid-era documentary photographs captured different faces of the crisis with many photographers challenging the media censorship instituted by the National Party (NP).

1.1.1 Documenting Apartheid: Photographs as Witnesses

In some of the documentary photographs, spectacles of violence were captured in moments of chaos. Conflicts between anti-apartheid protesters and the South African Police (SAP) are frozen in striking photographic stills. A baton raised threateningly in the air or the haunting presence of a Casspir armoured vehicle are familiar images of the era.⁵ However, as testament to the human impulse to search for higher significance in situations of peril, there are also images that encourage a deeper, more complex consideration of the human condition (Frankl [1946] 2008).

Documentary photographers, like David Goldblatt (1930-2018) and Ernest Cole (1940-1990), ventured through apartheid's city streets, navigated the dusty roads of townships and scoured rural country sides to record life as lived by ordinary South Africans (Thomas 2012, 206). Thus, as much as there are photographs of extraordinary violence, there are also complex photographs of South Africans simply living under apartheid's unequal systems; some doggedly enduring its systems while others thrive (Hayes 2009, 34).

Catherine Kroll (2012, 55) separates South African documentary photography into two categories. She states that there are traditional documentary photographs and critical documentary photographs. The first category is concerned with the production of struggle images for, what she calls, "mainstream media agencies".⁶ The publishing of traditional documentary photographs brought the poverty and protests of non-white South Africans to

⁴ *Afrapix* was a collective founded in 1982 by members Omar Badsha (1945—) and Paul Weinberg (1956—). The initiative included forty members who aimed to disrupt the apartheid regime through photography. The group was dissolved in 1991.

⁵ The Casspir is an armoured-defence vehicle that has been used in South Africa since the 1980s. The name is an anagram of SAP (South African Police) and CSIR (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research).

⁶ Kroll (2012, 55) refers to traditional documentary photography as being produced for the "mainstream press"; however, this classification is problematic because she does not give any examples.

the attention of the white public. Traditional documentary photographs simultaneously inform and sensationalise struggle politics for the sales of news publications.

Kroll's (2012, 55-56) second category focusses on an engagement with traditional scopopic regimes for social critique. These photographs deliberately engage with, what she calls, the "capitalist-apartheid" system to visually critique the social and political conditions of apartheid (Kroll 2012, 55). In this category, she places *Afrapix*, Goldblatt, as well as photographers for the alternative press such as Peter Magubane (1932-2024) and Sam Nzima (1934-2018).⁷

Other authors who have written about documentary photography have defined it as a subgenre of photography that is heavily influenced by context.⁸ Documentary photography separates itself from other genres of photography in its deliberate engagement with social and political factors beyond what is directly captured. As opposed to photojournalism which is characterised by its fast capture speed and minute reportage of events, documentary photography has a reputation as being a slower, more deliberative genre of photography (Kratcochvil and Persson 2001). On the documentary photography of the United States Civil Rights Movement (1954-1968), Martin A. Berger (2011, 14) states, "The meanings ascribed to the photographs, and the attitudes and actions they promoted, were clearly produced in part by contextual factors outside the photographic image". Thus, without contextual understanding or explanatory material, documentary photographs run the risk of overly confining their subjects to objectifying categories.

Put differently, although photography attempts to expose real social conditions, there is also a risk of the reproduction of racist, sexist and classist tropes (Hayes 2009, 34-37).⁹ As acknowledged by Kroll (2012, 66) and Rory Bester (2010, 156), photography has long acted as an extension of the empirical eye. Due to the immediacy of the medium, photographs can easily frame their contents as truth, especially if additional explanatory information is omitted. Kroll (2012, 54-55) states that photography earned a twofold status during apartheid, both to reveal the violence enacted against black bodies, and as a cultural tool that inspired elevated meaning despite the repressive atmosphere.

⁷ Magubane and Nzima, who photographed the Sharpeville Massacre (1960) and the Soweto Riots (1976) respectively, captured the onslaught on black bodies at the hands of the SAP and South African Defence Force (SADF).

⁸ Hayes (2009) and Thomas (2012), referring to the works of Gille de Vlieg and Santu Mofokeng respectively, highlight affect as the evocative power of their photographs. Bester (2010) and Kroll (2012) focus on the role of documentary photography as a signifying practice informed by ethnography and the ocular centrism of capitalism.

⁹ Hayes (2009, 36) discusses how anti-apartheid photography potentially catapults the harmful black victim trope.

1.1.2 *Visual Activism in South African Hashtag Revolutions*

In more recent years, the term visual activism has been used as a more encompassing category for visualised politics. Visual activism, according to South African visual artist Zanele Muholi (cited in Bryan-Wilson, González and Willsdon 2016, 7), covers a broad spectrum of visual political engagement, ranging from photographed public demonstrations to critical art installations. Visual activism, for Muholi, is a deliberate engagement with repressed visibilities to speak to unequal societal power relations.¹⁰ As a practice, visual activism is not as concerned with aesthetic form as the social injustices it addresses.

Julia Bryan-Wilson, Jennifer González, and Dominic Willsdon (2016, 9) state that visual activism is concerned with “how art can contribute to political discourse and how activism takes on specific, and sometimes surprising, visual forms that are not always aligned with or recognizable by art-world frameworks”. Visual activism moves away from medium specificity by including all forms of visual political expression and commentary. Although Bryan-Wilson, González and Willsdon (2016, 9) specifically mention art in their definition, visual activism subsumes *all* meaningful visual forms of political expression. Visual activism has played a role in the development and identity-construction of South African hashtag movements where activists have used digital technology to shape the collective identities of social movements.

1.1.3 *The Unfolding of #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall and #AmINext*

On 9 March 2015, student activist Chumani Maxwele threw a container of human faeces on the statue of Cecil John Rhodes (1853-1902) at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Maxwele’s act triggered a series of protests at UCT, collectively referred to as #RhodesMustFall (RMF). After Maxwele’s initial act of vandalism, the statue was further defaced with graffiti and black dustbin bags. Protests began to spread nationwide, and the movement soon gained international attention, leading to the creation of a RMF-dedicated Facebook page called *UCT: Rhodes Must Fall*. The sculpture of Rhodes was eventually removed on 9 April 2015 (Godsell and Chikane 2016, 58).¹¹ Aside from the removal of the sculpture, RMF protesters also vandalised other structures on campus deemed to be colonial markers, including artworks which were said to propagate black exoticism (Pather 2018, 10).

RMF is an important catalyst of Fallism. The movement marked the beginnings of a series of international movements aimed at dismantling colonial structures on university

¹⁰ Muholi’s creation of the term is related to their photographing of the black lesbian community in South Africa (Bryan-Wilson, González and Willsdon 2016, 7).

¹¹ Facebook is a social media site originally founded by Mark Zuckerberg in 2005 as a site to connect college students. The company is owned by a technology conglomerate service called Meta.

campuses and statues of colonial figures in public settings (Knudsen and Anderson 2018, 239).¹² Shepherd Mpofu (2017, 353-354) writes that the term Fallism contains two meanings. Fallism, firstly, pertains to the “falling” of marginalising systems and structures that exclude the poor black majority. Second, he suggests that there is a second version of Fallism that relates to intersectional and minority-motivated sub-movements that erupted due to tensions within the Fallist movements owing to a perceived neglect of intersectional issues such as sexism, gender-discrimination and misogyny (Crenshaw 1989, 144).

Later the same year, following an announcement by Higher Education Minister Blade Nzimande that university fees would increase by 10.5% the next year, disgruntled students at the University of Witswatersrand (WITS) blockaded the exits and entrances to the university, driving into motion a series of protests referred to as #FeesMustFall (FMF).

Students began *toyi-toyi*’ing and chanting inside and outside of the campus grounds (Godsell et al. 2016, 103).¹³ Clashes between the FMF protesters and campus officials led to an issuing of a statement that the protesters should disband (Godsell et al. 2016, 103). After noncompliance by the students, SAPS (South African Police Service) were called in to disperse the students. South Africans largely witnessed the violence breaking out between the protesters and the police via television media and social networking sites (SNS).¹⁴ Images and videos of the chaotic events proliferated including police officers grappling with students, activists sporting bleeding rubber bullet wounds, and the ongoing clashes between officials and students on campus grounds

After the initial rallies at WITS, various FMF protests erupted at other universities in the country, including the University of Pretoria (UP), University of Johannesburg (UJ), the University of the Free State (UFS), Stellenbosch University (US) and UCT. Aside from the protests on and near campuses, there was also direct engagement by the students with historically political structures, including protests in front of the gates of parliament in Cape

¹² Susan Booysen (2016, 3), defining Fallism, writes that, “The ideologies of feminism, the intersectionality of continuous societal injustice, black-African consciousness and identity, and dismissal of liberalism and neoliberalism were the core of the combination of more immediate targets for non-negotiables in the mix of targets for Fallism.” Mikateko Mathebula and Talita Calitz (2018, 178) writes that universities with lower incomes and previously disadvantaged students such as Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), University of Fort Hare (FHU) and the Cape Town University of Technology (CTUT) have had protests over university fees, academic exclusion due to unpaid fees much prior to 2015.

¹³ *Toyi-toyi*’ing is a form of dance including stomping, stepping, and chanting usually performed at South African protests (DSAE, n.d).

¹⁴ Although SNS are also social media sites, the social networking aspects of SNS differs them from other social media sites. boyd and Ellison (2007, 211) define SNS as, “[...] web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system”. Thus, sites like Facebook, Instagram, X are SNS because they allow the user to create profiles, view the friends or follower lists of other users and allow for the navigation of other users in the system.

Town, the Luthuli House in Johannesburg, and the Union Buildings in Pretoria (Booyesen 2016, 23).¹⁵

Photographs and videos taken by mainstream media, bystanders and student activists saw police-officers shooting rubber bullets at students and manhandling them. There is some consensus among scholars, such as Mpofu (2017), Tanja Bosch and Bruce Mutsvairo (2017) and L Sutton (2019) that police brutality was evident in the handling of the activists. In both RMF and FMF, there were images circulated of students standing off against the police, fleeing from the fumes of yellow teargas, or standing in solidarity with one another. In other instances, videos and images of the students vandalising property were shared on television media and SNS, such as X, Facebook, Instagram and the instant-messaging application WhatsApp.¹⁶ Activists used SNS to spread their ideologies and to counter media stories that were contrary to the tenets of the movement (Godsell et al. 2017, 108).

On the demographics of the FMF movement, Susan Booyesen (2016, 26-27) states that, “#FMF was a black-led struggle for radicalism, and it brought together the black underclasses in solidarity with the black middle class and a sprinkling of radical white middle class”. Booyesen’s statement implies that FMF was primarily a black-led student movement aimed at addressing the financial plights of poor young education-seeking people in South Africa. The FMF protests were reignited near the end of 2016 upon speculation that university fees would increase in 2017. Due to intimidation by some of the FMF protesters, lectures were disrupted, and campuses were closed. Although students vandalised private and public property in both the 2015 and 2016 stretches of the protests, a timeline of the RMF and FMF protests compiled by Booyesen and Kuda Bandama (2016, 326-327) shows there was a ramping up of destructive acts by the students in 2016. Incidents included engagements with arson at WITS, North-West University (NWU), and UJ. In response to criticism over the violent acts, leaders of FMF stated that violence was the only way that they could overcome the restrictive neoliberal policies of the universities (Mavunga 2021, 90). Unlike in 2015 when all university fee increases for the following year were waived, fee increases for 2017 were capped to an increase of 8%.

More recently, South Africa was hit by a series of protests dubbed the #AmINext protest movements.¹⁷ The #AmINext protest movements sparked after the murder of 19-

¹⁵ Luthuli House is the official headquarters of the African National Congress (ANC), and the Union Buildings is the official seat of the South African government.

¹⁶ Twitter was purchased by technology entrepreneur Elon Musk (1971—) in October 2022 whereafter he changed the name of the company to X (Kidwai and Carroll 2023). Instagram was launched in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger and is described by Victor P. Cornet, Natalie K. Hall, Francesco Cafaro and Erin Brady (2016, 4) as a “mobile-first” image sharing platform. WhatsApp is an instant-messaging service that is owned by Meta.

¹⁷ #TotalShutdown was a previous iteration of the movement against GBV which saw civil society groups and women’s rights groups march to parliament in 2018.

year-old UCT student Uyinene Mrwetyana, on 24 August 2019. Mrwetyana was raped and killed by former Post Office worker Luyanda Botha while trying to retrieve a package at the Clarenreich Post Office in Claremont, Cape Town.¹⁸

The brutal nature of Mrwetyana's murder along with the nearly concurrent deaths of 25-year-old boxer Leighandre Jegels, shot by her ex-boyfriend, and the murder and rape of 19-year-old Jesse Hess by her second cousin, led to widespread outrage on social media, with reactionary posts paired with the hashtag #AmINext (Lyster 2019).¹⁹ So infuriated were South Africans by the series of gender-based violence (GBV) incidents, that groups wielding placards with the hashtags, #AmINext, #IAmNene, and #JusticeForNene, among other enraged statements, protested outside of the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), the location of the World Economic Forum on Africa in Cape Town from 4 to 6 September 2019. Like with the RMF and FMF movements, protesters were forcibly dispersed with water cannons and stun grenades by policemen in riot shield gear.

Another significant protest was held outside of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) in Sandton under an additional hashtag #SandtonShutdown on 13 September 2019 (Mogoatlhe and Letsoalo 2019).²⁰ Protests continued throughout 2019 in various places throughout the country including Stellenbosch, Makhanda, and even overseas locations such as Times Square, New York (Head 2019). Hashtags that have been previously used to communicate about the sexual and violent assaults, such as #MenAreTrash and #MeToo, also re-emerged during the #AmINext protests where individuals, mainly women, took to social media to air personal stories of abuse and sexual trauma.

The #AmINext hashtag, paired with additional hashtags such as #StopGBV, re-emerged in June 2020 through to August 2020, after the brutal murder of pregnant 28-year-old Tshegofatso Pule at the hands of her boyfriend Ntuthuko Ntokozo where her body was found hanging from a tree in Roodepoort, Johannesburg (Makhetha 2020). In the above-mentioned cases of activism, hashtags were the central identifying point in uniting the protests, even if the exact tenets of the movements were at times transitory or even undefined in the form of an explicit manifesto (Buttelli and le Bruyns 2017, 4).²¹

¹⁸ Botha received three life-sentences from the high court in Cape Town (Nombembe 2019).

¹⁹ According to statistics gathered by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in 2019, South Africa has the sixth highest femicide rate in the world with 9.1 deaths per 100 000 women (*World Bank Group*, n.d.).

²⁰ Gender-based violence, as defined by the Centre for the study of Violence and Reconciliation (2016), refers to the "physical, sexual or psychological" harm inflicted on women. Although, in South Africa, violence is also committed against men at an alarming rate, GBV specifically refers to the violence committed against women and exacerbated by the unequal structural conditions that inordinately affect women of colour, the disabled, the poor and incarcerated women (CSVR 2016, 4).

²¹ FMF differs from RMF in the respect of not having explicit tenets. The organisers of UCT RMF issued a manifesto clearly delineating their goals.

1.1.4 Research Question

This thesis addresses the research question: How are political narratives configured as aesthetic issues in the selected images from apartheid, #AmINext and FMF? The question is addressed through iconological and hermeneutical interpretation, where I have analysed a total of sixty photographs: thirty images from the apartheid era, fifteen images from #AmINext and fifteen images from FMF. The formalistic qualities of the photographs were coded in the qualitative software analysis tool, ATLAS.ti. Additionally, on an online platform called Miro, I have visually collated some of the images into themes defining the movements. On the Miro platform, I included an additional thirty comparative images to illustrate an aesthetics of politically charged imagery (PCI). I have responded to this research question using existing literature on iconological methodologies and approaches, photography theory, social movement theory and digital culture theory.

1.2 Need for the study

There are three main reasons for exploring the construction of political narratives as aesthetic issues through an analysis of images in the South African context.

The first issue questions if there are any similarities in the expression of political arguments in apartheid-era photographs as compared to #AmINext and FMF. Although there has been much research delving into the role of documentary photography as a tool in exposing the atrocities of apartheid, there has been less explanation regarding *how* apartheid-era documentary photographers engaged with apartheid as a globalised social issue to create the impression that it warranted an international response. Such an exploration necessitates looking at temporally adjacent global activism in the post-war era, as well as the increased media attention on political issues. Although the selected apartheid-era photographs are not images of protest, as with the #AmINext and FMF photographs, the subtlety of their political argumentation is an additional layer adding to their complex position as political arguments. Cognisant of how online platforms intensify visual communication, I am drawn to images as nodes of political engagement. As such, I explore how South African political iconology engages within a global genealogy of PCI to create bids of connection. I am additionally interested in how the images work to narrativise social issues.²²

²² The term PCI does not imply that all the images in the image curation were specifically produced to canvas for political movements or that all the images intentionally put across political arguments. Rather, the collection of PCIs in the catalogues are intuitively selected based on the presupposition that they reflect latent or obvious political messages, whether intentional or not. Conversely, the examples from each category are interpreted as representing particular political situations, such as apartheid, #FeesMustFall, and #AmINext, as well as constituting a network of virtual PCI. In Catalogue Set A, additional examples of international PCI were added to the data pool and interpreted as part of a virtual PCI network. The images are understood from the theoretical standpoint of Manuel Castells's (2015, 7-8) Network Society, where PCIs constitute and speak to a virtual pool of images existing in a global communication network.

The second issue interrogates the relation between aesthetics and politics. For many documentary photographers of apartheid, there was a political necessity in documenting the lives of people of colour, whether that be through exposing the atrocities faced or asserting the ordinariness of their humanity through documenting their daily lives. Owing to an urge to bear witness to the atrocities, what Stuart Franklin (2016) refers to as the “documentary impulse”, photographers risked their lives to both capture the images and publish them. Many of the documentary photographs are also consciously figured with a studious attention to how their photographs construct the world of apartheid. Simultaneously, there are elements of the images that speak to ongoing issues of the past and concurrent issues of the present. There is thus an interplay between the photographs’ construction of apartheid and their ability to communicate beyond apartheid’s real and metaphorical borders. I dive into the connection between aesthetics and politics by looking at how images speak to one another through time and space, departing from the assumption that images from different times and spaces can now meet one another on digital platforms potentially inspiring novel interrelations and interactions.

As South African social movements have migrated to SNS, both professional and non-professional photographers are uploading PCI to social media sites.²³ With the broad reach of network technologies, there is an endless archive for image-makers to access and to inform their activism. In this sense, a political movement’s collective identity is potentially informed by all kinds of photographed or videoed events within networked systems. Conscious of the reach of online networks, I also interrogate the interactions of past political images in their migrations to digital online platforms. Relatedly by looking at the iconologies of contemporary South African social movements as experienced on online, I contribute to a broader understanding on how the images #AmINext and FMF potentially connect to other social movements through Internet networking technologies.

The third issue explored concerns networked image communication prior to the invention of the Internet. As previously stated, apartheid relied on a material and ideological separateness of people. Anti-apartheid activists looked to international broadcasting and newspaper companies to spread messages about the situation in South Africa. To counter the message of separateness of races, photographers in South Africa put forward oppositional narratives that asserted black South Africans’ right to autonomy. The use of images to suggest political counternarratives is not unique to the South African landscape. By looking at the arguments constructed by PCI through time, I offer a necessary renewed

²³ The term politically oriented refers to media that potentially has political implications, whether intended or not, its construction of conflict, protest or in its exposure of social conditions.

perspective on iconicity as a category of interpreting the suggestion of political messages through images.

1.3 Methodologies and Theoretical Frameworks

The image curation for this thesis is divided into three sections: Catalogue Sets A, B and C. In Catalogue Set A, I curated PCI ranging from early ethnographic photography to images from more current social movements. The images were downloaded from various online sources such as blogs, news sites, and online archives such as the Internet Archive.²⁴ The images were selected to convey different genres of photographic argumentation. I created a digital map to showcase the examples of PCIs as indicative of different time periods, social contexts and to plot a migration of PCI through time and space.

Catalogue Set B curates selected apartheid-era documentary photographs which I downloaded from the Photography Legacy Project (PLP).²⁵ The timeline of the photographs ranges from 1960 to 1989, representing the most socially turbulent years of apartheid. The catalogue focusses on photographs from Goldblatt and Cole, the reasoning behind the choice of photographers will be expanded on later. Catalogue Set C mainly consists of screenshots captured from Instagram and X that used the #FeesMustFall and #AmINext hashtags.²⁶

The photographs (D1-D60) were chosen according to an intuitive sampling method put forward by Robert Hariman and John Lucaites (2015, 13). The intuitive sampling method, for Hariman and Lucaites (2015, 13) focusses on “evocative images” and images that can speak to more universal categories. They explain the approach in the following way: “The image can expose the natural attitude governing those events as well as other perspectives already present in the reflective space of the photograph, and thereby bring their cultural characteristics and political complications forward for audience consideration” (Hariman and Lucaites 2015, 14). Thus, the images focus on specific situations that could speak to more universalised issues.

The images are arranged using a curatorial approach, also put forth by Hariman and Lucaites (2015, 13). They explain the curatorial approach as concerned with how the photographs encompass the events they represent, “These images (like the icons, incidentally) are not necessarily the “best” in terms of technical accomplishment and certainly not the most inventive or unique, but rather those that exemplify what photographs

²⁴ The Internet Archive is a free digital archive founded by Brewster Kahle and provides access to digital material such as books, music and audiovisual material.

²⁵ PLP is a Goodman Gallery, David Goldblatt Legacy Trust, David Goldblatt Family and WITS Historical Papers backed project to create a digital archive of African photographic connections.

²⁶ Many of the usernames in Catalogue Set C have been intentionally obscured or misspelled to prevent the subjects from being immediately identified. In the case that the users were professional photographers, organisations, political figures or celebrities, the username is not concealed.

are capable of doing in order to more fully realize the public art of that time. In other words, the critic's task includes creating a gallery show, and one that suggests how photography itself, in all its expansiveness, is creating a vast, virtual museum, an archeology [*sic*] of the present”.

1.3.1 *Catalogue Set A: The Aesthetics of Politically Charged Imagery*

The photographs chosen for Catalogue Set A were selected for the purposes of creating a visual map of PCIs through time.²⁷ The selected images form and inform a network of PCIs. Catalogue Set A consists of a mix of international examples of PCIs with a few additional South African examples added from the apartheid era, #AmINext and FMF. In this catalogue, I mainly selected professionally shot photographs to show a clear migration of gestures, visual motifs.²⁸ The image categories are provided as a guide based on the argumentation in this thesis. Although the images are roughly placed into image categories, the categories should not be read as prescriptive.

The PCIs are placed in a soft-chronological order representing different genres of photographs that carry political messages. The images were curated using the online visual workspace application, Miro. Miro's platform allows for real-time whiteboard collaboration where images and text can be embedded into the interface. Catalogue Set A lists the images which are numbered from 1 to 30. The Miro whiteboard can be accessed using the following link: https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVKEU35AI=/?share_link_id=223827884962.

The canvas also expands into two sections which includes the majority of images from Catalogue Sets B and C.²⁹ The critical documentary photography section expands into the deeper iconological analysis of the apartheid-era documentary photographs. The apartheid documentary photographs are further separated into themes such as instances of racial intimacy, black poverty and suffering, black people's conflict with police, wealth and racial privilege, signage designating racial separation, and the crossing of racial barriers, causing conflict.

Roughly situated under the networked images and social media images section are the selected images Catalogue Set C from #AmINext and FMF protests. Like Catalogue Set B, I have curated the photographs into themes. Unlike Catalogue Set B where the photographs are more detailed, the images are mainly smartphone captures that tended to focus on narrower subject matter, so their visual attributes are less detailed.

²⁷ The photographs are not exactly in chronological order to mimic the experience of network images through “horizontal communication” as characterised by the network society, put forth by Castells (2015, 15).

²⁸ In Catalogue Set A, I have included one image (Image 18) with the Facebook interface included to reflect how some of the photographs are viewed from SNS interfaces.

²⁹ The reason that certain images were left out of the thematic organisation of the images is explained in Chapters Five and Six.

1.3.2 Catalogue Set B: The Iconology of Apartheid-Era Photographs

Goldblatt and Cole were selected as the representators of apartheid-era documentary photography for two related reasons. First, there is an interesting parallel created when comparing the two photographers' approaches as a white man and a black man, respectively. As many of the photographs selected were taken in the 1960s, the images are curated to show coinciding perspectives of apartheid, which are made more apparent when their photographs are juxtaposed virtually. Whereas the selected photographs from Goldblatt (D1-D9) centre more on the rural Afrikaner experience during apartheid, the selected photographs from Cole's (D10-D30) work focus more on the lives and struggles of black South Africans with an emphasis on street photography, as well as some scenes from black townships.³⁰

Second, there is an interesting interplay in the types of scenes captured owing to the focus of the photographers. The photographs Goldblatt captures are not just of Afrikaner people (D8) but also the relationships between white farmers and their hired black workers (D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D7), miners and mine bosses (D6), Afrikaner families with the children of black workers, and the absurd racial dynamics present in everyday situations (D9). Unlike many of Cole's photographs where the subjects are unwittingly captured on film, Goldblatt's subjects in *Some Afrikaners Photographed* are more aware of Goldblatt's presence, thus some of subjects are posed and looking into the lens of the camera. The awareness of Goldblatt's presence implies a collaboration between the photographer and the photographed. Goldblatt famously did not officially align himself with any political side during apartheid and emphasised that his photographs were more about showing than telling (Rosen 2017).

The selected photographs from Cole, in contrast, come across as more candid and more focussed on the indignity of apartheid. The photographs capture dynamic moments, such as the evacuations of black spots (D14), the issuing of passbooks and swooping of black citizens (D11, D13, D21, D22, D28), tensions between black and white South Africans (D12, D16), images of black poverty (D15, D19, D20, D23, D27), black labourers (D26), material evidence of separation (D17, D18, D24, D25, D30), as well as intimate moments between black and white people (D10).³¹

³⁰ Although most of the photographs are from Goldblatt's *Some Afrikaners photographed* (1975), one photograph (D9) capturing the Semi-Final of the *Lovely Legs* competition in Boksburg (1980) is from Goldblatt's book *In Boksburg* (1982).

³¹ The excavation of "black spots" saw the forced removals of black South Africans from areas dedicated to white South Africans (Skelcher 2003, 761). During "swoops", police approached black South Africans in public and checked them for passbooks.

In comparison to Goldblatt's photographs, Cole's photographs were more mindfully framed to expose the struggles of black South Africans to an international audience. This fact is shown by Darren Newbury (2011) in his exploration of documents from the Department of Justice that track Cole's interactions with the South African Police before he left South Africa in the 1960s. The documents show that Cole made efforts to release his photographs to international outlets in the United States, and the Anti-Apartheid Movements (AAM) in Germany and the United Kingdom (Newbury 2011, 77-78).³²

Whereas Goldblatt's photographs lean more toward the slower and contemplative, Cole's photographs read more shocking, at times. That being said, there is no easy distinction between the two documentary photographers' approaches. Notably, the captions in both the photographers' works often lead the viewers' emotive responses, causing an interesting interplay between what is pictured and what is sentimentally evoked. Bogle (2019, 43) offers the term "expanded documentary" to explain the affects of text as paired with photographs. Both photographers often use captions to shift their initial experience of the photograph. For example, Goldblatt's photograph, D3, portrays an elderly white gentleman sitting comfortably near a doorway, posing for Goldblatt while a curious black child looks in on the scene. The caption for the photograph reads, "Sitting at the kitchen door, he said, affectionately, to the child, *"Ja, wat maak jy hier jou swart vuilgoed"* (Yes, what are you doing here you black rubbish).

The caption adds a dimension of complexity when one looks at the photographic scene and ponders the lived relationship between the gentleman and the child. In referring to the black child as *"swart vuilgoed"*, the level of dehumanisation in the language may strike the viewer. But when one considers the comfortability of the child in approaching the man and Goldblatt's conscious use of the word "affectionate", there is an implication of a level of intimacy between the two subjects. The experience of the photograph is, thus, heightened by its caption, which provides more insight into dynamics between the scene's subjects and speaks to a broader network of social relationships in the apartheid system. If, as Bester (2010, 145-160), suggests Goldblatt's photographs reflect a form of "whiteness" during apartheid, Cole's photographs concurrently reflect a phenomenology of blackness.

1.3.3 Catalogue Set C: #AmINext and #FeesMustFall

The images representing #AmINext (D31-D45) and FMF (D46-D60) are screenshots from Instagram and X. The hashtags #FeesMustFall and #AmINext were inserted into the image-search functions of each site. The images downloaded from X reflect an approximate start

³² The AAM were a British organisation who were instrumental in the dismantling of the apartheid system. The group famously rallied for economic, cultural and sports sanctions against South Africa and demanded the cease of sales of arms to the NP government.

and end of each of the protest movements.³³ The X-sourced images collected for #AmINext consist of from November 2019 to December 2021. The X-sourced images collected for FMF were mainly taken between October 2015 to December 2016.³⁴

As Instagram does not have advanced search functions, images were downloaded from the top results of the respective hashtag searches. Where possible, likes, retweets, captions, comments, and hashtags are included. Most of the images are selected from users either advocating for the #AmINext and FMF movements or commenting on the movements as social commentators or detractors.³⁵ Usernames and tags that were considered to be revealing of personal information were censored.

The #AmINext images comprise of performance as activism (D34, D37, D42, D43) clashes with the police (D38), images of protesters holding protest signs (D31, D32, D33, D35, D36, D40, D44), detractors against the movement (D41, D45) and individuals participating in protests (D39).

The FMF images cover a variety of themes, including conflicts between the police and protesters (D52, D55, D56, D57, D59), images comparing the FMF movement to the Soweto Riots (D46, D47), photographs of activists with protest signs (D51, D53, D54, D58), highlighting the actions of hooligans (D49), images of marches, graffiti (D48), and images of student leaders (D50, D60).³⁶

1.3.4 Digital Methodologies

1.3.4.1 Visual Content Coding

ATLAS.ti, as a qualitative analysis software tool, was used to code the images in Catalogue Set B and C. ATLAS.ti assists with organising and visualising large amounts of data. The software allows for both textual and visual data to be sectioned and labelled according to their formal qualities. Therefore, individual formal aspects, such as the race, affects, gender, notable gestures, and objects, can be separately identified. Through coding the images, the connections, as well as the disparities between the photographs could be better interpreted.

The use of coding in the analysis is not to quantify the visual attributes identified in the chosen images, but rather to create an overall impression of the image's visual characteristics so that they could be better attributed to larger themes related to the research's aims and objectives. Thus, though the results of the codification provided a broad

³³ It must be mentioned that these are approximate dates as FMF and #AmINext could be considered ongoing social movements.

³⁴ D50 is an exception to the timeline stated as it is an image posted in 2023 that is from either the RMF or FMF movement that includes the #FeesMustFall hashtag.

³⁵ Only D56 has been taken from the *Ground Up* website. The original photograph was taken by an independent photographer Samantha Camara (2015).

³⁶ Clarifications on the curation and methodology of the images of Catalogue Set C are further expanded on in Chapter Six.

visualisation of the political situations, codifying each photograph individually allowed me to understand how the photographs could be grouped together thematically and categorically using the Miro platform. The most pertinent objectives for the image collection were:

- Exploring the iconology of the apartheid era and analysing visual motifs and repeated icons.
- Detailing how South African protest iconology taps into collective memory to inspire and motivate activism.
- Expanding on the ways that images have contributed to the narratives of social movements.
- Analysing the interactions of PCI when they are viewed concurrently.
- Comparing the visual activism from FMF and #AmINext?.

Importantly, the images were not collected and coded with a statistical or numerical output in mind. My primary objective when coding the images was to gain a sense of visual patterns by systematically surveying the images. Although discussing methodological approaches to quantitative content analysis, Annekatrin Bock, Holger Isermann and Thomas Knieper (2011, 269) provide a useful blueprint in formulating coding categories for images:

When searching for change in reporting and the topics represented visually, it is also necessary to name (subjective) categories related to the content of the photographs. An example category is 'people in the picture.' The following variables might belong to this category: gender, with the value 'male,' 'female,' and 'unknown'; profession/function (politician, police officer, other officials, protester, other civilians, unknown); clothes, gesture, mimic; and so on.

The codes were separated into code group categories as indicated in Fig. 1.1. Code group categories included age, gender, clothes, expressions and actions.³⁷

1.3.4.1.1 Clarifications on Code Grouping

Each code contains its code group, named first, and then the code attributed to the image. The code groups correspond to the codes for all the documents in the project, including:³⁸

- Actions: Actions include physical acts captured such as hitting, the taking of fingerprints, holding a child or a newspaper.

³⁷ The data was uploaded onto ATLAS.ti using the <documents> function on the site and visual elements from the photograph were coded using the <quotation> function.

³⁸ Not all the code groups are relevant to the image curation sets. For example, the apartheid-era photographs would not include the code groups of "tags" and "hashtags" which correspond to online metadata.

- Ages: The age code group corresponds to general approximations ranging from infants to elderly people.
- Animals: Animal codes represented the presence of pets. Although there are many police dogs in apartheid-era photographs, the photographs in Catalogue Set B did not contain any police dogs.
- Body: The body code group corresponds to positions of the body or defining attributes such as missing limbs or text written on a body-part
- Clothes: Codes for clothes linked to casual or formal dress, uniforms, or distinguishable attributes such as tears or a lack of clothing.
- Drawing: The drawing code group mainly linked to illustrations on protest boards and signs
- Emoji: The *Oxford English Dictionary* (n.d.) (OED) defines emoji as “a small digital image or icon used to express an idea or emotion”. Emojis were predominately identified in the captions paired with images from digital platforms.
- Expressions: The expressions recorded include more obvious affects such as anger or fear. Where emotions were less determinable, the code “neutral (indeterminable)” was used.
- Gender: Gender categories included male and female. Where indeterminable, the code “unknown” was used.
- Hashtag: Hashtags are metadata used to identify predominant themes and to link them to other images and threads. Hashtags were coded on according to their occurrences in the captions of the images captured from SNS.
- Location: Locations ranged from the broader, such as township or city square to the more specific such as bedroom.
- Objects: Objects included more obvious signs such as beds and bags to more peculiar features such as masks or animal fur.
- Poses: Poses corresponded to positions of the body such as the subject crossing their arms or legs or making the thumbs-up gesture.
- Positions of subjects: Positions designated whether subjects were standing, sitting, situated in a group or even more complex positions like being on all-fours.
- Professions: The profession group was mainly designated to subjects whose profession or work was more obvious owing to wearing a uniform or as stated in the caption of the image.
- Race: The most predominant racial codes allocated were white and black. Where undeterminable, the race of the subject was coded as “unknown”.
- Statues: Statues were identified according to the location of the photograph.

- Tags: A tag is a form of metadata that designates a user's handle. Tags that were included in captions and comments were labelled.
- Text: The text code group included captions and comments on the SNS platforms, the text on protest placards and signboards designating the material separation of races during apartheid.
- Visual rhetoric: The visual rhetoric category included photomanipulation tools such as the use of collage to compare the FMF protests to the 1976 Soweto Riots.

1.3.4.2 Visual Attribute Analysis

Visual attribute analysis encompasses collecting an inventory of visual traits to gain an understanding of the leading images associated with an event or trend (Bainotti and Rogers 2022, 5). Patterns associated with the formal properties of an image can thereafter be tracked to compare images cognisant of how their articulation may vary across digital platforms (Bainotti and Rogers 2022, 10). Lucia Bainotti and Richard Rogers (2022, 9) state that the “visual vernaculars” of SNS must be considered when considering visual information from different sites.

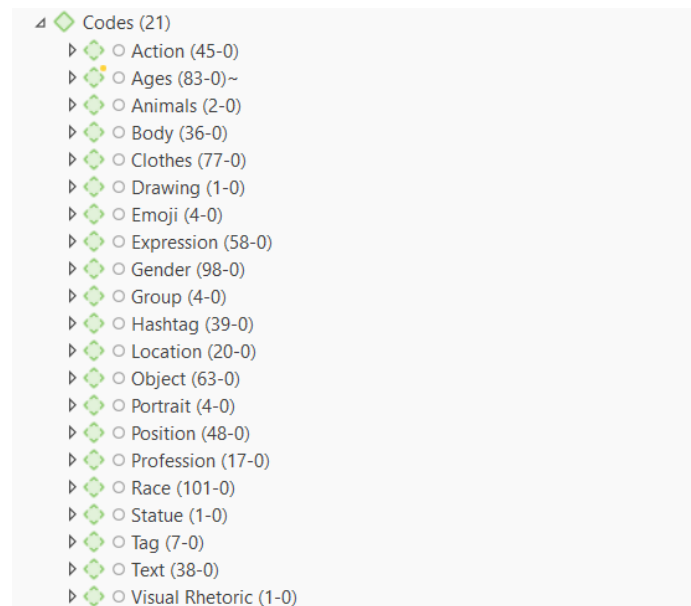


Figure 1.1: Code Groups Used for Visual Attribute Analysis in ATLAS.ti. Screenshot by Author, 2023.

Each SNS encourages their own narrative patterns in the forms of media outputs; for example, X encourages short-form outputs in text, limiting the character output to 280 characters (Bainotti and Rogers 2022, 9). Users can engage with other users using the retweet function, by tagging another user in a tweet or through the repost button. In comparison, Facebook's word-output is 63,206 characters. Cross-platform interactions were,

however, not relevant to this research which is more concerned with interpreting the images from the movements than comparing their expression across platforms.

Both the visual and textual attributes of the images were coded. In the cases of the images screenshotted from SNS, textual elements, such as hashtags, comments and captions often shifted the experience of an image. The visual attributes of the photographs were identified to facilitate both a close and distanced reading of the chosen political events and situations, as such, some of the codes are quantitated. Bonnie S. Brennen (2017, 217) highlights the reservation that some qualitative researchers' reservations may have towards qualitative data analysis software (QDAS): "Their concerns are often based on the view that computing technology assumes a positivist worldview, which insists on a singular knowable and findable reality. This is a view that is in opposition to the notion of a socially constructed reality, which frames much of qualitative research". Although the coded knowledge was structured, I found the software research useful in organising the photographs and enabling a more systematic approach to my analysis so that I could consider the individual aspects of the photographs.

My methodology consists of close readings of South African and international political iconography. In *Distant Reading 940,000 Online Circulations of 26 Iconic Photographs*, Thomas Smits and Ruben Ros (2023a) differentiate between close and distant readings of iconic images. In close readings, iconic photographs are still researched as phenomenon that represent both specific, social events and images that speak to wider, more generalised issues; however, the sample size is more controlled (Smits and Ros 2021, 3546). Distant readings, in comparison, pull from a large pool of images to identify visual patterns. For example, in their distant reading of iconic photographs, Smits and Ros used the Google Cloud Vision Application Programming Interface (GCV API) programme to track the circulation of twenty-six iconic photographs. By doing so, Smits and Ros were able to gain an understanding of how iconic photographs have circulated en-masse on Internet sites and the words that are often paired with the photographs.³⁹

1.3.4.3 Image Cluster Approach

Catalogues Sets A, B and C are presented in this thesis as "image clusters", to use Michael R. Müller's (2024, 89) conception. Müller (2024, 89) suggests that images that are presented as a "cluster" when they form a group of paired images. Image clusters are interpreted differently to looking at single images for various reasons. Firstly, Müller (2024, 91) suggests that the images are analysed as connected to one another as opposed to individually

³⁹ To do this, they used a technique called document embedding which is a form of Natural Language Processing that captures frequently circulated words associated with a phenomenon (Smits and Ros 2021, 3545).

representative of a subject, event or situation. Thus, viewing images as embedded in a matrix suggests relationships that may not occur to a viewer if the images were viewed in isolation. Second, he suggests that image quotation, or the reoccurrence of forms in images may suggest a sense of cohesion which directs the viewer's attention (Müller 2024, 90-91). However, he also warns that the direction of attention by the curator of the image cluster may also restrict the viewer's own interpretative facilities (Müller 2024, 91). Additionally, he implies that looking at groups of images in tandem may minimise differentiating factors in images (Müller 2024, 94-96). The benefit of image clusters, as applied in this thesis, is that they facilitate the reading of images as displaying stylistic similarities allowing for comparison and thematic associations (Müller 2024, 93).

1.3.5 Theoretical Approaches

The primary theoretical approach of this thesis is the iconological approach which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. In this section, I will summarise hermeneutics and touch on some of the considerations required when studying digital material.

Nicole Doerr, Alice Mattoni and Simon Teune (2013, xi) refer to the compositional aspects of protest symbolism as the “visual expressions” of the images. At the centre of looking at the compositional elements of the photographs is understanding how bodies, objects and locations work together to form a narrative:

A stereotypical visual representation of protest is the rule rather than the exception. Images of protest in the news are usually limited to a few archetypes such as the rioter, the picket, or the performer. This selective portrayal has consequences for the reception of social movements within a broader audience. Protests are not perceived as what they are on the ground but what they look like in press photos and television news images (Doerr, Mattoni and Teune 2013, xiv).

Importantly, Doerr, Mattoni and Teune (2013, xiv) stipulate that the visual expressions of protest imagery should not just be read at their surface value, but also in how they respond to historical precedent or social circumstances. Further, as opposed to just the images being read as stand-alone entities, there should be consideration of how audiences would view the images from individual standpoints. Assumptions of a blanket reading of political visuals should be avoided, especially considering even the reception of photographs that are considered iconic would have variant interpretations depending on the socio-economic standpoint or oppositional political standpoints of a potential interpreter. Ian Heywood and Barry Sandywell (2005, x) suggest a hermeneutical approach to images that, “[...] designates an analytic attitude towards the field of experience in which visual experience is approached as a socio-historical realm of interpretative practices. The emphasis indexed by the term ‘hermeneutics’ is placed on the role of visual meaning and interpretation in the

contexts of meaningful human action”. As such, a hermeneutical interpretation considers the texts both at face-value and from the standpoint that protest action are intertwined in historical narrative at both a local and global level. Hermeneutical analyses, further, consider visuals as emplaced within spatial and temporal contexts.

Considering the digital approach and scope of the research, the interpretation and theoretical approach is cognisant of the specificities and considerations associated with the digital humanities. Digital humanities is concerned with the “computational turn”, defined by David M. Berry (2012, 11) as the move of humanities-based investigations and inquiries into and of the digital sphere. Research in the digital humanities considers how the datafication shifts the production, circulation, audience and interpretation of research material (Berry 2012, 1-2). Importantly, digital humanities does not approach digital apparatuses as one-dimensional surfaces to be analysed by an unbiased interpreter, rather, the technologies are embedded with human-mediated elements that shape its production and use (Hillis, Paasonen, and Petit 2015, 10). Thus, research in digital humanities necessitates ontological considerations of how technology shapes user experiences and considers technology’s role as an aggregator for cultural interactions (Berry 2012, 16). In the scope of this thesis, I reflect on how technology has shaped the production and reading of images through time.

1.4 Chapter Overview

In the chapters following, I analyse images representing the documentary photography of apartheid, the FMF movement, as well as the #AmINext movement. In this thesis, my primary objective focusses on illustrating how a local and global politics are constructed in the selected images; and how the iconicity of South African PCI potentially speaks to other political imagery both in the present and in the past. I additionally highlight how immaterial characteristics, such as affect, virtual images, and metadata have shaped the political argumentation of global and South African PCI. The body of this thesis consists of six chapters with various subsections.

Chapter Two is a literature review that addresses the theoretical and methodological framework of the thesis. I begin with a summary of iconography and iconology with an elucidation on why iconology is chosen as the preferred research methodology in this thesis. I then unpack the existing literature touching on the concepts of icon and iconicity as defined by contemporary theorists on icons and iconic power such as Hariman and Luicates (2015), Marco Solaroli (2015), Jeffrey C. Alexander and Dominik Bartmanski (2012). Further, I discuss relevant theoretical concepts that affect the reading of images in the digital age such as the networked image, as introduced by Daniel Rubinstein and Katrina Sluis (2008). In this chapter, I situate the research problem within the existing literature and explain the relevance of the research.

As the theories of Jacques Rancière are part of the theoretical framework for this thesis, Chapter Three is dedicated to explaining his theoretical approaches to images. As the construction of the political is an integral part of Rancière's theories on aesthetics, I begin with the question on how the political is read in images. To exemplify the difficulty in locating the political, I offer a short historical overview of the relationship between politics and aesthetics in early Western approaches to art, explaining how Rancière develops his ideas of aesthetics from these foundations. I summarise Rancière's aesthetic regime of arts as a critique of the modernist paradigm of art in presupposing distinct art mediums and autonomous forms of expression in each medium. I then expand on Rancière's concepts of the parataxis and imageness which highlights his departure from the representational mode of image interpretation. Rancière proposes an imageness that unites forms of expression, where image and text come together to form meaning. Rancière's concept of the sentence-image exemplifies how these seemingly disparate forms of expression can be combined to suggest novel meaning. However, in his conception of the political, Rancière (2019, 45-46) implies that the intelligible or discursive dimension of the sentence-image reins in the pathos of the image. I critique this idea by comparing past and present photographs of the flower power visual motif that shows protesters handing flowers to policemen. Using Bradford Vivian's (2007) critique of the discursive approach in his article "In Regard of the Image", I exemplify how an over-reliance on a discursive approach is problematic, particularly considering the immaterial qualities of images that affect their construction and interpretation.

In Chapter Four, I examine various examples where photographs have been used as a form of political argumentation. I begin the chapter with a short discussion on ethnographic photography. Although ethnographic photographs are not overtly political, scholars such as Michael Godby (2010) and Roy Dilley (2019) have shown the techniques that early photographers used to produce a typified construction of African indigenous subjects to reflect an imperial, colonial or ethnographic gaze. Using Rory du Plessis's (2020) analysis of the images from Santu Mofokeng's book *The Black Photo Album/Look at Me (1890-1950)* (1996), I construct an imageness of early South African photography. Next, I discuss selected examples from the social documentary photography genre which I contend to be the first form of activist photography. I analyse photographs by John Thomson (1837-1921) and select examples from the Farm Security Administration (FSA) Project to further exemplify the affect of the modernist paradigm on early photographic activism and to highlight the contradictions inherent in early documentary photography practice. I also use Gordon Parks' *Segregation in the South* (1956) series to exemplify how political issues can be communicated through aesthetic constructions; thereby, making visible previously unarticulated issues. By highlighting the parallel use of photography during the Civil Rights

Movement and the anti-apartheid movement, I show the increasing globalised nature of photographic image argumentation by focusing on the migrating image of the attacking police dog. Finally, I analyse the movement of photographic activism to digital platforms in the post-photographic era. Using photographs from Instagram user @deedwyerjonts, I demonstrate how the iconology of past protest movements transfers to the political iconology of more contemporary social groups. I further problematise the transfer of imagery by suggesting that though visual correlations may amplify the shared political ideals of social movements, the decontextualisation that occurs through the sharing of imagery through digital platforms may occasionally minimise the nuances that define the tenets of a social group.

Chapter Five unpacks the iconology of the selected apartheid-era documentary photographs in Catalogue Set B. In this chapter, I conduct an iconological analysis of the documents and delineate the themes of Catalogue Set B, namely, *Wealth and Racial Privilege*, *Black Poverty and Suffering*, *Black People's Conflict with Police*, *Signage Designating Racial Separation* and *Crossing of Racial Barriers*. Following the iconological breakdown, I interpret the iconicities of the images as reflecting local and global politics. I position the photographs as aesthetic images, following Rancière (2019, 25-26), that construct the local politics of apartheid. By showing the everyday conditions and lived relations of apartheid, the photographs articulate the unequal relations that characterised the era. I further posit that many of the photographs are also affective bids that attempt to resubjectify the subjects pictured by making apartheid visceral. The affective force of Catalogue Set B further amplified by concurrently occurring imagery, thus, creating a network of virtual imagery that potentially speaks to similar social and political issues.

Chapter Six is an iconological exploration of Catalogue Set C which consists of images from FMF and #AmINext. I start the chapter by situating FMF and #AmINext as networked social movements following Manuel Castells's (2015, 171-225) definition. I then discuss the contentious topic of the role of SNS in hashtag movements. Following this discussion, I review previous iconological studies on protest images online, namely those conducted by Raymond Drainville (2018) and Samuel Merrill (2023). I then conduct an iconological analysis of Catalogue Set C where I outline the themes *Performance as Activism* and *Protest Signs* in conjunction with #AmINext, and identify the themes *Conflict with Police*, *References to Apartheid*, *Student Leadership* and *Poster Signs* with FMF. Like with Chapter Five, I also break down the local and global iconicities associated with Catalogue Set C. I conclude that in the #AmINext images, there is frequently a performative characteristic to the images that aims to supplant the bodies of the protesters with the bodies of the victims, thus visualising an often-invisible crime. There is also a strong focus on the messages of individual women protesters as communicated by their protest signs which

potentially connects to other global feminist movements. In the iconology of FMF, there is an emphasis on the police brutality experienced by the student protesters. The images of police brutality are positioned as recollective images that not only recall the past protest imagery of apartheid and the Civil Rights Movement, but more contemporary movements such as the Arab Springs and Black Lives Matter (BLM).

The final chapter will be a conclusion, including a summary of the chapters, a discussion on the contribution of the research to the existing literature, an explanation of the limitations of the research and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

WHAT BECOMES AN ICON MOST: THE ICON AND ICONOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

What makes an icon? Thinking of the word icon may yield different mental images. When some hear icon, Andy Warhol's (1928-1987) diptych of Marilyn Monroe (1926-1962) may flash through their minds. Others may think of Che Guevara (1928-1967) or Albert Einstein (1879-1955) sticking his tongue out to the camera. Some might imagine the Google Chrome or Instagram icons on their phones. In academia, the definitions of icons are just as diverse, ranging from categories of signs to artworks with religious connotations.

In this chapter, I outline some key theoretical terms used throughout this work. In the first part of this chapter, I grapple with approaches to the icon by delineating how the term is used throughout different theoretical disciplines. I begin this discussion with the semiotic approach to the icon. By starting with semiotics, I intend to show how there has been a misappropriation of the term indexicality in photographic studies where iconicity would be more appropriate. The discussion then moves to applications of the word icon as pertaining to influential images. In particular, I focus on Hariman and Lucaites's (2015, 4-5) determination of icons as influential narrative markers of collective memory. I summarise the arguments of critical thinkers who have written about the political potential of iconic photographs and conclude with insight on factors that affect the reading of iconic imagery in the digital age.

In the second section, I outline a historical overview of iconological methodologies focusing primarily on Aby Warburg's (1866-1929) approach in his *Mnemosyne Atlas* (1927) where I discuss Warburg's theories regarding migrating gestures and image vehicles and their relevance to iconological explorations of images on digital platforms. I also summarise Erwin Panofsky's (1892-1968) methodology as explained in *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (1972) and state how his methodology has been applied as a framework of analysis for the images in this work. I conclude the discussion by briefly stating relevant contributions to iconology made by Mitchell and Hans Belting.

Next, I discuss some relevant terms and contexts pertinent to the analysis of digital images, namely networked images and the hidden power structures behind the production and consumption of imagery on online platforms. I conclude this chapter with a review of contemporary sources that use iconicity as an approach to social and cultural interrogations, and finally, I stipulate the potential of revisiting the term iconicity to encompass a broader definition relating to likeness and recognition in images.

2.2 Approaching the Icon

The word icon has a complicated etymology because of its varied use across many disciplines, making it difficult to locate an exact definition. As a term widely applied to photographs, there is an added complexity because competing fields grapple with the meaning-making quality of the medium.

2.2.1 *Semiotics and Photography: The Interplay Between Indexicality and Iconicity*

The semiotic application of the term icon was made famous by Charles S. Peirce (1955, 102), who defined icons as signs that have resemblances.⁴⁰ Peirce ([1894] 1998, 4-7) further labels icons as “likenesses” and explicitly states that photographs are icons because they are direct reproductions of what they capture. However, Peirce ([1894] 1998, 6) also emphasises that photographs are indexical by stating that the iconic connection is only produced because of the mechanical nature of the instrument that is, in his words, “[...] physically forced to correspond point by point to nature”.

Indexicality, for Peirce ([1894] 1998, 6), specifically refers to a sign’s “physical connection” to its object. In an exploration of Peirce’s observations on photography, Alexander Robins (2014, 2-6) shows that Peirce’s particular wording on the iconicity and indexicality of the photograph is intrinsic to him being a trained photographer in the nineteenth century. Peirce was a photometrist, a discipline that specialises in photographing light emitted from stars (Robins 2014, 5).

Robins (2014, 5-7) proposes that to understand Peirce’s conceptions on photography fully, one must acknowledge the scientific realism that coloured his understanding of the medium.⁴¹ For example, the process of photometry consists of starlight leaving a gradient physical imprint on the photometric wedge, requiring a specialised scientific interpretation of its quantification (Robins 2014, 9). The physical imprint of light thus precedes any interpretation of the wedge as a representation of the star’s visual impression. Following this fact, Peirce’s explanation of the photograph as primarily indexical is based largely on the physicality of photo-making at the time, particularly in the field he was trained in (Robins 2014, 9). Further, Peirce clearly specifies that the indexicality of a photograph is not enough to determine meaning, and the photograph requires additional indexicality, or material

⁴⁰ Mitchell (2009, 119) states that Peirce’s characterisation of icon as resemblance is intricately connected to his conceptions of index and symbols as well as the connection of image to language, “But it’s important to note, then, that the icon can only work as a sign in this way when it has become associated with the other two sign-functions, namely the index and the symbol, which link it to deixis and language.” Short (2007, 2-3) contends that Peirce’s sign theory evolved with time where it became increasingly multilayered in the mid-twentieth century.

⁴¹ Scientific realism is a philosophical discipline that maintains the reality of the external universe as confirmed by science. As explained by Howard Sankey (2001, 36) “The scientific realist interprets scientific discourse about theoretical entities in a literal fashion as discourse which purports to be about real unobservable real unobservable entities.”

connections in time and space, to signify contextual meaning ([1894] 1998, 14; Short 2007, 215).

Peirce ([1894] 1998, 14) also indicates that indexicality requires a “real connection”, not merely a suggestion of causal meaning. Robins (2014, 10), therefore, posits that there has been a rampant misuse of the term index as referring to the signifying aspect of photography that connects its subject matter to events that have materially occurred. Although indexicality is mechanically connected to the production of reality in photography, Robins (2014, 13, my emphasis added) stipulates that the word icon, or in my determination, iconicity, is more appropriate because of its, in his words, “[...] personal and conventional associations about photographs as a class of objects: that is, the various attempts to find *likeness* in these images”.

In the Peircean sense, Iconicity is the relation between the icon’s expression as moulded by convention and the object the icon represents (Mannheim 1999, 107). However, as Peircean semiotics is based on linguistic theory, scholars’ application of the term has tended to focus on the semantic, verbal, and rhetorical interpretation of signs (Mannheim 1999; Haiman 2015; Cabrera 2020). As critiqued by Mitchell (1986, 85), the Peircean approach to the icon seems too entrenched in linguistics to be meaningfully applied to a serious study of images. The rethinking of the term iconicity, as stated in the title of this thesis, is derived less from a purely Peircean perspective and more from more contemporary applications of the term by scholars such as Hariman and Lucaites, Alexander, Bartmanski and Solaroli.

The misinterpretation of indexicality is also highlighted by Tom Gunning (2008) in his exploration on the truth captured in analogue photography versus digital photography. Gunning (2008, 41) challenges the idea that the indexicality inherent in digital photographs are different to older forms of photography. Whereas the indexicality of analogue cameras is produced via light interacting with photosensitive materials, the digital camera uses light to transfer that information into digital data. Like Robins, Gunning (2008, 40) marks a persistent confusion in theoretical applications of indexicality in photographs as referring to the image created by the camera and material connection to the original object, rather than the technical process of the light’s imprinting of the object to create a form. The result, as he highlights, is an entanglement of the meanings of indexicality and iconicity (Gunning 2008, 41). In detaching the concept from the technical process, against Peirce’s original determination, the concept of indexicality also became attached to the idea of truthful or accurate representation (Gunning 2008, 42). Even in its more rudimentary forms, the photograph’s object is subject through processing, whether that be through the lens, aperture, plate, film, or the developing process required to materialise the image, meaning that the object is never a direct manifestation of the image created (Gunning 2008, 44).

Importantly, Gunning (2008, 41-45) shows that the overt focus on the truth value (what he elsewhere refers to as the “truth claim”) of the analogue and digital image via a focus on indexicality has obscured the significance of *recognition* in photographic contemplation. He, therefore, asserts, “I am positing a phenomenological fascination with photography that involves a continuing sense of the relation between the photograph and a pre-existing reality. While this is precisely what “indexicality” supposedly involves, I am less and less sure this semiotic term provides the proper term for the experience” (Gunning 2008, 45). Gunning (2008, 45) concludes that iconicity is the more accurate term for the relationship between reality and the contents of the photograph.

Photography, in his contention, is an interactive medium where the viewer is usually not looking to translate individual elements conceptually (as with the semiotics approach), and the truth-seeking element of photography is not a matter of *measuring* or translating the image object’s connection to an existing reality (Gunning 2008, 46-47).⁴² Instead, the viewer is seeking meaning in the photograph beyond what is directly shown. He thus deduces, “Certainly a photograph can function as a sign for something, usually its subject, a souvenir of a place or a person, a way of identifying or referring to something. But I think this is a secondary process to its ability as a picture to present us with an image of the world” (Gunning 2008, 46). As a relational medium, a viewer does not just engage with what is directly shown in a photograph, but uses personal experience, cultural context, and inferences from past (virtual) and current images to orientate what they are shown. In this regard, as Gunning (2008, 46) also concludes, viewing the photograph is ontological as it involves a mutual construction of knowledge on the parts of the photograph producer and interpreter.

T.L Short (2007, 229), also writing on the misappropriations of Peirce’s terms, indicates that the use of icon in iconological applications in art historical studies often falls short of Peirce’s lengthy writings on the word. He posits that the icon as image in art historical uses is more derived from the Greek word *ikon* or *eikōn* referring to the religious artworks of the Eastern Orthodox Church (Short 2007, 229; Shapiro 2008, 815).⁴³ Solaroli (2015, 4) states that icons in the Eastern Orthodox tradition were not only interacted with visually, but ritualistically and sensually worshipped through physical touch and acts of devotion. He suggests that the original conception of the term icon contains both visual and haptic elements thus leading to future interpretations of the iconic as being constitutive of these elements (Solaroli 2015, 4). Solaroli (2015, 4) further posits that in the twentieth

⁴² In this sense, I am not talking about evidentiary photography used for legal matters or criminal cases where the connection to a material reality is the sole focus of photograph viewing.

⁴³ According to Annemarie Weyl Carr (2002, 79-82) icons in the Eastern Orthodox church were not just venerated pictures, but consisted of objects and sites that were used as stand-ins of worship.

century, the word was adopted by multiple disciplines such as art history, cultural studies and communication and media studies to encompass a wide range of meanings related to the study of images. In visual cultural studies, the end of the twentieth century saw the most rigorous re-engagement with the concept of the icon by scholars such as Mitchell, Hans Belting and Gottfried Boehm in what has been termed the Pictorial Turn and the Iconic Turn (Solaroli 2015, 8).

In his approach to iconology, Mitchell (2015, 125) appropriates the term icon as consciously image-first; he states, “I wanted to strike back at the empire of language, to insist on the image or icon as a “firstness” (as Charles Sanders Peirce called it) in the production of meaning and emotion”. In this sense, Mitchell’s (2015, 125-126) use of icon reasserts an agency to the image as preceding language. Throughout his work, Mitchell (2015, 29) uses the word icon as an umbrella term to refer broadly to images, graphic images, diagrams and pictures. Primarily, he defines it in its original sense as resemblance.

For Mitchell (2015, 52), images are the crossroads between icons, senses, texts and their associated meanings. He states that pictures are the material versions of images, whereas images are incorporeal, pictures are locatable: “The distinction between images and pictures [...] is grounded in the difference between a disembodied, phantasmatic idea of images as immaterial apparitions, and the inevitable arrival and appearance of an image in a concrete, physical picture, no matter how fleeting. Pictures are the homes where images take up residence, the bodies in which their spirits are incarnated” (Mitchell 2015, 78). In coding my selected images, I approached the individual aspects of the image as iconic signs, allowing me to identify recurrent icons to distinguish themes.

2.2.2 The Cultural Force of the Icon

Michael Shapiro (2008, 815-818) posits that in the mid-twentieth century, driven by journalism, icon gained an additional meaning, referring to an object or individual that characterises an event, circumstance, or group, with the adjective “iconic” denoting a sense of cultural impact. It is in this characteristic sense that many scholars have appropriated the term iconic to refer to influential images that construct the memory of events or eras (Perlmutter 2003, 1-2; Bartmanski 2014, 175-178; Hariman and Lucaites 2015, 3). Hariman and Lucaites (2007, 90; 2015, 4-5), who are likely the forerunners of contemporary studies on iconic photographs, suggest that icons are formed through visual associations where individuals (and their images) are repeatedly tied to specific narratives, to the point where they begin to signify the event itself (Hariman and Lucaites 2007, 90). In this sense, the icon’s cultural force is further amplified through the repeated circulation of certain images, making them powerful points of connection. They determine, “Icons work because people do grant them ‘timeless’ properties that are based on modernist assumptions regarding

meaning, social organization, and culture, yet they also provide ready examples of how media incorporate and are incorporated into social practices that are aesthetic, emotional, and otherwise more than merely rational actions, normative habits, or functional routines” (Hariman and Lucaites 2015, 5). Iconicity, for Hariman and Lucaites (2015, 29), refers to the capacity of an image capturing a single moment to say something about the future. In summary, icons are reinforced by institutional authority, and they are also an indicator of cultural and affective interventions in everyday social and political processes.

Hariman and Lucaites (2007; 2015) are further interested in how icons function symbolically; in other words, how icons condense meaning to communicate politically. In their book *No Caption Needed: Iconic Photographs, Public Culture and Democracy* (2007), they focussed specifically on iconic photojournalistic images from the United States as both encompassing democratic ideals and communicating public dissent. They explicitly position icons as impactful because they replicate worldviews, articulate the social, construct public remembrance, and provide cultural materials that can shape argumentation (Hariman and Lucaites 2007, 9). Importantly, with an intense focus on the performative actions of individuals, iconic photographs are mnemonic for them (Hariman and Lucaites 2007, 90, 114; 2015, 7).⁴⁴ Hariman and Lucaites (2015, 8) concur that there is an element of corporeal performativity to iconic photographs that allows them to be re-enacted and reused in other settings to stir emotion. As will be discussed later in the section on iconology, this idea sits very closely to Warburg’s ([1929] 2009, 281) conception of “the gestural language of pathos” or *Pathosformeln*. They further assert that the performative aspect of iconic photographs may trigger affective responses potentially contributing to a public imaginary of the unfolding of events and the stories behind the people captured on camera (Hariman and Lucaites 2015, 8).

Another prominent scholar on iconic photographs, David D. Perlmutter (2003, 115), who has also written extensively on “icons of outrage”, also emphasises the emotive quality of certain icons. Icons of outrage, such as the *Napalm Girl* (1972) by Nick Ut or *Tank Man* (1989) by Stuart Franklin, are those images that embody intense emotions such as anguish, reactions to catastrophe or the after-effects of acts of brutality. Perlmutter (1998) offers useful guidelines for establishing what qualifies an image as iconic, defining six criteria:

- 1) The importance of the event,
- 2) The ability of the photograph to encompass the event,
- 3) The promotion of the image by media,

⁴⁴ In controlled neurological studies on memory-making and images, research has shown that iconic photographs with human subjects, distinctive actions and highly emotive contents, in particular, are the most memorable (Isola et al. 2011; Khosla et al. 2012; Goetschalckx, Moors, Wagemans 2019).

- 4) The eminence of the image in the reporting of the event,
- 5) The number of times the image is displayed by media,
- 6) The capability of the photograph to speak to universal themes.

Importantly, Perlmutter (2005, 115) argues that despite the intense emotional reactions that icons of outrage potentially entice, they do not significantly affect public behaviour or opinion. Speaking specifically about the spread of iconic imagery during the Vietnam War, he states that statistics show that more anti-Vietnam supporters disagreed with the government's handling of the war (Perlmutter 2005, 115). He further suggests that the disfavour against the war was more based on the loss of American lives than for the injustices faced by the Vietnamese people (Perlmutter 2003, 116). However, that is not to say that Perlmutter states that icons are completely unconvincing. In an article co-authored with David Domke and Meg Spratt, Perlmutter (2002, 147) argues that icons of outrage are persuasive when they are paired with a narrative that can convince an audience based on their existing viewpoints and opinions.

In a more recent examination of iconic imagery and the appropriation of icons online, Sandrine Boudana, Paul Frosh, and Akiba A. Cohen (2017, 1213) concur that iconic photographs are useful in the narrativisation of events. Like Hariman and Lucaites, they emphasise that iconic photographs contribute to the collective memories of past events (Boudana, Frosh, and Cohen 2017, 1213-1214). The abundant sharing of iconic photographs across mediums also leads to an imprinting of them on collective memory (Boudana, Frosh, and Cohen 2017, 1212). They act as markers of public memory owing to their ability to condense meaning and contain narratives that speak simultaneously to local and historical contexts. Boudana, Frosh, and Cohen (2017, 1211) agree with Hariman and Lucaites on the effectiveness of iconic photographs in establishing what they refer to as "public salience" because they contain, in their words, a "crucial semiotic duality: they are at once particular and universal, concrete and abstract". Regarding the tendency of iconic photographs to encompass global meaning they state:

However, with iconic photos the process of symbolic generalization is exceptionally extensive: they connote death, injustice, courage, patriotism, and hope in ways that move beyond the particular political and cultural climates of their first appearance. This universal dimension is afforded by the photo's particular signifiers, although it frequently also taps into pre-existing symbolic frameworks. For instance, the connection between the suffering of Kim Phuc and the suffering of innocents in general is not simply due to her status as a child (or her nudity, to be discussed below), but to her Christ-like pose. (Boudana, Frosh, and Cohen 2017, 1215)

Specifically looking at *Napalm Girl*, they posit that there is a decontextualisation of iconic photographs in the digital age that creates a moveable aesthetic that can be applied to other

image models, such as memes (Boudana, Frosh, and Cohen 2017, 1216). According to Rogers and Giulia Giorgi (2023, 2), memes are characterised as altered cultural materials disseminated online. The transfer of the icon into meme form allows for a multifaceted engagement both with the contents and with the message whereby there can be both critical and playful engagements with more contemporary issues using the associations of the original photograph (Boudana, Frosh, and Cohen 2017, 1225-1227). Boudana, Frosh, and Cohen's (2017, 1228) study shows how iconic meaning is transferred, responded to, and referenced in the digital realm. However, they ultimately warn that there is a risk of total decontextualisation with the reusage of iconic imagery. Without proper contextualisation there is potentially a loss of meaning and context associated with the original image (Boudana, Frosh and Cohen (2017, 1228).

The final author I mention here convincingly attends to the immaterial aspects of iconic photograph sharing on digital platforms, with particular attention to virtuality, virality and memory. Yasmin Ibrahim (2018, 454) situates her study of the movement of the *Napalm Girl* icon in her words, "a post-human world where algorithms and technologies simulate and anticipate human behaviour while re-calibrating our projects of remembering and forgetting as redemptive acts in human history". According to Katherine Hayles (1999, 2-3), posthumanism refers to a reimagining of what it means to be human, cognisant of an increasing bodily integration with cybertronics, information and machine systems.

Posthumanism considers how the experience of the body is reconstructed or simulated in networked and information systems, like the Internet, despite the absence of the physical body (Hayles 1999, 4). Ibrahim (2018, 455) uses the terms "fluidity" and "liquid modernity", following Zygmunt Bauman (2000), to describe the increasing malleability and mobility of borders, information flows, and the barriers between producers and consumers. Most fascinatingly, she implies that there is now a transactional element to memory recollection and production facilitated by machinic media repositories such as cloud systems, smartphone and computer databases, which now coincides with human memory (Ibrahim 2018, 454). Information can now be retrieved and shared instantaneously, activating and reactivating human and non-human processes of collection and re-collection.

Owing to the possibility of virality, or attention accumulation due to the meteoric circulation of content, Internet users may use these repositories to curate and create content for material gain; she writes: "The virtual world induces our bind with the fluid and immaterial, where new images can be morphed, curated and relentlessly transacted through a viral economy inviting new forms of gaze and immaterial objects of desire" (Ibrahim 2018, 454).

Ultimately, she warns about the "technological gaze" in the curation and consumption of online information (Ibrahim 2018, 461). Speaking specifically about an incident where the *Napalm Girl* was flagged by Facebook's community standards algorithm as pornographic,

she suggests that visual information is being filtered, curated and censored in ways unbeknownst to users.⁴⁵ As iconic images may contain graphic or sensitive subject matter, she speculates whether image regulation by technology companies may affect the collective reflection that possibly occurs when contemplating icons of outrage, such as *Napalm Girl*, potentially leading to moral quandaries on the role of technology in shaping the experience of events (Ibrahim 2018, 462). Although Ibrahim's argument overstates the impact of iconic imagery on memory construction in networked technologies, she nonetheless presents crucial insight into how visual information is filtered and directed by invisible technological structures for capitalistic gain.

I now move to a breakdown of the iconological approach as one of the primary methodologies of this thesis. Although I use a mixed-method approach of iconology and digital methods, such as visual attribute analysis, visual content coding and image clusters, the theoretical and methodological background of iconology must be unpacked to demonstrate its relevance to the study. What follows is a historical overview of iconological methods which then moves to more contemporary approaches.

2.3 Early Approaches to Iconology

Iconology originated with the influential work *Iconologia* (1593) by the sixteenth-century historian Cesare Ripa (Müller 2011, 283). *Iconologia* consisted of a breakdown of Egyptian, Greek and Roman moralistic visual motifs, pairing illustrations of repeated symbols and descriptions of their meanings.⁴⁶ Bradford Venable (2008, 16) notes that *Iconologia* provides the basis for understanding the migration of symbolism and how they can communicate narratives abstractly. As Venable (2008, 16) explains, "Typically narrative or dramatic, the depictions were arranged alphabetically. They move beyond the characters and subject matter presented to suggest a second, more abstract concept".

The handbook gained international recognition following its publication as a reference tool for artists and historians from the sixteenth century onwards (Müller 2011, 283). Research on artistic symbolism was further advanced in the early twentieth century by Warburg and Panofsky who both took an interest in the influence of Classical Antiquity on Renaissance visual motifs and themes. Whereas Warburg is more linked with iconology, Panofsky is more associated with iconography, yet their methods blend both terms.

⁴⁵ The idea that technology is directing the flow of communication for capitalistic purposes with hidden consequences in the creation, control and receiving of information is also addressed by David Beer (2009) in his formulation of the "technological unconscious".

⁴⁶ Ripa's original publication did not contain illustrations and merely described the symbols. Illustrations were added to the work in the 1603 edition (Venable 2008, 16).

2.3.1 *The Force of Images in and as Movement: Aby Warburg's Iconology in Mnemosyne Atlas*

Warburg, the eldest son of a Hamburg banker, began his career as an independent researcher of the remnants of antiquity in the art of the Italian Renaissance via image vehicles (*Bilderfahrzeuge*) (Forster 1999, 2, 36). According to Georges Didi-Huberman (2002, 61-68), Warburg's interest in the "survival" of images derives from an anthropological and ethnographical approach that rejects traditional art historical categories of temporalisation. Didi-Huberman (2002, 64) positions migrating images in Warburg's approach as, "Between phantom and symptom [...] in no way reducible to the existence of material objects, but could equally live on in forms, styles, behaviours, the psyche". Warburg is thus interested in the invisible forces that drive image-making where the image occurs as an indicator of realities otherwise hidden in everyday functioning (Didi-Huberman 2002, 65).

Kurt W. Forster (1976, 171), states that Warburg's drive to uncover the hidden impetuses behind historical imagery is a result of an interest in, "Human expression in its most encompassing definition", motivated by Warburg's own fluctuating states of mind and emotional drives.⁴⁷ His penultimate project, before his death, was an immense but incomplete image project called the *Mnemosyne Atlas*. The *Mnemosyne* tracks the symbols and migrating gestures of Western art, mapping icons from their ancient origins to their contemporaneous manifestations in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. On Warburg's curation style, art historian and critic Martha Schwendener (2020) writes, "He felt that images were viral: They couldn't be held within their discrete, historical containers. He showed, for instance, how a famous fresco cycle in Ferrara, Italy, was inspired by a ninth-century Arab treatise on astronomy by Abu Ma'shar".

The *Mnemosyne* consisted of sixty-three wooden frames covered in black cloth. Black and white photographs of paintings, sketches, and sculptures were displayed alongside maps, genealogical trees, diagrams, and images of the cosmos to impress on how icons and ideas capture and transmit meaning through emotive gestures (Warburg [1929] 2009, 281). Through the combination of words and pictures from disparate times and locations, Amanda du Preez (2020, 380) writes that Warburg's *Mnemosyne* forms a "multi-dimensional network" of ideas, images and texts that are meaningfully linked by their pairing in the frame. Du Preez (2020, 377-379) further highlights the inclusion of spaces between images that physically insert moments of contemplation. In Warburg's curation, images connect to each other much like the transmission of data in a digital network, she therefore surmises, "The screen as panel frames a selection of images (although the selection can be

⁴⁷ Forster (1976, 170) writes that Warburg's academic pursuits were propelled by his own mental issues and a desire to make sense of his mental states.

changed instantaneously with a click) and allows for the comparative consideration of the chosen images within proximity. In this digital *Denkraum* the hermeneutic dialog can take place. The framing device thus allows for linking” (Du Preez 2020, 379). The *Denkraum der Beonnenheit* (room for thinking) refers to the conquering of the imaginations of the mind by the logical faculty, which are at constant ends with one another (Sacco 2015, 63).⁴⁸ Art, for Warburg, occupies the middle ground between untethered imagination and logical contemplation where reason ultimately prevails (Gombrich 1999, 275-279).

In Catalogue Set A, which also includes selected images from Catalogue Set B and C embedded in it, I have curated the images from apartheid and the images from FMF and #AmINext and I have thematically placed them in digital frames. The Miro interface, referred to as a poster board, allows for images to be placed near one another, and the navigator can zoom into the particulars of each image. The site also allows one to save a Portable Network Graphic (PNG) of the file, which can be viewed on other digital devices. When one zooms out, the image as part of a network of PCI becomes apparent. Although describing the *Mnemosyne. Meanderings Through Aby Warburg's Atlas* online project, which allows for the online navigation of Warburg's *Mnemosyne* through a similar interactive interface, Du Preez (2020, 380) describes the way that zooming in and out can shift the contemplation of an artwork, “The act of zooming in and out recollects the different motions of close reading and distant reading, enabling the extraction of patterns between form and interpretation”. Interestingly, she suggests that the patterns that emerge form their own algorithms via the creation of a “[...] repeatable visual paradigm” (Du Preez 2020, 381).

Although I would not go as far as to say that my image formulations are comprehensive enough (in their current form) to encompass a complete formula, the purpose of my mapping is to suggest motions of visual transfer. Alternatively, a user traversing the interface of the poster board may come to their own conclusions about how visual paradigms are transferred from one image to another based on my intuitive composition of the images. However, that is also not to say there is always a suggestion of image transfer in the curated images. For example, in Catalogue Set C, which consists of screenshots from X and Instagram of the FMF and #AmINext movements, there is less visual fluency in what unites the photographs as part of their frames and more rhetorical intervention on my part to pair the images as part of a theme.

The *Mnemosyne* is not only about how expressions “survive” material distances in time and space, but also how the gestures of antiquity are interacted with in their rearticulations. Further, the project shows how Western allegories are traceable through the

⁴⁸ Daniela Sacco (2015, 64) writes that Warburg's conception of this term derives from his own psychological battle where he was asserting his own ability to logically conquer his uncontrollable mental images with logic.

movement of gestures of art as part of a shared image consciousness or *Bildwissenschaft* (Müller 2011, 288). Importantly, the progressive element of the dialectic is obtained in liberating the gesture from their archaic forms (Gombrich 1999, 278). David L. Marshall (2018, 357) demonstrates this dynamic in his interpretation of how *magnanimitis* or the magnitude of the soul, is expressed in Warburg's curation of Frame 52. The frame contains images of *The Continnence of Scipio*, which are paintings that depict Roman general Scipio Africanus refusing a ransom from Celtiberian prince Allucius for his imprisoned fiancée who was taken as prisoner by Scipio during a siege on Carnage in 209 BC (Marshall 2018, 356-357). Instead of accepting the money as a ransom, Scipio receives it as dowry, thus adopting a patriarchal role in the narrative and Allucius' loyalty is therefore commodified in exchange for the imprisoned woman (Marshall 2018, 357). Marshall (2018, 357) posits that Scipio's gestures in the paintings work within a suggested rape narrative where Scipio's power, in its various depictions, is performed as a counter-gesture of restraint against rape., Warburg's curation then shows different iterations of the counter-gesture as an expression of magnanimity (Marshall 2018, 357).

Accordingly, Matthew Rampley (2001, 303) states that Warburg's iconology is associated with gestural "formulations of the concept". Rampley (2001, 312) describes the formulations of the concept as an unravelling of allegorical themes through Warburg's stringent research and image comparison, "Likewise Warburg's often painstaking attention to historical antecedents and contemporary parallels is bound less to an impulse toward encyclopaedic documentation than to a goal of mapping out the historical dynamic informing a specific motif or symbol".

Marion G. Müller (2011, 286) concurs with Rampley as distilling Warburg's iconology to a "forensic" approach that sees visual material as providing insight into the cultural, political, and societal concerns of a time. Importantly, Warburg does not synthesise visual evidence into rigid trends and themes, but allows for *restitutio*, or restitution. Marshall (2018, 357), interpreting Warburg, refers to *restitutio* as the act of orientating oneself within a work, "[...] for Warburg *restitutio* was a facility in taking up and shrugging off the forms one encountered in the art work of others".

Warburg ([1929] 2009, 283) describes restitution as the "Dionysian-Apolloian dialectic", or as the struggle between pathos (represented by Dionysus) and the restrained and logical (represented by Apollo) in a work of art. He thus speaks about the representation of emotion in art in Nietzschean terms, as ultimately a conflict between these two modes, as demonstrated by this paragraph: "This contradiction in the external expression of self-consciousness demanded that the gaze of the waning Middle Ages, absorbed in its object, engage in a parallel ethical confrontation between aggressive pagan feelings of personal identity and those of Christian humility" (Warburg [1929] 2009, 283).

As suggested by Marshall (2018, 354) and Christopher D. Johnson (2012, 104), the Dionysian-Apolloian dialectic is encountered both in the curated images and in the physical traversing of the *Mnemosyne*. Johnson (2012, 104), therefore, states, “In Mnemosyne the God of details and the mother of the Muses join forces to forge a syncrisis, a rhetorical means of comparing polarized things, such that images like the nymph contain multiple, competing meanings”.

If synthesis stresses the cumulation of knowledge to form concrete conclusions based on evidence, syncrisis poses knowledge production as a weaving of information that does not always transmit fully or as intended (Johnson 2012, 312-313). A syncritic approach to image-interpretation does not attempt to invoke the image as the truth of a historical context but rather acknowledges the erratic and sometimes contradictory transfer of visual information through time and space. The meaning of the image, for Warburg, is sought in tracing the survival of gesture even in its fragmentary, or disjointed forms as that is what provides the psychical insight in its expression (Didi-Huberman 2002, 63).

Warburg’s *Mnemosyne* is a useful model for understanding how meaning or arguments are carried emotively through the gestures in online image networks. Significantly, Warburg’s curation of meaning in the *Mnemosyne* treats images as porous and migratory, hence why many scholars have compared his Atlas to a rhizome, in the Deleuzian sense (Johnson 2012, 117; Del Carmen Molina Barea 2018; Du Preez 2020, 380).⁴⁹ As Marshall (2018, 365-367) shows, Warburg’s curation of the *Mnemosyne* is not merely a display of images suggesting connections or suggesting moralistic messages, rather, the images are curated to encourage viewers to become attuned to the slight shifts in the gestures as they are grouped together. Ultimately, the curation puts the onus on the interpreter to come to their own rationalisations regarding the image compositions (Forster 1999, 11).

As shown by Drainville (2018) and Merrill (2023) in their iconological analyses of protest photographs, images from various contexts are now paired together on online platforms such as image compilation websites, social media profiles, or Google Images. The technology sustains the survival of the image and creates intimations among images that may not always be obvious to the user.⁵⁰ Although Warburg’s iconology is ahead of its time in providing an alternative to the canonistic art history approach, Ernst Gombrich (1999, 279) stresses that Warburg’s methodology must be understood as entrenched in the era it was created. As such, Warburg paints Western art approaches as progressive at the expense of

⁴⁹ Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 11-21) describe the rhizome as “anti-genealogy” where the spread of information is transferred through intensities transmitted through “flows”, rather than hierarchical systems.

⁵⁰ That is not to minimise the human-hand in creating algorithms and the curation of images on websites by human authors.

Eastern and paganistic art forms, which he deems archaic and primitive. However, Gombrich (1999, 280) also makes the following determination about Warburg: “Whatever his determined non-conformist stance and intense desire to revise the notions with which art history had operated for too long can still arouse our admiration”. I agree with this attitude towards Warburg’s theories, as exemplified in the continued use of Warburg’s methodology in more contemporary studies of gesture and visual motif transfers and their political potential by scholars such as Drainville (2018, 22), Marshall (2018) and Erika Zerwes (2023). In my determination, the *Mnemosyne* is a useful reference point as a picture network that exemplifies iconicity where image likeness and image recognition are interweaved to suggest cultural, social, and political meaning.

2.3.2 A Systematic Methodology: Panofsky’s Three-Step Iconographical Methodology

Warburg’s student, Panofsky tackles iconography and iconology more procedurally in his decisive separation of form and meaning. To summarise very briefly, Panofsky’s (1972, 14) iconographical method in *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* involves first identifying the content of an image and conjuring a pre-iconographical description. The pre-iconographical description is a factual account of what he calls the “object of interpretation” where an artwork’s forms, shapes, colours, and “natural” aspects are identified but not yet culturally embedded. Second, the “secondary or conventional” subject matter is identified and interpreted as the images, allegories, and themes in the work or the “iconography”. In this step, the associations with other images, allegories and themes are also related to the image in question. Third is iconology, which he defines as the level of “intrinsic meaning or content” identified as the “underlying principles which reveal a basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion—unconsciously qualified by one personality and condensed into one work” (Panofsky 1972, 7).

Panofsky (1972, 9) posits synthesis as an inherent part of iconographical analysis where, if the correct steps are taken in contemplating the object of interpretation, the analyser gains higher levels of interpretation and can even reach the “correct” iconographical analysis of the object of interpretation. Purely subjective associations can be avoided with more stringent studies into why paths of motifs cross, such as through the consultation of literary texts and with consideration of how the meanings of symbols migrate through time.⁵¹

⁵¹ Panofsky (1972, 12-13) refers to a painting by Francesco Maffei (1605-1660) to illustrate this point. The painting of a young woman holding a sword and a dismembered head in a bowl was originally titled a picture of biblical figure, Salomé. However, by tracing the symbolic associations and even lack of symbols in the painting, Panofsky corrects the subject to the biblical figure who beheaded the Assyrian King, Holophernes.

Panofsky defuses the power of symbols by emphasising their rational traceability and logical transfer. Literary aids and an understanding of contextual information help the iconographical researcher to understand why visual motifs retain some of their original elements, gain new traits and lose others in different historical situations. Panofsky (1972, 70) uses the term pseudomorphosis to explain the reintegration of old forms into novel modes of representation. For example, the figure of Father Time is traced by Panofsky from its mythological origins in Greece to the High Renaissance where the symbol transformed into a more recognisable form as an old man with a sickle and an hourglass.⁵² Panofsky's iconographical method requires fixed attention on an object of interpretation and the ability to regard images as ultimately decodable by following the correct path of synthesisation. Warburg's iconological approach in the *Mnemosyne*, in contrast, is curated to acknowledge the fleeting nature of interpretation where the eye flits between objects to suggest meaning, much like the way that eyes travel across the smartphone or computer screen (Johnson 2012, 112-113).

In Johnson's (2012, 212) determination, Warburg's methodology is an affective approach geared toward reading images through "metaphoric intuition" in contrast to Panofsky's (1972, 15) synthetic intuition. His description of metaphoric intuition describes Warburg's approach in the *Mnemosyne* as geared towards the interpreter sensing meaning through the repeated gestures rather than intervening with lengthy explanations of the image transfers (Johnson 2012, 73).⁵³ Although Warburg has done the work of painstakingly researching the migration of his chosen images, the *Mnemosyne* itself mimics how expressions appear in different settings and times yet retain some continuation in meaning through the recollection and psychological facilities of the interpreter (Johnson 2012, 80).

Panofsky's synthetic intuition, in comparison, requires deep readings of individual images with continuous fact-checking aided by literary sources to ensure that the transfer of symbolism is *correctly* synthesised according to the historical visual and literary lineage associated with the image's symbolism. Synthetic intuition infers a feeling between objects of interpretation that must be reeled in to accurately understand the material. The symbolism in the artwork is then checked for its deviations and adherences according to various literary sources. In other words, only when one understands the image and etymological transfer of the Greek personification of time Chronos (Χρόνος) to Kronus, then the pseudomorphosis of

⁵² The symbol of Father Time is connected by Panofsky (1972, 73) to the Greek word for time Chronos and its etymological similarity to the Roman name for the god Saturn, "Kronos". In time, the words became inseparable where depictions of Saturn began to adopt metaphorical features associated with literary descriptions of time.

⁵³ Johnson's differentiation of Panofsky's and Warburg's iconological approaches may be accurate as applied to how Panofsky describes his methodology in *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (1972); however, as Jaś Elsner and Katharina Lorenz (2012, 487) show, Panofsky's methodology evolved throughout time. Whereas his approach was more neo-Kantian in Germany, such as referring to the *Sinn*, or the underlying sense that leads to the expression of artistic works, his work becomes much more pragmatic in his American phase.

Chronos to Father Time can be fully understood—only after following the migration of the symbol, can the intrinsic meaning of the representation be fully extracted and transformed into an “iconographical synthesis”, to use Panofsky’s (1972, 14) term.

Panofsky’s methodological approach is systemised and procedural in a way that assists with breaking down the visual contents of an image, providing terms to meaningfully connect images with other iterations and provides a path for an innate reading of the image as embedded within a historical and contemporary context. In coding the images for this thesis, I followed his methodology by first identifying codes, then locating reoccurring codes to delineate themes and finally synthesising the images with contextual information to form an iconological interpretation. However, my plotting of Catalogue Set A follows more of a Warburgian approach in plotting image transferences where the viewer can intuit meaning with some text as a suggestive guide.

2.3.3 *Later Approaches to Iconology: WJT Mitchell and Hans Belting*

Mitchell and Belting’s approaches to iconology provide some additional insights to image studies in considering the site of the image, its circulation and its reception. As I do touch on Mitchell and Belting’s ideas throughout this thesis, I dedicate this section to only briefly summarising some of their theoretical contributions to iconological approaches as relevant to the formulation of my argument.

The most rigorous explanation of Mitchell’s iconological approach is delineated in *Iconology: Image, Text and Ideology* (1986). Mitchell (1994, 4-5) states that where *Iconology* questions the nature of images, his later book, *Picture Theory* (1994), could be seen as an application of his previous work. Mitchell (1986, 1-2) is primarily concerned with interrogating how the idea of the image is formed, what distinguishes an image and how images communicate as images. In *Iconology*, Mitchell (1986, 8-9) takes issue with the assumption that images are unambiguous “natural signs”. He dedicates the book to deconstructing the complex nature of imagery as derived from language, mental images, sounds, sensations, and material forms. He convincingly demonstrates how an understanding of imagery is entrenched in ideology and formed by historical context. Throughout the text, he exposes and problematises Western approaches to the image as multifaceted and even contradictory, Mitchell (1986, 1-3) thus terms his approach a “critical iconology”.

For example, in his analysis of G.E Lessing’s *Laocoon: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* (1776), he shows that Lessing puts forward an inherently hegemonical view of space and time in the classification of literature versus painting. He argues that Lessing pairs literature with temporality owing to the chronological unfolding of the plot through action (Mitchell 1986, 97-98). Painting is associated with spatiality over temporality

through unambiguously representing an instant perception without movement, thus “literature is a temporal art, painting a spatial art” (Mitchell 1986, 98).

Mitchell (1986, 106-107) argues that this illogical separation displays a subtle hierarchical delineation that aligns rhetoric with a greater range of imaginary potential, whereas painting is merely a form of exposition for ideas. He pushes this argument further to reveal an underlying gender bias in the categorisation of painting versus poetry that aligns painting with femininity and poetry with masculinity; in his words, “Paintings, like women, are ideally silent, beautiful creatures designed for the gratification of the eye, in contrast to the sublime eloquence proper to the manly art of poetry” (Mitchell 1986, 110). Mitchell’s iconological approach, thus, provides useful perspectives in interrogating the hidden power structures that may affect image reading and provides a much-needed philosophical reflection on the image and its construct.

Mitchell’s later work *Image Science* (2015) is a consolidation of his earlier publications and his more contemporary writings on the future of the image. With concepts such as the metapicture and biopicture, Mitchell (2015, 30-32) illustrates how images are prefigured in other images. In the metapicture, the picture inside of a picture, images draw attention to the mechanisms of vision and the constructs of imagery (Mitchell 2015, 30-31). Importantly, he stipulates that metapictures are a type of self-aware imagery that reflect implicitly or explicitly on the essence of images. With the biopicture, Mitchell (2015, 32) conceptualises a genre of imagery directly related to cloning and the reproduction of genetic material. The biopicture relates to the creation of artificial intelligence, and the consequences on human identity in the re-creation of bio-organistic processes in artificial bodies (Mitchell 2015, 32). Importantly, Mitchell (2015, 49) with these conceptions, depicts images as “speculative projection[s]”, that may speak to future images or circumstances yet to come, a quality that many images of protest possess in envisioning a changed future.

Belting (2005, 302), for his part, takes the emission of images seriously. Belting’s (2005, 304-306) iconology positions the “body” and “media” as vehicles of memory and image communication. He states that bodies shape the knowledge of images, a fact that is lost if one focuses merely on the translation of images into words (Belting 2005, 306). Bodies also carry their own histories and feelings, which transfer when they are reproduced in pictures (Belting 2005, 311). He further suggests that media, which he describes as the middle ground between image and body, acts as a surrogate for lived experience (Belting 2005, 307). Thus, bodies are recollective even if they are reproduced in media. Belting’s theories interrogate the affectivity of images as intimately linked to the responses and discernments of bodies providing valuable insight into the bodily dimensions of political imagery, particularly with the FMF and #AmINext protests where protesters used body politics to portray political messages.

2.4 Interpreting Images Online: The Image in the Digital Age

In his article, “Warburgian Maxims for Visual Rhetoric”, Marshall (2018, 371) refers to Warburg’s image frames and Google Images as analogously arranging visual information as image displays. However, unlike the *Mnemosyne*, he points out that the image pairing on Google Images is powered by algorithms whereas Warburg curates the images by his own hand (Marshall 2018, 371-372). The result of the algorithmic sorting of images is that Google populates the iconology of a chosen search parameter. For example, if one were to conduct a Google Images Search of “Fees Must Fall”, Google would populate the search with the most relevant images according to its own parameters, such as displaying images from web pages that contain the search terms or presenting images that are personalised to the searcher’s Google activity (Google, n.d). In this sense, Google automates the gesture pairing activity that Warburg undertakes in the *Mnemosyne* but without the same level of human deliberation (Marshall 2018, 370). He, therefore, suggests that Google randomises the iconology of events, which may affect the way that they are remembered (Marshall 2018, 371). Put differently, algorithms are now producing how events, people and objects are seen, as Geoff Cox (2016) aptly surmises, “There is a sense in which the world begins to be reproduced through computational models...”

2.4.1 The Networked Image

Rubinstein and Sluis’ (2008, 23), with their formation of the networked image, tackle the monumental task of conceptualising network technology’s effect on image-making and circulation. With the networked image, the image is no longer an object of deep contemplation but a node to be experienced among other nodes of online content. They write: “The networked image is camouflaged as a non-political, non-significant and non-ideological site that does not merit textual analysis. This is perhaps a source of the persistence and power of the networked image” (Rubinstein and Sluis 2008, 23).

Among the flurry of mass visuals uploaded online every day, the networked image does not stand out as out of the ordinary; thus, implying that networked images do not often encourage a studious eye. Further extrapolating on the networked image, Rubinstein and Sluis (2008, 22) state that the introduction of the online data stream, as well as the sheer number of images uploaded every day to Internet networks, makes it difficult to establish any “intimacy” with networked images:

The lack of significance represented by the authorless snapshot now has more to do with its belonging to a class of images that share similar metadata than it does to photography’s intrinsic polysemy. Put another way, transmitted over networks, the snapshot image signifies an absence of meaning; it is the ambient visual background

against which visual narratives are told, distributed and consume. (Rubinstein and Sluis 2008, 23)

Rubinstein and Sluis state that the tagging system encourages users to consume similar content through curated streams guided by the logic of the networked systems. Unlike analogue photographs, which require a slower contemplation, the “next” button, tagging and hashtag facilities on SNS encourage users to consume images fleetingly or even arbitrarily, linked together through tags and hyperlinks. They imply that the often-superficial attribution of tags creates databases of images casually paired together, forming “universal[ised]” narratives and identities (Rubinstein and Sluis 2008, 23-24). Further, the networked image has shifted the act of perception in encouraging a consolidatory view of visual content where virtually anyone with a smartphone can produce and share visual content, whether they are an amateur photographer or expert. The networked image is recognised by its framing within the SNS interface by utilising hashtags, explanatory captions, tags, likes, emojis and comments.

The term networked image combines two conceptually dense terms, network, and image, to create an understanding of the digital image as a shifting entity shaped by social and technological developments (Dewdney and Sluis 2023). On the networked aspect of the networked image, Andrew Dewdney and Sluis (2023) remark that the image is mediated by both the human and non-human. Further, the networked image must be understood as embedded in a global capitalistic transactional system. They write, “Smartphones require, organise and reproduce global differentiated labour power, which is to say the social relations of the reproduction of divided, exploitative and unequal labour power necessary to their production” (Dewdney and Sluis 2023).

Dewdney and Sluis paint a picture of smartphone usage as part of an assemblage of networks that can be gradually exposed like a Matryoshka doll. Smartphones, including their image-making and image-uploading technologies, are created by profit-seeking conglomerates who seek to outperform competing technology companies. The continued use of smartphones also depends on the unequal labour systems that produce them. Dewdney and Sluis (2023) imply that the types of images produced and consumed in this political system create “paradoxical” images that both critique systems of inequality and participate in the unequal system by virtue of reproducing images of inequality. They write:

The image conceals the extractive labour of network operations within itself, whilst the image simulates a representational reality that normalises the inequalities in the conditions of labour. Representation reinforces the ‘sensible’ interpretation of objects and events and occludes the solidarity of labourers. (Dewdney and Sluis 2023)

Dewdney and Sluis’s statement implies that smartphone technology imposes a global sensibility where visions of inequality are becoming increasingly normalised, yet

simultaneously, the unequal mechanisms that produce the imagery are obscured. They thus allude to a system of hidden networks that dictate the flow and direction of life. Citing Jonathan Beller (2018), they assert that network images must be understood as assemblages formed by the attention economy within technological systems that seek to propagate societal divisions, particularly around race, sex and gender.

Beller (2006, 201) builds his argument from the standpoint that visualisations of inequality are part of the attention economy within a global space where technologies have been formed to both command attention and occupy time. He additionally argues that image-making technologies, like the camera, have been historically imbued with remnants of violence by virtue of producing images that propagate and constitute capitalist economies (Beller 2018, 13, 104-105). In his words, "Slavery and race become the rhetorical figures, the discursive, and arguably material media for the derivation of the supposedly ontological character of a visual technology (Beller 2018, 106).

Conversely, Beller (2018, 39-40) shows that even the counterimages created on smart technology to combat racism, classism, sexism, or homophobia are continually integrated into networks where the visibility of political causes becomes a form of capital for technological companies. So intertwined is the photograph with sexual, gender and racial violence that Beller (2018, 112, emphasis in original) claims "the photograph as a form of slavery". To assess any image without considering the systems of inequality governing the production and circulation of images is to propagate violence. For Beller, the only way to overcome the unequal power relations propagated by technologies is to expose the hidden inequalities coded into them through radical processes of decolonisation through an active contemplation and engagement. There is, therefore, an implication that images uploaded to networks *appear* to be neutral, but those same images are also affected by hidden networks of power that inevitably create a naturalised sense of unity via their algorithmic sorting functions.

In the *Theatre of Images*, Rancière (2008, 73) similarly implies that the sheer number of images in circulation creates a value system of merit whose transmission to the public is based on the interests of those in power:

And the great information machines do just that. They are accused of drowning us under waves of images, but they do the complete opposite. They are not content with reducing the number of images made available. Above all, they order the way they are staged. That is what is meant by in-form in the dominant system: put into form—eliminating any singularity in the images, everything in them that exceeds the simple redundancy of content that conveys meaning, placing them at distances that correspond to the hierarchy of their "interest," in short reducing them to a strictly deictic function, that of the substance to which the word of those who know which images are worthy of being kept relates, and which is capable of telling us what they say.

Despite this acknowledgement of the hidden processes behind “information machines”, Rancière offers a counterargument to Beller’s view of photography as a form of slavery. Even though hidden powers are directing the flow and visibility of visuals, Rancière (2008, 73) suggests that there are certain ways of framing images so that they are not dulled by the “anaesthetisation” that occurs in the exposure to more and more images of violence, death, destruction, and war. Framing an image to create a sense of novelty or to rework the associations with that image involves considering how the image works within a global sense of visibility; he states, “And that different way of looking starts with a disruption of the normal relationships between textual messages and visible forms, between poetry and what are known as the visual arts, between the spoken word and silence” (Rancière 2008, 79-80).

In reconfiguring norms of visibility, images can take on renewed meanings that suggest more egalitarian or even more humane ways of looking at situations or events otherwise characterised by violence and other adverse effects. However, Rancière, in the above quote, is talking about analogue photographs purposefully framed for contemplation in a museum setting. Can a purposively curated or framed networked image also instil a sense of political significance to the level of say, iconic photographs? In my findings, the networked image can be framed to persuade a more contemplative engagement; for example, by pairing it with another image or reworking the image as a meme, but, arguably, not to the level of iconic photography.

Bogre (2019, 96-97) offers a thought-provoking point of view by suggesting that smartphone images are not forms of memory engaged with the legacy of visibility, like iconic photographs. Rather, smartphone images are fragments of real-time knowledge. Where the smartphone-borne image on the screen quickly flits from one scene to the next, the camera’s photograph fixates the viewfinder to create a scene of interest that mindfully engages with visual history (Bogre 2019, 106). She, therefore, locates temporality as the defining feature of analogue photography that contributes to their memory-making ability (Bogre 2019, 105).

Networked images (she refers to “smartphone images”), in her conception, are more associated with the “vernacular” where memory is less important than the present consequence of the image (Bogre 2019, 98-99). Iconic photographs are formed through this fixation process, where the camera and the viewer are enticed into a more contemplative position. Bogre’s point of view implies that the image taken through a viewfinder, encourages the interpreter to engage with a legacy of visibility. Merrill (2023, 137) indicates that in the viral capitalist market, where attention breeds wealth, an image’s aesthetic similarity to an iconic photograph can confer a sense of iconicity. Merrill’s (2023, 137) conception of iconicity

refers to the enduring quality of a photograph that confers a sense of public recognition and memorability.

2.5 Interpreting Iconicity: Critiquing the Materiality of Icons

Contemporary undertakings with the term iconicity, especially as a source of social influence and power, has been largely explored by cultural sociologists such as Alexander, Bartmanski and Solaroli. The turn to iconicity as a category of image interrogation by the above-mentioned authors has been an attempt to bridge the gap between disparate disciplines that deal with icons and images, such as media studies, rhetorical studies, visual culture studies, sociology and philosophy, to name a few disciplines (Solaroli 2015, 4).

As Solaroli (2015, 3-4) explains, in the sphere of sociology, Émile Durkheim's (1858-1917) writings on totemism lie close to art historical studies on the icon. Durkheim, in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912) focuses on the collective development of religion as a social construct. He analyses totemism in societies where the totem, as a material object, is seen as possessing a sacred quality or an unseen force that signals meaning to followers of a religion (Solaroli 2015, 6). The totem, like the icon, stands for qualities outside of what it directly shows (Durkheim ([1912] 1976, 225-226). Durkheim ([1912] 1976, 210) further emphasises that the beliefs associated with totemism are not merely believed but are communally affirmed and ritualistically performed as true.⁵⁴ Cultural sociologists thus approach icons from this conceptual root, as deeply engrained in and responsive to materialist theories on objects and ideologies. Accordingly, Solaroli (2015, 18) summarises: "As it becomes clear, the iconic turn in cultural sociology aims at theoretically and empirically investigating the power of specific visual-cultural objects to symbolically condense deep meanings in a peculiar sensuous, material form – thus showing, through an expanding variety of case studies, how a cultural sociology of iconicity would look like".

Alexander (2010, 782, my emphasis added), therefore, describes his concept of "iconic consciousness" as the following:

Iconic consciousness occurs when an *aesthetically shaped materiality signifies social value*. Contact with this aesthetic surface, whether by sight, smell, taste, touch provides a sensual experience that transmits meaning. The iconic is about experience, not communication. To be iconically conscious is to understand without knowing, or at least without knowing that one knows. It is to understand by feeling, by contact, by the 'evidence of the senses' rather than the mind. Iconicity depends on feeling consciousness.

⁵⁴ I have drastically reduced Solaroli's summarisation of the roots of iconic interest in sociology; however, he mentions conceptual influence in the field from Marxism, Georg Simmel (1858-1918), Max Weber (1864-1920), Benjamin and Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002). Bartmanski and Woodward (2015, 2) suggest that discussions on iconicity in sociology may have been subsumed by a focus on "fetishism" and the "aura".

In Alexander's conception of iconicity, iconicity is imperceptible to the conscious mind but available to the senses. A type of human-intervention forms the icon. The *feeling* gained from an "aesthetically shaped materiality" leads to consciously formed significance (its "meaning") (Alexander 2010, 782).

Bartmanski (2015, 2) also highlights the aesthetic configuration of materiality in his definition of iconicity, he states: "Iconicity is a symbolic signification in its own right that involves the felicitous performative arrangement of visually arresting phenomenon and socially potent meanings and their references. This signification means material-cum-aesthetic objectification of thoughts and feelings held by subjects". The use of this quote is not to oversimplify Bartmanski's (2015, 25, my emphasis added) conceptualisation of iconicity as purely concerned with the material, as he goes on to say: "A key conceptual move is to include *sensuous* notion of "materiality" that comprises the physical and sensually relevant environments of human action". Bartmanski (2015, 25-26, 27) calls for a multidisciplinary approach to the icon and acknowledges the non-representational aspects of image-reading, including the somatic, the haptic and the virtual. He concludes that icons must be understood both materially and immaterially. Though he makes this admission, Bartmanski (2015, 28) ultimately concludes that the material aspect of icons or in his words, their "objectual" quality, is most relevant to cultural sociologists, "But again, these representations are not abstract or absolutely openended [*sic*] cognitive schemas or free-floating symbols. As far as social action and order are concerned, neither aspect of signification is conceivable without the other, and neither can be explained with one size fits all mode of seeing and representing. Like its conceptual predecessor – totem, icon is "good to think with," or to be more specific, it's good to rethink the complexity of culture in action".

The problem with over-focussing on the materiality of icons is that the term materiality begins to stretch itself very far, potentially to the point where meaning is lost. For example, in the abstract for their earlier edited collection *Iconic Power: Materiality and Meaning in Social Life* (2012), Alexander and Bartmanski describe the contents of the book as interested in the following:

With this volume, we push the study of culture into the material realm, not to make cultural sociology materialistic but to make the study of material life more cultural. We introduce the concept of iconicity, and alongside it the idea of iconic power. Objects become icons when they have not only material force but also symbolic power. Actors have iconic consciousness when they experience material objects, not only understanding them cognitively or evaluating them morally but also feeling their sensual, aesthetic force.

What becomes semantically confusing here is the de-facto association of objects as the primary form of icons. Although totems and early Byzantine icons are undoubtedly material objects, other definitions of icons, such as in Peirce's and Mitchell's conceptions, primarily

engage with icons as representations. Though the book offers valuable critiques to traditional materialist approaches to icons, it becomes apparent that there is an over-extension of the term iconicity as encompassing the feelings associated with icons, the symbolism of icons, the presentation of icons, and the representations of icons.

In contrast to Alexander and Bartmanski, Solaroli (2015, 33-34) tackles the issue of what he calls a “generic” materiality into conceptualisations of the iconic by suggesting that interrogations of materiality should be carefully specified. He judiciously explains, “[...] materiality is thus conceptualized not just as a property, but as a space of active material relations involving “synaesthetic,” rather than merely visual/material, activities. Surface, in other words, is “porous,” and its material skin is “texture” [Bruno 2014.]” (Solaroli 2015, 34). What becomes clear in many of the current applications of iconicity is that many of the authors are concerned with how iconic images can shape experiences, social imaginaries, memories, political views or cultural views consciously or unconsciously.

The focus on the “icon” in many of these contemporary undertakings of iconicity concentrates on pictures that have reached a certain level of recognition. It largely examines how a so-called cultural or collective memory can impact the creation of other images. The problem with this approach, as indicated by Merrill (2023, 136-137) and hinted by Solaroli (2015, 37-38) with his mention of the “post-iconic”, is that the concept of the icon is becoming increasingly evasive as social influence is motivated by attention-aggregating sites, virality and machine-based image curation.⁵⁵ However, there is also a good reason why “iconicity” has not been explored by art historian iconologists, particularly those from the German discipline who are the proprietors of the iconic turn. As stated by Boehm (2009, 108), there is an all-purpose approach in the German language toward images:

It is true that the German language does not differentiate between picture und image – the words ‘Bild’ (image) or ‘bildlich’ (pictorial) open up a very broad semantic field. The neologism ‘ikonisch’ (iconic) emphasises this generalisation even further; the image is simultaneously marked as an object as well as a process, and thus a name is given to the theoretical claim that associates itself with ‘turn’. The words ‘ikonisch’ (iconic) or ‘Ikonik’ (the Iconic) – Max Imdahl took up the latter and made it his theoretical trademark – therefore have no relation to the ‘icon’ introduced by Peirce as a pictorial sign. This is probably worth noting for an American reader acquainted with it. However, in the German-speaking realm, Peirce’s concept is, if not unknown, then not particularly prevalent either.

Therefore, there is a severe lack of engagement with the category of iconicity in image-first research even though, as I have shown, its application refers to qualities of recognition,

⁵⁵ I do not use the term “social influence” lightly here. As indicated by the study on “Attention-based social aggregation neural networks for recommendation system” by Jiang et al. (2021), SNS regularly directs information to users to retain their attention, particularly through feeding recommended content through the user’s network.

likeness, and, as I will argue later, an imageness, are increasingly useful in digital culture research. To illustrate my point with a practical example from Catalogue Set A, in sections III and IV, I have curated a transference of the struggling or captured black protester visual motif that has transferred through time. Are any of the curated images culturally impactful enough to be considered iconic? Is the reproduction of the motif enough evidence to indicate that the material circumstances of the images are being reproduced? If so, to what degree? In terms of the more recent photographs, as Ann Rigney and Smits (2023, 12) posit, are the photographers reproducing similar images to mimic an unidentified original image, or are the images coincidentally very similar to one another? Relatedly, how do media photographers construct the images that come to represent a protest versus protesters themselves? That is not to argue that the images do not point to real circumstances, rather, I believe there is more use for iconicity as a category for interpretation when definitions of it move away from specificity, materiality, or the object(ive), and more decidedly into the realm of potentiality and immateriality. As I will show in the following chapters, the recognition and sentiments associated with certain photographs are intrinsic to their being situated in a *sensus communis*, or a mutual sensibility, driven by the iconicity inherent in networks of PCI (Rancière 2019, 25-26).

2.6 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to situate terms that are used throughout this thesis, and to explore the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of iconology and iconography as relevant to this research. Although the origins and uses of the word icon are undoubtedly complex, I have detailed the application of the word in semiotics, art history and, more broadly, as a term in academia that has come to mean an object of cultural influence.

In the historical overview of iconology, Warburg's *Mnemosyne* was interpreted as a prototypical form of the modern-day image network (Du Preez 2020, 380). Additionally, Warburg's *Mnemosyne* provides an interesting perspective on how images can carry meaning through time and space through the remediation of gestures. Where Panofsky's methodology provides a practical means to deconstruct images into their component parts to determine contextual and historical meaning, Mitchell and Belting's approaches offer critical perspectives to the study of icons.⁵⁶

I also touched on the arrangement of digital information on Internet platforms, such as Google Images, and how algorithms may form the perceptions of a social movement. The concept of the networked image was interpreted to postulate the experience of images in

⁵⁶ There are some key contributions to iconology missing from the overview particularly Belting's (2016) construction of "iconic presence" and Boehm's (2019) contribution of "iconic difference". The omission of these concepts is for the sake of brevity and to maintain focus on the political aspect of the research.

data streams. The capitalistic basis for image-sharing platforms was also mentioned, particularly regarding the attention economy and its effects on image production and circulation.

Lastly, I set out to expand on the need to “rethink” the concept of iconicity with a view of the digital age. I discussed contemporary approaches to iconicity, particularly from the cultural sociological perspective and discussed the need to expand beyond material approaches to the icon.

The next chapter will overview theoretical contributions of Rancière in image interpretation, in particular, his conceptions of the aesthetic regime of art and his politics of visibility. I also discuss concepts of virtuality and visual interpretation following the arguments of Vivian.

CHAPTER THREE: JACQUES RANCIÈRE AND THE AESTHETIC REGIME OF ARTS

3.1 Introduction

How are political messages read in images? This question suggests first, that the political is a stable concept that is transmitted in images; and second, that there are ways to reliably locate the political in images. Therefore, the question of how political messages are read in images is linked to both the construction of an identifiable politics and its interpretation in images. Although the focus of this thesis is on the iconologies of South African PCI through time, the contentious topic of how images speak first requires expansion. The goal of this chapter is to set the stage for Chapters Five and Six, where I argue that the iconology of South African visual activism configures local expressions of social inequalities that potentially speak to global expressions of equality and human rights through their iconicity.

In this chapter, I summarise arguments concerning the aesthetic regime (as posited by Rancière), and alternative views to the question of how images speak politically. I use this chapter as a theoretical foundation to support my main argument that current definitions of iconicity must be expanded to accommodate the immaterial qualities of image-transfer in order to meaningfully interpret the images of new social movements (NSMs) and networked social movements. I compare the arguments of theorists such as Rancière, Barthes, Deleuze and Guattari, and Vivian to illustrate varying perspectives on how images express messages and how they are interpreted. As I will show, the political element of imagery is not always explicit and cannot always be reliably interpreted, especially at first glance.

In this chapter, I mainly focus on Rancière's approaches to the "regime of representation" and the "aesthetic regime of arts" to anchor the discussion on political images. Although Rancière addresses the regime of representation and the aesthetic regime of arts in many of his publications, such as *Dis-agreement: Politics and Philosophy* (1999), *Aisthesis, Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art* (2019), *The Emancipated Spectator* (2021), I will chiefly use his works *Aesthetics and its Discontents* (2009) and *The Future of the Image* (2019) to support my discussion.

Rancière reconsiders the conventional attributions of the term aesthetic as traditionally associated with beauty, the appreciation of art, or the critique of art. He, thus, provides a distinctive perspective on how images articulate political perspectives through "the aesthetic regime" (Rancière 2009a, 2019). Rancière's (2009a, 9-10, 27-28) reconceives the philosophical field of aesthetics as "an elaboration of the regime of intelligibility", and the "politics of visibility".

In the first section of the following discussion, I rehearse some well-known ideas about aesthetics and politics as they pertain to my central argument. Many of the theorists and ideas mentioned also form the basis for Rancière's deliberations on aesthetics, politics, and images. The discussion on aesthetics here is a foundation to show where Rancière's ideas on aesthetics depart from the traditional perspectives in Western philosophies on aesthetics, as well as to emphasise some of the underlying political dimensions in earlier deliberations on the topic.

3.2 Aesthetics and Politics: Early Deliberations

Aesthetic theory was mainly developed during the Enlightenment (1685-1815) due to an increased interest in rationalistic and empirical approaches to all scholastic disciplines. Philosophers such as Jean-Baptiste Dubos (1670-1742), Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), David Hume (1711-1776) wrote on the perception of objects as pleasant to the eye, collective versus individual judgments on beauty, and the distinguishing characteristics of art objects.⁵⁷

The Enlightenment concern with aesthetics derived mainly from Plato's ([375 BC] 1901, 76-78) idea of the "sensible" (*aisthesis*) as infringing on the reasonable, disciplined realm of the "political". Plato saw the sensible, which he aligned with artistic acts such as theatre and poetry, as untethered forces capable of rousing cries for change in public forums and, thus, a threat to social regulation. He saw art as an outlet for the impassioned but, ultimately, as an interference to reason and politics.

Plato ([375 BC] 1901, 75-66) characterises the arts as an imperfect translation of nature which can only strive toward perfection (the Ideal) but never reach it. For Plato ([375 BC] 1901, 76-78, 81), the political realm is ruled by a dedication to truth and should not be sullied by acts of imitation (*mimesis*). By virtue of being an outlet for passion and emotion, the tragic and comedic plays of Ancient Greece oppose the seriousness and rationality needed to rule the State. Further, when referring to the plays of Aristophanes (446 BC-386 BC) and Sophocles (ca. 497/496 BC-406/405 BC), he suggests that they are guilty of deception in a twofold manner. Firstly, he implies that since poetic texts are only imitations of stories of life, the actions of the actors must be exaggerated and mimed to be understood. The result is impassioned mimicry posed by Plato ([375 BC] 1901, 81-86) to be at ends to the sober mindset of the philosopher. Second, he positions the actor's actions as ultimately

⁵⁷ An in-depth summary on the philosophies of aesthetics is beyond the scope of this dissertation. To briefly summarise some of the arguments of the mentioned authors: Dubos ([1735] 1978, 9-10) writes on the pleasures and passions borne from art. Like, Kant ([1790] 1914), Dubos ([1735] 1978, 11-14) expands on the genius required to create great art and sees artistic talent as innate but expands on the creation of art in emphasising the need for refinement of artistic skill through passion. Hume (1757) expresses a similar sentiment suggesting that a sense of beauty can be developed and refined with time. Hume (1757) poses the discerned artist and critic as one who can tame the sentiments that art arouses and suggests that good art should be purposeful and guided toward expressing universal values, or common sense. Kant's views are expanded in the following section.

deceptive (Plato [375 BC] 1901, 85). Instead of possessing the qualities needed for political leadership, actors only imitate them. As such, he positions the Greek epics as far removed from reality, suggesting that their existence is ultimately at odds with a democratic political system that strives toward transparency.

On the other hand, Aristotle ([350 BC] 1895, 5-6), student of Plato, imagines a more positive position for the arts. He suggests that artmaking is an intrinsic part of humankind's nature. For Aristotle ([350 BC] 1895, 4-6), imitation is an integral consequence of human action. As opposed to a pure imitation of nature, He states that art produces, what he calls, "recognition" in the witnesser (Aristotle [350 BC] 1895, 12-13, 15). In creating a sense of real-life connection in the viewer, the imitation rouses cathartic emotions (*katharsis*). According to Aristotle ([350 BC] 1895, 6), poetry serves two purposes. He firstly implies that human beings learn through likeness, particularly the depths of their emotions. Second, he states that the poetry of the Greek tragic and comedic plays fulfils a human need for "harmony" and "rhythm". Comparing Plato and Aristotle's stances on the arts, contemporary philosopher Amadi Cornelius Chukwudi (2022, 134) suggests that Aristotle's stance not only aligns art with an innate human nature to create, but also positively portrays the natural pleasures of consuming art. Whereas Plato poses the pleasures of art as harmful, Aristotle suggests they are necessary and purposeful to a society's need to express itself.

Though the discussions of the purpose and utility of art are not explicitly labelled by either Plato or Aristotle as "aesthetics", they mark the theoretical foundations on aesthetics as attempting to separate or integrate artistic expression in a rational society. For Plato and Aristotle, respectively, art is an emotive practice that either inhibits politics or plays a necessary release of emotion. Rancière's (2009a, 24-25, 37) idea of politics is explicitly linked to aesthetics where he conceives of the historical separation of art and politics as part of the "distribution of the sensible".⁵⁸ The realm of aesthetics is based on a sense of commonality or what he refers to as the "community of sense" or *sensus communis* (Rancière 2009a, 37). Related to this thesis, Rancière's concept of the community of sense is useful in understanding how images of political situations in the South African context configure the "politics" of the situations pictured. In other words, the *sensus communis* is a useful term in interpreting how PCI speak to a historicity, and how they prefigure an alternative future for the subjects pictured.

⁵⁸ Rancière (2010a, 28) is particularly troubled by the binary that arises in western political philosophy in comparing a generalised public political figure who is associated with the good to the person in the private sphere who is paired with personal desires that do not serve societal interests. The separation inevitably separates the actions of the public sphere with the private sphere, further implying that private actions do not affect public actions.

3.2.1 Defining the *sensus communis*

In the *Critique of Judgment* ([1790] 2007, 135-136), Immanuel Kant first describes the *sensus communis* (or common sense) as universal and rational principles or concepts of judgment of art objects. In his formulation of the term, he suggests that rational individuals have an innate ability to cognitively appreciate artistic form separately from the sensation attained when viewing the object.

The ability to put aside personal judgment and connect to a universal understanding of beauty is predicated on the ability to rationally articulate the pleasing aspects of the art object as connected to what he refers to as the “collective reason of humanity” (Kant [1790] 1914, 136-138). Kant’s idea of the *sensus communis* suggests that the comprehension and appreciation of art objects is firstly, only achievable through “transposition of words”, and second, only through judgmental reflection ([1790] 1914, 148). Where the *pleasure* attained from looking at a beautiful piece of art is related to the senses, the *aesthetic appreciation* is achieved through rationality (Kant ([1790] 1914, 148-149). Like Plato, Kant ([1790] 1914, 140-141) is suspicious of the impassioned or, in his words, “mischievous” feelings attained from looking at art. He resolves the issue by suggesting that a detached interest in art is aligned with morality (Kant [1790] 1914, 141).

For Kant, the *sensus communis* also relates to the pictorial articulation of concepts not yet verbally expressed by humankind ([1790] 1914, 138). He places societal communication at the core of aesthetic pleasure, stating that a man who finds himself alone on a desert island would not decorate his house with flowers if no one were around to appreciate them (Kant [1790] 1914, 139). Thus, Kant defines aesthetic appreciation as rational via the *sensus communis*. The unarticulated sensation is not aligned with the morally virtuous. Acts of art *become* virtuous if they are in service of “social communication” with the purpose of expressing how something is pleasurable in the pursuit of a socially agreed-upon standard of beauty (Kant [1790] 2007, 148).

In Rancière’s neo-Kantian appropriation of the term *sensus communis*, he describes a maintenance and perception of the sensible and the intelligible in the realm of representation (2009a, 100-101). The question of what counts as art versus other forms of life is referred to by Rancière (2009a, 6) as “aesthetic confusion”, and forms the grounds of debates on aesthetics since the eighteenth century. He suggests that the Enlightenment understanding of aesthetics is predicated on a cognitive separation of art and politics, which, in his conception, are intrinsically linked. Following Benjamin ([1935] 1969, 24-28), Rancière suggests that the creation of new representational technologies, such as the camera, meant that the boundaries constituting how art could be created and perceived became murky (Rancière 2009b, 34). Modern art critics, such as Clement Greenberg and Clive Bell,

contended whether art could maintain its autonomy, especially as it became increasingly commodified (Rancière 2009b, 33).

Rancière classifies aesthetic discourse as the verbal interpretation of the three-way relationship between *mimesis*, *poesis* and *aisthesis*. *Mimesis*, as translated by Rancière (2009a, 10), refers to the relationship between *poesis* (or the method of creation) and *aisthesis* (as the affects of the method of creation). Put differently, *poesis* refers to the production of art and *aisthesis* to the sensible reception of modes of art within specific social conditions, or what Rancière (2009a, 27) calls the “*milieu*”. Crucially, Rancière distinguishes aesthetics as the discourse where art objects are distinguished as separate from other forms of life, and where the politics of art is negotiated (2009a, 11-13; 2009b, 34).

To illustrate his ideas on aesthetics, Rancière (2009a, 27) points to Enlightenment philosopher Friedrich Schiller’s (1759-1805) deliberations on the Roman statue *Juno Ludovisi* in *Letters of the Aesthetic Education of Man* (1795). He defines Schiller’s writings on the statue as one of the “first formulations of the politics inherent to the aesthetic regime of art” where Schiller attempted to equate the statue’s existence with political equality (Rancière 2009a, 27).⁵⁹

Using Schiller’s discussion of the *Juno* as a basis, Rancière (2009a, 44) introduces two states of “the great politics of aesthetics”, which he states as being the “politics of becoming life”, and the “politics of the resistant form”. The politics of becoming life uses the aesthetic form to eliminate what he refers to as “dissensus”. Dissensus arises when previous forms of social processes require reconfiguration, or what he refers to as a “conflict between *sense* and *sense*” (Rancière 2010a, 139, emphasis in original). The politics of the resistant form, on the other hand, uses aesthetics to keep art separate from the workings of the everyday realm. The oscillation between the two politics spurs aesthetic discourse where the dissensus caused by the art object means its existence must be reconciled in the workings of everyday life.

Rancière (2009a, 27) suggests that Schiller presents *Juno Ludovisi* as a “sensible *milieu*”, meaning a “particular sensorium” associated with “idleness”. For Schiller, the statue’s presence is not purposive to anything but its appearance. Rancière refers to this interpretation of the statue’s appearance as “free play”.⁶⁰ The statue, for Schiller, is thus representative of a promise of freedom, play, and emancipation beyond the everyday lived

⁵⁹ Rancière (2009a, 2010b) and Schiller ([1795] 2004) repeatedly refer to the *Juno* statue as Greek, but it is of Roman origins.

⁶⁰ Although Schiller ([1795] 2004) interchangeably mentions other versions of divine statues such as the Venus, Apollo, and the *Juno*, he refers to Greek society as the pinnacle of “ideal” society and the *Juno Ludovisi* as representative of the ultimate form of “Beauty” created by “Man”.

experience of society. Therefore, Schiller positions the statue as separate from everyday life proceedings (Rancière 2009b, 34).⁶¹

Through his reading of Schiller's work, Rancière (2009a, 28) discerns what he refers to as three "regimes of intelligibility". The first regime he refers to is the "ethic regime of images", which is found in contemplating the statue not as art but as an image, representing transcendent and collective values (Rancière 2009a, 28). The second regime is the "regime of representation" which he suggests concerns the rhetorical identification of how the statue conforms to the "conventional expressions" of characterised by a teleological approach to Western art history (Rancière 2009a, 29). The third regime he mentions is the "aesthetic regime of art", which can be seen in Schiller's analysis of the *Juno* as "free play" constructing the promise of freedom owing to its apartness from other ordinary forms of life lending to its "aesthetic experience" (Rancière 2010a, 117-118). Rancière (2009a, 32) states that Schiller, inspired by the values of the French Revolution (1789-1799), produces a novel way of contemplating the form of the statue that speaks to Schiller's own ambition for a state of equality based on an existence of being away from the domination of French monarchy. Schiller's interpretation both exalts the statue as separate to the running of everyday society and politicises the statue by ascribing transcendent meaning to it.

I will now briefly expand on Rancière's concepts of the regime of representation and the aesthetic regime of art. I will then move to Rancière's understanding of "imageness", as put forward in *The Future of the Image*, to illustrate Rancière's aesthetic regime of the arts as well as to contrast the rhetorical approach to the non-signifying approaches of representational interpretation posed by Barthes, Deleuze and Guattari. The purpose of this discussion is to situate Rancière's approach in the imagetext debate and to exemplify his discursive approach to image interpretation. By referring to Deleuze and Guattari's semiotic chain, I present an alternative view to Rancière that acknowledges the immaterial aspects of image transference, particularly as related to political argumentation.

3.3 The Regime of Representation and the Aesthetic Regime of the Arts

According to Rancière, the aesthetic regime of arts responds to the representative regime of arts; he states:

For the representative regime in the arts is not the regime of resemblance to which the modernity of a non-figurative art, or even an art of the unrepresentable, is opposed. It is the regime of a certain alteration of resemblance – that is, of a certain

⁶¹ Interpreting Schiller's analysis of the *Juno*, Temenuga Trifonova (2004) puts forth the idea that Schiller is writing on the statue as a form of "pure semblance". Like Rancière, she notes that Schiller's focus on semblance as an appearance of a higher value or a state of life apart from other forms, potentially traversing into the realm of the sublime. Trifonova (2004), however, distinguishes between the statue representing "Beauty" as an aesthetic object and the "aesthetic man" experiencing the statue as using higher faculties to experience the object. She, thus, suggests that Schiller's text potentially reinforces a Platonic emphasis of Idea over Form.

system of relations between the sayable and the visible, between the visible and the invisible. The idea of the pictorial character of the poem involved in the famous *Ut pictura poesis* defines two essential relations. In the first place, by way of narration and description words make something visible, yet not present, seen. Secondly, words make seen what does not pertain to the visible, by reinforcing, attenuating or dissimulating the expression of an idea, by making the strength or control of an emotion felt (Rancière 2019, 19).

Roman poet Horace's (65 BC-8BC) often quoted line *Ut pictura poesis* translating to, "As is painting so is poetry," has been used to describe the classical approach to artistic representation and expression as intrinsically tied to poetry (Deranty 2010, 118). Aristotle's ([350 BC], 1895) *Poetics*, for example, links the expressions of universality in Ancient Greek theatrical representations as fundamentally driven by the quality of their written form. The classical approach to art is succinctly summarised by Jean-Philippe Deranty (2010, 123):

The classical system of representation, under the tutelage of Aristotle's theory of tragedy and classical rhetoric, made the intelligible, "conceptual" content the primordial part of all the aspects of the artwork. The "*inventio*", the choice of a right topic, was the foremost element, ahead of "*dispositio*", the crafting of the narrative, and "*elocutio*", the actual linguistic expression of the topic. In works of fiction, the "*inventio*" concerned above all the choice of the story, that is, the "actions of sufficient magnitude" performed by characters of sufficient relevance, as Aristotle famously argued in the first book of his *Poetics*. In this system, the specific sense of what constitutes "the poetic", of what is poetic in works of art, is thus primordially the value of the story, which is dependent on the standing of the characters and on what happens to them. This provides the standard that makes the art works and artforms commensurable: beyond their specific medium, all arts works tell stories; a story from one medium can always be retold in another (from a painting to a narrative, from tragedy to painting, and so on).

Rancière (2009a, 25-26) suggests that the representative regime of arts provides the Western artistic conventions of visibility through genres and codes and allows for the verbal expressions of feelings or concepts ("a certain system of relations between the sayable and the visible, between the visible and the invisible"). Put more simply, the classical approach to representation grounds both its expression and intelligibility in rhetoric. The grounding of the work in literature allows for its critical value to be logically discerned and creates the standard for future iterations of the form of representation. Rancière (2019, 40) refers to this classical approach to the representative regime as the "rational" approach which hinges on the logical separation of art forms via codes such as form, genre, and style.

From the nineteenth-century onward, the discourses and practices of creation obtained a greater sense of historicity, globalism, and could pull from an expanded lineage of verbal and visual images. In his own words, "When the thread of history – that is, the common measurement that governs the distance between the art of some and that of others – is undone, it is not simply the forms that become analogous; the materialities are immediately mixed," (Rancière 2019, 42). Importantly, Rancière does not shift the logic of

the representative regime as far as implying that representations have lost their stability and readability. For Rancière, the aesthetic regime of art is an acknowledgment of the collage-like interactions between mediums that leads to a more flexible interpretative approach, reconfiguring the norms of visibility as associated with the representative regime of arts.

3.4 The Silent Speech of Photographs

Rancière (2019, 16-17) illustrates the aesthetic regime of arts by demonstrating how technology has affected the production and the reading of other visual representations:

And photography, formerly accused of opposing its mechanical, soulless simulacra to the coloured flesh of painting, sees its image inverted. Compared with pictorial artifices, it is now perceived as the very emanation of a body, as a skin detached from its surface, positively replacing the appearances of resemblance and defeating the efforts of the discourse that would have it express a meaning.

The inventions of technologies and the constant negotiations of the place of technology in art have led to the creation of what he terms a “fraternity of metaphors” or the “parataxis” (Rancière 2019, 43-44, 52). His argument is roughly summarised as follows: technologies have increasingly expanded on what is visible, sayable, and imaginable, which has led to a greater interaction among mediums (Rancière 2019, 19). The aesthetic regime of arts, according to Rancière (2009b, 31-35), incorporates both the visual forms and the discourses that attempt to make sense of the ambiguities that arise owing to an expansion of the regime of representation, especially as representations communicate intertextually.

Rancière (2019, 15), further posits that the invention of the camera caused a deep dissensus in the regime of resemblance. Whereas discourses on aesthetics were initially concerned with the intelligible components of art, the invention of the camera proved to be an enigma as it produced arresting imagery that seemingly did not require translation. Because the representation of the photographic image was grounded in reality as opposed to the abstract realm, it was afforded a dimension of presence or “indexicality” that affected its reading (Benčin 2020, 180).

Rancière deconstructs the idea that photographs have an exclusive quality that affects their interpretation by critiquing Barthes’s main arguments in *Camera Lucida* (1980). Rancière (2019, 17) recapitulates Barthes’s interpretation of photographs in the publication as following:

He [Barthes] wants to establish a direct relationship between the indexical nature of the photographic image and the material way it affects us: the *punctum*, the immediate pathetic effect that he contrasts with the *studium*, or the information transmitted by the photograph and the meanings it receives. The *studium* makes the photograph a material to be decoded and explained. The *punctum* immediately strikes us with the affective power of the *that was: that* – i.e. the entity which was

unquestionably in front of the aperture of the camera obscura, whose body has emitted radiation, captured and registered by the black chamber, which affects us here and now through the 'carnal medium' of light 'like the delayed rays of a star'.

To assert its power of communication as different to other representational mediums, Barthes (1980, 89) poses the photograph as self-contained entity that refers to nothing but its own material existence in time; he therefore contends, "The photographic image is full, crammed: no room, nothing can be added to it".

As stated by Rancière, Barthes (1980, 102-103, 117) proposes that photographs are understood through two categories: *studium* and *punctum*.⁶² *Studium*, according to Barthes (1980, 28-29), is informed by an understanding of the informational and cultural content of the image. The content of photographs consists of "codes", though he asserts that one cannot *read* the codes but only understand them as they are merely embedded in the photograph (Barthes 1980, 90). Barthes (1980, 26) describes *studium* as a "kind of general enthusiastic commitment, of course, but without special acuity;" the codes include the elements of history that are simply observed when looking at the photograph, such as its identifiable era, the clothing styles, or the photographic techniques used. Secondly, Barthes (1980, 27) identifies the *punctum* that "pricks" the viewer whereby they only gain understanding of the prick after having left the photograph. The cause of the *punctum*, as implied by Barthes (1980, 47), is the deeply personal feelings and associations that affect the experience of a photograph.

The self-contained nature of the photograph leads Barthes to claim that photography is not art; he states, "What I intentionalize in a photograph (we are not yet speaking of film) is neither Art nor Communication, it is Reference, which is the founding order of Photography" (1980, 77). The reference or referent that he speaks of concerns the connection of the scene photographed to something that has actually existed in reality or "the thing that has been there" (Barthes 1980, 76). Barthes (1980, 34) calls each capture of the photograph "contingent", concluding that each moment in front of a photograph is a chance encounter. The capturing of the photograph simulates a moment of presence, attesting to the undeniable existence of something which provides its ability to move the viewer emotionally. Barthes (1980, 87-88), further, says that there is only presence in front of the photograph, and no real reference to historicity; he writes: "The Photograph, for the first time, puts an end to this resistance: henceforth the past is as certain as the present, what we see on paper is as certain as what we touch "in the Photograph"".

⁶² Barthes (1980, 85-86) implies that language is fabricated whereas the messages transmitted by photographs are more rooted in authenticity, he writes: "It is the misfortune (but also perhaps the voluptuous pleasure) of language not to be able to authenticate itself".

Rancière (2019, 16) states that in *Mythologies* (1957), as a semiologist, Barthes puts forward a distinct role for photographs. In *Camera Lucida* (1980), he paints a new method of understanding photographs emplaced firmly in a modernist paradigm of distinguishing them from other representational mediums. He interprets Barthes' argument as asserting that photographs can speak without words through what Rancière (2019, 19-20) refers to as "silent speech".

Though Rancière affirms that all images speak through silent speech, he implies that Barthes's silent speech treats the photograph as holding a truth that can only be imperfectly translated into language. Rancière (2019, 20) characterises the emission from the photograph in Barthes's conception as a "naked, non-signifying presence". The naked, non-signifying presence beholds the spectator in a type of stupor in front of the photograph, which causes unlabelled feelings to stir but ultimately signifies nothing and points to no other signs (Rancière 2019, 20). Barthes (1980, 36-38) locates the appeal of photography not in its ability to directly convey meaning but to affect the viewer without any direct conveyance of its message. Rancière (2019, 19) ultimately critiques Barthes by suggesting his theories do not prove photography's uniqueness to other forms of representations, rather, his *studium* and *punctum* are an attempt to expunge photography's place in what he calls the "regime of imageness".

To illustrate his critique, Rancière (2019, 30) conceptualises the "naked image". He describes the naked image as an image that poses a straightforward experience of a scene, which he proposes as "intent solely on witnessing". Explaining the naked image, he points to the horrific photographs taken of the piles of corpses and the offending SS officers present at the liberated Nazi concentration camps, such as Dachau and Auschwitz. He suggests that the purpose of such photographs is usually to show an audience the reality of a dire situation and nothing beyond what is directly shown. Rancière's naked image is thus similar to Barthes's (1980, 80) concept of the unary photograph which Barthes suggests as the "literal" photograph that does not evoke *punctum* but "can traumatise".

However, just as quickly as Rancière (2019, 31) identifies the naked image, he exposes the dual nature of naked images. The mounds of mutilated bodies attest not only to the visible, traumatic horrors of the camp, but also to the unseen deaths that are unaccounted for by the borders of the photograph. Viewing the inhumanity of the Holocaust, further authenticated by the presence of the Nazi officers next to their victims, conjures a similar image to the dead ox in Rembrandt's *Slaughtered Ox* (1655). Rembrandt's painting, he states, blurs the lines between "human and the inhuman, the living and the dead, the animal and the mineral, all alike merged in the density of the sentence or the thickness of the pictorial paste" (Rancière 2019, 31). By alluding to the invisible lines of correlation that may sensuously link mediums of representation together, Rancière (2019, 32) resists Barthes's

autonomy of the photograph. Simultaneously, he disputes any sensational qualities that are specific to photography. Instead, he puts forward a unifying concept of images, stipulating that there is an inherent sameness in sensory experience that links heterogeneous forms.

Imaginess, for Rancière (2019, 14), refers to the relations between different forms of expressions, their affects and their articulation, thereof. Rancière's idea of imaginess does not necessarily just relate to visible relations but to the mental concepts and affects that connect representative forms. The "parataxis" is an umbrella concept to describe the forms that arise when different representative forms communicate with one another through their imaginess:

[...] it is a world where all the histories have dissolved into sentences, which have themselves dissolved into words, exchangeable with the lines, strokes or 'dynamisms' that any pictorial subject has dissolved into; or with the sound intensities in which the notes of the melody merge with ship horns, car noise, and the rattle of machine-guns. (Rancière 2019, 44)

The parataxis is further characterised by Rancière (2019, 45) as "schizophrenic explosion". Schizophrenic explosion is the unstable multiplicities of representative forms. He poses schizophrenia as the unbridled relations of one media to another where the affective resonances between representations are only felt and not articulated. Schizophrenia is opposed to the consensus, which he characterises as "[...] consent to the great equality of market and language or the great manipulation of bodies drunk on community" (Rancière 2019, 45). Schizophrenia is additionally described by Rancière (2019, 35, 45) as "unbound elements". He designates the "sentence-image" as the combination of those unbound elements in the schizophrenic explosion that inspire meaning. The sentence-image is defined as the following:

By sentence-image I intend the combination of two functions that are to be defined aesthetically – that is, by the way in which they undo the representative relationship between text and image. The text's part in the representative schema was the conceptual linking of actions, while the image's was the supplement of presence that imparted flesh and substance to it. The sentence-image overturns this logic. The sentence-function is still that of linking. But the sentence now links in as much as it is what gives flesh. (Rancière 2019, 47-48)

With his idea of the parataxis, Rancière (2019, 32) implies that images do not operate autonomously, but within a wider schema of historical references, including images from literary sources, the commercial sphere, the art world, film, and television.^{63 64}

Though the two authors are only briefly mentioned by Rancière in his conceptualisation of the parataxis, Deleuze and Guattari's (1987, 7) articulation of the "semiotic chain" resonates closely with Rancière's sentence-image. The semiotic chain is a concept introduced by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987). They describe a semiotic chain as the affective connections between objects and traits that link diverse states with each other; they state: "A semiotic chain is like a tuber agglomerating very diverse acts, not only linguistic, but also perceptive, mimetic, gestural, and cognitive: there is no language in itself, nor are there any linguistic universals, only a throng of dialects, patois, slangs, and specialized languages" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 7). On the ways semiotic chains inspire territories of being, they further state, "[...] semiotic chains of every nature are connected to very diverse modes of coding (biological, political, economic, etc.) that bring into play not only different regimes of signs but also states of things of differing status" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 7). Unlike Rancière (2019, 47), who affirms the sentence-image as a stable relation connecting heterogeneous forms, Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 8) are careful to highlight the notion of "multiple lines of enunciation" that emerge in the semiotic chain.

Whereas Rancière refers to the sensate plane of articulations as the parataxis, Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 12) refer to the rhizome as the system that maps the lines of connecting forms. In both cases, the sentence-image and the semiotic chain denote lateral connections between seemingly disparate forms that generate (virtual) images. For Rancière (2019, 46), the sentence of the sentence-image is the conceptual linking of heterogeneous elements, which lends to an image that causes "rupture" in consensus. In Deleuze and Guattari's (1987, 10) concept of the rhizome, the "rupture" itself is "asignifying" leading to "territorializations" or "deterritorializations". Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the semiotic chain, unlike Rancière's concept of the sentence-image, does not locate an articulate or

⁶³ It is not overtly clear how Rancière differentiates the sentence-image from the aesthetic image. His definition of the aesthetic image implies a more intentional approach to combining images as seen in the artworks of Martha Rosler and Barbara Kruger. He describes the aesthetic image as the following: "aesthetic image: the image as cipher of history and the image as interruption. On the one hand, it involves transforming the targeted, intelligent productions of imagery into opaque, stupid images, interrupting the media flow. On the other, it involves reviving dulled utilitarian objects or the indifferent images of media circulation, so as to create the power of the traces of a shared history contained in them" (Rancière 2019, 30). In this research, I adopt a broader understanding of the aesthetic image as those images that configure social realities and the aesthetic issues that define social situations.

⁶⁴ Rancière's expanded definition of images as not limited to the visual sits very closely to Mitchell's concept of the image as imagetext. Mitchell (1986, 13-14) states: "images 'proper' are not stable, static, or permanent in any metaphysical sense; they are not perceived in the same way by viewers any more than are dream images; and they are not exclusively visual in any important way, but involve multisensory apprehension and interpretation."

identifiable power of the image, but shows the shaping of resemblances via affective intensities without a logical beginning or endpoint. Although the differentiation appears just as a semantic distinction, the deviation in wording shows a disagreement in the location of meaning in images.

To summarise, Rancière's concept of the sentence-image relies on a certain level of discernment, through resonance, to distinguish how images transmit meaning. Although Rancière (2019, 19-20, 107) acknowledges that images are verbal, visual, and sensual conglomerates that communicate through "silent speech", he resists the idea that there are stupefying, "asignifying" or sublime elements in the aesthetic regime of art. Silent speech is coaxed out of sentence images to create a meaning that is dialectically expressed in literature via montage in film or synthesised in theories of art and philosophy. As such, transmitted meaning, even transcendent meaning, is merely invisible until it is made intelligible through aesthetic interpretation. In comparison, Deleuze and Guattari's semiotic chain does not rely on any stable transmission of meaning. The lines that connect expressions do so via power takeovers creating other images. Intensities charge forms, which can then affect other forms dynamically. The affect is the force that ruptures forms, leading to a sense of novelty of expression. The argument in this thesis aligns more with Deleuze and Guattari's situating of rupture as an asignifying intensity that suggests politics. As will be shown in the next section, the reasoning is that the politics articulated in images is not always easily rhetorically discernible as "sentence", particularly where the image transfer causes a sense of resonance. Although I side more with Deleuze and Guattari's line of thinking of rupture as asignifying, I appropriate Rancière's imageness and sentence-image to demonstrate an indistinct transfer of imagery that could still inspire resonance.

3.5 Virtuality and Visual Interpretation

In this section, I illustrate the need for an expanded understanding of the visual interpretation of images that combines both rhetorical interpretation and an acknowledgement of the asignifying qualities that affect the reading of images, such as virtuality and affect. Three photographs are analysed in this section, namely, Bernie Boston's photograph *Flower Power* (1967) (Fig. 3.1), Anggie Angela's photograph of a student protest in Jakarta, Indonesia (2019) (Fig. 3.2), and Marco Lombardi's photograph from the FMF protests of a male student handing flowers to a police officer (Fig. 3.3). Using these images, I apply Rancière's notion of the sentence-image to image interpretation, and then using Bradford Vivian's article, "In

the Regard of the Image” (2007), I expand on some of the non-representational qualities that affect the reading of political images.



Figure 3.1: *Flower Power*. Photograph by Bernie Boston, 1967. Washington DC.
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flower_Power_\(photograph\)#/media/File:Flower_Power_by_Bernie_Boston.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flower_Power_(photograph)#/media/File:Flower_Power_by_Bernie_Boston.jpg).

Boston's *Flower Power* was captured in Virginia during an American left-wing protest outside of the Pentagon against the Vietnam War (1955-1975).⁶⁵ “Flower power” was one of the slogans from the Vietnam War protest movement originating from Allen Ginsberg’s essay “Demonstration or Spectacle as Example, as Communication or How to make a March/Spectacle” (1965). In Ginsberg’s article, the author emphasises the visual power of the flower in anti-Vietnam war demonstrations as a form of “visual spectacle” or as a message of anti-violence set against the tumultuous atmosphere of protest. The photograph shows George Edgerly Harris III placing a carnation into the barrel of a rifle of an armed guard.

In the photograph's background, another officer appears to be removing the carnations from the barrel of his gun. Flowers were repeatedly used in protests of the Vietnam War as a symbol of anti-violence and peace. Boston's photograph and Marc Riboud's *The Ultimate Confrontation* (1967) are iconic photographs representing both the flower power movement and the non-violent approaches of the anti-war protesters in Vietnam.

⁶⁵ The Vietnam War was a proxy war fought between the United States and the Soviet Union over influence in Southeast Asia (Minh 2023, 35). The Viet Cong were affiliated with the Soviet Union whereas the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) with the United States.

Angela's photograph is a scene captured outside of the state-owned television broadcaster, Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI), where students gathered to protest the lack of political reform in the country. The protest marks one gathering out of many violent encounters between student protesters and Indonesian military police from September 2019 to October 2019 (News Desk 2019). In Fig. 3.2, an unnamed student hands a bunch of chrysanthemums to a police officer, who accepts them while surrounding officers look on. Unlike Boston's photograph, the pictured police officers carry riot shields but have no other visible weaponry.



Figure 3.2: *Student Protester Hands Flowers to Police Officer Outside of TVRI*. Photograph by Angie Angela, 2019. Jakarta. <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/10/01/flower-power-students-in-jakarta-hand-out-blossoms-as-sign-of-peaceful-protests.html>.

Though there are some minor differences in details, the photographs bear a striking resemblance to one another. Interpreted with knowledge of their respective historical contexts, both photographs suggest a moment of cordiality between opposing sides of an ideological conflict. The passing of the flowers, as a gesture of peace, is centred in both images. According to Ephrat Huss, Kfir Bar Yosef and Michele Zaccai (2018, 1-2), images of flowers provide a sense of “comfort” and “familiarity” that can move individuals in an emotive manner (Huss, Yosef and Zaccai 2018, 2). Susan Loy (2018, 4079) further suggests a universality in the meanings associated with flowers, particularly as objects used for celebration, religious worship, mourning or love have been universal:

Although specific flowers have had different meanings from culture to culture, the meanings themselves have been similar, with sentiments such as affection (tree peony, carnation), beauty (plum blossom, rose), longevity (peach, plum, pear), love (peony, rose, carnation), purity (lotus, pear, water lily), truth (lotus, carnation), and youth (wisteria, primrose).

Loy's statement implies that though there are sentimental associations with specific flowers in different cultures, there are also universal associations with flowers such as intimacy, beauty, sentimentality, innocence, emotional gravity and so forth.

Viewed together, the photographs are evidence of Rancière's notion of imageness. At first glance, the nuances that separate the argument(s) put forth by the photographs are indiscernible. Both photographs use a universally peaceful symbol, a flower, to oppose the mechanisms of the State, represented by the presence of the police. The visual icon of offering flowers to police officers transfers from Boston's photograph to Angela's image. Rigney and Smits (2023, 15) provide the useful terms, "mediation" and "remediation", to describe the framing of images to create emotional connections and the reuse of that visual content over multiple media. Mediation refers to the practice of appropriating signs for emotional impact and enhanced reception, while remediation refers to the reworking of previous media on primarily networked platforms (Erll and Rigney 2009, 3-4; Rigney and Smits 2023, 15). As modern-day protests are highly photographed, the Indonesian protester in Angela's photograph may have been aware of the iconic references of Boston or Ribaud's images and, thus, knowingly remediated the iconic imagery through his actions.

In a study on the transmission of historical knowledge between generations, researchers Sam Wineburg, Susan Mosborg, Dan Porat and Ariel Duncan (2007) showed various photographs about the Vietnam War to a group of American parents and children; one of those photographs was Boston's *Flower Power*. Most of the adults in the group, thirteen out of fifteen, understood the symbolism of the photograph as the flowers representing non-violence, and many could read deeper ideological connotations, such as the photograph representing a divided nation (Wineburg et al. 2007, 56).

When teenagers encountered the photograph, eight out of fifteen could distinguish a rudimentary understanding of the photograph as "peace versus might" (Wineburg et al. 2007, 56). Though most of the children knew the photographs were about the Vietnam War, many of them could not determine why the citizens were in front of the military police; some of the teenagers even suggested that the flowers were part of a military aide effort or part of a funerary procession (Wineburg et al. 2007, 57). Considering the teenager's difficulty in fully understanding the photograph, Wineburg et al. (2007, 57) surmise that though the flowers retained their "symbolic aura", the rest of the icons did not carry the same iconic durability. Without the contextual information, or knowledge of historicity, which serves to animate the image to the level of theatre, the photographs are easily misunderstood by individuals too young to remember the image or by individuals without the surrounding knowledge to understand their contents. Considering that the Wineburg et al. study was conducted in 2007, there is a question of whether contemporary teenagers or young adults would be able

to recognise the messages of non-violence in Boston's photograph or if the original meaning would be obscured or enhanced with time passed.

On why the icon of the flowers is so durable in meaning-making, Ephrat Huss, Kfir Bar Yosef and Michele Zaccai (2018, 1-3) provide an interesting outlook on the human relationship with flowers. Following their study on interpretations of pictures of flowers by sixty men and sixty women in Israel, they concluded that images of flowers are an example of "embodied aesthetics". They suggest that because humans relate to flowers primarily through their bodies, by seeing, smelling, and cultivating them, their sensorial connection to the representations is heightened. They additionally suggest that because flowers do not serve much evolutionary purpose, humans have globally tended to seek them for their symbolic or decorative purposes rather than utilitarian purposes. They conclude that because the vividness of flowers is experienced through human bodies, their affective associations, make them powerful phenomenological markers for collective memories (Huss, Yosef and Zaccai 2018, 7).

Looking at the photographs together, it is easy to see how the iconic photographs of the flower power movement could have influenced the visual activism of the Jakarta protests. As highly circulated iconic photographs, it is possible that the Jakarta student protesters encountered either of the flower power photographs and chose to emulate them as part of the symbolism of their movement. Driven by the fact that the anti-Vietnam War protesters purposefully used visualisation as a tool to communicate their tenets via heightened media attention, the Jakartan student protesters could have adopted the flower power symbolism as their own brand of visual spectacle.

There are strong counterpoints to assuming that Boston's flower power photograph directly influenced the Jakartan protest photograph or that either photograph is a political argument. For example, though it is very likely, there is no concrete evidence that the person pictured in Fig. 3.2 has seen Fig. 3.1 or any of the flower power movement imagery aside from the transfer of the icons in the image itself. As such, there is a possibility that the Jakarta student protesters may have autonomously concluded that flowers function as effective reconciliation symbols without knowing their prior usage in the Vietnam War. After all, based on the arguments of Wineburg et al. (2007) and Huss, Yosef, and Zaccai (2018), the iconicity of the flower icon is powerful enough to communicate positive or sentimental associations even without including additional contextual information. There is also no evidence that either Figs. 3.1 or 3.2 were *produced* for the purposes of canvassing for either of the political causes. Though the photographs are undoubtedly from the political situations they represent, they were taken not by the activists but by media photographers who captured the event. Thus, a strange dualism emerges in that the photographs are media

photographs of the movements that also function as part of the collective identities or as visual arguments for their respective movements.

Even with these counterpoints, compelling allegorical messages arise when looking at the two photographs together, particularly with the perspective of time passed between them. The similarities between the images are enough to suggest there is a movement of icons, even if the origins or context of the photographs are less determinable at first glance and without additional research. Whether intentional or not, the cultural impact of the original flower power photograph(s) is amplified through Angela's photograph, speaking to an underlying iconicity connecting the images. Although the exact meaning of the photographs may be missed, the significance of similar moments occurring at different times is enhanced by placing the photographs next to one another – this is what I believe to be Rancière's conception of the sentence-image or as the achievement of resonance in combining the photographs to enhance a political ideal.

If the photographs were encountered together via collage on an SNS, such as X or Instagram, the temporal and spatial differences between the two photographs would be further minimised. Due to the participatory nature of SNS, there is an emphasis on immediacy and real-time consumption of information; as such, there is potentially a perceived continuation of the messages despite the passing of time (Hochman 2014, 2). Arguably, the resonance between the images could be so strong that without context, the visual arguments of the images are potentially indistinguishable from one another.



Figure 3.3: *Student Protester Hands Flowers to Police Officer During #FeesMustFall, WITS University*. Photograph by Marco Longari, 2016. Johannesburg.
<https://correspondent.afp.com/crazy-day>.

According to Dan Schill (2012, 126), the defining quality that potentially enlivens (or moves) the message of a political cause, like that of the anti-Vietnam War movement or the Jakarta protests, is the creation of a tale through dramatisation, by “setting the scene, depicting

characters, and adding drama” through the image’s visual framing. In Figs. 3.1 and 3.2, both photographs are captured in-action so that the photographs are read in the motion of the activists passing the flowers as symbols of peace and non-violence to the armed aggressors. Thus, as sentence-images, the resonant messages could be read as allegorical themes, such as *brute force met with gentleness*, *resilience in the face of great danger* or *the reconciliatory power of non-violence*.

However, just interpreting the resonance of the images via their messages and thematic similarities does not do justice to the individual complexities of each photograph and does not fully explain the visual transfer that occurs (Vivian 2007, 471-472). For example, there is not a complete transfer of the imagery in each version of the picture. In Fig. 3.1, for example, the activists and the military police are seemingly unaware of the camera on them. The presence of the bayonets conveys an increased sense of danger. The passing of the flowers *comes across* as more organic, even if the act is performative.⁶⁶ In Fig. 3.2, there is a slight suggestion of an awareness of the camera connoted by the angled posture of the protester so that his action is made visible to the lens. As stated, unlike in Boston’s photograph, the police officers hold only riot shields with no other visible weaponry. Further, the Indonesian officer appears to be more welcoming of the gesture than the military police in Fig. 3.1, who use their bayonets to separate themselves from the protesters.

Interestingly, the performative element is most pronounced in Marco Longari’s version of the image. The protester holds a hand over his heart, a gesture associated with fidelity and trustworthiness in many cultures (Parzuchowski and Wojciszke 2014; Leng and Wu 2019). Like in Angela’s photograph, the police officer appears to accept the gesture; he delicately holds the flowers between his thumb and forefinger as a symbol of acceptance. The nearly tender exchange instils a sense of dissonance offset by the otherwise foreboding atmosphere of the image where other police officers are seen lined up in riot gear and holding rubber-bullet shotguns. Indeed, moments after the picture was taken, the scene dissolved into violent chaos where the police lobbed stun grenades and tear gas at the protesters. Nonetheless, the moment captured reflects a strongly embodied exchange between the protester and the policeman. Therefore, although there are some broad rhetorical and iconic transfers in the images, there are some critical nuances, such as the inclusion of the hand on the chest gesture, that may not necessarily be acknowledged by solely focussing on their visual resonances. Even with the individual differences noted, there is undoubtedly enough of a transference of the imagery from Fig. 3.1 to Figs. 3.2 and 3.3

⁶⁶ That is not imply that the activists during the anti-Vietnam War protests were unaware of the presence of cameras. Riboud’s photograph *Flower Child* (1967) photograph, for example, is a close-up of Jan Rose Kasmir so she likely would have been aware that she was being photographed. Further, Ginsberg’s original essay emphasises that the flowers should be used intentionally as a tactic to gain the attention of the media.

suggest the movement of a visual shape, Du Preez's (2020, 381) reference to a "visual paradigm", an imageness, or perhaps, an iconicity inspired by the original iconic photographs of Boston and Riboud.

Bradford Vivian (2007, 474) points out some drawbacks in suggesting that images are only readable via methods of visual rhetorical interpretation. He implies that the conflation of image and text, as shown in the interpretative approaches of Rancière, Hariman and Lucaites, tends to promote the idea that images can always communicate reliably and that image meaning is always determinable (Vivian 2007, 471-472, 479). Hariman and Lucaites (2015, 29, my emphasis added), as visual theoreticians in the school of rhetoric, thus define iconicity as "[...] about how something that is *distinctively* particular, concrete, material, and otherwise in and *indubitably* part of a present moment, can nonetheless speak to us about a world to come". However, as revealed by Wineburg et al., without contextual information, an image's underlying meaning or visual argument does not always communicate "distinctively" or without failure. Even with the transfer of information associated with iconic photographs, as the category of images that are said to imbue iconicity, *par excellence*, the image requires additional information to form a political argument accurate to its context.

Vivian (2007, 474) thus suggests methods of visual interpretation that acknowledge the inconsistencies and indecipherable qualities in transferring visual information. Following Deleuze's ([1977], 2007) conceptualisation of the "virtual image", Vivian (2007, 480) contends that image interpretation should consider the image as a propagative site or a "virtual event" that constructs perception and not as just a direct portrayal of reality.

Deleuze's ([1977] 2007, 148) construction of the virtual suggests that there is an "actual perception", or a materialised state of imagery, and adjoining layers of virtual images. For Deleuze, ([1977] 2007, 149), virtuality exists in the past as "memory" and the moment of actual perception acts as a present, momentary evocation of the virtual. Because of the proliferation of virtual images, he implies that the connection between the virtual and the actual becomes obscured, and they are no longer distinguishable as distinct entities. Looking at Figs. 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3, it is easy to see how the lines between virtuality and actuality become blurred. The presence of the re-articulated image ascertains the movement of *something* resonant; however, the exact point of resonance is rhetorically indeterminable (Vivian 2007, 491). Put differently, the very re-appearance of the virtual image points to a non-articulated connection that seemingly does not require a literate translation of the thematic or rhetorical links that unite the images.

Vivian, however, does not dismiss the value of rhetorical interpretation or diminish representational approaches to image study. In fact, he suggests that the signifying quality of images enhances their political interpretation (Vivian 2007, 492). He states that images

“illuminate” or cast attention on issues that might otherwise be hidden by pointing to the existence of virtual scenes not shown in the image (Vivian 2007, 491). Following Maurice Blanchot ([1955], 241-242), Vivian (2007, 490) emphasises the interconnectivity of image communication as marked by a “duplicity”. The duplicity of images demonstrates an image’s ability to reproduce states of being and simultaneously point to co-existing realities, which he states, “renders an image available for appropriation as a medium of argument, persuasion or communication” (Vivian 2007, 492). Vivian’s (2007, 493-494) concluding remarks on the political potential of the image sit closely with Rancière’s ideas on the aesthetic regime of arts by suggesting that the production and interpretation of images allow for the generation of new ideas and subjectivities. However, unlike Rancière, who sees the political potential in the illumination of the image via interpretation, Vivian (2007, 480) locates equal political potential in the “immaterial” or the asignifying and affective aspects of the image.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter provided a brief historical overview of the relationship between aesthetics and politics. I further summarised Rancière’s views on aesthetics and its linkage to the political. I outlined Rancière’s interpretation of the *sensus communis* as a shared experience of visibility. I also outlined Rancière’s ideas on the regime of representation and the aesthetic regime as concerned with the social relations of visibility and their theoretical interpretations.

I explained Rancière’s concept of the parataxis and the sentence-image as his term that links heterogeneous image forms. I further delineated Rancière’s critique of Barthes’ as posing the photograph as an isolated medium, autonomous to other forms of perception. Although I agree with Rancière’s determination that all types of images can speak to one another, I ultimately concur with Vivian’s critique of the discursive approach to interpreting images, highlighting the importance of considering the asignifying aspects of image communication.

In the chapters that follow, I interchange between rhetorical approaches and non-representational approaches to image interpretation. Although iconology is the primary method of image curation and interpretation, it does not give precedence to *logos* or the discursive dimension of reading images (Mitchell 1994, 38). Like Vivian, I contend that the immaterial or asignifying aspects of image communication, such as the sensual, the affective and the virtual, are equally as consequential as that which is intelligible or rhetorically identifiable. I use the core concepts of Rancière’s aesthetic regime of arts to interpret the selected images as sites where politics is configured. Rancière’s arguments on politics and aesthetics allow for a novel perspective on South African visual activism as more than just

chronicling political issues, but as dynamic visual arguments that configure and reflect iconicities embedded in local and global networks of politics.⁶⁷

In Chapter Four, I discuss instances where photography has been used as a political tool to suggest how iconicity could be used as a category of analysis as a relation of resemblance between images that lend to political meaning. In the following discussion, I focus specifically on documentary photography as the nascent medium of activism imagery, interpreting its integration into digital platforms.

⁶⁷ The use of the word “iconicities” in this thesis reflects a central argument namely that there is a (particular) local vernacular underlying image communication that can potentially speak to a global (universal) representation of political issues (Laclau 1997, 9-11).

CHAPTER FOUR

DISRUPTIONS THROUGH THE LENS: PHOTOGRAPHY AS A POLITICAL TOOL

4.1 Introduction

Photographs freeze people and events in the flow of time. As such, they have been held up as proof of wrongdoing, as persuasive arguments for change, and as testaments to the existence of places and lives once lived. Early photographs were seen as direct reproductions of reality (Bogre 2019, 65). In this regard, one of the first critics of photography, Lady Elizabeth Eastlake (1857, 466), describes the medium as the following, “Here, therefore, the much-fauded and much-abused agent called Photography takes her legitimate stand. Her business is to give evidence of facts, as minutely and as impartially as, to our shame, only an unreasoning machine can give”. Throughout its history, because of an association with testimony, photography has frequently served as a political tool to sway public opinions on social issues.

In South Africa, photographs have enhanced the visibility of subjects otherwise deemed invisible and voiceless (Bester 2010, 154). Prominent scholars on documentary photography in South Africa, Hayes (2009, 37) and Thomas (2012, 207) suggest that photography articulated and constructed the notion of “struggle” during apartheid. The term “struggle photography” most prominently describes the unfolding of apartheid in the eighties where there was an escalation in violence amongst tribal factions, anti-apartheid protesters and the apartheid state. In these tense moments, the camera acted as a companion and witness to the movements of the activists, corroborating their cries for change especially as the State retaliated against them with brutality. As mentioned in Chapter One, photographs also played a crucial role in the activism of the RMF and FMF protests when students, using their smartphone cameras, documented the violence they faced at the hands of university security personnel and the police. Concurrent to the students’ reportage of the protests, more stylised photographs of the protests were produced by professional photographers. Images of the events were shared widely by activists, commentators on the events and news media.

If, as Gil Pasternak (2021) proposes, photographs are now the most dominant forms of communication concerning the public understanding of cultural conflicts, then a historical exploration of the compositional and contextual qualities of activist photographs is useful in understanding how South African documentary photography and contemporary visual activism has expressed political issues in the past and the digital age. The initial focus on photography in this research does not imply that photography is or has been the sole impetus for change in South African politics. Rather, as James M. Jasper (1998, 2)

suggests, photographs are understood as part of a complex interweaving of political relations where the production of cultural objects, like photographs, potentially resonate on a local and global scale.

In this chapter, I outline instances in modern global history where photography has been used as a form of activism. I start this chapter with a brief discussion on ethnographic photography to exemplify the colonial foundation of photography as an inherently politicised medium. I then move on to a summary of social documentary photography, which I consider to be the nascent genre of activist photography. I commence this discussion by exploring what has qualified photographs as documentary, touching on some ambiguities in the genre.⁶⁸ Throughout this chapter, I analyse selected case studies, starting from analogue photography and concluding with a discussion on activism in the digital age. In my interpretation, I focus on the historical and contemporary social contexts where photographic evidence was used as a form of advocacy. This chapter is an extended literature review and historical breakdown of examples of political photography. I have compiled Catalogue Set A as an accompanying framework to illustrate the developments that are expanded on in this section of the research and in later chapters. Although not every photograph in Catalogue Set A will be analysed, the examples discussed here will provide the foundations for one of the central arguments of this thesis which argues that an expanded definition of iconicity is required to analyse political images in the digital era. Further, this chapter attempts to locate how the political has been expressed in images through time and across different mediums.

4.2 Ethnographic Photographs and the “Counterimage”

Before moving onto the discussion on documentary photography as a form of political argumentation, it is helpful to first address ethnographic photography as the first photographic genre that composes a “colonial discourse”, to use Roy Dilley’s (2019, 11) term. I position ethnographic photography as exemplifying the modernist approach to photography, thereby constructing the conditions for future “imagic” resistance.⁶⁹ The following discussion on ethnographic photography aims to demonstrate why it may be valuable to move discourses of iconicity away from a locatable element to an immaterial quality of imagery that shapes other images (Boudana, Frosch, and Cohen 2017, 1213). In this section, I will focus on the works of Alfred Martin Duggan-Cronin (1897-1954) and the

⁶⁸ The purpose of outlining the history of photography as activism is mainly delineated for interrogating iconicity in future chapters. For a more comprehensive account of the history of photographic activism, refer to Bogre (2011) and her latest book, *Documentary Photography Reconsidered History, Theory and Practice* (2019). For an African and Southern African historical account, see Patricia Hayes and Gary Minkley’s *Ambivalent: Photography and Visibility in African History* (2019), as well as Lorena Rizzo’s *Photography and History in Colonial Southern Africa* (2020).

⁶⁹ I use the word “imagic” as an adjective for image as put forward by Amaka Grace Nwuche, Chinyere Loretta Ngonebu and Ogechi Chiamaka Unachukwu (2024) in their analysis of sense-transference through language in Nigerian children’s literature.

photographs exhibited in Santu Mofokeng's *The Black Photo Album/Look at Me: 1890-1950* (2013). Using the arguments of Michael Godby (2010) and Rory du Plessis (2022), respectively, I show how ethnographic photographs compose an otherness as part of a modernist empirical narrative but simultaneously create the grounds for images of resistance.

Ethnographic photography is an early genre of photography that aimed to document and categorise colonial subjects for what Bogre (2019, 39) refers to as the "implicit Western white colonial gaze". The purpose of ethnographic photography or colonial photography was to make the exotic subjects of the colonial empire knowable under the guise of scientific knowledge production (Dilley 2019, 11). Duggan-Cronin was an Irish-South African photographer who operated in the genre of ethnography, focussing on the tribal life of Africans in Southern Africa as part of a genre that has come to be known as "Native Studies" (Godby 2010, 68). Duggan-Cronin's book, *The Bantu Tribes of South Africa* (1928), focuses on the production of portraits of the Bantu tribes and consists of typified depictions of indigenous dress, customs, and people (Fig. 4.1) (Godby 2010, 58-59). Although colonists and imperial officials practised ethnography, it is important to note that the typifying practices of ethnographic photography were not just limited to photographing colonised subjects, but extended to anthropological accounts of prostitutes, criminals and the mentally disabled (Gilman 1985).

Godby's (2010) exploration of Duggan-Cronin's photographic oeuvre reveals how an unexamined approach to the colonial archive can obscure the realities of the subject matter and obscure the pseudoscientific approaches in the characterisations of the subjects. For example, he observes many conscious choices that Duggan-Cronin made in exhibiting the movements and habits of the Bantu tribes, such as eliminating evidence of Western intervention and taking multiple iterations of the photographs to orchestrate the routines of the indigenous people (Godby 2010, 59-62). In another instance of historical erasure, Duggan-Cronin purposefully chose to exclude a portrait of Chief Mpafuri, a Venda chief who preferred Western military outfits, from the official print of the book (Godby 2010, 65). Further, Duggan-Cronin's captions delve into Social Darwinism by using the pseudoscience physiognomy to classify the indigenous subjects (Godby 2010, 58). Godby demonstrates how Duggan-Cronin's photographs enact an idyllic construction of native life, erasing Western influence and affirming the colonial Western view of black Africans as so-called backwards people. Importantly, he asserts the photographs as "conscious" productions within the political atmosphere of the early twentieth century as part of the grappling with the "Native Question" or the "Native Problem" regarding the self-determination of African Indigenous people (Buxton 1921, 172). Godby ultimately positions Duggan-Cronin's photographs as using their aesthetic qualities to disguise racist political undertones. Godby

thus critiques the images as aesthetic productions of a particular colonial perspective that aims to fixate black Africans in an indeterminate past, justifying the paternalistic treatment of them by the government.

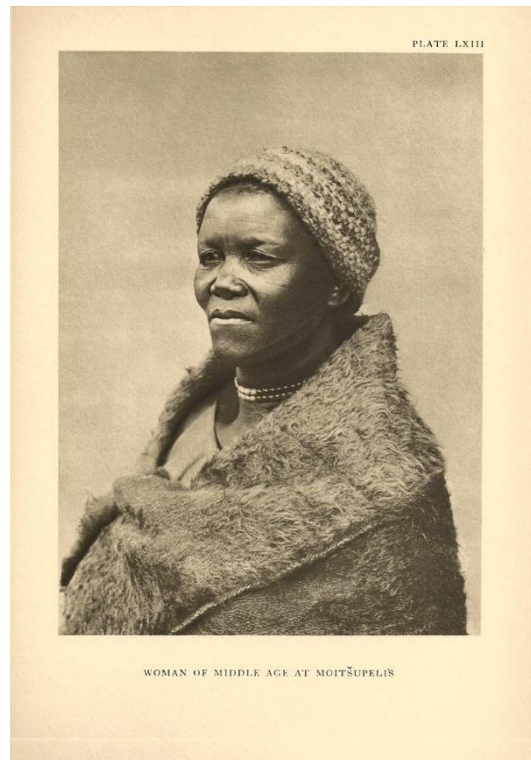


Figure 4.1: *Woman of Middle Age at Moitšupeli's*. Photograph by Alfred Martin Duggan-Cronin, ca. early 1900s. Moitsupelis.
<https://artblart.com/tag/a-m-duggan-cronin-the-bantu-tribes-of-south-africa/>.

In contrast to the limited view of black Africans posed by ethnographic photography, the images in Mofokeng's *The Black Photo Album* unearths a photographic history that challenges the stereotypical and racist perspectives inherent in colonial photography (Bogre 2019, 140-141). The photographs are commissioned studio portraits of black working and middle-class families dressed in typical Victorian attire, taken between the years 1890 to 1950. Mofokeng (1996, 54) states that some of the photographs were exhibited in township homes as cherished mementos of their ancestors, warding off evil energies. The images are intimate and strikingly self-aware compositions suggesting a collaboration between the sitters and the photographer(s). Although Du Plessis' (2022, 157-158) analysis of *The Black Photo Album* mainly focuses on the images through a "haptic and sensory approach", I focus specifically here on his characterisation of the photographs as "counterimages". Du Plessis' assessment of Mofokeng's collection as counterimages follows the work of Tina M. Campt (2012, 5-6), who describes the counterimage as a form of imagic resistance enacted by black Americans in the early twentieth century to assert "identification and community". The family photographs analysed by Campt are surmised not just as reflections of subjects and

scenes but as generative of the complex relations in black communities. Thus, as counterimages, the contents of *The Black Photo Album* are not just responding to the stereotypical and exotifying images produced by Duggan-Cronin and his contemporaries, but productions of a parallel resistant gaze (Du Preez 2008, 434). As Du Plessis (2022, 158-160) further shows, the instances of care and touch in the photographs also produce an affective engagement with the photographs, embodied by the sitters themselves, who show their fondness for one another. He concludes that the photographs are subjective interventions of black intimacy created in the objectifying circumstances that defined apartheid.

In Section I of Catalogue Set A, I place one of Duggan-Cronin's photographs, captioned "Korana girl" next to a family portrait from *The Black Album* depicting Bishop Jacobus G. Xaba, his wife and children, taken by a photographer simply named "Deale".⁷⁰ Whereas Duggan-Cronin's photograph is a medium shot of a mother and child, Deale's photograph is a full-bodied shot of the Xaba family members positioned closely to one another. An imageness, or iconicity, is exemplified by their juxtaposition, particularly felt in their visual similarities. In both images, the subjects stare directly into the lens of the camera with a sense of seriousness and regality. In Duggan-Cronin's photograph, the confrontive stares of both the mother and child are striking in forming an indeterminable but mutual expression, despite not being able to see one another. The subjects in Deale's photographs, particularly the adults, look at the camera with a similar awareness of the production of their image. Read through Rancière's *sensus communis*, Duggan-Cronin and Deale's photographs construct the politics of visibility of the apartheid-era. They are aesthetic images indicative of a mutual sensibility relating to typical representations of black people in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries (Rancière 2019, 25-26). Whereas Duggan-Cronin's caption and image reinforce an ethnographic view of the "Korana girl" and her child, dissensus still occurs in the directness of the subjects' gazes as if they are mutually confronting the viewer (Azoulay 2008, 13). The subjects are then not merely reflective of the Korana type but animated through their engagement with the camera.

Deale's image of the Xaba family may or may not be a staged composition. Mofokeng (1996, 54) states that the sitters for some of the photographs in the album may have been given props, costumes or have been told how to pose. Nonetheless, even as potentially performed images circulating in the private domain, the images produce a compelling resistance to the ethnographic imagic tropes. The subjects in Deale's photograph

⁷⁰ Deale could refer to the "Deale Brothers" who were studio photographers active in Bloemfontein in the late nineteenth century (*Ancestors Research South Africa*, n.d.)

adopt the icons of the colonisers and appropriate them as part of the counterimage.⁷¹ Simultaneously, the juxtaposition with Duggan-Cronin's photograph in Catalogue Set A creates an interaction that (re)constructs a view of the politics of the era. As Rancière (2010a, 27, my emphasis added) stipulates in his first thesis of *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, "Politics is not the exercise of power. Politics ought to be defined in its own terms *a specific mode of action that is enacted by a specific subject that has its own proper rationality*. It is the political relationship that makes it possible to conceive of the subject of politics, not the other way round".

In Deleuzian terms, the largely typifying portrayal of black Africans in Duggan-Cronin's photographs could be read as the production of actual images that feed into the virtual imagery of the exotic colonised. However, as multiplicities, there are images in Duggan-Cronin's book that resist a pure identification with the virtual pool. The photographs in the *Black Photo Album* also construct an oppositional, virtual imagery that exists in parallel to Duggan-Cronin's photographs but articulates an alternative subjectivity to the ethnographic gaze. Owing to the lack of circulation of multifaceted depictions of black people in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the affective resonance of the *Black Photo Album*'s photographs would have been minimal at that time. Nonetheless, Deale's photograph is a political assertion of black equality in the atmosphere of apartheid. The purpose of the above comparison was to enact a speculative demonstration of an imageness in early Southern African photographs, a more rigorous analysis of apartheid-era images as aesthetic images will be conducted in Chapter Five.

4.3 The Origins of Documentary Photography

There is surprisingly little genealogical research on photography as a tool of activism. Although much is written on specific historical instances where documentary photography has been used to inspire social change, few sources overview a general history of photographic activism since the camera's invention.⁷² Michelle Bogre (2011; 2019) has, however, written extensive historical summaries on activist photography extending from the past to more present examples. Her earlier overview of photographic activism, titled *Photography as Activism: Images for Social Change* (2011), spans from nineteenth-century European welfare advocacy for the poor, to more contemporary cases of image activism,

⁷¹ Former slave turned Abolitionist Sojourner Truth (1797-1883) also used photography to assert her personality and identity also included various props in her images such as books, her knitting and other photographs (Bogre 2019, 123).

⁷² That is not to imply that photography as form of activism is under-researched, as the topic has been explored by various authors. However, scholars have tended to either focus on the definitions and uses of documentary photography such as Rosler ([1981] 1999) and Ingledew and Lorentz Gullachsen (2013). For investigations of the ways documentary photography has been used in specific countries to bring attention to pertinent social situations, see Carlebach's *The Photographs of the Farm Security Administration* (1988) and Ángeles Donoso Malaya's *The Insubordination of Photography: Documentary Practices Under Chile's Dictatorship* (2020).

such as Marcus Bleasdale's *Lord's Resistance Army* (2010) series.⁷³ Bogre's (2011, xii) definition of "activism" provides guidance for my understanding of "activist photography", where she specifies that activism should be used conversely with "advocacy". She stipulates that an understanding of photographic activism should encompass more understated approaches, including the mere suggestion of political undertones to more obvious forms of social engagement, which she calls "confrontational" photography.

4.3.1 Definitions of Documentary Photography

The definitions of documentary photography, and its various subgenres, are often contradictory and the exact distinctions between the subgenres are vaguely expressed. The term "documentary" as a distinct genre was coined by filmmaker John Grierson (1926, 8), who describes it as "the creative treatment of actuality with a social purpose". Documentary photography, for Martha Rosler ([1981] 1990, 303), "[...] has come to represent the social conscience of liberal sensibility presented in visual imagery". For John Ingledew and Lorentz Gullachsen (2013, 91), documentary photographs are images taken to "educate" and "enlighten", and to expose stories that are otherwise left out of mainstream media. Documentary photographs, thus, sometimes function as instruments of pedagogy and other times as material persuasions to change social circumstances, particularly regarding the treatment of the powerless by those in power.

Bogre (2011, 9) makes an important assertion that not all documentary photography should be considered as *intentionally* seeking to instigate social action. Some documentary photography projects, such as France's *Mission Héliographiques* (1851) documented buildings and infrastructure around France for structural reforms and were instituted to preserve French architecture and monuments. In 1897, an additional example of documentary photography for history documentation occurred in Vienna, Austria, when the *Photothetek* at the *Kunsthistorisches Institut* photographed art from the medieval era to Antiquity for preservation purposes (Caraffa 2018, 146).

The first known use of photography as a means of social advocacy is regarded to be the works of David Octavius Hill (1802-1870) and Robert Adamson (1821-1848) in their exposition of the effects of industrialism on a town of fisherfolk in Newhaven, Scotland in 1843. According to Bogre (2011, 9), Hill and Adamson's more candid approach to photographing their subjects was peculiar, as early Victorian photographers required their subjects to sit or stand still for long periods. In their exposition, many subjects are caught in motion or in the motions of their work. Moreover, the captions of the calotypes were lengthy,

⁷³ Bleasdale's series showcases the terror inflicted by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) on the peoples of Northern Uganda and the surrounding regions.

including the names of their subjects and details about their duties, eschewing class differences.⁷⁴ Hill and Adamson's project was additionally self-funded and intended to shine light on the activities of a community that could not offer them financial compensation (Bogre 2011, 9).

The term "social documentary photography" has been used to refer to photographs that bring attention to social inequalities or humanitarian problems, such as Hill and Adamson's project. Described by Jon Soske (2011, 4) social documentary photography engages with visual elements and external factors to construct social facts:

It explores significances beyond what is strictly visible. Sometimes, the narrative is conveyed through the choreography of elements within a single image. More often, a photographic essay develops a set of ideas from frame to frame, building an argument at the levels of content and form, exploiting the possibilities of visual echoes, resonances, repetitions, juxtapositions, absences and discontinuities.

Definitions of social documentary photography tend to focus on the societal dynamics expressed in the documentary images, such as the differences between classes, the effects of poor governance on the lived circumstances of those less fortunate in societies. The term has been applied mainly to photographs taken from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century in the United Kingdom and the United States to describe a genre of photography that captured the effects of industrialism on the working class, including children, farmers, and immigrants.⁷⁵ Christopher Carter (2015, 4) describes the undercurrents within social documentary photography as, "Those rhetorics [*sic*] (that) build knowledge about the links between social class and the built environment, addressing how variously positioned subjects use engineered space, how space uses them, and how it manifests their divisions of labor and power". Some authors, such as Soske (2011) and Diana Wiley (2012), also refer to the resistance photographs of the apartheid-era as social documentary photographs.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Calotypes are printed reproductions produced by a negative-positive photographic process developed by Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877).

⁷⁵ Photographers under the social documentary photography genre include Jacob Riis (1849-1914) and Lewis Hine (1874-1940).

⁷⁶ The qualities that define the apartheid-era documentary photographs as part of the social documentary subgenre as opposed to other documentary photography subgenres, such as "pure documentary" or "lyric documentary", as put forward by Walker Evans (1964), are not deeply interrogated by the authors mentioned. In a lecture presented at Yale University on the subject of "lyric documentary", Evans (1964, 107-108) distinguishes between lyrical documents which he suggests as more artistic to pure documents. In his commentary, it becomes apparent that the purity of the photograph is connected to the lack of manipulation in the photograph's contents and, crucially, to the closeness to the photograph to 'fact'. Evans suggests that a documentary approach to photography encompasses a straight-forward capturing of a situation whereas the more manipulated shots are less "pure".

4.3.2 Early Political Photography: John Thomson's *Street Life in London*

Like the works of Hill and Adamson, John Thomson captured social documentary photographs for his magazine, *Street Life in London* (1876-1877) published with social welfare advocate Adolphe Smith. The magazine provides a rare view into what advocacy for the poor looked like in nineteenth-century England. Unlike many contemporaneous social documentary photographs that focus on short, impactful yet still descriptive captions, Thomson and Smith's (1877) magazine provides extensive descriptions of the photographed subjects, including the names of the participants and descriptions of the social context that led to their situation.⁷⁷ The addition of essay-long descriptive passages deepens the reader's understanding of the image as embedded in both the local context and speaking to what has been referred to by some scholars as the "imperial imaginary", where the situations captured reflect both on the social conditions of the city and the state of the British empire (Shohat and Stam 2014; Scully 2002; DuBois 2006).

As Bogue (2019, 39) notes, the photographs in *Street Life in London* were captured in a time when the products of the camera were viewed as unmediated by human intervention, a view that extended into the twentieth century. Although writing much later, film theorist André Bazin's (1960, 7) assesses the photograph as an object untouched by "creativity" and a form of "pure" reproduction, he says: "For the first time, between the originating object and its reproduction there intervenes only the instrumentality of a nonliving agent. For the first time, an image of the world is formed automatically, without the creative intervention of man". So committed was Thomson to showing the reality of the situations captured, he did not utilise any additional lighting and was dedicated to, what Bogue (2011, 14) refers to as, a "direct" approach where his subjects were captured in pure daylight.

Simultaneously reflected in the photographs is evidence of the contagion of colonial narratives where there is a comparison of London's poor to the primitivity of the other; in the words of David Bate (1993, 81), "The histories of colonialism and photography are mutually intertwined in Europe's nineteenth-century moment of industrial and imperial expansion".

⁷⁷ In this regard, Western social documentary photography of the poor working class different from ethnographic photography which tended to present the subject captured as part of a 'type', rather than individuals (Godby 2010, 58; Bogue 2019, 55-58).



Figure 4.2: *The 'Crawlers'*. Photograph by John Thomson, 1876-1877. London.
<https://digital.library.lse.ac.uk/objects/lse:zeg943muw>

I use Thomson's social documentary photographs as an illustrative example of an iconic awareness, or to use Alexander's (2008, 782) term, an "iconic consciousness" in modernist photography. The self-aware approach of a photographer, like Thomson, creates the conditions for expressing an image of politics that suggests the social issue pictured and creates the conditions for concurrent and resistant images from a globalised perspective. *Street Life in London* includes a striking photograph captioned *The 'Crawlers'* (Fig. 4.2). The image shows a woman holding a child while sitting on a stoep. Her head is leaning against the wall of a building, and a teapot and cup are visible in the background. Thomson and Smith explain crawlers as an underclass of older women in Victorian Britain, and their lack of physical ability to work laborious jobs makes them ineligible for many working-class positions. With an inability to earn a liveable wage, they become malnourished and prone to tiredness and can often be seen dozing off at the doorways of workhouses.⁷⁸ The description relays the woman's story as her husband having died ten years prior. After his death, she

⁷⁸ Workhouses are large institutions where destitute people were housed and fed. The conditions of workhouses were often very poor and families who entered them were frequently split up.

lived with her daughter, son-in-law, and her son; however, she left the residence after her presence caused tension in the household. As a result of the home situation, she resorted to homelessness, as a “crawler”. In the photograph, she is seen looking after someone else’s child with a mere cup of tea and a bread roll as a wage (Thomson and Smith 1877, 82-83). *The ‘Crawlers’* is one of many photographs taken by Thomson in East London, an area largely neglected and characterised by extreme poverty (Vanhaelan 2002, 192).

Writing about *Street life in London*, historian Geoffrey Belknap (2014, 94-95) makes a compelling argument about the framing of Thomson’s photographs as embedded in a global imperial context. Belknap (2014, 94) suggests that despite showing “poor whites”, Thomson’s photograph has a racialising element where the treatment of London’s poor is comparable to the treatment and behaviour of the ‘primitive’ people in the colonised lands. Belknap qualifies this statement by pointing out that Thomson and Smith start the periodical by highlighting similarities between London’s nomadic class and the “savage(s)” of Equatorial Africa and Formosa, they write: “In his savage state, whether inhabiting the marshes of Equatorial Africa, or the mountain ranges of Formosa, man is fain to wander, seeking his sustenance in the fruits of the earth or products of the chase. On the other hand, in the most civilized communities the wanderers become distributors of food and of industrial products to those who spend their days in the ceaseless toil of city life. Hence it is that in London there are a number of what may be termed, owing to their wandering, unsettled habits, nomadic tribes” (Thomson and Smith 1877, 1).

Belknap (2014, 74) analyses the comparison by stating, “[...] there is a clear representational conception of racial and geographical difference, yet the reading of these visual tropes was constructed through more than just the photographs themselves; it was also mediated by the textual spaces and print technologies that he used to reproduce them”. He thus implies that the images in *Street Life in London* cannot be read as just *showcasing* the social conditions of London’s poor, but rather as embedded as part of a network of empirical imagery that seeks to compose a sense of order in a global context:

While the geography of the subject matter may have changed, the constructs in making the images - whether the notion of racial, gender or economic difference - remained the same. When we finally move back to the reading of Thomson's books, what draws the reader's eye is not only the categories under which he made his images, but the emphasis on reading his images in context. The production of these images starts to matter less, and the reception of them through books and periodicals - and the stories told around these different forms of print - become essential (Belknap 2014, 91).

In particular, Belknap (2014, 91-92) looks to the Victorian travel book as further informing the reading of Thomson’s photographs, which he calls “taxonomically constructed”. Before his involvement in *Street Life in London*, Thomson was one of the first British photographers to

document the Far East. In his travel books, Thomson (1873, iii, my emphasis added) highlights his position as an interested but neutral observer, as demonstrated by this quote from *Illustrations from China and Its People* (1873), “[...] I am indebted for the *faithful reproduction* of the scenes I visited, and of the types of race with which I came into contact”.

When photographing the colonial subjects from China, Malaysia and Cyprus, Belknap (2014, 88) notes, like with *Street Life in London*, Thomson’s labelling of the photographs also tended to focus on “race, gender and class”. Thomson intersperses his lengthy descriptions of the Chinese with prejudicial language (referring to Chinese workers as “coolies”), and appropriating Victorian gender prejudices to describe Chinese women (such as differentiating Chinese women from different regions only by their dress, hair, and make-up whereas the men are classified by their facial features). Although the books are meant to pass as objective accounts of the locations visited, Victorian racial and gender stereotypes inform Thomson’s descriptions of the foreign people he encountered. Crucially, Belknap (2014, 73) emphasises that Thomson’s photographs and accounts of the foreign lands were framed in this way to be understood by a bourgeoisie Victorian audience. Through placing the characters in familiar class, gender and racial roles, Thomson aimed to broaden the intelligibility of the scenes so that they could be understood by an audience unfamiliar with the people and events pictured. The view of the poor as requiring assistance owing to their similarity to the colonised subjects is, therefore, another example of the ethnographic gaze.

Angela Vanhaelan (2002, 194) expresses a similar view to Belknap when she describes Thomson and Smith’s comparisons in *Street Life in London* as inflicting a sort of “racial other(ing)” on London’s poor. Vanhaelan (2002, 194-195) poses a complicated perspective of the poor in London in the 1870s, where outright charity was looked down by some socialists because it inhibited the needy from becoming self-supporting workers.⁷⁹ Middle-class run organisations such as the Charity Organization Society (COS) thus created a classification system delineating the types of poor ranging from those workers who did not need to depend on charity, to the very poor who depended on financial assistance to maintain respectability (Vanhaelan 2002, 194). Consequently, the English poor were placed into taxonomical categories much like the colonised subjects in the travel periodicals (Vanhaelan 2002, 199).

Due to the high cost of printing photographs accompanied by text, Thomson’s periodical was aimed at the affluent upper-middle and upper class (Vanhaelan 2002, 192). Vanhaelan thus suggests that there is a complex picture of the poor posed by Thomson and Smith; some of the photographs and accompanying text affirm stereotypical views of the

⁷⁹ Angela Vanhaelan (2002, 194) states that where Thomson took the photographs, Smith usually wrote the text.

poor as drunkards, slovenly or uncivil, yet they also present oppositional specimens to the norm, those who are soberminded, hardworking, and dignified (Vanhaelan 2002, 201). There is a treatment of the subjects as both a threat that encroaches on the comfort and security of the middle and upper-class and as multifaceted subjects deserving the dignity of better treatment from those in power (Vanhaelan 2002, 198-199).⁸⁰

Reading Belknap and Vanhaelan's arguments together, it is apparent that Thomson's previous experiences with ethnographic photography colours his approach to photographing London's poor. Although Thomson's subjects were not foreign, Victorian class sensibilities and the imperial imaginary affects both the production and the reading of the photographs. Instead of being objective or scientific photographs that simply show the squalid conditions of the underclass, Belknap (2014, 75) positions the photographs as constructing a political argument as part of an interconnected network of images constructing the imperial gaze. The political appeal in Thomson's documentary photographs draws from its contextualisation in both a local and global framework. Therefore, it could be argued that the *sensus communis* of the British empire shapes the political argumentation of *Street Life in London* as it relies on its consumption by a public that believes in the veracity of the photographs as true; namely, a belief in British superiority to the colonised, and shared beliefs regarding propriety and respectability.

In plotting Thomson's photographs in Catalogue Set A, I included an image from *Illustrations from China* labelled, *Chao-chow-fu Bridge, Kwangtung. Groups of People Gathered on the Bridge and Began Throwing Stones. A Vertical Crack can be Seen on the Glass Plate* (1868-1872). The image depicts a bridge in Chaozhu, in Guangdong province where there are a few makeshift housing structures on the bridge with visible occupants present. A curious aspect of the photograph is the obvious crack dividing the photograph into two parts. The crack in the plate is due to the inhabitants of the bridge throwing stones at Thomson when he took the image, causing the wet plate to split. Thomson (1873, 29) explains that the Chinese bridge occupants reacted angrily upon seeing his camera, assuming he was practising witchcraft against them using the strange device.

In an analysis of Bate's series of photographs *Bungled Memories* (2004), which displays broken everyday objects on top of tabletops, Parveen Adams (2021) offers the term "broken image" to describe the set of photos.⁸¹ In her words, "The reduction in the number of objects and the highlighting of one object are important to the underscoring of loss. This object achieves a different status from other objects. The cracked plate doesn't offer up

⁸⁰ However, that is not to imply that the entirety of the periodical haughtily dismisses the poor. Other parts of the texts reflect on the determination of the poor to survive despite their non-ideal situations (Vanhaelan 2002, 198).

⁸¹ Bate (2010, 69) describes his series to be concerned with the idea of "Freudian slips", which he describes as the unconscious impeding on the conscious. His series is aimed at questioning what emerges when there is an awareness of that which is forgotten.

meanings. The function of the object has changed. It is no longer something to be connected to other objects or to words. It stands as that object beyond which there is nothing more. The object simply is, without explanation” (Adams 2021, 271). Although Adams is speaking about Bates’ series that displays broken objects, the concept of the broken image can be applied to Thomson’s photograph. The image initially produced as an object of knowing, in the form of a modernist project of categorisation, is destroyed from within by the same subjects the photograph attempts to objectify (Heidegger [1950] 2002, 57). Though the photograph could alternatively be read as a reinforcement of tropes about barbarism, there is an alternative reading of the image as a form of internal resistance. My conceptualisation of Thomson’s broken plate differs from Adams’s characterisation of the broken image as negating meaning beyond the broken object; rather, the crack in the plate is a rupture that multiplies the photograph’s meaning beyond its original intent.

4.3.3 The Farm Security Administration Documentary Project

The collection of photographs that have come to epitomise the social documentary approach are the FSA visual records of the rural American from 1935 to 1944, taken by celebrated photographers such as Evans, Dorothea Lange, and Arthur Rothstein. Ingledew and Gullachsen (2013, 91) state that the FSA photographs have come to represent the “origins” of documentary photography. The photographs are moving explorations into rural America, showcasing the lives and daily activities of immigrants, farmers, and the landscape. Bogle (2011, 36) describes the FSA project as, “profoundly chang[ing] the notion of what documentary work can or should be because it was both emotionally persuasive and rooted in reality”. The project was imagined as a persuasive marketing campaign for the New Deal (1933-1938) as part of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s (1882-1945) efforts to combat the Great Depression by enacting economic and social relief throughout the United States.

The FSA was tasked with shining a light on the plights experienced by the agricultural sectors of American society. Roy Stryker (1893-1975), the appointed head of the project, expressed to the hired photographers that their documentary photographs should be straightforward accounts of the situation in the countryside with minor editing and engagement from the photographers (quoted in Carlebach 1988, 6). The result of the project is a set of poignant photographs, including Lange's *Migrant Mother* (1936) (Fig. 4.3) and Rothstein's *Dust Storm* (1936), of which the former has gained a reputation as an iconic photograph.⁸²

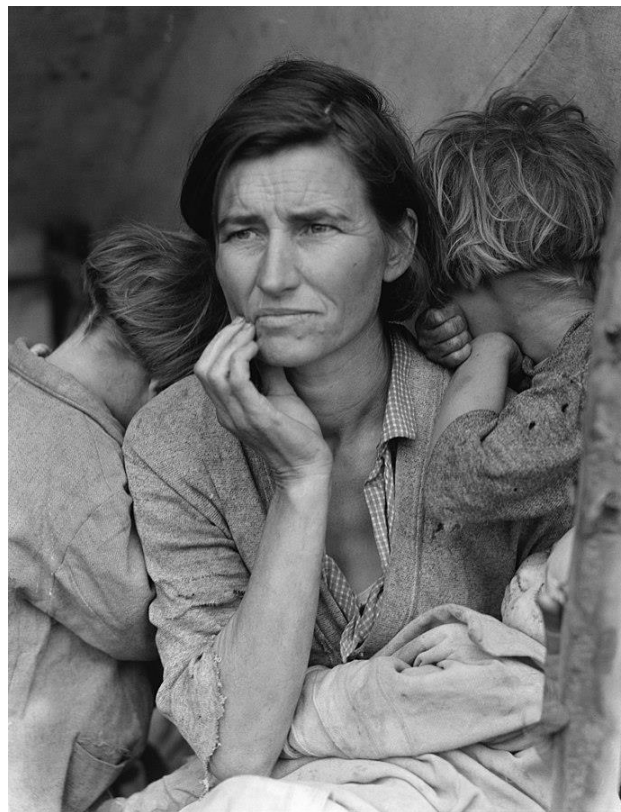


Figure 4.3: *Migrant Mother*. Photograph by Dorothea Lange, 1936. Nipomo.
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lange-MigrantMother02.jpg>2011

The result of the project is 178000 black and white negatives, 107000 photographs and 1610 colour transparencies (*Library of Congress*, n.d.). The photographers would send their negatives back from their assigned regions and the head office would distribute the photographs to newspapers and journals. Although the FSA project has retained a reputation for epitomising social documentary photography due to capturing the supposed realness of American Depression-era poverty, scholars such as Michael L. Carlebach (1988,

⁸² Lange's image is more frequently mentioned as an iconic image by sources that list iconic photographs, such as CNN's *25 of the most iconic photographs*, and iPhotography's *Stories behind the camera: the world's most iconic portraits*; however, Carlebach (1988, 19) and Borge (2011, 36) both note Rothstein's *Dust Storm* as another notable image from the collection.

9-10) and Winfried Fluck (2010, 64-65) assert that the photographs were anything but objective accounts. In fact, many of the photographs, were staged or edited to heighten the emotive impact of the photograph. Some objects were moved in the frame to emphasise the desolateness of the farmlands; other objects were moved to preserve the dignity of the subjects pictured, or to deepen the contrast in the images (Fluck 2010, 65-70).

In Fig. 4.3, for example, although Lange chooses to zoom in on the troubled expression of Florence Owens Thompson (1903-1983), the baby in her arms and her two children, Thompson had other children present who were excluded from the photograph (Pruitt 2020). Lennard J. Davis (2020), while reviewing a retrospective exhibition at New York's *Museum of Modern Art* (MOMA) on Lange's work in 2020, points out that *Migrant Mother* was just one of several photographs taken on the same day. Many of the other photographs that were excluded from the official account feature Thompson's teenage daughter, who was dressed in more modern clothing than her siblings and directly engaged with the camera instead of ignoring it (Davis 2020). Fluck (2010, 65) claims that Lange admitted to moving soiled laundry aside before snapping the photograph so as not to humiliate the subjects by showing the dirtiness of their living conditions. Lange did so to supposedly protect the dignity of her subjects and to not sensationalise their poverty.

Although Thompson's image was used as evidence of Depression-era white poverty, Sally Stein (2013, 348) writes that the Madonna-type portrayal of *Migrant Mother* obscures the fact that Thompson carried Native American heritage.⁸³ Stein (2013, 352) implies that mentioning Thompson's race in the caption would have moved the narrative away from the effects of the Depression on the white population to the disappearance of Native Americans due to European westward immigration. The staging of the scenes and the omission of information, as indicated, show that the capturing of the FSA photographs was not as straightforward and untouched by the photographers' hands as the terms "documentary" or "document" suggest. Despite numerous other examples of manipulation that Carlebach, Fluck, Davis and Stein list, the photographs of the FSA project have all maintained their status as documents of the Depression era.

While the additional information inevitably changes the way the photograph is experienced, something about the image maintains its longevity through time. According to Rancière (2009b, 41), what potentially makes photographs 'powerful' or iconic is their ability to encapsulate an era or "stage" an "aesthetic experience". Rancière (2009b, 41) suggests that the aesthetic experience felt in photography results from the divulgence of something otherwise hidden in everyday experience. Put differently, the aesthetic experience unveils an

⁸³ Stein (2013, 352) states that Stryker expressed to Rothstein that he was not interested in taking photographs of Native Americans because he does not get "excited" over the Indians and did not feel that such photographs would appeal to the American public.

association otherwise unarticulated in day-to-day life (Rancière 2009b, 41-42). The revealing quality of photography not accessed in the everyday is also expressed by Benjamin ([1932] 1972, 7) in his conception of the “optical unconscious”. In the optical unconscious, moments otherwise minutely experienced are expanded by the photographic lens to speak to something more significant than the moment captured. Benjamin ([1932] 1972, 7) thus describes the optical unconscious as “[...] material physiognomic aspects of pictorial words which live in the smallest things, perceptible yet covert enough to find shelter in daydreams, but which, once enlarged and capable of formulation, show the difference between technology and magic to be entirely a matter of historical variables”.

Writing specifically about *Migrant Mother*, Rosler ([1981] 1990, 307) explains why documentary photographs potentially create aesthetic experiences:

[...] a documentary image has two moments: (1) the “immediate,” instrumental one, in which an image is caught or created out of the stream of the present and held up as testimony, as evidence in the most legalistic of senses, arguing for or against a social practice and its ideological-theoretical supports, and (2) the conventional “aesthetic-historical” moment, less definable in its boundaries, in which the viewer’s argumentativeness cedes to the organismic pleasure afforded by the aesthetic “rightness” or well-formedness (not necessarily formal) of the image.

The framed cohesion of elements in the documentary photograph is implied by Rosler to enhance its present significance within a historical perspective, or the “aesthetic-historical moment”. She expands on the aesthetic-historical moment as not actually embedded in any particular history but amplified by being representative of something non-specifically historical (Rosler [1981] 1990, 317). Paradoxically, she states that the aesthetic-historical quality of the photograph simultaneously makes it “ahistorical” but still “historically minded” in pointing to a non-specific past through composition. In the case of *Migrant Madonna*, the aesthetic pastness is composed using black and white film and the photograph’s careful composition is reminiscent of the Virgin Madonna (Rosler [1981] 1990, 317). She further criticises the subsumption of documentary photographs under the realm of the aesthetic by stating that the situatedness of the photographic event may be unacknowledged by just focussing on its aesthetic qualities (Rosler [1981] 1990, 317-318).

Bogre (2019, 83) also separates the reading of documentary photographs as existing on two levels when she posits that documentary photographs are read on the “micro” and “macro” level:

Given that every photograph registers on multiple layers of interpretation and exists in both a micro (specific details) and macro (metaphor for a more general theme) space, we might say that every photograph also functions as what documentary photographer and educator Paul Lowe characterizes as a performative space into which the viewer is “invited to project their imagination the mobilization of the

imagination ...the mobilization of the imagination...lies at the heart of photography's ability to emote.

Like Rosler, Bogre (2019, 82-83) emphasises the observer's participation in the construction of meaning when viewing a photograph. The frame does not limit a photograph's capacity to create meaning (Bogre 2019, 83). Although Bogre (2019, 84-86) states that documentary photographs have a capacity to reflect a truth in potentially speaking to universal themes, she warns against viewing photographs as "the truth". In sum, though *Migrant Mother* may not accurately depict the lived circumstances of Thompson in the moment the photograph was taken, there is still a quality about it that resonates as an aesthetic experience. As an iconic photograph, the image, thus, both encompasses the mood of the Great Depression and speaks to a more universalised experience or a truth on the macro level.⁸⁴

In Catalogue Set A, as representative of the Depression-era social documentary photography, I have included an image by Evans between sections I and II portraying a scene from sharecropper Floyd Burrough's house from the book *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1936). The book includes photographs taken by Evans and descriptions by novelist James Agee (1909-1955), narrating the lives of extremely poor individuals from the American South (Bogre 2019, 126). Like with the FSA project, the book attempts to shine a light on the plights of impoverished Americans but includes lengthy descriptions of the subjects' lives instead of just captions. Evans' photograph captures Burroughs with his wife and children on their porch. Bogre (2019, 126-128) paints a complicated view of Evans and Agee's project that is constructed in the image. She suggests that the photographs and descriptions in the book encompass Evans' and Agee's views on how the subjects *should* be captured rather than the individuals performing their own subjectivities (Bogre 2019, 129). In fact, she suggests that similar to Duggan-Cronin's book, certain images were left out of the final version, including one where the Burroughs family looked more dignified and chose to dress in their Sunday best (Bogre 2019, 128). She further holds that Evans and Agee were not fully forthcoming about what they were capturing, a point corroborated by Burrough's son, Charles Burroughs, who recalls that the duo claimed to be reporters and did not mention a book (Whitford 2005). Another son of Floyd, Phil Burroughs (quoted in Whitford 2005), expressed his father's anger at the book's outcome. Upon asking if his father was angry at Evans and Agee, he responded:

No doubt. And to be honest with you, I think he had a right to be. I honestly do. You were looking at people that were struggling to put food on the table, you know? It was a simple life. They didn't have anything. Everybody wants something. That's probably the American dream. Everybody wants something. So it kind of left a bad taste in

⁸⁴ I intentionally leave the macro reading here vague as I argue for a multiplicity of universal themes in the reading of the image.

everybody's mouth. Maybe that's hard for a lot of people to understand, but it absolutely did. It made him upset, it really did. They were cast in a light that they couldn't do any better, that they were doomed, ignorant. How would you feel if somebody cast your folks, your parents, or your grandparents in that light? Even though I know they were real poor, no doubt about that, but they weren't ignorant, and they definitely weren't lazy. (quoted in Whitford 2005)

Looking at the image in Catalogue Set A, one gains a similar sense of internal resistance felt in Thompson's photograph from Chao-chow-fu Bridge. Burrough's wife and daughter, although they are wearing stained clothes, are fixing their hair for the photograph. The phenomenon of the photographed subject resisting or challenging a fixating gaze is described by Azoulay (2008, 11), when she speaks about images of Palestinians in Israeli newspapers, "But the photographed persons went on looking out of the photographs and demanding something else, even when the gaze turned them into a sign to be drawn on in speaking out against the occupation". The photograph as "encounter", is described by Azoulay (2008, 13-14) as part of her description of "watch[ing]" a photograph instead of simply "looking" at it. The event of the photograph must be relived instead of merely consumed (Azoulay 2008, 14). From this perspective, the image becomes an *act* of participation where the subjects' dignity is enlivened. Although the photographs are no doubt part of what Abigail Solomon-Godeau (1997, 76) refers to as "an act of double subjugation", first by social inequality, and second by the disproportionate power dynamics that allow the privileged to create images of the poor, there is a politics from within the photographs where the subjects reclaim their visibility.

4.4 Segregation is Now Visualised: Gordon Parks's *Segregation in the South* (1956)

Gordon Parks's series *Half and the Whole* (1942-1970) contains a fascinating mix of everyday social documentary photographs capturing life in the Segregated American mid-west and South. Other images in the series showcase the activism of the Civil Rights Movement including portraits of both famous activists next to images of the injustices faced by ordinary Americans. *Half and the Whole* has been frequently named an iconic series that speaks to American culture and racial relations.⁸⁵ Parks's *Segregation in the South* (1956) photographs, which form part of *Half and the Whole*, are revealing explorations into the turbulent racial landscape of Mobile, Alabama, following the Bus Boycott of 1955.⁸⁶ Commissioned by *LIFE* (1936—) magazine in 1955, *Segregation in the South* reads as a

⁸⁵ Some websites that name the series as iconic are *Jack Shainman's Gallery*, *Creative Boom*, *1854*, and *On Art and Aesthetics*.

⁸⁶ The Bus Boycott was a planned protest by members of the Civil Rights movement in Montgomery, Alabama where protesters refused to give up their seats at the front of busses for white passengers.

contemplative reflection on the Jim Crow laws, that legalised the institutional separation of black and white Americans.^{87 88}



Figure 4.4: *At a Segregated Water Fountain*. Photograph by Gordon Parks, 1956. Mobile.
<https://www.gordonparksfoundation.org/gordon-parks/photography-archive/segregation-in-the-south-1956?view=slider#6>.

Parks's photographs resemble many apartheid-era documentary photographs from their point-of-view of witnessing everyday moments of Segregation. Some of the photographs even come across as idyllic or peaceful, yet the scenes are also offset by the disconcerting, looming presence of signboards separating white and black facilities. Like many apartheid-era photographers, Parks uses a type of street photography to illustrate the continuity of the flow of life despite the repressive and often violent social atmosphere of the segregated American South. Considering that there are visual similarities and analogous tenets of the Civil Rights Movement and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, there is a

⁸⁷ Parks spent a short stint working for the FSA and was said to have been inspired by the photographs of the Dust Bowl after having seen them in a magazine while working as a waiter on a train (*National Gallery of Art*). Although Parks learned how to use the camera prior to working under Stryker, it is likely that he would have received instructions on how to photograph in the documentary style.

⁸⁸ *LIFE* magazine was kickstarted by Henry Robinson Luce in 1936 in Chicago, Illinois. The magazine focussed on a visual representation of current events, popular culture, as well as political and social commentary (Vials 2006, 75).

reverberation between *Segregation in the South* series and much of the apartheid-era documentary photography.⁸⁹

Segregation in the South follows the family of an African American man, Willie Causey, who worked as a woodcutter and sharecropper in the American South (*Gordon Parks Foundation*, n.d.).⁹⁰ Compared to other black families during the time, the family achieved relative wealth due to the accumulated savings between Willie and his wife, Allie, who worked as an elementary school teacher. The series also follows Allie Causey's (née Thornton) side of the family, including the eldest Thornton son, E.J and his family (Fig. 4.4). Parks was accompanied by another black reporter, Sam Yette. Both suffered racial discrimination throughout the documentation of the series.⁹¹

Peculiar to *Segregation in the South* is Parks's use of vibrant colours that set the photographs apart from many of its contemporaries. Journalist Candice Nembhard (2020) writes, "By opting to shoot in colour, Parks aesthetically liberates his subjects from the black/white segregationism of the Deep South, foreshadowing the changes that the 1964 Civil Rights Act would institute". Nembhard's statement implies that Parks's choice of colour-film envisioned a changed future for African Americans by portraying them in the full spectrum of colour. The pastel colours, the full circle-skirts, Ray-Bans, and hand-drawn advertisements are all typical of 1950s American cultural symbolism and resemble the folk culture-feel of Norman Rockwell paintings.⁹² Viewing the photographs from a contemporary standpoint, the appeal of the colour aesthetic is offset by the unpleasant, exclusive dissonant symbolism of Jim Crow that looms closely in nearly every photograph.

What should portray pleasant days out for the Thompson family, such as a visit to the ice-cream shop (Fig. 4.5), or a trip to the local fair in another photograph, is fraught with reminders of racial difference. The attentive father in Fig. 4.4 lifts his child so that she can drink out of a water fountain. Though barely visible, the fountain specifies that it is for "Colored(s) Only" in capital letters across its front. Two smaller children watch the act as if waiting for their turn. There is a slight smile on the father's face as he assists his child.

⁸⁹ Yet, Newbury (2011, 16) provides a compelling counterpoint to the argument just stated: "Though, as the equivocation in the review indicates, there remained the possibility that *House of Bondage* could be read in a more reassuring way by US audiences; that what was significant about Cole's image of South Africa was not its similarity to the racial situation in the US, but its difference". Newbury (2011, 13-16) suggests that the photographs of *Segregation* included in *LIFE* tended to represent a tamer version of discrimination compared to the injustices of apartheid.

⁹⁰ A sharecropper refers to a tenant who occupies a piece of farmland, exchanging the occupation of the space for product or money (*Britannica*, n.d.).

⁹¹ The chief of *LIFE*'s southern office, who Parks refers to as Freddie, had stated that there was not enough discrimination in Alabama to warrant a story and employed a handler who was part of the White Citizens' Council, a white supremacist organization, to act as a 'bodyguard' for the two men (*Gordon Parks Foundation*, n.d.). It is also reported that on a train ride from Birmingham to Nashville, Yette chose to drink out of a 'White's Only' water fountain which led to the two nearly being physically assaulted on the train.

⁹² The founder of *LIFE* magazine, Henry Luce, reportedly had a very specific vision for the magazine as spreading American liberalism and democracy through, what Chris Vials (2006, 75) refers to as the "culture of consumption".

Despite needing to use a separate facility to white citizens, the image portrays the Thornton family as a tightknit family, indeed, very near to the typified nuclear family of the 1950s. The visual elements in tandem cause an empathetic viewer to question what requires the family to use a separate water fountain facility aside from their race.



Figure 4.5: *Untitled*. Photograph by Gordon Parks, 1956. Shady Grove.
<https://www.gordonparksfoundation.org/gordon-parks/photography-archive/segregation-in-the-south-1956>.

A similar dynamic occurs in Fig. 4.5, where other members of either the Thornton or Causey families are buying food from a takeaway restaurant in Shady Grove, Alabama. The window labelled 'white' is at the front of the restaurant whereas the teller for 'colored' is relegated to the side of the building. The inclusion of colour in the photograph shows that two of the children are wearing matching red outfits, and the other wears a neat red dress. The ordinary look of the family, again, leads to a question of fairness or justice of the situation. Like with Thomson's photographs, the political argument relies on the sensibilities of their audience to question the injustice of the system as there is nothing about the countenance

of the subjects that suggests a need for them to be separated from white patrons. The photographs, thus, operate as a contemplative documents or evidence of an injustice that is expressed through a shared sensibility.

Speaking about the historical visualisation of female rape and its emergence in common lexicon, Azoulay (2008, 231-232) speaks about the “coax[ing]” of a visual language through photography that speaks to a legacy of violence on women’s bodies but had yet to be fully articulated until the mid-twentieth century. Rape had since then persisted as a topic not wholly visualised, according to Azoulay (2008, 236-237, 256), because victims have been forced to disclose what happened to them in detail from a “confessional” and, ultimately, a discursive standpoint. The woman forced to disclose her rape must also contend with the ruining of her sanctity which potentially inhibits the articulation of rape. Considering the repressive views on female sexuality which persisted globally until the late twentieth century, the need to prove that the sexual act was not for pleasure creates a psychically fractured situation where a woman is forced to prove, and relive, the rape all through her own account. Azoulay (2008, 247-248) suggests that the fractured, incomplete visualisations of rape that slowly emerged in the twentieth century were a result of both the inarticulability of rape, and the lack of visual precedents to adequately explain what rape is. The artistic solution to expressing and processing the rape, in Azoulay’s words, is an “abstraction” of the event that translates to pictures of bloodied undergarments, wringed hands or obscured faces. Although I have only expressed parts of a more complex argument, Azoulay’s discussion on the lack of photographs of female rape also suggests the difficulty in representing the experience of racism.

Photographs that speak to racism either communicate an act of direct violence, the consequences of racism; for example, a photograph of a lynching, or more indirect examples of differencing, such as the 1958 photograph of black teenager David Isom defiantly walking on the edge of a white-designated pool in Florida. Considering the turbulent racial situation in Alabama, Parks’s photographs are dangerous but are also necessary interventions in influencing a change in Alabama’s Segregation public policy. For the photographs to be effective enough for change, the viewer had to be convinced that Segregation was indeed a problematic policy.

In the conservative social atmosphere of 1950s America, very few people of colour occupied prominent and authoritative voices in American society. Thus, there was very little advocacy for the equality of African Americans directly from governmental branches. As such, many forms of advocacy came from grassroots institutions, such as settlement houses and churches, run by religious leaders, social activists, and social workers (Shepherd and Pritzker 2021, 244). *LIFE* would have a mixed demographic in terms of their readership but considering the economic hardships of many black Americans in the 1950s, time for leisurely

reading magazines would have been a luxury afforded to a few. Richard B. Freeman (1973, 68-69) shows that in 1959, the median income for black men was 58% of that of white men; for black women it was 57%. He also claims that the unemployment rate amongst black individuals was double that of white individuals.

Subjective experiences with racism, much like any other feeling of prejudice, is not easily articulated because, like rape, it requires the victim to relay the experience after the fact. Benjamin P. Bowser (2017, 573-574) suggests that racism, denoting animosity between ethical groups based on ethical attributes, was only popularised as a term in the 1960s and 1970s during the Civil Rights Movement. In fact, Bowser (2017, 576-577) argues that even with the development of the term, there has been inadequate theorisation of the extent and content of what racism encompasses. Azoulay (2008, 227) also contributes an interesting perspective on rape which can be applied to racism by suggesting that it is only through *visualisation*, via an affirming gaze, that a mutual experience of something felt can be known.

The institutionalised racism that translated to Jim Crow laws was not a new phenomenon, but rather the natural progression of what Bowser (2017, 582) refers to as “cultural racism”. Cultural racism refers to the prejudicial symbolism and themes that occurred in mainstream United States culture following the re-establishment of black participation in public life following the abolishment of slavery (Bowser 2017, 579). Though slavery, as an institution, was formally disassembled, the feelings and prejudices associated with white hierarchy did not disappear. Anthony Giddens (1984, 3), following Henri Bergson (1922), has referred to the transference of cultural sentiments through time as in “*durée*”, where cultural attitudes are not eliminated but merely transferred to new political, economic, or social institutions and then via cultural objects. The prejudice (and cultural translations) associated with the maintaining of institutions such as slavery, thus, do not disappear with the elimination of the institution but manifest in different forms. Parks’s photographs, read in this way, seem to be responding to a phenomenon that had not been fully expressed and perhaps *needed* to be expressed following the initial Bus Boycott of the Civil Rights Movement.

Parks’s documentary approach in the *Segregation in the South* does not focus on the direct violence but focuses on the reality of life for middle-class black families in Alabama. There is no sense of sensationalism in the images, instead the approach is put forward by Parks to be a matter of fact.⁹³ In taking the viewer to familiar American locations, for example, the family house, the diner or the fair, and the clothes shop, Parks’s documentary

⁹³ Although I assess that there is no sensationalism in Parks’s *Segregation in the South* series, Vials (2006, 80) posits that sensationalism was an integral aspect of *LIFE* reportage that differentiated it to other contemporary magazines such as *TIME* (1923—), which he characterises as having a more balanced reportage.

focuses on showing the everyday sameness of life for black subjects, which the primarily white readership must internalise. Parks's photographs in *Segregation of the South* could be understood as aesthetic images that use the "truth-telling" quality of the photograph, their iconicity, to suggest a politics (Rancière 2009, 37).

By aesthetically framing the families in the familiar language of Americana, Parks communicates a dissensus contra to the liberal American readership of *LIFE*. The colours and textures of the images induce the feeling and look of Americana, yet the presence of Jim Crow dips the otherwise picturesque images into the surreal.⁹⁴ Wendy Kozol (1996, 10) argues that *LIFE* magazine marketed itself on an aesthetic of "realism". The sense of straightforward reportage projected through a lens of familiar scenes of tradition and domesticity, contradictorily, compose a politics but also obscure the latent ideologies. Unlike Thomson's photographs where the activism primarily draws from a global context, Parks's photographs' activism uses more of a local context to criticise the othering of black Americans. That is not to say that the photographs do not speak to universal experiences of black people, but rather seem to be mindfully crafted as a construction of the contradictory treatment of African Americans in democratic America.

4.4.1 A Brief Breakdown of Political Photography in South Africa

I now diverge from the discussion of early documentary photography to touch briefly on the history of photographic activism in South Africa. A full summary of the works and contributions of documentary photographers and photojournalists in South Africa is beyond the scope of this thesis; however, some key photographers and their approaches are outlined here. Early documentary works such as those by Leon Levson (1883-1968) and Eli Weinberg (1908-1981) focus on the plights of the black urban class, the life of black Africans in mines, and the poor quality of life in the native homelands. Weinberg was involved in documenting direct resistance against the apartheid regime, such as the Defiance Campaign (1952) against the restrictive Population Registration Act (1950) and the Native Laws Amendment Act (1952) (Thomas 2021, 4).⁹⁵

Drum magazine, founded in 1951, was one of the first South African journals to highlight the works of black South African documentary photographers (Hayes 2007, 144; Thomas 2021, 6). The initial publication of photojournalistic exposés in *Drum* magazine was inspired by lifestyle magazines, such as *LIFE* and *Look* (1937-1971), which combined political and social commentary with documentary photography and photojournalism to

⁹⁴ Rancière would likely disagree with my assessment that the presence of the signage is sublime. Rather, the signage points to an implicit inequality already inherent in democracy made visible by the presence of the image (Zepke 2017, 204).

⁹⁵ These acts limited the movements of non-white South Africans and decreed the carrying of Pass Books as a form of regulatory document permitting movement across the country.

educate and entertain.⁹⁶ In the mid-twentieth century, visualisation became increasingly important in making news issues known. Photojournalism is a photographic genre that uses photography to highlight local and international stories for popular consumption. *Drum*, in particular, provided unprecedented views into township life in Sophiatown, jazz culture featuring African music sensations such as Miriam Makeba (1932-2008) and Dolly Rathebe (1928-2004) and urban life through the 1950s and 1960s. Early photographers for *Drum* included Jürgen Schadeberg (1931-2020), Peter Magubane (1932-2024), and Alf Khumalo (1930-2012). Paul Weinberg (1990, 4) posits that although *Drum* did highlight social and political issues otherwise uncovered in apartheid-era mainstream media, their prime concern was highlighting African pop culture: “The work captures the mood of *Drum* at the time - live fast, die young and have a good looking corpse, Music superstars and pin-ups compete for space with reportage of political campaigns [...]”.

The works of more independent documentary photographers like Goldblatt and Cole, moved away from popular reportage and were published in book form during apartheid.⁹⁷ Goldblatt began his professional career in photography in 1963, capturing various types of scenes throughout his career ranging from capturing apartheid-era to architecture to scenes in the community of *Fietas*, Johannesburg, where many of its inhabitants were forcibly removed in 1956 (Thomas 2021, 23).⁹⁸ Notable titles by Goldblatt include *On the Mines* (1973), *Some Afrikaners Photographed* (1975), and *In Boksburg* (1982). Goldblatt's photographs are diverse. Some photographs focus on more portraiture-style shots, highlighting the stories of individuals against the landscape backdrop of apartheid (Weinstein 1990, 5). Yet, a common trend in Goldblatt's work is that he often avoids scenes of overt antagonism, conflict or suffering and instead adopts a more contemplative portrayal of the subjects or scenes captured.

Although there are also pensive moments in Cole's *House of Bondage* (1967), there is also a tendency to make visceral the injustices faced by black South Africans. Cole was born in 1940 in Eersterust, Pretoria and began his photographic career under the apprenticeship of a Chinese studio photographer in 1956 (Thomas 2021, 7). Before exiling himself to the United States at age twenty-six, Cole embarked on a journey to expose the discrimination faced by black people in South Africa. The photographs are poignant in not just capturing the trauma endured by black South Africans, but also focusing on moments of resilience and dignity. Although Cole unfortunately never returned to South Africa, his

⁹⁶ *Look* magazine was started by Mike Cowles in Des Moines, Iowa, 1937 with a focus on highly visualised popular culture and sensationalist international news stories (Yarrow 2021, 22-23).

⁹⁷ The wording here is not to imply that Goldblatt and Cole were solely independent photographers. Goldblatt worked as a commercial photographer and Cole worked for publications such as the *Rand Daily Mail*, *Zonk!* And *Drum* (Newbury 2011, 6; Thomas 2021, 22-23).

⁹⁸ *Fietas* also known as Vrededorp or Pageview is an area where groups were forced to evacuate due to the Group Areas Act (DSAE, n.d.)

photographs maintained their influence in their unflinching focus on the day-to-day inequalities of apartheid. The works of Goldblatt and Cole will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five as case studies representing the iconology of apartheid-era South African documentary photography.

The eighties witnessed an emergence of photographic collectives, such as *Afrapix* and the *Bang Bang Club* (Thomas 2021, 1, 21).⁹⁹ The images produced in the eighties are a mixed bag of photojournalistic shots and everyday scenes. *Afrapix* saw themselves as cultural producers, battling against the apartheid regime by recording it mindfully and artfully (Krantz 2008, 294-295; Wylie 2012, 17). Notable members of *Afrapix* include Omar Badsha (1945—), Paul Weinberg (1956—), Gille de Vlieg (1940—), and Lesley Lawson (1952—). According to Hayes (2007, 154), *Afrapix* provided unprecedented access to photography for many individuals from poorer communities who wanted to learn how to use the medium, they empowered women photographers, and sought to actively change the visual landscape of the country with their approach. Diana Wylie (2012, 17) suggests that *Afrapix* were so intentional with their goal to narrativise the events of apartheid, that their actions catalysed the international attention on apartheid. Although many members of *Afrapix* remained active following the end of apartheid, the group was dissolved in 1991.

The *Bang Bang Club*, on the other hand, was a collective not uniquely focussed on apartheid but nonetheless produced extremely close-up and often graphic portrayals of the unrest leading to the end of the regime. The group consisted of Kevin Carter (1960-1994), Greg Marinovich (1962—), Ken Oosterbroek (1962-1994), and João Silva (1966—), who focussed on documenting conflicts, such as the deadly clash between ANC members and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) in 1990 resulting in the death of one-hundred and fifty people (MacInnes 2020, 2). The photographs by the *Bang Bang Club* are characterised by an unflinching approach to capturing the violence of apartheid. Hayes (2007, 50-51) suggests that by the end of the eighties, there was a weariness felt in the overexposure to the bloodshed and conflict. Nonetheless, many documentary photographers continued to document the transformation of the country following the election of the ANC into governmental power in 1994.

Marietta Kesting (2017, 5-14, 155-162) tracks the documentary focus of post-apartheid photographers and filmmakers unearthing trends of xenophobia, racism, and identity politics. She crucially argues that the post-apartheid document trajectory is filled with affective images of the past and metapictures of an imagined future, following Mitchell (1994, 48). One of the post-apartheid documentary photographic projects that Kesting (2017, 138)

⁹⁹ Thomas (2021, 15) states that the membership numbers grew quickly after *Afrapix*'s inception in 1982, with twenty-five members and sixty freelancers at its peak.

analyses in her book *Affective Images: Post-Apartheid Documentary Perspectives* (2017) is the Market Photo Workshop's collection *Working the City* (2010).¹⁰⁰

Working the City is framed by Kesting (2017, 138) as a collaborative project between members of the collection, largely African students, and migrant sex-workers in Johannesburg. A workshop was facilitated where the migrant workers were asked to describe how they arrived in South Africa as well as their present situations in Johannesburg (Kesting 2017, 139). The migrant workers were given rudimentary training in photography by the students and asked to create their own self-portraits – the result was a series of self-portraits accompanied by their verbal accounts that told stories of xenophobic discrimination, GBV, as well as health challenges such as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) (Kesting 2017, 139-140). The purpose of the project was twofold: firstly, it was created to raise awareness of the issues that migrant sex-workers face; and second, to personalise the faces of prostitution as the profession has historically faced stigma as being dirty or taboo (Kesting 2017, 140). Kesting (2017, 141) demonstrates how the project was facilitated with a sense of awareness; whereas photographs have tended to objectify women of colour and sex workers in the past, *Working the City* mindfully encouraged the women to compose photographs of themselves and speak to their own experiences. The project is thus a demonstration of what Janell Hobson (2003, 89-90) refers to as “mirrored images” of black women, as they are self-constructed images produced by the migrant workers.¹⁰¹

4.4.2 Photojournalism in the Mid-Twentieth Century: Police Clashes and Police Dogs

Although the focus of this chapter has been primarily to discuss the political dimension of documentary photography, it would be remiss not to dedicate some attention to photojournalism as an integral medium that has affected the construction and reception of PCI through time.

The primary function of photojournalism is to make social issues known (Chapnick 1994, 12). Describing how photojournalism has affected the reportage of global problems, Howard Chapnick (1994, 12) states the following:

Photojournalism has not stopped wars, eliminated poverty or conquered disease, but neither has any other medium or institution. Photojournalism was, however, influential in making plain to the American people and to the world the obscenities of the Vietnam War, and it affected the way the government conducted its war in the Gulf. Photojournalism helped to focus attention on and bring aid to the Sahel millions dying of famine and drought in the early 1980s. A decade later, the famine induced

¹⁰⁰ The Market Photo Workshop was founded by Goldblatt in the late 1980s and sought to train young African photographers (Kesting 2017, 138).

¹⁰¹ The self-creation of mirrored images is positioned by Hobson (2003, 96-98) to be a necessary balm to the negative icons associated with black women created in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

by the callous war lords of Somalia once again became the focus of caring photojournalists. They helped to awaken the public sympathy and mobilise international support for relief of the populace and intervention by the United Nations in that troubled area.

Chapnick's statement implies that photojournalism has both a local and global dimension. In the case of the Vietnam War, photographs in newspapers and magazines (as well as live television footage of the war) informed the American public about the events occurring on the ground (Chapnick 1994, 12-13). There is also an implication by Chapnick that photojournalists play an ethical role in informing the publics about issues far away from their home soils. Although Chapnick conflates documentary photography with photojournalism, photojournalism is primarily produced and disseminated by news media companies. Though the genres often cross paths, Ingledew and Gullachsen (2013, 91) imply that documentary photographers are more concerned with revealing circumstances that are not of public interest, whereas photojournalism, in my assessment, creates an imagic hyperfocus on the here and now in the name of public interest. Sontag (2003, 81) provides the helpful term, the "CNN effect", to describe the use of images by the media to draw attention to certain events regarding the "influence of photographs in shaping what catastrophes and crises we pay attention to, what we care about, and ultimately what evaluations are attached to these conflicts".¹⁰²

Photojournalism played an integral part in the Civil Rights Movement by documenting the resistance that the activists faced, both from American citizens and the police force. In Berger's book, *Seeing Through Race: A Reinterpretation of Civil Rights* (2011), he describes the shocking scenes that emerged during various legs of the movement. For example, the first event he describes is the unfolding of violence between Civil Rights activists and Alabama State Troopers and white vigilantes during a march in Selma, Alabama on 7 March 1965. The march was organised by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) against the killing of Jimmie Lee Jackson (1938-1965), who was beaten to death by troopers while trying to protect his mother and grandfather from police assault during a previous protest (Berger 2011, 2).

Six hundred protesters engaged in the March from Selma to Montgomery. When the protesters attempted to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, they were met with a barrage of troopers, Dallas County sheriffs and citizen vigilantes on horseback, led by Major John Cloud (1953—), who ordered them to disperse (Berger 2011, 2). Lead activist, John Lewis (1940-2020), commanded that the activists kneel instead of retreat, indicating their non-violent resistance to the Major's orders (Berger 2011, 2). The non-compliance led to the

¹⁰² CNN stands for Cable News Network and refers to a news channel and news site founded by Georgia businessman Ted Turner in 1980 (*New Georgia Encyclopedia*, n.d.).

group of police and vigilantes barging forward to violently disperse the group of activists, Berger (2011, 2) describes the scene as the following, "Firing tear gas and wielding billy clubs and bullwhips, they drove the protestors back over the bridge to their church and homes, as newspaper and television cameras recorded the mayhem". He further states that many non-Southern major newspapers were at the scene to cover the event (Berger 2011, 3). The result of the media presence leads to striking photographs of the Civil Rights activists both peacefully resisting and being met with the violent resistance of the police force, who are seen pulling and prodding the clothes of the protesters and pushing them over with police batons. Similar media interest erupted wherever there were Civil Rights marches planned, such as in Birmingham, Alabama, and Detroit, Michigan.

Surprisingly, similar images have emerged and continue to emerge from photojournalistic coverage of protest conflicts worldwide. For example, in South Africa, the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960 saw a deadly clash between black activists and police officers. The Sharpeville Massacre began as a peaceful march to Orlando Police Station, Johannesburg, on 21 March 1960 in a township in the Transvaal Province called Sharpeville. The protests were organised by the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) led by Robert Sobukwe (1924-1978), a prominent leader of the struggle for liberation. The march was against the previously mentioned pass laws, which required non-white South Africans to carry passbooks indicating their permittance into white-only areas. Soon after its start, the protest devolved into a massacre as police began shooting live rounds at the protesters, injuring, and killing many of them (Lodge 2012:147).

In Catalogue Set A, I have paired together photographs from the Civil Rights Movement, the Sharpeville Massacre and additional photographs from the "Battle of Lewisham", a conflict that occurred on 13 August 1977 in Brixton, United Kingdom between members of a right-wing extremist group, National Front (NF) and anti-racist demonstrators (Townsend 2017). The image resemblance in the manhandling of the protesters by the police is no doubt striking, but I want to focus here on the visual trope of the police dog attacking protesters, a common photograph that I have come across while researching this thesis.

In the article "'For the Very Existence of Civilization': The Police Dog and Racial Terror, Tyler Wall (2016) makes a compelling argument about the recurrent icon of the attacking police dog as a visual testament to the dehumanisation and terrorisation of black people throughout time and across space. Following the killing of 18-year-old Michael Brown by police officer Darren Wilson on 9 August 2014 in Ferguson, Missouri, BLM protests

erupted nationwide.¹⁰³ The hashtag movement #BlackLivesMatter began in 2013 following the acquittal of George Zimmerman, the murderer of 15-year-old black teenager Trayvon Martin.¹⁰⁴ The hashtag was shared on X to refer to the dismissal of black lives by the American legal and policing system. Originally founded by three African American women, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi, the hashtag has since evolved into an international social movement which operates across various SNS.¹⁰⁵

Wall (2016, 861) states that some of the initial photographs shared regarding Brown's death showed a police dog next to the teenager's body, keeping away bystanders. Further, he says that police dogs were also used to control crowds in the Ferguson BLM protests that followed. Images of the police dogs present at the BLM protests were placed next to the Civil Rights protest images where dogs were used as crowd control and shared widely on social media (Wall 2016, 861). Wall (2016, 863) further implies that in the United States police dogs, particularly German Shepherds, were theorised as a symbol of control from as early as 1907. However, he states that it was only in the 1950s that the K-9 Unit became a prominent part of the American policing system (Wall 2016, 864). Christopher Agee (2014, 194) posits that police dogs were initially accepted as a better alternative to firearms or lethal weaponry as they could act as a deterrent before physical force was required. However, as Madalyn K. Wasilczuk (2023, 1127) writes, police dog bites are legally considered to be "deadly force" in the United States, meaning that they are used to inflict significant harm which may cause serious injury or even death. Wasilczuk (2023, 1127-1128) further says that black people are inordinately represented in the racial statistics as receiving bites from police dogs; for example, in Sacramento, California, black people account for 43% of the bites despite only representing 13% of the population. To return to Wall's (2016, 866) argument, the German Shepherd breed, in particular, gained a reputation in the United States for its association with obedience, faithfulness and smartness. A mythical quality was further attributed to the German Shepherd as able to attack and disengage on command, which Wall (2016, 867) says imbued certain qualities to the dog as a "hygienic, civilized force, the political and cultural force of the German shepherd [...]". He concludes his argument by suggesting that, historically, dogs are affective icons that conjure

¹⁰³ Following a clerk reporting Brown for stealing cigarillos from a convenience store, the teenager was stopped by Wilson on a nearby road, Canfield Drive. Wilson alleges that Brown obstructed him from opening his police door and proceeded to punch him in the face through the window of his car. A struggle ensued after Wilson reached for his gun to defend himself from Brown, resulting in Wilson chasing Brown down the road. Eyewitnesses in the memorandum compiled by the United States justice department state that Wilson shot at Brown when he charged toward him (Pather 2018, 8-9).

¹⁰⁴ Trayvon Martin, a teenager from Sanford, Florida was walking home from a convenience store with his hoodie up when Zimmerman, then acting as a neighbourhood watch coordinator in his gated community, chased and shot the unarmed teenager. For a more detailed account, refer to Pather (2018, 6).

¹⁰⁵ BLM also stages protests and site activations, such as the falling of a statue of slave merchant Edward Colston in Bristol, England, or the removal of the statue of Robert E. Lee (1807—1870), in Richmond, Virginia.

an atavistic relation between civilization and savagery with the tamed beast inflicting fear and harm on the bodies of the subjugated.¹⁰⁶

Wall (2016, 861) positions the attacking police dog image as a “dialectical image”, following Benjamin’s (1999 [1982], 462) conception of an image where past and present meet to convey an unresolved issue or a meeting of meanings. Although I agree with this assessment, I also contend the attacking police dog to be a migrating image, or *Bilderwanderung*, to use Warburg’s terminology, in an increasingly connected network of images (Schankweiler and Wüschne 2019, 106). The *Bilderwanderung* is a term that Warburg ([1929] 2009, 281) used to describe the movement of Antiquity and Renaissance images through time and space. Warburg’s ([1929] 2009, 283) idea of the migrating image refers to the appropriation of existing gestures by artists as part of, in his words, “external expression of self-consciousness”. In the context of his usage of the term, he describes the image as a syncretism of the past infused with the personal, the political and the cultural illustrating a burgeoning cultural memory (Warburg [1929] 2009, 283).

Although the attacking police dog may not be a conscious re-imagining of an icon in the Warburgian sense, the reoccurrence of the icon through time and space may point to an increased awareness of how the particular (the micro) relates to the whole (the meta). In this sense, the image of the police dog is potentially an affective icon not just because of its atavistic history, but because of the sense gained by witnessing the concurrent spread of similar imagery at that time (Mitchell 1994, 48). The images are intensive because they show the affects of a savage, bestial attack on a body in a public space; however, they are further intensified by the occurrence of the repeated image, which simulates the virtual image. However, I would argue, one does not get the impression of the frequency of the image without the ability to zoom out from the individual image and witness the resonance via an interface. Without the perspective of a screen or without the presence of an optical imaginary, how would one understand the persistence of certain images on a universalised scale?

Alan Trachtenberg (1978, 842) writes that early social documentary photographers realised that communicating their political arguments required participation via “metalanguage”. Speaking specifically about Hine’s approach to photography, which included lectures, contextual images and impactful captions, Trachtenberg (1978, 838) suggests that despite using a “straight” or “direct” approach, a single image was not enough to effectively portray an argument for Hine. He suggests that in Hine’s work, a “metaphorical” view of photography is adopted, which he defines as activating a shared understanding of

¹⁰⁶ Wasilczuk (2023, 1132-1134) substantiates Wall’s statement by sharing colonial examples where dogs were used as punishment by the Spanish against the indigenous Caribbeans. Further, she states that dogs were frequently used to regulate the movements of slaves on the American plantations.

circumstances, which he characterises as “work” (Trachtenberg 1978, 838). Instead of a photograph merely showing what was there, the storytelling aspect of photography connects the viewer with what is being shown, the surrounding context and the meaning behind the image, which turned it into, in his words, an “image symbol” because the photographer intervened in narrativising the photograph (Trachtenberg 1978, 841). The photographer, thus, sets the scene surrounding the photograph so that it is experienced rather than just viewed.

The idea of the photographer “intervening” in the taking of the photograph is controversial in any type of reportage style, particularly in photojournalism and documentary photography, where there is a question of how much the photographer should mediate when photographing a scene (Mäenpää 2014, 92-93). Trachtenberg (1978, 838) shows that the idea of the “unmediated” or objective photograph is founded in the Romantic-modernist tradition where, in his words, a “pure” image can be achieved.¹⁰⁷ Nonetheless, as demonstrated by the examples above as well as the examples in the previous chapter, photographs require context to be understood. Trachtenberg (1978, 842), thus, suggests that the (documentary) image should rather be viewed as unclear until made translucent rather than inherently evident:

[...] the manifest image is an opacity; it achieves transparency only by the viewer's successive recoveries of texts, the rings of connotation that layer the image and focus it as a viewer's experience; the recovered texts include a metatext which reflects upon the very process which is the work of the image: symbolic storytelling. The viewer, then, insofar as one enters into a fully conscious dialogue with the image, apprehends his or her own identity as subject. One finds oneself inside the image, a constituent of the process whereby the image coerces the world to a meaning. The picture is not a meaning already achieved, but a scene in which a meaning (and thus a subject) is produced.

I summarise Trachtenberg's argument here: a photograph can only become politically argumentative as work, which involves the viewer being compelled by the photographer through the image by a sense of personalisation. Trachtenberg's image symbol, like Rancière's imageness and Mitchell's imagetext, suggests that a photograph's capacity to create personal connection is not achieved solely through its visual aspects, but also in its ability to suggest a meaning beyond what is directly shown by connecting it to non-photographic texts or other representations that may draw the viewer into the narrative.

The so-called personalisation of politics or the “particularism” of social issues is an integral part of the representation of NSMs (Laclau 1994, 12-13; Korostelina 2007, 2). As Ernesto Laclau (1994, 11-12) shows, a conflicting relationship between the “particular” and

¹⁰⁷ He conceptualises the pure image as a perspective from which any representation is viewed as unmediated (Trachtenberg 1978, 834).

the “universal” begins to emerge in the twentieth century as political communication became more global. Political groups began to, contradictorily, assert their “differential identities”, to use Laclau’s term, by appealing to universal meaning. In order to suggest a universalised cause, a group must be able to delineate the parameters of that cause, which is achieved by creating a common adversary. However, he emphasises that a balance must be struck between “pure particularism”, which risks decreasing the global significance of a cause and its inscriptional ability to appeal to what he calls a “universal perspective” (Laclau 1994, 15). According to Laclau (1994, 14-15), a group’s ability to universalise an issue leads to “hegemony”. Put more simply, when a representation connects with adjacently affiliated groups, then the groups begin to adopt more homogenised identity, united by representation. Laclau (1994, 16-18), thus, suggests that representation must simultaneously depict a universalised issue affectively in order to be adopted by another group.

Laclau (2009, 75) implies that the connection between the political groups is derived “metonymic[ally], where there is a suggestion of a relationship through shared representation. Using this logic, through similar imagery like the attacking police dog, groups such as the Civil Rights Movement, the anti-apartheid movement and, eventually, BLM become ideologically affiliated through the suggestion of a shared cause.¹⁰⁸ According to Håkan Thörn (2006, 4, 16) the advent of “new media” such as television, handheld cameras, and tabloid journalism advanced the conditions of the hybridised political space where political issues were highly visualised and networked. As Thörn (2006, 56) shows, the anti-apartheid movement, in particular, actively campaigned outside of South Africa’s borders in order to internationalise the issues occurring in the country.

The efforts to globalise South African issues led to what Thörn (2006, 61) refers to as a shared “consciousness” about the social injustices black South Africans faced in the postwar era. The creation of a visual narrative of shared issues thus compounded the visual arguments of the NSMs, particularly as similar images proliferated on the world stage, aptly summarised by Vivian (2007, 490) as the following: “The image so defined does not refer to a single picture, photograph, or any other discrete visual artifact; it refers, instead, to a web of sociopolitical relations in which a field of perception, observation, or interpretation in which an array of subjects participate, and from which they derive competing, even irreconcilable, grounds for truth claims and value judgments”. In the era of NSMs, the political image is thus produced and consumed by a public increasingly aware of the importance of how images form realities and act as points of connection. I argue that with the advent of SNS and

¹⁰⁸ Laclau (1994, 18) also suggests that the consequence of political groups forming a universalised perspective is the loss of their particularism. An example of a shared cause usually articulated in the representations of all three groups is the theme of violence of the State versus the non-violence of the activist groups.

smartphone technology, the ability for imagic reference becomes pronounced, which is evident in the iconic appropriation in the iconology of modern-day social movements.

4.5 Documentary in the Digital Era: Experiencing Black Lives Matter Through the Works of Dee Dwyer Jonts @deedwyerjonts

What happens as image creation and circulation become more pronounced in the digital age, particularly with the advent of SNS? Bogre (2019, 95) argues that the very landscape of image-making has shifted. She states that whereas in the past, photographs have focussed more on memory-making and the capturing of the particular, the digital era has seen an emphasis on “experience” and connecting to the many in the post-photographic era (Bogre 2019, 96-105). Post-photography, defined by Joan Fontcuberta (2015, 6), is “[...] photography that flows in the hybrid space of digital sociability and is a consequence of visual overabundance”. The post-photographic is not so much about signalling an “end” of photography, but rather what Fontcuberta (2015, 10) refers to as the “going beyond” the photograph. He additionally implies that post-photography is not solely concerned with the technology of photography but rather the shifting nature of the image as photography becomes more ubiquitous and widely practised.

As both Bogre (2019, 95-96) and Fontcuberta (2015, 11) posit, photographs in the age of the smartphone are immediate and highly produced. Andreia Alves de Oliveira (2016, 72) states that the pervasion of smartphone technology has led to an ever-present image where pictures can be produced and shared virtually anywhere. The idea of the ever-present image is shared by Nadav Hochman (2014, 3) with his conception of the “social media image”, a concept that suggests that the format of SNS has shifted the experience and dispensation of imagery to a constant now via the data stream. Hochman (2014, 4) further states that social media has created an unprecedented access to information where photographs are taken, circulated and processed nearly simultaneously. Further, social media platforms enable a system of retrieving and sorting visual information facilitated through username tagging, hashtags, and location tracking among other forms of metadata that allow for the traversal of the sites. Hochman (2014, 4-5) posits that the data systems of social media sites, thus, inspire a more collective type of image creation that encourages image interaction rather than image consumption. Importantly, Hochman (2014, 6), however, emphasises that instead of creating a sense of “no-time”, social media platforms facilitate a sense of layered time where spatial and temporal constraints are broken down. The data-stream represents a sense of accessibility to images, but also a disjointed experience with them as images do not linger in the stream unless they are archived. Fontcuberta (2015, 6) concurs with Hochman in suggesting that photographs are now primed for circulation and sociability.

Bogre (2019, 98), writing on the documentary image in the digital age, puts forth that there is an epistemological shift in documentary practice. Whereas in the past, a perfected camera technique was associated with truth, in the era of mobile phones, grainier photos are accepted as more real than an overly fabricated photograph (Bogre 2019, 96). Fontcuberta (2015, 12) proposes that the advent of digital manipulation technologies, such as Adobe Photoshop, has not led to an easily fooled public, but rather a more acute audience aware of the prospect of manipulation when viewing a photograph.¹⁰⁹ A consequence of the increased flow of images in the Internet age is also an access to older photographs while confronted with newer ones. Stephen Mayes (2014, 35) writing about the shift in photographic production and consumption with smartphone technology, “Photography now exists in a world that is fluent in visual metaphor and understands the image beyond the limitations of the merely representational”. In other words, like Fontcuberta, Mayes suggests that photographs are met with unprecedented scepticism and a pronounced awareness of a global consumption of imagery. Put differently, an image does not merely show its content but speaks to a genealogy of imagery beyond its frame. In this final section, I analyse photographs taken by a BLM supporter Dee Dwyer Jonts. Jonts’s photographs are case studies of the movement of photographic political activism in the age of social media and a clear example of the post-photographic moment.



Figure 4.6: *The New Black Panther Party*. Photograph by Dee Dwyer Jonts, 2020. Washington D.C. <https://www.instagram.com/deedwyerjonts/?hl=en>.

In 2020, the death of 46-year-old George Floyd on 29 May, at the knee of police officer Derek Chauvin in Minneapolis, Minnesota, triggered a resurgence of the BLM movement.

¹⁰⁹ Adobe Photoshop is a photo-manipulation programme that was founded in 1982 by John Warnock and Charles Geschke (Norr 2024).

Washington D.C, the capital of the United States. As a native of Washington D.C, Jonts provides a unique and intimate perspective on the participants of the social movement, as captured in her shot of the *New Black Panther Party* (NBPP) (Fig. 4.6) posted in August 2020.¹¹⁰ Fig. 4.6 depicts BLM protesters dressed in typical Black Panther outfits such as military-inspired garb, black berets and black sunglasses; however, the photograph is contemporised with the addition of COVID-19 face masks.¹¹¹ Without the addition of the masks and inclusion of the Instagram interface, the black and white photograph might be mistaken at first glance for a picture of the original Black Panthers at a Civil Rights protest, which I have included here as Fig. 4.7.

Although Jonts refers to her works as “document(s)” of the protest, Jonts’ photograph does not pretend to be objective or pretend to capture an unbiased portrayal of the scene. Looking at Fig. 4.6, the *contre-plongée* angle highlights the position of the photographer in the framing of the shot. There is an admission by Jonts in the caption that she is a BLM supporter, which provides her perspective on the scene captured. Nonetheless, as a street photograph capturing the BLM social movement, the image carries a documentary spirit similar to the documentary photographs that constitute the Civil Rights Movement protest archive.

Aside from the quality, the locations, and the timestamps on the images, there are striking similarities shared between Figs. 4.6 and 4.7. Both images are taken at an upward angle, with city buildings rising above the protesters’ heads. There is a conscious aesthetic choice of a black and white film or filter, as well as a focus on the dynamic actions of black Civil Rights activists protesting in the city street. Considering the media climate of the 1960s, the Black Panther Party were likely aware that their march would be photographed for local and international news circuits. The Black Panther movement meticulously constructed their visual activism from the uniformity of their outfits to their choice of hairstyles (Vargas 2009, 96). For example, the use of the afro was associated with a sense of pride in the “natural” presentation of black beauty. The use of the clenched fist symbol, for many of the black revolutionary movements of the 1960s to 1970s, was a conscious appropriation of Marxist-

¹¹⁰ The Black Panthers were a black nationalist movement founded by college students Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton in 1966. The group advocated prominently for African American rights in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s.

¹¹¹ COVID-19 is a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus which led to a worldwide pandemic in 2020. As of writing, the spread of the disease continues to affect countries with the disease affecting the poor, elderly, disabled and indigenous people disproportionately (*United Nations*, n.d.).

Leninist symbolism to show an affiliation with the socialist workers movement (Cleaver 1969, 3).



Figure 4.7: *The Black Panthers March in Protest of the 1968 Trial of Co-founder Huey P. Newton.* Photographer unknown, attributed to Bettmann Archive/Getty Images, 1968. Oakland.
<https://www.insider.com/black-panther-party-what-is-huey-newton-2020-6>.

The appropriation of the Black Panthers' original symbolism in Jonts's image is not coincidental but is rather part of a conscious choice by the individuals to communicate a united collective identity with the original Black Panther movement (more clearly expressed by the adopting of the name "New Black Panther Party" (Vargas 2009, 96). The affects of the symbolism associated with the original Black Panther party is then potentially transferred to the NBPP (Laclau 2009, 75). Simultaneously, Jonts's appropriates the message of the NBPP movement to elevate her own BLM activism. The conscious perpetuation of the imagery then associates the activism of the BLM movement with the ideologies of the Civil Rights Movement.

Although there is a suggestion of a correlation between the advocacy of the Black Panthers and the NBPP through the images, the de facto connection between the groups may also be gravely simplistic. According to a report facilitated by the *Anti-Defamation League* (2014, 3), original Black Panthers members, such as Bobby Seale and David Hilliard, have distanced themselves from the NBPP because of their perceived anti-Jewish, anti-white and anti-cop sentiments. Although there was a sense of radicalism in the original Black Panthers' movement tenets in positing that the United States governmental system needed to be completely overhauled in the name of Black Nationalism, their calls for black self-defence are very different to the outright advocacy of violence that the NBPP promotes (Harris 2001, 409-410). For example, the NBPP has repeatedly called for violence against Zionist Jews, denied the Holocaust and advocated for the killing of police officers who have

been accused of police brutality (*Anti-Defamation League* 2014, 8-9). Thus, although there is a shared iconicity between the two images, additional context is still required to fully understand the nuances behind the images.

Jonts's photograph, therefore, shows an awareness of iconographic precedence and a conscious use of that iconicity to put forward a political argument (Merrill 2023, 137). The appropriation in the image seems to confirm Merrill's (2023, 137) statement that iconicity can be conferred to elevate an image's affects. Further, by virtue of being uploaded to Instagram, Jonts's images are provided with instantaneous feedback via the 'like' and the 'comment' functions, which may serve to affirm the photograph's resonance with other viewers. Instantaneous feedback, as previously argued, is a function of the social media image unavailable to past documentary photographers. High levels of feedback also make images more visible to other users via the algorithms on social media sites that prioritise posts with more user engagement (Hochman 2014, 6). In the case of Jonts's image, the visual activism of the NBPP provides a sense of a shared cause that the Black Panther party has previously faced, as well as the sense of a continuation of a social issue, despite distance in time and space. However, as also shown, although there are shared tenets between the original Black Panthers, NBPP and BLM, the particular aspects that may divide the ideologies of the movements are also erased in the social media image.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I explored examples of photographic political arguments through time with a focus on documentary photography. Using the works of Duggan-Cronin and Mofokeng's collection in the *Black Photo Album* as a starting point, I portray a competing imageness of black South Africans in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Though the ethnographic photography of the time largely represented Africans as one-dimensional, nearly contemporaneous counter-images were produced that challenged the colonial gaze (Du Plessis 2022, 157-158). Further, using Thomson's photographs in *Street Life in London*, I illustrated how early social documentary photography relied on an ethnographic gaze to assert the racial otherness of London's poor in the nineteenth century. The purpose of this analysis was to show how the particular or local circumstances of Thomson's photographs, the plight of London's poor, was narrativised through the iconicity of the imperial gaze. The photographing of London's poor is thus shaped by the co-present Victorian travel books and ethnographic photographs, signalling a sensuous approach to early photographic political argumentation (Belknap 2014, 94-95).

I additionally analysed selected photographs from the early-twentieth century pointing to the duality of early social documentary images as both encompassing the aesthetic-historical moment and as failed attempts to authentically present social issues (Rosler [1981]

1991, 317). For example, as an aesthetic-historical photograph, *Migrant Mother* poignantly captures the hardships of the Great Depression; however, the image is simultaneously a fragmented view of Thomson's actual lived conditions. A similar dynamic occurs with Evans' portrayal of the Burrough's family, who reclaim their image by fixing their hair and wearing their best clothing. Although the photograph, embedded in the modernist paradigm, attempts to fixate on the subject within its frame to create a seamless experience of the scene pictured, the subjects' resistance within the image enacts concurrent politics (Rancière 2009a, 25).

In Parks's *Segregation in the South* series, there is an attempt to construct the experience of racism for those who may not have a direct understanding of what it may look or feel like. The black families photographed in the series are well-put-together, middle-class families who perform everyday activities in the atmosphere of Segregation. The images, as featured in *LIFE* magazine whose primary market is middle-class liberal Americans, are aesthetic appeals that make a 'hidden' politics known to the public. The photographs also preambles to the more sensational images that emerge in the 1960s during Civil Rights Movement and the anti-apartheid protests.

The similar images that emerged from the Civil Rights Movement and the anti-apartheid protests in the intensive media environment of the late twentieth century created a connection between the movements, fuelled by a shared iconicity. The increased visualisation of protest events was due to what Sontag (2003, 81) refers to as the CNN effect, where there was a mutual effort by the protesters to visualise their protests and an increased push by the media to focus attention on certain events. The result is an unprecedented visualisation of politics in the postwar era, which contributed to increased international attention on certain social issues, an amalgamation in the representation of political groups and an increased awareness of how political imagery is witnessed on a global stage (Laclau 1994, 14-15; Thörn 2006, 4, 16).

In the digital era, images are seamlessly uploaded onto Internet sites, which enables an instantaneous representation, circulation and engagement with political issues (Hochman 2014, 6). By analysing Jonts's photograph of the NBPP, I showed the 'echo' of the iconology of the original Black Panther movement in the image. I also demonstrated how Jonts appropriates the iconicity of the Black Panther movement to amplify her own BLM activism. However, I additionally illustrated how a conflation of the movements via their shared imagery poses a threat of decontextualisation owing to an explicit distancing of the original Black Panthers movement from NBPP.

The examples used in this chapter express the need for an expanded definition of iconicity that acknowledges the shaping of political imagery as part of a *sensus communis*. By making visible some of the invisible factors shaping the politics of the images, I highlight

an interactivity of texts through time and space that may be ignored by just focusing on the representation of an image as encompassing a political event. The images could be seen as interacting with one another in a network, where one image affects the next but also retroactively interacts with a past image. The interaction of the images is further facilitated by the ability to zoom in and out of moments and to juxtapose photographs via the tactile screen of the smartphone, tablet or a touchscreen laptop. The next chapter will zoom in on the documentary photographs of the apartheid-era as aesthetic images that construct the political issues of apartheid and function as images of resistance by constructing and disrupting the logic of the apartheid state.

CHAPTER FIVE INEQUALITY VISUALISED: APARTHEID-ERA DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHS AS AESTHETIC IMAGES

5.1 Introduction

Photographs are carriers of the sensuous, the symbolic, and the iconic. They are vehicles of a sense of truth, yet simultaneously they are subverters of expectation. Photographs reveal circumstances that speak to the present, yet they also produce memories of times past. They reveal afflictions that continue to plague humanity, such as famine, unequal displays of violence and the after-effects of war. Photographs are also fortune-tellers by pointing to times yet to come.

In the nineteenth to early twentieth-century, photography represented a technologically mediated access to reality, primarily because of its ability not just to mechanically replicate vision, but also to transcend the limits of ordinary vision (Benjamin [1932] 1972; Bogre 2019, 92-95).¹¹² From its inception, photography has cemented its place among other representational mediums, such as painting or sculpture, as chemically ordained. The imprint of the photograph stood as proof of the undeniable occurrence of something or someone in time and space. Photographs have thus been heralded as material testimonies: they are proof of existence, lives lived, and events having occurred (Benjamin [1932] 1972, 4; Barthes 1980, 76; Sontag 2003, 21).

Beyond showing what has been captured, there is an immaterial aspect of photography that contributes to its appeal. The immaterial quality of the photograph that speaks to meaning beyond the physical world has been attributed to the sublime, *punctum*, the imaginary, or the virtual. As argued in Chapter Three, this intangible aspect of photography is what ultimately contributes to its political potential. A photograph that *just* shows dire or troubling circumstances is not enough to stir or agitate sentiment unless it is connected to an ongoing issue or an unresolved problem in motion. When photographs are paired with other representational systems in the form of montage, juxtaposition or captions, the political potential of photography is fully realised (Benjamin [1932] 1972, 6). Despite being conceived of as the medium that most closely replicates visible reality, an understanding of a photograph often pulls from seemingly disparate reference points to put across messages wherein the photograph enters the realm of the image (Benjamin [1932] 1972, 6, 460; Rancière 2019, 47-48).

¹¹² Benjamin ([1932] 1972, 6) writes that in 1839, photography's role in technology and science was cemented by French politician François Arago (1786-1853) in the National Assembly.

As argued in Chapter Two, with iconic photographs, the full potential of photography as a political tool is grasped. Iconic photographs are aesthetic images because they configure a viewer's relationship with what they are seeing (Rancière 2009a, 25). They represent the social mediation of the visual; they can establish and produce the norms of visibility, and simultaneously constitute the visual paradigms that come to define future eras; therefore, they can even speak to relations of visibility beyond the eras of their creation (Bartmanski 2014, 174-177).

Although there is a general understanding of what constitutes the iconic in photography, there is less consensus on *how* images are socially reified to represent something beyond their immediate contents to express political or transcendent messages. Rancière and Mitchell represent somewhat opposing views on the question of how images express their politics—at the core of their disagreement is how images are understood. In other words, whether the expressive qualities of images are mediated by language or if language mediates the reception of images (Bartmanski 2014, 166).

Aesthetic images, dialectical images or images of rupture make visible the unequal relations and the force of the collective (*demos*) over those in power (Rancière 2009a, 25; Rancière 2010b, 21). Importantly, they create sensible connections by showing bodies emplaced in living environments and movement(s). Assertions of visualised equality have characterised the iconology of South African PCI, ranging from the apartheid era to the iconology of more contemporary movements such as FMF and #AmINext.

This thesis has thus far unpacked its theoretical and methodological frameworks, introduced the gaps in the literature on icons and iconicity, and generally applied some of the concepts to a history of photography as activism. In Chapter Five, the curated apartheid-era photography of Catalogue Set B will be interpreted first via an iconological methodology, and then the iconicities of the catalogue set will be determined. I will then explain how the images of apartheid potentially speak to the anti-apartheid narratology using Rancière's (2019, 48) concept of the aesthetic image, as well as postulate on how the images of Catalogue Set B potentially resonate with globalised issues on inequality and race through their iconicity.

5.2 The Critical Documentary Photographs of Apartheid

The struggle against apartheid must be understood fundamentally as an ideological regime change from a white-supremacist oligarchy to a non-racist democracy. The anti-apartheid movement is represented by the social movements that overturned the system. The political groups associated with the anti-apartheid movement include, but are not limited to, the ANC,

the PAC, the AAM and the Black Consciousness Movement.¹¹³ The documentary photographs of the era, along with other symbols of resistance constitute the social, political, and economic conditions of the time. Visualisation of the apartheid regime was a crucial tool in informing other countries about the social inequalities occurring in South Africa. Through the leaking of imagery of apartheid to international media channels, there was gradual international pressure and sanctions in spheres such as trade and sport on the South African government to end apartheid (Thörn 2006, 153-154).

As stated in Chapter One, Kroll (2011, 58) distinguishes between two types of documentary photographs that emerged from the apartheid era, namely, traditional documentary photographs and critical documentary photographs. To recap, traditional documentary photographs, according to Kroll (2011, 58), are photographs taken by the media and are produced either by the media for sensationalist purposes or for social reform reasons. Critical documentary photographs, through their visual staging and framing, actively challenge the capitalist apartheid-system.

Kroll's interpretation of traditional documentary photography suggests that the photographs, even if advertently, relegate underprivileged people to lesser roles and capitalises on the underprivileged by virtue of creating images for popular consumption. Thus, traditional documentary photographs include the struggle photography captured for the press and those photographs that may reduce their subjects to archetypes (Kroll 2011, 58). No explicitly traditional documentary photographers are named by Kroll, but she implies that ethnographic documentary photographs and social documentary photographs that capture black South Africans in tribal settings and dress may fall into this category. Thus, photographs taken by Duggan-Cronin and Constance Stuart Larrabee (1914-2000) may qualify as traditional documentary photographs.

In critical documentary photography, as stated by Kroll (2011, 58), there is a staging of the visual that pictorially speaks to the broader unequal political, social, and economic circumstances that both define and critique the apartheid structures. Instead of hyper-focusing on the struggles of singular subjects, critical documentary photographs may focus on both the background and foreground of an image to challenge Western scopic regimes. Concurrently, I would argue that there is a potency in these images to speak to global issues that occurred parallel to apartheid, such as those challenged by the Civil Rights Movement and the anti-Vietnam War Movement. Thörn (2006, 7) refers to the movements that emerged

¹¹³ The anti-apartheid narrative as representing the communication against apartheid by various social movements against apartheid differs from the official AAM mentioned throughout this thesis.

following the postwar era that actively visualise their tenets and encourage a global collective action against culturally expressed issues as NSMs.¹¹⁴

Cultural expression, according to Thörn (2006, 7), emphasises a concerted effort by NSMs to make their tenets digestible and expressible by media organisations where their causes could be immediately understood and recognised by a widespread audience. Thörn (2006, 117) classifies the anti-apartheid movement as an NSM because he argues that there was an intense effort by anti-apartheid activists to visualise the anti-apartheid movement to purposefully create an ongoing narrative about the injustices occurring in South Africa.

Before analysing Catalogue Set B, I would like to modify Kroll's argument to widen the scope of critical documentary photographs. Although I agree with Kroll's delineation of critical documentary photographs as critiquing the unequal capitalist system of apartheid, I widen the definition to include all documentary photographs that meaningfully use their aesthetic configuration to critique the systematic inequalities propagated by capitalist systems (Solaroli 2015, 1; Alexander 2010, 782). This modified explanation allows for photographs such as Parks's *Segregation in the South* series to be included under the critical documentary genre because of their pointed visual critique of Jim Crow. Like the documentary photographs from apartheid, Park's series visualises and makes visceral the material segregation and contradictions of the racial inequalities under Segregation.

The selected photographs for Catalogue Set B in this study are also classified as critical documentary photographs as they show specific scenes that speak to the lived experiences of apartheid for different race groups, ages, social classes, and genders. As stated in Chapter One, the coding of the selected photographs by Goldblatt and Cole should not be interpreted as representing the entirety of the anti-apartheid movement iconology. Rather, the selected examples are read as aesthetic images that potentially contribute to an anti-apartheid narrative through forming an anti-apartheid iconicity.¹¹⁵¹¹⁶ It should be noted that the following breakdown of the iconology of Catalogue Set B does not address the

¹¹⁴ Although Thörn refers broadly to the "postwar" era, there are different types of cultural expressions that emerge from social movements throughout the decades. Concurrently, not every cultural expression emerges from activists, as some of the most striking images representing social movements were taken by the mainstream press.

¹¹⁵ I have thus far been careful of labelling Goldblatt as an anti-apartheid activist because he has repeatedly stated in interviews that his photographs were not created as tools to combat apartheid (Krantz 2008, 295). Nonetheless, his photographs do still reflect an anti-apartheid aesthetic and speak to the political conditions of apartheid in a critical manner and thus contribute to the anti-apartheid narratology.

¹¹⁶ It should be noted here that Rory Bester's (2015) doctoral thesis also analyses Goldblatt's archive as aesthetic images, in the Rancièrian sense, and his work goes into much more detail on contemporaneous literature that were released with Goldblatt's photographic publications, as well as the many political and social nuances that informs Goldblatt's work. My argument more broadly focusses on analysing the selected apartheid-era images as part of the apartheid-era iconicity and examines the ways that they potentially lend an iconicity to other politically charged images in the digital age, there is thus much less attention on the various extenuating factors that informed both Goldblatt and Cole's work. This approach does not dismiss the work of the extremely dense network of activists, photographers, authors, and politicians that led to the overthrowing of the apartheid-state.

documents and the themes in numerical order, but rather attends them according to the flow of argument.

In the critical documentary photography of Catalogue Set B, the photographs both define the habitual social routines of apartheid and subtly expose its mechanisms of repression. In Rancièrian (2010b, 24) terms, they construct aesthetic issues because they articulate a politics about the reality of apartheid. Where the “aesthetic” translates to the visually framed reality presented, the “issues” relate to how the social issues are presented as politics. Put more simply, aesthetic images relate to a category of images that point to social issues by configuring a “politics of visibility”, to use Rancière’s (2009a, 35) term in their contents.

Importantly, Rancière (2010b, 24) delineates aesthetics as a “form of experience”, wherein the presence of the image creates an interpretative gap which can be filled by the articulation of a novel sensible relation.¹¹⁷ This relation can only be filled when the subjects are cognitively repositioned in manner autonomous to their actual relations in space and time or what Rancière (2010b, 20) refers to as “heterotopia”. Rancière’s (2010b, 20) concept of heterotopia suggests that there is a neutral state where the relations of the “other” are made sensible and can thus be reconceptualised.¹¹⁸

Articulated differently, within the logic of apartheid, the actual lived relations of the subjects do not represent politics; however, the relations viewed autonomously as an aesthetic image or as a representation of the apartheid system signifies the politics. With his conception of the aesthetic, Rancière (2010b, 19) reconciles the Kantian transcendental idealist view of aesthetics with a materialist view of politics by asserting certain (aesthetic) sites as autonomous to the relations of the everyday. These sites are points where the norms of sociality can be contested, even if only conceptually. Politics represents an *a posteriori* disruption or a “rupture” to the norms of visibility (Rancière 2010b, 20).

In order to rupture the norms of visibility, the image must first create dissensus within the viewer or interpreter. In other words, for the politics of visibility to cause dissonance, the interpreter must be able to first tap into the habitual relations that define the sociality of apartheid. What then defines the social? Durkheim ([1895] 1982, 52) presents the idea of “social facts”, which designates “manners of acting, thinking and feeling external to the individual, which are invested with a coercive power of virtue of which they exercise control over him”. He separates socialised actions from individual functions by suggesting that there

¹¹⁷ In his lecture “Age of the World Picture” ([1950] 2002, 57), Martin Heidegger states that the movement of viewing art as “object[s] of experience”, or “*Erlebens*” that convey existence as a crucial aspect defining modernity.

¹¹⁸ Rancière (2010b, 20-21) defines other as “the effect of a reconfiguration of the distribution of places, identities, and capacities. He also distinguishes his heterotopia as different to Michel Foucault’s heterotopia in that it is separated to other physical places and is defined by its neutrality.

are routine feelings and actions which are influenced by the policing of others; these routines become more structurally entrenched in the transition from community to society (Durkheim [1895] 1982, 53-54). Further, Durkheim ([1895] 1982, 56-57) identifies the conditions whereby social facts make themselves evident: "The presence of this power is in turn recognisable because of the existence of some pre-determined sanction, or through the resistance that the fact opposes to any individual action that may threaten it". In this sense, Durkheim positions social interactions as resulting from the material circumstances that both dictate interactions and delineates the limitations of the social on individuals, even without explicit utterance of those limitations.

From a more contemporary perspective, Couldry and van Dijck (2015, 2) define the social as "a site of necessary, and necessarily contested, representation of whatever it is that binds large domains of human interaction together and, second, approaching the particular configuration of resources and representations that generates the social at any one time and space as itself in need of sociological and cultural unpacking within "a properly materialist theory of culture" (Hall, 1996, p. 48). Couldry and van Dijck, thus, imply that "the social" is defined by the negotiation and production of representations through communication.

Whereas Couldry and van Dijck repeat Hall's (1997, 5-6) constructionist approach as seeing cultural representations as generative of the social, Solaroli emphasises the importance of (iconic) images as centralised points of reference in meaning-making. He states, "Social life is widely marked by cultural icons. Iconic images, personages, objects, buildings, brands and events constitute deep-rooted and widely shared reference points, which materially embody, visually crystallize, aesthetically express and symbolically condense experiences and meanings" (Solaroli 2015, 1). Apartheid-era documentary photographs, accordingly, could be seen to reproduce the norms of the everyday by reflecting the social facts of apartheid and constituting those issues aesthetically.

Fuyuki Kurasawa (2015, 5) consolidates the social as both the site of representative communication and the mechanisms through which social life is perceived by offering the term "visual constructivism". He describes visual constructivism as:

[...] the mutual constitution and interweaving of the social and the visual, the first corollary of which is the fact that visibility is a social construct to the extent that it ought not narrowly be perceived as composed only of images, but also of the sets of social relations and practices of creating, viewing, and making sense of images, as well as texts, discourses, and modes of thinking about these images [Bal 2003; Becker 1982; Mitchell 2005; Wolff 1993, 2012.]. (Kurasawa 2015, 5)

From the visual constructivist view, looking at the spaces and subjects reflected in apartheid-era photographs necessitates reading them in the atmosphere of repression and coercion due to the ubiquitous censorship, structures of material racial segregation and the unequal roles that people occupied due to the structural separation. Further, the environment is doubly restricted by the mechanisms of capitalism that limit social mobility, political power, and economic opportunities for non-whites.

Quintana (2020, 2) presents an opposing view to the constructivist view. Critiquing Guy Debord, Giorgio Agamben and Slavoj Žižek, she suggests that capitalist systems discourage internal resistance through a sense of “totality” (Quintana 2020, 2). Therefore, the photographs are not *reflections* but actively generate the politics of apartheid. Put another way, the photographs are not representations but construct the image-worlds of apartheid, where the dynamics of the pictured bodies produce the politics of apartheid’s lived experience (Quintana 2020, 1-2).

In the dynamics peculiar to Catalogue Set B, Goldblatt and Cole’s photographs present microcosms depicting the social relations of different people, largely those who lived in the Transvaal. The images are of the habitual actions, or social life, of apartheid. They show the complexity of the racial relations between the captured characters and symbolically speak to the relations within a bigger picture, both of apartheid and global issues that echo in the photographs.

In what follows, I will describe and explain some of the context surrounding the documents collected in Catalogue Set B, using both iconological and hermeneutic interpretation.¹¹⁹ The purpose of the following descriptions is to paint a picture of the social life of apartheid as portrayed through the documents and to inform them with contextual information that assists with a contemporary interpretation of them. As opposed to a purist iconological approach, the interpretation of the photographs will mix the pre-iconographical level, iconographical and iconological levels to create an encompassing view of the photographs.

The reasoning behind this methodological approach is owing to the polysemic nature of photographs, where their meaning is often informed by contextual factors such as prior-knowledge, other images, information provided by titles, captions, additional research, and rhetorical as well as affective associations. The reading of the photographs is further complicated by the fact that they are being interpreted in a time different from when they were produced, and thus, they are removed from their original medium and era of

¹¹⁹ The reader is encouraged to have a digital version of the “Aesthetics of Political Imagery” map open where they can zoom in and out of the images as they are discussed.

consumption. In the section following the iconological breakdown, I will argue how the photographs constitute and informs local and global iconicities.

5.3 The Iconology of Catalogue Set B

As mentioned in Chapter One, the selected photographs by Goldblatt aim a critical eye on rural relationships during apartheid. According to Andries du Toit (2017, 2), the rural relationships in South Africa showcased a type of heightened inequality owing to the exclusion of black labourers from urban life and social welfare as well as the reterritorialisation of black workers owing to the Native Land Act (1913):¹²⁰

From the beginning of the twentieth century, then, the rural hinterlands and the urban centres of South Africa were tightly yoked together in a relationship that was far from mutually beneficial. Fiscal demands and land hunger ensured that own agricultural production was not sufficient for black peasants' household survival: instead, they depended for food security on wage labour and participation in the formal economy. At the same time, political repression and segregation insured that those wages remained low. Additionally, the burden of social reproduction and welfare was displaced onto the impoverished rural areas (Du Toit 2018). The result was a system in which rural areas subsidised urban profits and urban development (du Toit 2017, 2).

5.3.1 Theme 4: Wealth and Racial Privilege

Looking at Goldblatt's images, the white subjects in the photographs are often sitting down, lying down, posing for the photographs or engaging in conversation (D2, D3, D5, D7, D8), whereas the black workers are often passively engaging in a form of labour.¹²¹ In images D1, D2, D3, D5, D6, D7, D8, D9, D29, there is a sense of dissonance in the presence of luxury and recreational activities concurrent to the acts of black labour. For example, In D1, a young black child wearing a chauffeur's hat pushes an older white child up a hill in a go-kart. The black child's back is hunched over while a dog trots next to the kart. The child's strained pose and the trotting gait of the dog suggest that the kart is moving at a slow pace, likely due to the weight of the older child. In D2, which depicts either the beginning or end of the child being pushed up the hill, the white child is smiling, and the black child's face conveys a seriousness that suggests that he is not engaged in play.

¹²⁰ The Native Land Act (1913) was a governmentally gazetted motion to dispossess black South Africans of their occupied land and move them to "bantustans" which were unfertile lands that made up 13% of the country (Walker 2014, 656-657).

¹²¹ Importantly, there are photographs of Goldblatt's that do not display Afrikaner farmers as passive while black labourers work. For example, in *Some Afrikaners Photographed* (1975), a photograph titled *Two men building a dam on the farm Drogedal or Droëdal in the Marico Bushveld, near Nietverdiend, Transvaal (North-West Province)*, (1964) shows two Afrikaner men building a dam on a plot. The photograph displays the intense physical strain on the men's bodies.

D2 is taken immediately before D1. In D2, the black child is referred to as *klonkie* in the caption, which is an offensive word for a young black person (DSAE, n.d.). The reference to the young white child as *kleinbaas*, Afrikaans for “small boss”, and the black child as a racial slur adds a multi-layered level of tension in the reading of the photograph. Though both subjects are children, one child has the privilege of enjoying the act of play whereas the other child is involved in the labour of the other child's fun. Based on the evidence of the photograph alone, there is a chance that it could be read that both children are participating in the karting activity; however, read with the caption, likely, only the white child is willingly participating and enjoying the act of play.

D3 presents a photograph taken in a kitchen, presumably on a farm. An elderly white man with a hat and glasses sits with his hands and legs crossed near an open door. Near the entrance, a young black boy, presumably six- or seven-years old peeks up at Goldblatt. There is a vague outline of another young child in the background of the photograph. The seated white subject is assumed to be the master of the household or at least a prominent member, as according to the patriarchal structure of white Afrikaner farmer households (Sylvain 2001, 718). The black children are assumed to be the children of black domestic workers or workers in the plot. As stated in Chapter One, there is an interesting interchange between the reference to the black child as *swart vuilgoed* in the caption, compared to the comfortability of the child in approaching the elderly man and Goldblatt in the photograph.

In D5 and D7, the photographs also show elderly white men who are seated and centred in the image, while black labourers stand working, either in the background (D5), or to the side of the frame (D7). In D5, a black labourer in the farm workshop works shirtless in the background conveying a muscular body, likely shaped by strenuous work. While the elderly white gentleman, identified as Flip du Toit by the caption, speaks to Goldblatt on the stoep of his workshop, the black male labourer blends in the background of the photograph, continuing with the routine work on the farm. The door frame creates a spatial separation of the black worker and Du Toit.

In D7, a domestic worker irons a dress barefoot in what is referred to as a *jukskei* encampment.¹²² There is no interaction between the two subjects in the photograph. The man stares at something out of frame while the woman is preoccupied with the ironing.¹²³ The man wears shoes, while the woman performs the laundry tasks barefoot. There is a stark juxtaposition between the somewhat relaxed pose of the white male subject and the labour of the black female domestic worker. Though the white male subject is sitting, there is

¹²² *Jukskei*, according to the Dictionary of South African English (DESA, n.d.), is “a game in which a bottle-shaped peg or 'skey'...is thrown at a stake planted in a sand pit”. *Jukskei* is a recreational game played mostly by Afrikaner people in South Africa.

¹²³ Outside of interacting with domestic workers, it would not have been common for white men and black women to associate with one another during apartheid (Gaitskell et al. 1983, 88).

some tension between his eyebrows and his mouth is set in a straight line. It is unclear whether the discomfort is caused by the presence of the photographer or another source. The domestic worker also carries tension in her face. She has dark shadows under her eyes, connoting to a lack of rest.

D8 portrays members identified as the “Nel” family in their bedroom. A white elderly gentleman lounges on a single bed while assumedly listening to a record on the gramophone on the table in front of him. The record on top of the pile on the table is by Christian singers Koos and Hester Nortjé. In the background, a woman enveloped by daylight, presumably the gentleman’s wife, exits the room. A photographic portrait of the ex-prime minister to South Africa, Hendrik Verwoerd (1901-1966), a political figure often titled “The Architect of Apartheid” sits on the wall next to the door leading out. The resting gentleman paints a figure of repose and leisure, where the portrait of Verwoerd speaks to the looming structural presence of apartheid in the private space.

In D6, a black miner’s eyes are downcast, and his expression conveys fear or discomfort as he stands next to a white man referred to as the “shiftboss” in the caption. According to Keith Breckenridge (1998, 669-671) hierarchical displays of masculinity underlined the unequal power relations between black and white South Africans in the mining system. It was not out of the ordinary for black mine workers to receive a *klap* or a hit from a white senior official as punishment for a perceived offence. Breckenridge (1998, 670) notes, “the relationship between white and black men was pre-eminently violent” in the underground.

D29 is a photograph by Cole that shows a domestic worker putting on a pillowcase in a room kitted with a dressing table, two single beds with backboards, and nightstands adorning Victorian-style lampshades. Unlike images D1-D8, the domestic worker is the sole subject of the photograph. The sidelong camera angle decentres the worker in the environment, labelled “opulent” by Cole. The strange angle of the camera distorts the photograph, creating a surreal environment enhanced by Cole’s caption that reads, “She lives on the edge of opulence, while her own world is bare”. Rebecca Ginsburg (2000, 84) writes about the role of the “back room” as both a lodging space for domestic workers and as a psychical entity. The back room was the domain where domestic workers lodged in the evening, mostly out of necessity as their homes were too far away and dangerous to travel back and forth every day (Ginsburg 2000, 85). Ginsburg (2000, 88-89) describes the back room as a lonely space where domestic workers were offered separate dining dishes, and their food was often limited to what their employers chose to give them. The use of discriminating language and occasional acts of violence is also described by Ginsburg (2000, 88) as a source of torment for many domestic labourers.

Whereas D1, D2, D3, D5, D6, D7, D8 and D29 show more intimate scenes that occurred in Randfontein and in the case of D29, a suburban home in an unnamed place in the Transvaal, D9 is a photograph of Goldblatt's that stages the public social racial dynamics that occurred on a day in 1980 in a Pick n Pay in Boksburg.¹²⁴ Four young Caucasian women hold signboards with different numbers on them. The women are in bathing suits and are wearing heels. The swimsuits, number placards, make-up, high heels, the addition of a stage as well as the title of the photograph suggest that the women are taking part in a beauty competition where their legs are being judged. In the background of the image, a crowd of individuals of different races, genders, and ages spectate the activities on stage. Children occupy the front of the stage, whereas the adults are further back. While the children look up at the scene in wonder, many of the black audience members look disgusted, bemused, or confused at the display. The photograph raises questions about the standards of beauty in the repressive environment. There is also a sense of absurdity in witnessing the hosting of a beauty competition in a family supermarket chain. The women wearing scanty swimsuits impart cognitive dissonance to a viewer, especially when considering the Christian conservative norms of apartheid (Struby 2018).

In the documents discussed, the photographs are framed in a way that performs the complex yet seemingly naturalised relations between the subjects pictured and the environments in which they lived. The immediate contents of the photographs themselves are usually not enough to offer a full comprehension of what is pictured and the surrounding context. To fully paint a picture of the scene, the title or caption often filling in the gaps in understanding. I offer the theme name "Theme 4: Wealth and Racial Privilege" to class photographs D1, D2, D3, D5, D6, D7, D8, D9, and D29. Recurrent motifs include black workers pictured next to white bosses, white individuals engaged in recreational or leisure activities, black workers engaged in labour in affluent surroundings, or surroundings that connote the comfortability of white people versus the hardships of black people. Aside from the visuals, the accompanying text sometimes alludes to the prejudice in the photographs, such as the use of racial slurs or diminutive terms.

5.3.2 Theme 2: Black Poverty and Suffering, Theme 3: Black People's Conflict with Police, Theme 5: Signage Designating Racial Separation, Theme 6: Crossing of Racial Barriers

The selected photographs by Cole that make Themes 2, 3, 5 and 6, in comparison, primarily document the ill-treatment and endurance of black South Africans under the many unfair

¹²⁴ Pick n Pay is a grocery-store chain which was founded in 1967 by Harry Goldin. Raymond Ackerman purchased a few chains of the store in 1967, eventually turning it into a franchise with stores across South Africa and Africa (*Pick n Pay Integrated Annual Report 2014*).

structural policies.¹²⁵ Theme 2, titled “Black poverty and suffering” includes documents D11, D13, D14, D15, D19, D20, D23, D26, D27. Reoccurring motifs include scenes of famine, improper resting conditions, restrictions of access due to the presence of police or signs, bodily indicators of poverty such as a lack of clothes, torn clothes or the presence of suitcases indicating a migratory lifestyle.

In D11, the title states that the photograph was taken of two black individuals who were in a white area illegally. Their hands are chained together in handcuffs. The photograph is an extreme close-up, with only the wrists and hands of the captives clearly visible. As there is not much information provided in the caption other than indicating why the individuals had been arrested, the viewer is led to question why they are handcuffed together and ethically, if their presence in a white-designated area warrants their arrest. D13 showcases an individual undergoing fingerprint processing for a pass so that he can work in a white area. The black gentleman wears a hodgepodge of tattered garments and is assisted by a more formally dressed man who presses his fingerprint onto a piece of paper. The photograph connotes the proceduralism involved in allowing black access to typically white areas and domains.¹²⁶

D14, D15, and D23 highlight the effects that dispossession, poverty and unfair education policies had on black children. In D14, a young child of only about three-years old clutches on to her torn, soiled dress with the remnants of her destroyed home behind her. She stands barefoot amongst pieces of brick while the caption reads that her home had been declared a “black spot”.¹²⁷ D15 focusses on a young black girl who the caption names as “Grace Matjila” tearing while holding her crying younger sister. The caption also discloses that both children are hungry and without clothes for school. Again, both children are wearing dirty, torn clothing. Following the natural interplay of presence versus absence when looking at an image such as this, one may wonder if Grace and her sister could acquire food and what happened to them in the aftermath of the photograph (Belting 2016, 235).

D23 is a striking photograph that portrays a young black boy sitting on his haunches with beads of sweat running down his face. He stares determinedly up at something out of frame, assumedly his teacher or a blackboard, as the caption states that he is in a “packed classroom”. Despite clear discomfort, the boy bears his writing utensil down on the notebook

¹²⁵ The wording here is not to imply that Goldblatt's photographs do not portray black poverty and suffering as there are various photographs from his portfolio, such as *Migrant workers waiting for train to Bechuanaland* (1952) and *9:00 PM, Going home. Marabastad-Waterval route: for most of the people in this bus, the cycle will start again tomorrow at between 2 and 3 am* (1984).

¹²⁶ Pass Laws have a long history in South Africa, spanning from 1790 when passes were required by slaves for movement through the Cape colony to their eventual elimination in 1985. Michael Savage (1986, 185) provides a statistic for black South Africans prosecuted by the Pass Laws stating, “During the period 1916-1984 over 17,745,741 Africans have been prosecuted under pass laws and influx control regulations”.

¹²⁷ The DESA defines as black spot as “A freehold area occupied by black people but surrounded by land designated for white occupation, and thus destined for expropriation and re-zoning in terms of Group Areas legislation; land in designated ‘white’ areas which was occupied by black people”.

or blackboard that he is holding, as if he is resolute to continue his education despite the uncomfortable conditions in the room.

The documents D19, D20 and D26 capture scenes of the migrant lifestyle many black Africans were forced to adopt during the apartheid era. According to Christo Vosloo (2020, 3-4), industrialism in the mid-nineteenth century created economic centres that necessitated the use of inexpensive labour. The mining industries and white businesses in cities are examples of industries that depended on black labour; however, because black people were not allowed to occupy white areas, many individuals were forced to migrate between the native reservations and the places where they worked.¹²⁸ Both D19 and D26 capture tribesmen in the middle of being processed for their tenure in the mines. The men carry suitcases, and some bear an expression of confusion on their faces as if they are unsure of what happens next.

The young man in D19 looks particularly unsure. He appears to be in his early twenties, and he holds his arms around himself, squatting on a makeshift seat which he made from one of his bags. He is barefoot and wears an oversized coat with an identity tag attached to his right wrist.

Unlike many of the other photographs by Cole, the men captured in D26 appear to be aware of his presence and the fact that he is taking a photograph of them. Two of the men stare curiously at him, while the other three men stare at other objects or people out of frame. Like many of the subjects in this theme, the man in the centre of the frame has torn pants. Other men in the photograph wear a mishmash of urban clothes and blankets.

D20 shows another perspective of migratory labour by showing the backs of men returning from the mines. The main subject in the photograph is an injured labourer who is using a wooden cane to support himself; the caption states that he was involved in a mine-accident, which led to him losing his leg. He lingers behind the rest of the group, potentially leading the viewer to wonder about his level of mobility and his future of employment following the accident.

D27 captures a man who the caption labels as “Piet Mokoena” lying on the floor of a room with a bible over his face. It is assumed that the subject is Piet Mokoena, a banished person of the Witzieshoek Native Reserve in the Orange Free State (Badat 2012, 67). Mokoena was banished to a hut in Frenchdale, in the Northern Cape, after taking part in a revolt against the appointed chief of the reserve. Fascinatingly, Saleem Badat (2012, 67) recounts an anecdote about apartheid activist Helen Joseph (1905-1992) meeting with

¹²⁸ In the case of the mining industry, though many mines provided accommodation for workers during their tenure; however, it is well-recorded that the conditions in the mine lodgings were very poor, and the treatment of the workers was inhumane (Vosloo 2010, 10-11). Vosloo (2010, 9-11) writes that in the Kimberley Diamond Mines, the miners endured regular anal cavity searches to make sure that they were not hiding any diamonds.

Mokoena in his hut, where she notes his neat lodgings, including a bed, a goat-skin rug (pictured), a table, his bible (pictured) and a chair. However, based on Cole's photograph alone, the presence of the other furniture would not be known. With no further information in the caption outside of Mokoena falling asleep with the bible on his face, there could be a harsher assessment of Mokoena's living conditions just by consulting the visual contents of the photograph.

Themes 3 and 6 are connected in portraying the direct acts of intimidation and violence that characterised the apartheid era, namely the acts of police intimidation within the 1960s and 1970s. Theme 3 includes those documents that portray black people's conflicts with police (D21, D22, D28). Frequent visual motifs include handcuffs, young black men targeted by police, the presence of passbooks, fearful onlookers, unwanted touching, and acts of intimidation. D21, D22 and D28 all involve "police swoops", where black men are approached by police officers for their passes.

D21 depicts a young black boy being arrested by a black officer who smiles while retrieving something on his bicycle. The young boy stares at the camera with an angry glare. The caption informs the viewer that the young man has been arrested for travelling around a black township without a pass. It further states that he showed his fountain pen and his ink-stained fingers to the police officer to prove that he was still a student and, thus, too young to possess a pass. The glower of the young boy indicates his rage at the injustice of the situation, which is offset by the slight smirk on the police officer's face.

D22 displays a similar situation where a police officer towers over a black teenager, holding onto his shoulder. A mixed-race group of onlookers watches the situation. Some of the onlookers, like those behind the young boy, look concerned at the proceeding. To the right side of the frame, a white gentleman in a suit stands with his hands in his pockets. In the form of visual irony, there is a poster showing a news headline from *The Star* that says, "Police Swoop Again".¹²⁹ There is a sense of casual interest from the white gentleman, in contrast to some of the other spectators who look fearful, perhaps owing to having the privilege of spectatorship over being worried that he, too, will be targeted.

D28 shows two black gentlemen having their passbooks checked by police. The gentlemen gave the police their passbooks, which the policemen are perusing. The caption states what proof is required to allow their permittance into the city including "employer's signature", "proof that taxes are paid," and proof of the "legality of their presence in white area". The policemen surround the two men as if emphasising the "swooping" aspect of the caption.

¹²⁹ *The Star* is a South African newspaper founded in Grahamstown in 1871. The newspaper's headquarters was moved to Johannesburg in 1889 and is distributed mainly in Gauteng with some readership in Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and Kwa-Zulu Natal (SAHO, s.d.).

Theme 6 is titled “Crossing of racial barriers, causing conflict” (D12, D16), and illustrates those instances where racial lines are crossed. Common icons in these images include acts of violence, touching without consent or unwelcome touch, white versus black conflict, and captured affects such as shock or anger. D12 captures an act of pickpocketing. Two black individuals work together to steal from an elderly white man on a street in the Transvaal. One of the black men places a hand under the white man’s chin, which elicits a reaction of shock and anger. Derek Hook (2004, 678) writes about the “psychical density” of racism in South Africa. Specifically, he speaks about the bodily affects of racism in South Africa and how these experiences are inadequately addressed by discursive practices of historical analysis. Black bodies, according to the apartheid-era psychical logic, are conceptualised as abject by Hook. The psychical construction of black bodies within the apartheid state justifies the violence enacted against them because they threaten to impinge on the respectable, the pure, and the Stable represented by white bodies (Hook 2004, 689). Hook (2004, 682). states:

This was an era in which, as [Iris Marion] Young insists (1990a, p. 125), modern scientific and philosophical discourses propounded and legitimated formal theories of 'race': 'scientific, aesthetic, and moral culture explicitly constructed some groups as ugly or degenerate bodies, in contrast to the purity and respectability of neutral, rational [white] subjects'. In contemporary liberal societies, by contrast, the level of explicit racial objectification has receded and is no longer condoned.

As indicated in the caption, the white gentleman is “enraged” by a hand on his chin, which distracts him from the pickpocket.

The violent outcome of the “psychical density” of racism is shown in D16 when a white gentleman is shown striking a young begging black boy. The scene is identified as taking place in the “Golden City” or Johannesburg, and it shows three young boys begging on an unidentified street. The caption states that black children begging is not an uncommon night scene in Johannesburg and that the act could either garner a penny or a slap. A white man with what looks like one hand in his pocket is captured in the act of slapping one of the boys who stands near a shop window. The slapped boy lifts his hands in a defensive posture while his companions watch the interaction. One boy still holds his hands out in a beggar’s pose, either unaffected by watching the violence or caught in the act of begging while the scene unfolds.

Theme 5 encompasses photographs D17, D18, D24, D25, D30 and displays the material evidence of apartheid, mainly through the public signs that designate facilities to certain races, and is thus labelled “Signage designating racial separation, apartheid”. In this category, the frequent icons are the signage that portrays the visual evidence of discrimination, and the unique interactions that the separation warrants. The signage of the

era did not just label the facilities but authorised the correct public conduct and racial hierarchies of South African public spaces (Carlebach 1988, 11). In this sense, the signage also demonstrates the structural propaganda of the era and behaviours that amounted from their presence.

In D17, a black cleaner woman is on all-fours, cleaning the tiles leading down the stairway assumedly to a ladies' bathroom with a sign designating that the facility is for white ladies only. The bathroom appears to be situated in a parking lot as a few cars are visible in the background. Again, the only identifying information in the caption relating to the location is that the scene takes place in the Transvaal and in a city, as there are buildings visible in the background. The cleaner appears to be unaware of Cole's presence, giving the impression that this scene is an ordinary activity in the city.

D25 shows two white women exiting a bathroom with a similar signage stating that it is for Europeans only. The younger woman wears what looks like a policewomen's outfit, and the other, an elderly woman holding an object with 13A embossed on it. Both women wear matching satchels indicating that they may work together. They look off in different directions, seemingly unaware that Cole is taking a photograph of them.

D18 also portrays a sense of the everyday with a well-dressed older white woman sitting on the edge of a bench labelled "Europeans Only". Like D17 and D25, she too seems unaware of Cole's presence and is staring at something out of frame. Barely visible in the background of this photograph is a black man sitting on the grass behind the bench.

Whereas D17, D25 and D18 focus on women, D24 captures three white men walking down Pretorius Street in Pretoria. They are passing a taxi rank that shows a sign that the taxis are designated for white persons only. In the background, a police officer who looks black passes behind them. The signage occupies the left side of the frame, which solidifies its place within the city scene, alongside a taxi that also shows that it is designated for white persons. D30 is also related to transport and shows a sign designating a suburban station for non-white persons. From the visual material alone, it is unclear if the station is a bus station or a train station. Cole chose not to add captions for images D17, D18 and D30, perhaps because he thought the images to be self-explanatory.

Theme 1 (D4, D10), termed "Instances of racial intimacy", documents, arguably, more positive correspondences between different races. Frequent motifs include touch and intimacy across racial divides, white children being affectionate with domestic workers, expressions such as smiling and fondness and black women acting as caregivers to white children. The iconic pair of the black female servant tending to a white child is also seen in photographs such as Peter Magubane's *Girl and her nanny in a segregated park* (1956) and Ian Berry's post-apartheid photograph *White child and black nanny at a National Party Meeting* (1994).

D4, a photograph by Goldblatt, portrays a young boy labelled by the title as a “farmer’s son” with his nursemaid.¹³⁰ The photograph is taken on a farm, according to the accompanying text. A young white boy, who looks ten or eleven years old, is barefoot and standing in front of a wire fence next to a tree. He holds the shoulders of a young black woman who looks to be in her early twenties. She is also barefoot and is seated on a concrete slab that encases the tree. Her left-hand wraps around the foot of the child, both subjects are smiling at the camera. Through this title and the intimate posturing between the two subjects, it can be assumed that the black woman acts as a nurturing figure to the white child. Considering the strained relations between black and white South Africans during apartheid, the intimacy between the two, on a surface level, may seem strange or out of place considering that intimacy between black and white people was forbidden.

D10 is a photograph by Cole that was taken near a bench in Johannesburg. The photograph displays a white baby comfortably held by a black domestic worker. The baby holds a toy in her hand and appears to be giggling with her mouth against the middle-aged black domestic worker’s head. The servant wears a headwrap and embraces the child close to her body. The text reads, “I love this child, though she’ll grow up to treat me like her mother does. Now she is innocent”. Though the close embrace shared by the two connotes a sense of intimacy and trust, the caption alludes to the fact that the servant is ill-treated by the madam of the household.¹³¹

5.4 The Iconicities of Catalogue Set B

Catalogue Set B are aesthetic images in that they sensibly construct the social issues of apartheid, and they are also visceral configurations of the social relations of the time. Aesthetic images both reveal and counter normative power distributions. Normative social distributions are continually re-established by their habitualised representations, exemplified by the photographs (Rancière 2019, 48). Rancière (2019, 48) suggests that aesthetic images are autonomous realms where the sensible configurations of normative social constructs are both realised and countered. In other words, they are images that disrupt habitual configurations or cause “dissensus”. Concurrently, Rancière (2010a, 15; 2019, 25-26) implies that aesthetics confers the intelligibility of visible phenomena. Therefore, he suggests that aesthetics as discourse establishes the logos of images as constitutive of the *sensus communis*.

¹³⁰ The Oxford English Dictionary (OED, n.d.) defines nursemaid as, “a woman or girl employed to look after a young child or children”.

¹³¹ “Madam” is a term for the employer of domestic workers, where “maid” refers to the domestic worker. The terms are also loaded with the unmentioned social, intimate, and private dynamics between black domestic workers and their white employers. For example, a study by Tanja Bosch and Caitlin McLeod (2015, 145-146) writes about the social relationships between white female employers and black domestic workers as often following a maternalistic dynamic.

In Rancière's (2019, 25-26) words, the aesthetic image is a "cipher of history" where forms of visibility converge to create the "power of a shared history". Significantly, he also sees aesthetic images as the excess of acts of speech or language. The aesthetic image, much like Benjamin's ([1932] 2002, 462) dialectical image, disrupts a sense of progressive time by suggesting a revitalised performance of events. As such, the contents are informed by their current context, by histories and images that have already occurred, but also have the potential to speak to the future of image-making.

Rancière's conception of politics is the sensible comprehension of aesthetic images in lieu of language or discourse.¹³² Politics re-establishes sensible relations following dissensus (Rancière 2009a, 25). When there are modifications in material circumstances, novel subjective positions are negotiated through the politics of visibility. Rancière (2000, 115) states, "[...] political subjectivity thus refers to an enunciative and demonstrative capacity to reconfigure the relation between the visible and the sayable, the relation between words and bodies: namely, what I refer to as "the partition of the sensible".¹³³ The partition of the sensible refers to who and what is allowed to be seen according to societal norms of acceptability.

Mitchell (2009, 139), unlike Rancière, does not see images as requiring language to translate their existence or justify their force. Images do not need to be demystified by the written word. To illustrate the differences in his views to Rancière's, Mitchell (2009, 140) states, "Every image is really an 'image/text' or a 'sentence image' as Rancière would put it. The question is, which term takes priority, and in what sense? For Rancière it is the word; for me the image. Rancière believes that Dutch painting became 'visible' in a new and modern way in the 19th century, that something became seeable in these paintings as a result of a new discourse, principally Hegel. My sense is that something was in the painting, waiting to be described in a new way, waiting for language to catch up with a compelling picture". In Mitchell's conceptualisation of the image, the visual element of an image often supersedes the written word to preconfigure states of being or ways of thinking (Boehm and Mitchell 2009, 140). Relatedly, Boehm's (2009, 108) conception of the iconic turn stresses the importance of images in the constitution and understanding of worldly processes. In other

¹³² In *The Aesthetic Heterotopia* (2010b), Rancière demonstrates how Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's (1770-1831) analysis of Bartolomé Esteban Murillo's (1618-1672) *Beggar Boys Eating Grapes and Melon* instils an alternative view of reading the role of the beggar children different to Western economical and representational norms, where beggars are seen to be unsightly, idle, and ignorant. The passivity of the beggar boys is repositioned by Hegel to embody an ideal where the boys are free from the tethers of activity, thereby suggesting a novel ideal associated with the pleasure of inactivity which is correlated with the freedom of Olympian gods who are untethered to labour (Rancière 2010b, 20).

¹³³ The counterargument that both Mitchell (2009, 138) and Steve Klee's (2013, 181) use to counter Rancière is that by classifying hierarchical social relationships in his conceptualisation of aesthetics, politics and critical art, he inadvertently reinforces power-imbalances even though he provides the grounds to critique those same power relationships.

words, images do not just reflect the world, but paradigmatically shape a social understanding of the world.

Alexander (2010, 782), with his “Strong Program”, proposes that a quality often left out in scholarly interrogations concerning images is the ability of images to speak through sensual connection, which he terms “iconic consciousness”. Iconic consciousness is the sensate aspect of knowledge-making and connection that occurs even without translation. Somewhat in contradiction to Rancière, who posits the power of art or the aesthetic in its separateness to the realm of the everyday, Alexander (2010, 784) writes that iconic consciousness is personally and intricately melded in the everyday understanding of cultural material that signifies social value through feeling. As such, whereas Rancière (2010a, 24) labels aesthetics as a “form of experience”, Alexander (2010, 782, my emphasis added) states, “The iconic is *about* experience, not communication. To be iconically conscious is to understand without knowing, or at least without knowing that one knows. It is to understand by feeling, contact, and the ‘evidence of the senses’ rather than the mind”.

Put in another way, Alexander seems to suggest that images can be felt before they are lucidly deconstructed by reason. Images are the iterations of being as opposed to representing a form of experience that must be translated after the fact. In contrast to Alexander, who suggests images are experienced through sense, Rancière’s approach suggests there are autonomous realms, such as art, where the material can be cognitively experienced as separate from the sensual to construct the political. Alexander (2010, 786) also states that iconic consciousness shapes the experience of an aesthetic object as unique to its circumstances and as related to a collective importance:

In both everyday aesthetics and high art there is the same interplay of the unique and the general, the contingent and the a priori. Surfaces are specific and idiosyncratic in their object reference...At the same time, such aesthetic representations are generic, connecting us to shared meanings, to culture structures.

Here, Alexander’s interpretation speaks to Martin Heidegger’s ([1950] 2002) “world picture” (*Weltbild*). Heidegger ([1950] 2002, 57, 66-67) states that this attribution of collective standard attached to art is a characteristic of the move to modernity where the specific, represented by the individual subjective circumstance, speaks to the whole, characterised by an objective world picture. Heidegger ([1950] 2002, 68) uses the term world picture to describe the logic of modernism, where the value of the specific is only as beneficial as its ability to be represented by something larger than itself. Paradoxically, subjectivity for Heidegger ([1950] 2002, 70) is the ability of a person to define and identify themselves as capable of being documented as part of the objective picture of the world.

The issue with both Alexander and Rancière’s approaches is that neither scholar fully dives into the affective dimension in their discussions on image communication. Though both

authors deal with “the sensible” and the aesthetic or iconic transmission of political and moralistic meaning through configurations of bodies or performance, neither Alexander nor Rancière engage with affect owing to their analyses of aesthetics deriving from the neofoundationalist and neo-Kantian theoretical foundations, respectively.

However, there are various scholars who have produced productive explorations into the affective dimensions of political communication. Sarah Ahmed’s (2004) concept of the “affective economy”, for example, attends to the how of the political by addressing how the political is communicated sensibly. In affective economies, intense feelings “stick” to objects, subjects, and bodies through the circulation of icons (Ahmed uses the word signs).

Ahmed implies that certain feelings are consistently associated with certain states which produces a habitualised way of viewing the object, subject, or body. Importantly, Ahmed (2004, 128) specifies that these invisible affective relationships generate the idea of the collective. She states:

My argument is not that there is a psychic economy of fear that then becomes social and collective: rather, the individual subject comes into being through its very alignment with the collective. It is the very failure of affect to be located in a subject or object that allows it to generate the surfaces of collective bodies. (Ahmed 2004, 128)

Brian Massumi (2015, 6-7) defines affect as the potential of bodies in movement. He states that affects are intensities that can move bodies into different positions or states of being (Massumi 2015, 4). Concurrently, bodies are affective and open to be affected hence why Massumi (2015, 5, 18) states that affects *flow*. Affects can also interrupt the flow of meaning. Although rooted in feeling, affect is not emotion, though emotions are partially constituted by affect (Massumi 2015, 5). According to Margaret Wetherell (2013, 355), affect theory is concerned with the “non-representational” in cultural and political processes and looks at how sensation confers meaning in the representational realms.¹³⁴

The question that naturally follows is if affective relationships are characterised by their non-representation, how are they located? Solaroli (2015, 2), perhaps inadvertently, provides the answer to this question, “[...] icons can bring into focus collectively, yet often unconsciously, shared emotions and meanings, condensing, intensifying, and circulating them in concrete visual-material forms”. Iconic images construct the underlying affects that attach to certain bodies and configurations of bodies. The concept-forming aspect of image-meaning is interpreted through fields such as semiotics, aesthetics and iconology, but the untranslatable sensuous connections that link the individual experience to the collective

¹³⁴ Affect theory has also acted as a refuge for many theorists who have found the translatory, discursive practices of post-structuralism insufficient in addressing how bodies act and react as embedded in the world (Clough 2008, 1-6; Wetherell 2013, 349-351). Affect theorists also, importantly, consider the effects of technologies in the shaping of bodies and their relationships to other people and to the material world.

experience often get lost in translatory practices because of the often-indescribable connection between personal experiences and collective interpretations of personal experiences. As Massumi (2015, 5) states, “There’s no way they [the bodily capacities for affecting and being affected] can all be actually expressed at any given point. But they’re not totally absent either, because a different selection of them is sure to come up at the next step. They’re still there, but virtually – in potential. Affect as a whole, then, is the virtual co-presence of potentials”.

Aesthetic images, interpreted by Quintana (2020, 27, emphasis in original) provide, “The disjunctive operations that characterize emancipatory movements and their aesthetic-political interventions at the established boundaries of sense are, then, the unfolding, torsion, and piercing through intervals (*écarts*) of certain assemblages established as the reality (of bodies, of the common world). These operations make it possible to create and assert forms of equality since they produce an excess *within* these established boundaries, not outside or beyond them”. Whereas Rancière does not fully address affect in his construct of the political, Quintana (2020, 34-35) offers some necessary inclusions to Rancière’s arguments, “But the wrong is not given; it has to be staged through words, gestures, polemic actions in which a community can present itself as divided, crossed by the supplement of the uncounted ones that are counted and not counted as part of the common world (Quintana 2016a, 11)”.

Rancière interprets issues of visibility as part of the larger discourse on the democratic distributions of space and time, and action. In modern democracies, the validity of power is maintained through the semblance of progressive time, rational space distributions and logical distributions of roles that enact a dominance of the ruling class over individuals whose habitual movements are controlled (Rancière 1999, 8, 28; Fajardo 2022, 2; Buttelli and Bruyns 2017, 4). Rancière (1999, 28) suggests that democracy is not so much a form of government and more of an arrangement of legitimisation ruled by powerful associations that control everyday processes and where its representative nature is occasionally contested by citizens. Democracy for Rancière, according to Emily Apter (2017, 12) is contradictory in being controlled by leaders who are contemptuous toward mass culture but also legitimised through the equalising mechanisms of it. The Rancièrian idea of dominance in democracy, according to Christian Fajardo (2022, 1-2, my emphasis added), is maintained through semblances of progressive where time “[...] *appears* as a flow”. In other words, where the everyday action of life progresses without disruption.

To return to Catalogue Set B, the photographs encompass both the domination and the resistance of certain bodies within the *sensus communis* of apartheid. As argued, they are critical documentary photographs that construct the social world of the apartheid state. They are also individual (specific) aesthetic productions of the habitual activities of apartheid,

as represented by the dynamics of lived bodies (Quintana 2020, 61). In revealing the racist and unequal structuralism through the social dynamics of apartheid, they can simulate the virtual experience of the totalising capitalist and white supremacist system of apartheid. From a Rancièrian perspective, if they are conceived of just as representations of apartheid, there is no dissensus because they are not conceptualised as *apart* from the apartheid logic. Only when one can potentially encounter them as aesthetic images in excess of the logic of the apartheid system do the images adopt their political potential.¹³⁵

In D5 and D7 of Theme 4, for example, the relations of the subjects are pictured in action: the black labourers work in the peripheries of the photographs as the white subjects are afforded the time and leisure to rest; the contents are figured as the regular functions of the environments and individuals pictured. The apartheid iconicity, or the local iconicity of apartheid, is communicated through the apartheid-era structures and mechanisms of control, most blatantly shown in Theme 5, which shows the material signage of the separation. How, then does one gain the alternative reading of the circumstances as, to use Quintana's (2020, 34-35) conceptualisation, a "stag[ing]" of the "wrong"?

Although I hold that Catalogue Set B are aesthetic images that provide alternative readings of the apartheid state through dissensus, I also argue that they are foremost *affective* arguments against the apartheid state framed for the interpretation of a virtual community (Azoulay 2008, 21). The photographs are arguments that both characterise and resist against the social formulations of apartheid. The resistance occurs because the images simulate the relations of apartheid and show how those conditions are conformed to and were resisted by the lived dynamics of people within the confines of the system. The photographs are thus affective bids as to why the apartheid configuration is problematic (Massumi 2015, 17; Quintana 2020, 61).

Francesca Polletta and Jasper M Johns (2001, 287) make an interesting argument in lieu of the significance of the structural dynamics in the battle against apartheid, they say, "In a comparable dynamic, the legal institutionalization of racial privilege in the United States and South Africa generated severe and pervasive inequality and eventually provided the basis for demands by blacks for legal equality. By contrast, the absence of legalized racial categories, agencies, and statistics in Brazil impeded black mobilization (Marx 1998)". Their argument goes on to suggest that it was definitively the structural policies that labelled individuals as black or non-citizens that generated the grounds for black people in the United States and South Africa to mobilise. They sum up their argument concisely by saying, "What

¹³⁵ The distinction mentioned here aligns with Boehm's (2012, 17) distinction between presentation and re-presentation, "Representation has the particular ability to present the represented that was originally subject to the passing of time, as if it were present. Thus it receives presence by the representation, and this presence possesses evidence or *enargeia* (Boehm 1995: 31)".

"worker" or "citizen" or "African American" means, and what behavioral expectations it entails, are partly a function of the vocabularies, stories, and images available" (Polletta and Johns 2001, 289). In the instances that the articulations of those identities are constrained, such as in the censored environment of apartheid, political groups may rely on other independent networks to articulate their experiences, which may result in what they call the formulation of a "common enemy or goal" (Polletta and Johns 2001, 289).

Polletta and Johns further offer a compelling argument on the role of narratives in recruiting individuals towards NSM causes:

Since mobilization does not always require preexisting collective identities, activists' efforts to strategically "frame" identities are critical in recruiting participants. "Frames" are the interpretive packages that activists develop to mobilize potential adherents and constituents (Snow et al 1986, Gamson 1988, Snow & Benford 1988, Benford 1993, Tarrow 1998). When successful, frames make a compelling case for the "injustice" of the condition and the likely effectiveness of collective "agency" in changing that condition. They also make clear the "identities" of the contenders, distinguishing "us" from "them" and depicting antagonists as human decision makers rather than impersonal forces such as urbanization (Gamson 1988, 1992, also Hunt & Benford 1994, Hunt et al 1994, Klandermans 1997) (2001, 291).

They conclude by stating, "How successfully groups frame their identities for the public thus affects their ability to recruit members and supporters, gain a public hearing, make alliances with other groups, and defuse opposition," (Polletta and Johns 2001, 295). The idea of the narratological frame that minutely encompasses the arguments of NSMs rings very closely to Warburg's iconological use of the frame in showing the transfer of visual information over space and time. They further imply that the political must be made into a personal issue in order for potential recruits to be convinced of the group's cause.

Sontag (2003, 10) provides an appealing insight as to why certain images of violence, war or suffering may resonate with some or dismissed by others. Fairly radically, Sontag (2003, 11) suggests that photographs of the evidence of war, carnage and violence, are not enough to align people with any side of a conflict:

To those who are sure that right is on one side, oppression and injustice on the other, and that the fighting must go on, what matters is precisely who is killed and by whom. To an Israeli Jew, a photograph of a child torn apart in the attack on the Sbarro pizzeria in downtown Jerusalem is first of all a photograph of a Jewish child killed by a Palestinian suicide-bomber. To a Palestinian, a photograph of a child torn apart by a tank round in Gaza is first of all a photograph of a Palestinian child killed by Israeli ordinance. To the militant, identity is everything.

She goes on to state that even if a person sees photographic evidence contradicting their views on the rights and wrongs of a conflict, they are likely to dismiss the image as fake or manipulated in some way: "In contrast, images offering evidence that contradicts cherished

pieties are invariably dismissed as having been staged for the camera” (Sontag 2003, 11). Sontag’s remarks highlight the narrativised nature of war and conflict and how that narrativisation is intimately connected to identity.

5.4.1 Table 1: *The Local and Global Iconicities of Catalogue Set B*

Table 1 (Appendix A) delineates the frequent icons and motifs identified in each theme of Catalogue Set B and how the photographs construct the apartheid narrative through a local and global lens, which I label as their iconicities. The table provides suggested readings on how the icons and visual motifs of the photographs in each theme configure an apartheid narrative and how the photographs potentially contribute to a global iconicity of related protest movements through shared icons, gestures, and motifs.

On the one hand, the apartheid-era photographs of Catalogue Set B communicate about the specificities of the local by showing the aesthetics of the everyday. They show how the social identities are reified in social practices by making the poverty (Theme 2), the racism (Themes 3, 4, and 6), the social inequalities (Themes 1, 4, 5) and even the contradictions (Themes 1, 4) of apartheid visible. Simultaneously, the photographs *configure* the emancipatory potentials of bodies within the police logic of the apartheid state. The affects of inequality, particularly on black bodies, are shown through the torn/lack of clothing, the sweat, the tears and the physical strain put on the subjects. The privileges of inequality afforded to the white subjects in the photographs are made real through showing their access to (assumedly) superior facilities such as benches, bathrooms, public transport or leisure activities such as beauty competitions, *jukskei*, or the ability to enjoy a go-kart ride as opposed to pushing the go-kart.

Through their iconicity, or their underlying visuality, the images convey the narrative of apartheid through the dynamics of bodies. The potential for change is also embedded in the motions and states of bodies that resist their subjugation. Accordingly, Didi-Huberman (2018, 11) states, “Images are the medium of the political – bodies in motion are tools of re-subjectifications”. In order to reach the level of resonance that signals re-subjectification, the photographs must first configure the unsaid relationships of power in ways that make their aesthetic issues felt. On the other hand, the interplay between showing the specific and the general creates a universalised pool of imagery that makes photographs resonate when they enact similar scenes (Quintana 2020, 13-14). Expressed differently, the aesthetic images of Catalogue Set B make visible the invisible lines of connectivity that potentially speak to universal issues concerning identity. It is through the interplay of the specific configuration of the scenes and the ability of the photographs to potentially resonate universally (via their connection to other images) that add to their iconicity. Subsequent images and their

readings thereof represent actualisations of the affective arguments (Deleuze [1977] 2007, 148).

To illustrate an example from the data, a frequent visual motif in Catalogue Set B, seen in Themes 2, 3, 4, and 6, are young black children or teenagers subject to violence, police intimidation, poverty or racialised slurs. Kurasawa (2015, 16) suggests that victimhood is a frequent representational type used in Western humanitarian crises. He goes on to imply that children are frequent icons of innocence due to their level of vulnerability:

Furthermore, victimhood is correlated with innocence and passivity, the relevant person or group of persons being devoid of situational or compositional symbols that would indicate either a degree of responsibility for their condition or a capacity to change it of their own volition; hence the popularity of the figure of the child, the innocent victim par excellence – and one designed to elicit pity or sympathy amongst viewers – in humanitarian visuality. Commonly in Euro-American socio-visual imaginaries, the victim is also a racialized and gendered figure, for persons of colour in the global South, and notably girls and women of colour, stand as the penultimate representational archetypes of victimhood. (Kurasawa 2015, 16)

Kurasawa further implies that it is the framing of the child as a victim of the contextual circumstances, usually with a seen or unseen perpetrator instigating the act of violence or injustice, that amplifies the affective force of the image. In Western history, Jason Hart (2023, 4) shows how the view of children as vulnerable beings was exacerbated by the frequent illnesses and injuries faced by child labourers during the Industrial Revolution. He states: “Despite the fall in child mortality rates in the late 19th Century, the view of children as especially vulnerable endured. Moreover, they were increasingly seen as dependent upon adults and in need of their protection: a view reinforced by children’s removal from factory labour that brought to an end the standing that many enjoyed as contributive economic actors...” (Hart 2023, 4).

Children feature as subjects in many social documentary photographs from the nineteenth century and twentieth century, most famously by Riis and Hine who focussed on the plights of poor children in the US tenements and the plights of child labourers, respectively. Crucially, Kurasawa (2015, 22) points out that the trope of the innocent child as victim gains a repertoire of meaning through its frequent appearance in humanitarian visuality. Although the photographs are not of Western scenes or Western children, they are assumed to be framed to be perceived by an audience presumably versed in Western representational tropes.

In D16, a begging black child is struck by a white man clearly much older than him. The image configures a narrative of an innocent (represented by the child) being struck by an aggressor. Without any other information aside from the caption which tells the viewer that the boys are begging, the viewer is forced to fill in the gaps as to why the act of violence

was warranted. Although the trope of the innocent black child as a symbol of innocence was less frequently seen in the early to mid-twentieth century, the visual argument of the “mighty” against the “weak” in similarly performed, which affects the scene’s interpretation.

Put differently, even if an observer is not directly affected by a black child being struck by an adult, they may be affected by the incongruent displays of force. Similar interplays are shown in D21 and D22, where the young black boys are framed as victims of excessive police force or intimidation. For example, in D22, the imposing figure of the policeman literally swoops over the black teenager, making the unequal dynamic felt. The scene’s affective impact is reinforced by the news headline poster in the background that says, “Police swoop again”, creating a sense of situational irony.



Figure 5.1: *Parents of Children Who Attend Two Newly Integrated Schools in New Orleans Stage a Mock Funeral Procession up the Capitol steps in Baton Rouge.* Photographer unknown, 1960, Baton Rouge.
<https://twitter.com/HundredHistory/status/1747019802068373552>.

On a global level, the photographs of black children being subjected to violence and discrimination resonate with the broader struggles of black children as victims of racial violence. As such, one could compare D16 to the 1960 documentary photographs of the then tiny figure of the six-year-old African American child, Ruby Bridges (1954—), who was confronted by a group of mixed-age angry white protesters when walking to her first day at a desegregated school.

In the images, mobs of angry Segregationists follow Bridges to her first day at William Frantz elementary school in New Orleans, holding up placards such as “All I want for Christmas is a clean white school”, and “We don’t want to integrate”. One photograph even shows a group of protesters carrying a coffin with a baby doll propped inside (Fig. 5.1), speaking to the acceptability of implied violence on black children’s bodies.

The anti-apartheid images and the pictures of Bridges connect virtually to compose a world picture speaking to the disregard for black children's lives, education, and wellbeing in the 1960s. The images compose the iconicity of racism against black children, leading to additional branches in the iconic consciousness, such as images of black children's indignity, black children's confrontations with police, or black children and poverty which can be rerouted to more contemporary images, such as the 2014 art installation by Ti-Rock Moore portraying the crime scene of black teenager Michael Brown's death (Pather 2018, 30).

In order to be convinced of the narrative of the PCI, one must be able to engage in an act of "mutual recognition", as Azoulay's (2008, 23) phrase says. In a similar trend, the photographs of white children behaving intimately with their black nursemaids or with the family's domestic workers also re-subjectifies the persons pictured. Although the material structures of apartheid designate a separation of the races, the dynamics between the children and the black women reflect more positive associations between the two races.

On a global level, images such as white and black activists clasping hands at the March on Washington (1963) (Fig. 5.2) spark a similar iconic connection to the images in Theme 1 as speaking to racial conciliation and camaraderie. The images portray a similar dynamic, but it is also important to note that the images from the Civil Rights march adopt a performative dimension owing to the image being from a highly publicised protest event. In contrast, the aesthetic issue in Theme 1 is constructed and challenged more subtly in the everyday relations pictured. As I have previously argued, the performative protest gesture of the clasped hands, most famously associated with the Civil Rights Movement, wordlessly connotes its peaceful tenets as based on Christian notions of brotherhood (Pather 2018, 51). The gesture connotes peaceful defiance particularly in intensive situations where the protesters were met with police resistance (Korff and Peterson 1992, 72).¹³⁶ Like some of the photographs in Catalogue Set C and in the next chapter, Fig. 5.2 speaks to an alternative visual politics different from the lived experience of the subjects pictured.

¹³⁶ Gottfried Korff and Larry Peterson (1992, 72) track a genealogical transference of the clasped hands icon from symbolising "fidelity and loyalty" to Christian ideas of "fraternity" among social activists.



Figure 5.2: *The March on Washington*. Photograph by Leonard Freed, 18 August 1963, Washington D.C.
<https://www.magnumphotos.com/newsroom/magnum-photographers-the-civil-rights-movement/>.

5.5 Conclusion

The photographs in Catalogue Set B were iconologically and hermeneutically interpreted as aesthetic images representative of an anti-apartheid narrative. Although the photographs are not part of the official anti-apartheid movement's iconology, they encompass a specific anti-apartheid iconicity associated with critical documentary photographs, as proposed by Kroll (2011, 58).

As aesthetic images, the photographs portray a “stag[ing]” of the “wrong”, to use Quintana’s (2020, 34-35) determination. The images could be read as heterotopias in sensually setting the stage of relations or the social facts of apartheid that point to the contradictions of its lived experience, or what Rancière (2010b, 24) refers to as “aesthetic issues”. While some photographs affirm the hierarchical and domineering structures of the apartheid state, others challenge the relations through the lived relationships of the bodies pictured. The photographs portray a local iconicity by enacting the “micropolitics” of apartheid, such as the instances of racial intimacy, the unequal policing, the wealth disparities between white and black South Africans, the extent of black poverty and the racial

signage associated with apartheid (Rancière 2009a, 9). They also show the resistances to the system enacted by the bodies who resist or dignify the roles in which they have been confined to either by history or by the social situation.

At the same time, the photographs configure an iconicity that potentially speaks to other movements on a macro scale. Owing to the increased visualisation of politics in the age of NSMs, there is a chance that the combination of icons in the images will resonate with other movements both contemporaneous to the apartheid-era and movements of the future. Like with Parks's photographs from the *Segregation of the South* series, Goldblatt and Cole's photographs sensibly construct the category of racism, as well as the lived experiences that stem from the racist structures. With Cole's photographs, especially, the politics of visibility is at work in visualising the struggles and endurance of black individuals in the apartheid system, subjects who, within the logic of apartheid, are otherwise hidden and voiceless (Rancière 2009a, 25). As aesthetic images, the photographs of Catalogue Set B configure the experience of apartheid also creating potential nodes of connection for other social causes.

In the next chapter, I will delineate the iconologies of the #AmINext and FMF movements and interpret the local and global iconicities of Catalogue Set C. I will further expand on Castells' concepts of the Network Society and networked social movements. I begin by situating #AmINext and FMF within theories of social movements and then move onto an expanded interpretation of the term iconicity cognisant of the mechanisms of affect, algorithms, hashtags and other forms of metadata that enmesh images in the digital age.

CHAPTER SIX HASHTAG COLLECTIVES: THE ICONOLOGIES OF #AMINEXT AND #FEESMUSTFALL

6.1 Introduction

South Africa has a long history of rebellions, uprisings and social protests spanning from the colonial era to contemporary hashtag movements. Peter Alexander (2010, 25-26) suggests that there is a spectrum of protest in South Africa, ranging from “rebellions of the poor”, or smaller-scale uprisings addressing a lack of service delivery, crime, corruption, and unemployment, to larger rallies arranged by political parties like the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF).¹³⁷ In the mid-2010s, South Africa saw university students lead a series of protests aimed at dismantling colonial structures and financial inequalities on university campuses dubbed #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall. Grievances raised by the students included perceived racial exclusion in language, an absence of representation in tertiary staff, a lack of transformation in course material, and the outsourcing of labour to outside suppliers (Godsell and Chikane 2016, 55-59).¹³⁸

Whereas the previous chapter discussed the iconology of Catalogue Set B as situated within local and global iconicities, this chapter looks at the iconology of Catalogue Set C. Catalogue Set C curates selected images from the #AmINext and FMF movement. The first section of this chapter overviews theoretical standpoints on social movements and situates #AmINext and FMF as networked social movements. A discussion on the role of SNS in political activism ensues, followed by an interpretation of two existing studies by Drainville (2018) and Merrill (2023), both of which analyse the reinterpretation and circulation of online protest photographs. After an overview clarifying the image-collection methodology, detail the iconology of Catalogue C and then proceed to interpret the iconicities of the FMF and #AmINext movements.

6.2 Situating #FeesMustFall and #AmINext in Debates on Online Social Movements

In this section, I establish #AmINext and FMF within existing theories on social movements for two reasons. Firstly, literature on social movements seeks to explain the motivations, methods, and philosophies behind why people congregate and act politically. Further, scholars on social movements often discuss the representation that activists use to connect to their fellow activists to create a collective identity and to make their cause(s) known to a

¹³⁷ On 20 March 2023, for example, supporters of the EFF marched nationwide against President Cyril Ramaphosa due to high unemployment levels and lack of stable electricity (Cocks and Miridzhanian 2023).

¹³⁸ Gillian Godsell and Rekgotsofetse Chikane (2016, 55) suggest that the South African university protests of the 2010s set themselves apart from other student protests by their alignment with the workers movement including the issue of the outsourcing and matters of racial inclusion in the academic staff makeup.

wider audience. The reasonings and methods behind politically motivated behaviour, such as connection establishment and campaigning, are not static. Collective identities, for example, can be influenced by cultural, technological, or epistemic shifts owing to local and global events and the private and public perception of those events (Polletta and Jasper 2001, 284; Della Porta and Diani 2006, 8).

Secondly, the efficacy of politics as enacted on social media is a highly contentious topic that requires significant unpacking. Although I am not arguing that the #AmINext and FMF images directly influenced the participation of activists in the protest movements, I am arguing that many of the images from the #AmINext and FMF movements show an awareness of their iconicity on a local, global and a historical level, that connects their perceived narratives to historical and ongoing current events. Images connect events and people to one another, regardless of temporal and spatial distances. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the idea of creating connections through cultural artefacts, symbols, clothes, phrases, or names has been associated with the emergence of NSMs, more specifically, through the creation of “collective identities” in social movements (Polletta and Jasper 2001, 285; Thörn 2006, 4; Knudsen and Anderson 2018, 243).

The following iconological interpretation is based on the understanding that #AmINext and FMF are networked social movements. By highlighting the complexities inherent in the conceptualisation of “hashtag movements”, I seek to underscore how the iconology of the FMF and #AmINext movement construct and contribute to a local and global iconicity of protest and simultaneously populates an iconology of South African hashtag protests. I also show how the images of the movements compose their respective collective identities and potentially contribute to future protest movements.

6.2.1 What Are Social Movements?

Before defining what social movements are, it should first be noted that the term social movement is a complex term. Although social movements are generally formed to enact social change, different movements demand differing degrees of transformation. Some movements focus on raising awareness of social issues, others rally for governmental policy changes, and at the extreme, selected movements call for total regime changes (Touraine 1985, 759). For example, Booysen (2006, 36) shows that although the FMF movement challenged the status quo regarding institutional authority in South Africa, some of the protesting students and student leaders, like Nompandolo Mkatshwa (1993—) and Mcebo Dlamini (1986—), aligned themselves with the ANC ruling party either implicitly or explicitly. Though FMF, in its entirety, took a critical stance against university policies, racial transformation, and the dismissal of the grievances of lower-income students by those in power, the allegiance of the movement with the ANC meant that there was not an outright

questioning of the government's authority from prominent leaders in the movement. Thus, although both are defined as social movements, FMF differs from the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, where activists rallied for the ousting of then-President Muhammad Hosni El Sayed Mubarak (1928-2020).

Further, the dimension of this research that discusses the globalised character of social justice issues should not suggest a dismissal of the specificities of individual social movements, as there is an acknowledgement that not all social movements are the same even though certain factors may unify them. Alain Touraine (1985, 760), thus, provides a useful broad definition of social movements as those conflicts that are concerned with the "social control of the main cultural pattern". Touraine (1985, 760-761) states that social movements are generally defined by the identities of the social actors, the main opponents to their conflict and the "cultural totality", which describes the sphere of protest from which the issues arise. In the case of #AmINext, the activists are members of the South African public who are against the rampant violence against women and oppose the governmental policies on GBV. In FMF, the activists mainly consist of students rallying against the remnants of colonialism and unequal financial policies connected to the higher education institutions in South Africa.

Much of the literature on social movements from the late twentieth century to the early twenty-first century grappled with shifts in the organisation and participants in political activism (Polletta and Jasper 2001, 286; Della Porta and Diani 2006, 6-7). Prior to World War Two, European sociologists, such as Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909), Max Weber (1864–1920) and Georg Simmel (1858-1918), studied actors in social conflicts as uniform groups with concrete goals united in enacting social change (Della Porta and Diani 2006, 6-7). Donatella Della Porta and Mario Diani (2006, 8) suggest that the influence of Marxist ideology led to a predominance of class conflict and economy in social conflict theory leading to social groups being perceived as homogenous groups. Although still influenced by Marxism, the deterministic nature of class struggle in social conflicts was challenged by theorists such as Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) and Louis Althusser (1918-1990), who respectively re-asserted the importance of culture and ideology in considerations of state power, influence, and societal conflict.

With the advent of NSMs, the cultural and ideological influences on the formation of social movements were examined more. Polletta and Jasper (2001, 286) state that political and social issues increasingly moved from deterministic socio-economic and nationalistic concerns to more personalised issues involving diverse actors concerned with women's rights, gay rights, racial rights, nuclear warfare, and the environment. That is not to imply that there was a complete disappearance of class-concerns in social movements but rather that identity became so intertwined with social issues that the deterministic aspects of

functionalist and conflict theories became inadequate in dealing with the cultural and affective qualities characterising the formations and expressions of NSMs. Studies on activism were further complicated as activists began to consider how their efforts could be recognised on a global, or a “transnational” stage (Polletta and Jasper 2001, 284; Della Porta and Diani 2006, 9; Castells 2015, 7).¹³⁹

Polletta and Jasper (2001, 288) also suggest that self-identifying factors garnered a special interest in causes where one’s race, sexuality or personal views on political situations encouraged their engagement as activists. Personal stakes in protest movements created a stronger sense of moral obligation in both the representation and the maintenance of the movement (Polletta and Jasper 2001, 290). In other words, the idea of what it meant to be female, black, or a worker, for example, became increasingly aligned with the iteration of shared experiences and the production of cultural recapitulations of those experiences as part of an ongoing establishment of a movement’s collective identity. As opposed to membership in an activist organisation being the unifying factor of social movements, the ability to conform and reproduce the collective identity of a movement gained importance. So, while the barriers to identify with social movements loosened, there was an increased need to integrate members through cultural expressions and shared symbolism to frame a cohesive activist identity among members.

The flow of information brought by new telecommunication technologies, a widening of literary perspectives, and global news media also expanded the narratives that came to define the experiences that united groups (Polletta and Jasper 2001, 289-292). The interchange of information as the basis of social congregation, and importantly, the exchange of information outside of and, at times, against institutional systems underlies Castells’ (2015, 4-5) concept of the Network Society. Related to the contents of this thesis, understanding social movements as underlined by networks is significant to interpreting the iconologies of South African hashtag movements because like the anti-apartheid movement, the #AmINext and FMF movements were, at their core, formed in networks.

6.2.2 *Networked Social Movements*

Castells (2015, 4-6, 248) suggests that communication technology has progressively become more multimodal and universal. Particularly with the invention of the Internet, which has connected individuals across the globe, he conceptualises the Network Society as a place where “[...] power is multidimensional and is organized around networks programmed in each domain of human activity according to the interests and values of empowered

¹³⁹ Thörn (2007, 899) defines transnational processes as “referring to any interaction across national borders not exclusively based on national organizations or institutions”.

actors” (Castells 2015, 7). Communication, for Castells (2015, 5), defines the communal meaning-making processes enacted through information-sharing. Power, in the Network Society, is not determined by material circumstances but rather by what he refers to as symbolic influence within these multimodal systems (Castells 2015, 5-8). Accordingly, power is also resisted through bids to control the symbolism within communication networks.

Castells (2015, 10) also implies that NSMs may also aim to exert symbolic control by operating outside of the dominant representational systems. The strength of the network determines the network’s symbolic influence over more pre-determined authoritarian structures such as nations, governments, or established institutions. Thörn (2007, 907) asserts that the anti-apartheid movement operated autonomously, particularly in its orchestrated effort to release media to international organisations sympathetic to the anti-apartheid cause. Accordingly, he states: “It is fair to say that the anti-apartheid movement, during its final phase, had constructed an alternative global ‘anti-apartheid public sphere’ that was part of a broader alternative movement culture stretching across borders” (Thörn 2007, 907).

In *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age* (2015), Castells expands his argument on the Network Society by asserting that social movements, such as the 2011 US-based movement Occupy Wall Street (OWS) and the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, represent a new breed of NSMs which he refers to as “networked social movements”. His definition of networked social movements is the following:

They are networked in multiple forms. The use of Internet and mobile communication networks is essential, but the networking form is multimodal. It includes social networks online and offline, as well as pre-existing social networks, and networks formed during the actions of the movement. Networks are within the movement, with other movements around the world, with the Internet blogosphere, with the media and with society at large. Networking technologies are meaningful because they provide the platform for this continuing, expansive networking practice that evolves with the changing shape of the movement (Castells 2015, 249).

Networked social movements, according to Castells (2015, 171-255), exist in two spaces of autonomy. The first is the “space of flows”, represented by the horizontal collaboration and broad communicative practices on Internet, and the second, in the “space of places”, characterised by the physical iterations of the movements in public spaces. The space of flows exists on SNS, where multimodal communication technology allows for widespread communication by activists, mass organisation of activism, self-directed representation of political and social issues and subversions of dominant representations, such as those portrayed by mainstream media or political institutions.

The space of places, as defined by Castells (2015, 171) is “A [physical] space where the protesters could come together and form a community beyond their differences. A space

of conviviality. A space of debate, to move from contesting an unjust system to reconstructing society from the bottom up. In sum, a space of autonomy". The space of flows and space of place, implied by Castells, enacts a more equal form of democracy, less beholden and, at times, directly oppositional to the powers of institutions. Importantly, he also asserts that, in these networked social movements, images are instrumental to the articulation and mobilising potential of a cause because they are affective motivators (Castells 2015, 252).

For example, a sense of optimism could be triggered in showing the strength in numbers of a movement or a sense of indignation when activists are shown to be manhandled by police. In the age of instantaneous connection and real-time sharing, SNS enable the rapid spreading of images, relevant information, or personal anecdotes as part of activism. Examples include the sharing and viral spread of the self-immolation video of Mohamed Bouazizi (1984-2011) on Facebook. Bouazizi was a street vendor from Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia, who, after constant harassment and the repeated confiscation of his goods by police, set himself alight on 17 December 2010 (Lageman 2020).¹⁴⁰

Another example is the sharing of photographs of the disfigured corpse of Khaled Mohamed Said (1982-2010), which went viral on 6 June 2010 when he was beaten to death in a police station in Alexandria, Egypt for possessing a video of corrupt policemen dividing up confiscated goods after a drug bust (Meky 2014).¹⁴¹ Outraged activists changed their Facebook profile photographs to the picture of Said's corpse, leading to more awareness about the event and more pressure on the Egyptian government to take action (Abou el Magd 2010).

More recently, a bystander video taken by a teenager recording the final moments of black American George Floyd (1973-2020) went viral after a police officer, Derek Chauvin knelt on his neck for 9 minutes 29 seconds after a routine arrest for using a suspected counterfeit bill at a convenience store in Minneapolis, Minnesota on 25 May 2020. Floyd's repeated disclosure of "I can't breathe" while the policeman relentlessly kneeled on his neck became a rallying cry for a revival of the BLM protests in mid-2020.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ The widespread watching of the video and its featuring on local and foreign news, such as *Al Jazeera*, caused the Tunisian government to respond by stating they will send millions of Tunisian dinars to Sidi Bouzid which Ali Bouazizi, Mohamed Bouazizi's cousin, says was a lie aimed at appeasing the angry masses. *Al Jazeera* and *Al Jazeera English* are Arab-issues focussed international news channels headquartered in Doha, Qatar (Kraidy 2008, 24-25).

¹⁴¹ The release of the photographs is an integral catalyst for the 2011 Egyptian Revolution and inspired the creation of the prominent Facebook page *We Are All Khaled Said* by activist Wael Ghoneim.

¹⁴² The same statement, "I can't breathe", was uttered by African American Eric Garner when he was choked to death by a policeman in 2014 for selling illegal cigarettes on a New York sidewalk (Apatu 2020, 241).

6.2.3 *The Role of SNS in Politics*

Despite many movements like the Arab Springs, BLM, FMF, RMF, and #AmINext have been dubbed “hashtag movements”, there has been some contention over the influence of the role of social media as the most important tool in mobilising activists.¹⁴³ Scholarship on digital culture and politics in the early and mid-2010s focussed on the use of Web 2.0 technologies, such as social media and SNS, as tools of empowerment, collaboration and self-promotion (Gladwell 2010; Fuchs 2013; boyd 2015). Web 2.0, defined by danah boyd (2015, 1), refers to the community-building and participatory technologies that emerged after the dot.com crash of the late 1990s.^{144 145}

Malcolm Gladwell (2010) and Christian Fuchs (2013) are prominent figures who have positioned themselves against overstating the role of SNS in social movement mobilisation. Gladwell (2010) delineates instances of the Civil Rights Movement where the personal ties of the activists and their social investment in one another led to massive turnouts in rallies and protest events. Incremental and mass participation in movements was achieved without the use of social media sites where the primary spread of information was accomplished by news spreading through more traditional mediums such as newspapers, in-person campaigning or radicalisation through the eye witnessing of events. Gladwell (2010) states that although sites like Facebook and X assist with creating weak-tie connections that raise awareness about social issues, the important parts of activism are found on the ground where people risk their lives. As such, Gladwell (2010), following fellow social and political commentator Evgeny Morozov (2009), decries “slacktivism”, or the low-risk version of activism that occurs on SNS where activists show support for a cause through sharing, liking and commenting on posts, but take part in few real-life acts in the name of the cause.¹⁴⁶

Fuchs (2013, 193), on appraising Castells’ analysis of the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, accuses Castells of “techno-determinism”. By suggesting that social media may have played a more dominant role in mobilising individuals than in-person interactions by the Egyptian activists or print and television news media, Castells runs the risk of undermining the structural tensions, real economic distress and frustrations with the police that led up to the

¹⁴³ The Arab Springs was a serious of movements in the Middle East and Northern Africa aimed at tackling oppressive and corrupt governmental regimes. Black Lives Matter is an ongoing social movement aimed at highlighting and tackling the systematic racism that plagues black people around the world (Pather 2018, 7).

¹⁴⁴ The dot-com crash or dot-com bubble refers to the speculative investment in Internet technology companies in the late 1990s which caused a ‘bust’ owing to investors backing out in the early 2000s due to lack of profits (Wheale and Amin 2003, 119-121).

¹⁴⁵ According to Bogdan Pătruț and Monica Pătruț (2015, v-vi) social media are defined by six qualities, a) they are free to use b) public information is open and flows freely on the sites c) the user has the ability to broadcast information to an audience of any size d) the ability of the technology to be accessed by anyone e) the site should function in real-time usually via a timeline function and f) the site is malleable and open to change.

¹⁴⁶ It should be noted that both Gladwell (2010) and Morozov (2009) were writing before the start of the Arab Springs and the OWS protests, thus their views on the efficacies of social media as an activism tool may have been affected by a lack of circumstantial evidence.

Egyptian Revolution.¹⁴⁷ Thus, he disagrees with referring to the uprisings of the Arab Springs as social media revolutions. He implies that the revolution was not more likely to occur because social media facilitated it. Rather, social media was a tool amongst other tools that enabled activists to organise and express themselves. Fuchs (2013, 196) further emphasises that although SNS did play a role in organising the activists and spreading information during the Egyptian Revolution, a survey by Christopher Wilson and Alexandra Dunn (2011) suggests that SNS was overtaken by televisions, telephones and print media as the most important forms of communication for the activists.

Fuchs (2013, 200-201) additionally takes issue with claims of SNS being more autonomous or more democratic than other spheres of communication. He states that sites, such as X, are mainly accessible to those who have a certain level of digital accessibility, and are digitally literate, and the best audience reach is afforded to those who have a large following, which usually consists of celebrities and influencers. Focussing on X as a primary site of communication for activists, he asserts that, globally, the primary users on X are relatively young, middle-class, and well-educated (Fuchs 2013, 199).¹⁴⁸ True political freedom of speech is also limited owing to the corporate interests of the sites where the top spots for trending topics and hashtags can be bought by corporations (Fuchs 2013, 199-200). Thus, he concludes that SNS could not possibly represent a true “public sphere”, following Jürgen Habermas ([1962] 1989), because the level of political participation is limited to the parameters of communication that the site allows, the visibility of certain actors over others and the looming presence of corporate interests that dictates the flow of information. Relatedly, Fuchs (2013, 201) counters the view that SNS allow for greater depths of political communication. He states that during the Egyptian Revolution, at least half of the posts on X were not two-way conversations but informational tweets where the sole interaction with them was retweeted (Fuchs 2013, 193).¹⁴⁹ Whereas Fuchs does not deny the efficacy of SNS in spreading information, stirring emotion about social issues, and creating points of connection for activists, he argues against the perspective that the presence of SNS creates freer societies, and that the equality enacted on SNS is the prime reason for the success of so-called hashtag revolutions.

Fuchs, thus, is careful not to overstate the role of SNS in the Egyptian Revolution, whereas Castells (2015, 60) is comfortable to make the statement that the “[Egyptian] Revolution was Tweeted”. Castells (2015, 60), nonetheless, also states the occupation of

¹⁴⁷ Techno-determinism refers to an overstating of the role of technology in shaping societal processes without considering the human influence in the facilitation and design of technologies as well as the processes that occur without the intervention of technology (Fuchs 2013, 202-203).

¹⁴⁸ Updated statistics on the demographics of X from 2019 reflects similar data (Wojcik and Hughes 2019).

¹⁴⁹ Retweets are a feature of X where a user can repost another user’s material. Adding additional commentary is optional.

public space by the Egyptian activists was the most “fundamental social form” of the Egyptian Revolution. In response to developments such as the spread of fake news, the use of Russian bots to influence the 2016 American election, and increasing corporate influence in the Internet sphere, Castells (2023), reviewed his initial position, acknowledging that he was overly optimistic about the democratic potential of the Internet as a medium less beholden to the interests of governments and corporations.

Despite some of the limitations of SNS in allowing for rigorous democratic engagement, the affective mobilising potential of SNS social movements is repeatedly echoed in studies. Castells (2015, 109) explicitly mentions the “power of images” in uniting people during the Arab Springs: “The power of images, and creative narrative-activated emotions, both mobilizing and soothing, created a virtual environment of art and meaning on which the activists of the movement could rely to connect with the youth population at large, thus changing culture as a tool of changing politics”.

A study on the use of social media use in the 2010 Tunisian Revolution by Anita Breuer, Todd Landman and Dorothea Farquhar (2013, 766) backs Castells’ claim on the so-called “power of images”, as the survey shows that social media provided the impetus for affective mobilisation, allowed for the circumvention of the government’s media blackouts and enabled the collaboration and organisation of activists. Breuer, Landman and Farquhar (2013, 768) state that “At the microlevel, it [media content] can act as a cognitive catalyst that pushes people into protest action. At the macro level, media content that evokes negative emotions has a high potential to “go viral”, where anger and anxiety as emotional states of heightened physiological arousal are key in driving social transmission and diffusion”. Breuer (2012, 26) writes that the sharing of the atrocities against the Tunisian people led to less politically inclined people to become radicalised, “By depicting the worst atrocities associated with the regime’s response to the protests, social media led to the emotional mobilization of hitherto politically apathetic segments of Tunisian society”. She also suggests that the mutual witnessing of events via SNS assisted in the formation of a collective identity among activists.

Like with the Tunisian Revolution, SNS provided a point of emotional contact for many of the activists of the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. Following the posts on the *We Are All Khaled Said* Facebook page posted by founder Wael Ghonim (1980—), Kara Alaimo (2015, 2), suggests that Ghonim created awareness by attaching human stories and personal narratives to his posts. The page swelled with followers following the release of the images of Said (Abdulla et al. 2018, 142). The page was a platform for activists to share “virtual memes”, or vemes, to distribute evidence or narrate occurrences of police brutality, and to

share personal experiences with injustice at the hands of systematic corruption.¹⁵⁰ The page also allowed users to collaborate and exchange ideas for their offline activism, including the organisation of a protest on the Alexandria Corniche where attendants were encouraged to stand silently, wearing black t-shirts as a symbol of mourning (Abdulla et al. 2018, 142; Alaimo 2015, 7).

Despite a lack of public debate on the page, Alaimo argues that Ghonim's rigorous and reflective Facebook posts on the page encouraged the users to follow his leadership and gain inspiration and the confidence to take part in the in-person rallies and protest events (Alaimo 2015, 6-8). Alaimo's research directly challenges Gladwell's (2010) arguments by suggesting that the slacktivist exchanges on SNS during the Egyptian Revolution accumulated to higher levels of in-person engagement and personal investment in the causes. Alaimo's (2015, 8) findings also counter Castell's (2015, 15) claims of collective action on SNS promoting "horizontal" and "less-hierarchical" communication as she states that Ghonim emerged as a clear leader and propagator of the events planned on the *We Are All Khaled Said* page.

Godsell et al. (2016, 109) similarly posit the importance of SNS in documenting the FMF protests. They state, "Using personal stories, metaphors, videos and photographs, students and workers were able to create their own counter-narratives interpreting their community and discourse. The use of social media revealed very personal stories that would otherwise have been missed by main-stream media (Godsell et al. 2016, 109). Like with the Arab Springs, the images and videos shared on SNS, personalised the movement for individuals thereby enhancing their ability to connect with one another and with a virtual audience through sharing personal stories and the obstacles they were facing with the police and the university institutions.

Although there has been less academic research on the use of SNS as a mobilising tool in the #AmINext protests compared to the other examples of hashtag activism, Saskia Giraud-Reeves (2019) highlights X as an important platform for affected parties to voice their outrage at Mrwetyana's death, "Twitter seemingly became a sort of digital support group for survivors of sexual violence in the African country, with certain participants going as far as directly naming their alleged abusers".

¹⁵⁰ Alaimo's (2015, 3) definition of vemes comes from Linda Herrera (2014, 117) who describes vemes as ideas which are borne and circulated in virtual spaces.

#AmINext posts on X have a confessional quality addressing the fear, anguish and lack of safety felt by women in South Africa (Fig. 6.1). As primarily an image-based SNS, the #AmINext Instagram posts engage more directly with images of the activists, images of GBV victims, and the poster boards of individual activists, expressing a sense of anger, frustration and camaraderie among South African women and the victims of GBV. Thus, though the term hashtag revolution may hyperbolise the dominance of SNS in enacting political change in the abovementioned social movements, online mediums do play a role in connecting people and creating awareness about causes. Although posting on SNS may not be *more* democratic or more consequential than physically participating in protest in a public place, SNS provides platforms for activists to share personal narratives related to causes, spread awareness about injustices, coordinate protest events and, ultimately, to create affective nodes that may motivate activists to participate and get involved in social movements.



Figure 6.1: X Post Listing the Activities Women are Fearful of Doing Alone in South Africa, September 2019. Screenshot by author, 2024.

6.3 Iconological Studies of Protest Images Online

As previously argued, a prominent aspect of the visualisation of political movements since the emergence of NSMs is the visualisation of those movements. Visuals assist with creating a sense of commonality among protesters and also contribute to the distinguishability of movements, particularly as the success of the movement increasingly depends on its recognition on a global stage (Rigney and Smits 2023, 10). Iconological studies by Drainville (2018) and Merrill (2023) on the migration of iconic protest imagery to the online space provide useful insights into the role of PCI in contributing to political narratives and affective connections to activist movements.



Figure 6.2: *Taking a Stand in Baton Rouge*. Photograph by Jonathan Bachman, 2018, Baton Rouge. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/jul/11/baton-rouge-protester-photo-iesha-evans>.

Drainville's (2018, 1) research focusses on the online circulation of an image of activist and nurse, Ieshia Evans, taken by photographer Jonathan Bachman (Fig. 6.2) during a BLM uprising in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on 5 July 2016 following the killing of Philando Castile during a traffic-stop in Minnesota on 4 July 2016. The photograph portrays Evans standing calmly in the path of two police officers in riot gear who appear to be charging toward her. Although the police officers appear to be in the motion of arresting or grabbing Evans, their bodies are angled away from her as if an invisible energy is pushing them away.

Drainville's (2018, 5-7) image analysis follows the movement of Evans' photograph through X using the data harvesting software *Pulsar*. Although Drainville does trace the

movement of Bachman's image in online spaces, the work also adopts a strong iconological dimension in questioning the online and offline cultural and social impact of Evans' image and emplacing it within the history of similar imagery. His findings note that Evans' photograph was often paired with other visually alike images from history, such as the Tiananmen Square *Tank Man* (1989) image by Franklin, or the image of Swedish activist Tess Asplund (2016) by David Lagerlof, who raised a clenched fist at Neo-Nazi marchers in Borlänge (Drainville 2018, 8).

Looking at the text paired with her image, Drainville (2018, 9) notes that aspects of Evan's identity, such as her profession, her status as a mother, her race and her name, were often repeated. He also highlights the importance of the textual interpretation of the image on SNS, particularly the repeated phrases of "Say Her Name" and "Her name is...", identifying Evans as a unique person as opposed to solely a symbol for the movement.¹⁵¹ Further, the phrases are also connected to other movements, such as the feminist faction of BLM, which connects the image to other protest campaigns under the #SayHerName banner.

Finally, Drainville (2018, 10-15) also notes a tendency for Evans' photograph to be photoshopped or artistically manipulated including artistic highlights at the point where the police make contact with her, or superimpositions of Civil Rights Leader, Dr. Martin Luther King (1929-1968), on the image. In terms of the aesthetic configuration of the image, Drainville (2018, 18) observes that another image taken nearly at the same time by Max Becherer from a slightly different angle did not have the same level of circulation as Bachman's image. He attributes Bachman's viral success to the photograph's capturing of a moment in motion, underlying narrative motifs regarding race, gender and power relations, as well as Christian iconographical similarities to images of the *Arrest of Jesus*.¹⁵² Drainville (2018, 22) concludes his study of Bachman's photograph by stating that images are "rhizomatic" and prone to resonance across different mediums and times, which he relates to Warburg's *Nachleben*.

Although Drainville (2018, 8) does acknowledge the iconicity of Bachman's photograph as part of its appeal, he does not delve deeply into the term. In comparison, Merrill (2023, 133-137), in his analysis of the migration of *The Woman with The Handbag* (1985) by Hans Runesson (Fig. 6.3), locates the photograph's iconicity as the reason that it has embedded itself in a cultural "collective memory". Runesson's photograph captures the moment a 38-year-old Polish-Swedish woman Danuta Danielsson (1947-1988), swung her

¹⁵¹ The #SayHerName hashtag is a campaign launched by the African American Policy Forum that highlights the gender-specific ways that black women have been affected by police brutality.

¹⁵² The *Arrest of Jesus* refers to depictions of the moment that Jesus was arrested by Roman troops sent by the Sanhedrin or the Jewish judicial council (Winter 1974, 60).

handbag at a neo-Nazi at a march in Växjö, Sweden, on 13 April 1985. His research follows the “constellations” of photographs that a Google Image search returns of Runesson’s image using the search phrase “Danuta Danielsson” (Merrill 2023, 139-140). The results yielded four categories of images, namely 1) the photo and its offshoots 2) other protest images 3) images of statues, and 4) other historical images, not including protest photographs.



Figure 6.3: *The Woman with the Handbag*. Photograph by Hans Runesson, 1985, Växjö.
https://www.reddit.com/r/europe/comments/qa08tt/the_woman_with_the_handbag_38_yearold_danuta/#lightbox.

In Merrill’s (2023, 142) discussion of the “historical images” category, he notes that Runesson’s photograph was included in image compilations of other iconic photographs such as the photograph by Juan Guzmán of anti-fascist Marina Ginestà (1919-2014) (1936) atop the roof of Hotel Colón in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), *Lunch Atop A Skyscraper* (1932) attributed to Charles C. Ebbets, and *The Falling Man* (2001) by Richard Drew. He notes that the connection of Runesson’s photographs to other historical photographs is sometimes arbitrary. For example, some photographs are paired with the photograph simply because they are also black and white and situated in the past, but some share a more obvious connection, such as being related to the Holocaust or anti-Nazism. Merrill finds that Runesson’s photograph is also often paired with visually similar images from protests from more recent years, such as Bachman’s photograph of Evans, Lagerlof’s

photograph of Asplund and the photograph of Saffiyah Khan staring down a Far-Right protester in Birmingham, England. (2017) by Joe Giddens.

Merrill (2023, 135-136) differentiates between iconic photographs and viral images by suggesting that viral images have a shorter shelf-life than iconic photographs. He also posits that viral images are intimately linked to the attention economy, where the flow of attention dictates what images rapidly spread. Merrill (2023, 137), therefore, concurs that virality is a reassertion of iconicity. He labels Runesson's photograph as iconic owing to its durability and its ability to maintain its place within collective memory; however, he is less certain if Bachman's image has the longevity to qualify it as an iconic photograph, owing to it being so recently taken (Merrill 2023, 148). He concludes that Google Images, as an online image-curating platform, creates connections between images. The images then compose an assemblage offering cues of recollection that emerge out of the original image (Merrill 2023, 142). Rigney and Smits (2023, 13) suggest that certain photographs of protest have a propensity for circulation because they activate a sense of pictorial remembrance in their framing. In other words, they connect to past imagery from protests as part of what they refer to as the "memory-activism nexus" (Rigney and Smits 2023, 14). They suggest that iconic photographs exist in "explicit memory" from which other similar iterations of protest moments derive in more recent years (Rigney and Smits 2023, 23).

What is evident in both Drainville and Merrill's research on the circulation of images online is that there are underlying elements that connect images to one another algorithmically. The algorithms of sites such as Google Images and X sort search results based on the user, the user's location, cookies, and other recorded data that filters information to the user. The search platforms on Google Images and X both use pattern-recognition systems to retrieve the most relevant search results.¹⁵³ In the case of Drainville's use of the *Pulsar*, the platform likely uses a data-retrieving language, such as SQL (Structured Query Language), to draw from the X database and compose themes with relevant tweets.¹⁵⁴ Although algorithms do play a large role in the ways that images are paired in online spaces, they show there is still a human hand in the linking of images on image-compilation sites where protest imagery may be paired with iconic photographs. Thus, there are both machine and human interventions in the linking of protest imagery online, creating complex image networks.

¹⁵³ Whereas Google's Images search uses a combination of word-association and image-pattern recognition, a site like X relies more on its textual systems such as hashtags, URLs, and keywords to pair similar images and videos.

¹⁵⁴ SQL is a computer-language that assists with extracting and organising data from databases. SQL consists of various sublanguages such as Data Definition Language (DDL), Data Manipulation Language (DML), and Data Control Language (DCL) (Solomon, Jayaram and Saqqa 2019, 3-4).

6.4 The Iconologies of the #AmINext and #FeesMustFall Movements

In this section, I overview the iconology of Catalogue Set C. I start this section with a few clarifications on the curation of the collection of images and methods of interpretation. I will then move onto an iconological breakdown of the images and themes. I conclude with an interpretation of the iconicities of both movements.¹⁵⁵

6.4.1 Curation and Methodology Clarifications

Catalogue Set C consists of Themes 7, 8, 9, and 10 includes documents D31-D60. The images mainly consist of screenshots taken from Instagram and X, except for D56, which is a news photograph taken from the *GroundUp* news website. Unlike with the apartheid-era photographs, it was more difficult to collate the images into distinguishable themes. Whereas the apartheid-era photographs are rich in visual information owing to a variety of locations, scenes and activities captured, the #AmINext and FMF images, in comparison, are mainly of people partaking in similar activities such as marching and holding up protest signs.

I am not claiming to have collated a comprehensive iconology of both movements with Catalogue Set C, rather, the intuitive approach that I have taken aims to encompass a range of perspectives in capturing the representations of the movements. The collection of images aims to witness the unfolding of the movements from various angles, primarily analysed through their uploading onto SNS. The following interpretation examines how the activists engaged with their iconicity, or imageness, to put across their messages online. Contextual and historical factors are also considered in the analysis as features that influence the reading of the images.

Although some elements in the textual accompaniments to the images are relevant to their interpretation, some of the hashtags and comments were not on topic. Thus, some comments were disregarded. For example, in D55, a user @ann_and_anne_boutique comments “have a nice day” with a heart-eyes emoji, which has no apparent relevance to the image of FMF protesters running away from police. However, the commentary in other cases reflects a compelling engagement with the image, providing additional insight. Relatedly, only the most relevant hashtags to the images are discussed in the interpretation below.

The #AmINext images include a mix of smartphone captures and photographs from the news media. It is not always clear if the subjects in the images are the users posting them. D31, D37, D38, D42 and D44 are likely taken during a resurgence of the protests in

¹⁵⁵ The reader is again encouraged to consult the “Aesthetics of Political Imagery” map while progressing through this section. Refer to Catalogue Set C for images not sorted into themes.

August 2020. Some of the #AmINext images are posted in remembrance of the protest events; such is the case with D32 and D42.

Further, as previously mentioned, overlaps in the types of content collected allow them to fit into various themes. For example, many of the activists carried poster boards and dressed as GBV victims (D37, D42), meaning that those images could have fit in both Themes 7 and 8. I refrained from separating the contents of the protest placards into separate subthemes, but some subthemes could be intuited from the placards of both movements, such as mentions of political figures, an advocacy of violence or the use of hashtags to connect the ground movement to various other online movements.

The curated images of FMF are also a mix of news images, amateur photographs, image collages and networked images from smartphones. In many cases, it is unclear whether the original poster of a post had taken the image or if they were recycling the image from other users or platforms. With D50 and D53, although their captions featured the FMF hashtag, their connection to the movement is not obvious from the contents of the images, captions, and comments. Nonetheless, owing to the presence of the hashtag, the images are still part of the iconology of the FMF movement, even if only through algorithmic association via X's filtering functions.¹⁵⁶

The posts that were selected for this research included images and the hashtag #FeesMustFall. The images selected were determined to represent the various forms of activism, the activists, and the representations of events from both the news media and the activists. Not all the Top posts on X with the #FeesMustFall hashtag were image posts as some of the posts included statistics on poverty and education on South Africa, news reports on FMF or textual commentary as the events unfolded. Some posts on X and Instagram were image documents with textual commentary, such as D41. Two of the documents (D47, D50) have been posted outside of the time parameters of the initial FMF protests, which are representations of users recollecting the memory of the movement. D47 also represents a form of visual activism employed by activists during the heat of the protests, where images of the 1976 Soweto Riots protesters were paired with images of the FMF protesters (Pather 2018, 70-72).

Finally, some documents coded in ATLAS.ti were not included in the thematic division of the documents on Miro. These documents include D38, D39, D41, D45, D48 and D49. The omission of these images is because there were few other images to pair them with in the pool of themes.¹⁵⁷ As with the iconological and hermeneutical descriptions of the apartheid-era photography, the descriptions of the documents in the following sections will

¹⁵⁶ The images were selected from the Top section of X's search function that filters the most relevant tweets within the user's chosen parameters.

¹⁵⁷ The interpretation of these documents is still included in the iconological and hermeneutical breakdown.

not be in numerical order but will rather describe the documents via an argumentative flow. As race and gender continues to affect political and social discourse, as well as activism in South Africa, the race and gender of the activists is identified as an integral component of the iconologies of both movements (Bosch and Mutsvairo 2017, 78; Ebert and Pillay 2022, 2).

6.4.2 *The Iconology of the #AmINext Images*

6.4.2.1 *Theme 7: Performance as Activism and Theme 8: Protest Signs*

Themes 7 and 8 are loosely distinguished groupings of the documents from the #AmINext catalogue. Theme 7 includes documents D34, D37, D42 and D43 and is labelled “Performance as activism, #AmINext”. Theme 8 encompasses D31, D32, D33, D35, D36, D40, and D44 and is entitled “Protest signs, #AmINext”.

The documents in Theme 7 portray individuals using costumes, props, and make-up to put across political messages concerning the violence inflicted on GBV victims. D34 is an image from X that portrays the lower half of a young black man’s face. His lips are painted a bright red shade and framed by his facial hair. The caption states, “Looks good”, and includes the hashtags #stopviolenceagainstwomen, #SandtonShutdown and #AmINext. South Africa is a patriarchal country, where men’s displays of masculinity are a sign of strength and status, especially in African communities where fathers are accepted as the heads of households (Keratiloe et al. 2023, 5; Mpunzana and Mofokeng 2023, 21689).¹⁵⁸ By wearing lipstick, a make-up product traditionally associated with femininity, the young man pictured subverts the norms of masculinity and portrays a sense of camaraderie with the female-victims of GBV.

D37 depicts a young woman dressed in white, holding a placard that simply says, “Am I Next”, surrounded by black smudges. Her mouth is taped closed with black duct tape, a tool often used by criminals to bind or silence their victims (Wieten et al. 2015, 305). She has a bandage wrapped askew around her head, covering an eye. The enacting of the violence inflicted on the bodies of GBV victims is a type of affectual body politics aimed at simulating the violence of GBV (Clough 2008, 8). Put differently, in the absence of showing the actual violence inflicted on the bodies of GBV victims, the performance of the after-effects of violence is an affective bid to make the viewer understand the impact GBV on victims’ bodies (Hansen 2001, 60). The activist uses her own body as a site of affect, thus making the violence against GBV victims more real by portraying herself as a living victim.

¹⁵⁸ The term translates from the Greek word for father (*πατριάρχης*) and translates to the rule of the father (Mpunzana and Mofokeng 2023, 21689). The term designates the cultural traditions, policies and social norms that encompass a male-dominated society.

The caption for D42 identifies the young black female activist as a student from UCT. She holds a placard that says “#EndSARSnow”, “Stop police brutality”, “Enough is Enough”. She also holds a sheet with smudges of red colouring on it. Her face has black marks drawn on it, and she has drawn red tears running down her face, possibly emulating injuries and tears of blood. The activist’s inclusion of the hashtag #EndSARS and the rally to end police brutality indicates an affiliation between two networked social movements despite their origins in different places.

#EndSARS is a Nigerian activist movement aimed at disbanding the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a police group who have been repeatedly accused of police brutality since their inception. Protests were refuelled on 6 October 2020 after the circulation of a video on SNS showing a young man shot to death by SARS in front of a hotel in Ughelli and driving away with his car (Anyika, Ani and Mutambara 2023, 117). #EnoughIsEnough is a hashtag associated with the #AmINext movement, as well as a verbal cry expressing the frustration of #AmINext activists felt at the lack of accountability and action by the government following Mrwetyana’s death (Payne 2019).¹⁵⁹

D43 portrays a black-and-white close-up of a young black woman with two partially obscured women standing behind her, each with a hand resting on her shoulder. The young woman in the centre has her hand to the camera with the text, “Violated by your stares”, written on her palm. Her hand gesture also connotes the well-recognised symbol for stop. All the women in the photograph are wearing black. The performance enacted in D43 is more subtle than D37 and D42 in portraying slight gestures of solidarity. Akin to the Egyptian Revolution protesters at the Alexandria Corniche, the #AmINext activists in D43 wear black, likely to indicate a sense of mourning or solemnity. Similar to D37, the young activist in the front faces the camera as if engaging with an unseen audience. The obscurity of the women in the background allows for an open-ended interpretation of what is happening outside of the frame, which may allude to more women standing in solidarity.

Theme 8 includes documents where protest signs are predominant in putting across #AmINext activist messages. The protest signs show a mixture of anger, frustration,

¹⁵⁹ President Cyril Ramaphosa (1952—) acknowledged the activists’ cries of “Enough is enough,” when it was chanted at him on 5 September during the #AmINext protests outside of parliament. A memorandum of demands by a group of #AmINext was handed to Ramaphosa, including a demand that a state of emergency be held (Payne 2019).

advocations of violence against abusers and political figures, as well as some general messages speaking to the general South African public about GBV.



Figure 6.4: X Post Showing #AmINext Protesters Marching at the University of Pretoria Campus, @KickOffMagazine, 2019. Screenshot by Author, 2024.

D32 depicts a young black woman holding a protest sign that says “#One Rapist #OneBullet”, with interchanging red and black text. The caption states that the protester is from UCT. She is dressed casually and appears to be in an auditorium or lecture hall. Like with D37 and D43, the protest sign is aimed at the camera.

The slogan is derived from the Azanian People Liberation Army (APLA), the armed military sector of the PAC whose slogan is “One Settler, One Bullet” (Lephakga 2018, 4).¹⁶⁰ “One Settler, One Bullet” is a violent call for arms against the white settlers in South Africa who are regarded by the APLA to have stripped the African indigenous population of their property and land (Lephakga 2018, 4). In adopting the militant slogan of the APLA, the activist’s protest sign conveys outrage at the persistent sexual violence issues in the country.¹⁶¹ The slogan “One Rapist, One Bullet” was used in a previous protest on 23 January 2007, where 500 protesters rallied outside of a magistrate court in Scottsburgh, Kwa-Zulu Natal where three men were on trial for the rape of three women who were staying at a beach house in Pennington, Kwa-Zulu Natal. The same poster placard appears in other #AmINext protests, such as one on the University of Pretoria campus (Fig. 6.4), which connotes a mutual source for the protest material. The presence of hashtags on many

¹⁶⁰ Azania is the indigenous name for South Africa used by black nationalists, the PAC and some members of the Black Consciousness Movement (Lephakga 2018, 4).

¹⁶¹ The Police Recorded Crime Statistics for 2022-2023 reported 42 780 rapes (SAPS 2023, 8). A rape is defined by the SAPS according to Section 3 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 2007 (Act No.32 of 2007) which defines rape as follows: Rape is the unlawful and intentional sexual penetration of a person without his or her consent (SAPS 2022-2023, 125).

protest signs emphasises the networked aspect of the protest, both embedded in the Internet space and in the public sphere (Stewart and Schultze 2019, 6).

D36 similarly shows a protest sign with a call to violence. The black-and-white image is taken at a protest at Stable Square in Plain Street, Cape Town next to a statue of General Louis Botha (1862-1919).¹⁶² The smartphone capture shows a woman climbing the statue holding a large cardboard placard with the words “Consequence for Rape, Emancipate & Castrate”, with a cartoon of a bound man positioned under a guillotine. The cartoon man’s testicles are affixed to the frame with a bucket nearby. The blade of the guillotine has been painted a silver colour, causing it to glisten in the sunlight. A person holds another placard nearby that more simply states “Am I Next?”. The presence of the placard near the statue, and the photographer’s careful framing of the photograph are reminiscent of the imagery associated with RMF and Fallist campaigns.

D31 and D40 both depict two women dressed in black holding up placard signs. Whereas the young black or mixed-race woman in D31 looks at something out of frame, the young woman in D40 aims her poster sign at the camera. The poster sign in D31 displays the pithy statement, “My only sin is having a vagina”. The poster sign in D40 is not as legible; however, the message speaks directly to heterosexual men, “Protect your woman the same way you want to protect your reputation”. Karen Graaff and Lindy Heinecken (2017, 623) state that there is an expectation placed on South African men to perform their strength and toughness, which leads to displays of “hypermasculinity”.

Hypermasculine men show a proclivity towards enjoying dangerous acts, using violence as a form of control, sexist attitudes towards women and are more prone to acts of sexual violence (Smeaton and Byrne 1987, 175; Graaff and Heinecken 2017, 623). In South Africa, where there are high levels of income disparities between lower- and middle-class individuals, a lack of wealth can reflect on an individual’s masculinity, which may lead to acts of sexual aggression towards women as a form of reclaiming control (Graff and Heinecken 2017, 625-626). Graff and Heinecken (2017, 630) also find a strong connection between South African men’s violence as intricately connected to their view of what it means to be a man. They state: “This was summed up neatly by one participant in Gugulethu who simply said, ‘then I lost temper, because I am a man’” (Graff and Heinecken 2017, 630). A female practitioner gave a similar explanation, stating that, “[...] for so many men in family situations or in relationships, violence is a very ordinary everyday go-to strategy for managing their feelings and managing their relationship” (Graff and Heinecken 2017, 630). Following Graff and Heinecken’s study, it can be assumed that reputation management is

¹⁶² General Louis Botha was the first Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa and a prominent general during the Second Boer War (1899-1902) (Pretorius 2022, 285).

part of maintaining an image of masculinity in South Africa, which may have prompted the activist's plea for South African men to protect their women as they do their reputation.

D44 is an Instagram image taken from the 2020 revival of the protests, as indicated by the presence of masks, which were a form of prevention against the transmission of the COVID-19 virus.¹⁶³ Two white women are pictured, both holding protest signs attached to sticks. The poster sign on the left says, "Fuck Bheki Cele fire the dick", and the poster on the right says, "If I am next leave me in front of parliament".¹⁶⁴

The poster boards are direct hostile confrontations with the South African government, holding South African leaders directly accountable for the lack of governmental accountability for the perpetrators of GBV. Unlike the other captions in Theme 8, which are brief, the caption for D44 provides useful background information explaining the outrage that may have prompted the placards. The caption states that the activists were targeted with tear gas and stun grenades by SAPS. The caption further states that the activists were denied access to the roads to Parliament, prompting the original poster @voice_blog to tag @presidencyza, the official Instagram account of the Presidency and @sapoliceservice_za, the official Instagram account of SAPS. The tags increase the visibility of the image to those in charge of the @presidencyza and @sapoliceservice_za accounts, increasing the level of answerability by those in power.

The protest signs in D33 and D35 are not as confrontational as some other examples from Theme 8. D33 is a close-up shot of an activist's hands. The activist, assumedly a white woman by her skin colour, forms the praying hands gesture. The praying hands gesture in Hinduism is referred to as *Anjali Mudra*, which is a form of devoutness to the deities, as well as a gesture of greeting (Rajput 2016, 38). Praying hands with the palms clasped together is also seen in Christian iconography, such as in Albrecht Dürer's drawing *Betende Hände* (1508), representing a supplication to God (Modern 2019, 110-112).

"Performative prayer", as termed by Tobin Miller Shearer (2015, 491, 495-496) was a prominent form of activism during the Civil Rights Movement that drew from the powerful source of religious iconography to lend credence to the movement as driven by a divine source. Shearer (2015, 496, 502) highlights the performance of the body as central to the power of prayer as a form of dramatic activism that interrupts the everyday as a form of "social theatre", which he calls "part scripted" and "part improvisational". Public prayer, according to Shearer, is an act of proactive social disruption that draws attention to the bodies of activists. Although the prayer in D33 is more subtle than the tactics used by the

¹⁶³ The COVID-19 pandemic is a coronavirus viral infection that led to a global pandemic that began in December 2019 (Rothan and Byrareddy 2020, 1).

¹⁶⁴ Bhelokwakhe "Bheki" Hamilton Cele (1952—) is the current Minister of Police and has held the position since 2018.

Civil Rights activists, the proximity of the partially obscured word assumedly, “She”, to the activist’s praying hand in combination with the capture of the moment gives the powerful impression that the activist is praying for the women in South Africa.

D35 portrays activists from Kingswood College, Makhanda standing in a line. The activists are a mix of genders and races with a young white female student standing closest to the camera, looking into its lens. Unlike the other images in Theme 8, D35 derives from a news source, *HeraldLive*. The caption states that the activists are attending the launch of the Uyinene Mrwetyana Foundation (UMF).¹⁶⁵ The visible poster signs say “#IamNENE” and “#UMF”. The phrase, “I am Nene”, is a statement of camaraderie among the activists, as well as an implication that the violence enacted against Mrwetyana could have happened to anyone. Maya Stewart and Ulrike Schultze (2019, 3) contribute expressions of solidarity as part of the collective identity that connects activists in NSMs. In their study on acts of solidarity on the My Stealthy Freedom (MySF) Facebook page, where Iranian women and men virtually gathered to debate the enforcement of the hijab in Iran, Stewart and Schultze (2019, 7) collected evidence of what they call “everyday resistance” on the MySF page which includes images where women anonymously submit photographs of themselves without their hijab in public, as well as a tradition called “White Wednesdays” (WWeds) where activists would document themselves wearing white in public on Wednesdays as an act of resistance.

Stewart and Schultze (2019, 14) noted the use of collective pronouns by MySF activists in communication about their acts of resistance as a performance of solidarity among activists. The performed collectivity on SNS was most prominent in dangerous situations, such as where the activist’s identities were revealed, and when activists were arrested, as if alluding to the activists being together in critical moments. Interacting with the movement as a united collective, even from a virtual standpoint, personalises the movement for the activist and acts as a bid to connection with other activists (Stewart and Schultze 2019, 16). Although the young female activist in D35 does not use collective pronouns, her statement “I am Nene” suggests a transformation of Mrwetyana’s nickname into a collective noun or perhaps what Stewart and Schultze (2019, 6), suggest as an “imagined collective” of every person affected by Mrwetyana’s death.

6.4.2.1.1 Additional Documents, #AmINext

As stated, D38, D39, D41 and D45 were coded in ATLAS.ti but were not collated into individual themes. The following is a brief iconological and hermeneutical description of each

¹⁶⁵ The UMF’s (n.d.) mission statement states their goal as, “To be an instrumental partner, and a platform for youth engagement, in the fight against gender- based violence”.

image. Although the images do not fit neatly into the existing themes for Catalogue C, I intuit additional themes that could be possible if the curated images are expanded.

D38 and D39 are black and white images, both captured from Instagram by a user called @amberina.grace and both taken at the September 2019 #AmINext protests in Cape Town. D38 shows three young black male activists confronted by policemen. The activist in the centre of the image wears a mask that assumedly has the word “rape” on it. The male activist next to him wears a skullcap and a scarf and appears to be in a heated conversation with a black police officer. D38 represents a class of images that capture police confrontations at the #AmINext protests, which mainly occurred at the protests outside of the CTICC. The photograph bears visual similarity to the theme of police “standoff” images, as put forward by Merrill (2023, 19).

D39 emits a more pensive tone. Two school-aged black girls are pictured in their school uniforms, wearing backpacks and holding hands. Whereas the student on the left faces away from the camera, the student on the right looks upward with her eyebrows furrowed with a visible expression of concern or fear. The image powerfully captures the fear and emotion of the event. The two girls' loosely holding hands suggests they seek comfort from one another. Further, the presence of school-aged children at the #AmINext protests suggests a non-age-specific resonance with the protest movements.

D41 and D45 are similar images by showing oppositional stances to the dominant narrative of #AmINext. D41 is a screenshot shared by an #AmINext activist that shows a Facebook post by a male user. The text in the screenshot reads, “One rape n murder case and ya’ll go on and on, ya’ll just like to feed your brains with ugly stuff (facepalm emoji)”. The #AmINext activist responds to the screenshot by writing the caption, “I’m done with this gender, I can’t (crying emoji)(crying emoji) #MenAreTrash #AmINext”. The comments show a negative engagement with the post. One comment says, “Well I am done with all human beings”. The other comment suggests that women are responsible for rearing the perpetrators of GBV, “You raised this gender. You birthed this gender. You taught him from grade R to 12”.

The negative commentary shown by the male SNS commentators indicates an additional theme, what Pablo E. Reneses and Bosch (2023, 588) call “networked misogyny”, following Sarah Banet-Weiser and Kate M. Miltner (2016).¹⁶⁶ Networked misogyny, according to Reneses and Bosch (2023, 587) represents the antagonistic “anti-feminist”, and “anti-women” responses to the #MenAreTrash and #AmINext movements.

¹⁶⁶ Banet-Weiser and Miltner (2016, 171) define networked misogyny as, “[...] an especially virulent strain of violence and hostility towards women in online environments”.

Oppositional hashtags such as #WomenAreTrash and #NotAllMen emerged, countering the accusations against South African men, including testimonials of women acting abusively. The former phrase is included in D45, which shows the profile of a young black man with two serious stitched wounds on his face with the caption “Women are trash (heartbreak emoji) #AmINext”. The comments on the document show a non-supportive engagement, with the first comment saying, “ha ha ha u weak *suka uchanyelwe ngumfazi kanje usaphila komgazi?*” translated from Zulu as “ha ha ha u weak get away from your wife like this while you’re still alive?”. A second commenter states, “*wena ushashwe umphakathi nje* (laughing emoji)(laughing emoji)”, with the translated Zulu roughly saying, “You have been burned by society, huh (laughing emoji)(laughing emoji)”. The engagement with the post indicates a dismissal of GBV perpetrated by women on men.

6.4.3 The Iconology of the #FeesMustFall images

Similar to the #AmINext images, the images collected from FMF contained some overlapping aspects, which made it difficult to sort the images into clearly definable themes. For example, many of the images showing the leadership of the movement also showcased the protest signs used during the various legs of the movements. D58, though part of the protest signs category, showcases the clenched fist gesture, which is also associated with anti-apartheid protest symbolism. Nonetheless, several themes emerged, many of which correlated with the groups and trends identified by Bosch and Mutsvairo (2017, 80-83) in their analysis of the top 100 X images tweeted during the FMF protests.

6.4.3.1 Theme 9: Conflict with Police, Theme 10: References to Apartheid, Theme 11: Student Leadership and Theme 12: Poster Signs

Theme 9 (D52, D55, D57, and D59), curates images of police brutality labelled as, “Conflict with police, #FeesMustFall”. Theme 10 called “References to apartheid, #FeesMustFall”, includes images D46 and D47 which both directly reference the apartheid era. Theme 11 focusses on images of the student leaders of FMF and is titled, “Student Leadership, #FeesMustFall” including D50, D56 and D60. And Theme 12, labelled “Poster signs, #FeesMustFall” focusses on the placards and posters carried by the students and comprises of D51, D53, D54 and D58. Unlike #AmINext which mainly showcased performative displays of violence on the activists’ bodies, many of the images and videos that were circulated of the FMF protesters, particularly from 2015, focussed on the police brutality and inordinate amounts of violence faced by the protesters at the hands of university security personnel and SAPS (Bosch and Mutsvairo 2017, 81).

D55 is taken by professional photographer, Shaun Swingler, who was present at the FMF protests on 2 October 2015 in Cape Town. The image captures the FMF activists

fleeing from SAPS. One protester, wearing a yellow, black, and green t-shirt with a cartoon of President Nelson Mandela's (1918-2013) face on the front, is grabbed roughly backwards by a SAPS member.¹⁶⁷ The police officers link elbows in the photograph, emphasising their motion forward as a unit. The protesters, in comparison, look less unified as they struggle to get away. The photograph showcases an inordinate amount of force from SAPS compared to the protesters. None of the protesters are facing the police, and many of them have their hands open, extended in front of them as they flee, showing no signs of weaponry. Bosch and Mutsaers (2017, 82) suggest that the South African police force has gained a reputation for brutality that harks back to the apartheid-era and has continued post-apartheid.

D57 highlights a similarly chaotic scene, which was also taken by Longari. The caption states that the image was chosen as one of *TIME* magazine's best photographs of 2016.¹⁶⁸ Longari's photographs of the FMF protests are widely shared on SNS. For example, the visual compilation in D47 features one of Longari's photographs of then president of the Student Representative Council (SRC) of WITS, Mkhathshwa. In the image, a fallen policeman occupies the bottom centre of the image. To the left of the policeman, another officer fires a rubber bullet at a group of students at an extremely close range. The caption to the image states that it was taken on WITS campus. A student on the right has his foot raised near the fallen officer's head, almost as if to stomp or kick him. D57, unlike D55, presents a less clear aggressor versus victim narrative. Although the police officer on the left appears to be shooting indiscriminately and dangerously into the crowd, the foot of the student on the right side of the image hovers threateningly above the fallen police officer's head. Describing the moment, Longari (2016) said the following:

One was when a policeman stumbled on the steps and a protester was trying to kick him in the head. At the same time, in the left side of the photo you have an incredible close-range shot of a rubber bullet being discharged from a rifle. And to top it off, in the background, you have a stun grenade going off, giving the photo a slightly yellow hue. All three things in the same frame, at the same moment. It's rare to get all of these ingredients coming together at once in a single picture.

Greeff et al. (2021, 81) suggest that the news media played a role in public interpretations of the police as being heavy-handed with the students when, in fact, some of the students' actions may have led to non-protesters being harmed. They additionally state that the news media's focus on the violent conflicts of FMF led to the non-violent aspects of the protest being ignored. Longari's photograph portrays a parallel of violence, one side coming from

¹⁶⁷ President Nelson Mandela was a prominent anti-apartheid activist and served as president of South Africa from 1994 to 1999.

¹⁶⁸ Founded in 1923, The World Economic Forum describes *TIME* magazine as "[...] one of the most authoritative and informative guides to what is happening in politics, business, health, science and entertainment. Time has one of the world's largest circulations for a weekly news magazine".

the police and the other from a protester, complicating the narrative that the police were the sole aggressors during FMF.

D59, comparatively, is more similar to the class of stand-off images in the memory-activism nexus (Rigney and Smits 2023, 14; Merrill 2023, 142). Two white male students defiantly challenge a police officer in full riot gear. The activist on the right points at the police officer with the tip of his finger touching their riot shield while the activist on the left holds his arms up in the crossed-fist gesture that came to represent the defiance and collective identity of the FMF protesters (Pather 2018, 58). A disembodied arm emerges from the right-hand side of the image, showing a protester holding up the gesture for peace, also known as the V-sign, popularised during the Anti-Vietnam protests (Bousalis 2021, 4). D59 represents a class of photographs that emerged showing the defiance, peacefulness and the unity of the students against the police, particularly in moments before the protests devolved into violence (Godsell et al. 2016, 115; Bosch and Mutsvairo 2017, 78).

D52 is representative of a class of images that emerged during the protests showcasing brutal injuries, particularly against black female protesters (Bosch and Mutsvairo 2017, 82; Pather 2018, 71-72). The black and white image shows a young black female student cradling her head as droplets of blood run down her hands and the side of her cheek. The side profile of another female student is visible, presumably assisting or administering a form of first aid to the injured girl.

Images showing injured black students, as I have previously argued, act as recollection images that conjure the undue levels of violence inflicted on the bodies of black anti-apartheid activists during protests such as the 1960 Sharpeville Riots and the 1976 Soweto Riots (Cho 2015, 50; Bosch and Mutsvairo 2017, 82; Pather 2018, 73).¹⁶⁹ According to Alexander Cho (2015, 50), recollection images connect history to the present by simulating intensive feelings. In the case of D52, there is also a sense of personalisation of the injury by showing a close-up of the individual's face as well as the blood matted with her braids and running down her hands. The violence is made real through the visual evidence of the wound inflicted on the activist's body.

Theme 10 collates images that have a direct reference to the apartheid-era, namely the 1976 Soweto Riots. FMF activists created collages comparing their protest efforts and the violence they faced to the adversity faced by the activists of the Soweto Riots (Bosch and Mutsvairo 2017, 82; Pather 2018, 71-72). The combination of past and present to suggest a continuation of events unaffected by the passage of time could be read as

¹⁶⁹ The 1976 Soweto Riots started as a peaceful protest where students from the Naledi High School marched to Orlando Stadium on 16 June 1976 against the 1953 Bantu Education Act which enforced sciences, mathematics and geography were taught in Afrikaans (Simbao 2007, 52). The protest gathered more supporters as the students marched, progressing to 10 000 to 15 000 activists. Like with the Sharpeville Massacre, the Soweto Riots soon turned into a bloodbath with police officers opening fire on the schoolchildren (Simbao 2007, 52).

Benjamin's ([1932] 2002, 462) dialectical image. In the form of collage, battles that the Soweto Riots activists faced, such as access to fair education, repressive colonial structures, and violent opposition, are connected to FMF (Simbao 2007, 52). There is thus an implication that they are hurdles the FMF activists must still face and ultimately conquer.

D47 juxtaposes a photograph of Soweto Riot protesters with Longari's photograph of Mkhathshwa. In the black and white image of the Soweto Riot activists, the students hold up peace signs; the poster in the background says, "Don't shoot we are not fighting". The spirit and force of the crowd are captured by the sheer number of activists and the freeze-framing of many activists with their mouths open, either in mid-chant or song. Similarly, in the bottom photograph of the FMF activists, many of the activists are either chanting or singing. A large crowd held back by a rope follows Mkhathshwa and a few other student leaders. Notably, Mkhathshwa wears a headwrap with the ANC logo branded on it. The black male student leader on the right wears a brown t-shirt with Black Consciousness leader, Steve Biko's (1946-1977) face emblazoned on it.¹⁷⁰

The black male activist on the left-hand side of the image wears the red EFF beret. It is here that Hochman's (2014, 2) category of the "social media image" becomes useful in his suggestion that SNS, through its real-time functionality, has created a sense of contemporality for all events. Again, although thirty-nine years separate the Soweto Riots and the beginning of the FMF protests, the collage, as uploaded onto Instagram, creates the impression of a continuous issue, yet to be resolved. The image presents a seamless way to unite both temporalities and the united political messages, even without explicit iteration (Belting 2005, 313-314).

The clenched or raised fist emojis in the comment section represent a fascinating virtual mirroring of both Mkhathshwa's gesture in the image and the original poster's caption, which also uses a raised fist emoji and says, "*A luta continua*", Portuguese for "The struggle continues". The raised fist, which has historically come to represent black empowerment and black rebelliousness, was a prominent gesture used by anti-apartheid activists and the Black Panthers. The use of the raised fist as a symbol of defiance has transferred to the BLM movement and was repurposed by the FMF activists as the crossed-fist gesture (Osei-Kofi, Licona and Chávez 2018, 143-144; Pather 2018, 58).

D46 portrays a large crowd of students in an unnamed location. The caption uses the image to advertise a news article with the headline, "#FeesMustFall: Patriarchy and The Azania Hall rape case". An article by news site *okafrica* identifies the photographer as artist Imraan Christian (2015) and places the photograph at the UCT campus. A black female

¹⁷⁰ Steve Biko was a leader of the South African Students Organisation (SASO) and leader of the Black Consciousness movement who advocated for the rights and autonomy of black Africans (Lötter 1992, 6).

student holds a protest sign facing the camera that says “1976?”. The rest of the students surrounding the young woman seem to be unaware of the camera. The picture has a bluish hue, almost as if it has been filtered or edited, which creates an impression of nostalgia. The question posed by the poster-sign, like D47, also posits a de facto linkage between the actions of the FMF protesters and the Soweto Riots activists. However, as opposed to the visual cue of the collage, which more directly connects the 1976 Soweto Riots activists to the FMF activists, the “1976?” poster sign leaves more to the interpreter’s imagination; the question also suggesting an unresolved issue or a repetition of history. Theme 12 focuses mainly on individuals who are holding poster signs or where placards are visible in the background in the image. The placards indicate an engagement with social commentary, political commentary, and an assertion of the tenets of FMF.

D51 is a close-up of a cardboard that says “Free Oscar” next to a ticked checkbox and “Free Education” with a question-mark in a box next to it. The placard is social commentary on the trial of Oscar Pistorius (1986—) that opened on 3 March 2014. Pistorius was a celebrated Paralympian track athlete before he shot his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp (1983-2013), to death from behind a bathroom door in Silver Lakes Estate, Pretoria, on the evening of 14 February 2013. Although Pistorius claimed he shot Steenkamp, believing her to be an intruder, the State questioned why Pistorius did not execute reasonable warning before he fired blindly into the bathroom door (Harris 2016, 349). Pistorius was subsequently convicted of culpable homicide and served eleven years in prison before his release on 5 January 2024 (Harris 2016, 346). The poster sign constructs the outrage that some South Africans felt at Pistorius’ lesser sentence of culpable homicide as some were convinced of his guilt owing to neighbours hearing loud arguments from Pistorius’ house prior to the shots being fired and previous evidence of him firing his firearm recklessly (Ensor and Laing 2014). Although the state did not free Oscar, the poster questions the logic of people defending a convicted murderer over advocating for free education.

D53 and D54 portray two types of political commentary. D53 shows a mixed-race group of male activists holding cardboard placards in front of a stage where a young black, professionally dressed woman is speaking. A photograph of former United States Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy (1925-1968) is projected in the background. The placards say, “Iconic authentication and family privelege [sic]” and, “No to US hegemony”. The tweet is posted by Chairperson of the Democratic Alliance (DA), Hellen Zille (1951—), who captions the image “Lovelyn Nwadeyi explaining that the MC was wrong to introduce her as a leader of #FeesMustFall. No leaders there”. The image is from an event hosted at Jameson Hall, UCT, on 4 June 2016 commemorating Kennedy’s “Ripple For Hope” speech against apartheid, given to the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) at UCT on 6 June 1966 (Newsroom 2016).

The image, along with the caption, creates a strange mixture of dissident views. The protesters' placards oppose the United States' involvement in South African affairs. Simultaneously, Zille condemns the actions of the FMF protesters by reiterating a statement Nwadeyi made about not being an FMF leader, expressing that there are no leaders in the movement. Although Kennedy's anti-apartheid speech likely aligns with some of the goals of FMF such as antiracism, the poster signs of the activists reflect a dedication to decolonialisation that trumps the symbolic cultural ties represented by the event.

D54 directly criticises President Jacob Zuma (1942—), who served as the fourth president of South Africa during FMF. A young black man faces away from the camera while pointing his poster sign to the lens that says, "I don't want to end up like Zuma #FeesMustFall". A banner with the EFF insignia is visible behind him, and he is also clad in a red beret and an EFF t-shirt. Zuma has been criticised by many South Africans for his lack of formal education, which has led to public mishaps such as misreading long numbers during public speeches (Shubin 2018, 49). The EFF has posed a threat to the ANC voter base since its establishment by Julius Malema (1981—), former leader of the ANC Youth Party (Sadie and Patel 2020, 3). Zuma's presidential legacy was mired with allegations of corruption as he has since been accused of allowing the state to be captured by the Gupta family and Zuma "loyalists" via a "tenderpreneur" system (Sadie and Patel 2020, 5).^{171 172} The comments on the image are by the same user who expresses incredulity at the activist's message, reiterating that Zuma is the president of South Africa, thus implying that he deserves respect. The commenter also calls the pictured activist an "idiot", expressing anger and calling Zuma "my boy". The image shows the complicated relationship that many South Africans have with the ANC as both the party that ultimately overthrew the apartheid government and simultaneously, a government that is consistently accused of corruption, financial mismanagement, slow transformation policies and service under-delivery.

D58 features a protest sign, but it is not the photograph's focus. The photograph is professionally taken and shows a young black man looking upward with his arm raised in a clenched fist gesture. His eyebrows are deeply furrowed as if he is embodying the gesture with his entire body. The crowd in the background of the image is slightly out of focus, but over the young man's shoulder, a black woman holds up a protest sign that states, "U will

¹⁷¹ The full State Capture Commission Report compiled by Chief Justice RMM Zondo (1960—) is available on the official Commission of State Capture website.

¹⁷² Laurence Piper and Andrew Charman (2018, 1) define a "tenderpreneur" as, "a South African colloquialism for a businessperson who uses political contacts to secure government procurement contracts (called 'tenders') often as part of reciprocal exchange of favours or benefits. The term is a portmanteau of 'tender' (to provide business services) and 'entrepreneur'. The Gupta brothers, Ajay, Atul and Rajesh, established a personal relationship with Zuma in the early 2000s and struck very lucrative deals with Zuma in exchange for favourable tenders, particularly in the mineral and energy sector (Piper and Charman 2018, 2-3).

not turn universities into stores #theyarenotstokvels *pangi nge* education sale *phansi!!!!*” The Zulu is translated as “down with the sale of education!!!!”

Stokvels are informal saving systems used by lower-income South Africans where members make regular contributions on a continuous basis (Matuku and Kaseke 2014, 505). In some cases, the pooled money is doled out in an orderly manner to the investors or alternatively, the money is re-invested into business ventures for further profit (Matuku and Kaseke 2014, 506). Sally Matuku and Edwell Kaseke (2014, 504) describe stokvels as a form of financial “self-help” separate from the government’s initiatives for economic development. Just from the image alone, it is difficult to determine what the activist means by her protest sign. The placard may suggest that South African universities should be free from outside business investment and interests or that money should not be directed to universities as they are not banks.

Theme 11 collates images that showcase the student leaders of FMF, largely the SRC members of WITS who featured prominently in the 2015 leg of the protests. Along with Mkhathshwa, the featured students include former WITS SRC presidents Shaeera Kalla (1993—), Dlamini, and WITS EFF SRC Chairperson Vuyani Pambo (1989—).

D56 shows Mkhathshwa, Kalla, Dlamini and Pambo leading a large group of students down a street in Johannesburg. The student leaders are dressed in a mix of clothing displaying political insignia. Mkhathshwa adorns her ANC headwrap; Kalla wears a black t-shirt with the face of ANC activist Winnie Madikizela Mandela (1936-2018) on it, as well as the South African Student Congress (SASCO) logo. Pambo wears an EFF emblazoned t-shirt, whereas Dlamini wears a t-shirt that says WITS University. The photograph powerfully communicates a unification of diverse political groups for the common cause of free and equal education. The students’ faces connote a sense of determination as they stride forward, backed by the throng of students that follow them. A photograph such as D56 taps into the memory-activism nexus of similar student protest events such as the Paris Riots of May 1968 or the Student Strike of 1970.¹⁷³

D60, similarly, depicts a striking image of Mkhathshwa standing with her hands on her hips slightly apart from a group of students, linked arm in arm. She stands on a dusty surface with dust clouds swirling around her, suggesting a sense of movement from the surrounding students. Her pose emanates strength, affirmed by the caption which states, “The future leaders of South Africa #FeesHaveFallen #FeministAgenda”. Bosch and

¹⁷³ In May 1968, anti-authoritarian protests broke out in Paris instigated by the New Left, or left-wing activists who were disillusioned with traditional approaches of socialism and communism (Gilcher-Holtey 2014, 257). The Student Strike of 1970 was an anti-Vietnam War movement where students on college campuses around the United States protested against President Richard Nixon’s (1913-1994) announcement that the army would be deployed in Cambodia as an expansion of the war (Broadhurst 2015, 85).

Mutsvairo (2017, 78) concur that there was a “dominant feminist agenda” in the iconology of the FMF protests with particular emphasis on the power of black female leadership.

Similarly, D50 also shows a young black girl leading a protest event. She is shirtless and holding a microphone. Her bare chest has the words, “Still not asking for it”, written across it. As mentioned, it is difficult to determine whether D50 was taken as part of a FMF demonstration or a RMF demonstration as both the hashtags are included in the caption.¹⁷⁴ Allegations of rape were laid against a UCT RMF activist in November 2015, leading to an intersectional splintering of the RMF activist group (Petersen, Mzantsi and Tswanya 2015). For example, transgender activists as part of the trans* Collective group staged an intervention at the opening of a photographic exhibition at UCT against the lack of acknowledgement of black trans people in the representation of the RMF movement (Ndelu, Dlakavu and Boswell 2017, 2). Images such as D50 show the constant renegotiation of the collective identities of the Fallist movements based on the perceived representation and dominant narratives.

6.5 The Iconicities of #AmINext and #FeesMustFall

As networked social movements, the iconologies of #AmINext and FMF mix online activism and on-the-ground images of protest. Catalogue Set C are a mix of networked images and more composed photographs, such as those taken with professional cameras. When the protests reached the ground, images of the protests circulated on various mediums such as SNS, online news sites, and mainstream television media. The circulation of the images on these mediums creates impressions of the movements that are negotiated by the activists and commentators via the engagement tools on the platforms, such as through comments, likes, or retweets. In Rancièrian (2010b, 15) terms, the images form the movements’ aesthetic, which is then politicised by engagement via commentary and other forms of engagement, such as reposts or retweets.

6.5.1 Table 2: The Local and Global Iconicities of Catalogue Set C

On SNS, the images are interconnected via their hashtags, creating iconologies influenced by the logic and vernaculars of the platforms. This relationship characterises what Bainotti and Rogers (2022, 18) refer to as “co-occurrence network maps”, where the images make up the visual imaginaries of the events. Put differently, the hashtags connect the images to create a network of images that encompasses both the collective identities and overarching

¹⁷⁴ The phrase ‘still not asking for it’ is commonly used in anti-rape rhetoric as a response to the commonly held myth that women or girls who were raped were ‘asking for it’ by dressing provocatively or drinking alcohol excessively (Greene and Day 2020, 450).

narratives of the movements. Table 2 (Appendix B) suggests the local and global iconicities that could be read in the themes of Catalogue Set C.

Activists, news media and observers of the movements produce the images and upload them onto the sites. Simultaneously, the platforms mould the ways the events are perceived. The tagging and hashtag systems allow users to navigate the images where viewing hyperlinked posts create an impression of the narrative of the events. All these actions are part of the participatory culture of networked social movements where the representation of the events involves layers of invisible and visible connections (Beer 2009, 997; Drainville 2018, 8). The hashtags are an example of visible links in the network, whereas filtering algorithms that recommend certain images over others could be thought of as invisible or non-representational links in the network.

#AmINext and FMF also constructed by their respective collective identities. The bodies of the activists, their placards, their choices of clothes or their selection of protest space inexplicitly and explicitly express the tenets of the movements. The activism, whether in-person or online, creates rupture by challenging the routine. Didi-Huberman (2018, 13, emphasis in original) states:

What becomes clear then, is that protest invests sensible space, notably visually, on the basis of a vigorous refusal of political representation: it makes a *political expression* appear—the qualifier “direct” would perhaps not be exact since it is always mediated by its choice of path, slogans, iconography, more or less obligatory comportments—which fundamentally contest the previously acquired forms of political representation, whether they be parliamentary, or even unionised.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Didi-Huberman (2018, 21) suggests that even when gestures, phrases or other political icons transfer from earlier iterations of political iconology, their meaning is arbitrated by the new political expression via “re-subjectivisation”. Didi-Huberman’s idea of visual re-subjectivisation is, thus, comparable to Rancière’s (2009a, 25) aesthetic image by implying that older political expressions can be renewed to suggest novel subjectivities.

In the FMF iconology, for example, the activists adorn the iconic imagery of historical figures associated with the struggle. By adorning the faces of their heroes or using the clenched fist gesture, the protesters seek to combine the apartheid-resistance leaders’ representation with their own. In doing so, they refurbish and “re-subjectivise” the anti-apartheid iconology to bolster the affective impetus of their own movement (Didi-Huberman 2018, 21). The image of Biko on an activist’s shirt, for example, recollects not just the tenets of the Black Consciousness movement, but the legacy of a black intellectual who died at the hands of the police because of his beliefs. Through the use of iconic imagery, there is an

affective bid for the tenets of the anti-apartheid era movement to be associated with the FMF movement.

In their studies of the iconologies of protest photographs online, both Drainville (2018, 22) and Merrill (2023, 138) acknowledge the rhizomatic nature of images. Although social media platforms and SNS create hierarchical ways of visualising protest events based on their relevance and engagement, there are certain types of images that consistently come to stand for social movements since the inception of NSMs. The most prominent images that have represented movements are those that have gained the label of “iconic photographs”, the photographs that galvanize a single moment, stimulate emotion, and imprint themselves on global cultural memory (Merrill 2023, 134). Concurrently, many scholars writing on the iconicity of images suggest that iconic images are the nodes where social connections are felt (Alexander 2010, 783-784; Kurasawa 2015, 3; A. Chr. Engels-Schwarzpaul 2021, 670; Rigney and Smits 2023, 17-18). Iconic images encompass the politics of visibility by providing a locus for connection and stimulating affective responses (Rancière 2009a, 7). Iconicity, comparably, could be described as images' underlying qualities that potentially trigger resonance, recognition, and memory.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, Belting (2005, 302) highlights the body as the medium that both vitalises and politicises images. For example, Belting (2005, 311) refers to the body as “a living medium”. He further suggests the body produces the experiences in images (Belting 2005, 311). He conceives of visual media as a “prosthesis” for bodies that act as points of likeness and reflexivity (Belting 2005, 309). He goes on to imply that digital images are experienced differently from analogue images as they combine the “visual” and the “virtual”, in his words: “Digital images usually address our bodies’ imagination and cross the borderline between visual images and virtual images, images seen and images projected. In this sense, digital technology pursues the mimesis of our own imagination. Digital images inspire mental images, much as they are inspired by mental images and their free flux. External and internal representations are encouraged to merge” (Belting 2005, 309).

Belting (2005, 308-310) suggests a separation of the terms image and medium or media where he implies image to be more transient forms of visibility and media to be inscribed and emplaced. Importantly, he states that, “Our bodies always carry a collective identity in that they represent a given culture as a result of ethnicity, education, and a particular visual environment”. With this statement, he posits that because images transmit laterally, bodies are not just receivers of images, but are able to revitalise images through an awareness of their perception in time and space. Belting’s (2005, 303) conception of the visual and the virtual, thus, positions protest images as phenomenological bids for connection.

Similarly, Nigel Thrift's (2008, 8-9) "non-representational theory" also emphasises the affective or contagious way that bodies in motion transmit affective potentiality. He contends that bodies perform their re-subjectivisation in ways that are not always easily expressed or interpreted rhetorically. He further posits that the ubiquitousness of networked ICT systems encourages a feedback system where all spaces are configured and processed communally stating, "[...] Information technology acts as a means of propagation which is also a means of structuring perception (Liu 2004)" (Thrift 2008, 9). It acts as a means of singularization which is also a means of aggregating a multiplicity of voices" (Thrift 2008, 290-291).

The activists of #AmINext and FMF use SNS to structure the perception of the movement intentionally; however, they are also subject to feedback within the networked systems of SNS. By looking directly into the camera's lens or placing their placards clearly within its view, many of the activists from #AmINext and FMF perform their activism as if they are cognisant of their role as representatives of their respective movements. Relatedly, the activism is performed with an awareness that their image forms part of the movements' collective identities as well as the narrativisation of the movements through various media platforms (Rigney and Smits 2023, 12). On another level, some protesters also show an awareness of how their bodies are part of a collective history of visual protest (Rigney and Smits 2023, 19). Accordingly, the iconologies of the #AmINext and FMF protests are likely influenced by a universal imagic conversation on assertions of equality, particularly regarding the visibilities of people with a historical lack of power in the "civic political space" representing both the physical realm and in the digital realm (Azoulay 2008, 12).

In the #AmINext photographs, there is a strong performative element to the images. Furthermore, there is a strong focus on individual women activists holding legible protest signs. The performative element is related to Didi-Huberman's (2018, 14) earlier-mentioned statement that activism makes political expressions appear. By showing the effects of GBV on their bodies, the activists are making visible a reality that often occurs behind closed doors. Writing about "human rights art", Michael Galchinsky (2012, 69) outlines the potential reasons that artists focus on displays of human rights transgressions, stating, "They seek to clarify or dispute historical narratives, protest current practices, foment resistance, promote reconciliation, express solidarity, inspire others, and mourn". In the case of the protesters dressing up as GBV victims, the activists both mourn for the victims and act as living testimonials to the abuse experienced by GBV victims. Kaisu Hynnä, Mari Lehto and Susanna Paasonen (2019, 2) offer the term "affective body politics" as social media politics that "[...] concerns the capacities of all kinds of bodies to affect and be affected, sometimes in patterned and premeditated ways, sometimes spontaneously and unpredictably".

Judith Butler (2015, 71) emphasises the importance of the public character of body politics by "[...] bringing attention to the way that politics is already in the home, or on the

street, or in the neighborhood, or indeed in those virtual spaces that are equally unbound by the architecture of the house and the square". Although Butler (2015, 82), following Hannah Arendt (1958), is addressing acts of "body legitimacy" as a claim to equality as part of the space of appearance, her ideas can also be applied to the idea of bodies making private violence legitimate through the politics of visibility. The wounds of on the bodies of the activists are not painted on their bodies to be believable, but as a type of body politics where the activists appear as stand-ins for the victims (Hallsby 2022, 175).

Further, the visual activism of the #AmINext movement focusses on highlighting the voices of individual female activists. Accordingly, there appears to be an effort by the #AmINext activists to intensify the voices and messages of women whose voices may otherwise be unheard in the form of "testimonial" activism (Gilmore 2020, 28). According to statistics, women in the coloured (mixed-race) racial group are the most at risk of GBV, but many African cultural practices such as *ukuthwala*, virginity testing, and *u ku ngena* (widow marrying) lead to situations that may encourage GBV (Maluleke 2012, 2; CSVr 2016, 7).¹⁷⁵ The protest signs communicate a range of messages, from calls for violence, to bids of persuasion, to expressions of commonality (Johansen and Martin 2008, 507-509).

On a global scale, the protest slogans, images of the activists, and hashtags connect the movement to the #MeToo movement. #MeToo is a global activist movement started by Tarana Burke in 2006, aimed at spreading awareness about incidents of sexual assault, harassment, and rape (Murphy 2019, 53). Leigh Gilmore (2020, 28) states, "The #MeToo movement disrupted some mechanisms that silence survivors by conjuring a new witness in two temporalities: summoning the past, through memory, and the present, through testimony". Similarly, to #AmINext, Gilmore (2020, 31) states there was a performance of both the grief and suffering of the victims of #MeToo, "Because graphic witness is performative of intersectional survivorship, it transforms victimisation, without erasing it, into a collective and political identity focused on justice and healing its relation to the bodies of victims and to the circulation of images of bodies is fraught". Owing to the similar tenets of #MeToo and #AmINext, many of the forms of activism followed similar trends, such as addressing the perpetrators of violence, commemorating the victims of violence, and visualising the pain inflicted on victims of sexual and violent crime (Gilmore 2020, 28-38).

¹⁷⁵ *Ukuthwala* is a cultural tradition practiced in some South African cultures of abducting a potential bride to prompt marriage negotiations (CSVr 2016, 8-9). The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVr) states that the act encourages an unequal power-dynamic which puts young African brides at risk of sexual disease transmission, sexual and physical violence. Virginity testing is the physical assertion of a young girl's virginity (CSVr 2016, 9). Owing to a prevailing myth that sleeping with a virgin will cure human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), this practice puts young girls at risk for rape (CSVr 2016, 9). Widow marrying is the forced act of having a deceased husband's widow remarry into the family (Manala 2015, 8). The practice has been criticised for encouraging coercive practices including denying the widow access to her husband's wealth and treating a widow's non-compliance to the tradition as a form of contempt for the entire community (Manala 2015, 5-7).

Importantly, Gilmore (2020, 31) suggests that the iconology of these movements creates similar visual nodes that can potentially speak to other movements, thus creating networked points of recollection.

Recollective imagery, as argued above, is a crucial dimension of the FMF iconology in creating notions of solidarity and adding credence to the movement by referring to previous protests. More specifically, the representations of violence enacted on the bodies of the FMF protesters, and the displays of police brutality speak to a branch of protest iconology related to unequal displays of police violence on protesters that have occurred in the past and more contemporaneously. As stated, South Africa has a long visual history associated with the police taking a heavy-handed response to protesters, and that imagery (among others) was circulated by anti-apartheid activists to communicate the atrocities which were occurring in the country (Thörn 2006, 117-118).¹⁷⁶ However, the violent imagery of the police clashes does not only recollect apartheid-era history but connects to similar displays of police brutality seen in the Civil Rights Movement, the 1981 Brixton Riots, or more recent protest movements such as OWS, the Arab Springs or the BLM protests. The similar imagery creates an iconicity of a shared, visualised, ongoing battle for equality in the civic, political space (Azoulay 2008, 12, 21).

Finally, many of the images of #AmINext and FMF portray bodies as affective and affected sites of disruption. Clare Hemmings (2012, 148) uses the term “affective solidarity” referring specifically to the feminist expression of politics through affect. She underlies her concept of “affective solidarity” by making clear the connections between feminism, knowledge and politics: “This dynamic understanding of knowledge and politics is central to feminists, both through the challenges to objectivity that prioritise embodiment and location, and very importantly through a focus on knowing differently, as well as knowing different things or knowing difference”.¹⁷⁷ Therefore, Hemmings (2012, 154) sees identity as *formed* by affect rather than a category that shapes experience.

To illustrate a form of affective body politics from the images, D50 is an image that resonates with #AmINext and FMF. The photograph speaks to the politics of acceptability, particularly regarding the display of female bodies in public. The image makes visible a topless black female body in a typically restrictive space. As a PCI, the scene is multilayered in speaking to the prevalent “rape culture” in South Africa, which has shown to be a

¹⁷⁶ The most famous photograph to emerge from the apartheid-era is likely Sam Nzima's photograph of 18-year-old Mbuyisa Makhubo carrying 12-year-old Hector Pieterse's lifeless body after police opened fire on the activists at the 1976 Soweto Riots.

¹⁷⁷ Hemmings (2012, 151-153) problematises “empathy” as a category of analysis in feminist theory as containing underlying power assumptions about which subjects should be afforded empathy. Further, she reconciles feminism with affect theory by emphasising how feeling moulds experience and knowledge, potentially leading to expressions of discontent (Hemmings 2012, 157).

widespread issue on university campuses (Gouws 2018; Palm 2018; Orth, van Wyk and Andipatin 2020).

Rape culture refers to the dismissal and ignoring of rape throughout history which has led to a societal acceptance of sexual violence (Orth, van Wyk and Andipatin 2020, 193). In South Africa, the hashtag #EndRapeCulture proliferated on SNS in 2016, addressing the lack of accountability faced by rapists on university campuses and the inadequacies of university policies in dealing with rape (Gouws 2018, 5; Orth, van Wyk and Andipatin 2020, 201). The image straddles the line between two ways of viewing women's bodies in South African society: one, as associated with the objectifying colonising gaze which sexualises any form of public nudity, particularly by women, and two, from an African cultural view where a woman being topless is not associated with the same level of sexualisation as from a Western perspective (Gouws 2018, 10).¹⁷⁸ Additionally, the image becomes increasingly multilayered as paired with multiple hashtags such as #FeesMustFall, #RhodesMustFall and #YouthDay2023. The image embodies a feminist challenge to Western perspectives on female nudity and speaks to the wider systemic issue of rape culture and the lack of accountability by universities in dealing with GBV. Thus, the image epitomises the syncretic nature of networked social movements in representing a particular moment, and simultaneously speaks to many related political, social and cultural issues.

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I situate #AmINext and FMF in the existing definitions of social movements as networked social movements, following Castells (2015, 171). As a sub-genre of NSMs, networked social movements exist both in the online space and are performed in public spaces. I also interrogated the term "hashtag movements", challenging the techno-deterministic view that social media has been the key factor in the formation and propagation of social movements since the formation of OWS. Although social media play a significant role in the organisation and circulation of information during many "social media revolutions", other media platforms and on-the-ground protests also played a significant role in contributing to the formation of movements such as OWS and the Egyptian Revolution. As shown in survey research from the Tunisian Revolution, the circulation of images and videos on SNS plays a vital role in creating connection nodes, constructing events narratives, and forming interaction sites for activists.

Using Drainville's (2018) and Merrill's (2023) image studies focusing on the circulation of protest images on X and Google Images, I showed how algorithmic and human-manipulated connections on Internet platforms can link past protest imagery and more contemporary

¹⁷⁸ In Zulu culture, for example, being bare-breasted may indicate that a young girl is unmarried (Naidu 2009, 43).

protest imagery. I concurred with Rigney and Smits' (2023, 14) conceptualisation of the memory-activism nexus, where familiar image forms, such as iconic photographs, can be recalled contributing to the collective identities of movements. I argue that the performative image recollection seen in contemporary protest images and their imagic relations could be referred to as iconicity.

Following clarifications on the image-collection methodology, I conducted an iconological interpretation of Catalogue Set C. Apart from the compositional aspects of the images, and contextual information was also provided. My conceptualisation of the themes was also explained with performance activism emerging as a dominant theme for #AmINext and acts of police brutality against protesters for FMF. Where the visual activism of #AmINext focussed on highlighting the messages and experiences of individual women, thereby connecting their experiences to adjacent movements such as #MeToo and #TimesUp, the scenes of violence in FMF evoked recollection images of the apartheid and Civil Rights-era, and also potentially speaking to more concurrent movements such as the BLM protests where there are also often clashes with the police.

Finally, it was concluded that affective bodily politics was a crucial aspect of both the #AmINext and FMF protests, where the body, particularly the black female body, becomes a site of performativity where otherwise hidden traumatic acts can be publicly displayed. However, as shown explicitly in FMF, the black female body also becomes a site of an empowered future where black female leadership is prefigured. It was additionally concluded that the iconologies of the #AmINext and FMF movements are not straightforward compositions of the movements but amalgamations of different perspectives of the events, machinic interventions, as well as visions of a changed future.

The next chapter will conclude the research by providing a breakdown of the previous chapters, stating where the research fills the gap in existing literature, expressing the limitations of the research and providing suggestions for future research avenues.

**CONCLUSION:
RETHINKING ICONICITY THROUGH
SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICALLY CHARGED IMAGES**

7.1 Summary of Chapters

This thesis addressed the question of how political narratives are configured as aesthetic issues in the selected images from apartheid, #AmINext and FMF represented by Catalogues B and C. In the preceding chapters, I overviewed literature that addresses how photographs have constituted political arguments both in the South African and international context, outlined the relevant theoretical framework, and conducted an iconological analysis of apartheid-era documentary photographs and the networked social movements, #AmINext and FMF.

Chapter One situated the research by summarising the role of documentary photography as a form of political, social and cultural commentary in the South African context. Where some photographs focussed on exposing the atrocities of apartheid, others constructed subtle visual critiques of apartheid as a lived system. I overviewed visual activism as a more inclusive category for political expression through visual forms. The backgrounds of RMF, FMF and #AmINext were summarised to situate the discussion on networked social movements. Whereas RMF and FMF are more associated with the Fallist movements that aim to dismantle colonial structures and marginalising systems, #AmINext challenges governmental policies on GBV.

The need for the study was also touched on in Chapter One, where I stated that there have been no intensive iconological studies comparing apartheid-era political photography to more contemporary political images. Although researchers such as Bosch and Mutsaers (2017), Kesting (2017) and Thomas (2021; 2022) have addressed the channelling of apartheid-era images in contemporary visual activism, there have not been any rigorous comparisons of political images from apartheid to more recent images of activism. Further, as South African PCI are increasingly meeting other images on SNS, Google Images, cloud services, image-uploading sites and blogs, more interrogations on the interactions between political images in online spaces are required. I further illustrated a need to explore images as counternarratives to ideological regimes as they were used in South Africa during apartheid, #AmINext and FMF but also in international movements such as the Civil Rights Movement and BLM.

I introduced the methodological frameworks for the study, which involved an intuitive and curatorial approach to collecting and organising the images. I primarily employed iconology as the methodological and theoretical approach to inform my exploration of the documents. Hermeneutics was also applied as an interpretive paradigm, analysing the

images' subjects as embedded in a historical, cultural and social context. The digital methodologies used were visual content-coding, visual attribute analysis and image clusters (Bock, Isermann, and Knieper 2011; Bainotti and Rogers 2022; Müller 2024).

Chapter Two served as both a literature review and an overview of iconology as both a methodological and theoretical approach. The chapter began by exploring the term icon in its many forms and associations. Icons, in the Peircean (1955, 102) sense, are resemblances of objects. For Peirce, iconicity refers to the relation between a sign's expression of an object as shaped by convention (Mannheim 1999, 107). However, as Peirce's theories on iconicity have mostly been applied to linguistics, the potential for the word as related to iconology is not deeply explored. Further, as shown by Robins (2014) and Gunning (2008), there has also been a misattribution of Peirce's theories on indexicality in theories of photography. Whereas Peirce (1894] 1998, 14) states that the indexicality of a photograph is related to its technical processes of reproduction, there has been a misattribution of the word as analogous to its reproduction of reality (Robins 2014, 10; Gunning 2008, 41-45). Owing to a focus on photographs as faithful representations of events, things or subjects occurred, there has been less focus on photographs as a relational medium that relies on recognition to express meaning (Gunning 2017, 45). Following Gunning (2008, 45), I posit a usefulness in thinking of the relations of images through the category of iconicity. Specifically, as referring to an imagic quality of resemblance, recognition and likeness that is not always rhetorically discernible, but may be felt as resonance.

Additional to their meaning in semiotics, icons are also images that have earned a significant level of cultural impact. Images become iconic through institutional reinforcement (Hariman and Lucaites 2007, 90). For Hariman and Lucaites (2007, 90), icons are cultural interventions in the everyday functioning of social and political processes. As Perlmutter (2005, 115) as well as Boudana, Frosch, and Cohen (2017, 1228) argue, iconic images become politically argumentative when they are used narratively or paired with narratives. As recognisable images, Boudana, Frosch, and Cohen (2017, 1228) suggest that icons create a "moveable aesthetic" where their recognisable features can be appropriated into other image forms, such as memes and collages. In the digital realm, owing to a lack of accompanying information, there is also a risk that icons can lose the meanings associated with their original contexts (Boudana, Frosch, and Cohen 2017, 1227-1228). Further, as many SNSs profit from attention aggregation, virality may be an impetus for the integration of recollective technologies on their platforms, such as archives, galleries, and cloud systems (Ibrahim 2018, 457-462). In the posthuman era, memory and memory recall are now augmented by digital technologies (Ibrahim 2018, 457). As Merrill (2023, 137) suggested, iconicity can be conferred to images to elevate their meaning. According to Ibrahim (2018,

457-462), visual memory recall has been made profitable as networked technology now guides the circulation and consumption of imagery.

On interactive interfaces such as Miro and through the uploading and gallery functions on SNS like Facebook, Instagram and X, images can be paired with other images. Additionally, SNS automatically pair images with one another through metadata such as hashtags and tagging systems. Metadata, for Rubinstein and Sluis (2008, 23-24), form the relations between networked images. Networked images are primed toward universalised narratives and identities. However, it was also argued that the framing of networked images, can also encourage deeper contemplation.

The combination of images on digital platforms forms image interactions that may inspire resonances or may intimate novel interrelations. As Du Preez (2020, 381) shows, networked image pairing can suggest the movement of “visual paradigms”. In this sense, the movement of forms in images in digital interfaces is similar to Warburg’s curation of migrating gestures in the *Mnemosyne*. The *Mnemosyne* encourages the viewer to come to their own rationalisations in determining the meaning of expression through contemplation, or in Johnson’s (2012, 80) words, the “recollective and psychological facilities of the interpreter”. Warburg’s syncretic iconological approach was a useful departure point in this research in composing the images and themes for intuitive responses. The syncretic approach acknowledges the sometimes-fragmented transfer of meaning in image communication and acknowledges image-to-image expression as significant.

Panofsky’s (1972, 14) three-step iconographical approach, encompassing the pre-iconographical description, the iconographical description and the iconological level, were also summarised. Panofsky’s methodology provided a practical system for breaking down the codes of the images analysed. The individual aspects of the images could be connected to their historical and social context, lending to their iconological interpretation.

More recent approaches to iconology, as conceptualised by Mitchell and Belting, are also discussed in Chapter Two. Mitchell’s (2015, 49) critical iconological approach views images as, in his words, “speculative contemplations” speaking to the past, present and future. Mitchell reflects on the ideologies that affect the viewing of images and challenges the idea that images are clear-cut entities. Belting (2005, 308-311) is concerned with the transmission of the knowledge of images. Bodies do not just receive images but also recollect and diffuse knowledge. As depictions of bodies are prominent in activist imagery, it was argued that Belting’s theories contribute to an understanding of how bodies form affective images. In other words, performative images of bodies can carry meaning beyond when the image is initially captured.

The final section of Chapter Two addressed more recent applications of the term iconicity in the cultural sociological field. Iconicity in cultural sociology is mainly associated

with the sensuous qualities of a revered object with material origins. Sociologists such as Alexander, Bartmanski and Solaroli explore how icons shape experiences, social imaginaries, memories, politics and culture both consciously and unconsciously. However, I also argued that embedding discussions on iconicity in the material can be limiting especially considering the immaterial connections formed between images in the digital age. Considering the connections drawn by image networks both in the online and offline realm, I demonstrated the potential in rethinking the category of iconicity in visual and digital culture studies as referring to the qualities of images that inspire recognition, likeness and resonance in the viewing of other images.

Chapter Three overviewed Rancière's theories on the aesthetic regime of arts, the parataxis, and imageness. Rancière's theories on aesthetics and politics offer useful terms in interpreting how images interact with other images and how images can prefigure alternative futures for the subjects pictured. The chapter began with a delineation of Rancière's (2009a, 6) conception of aesthetics which is a critique of the Enlightenment predication of a cognitive separation of art and politics. He offers the term "distribution of the sensible" to refer to the maintenance and intelligibility of communal relations (Rancière 2009a, 25). Art causes dissensus as an interruption to the sensible flow of progressive time. The *sensus communis* is then re-established through a politics that refigures ways of being (Rancière 2010a, 37).

The aesthetic regime of arts refers to a form of experience that artworks enable that grants an autonomous realm to configure political relations (Rancière 2019, 19). Aesthetic experience is the relation of the art object to lived experience (Rancière 2010a, 173). Rancière (2019, 19) suggests that the unprecedented interrelation between literature, philosophy, film and photography in the nineteenth century led to a meeting of mediums that expanded what was seeable, sayable and intelligible. The meeting of mediums blurred the lines between low and high culture leading to what Rancière (2019, 19) refers to as a "parataxis", or a fraternity of metaphors where different modes of expression could be placed together to suggest novel meanings as sentence-images. Sentence-images, according to Rancière (2019, 46) loosen "the linking relationship between image and text," creating novel relations through montage. The relations between images, for Rancière (2019, 14), in the parataxis is an "imageness". Imageness is the ability of disparate forms of articulation to speak to one another. Using his theory of imageness, Rancière (2019, 19-20) critiques Barthes' conception of photography in *Camera Obscura* (1980). Where Barthes attempts to create a distinct mode of experience for photography through *studium* and *punctum*, Rancière suggests that photography forms part of a unified sensory experience which can connect to other mediums to suggest meaning.

For Rancière (2019, 46), the articulation of dissensus causes a rupture in consensus. Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 7-8), however, suggest that rupture is an

asignifying element that causes deterritorialisation through intensity. Using the remediated form of the protester handing flowers to a policeman as an example, I showed how an imageness can transfer between images potentially leading to resonance (Rigney and Smits 2023, 15). The iconicity of the original flower power photography could be read as intensive enough to carry over to the more recent flower power images as an affirmation of the original photograph's iconic power (Merrill 2023, 137; Rigney and Smits 2023, 15). However, as shown, what exactly makes the original image resonant is difficult to discern through translating it discursively. In fact, as demonstrated by Wineberg et al. (2007), without additional information, the message of the original flower power photographs does not reliably transfer to later generations that have no contextual understanding of the images. Vivian (2007, 479-480), following Deleuze ([1977] 2007), positions images as propagative sites that can construct perception. As opposed to discursive language lending power to the image as an icon, the resonance of the image is suggested to be its reoccurrence and remediation through time and space (Vivian 2007, 480).

Chapter Four focussed on interpreting the political arguments of activist photography and different iterations of PCI through time. The term activist photography was established as following Bogre's (2011, xii) broad delineation of photographs that hint at political engagement. Chapter Four explored various interrelations between images and explained how they configure politics, primarily using examples from Catalogue Set A. The chapter began by reinforcing Du Plessis' (2022, 157-158) argument of Mofokeng's collection of photographs in *The Black Photo Album* as counterimages to the exotifying images created by early ethnographic photographers such as Duggan-Cronin. As counterimages, *The Black Photo Album* resists the objectifying tendency of the imperial gaze, which makes them images of resistance within the logic of the empire. Relatedly, I showed how the *sensus communis* of the British Empire shaped the political argumentation of *Street Life in London*. The political argumentation of the images in the publication relied on a public that believed in the veracity of photographs, as well as a public that could read the images as embedded within the empirical network of images. My interpretation of the *Chao-chow-fu Bridge* photograph by Thomson exemplified how photographs can be multiplicities. In characterising the photograph as a broken image, Adams (2021, 271) states that the internal resistance of the photograph conveys a politics that resists a straightforward reading of its contents.

In my analysis of the FSA Project photographs, I applied Rancière's (2009b, 41) conceptualisation of aesthetic experience to Lange's *Migrant Mother*. The aesthetic experience implies an art object disclosing something otherwise obscured in everyday functioning (Rancière 2009b, 41). According to Rosler ([1981] 1990, 317), photographs like *Migrant Mother* are embedded in the aesthetic-historical moment. The aesthetic-historical moment refers to the photograph's framing where its aesthetic qualities point to an

indeterminate past and addresses the photograph's role as testimony for or against a social issue (Rosler [1981] 1990, 307). Using Azoulay's theorisation of photographs as encounters, I argued that Evans' photograph of the Burrough's family portrays politics. The Burroughs family resist a fixating gaze by fixing their hair and attire. Instead, they participate in the creation of their image as part of the encounter.

It was also argued that Parks's *Segregation in the South Series* constructs a visual language of racism, coaxed through the familiar language of Americana (Kozol 1996, 10). The visualisation of Segregation as a social issue requires an affirming gaze which is evoked by Parks through the *sensus communis*. The photographs construct the experiences of African American people during Segregation in a way that can be understood by the liberal middle-class readership of *LIFE* magazine. Aside from their skin colour, the pictures of the Thornton and Causey families read as typical nuclear families enjoying days out together. The disconcerting presence of Jim Crow creates dissensus, suggesting a politics.

Albeit briefly, the role of documentary photography in exposing the atrocities of apartheid was also discussed. Photographs taken during the apartheid regime simultaneously highlighted atrocities and captured otherwise hidden facets of life. Post-apartheid photography is filled with affective images that construct the ongoing affects of the regime (Kesting 2017, 5-14). In response to the subjugating images of the past, a series such as *Working the City* (2010) focusses on the creation of self-constructed images by black female migrant sex-workers who participate in the creation of their images.

The role of photojournalism as a crucial medium in the dissemination and reception of political issues was also discussed. The image of the police-dog attacking black protesters was determined to be a *Bildenwanderung*. It was argued that the police-dog images are intensive not just because of their atavistic origins, but because of the image's frequent recurrence. Mapping the images reveals a network of similar imagery in various locations and times, which can intensify the political messages associated with the imagery. An understanding of the spread of the image is amplified by interfaces, such as Miro, where the particular occurrence of the image can be compared with its global spread.

The chapter concluded with a breakdown of post-photography and the expansion of the concept of photography (Fontcuberta 2015, 6). The advent of NSMs led to a personalisation of politics where storytelling became an important component in expressing social and political issues. SNS and network technology have led to more significant image resources for activists. Further, it was argued that in Hochman's (2014, 3) conception, social media images have allowed for images to be experienced as a continuous present. Although an imageness may be drawn between images, there is also a risk of a loss of context. The images were chosen to exemplify why an expanded definition of iconicity may be useful in iconological research. A term such as iconicity acknowledges how images can be shaped by

other images, a quality that may be ignored if one were to just focus on rhetorical translations of representations.

Chapter Five analysed the critical documentary photographs of apartheid as represented by Catalogue Set B. It was argued that the photographs constructed the social issue of apartheid as aesthetic issues (Rancière 2010b, 24). The politics of apartheid are constructed through the documentary photographs as aesthetic images. For Rancière (2019, 48), aesthetic images are autonomous realms where normative social constructs are both realised and resisted. Politics is the re-establishment of sensible relations following dissensus (2010a, 15). The photographs are ruptures to the norms of visibility of the apartheid state (Rancière 2010b, 20-24). The photographs are further argued as framed to perform the complex yet naturalised relations between the subjects and their environments. As opposed to being solely representations of apartheid, it was argued that the photographs compose the politics of apartheid. Further, the accompanying text to the documents also enhances their experience, alluding to prejudice and unseen relations. For example, the psychical density of racism, as put forward by Hooks (2004, 678), can be read in the isolating images of domestic workers. The striking signage of apartheid is a demonstration of structural propaganda and alludes to the normalised behaviours that their presence generated. According to Rancière (2010b, 24), in the form of heterotopia, materiality can be separated from the sensible to create a novel form of experience in aesthetic images. Alexander (2010, 786), alternatively, argues that images (icons) have a material root, and that they are felt sensorially. Iconic consciousness shapes the experiences of images, which leads to a feeling of significance. I suggested that though Rancière and Alexander do not focus on affect in their arguments, an incorporation of affective theory in both their conceptions could expand the applications of their arguments to encompass a larger range of image communication as related to affect, virtuality and immateriality.

Catalogue Set B are claimed to simulate the virtual experience of apartheid by demonstrating how the situations pictured were conformed to and resisted by the pictured subjects. Quintana (2020, 27), interpreting Rancière, suggests that the “wrong” as portrayed in political imagery is not given, but performed as part of larger stage composing the democratic distributions of time and space. Thus, Catalogue Set B encompasses both the domination and resistance of certain bodies within the *sensus communis* of apartheid. As stated, NSMs aim to make political issues personal. As aesthetic images, Catalogue Set B demonstrate the reification of social identities through the apartheid system, but they also configure the emancipatory potential of bodies within the police logic of apartheid (Quintana 2020, 61). Thus, the images make visible the invisible relations of apartheid, which creates the potential of the images to speak to more universalised political issues. There is an interplay between the specific configuration of the scenes pictured, and their potential to

resonate with a larger audience that lends to their iconicity, or imageness. In order to be convinced of the universal narrative, one must be able to engage in mutual recognition or be able to engage with the images as encounter (Azoulay 2008, 23). The aesthetic images of Catalogue Set B both configure the politics of the time and prefigure the conditions for alternative images to the pictured worlds.

Chapter Six conducted an iconological analysis of Catalogue Set C. In the first section of the chapter, I situated #AmINext and FMF as networked social movements following Castells' (2015, 171-255) definition. Networked social movements occur both in the "space of flows" and in the "space of place", according to Castells (2015, 171-255). Although Castells (2015, 253), in *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age*, argues that SNS enhance democratic participation, Fuchs (2013, 199-200) provides a compelling counterargument that SNS cannot truly be public spheres of democratic engagement owing to the capitalistic interests of SNS platforms. The levels of political participation on the site are further limited by the parameters of their interfaces and digital accessibility barriers. However, Fuchs (2013, 193) does concede that SNS enables the sharing of personal narratives on injustices faced and enables an easier coordination of protest events. Further, SNS provide a platform for affective references, such as key images and videos, that may motivate activists to participate in social movements. Thus, SNS can facilitate points of commonality among protests that can contribute to a common identity among activists (Rigney and Smits 2023, 10).

Contemporary iconological studies on protest imagery were also discussed in Chapter Six, such as Drainville's (2018, 5-7) analysis of Bachman's photograph of Ilesha Evans and Merrill's (2023, 139-140) tracking of Runesson's *Woman with the Handbag* iconic image. Drainville's (2018, 5-7) research demonstrates how an image from a protest event serves as an image node that can be connected to other PCI. He notes how Evans' individual identity was highlighted in SNS commentary on the image, which counters an objectifying view of Evans as solely a symbol for BLM. The associated hashtags, such as #SayHerName and #IAmHer, associate the image with the feminist legs of BLM, which also creates the potential for the photograph to be associated with other feminist movements such as #MeToo and #AmINext. As noted by Drainville (2018, 18), a similar image taken from another angle did not have the same viral spread as Bachman's photograph potentially indicating that the aesthetic framing of the photograph contributed to its virality.

Merrill (2023, 137-140), as already stated, suggests that the virality is a reassertion of iconicity. Google Images' pairing of images, for Merrill (2023, 137), forms a "constellation" of protest imagery that creates cues of recollection borne from the originally searched image. Rigney and Smits (2023, 13) posit that certain images can connect to past images as part of a "memory-activism nexus" where past images can be recalled for their significance in the

present activism. Likewise, the iconologies of #AmINext and FMF, largely determined through hashtags, created what Bainotti and Rogers (2022, 18) term a “co-occurrence network map” that encompasses both the collective identities of the movements and composes the narratives of them. In FMF, many images are imbued with the iconic imagery of apartheid, whether that be in the wearing of the images of iconic apartheid leaders or refurbishing gestures such as the clenched fist icon.

The iconologies of both movements create rupture by challenging the routine. As Didi-Huberman (2018, 13) argued, images of bodies participating in activism encourage a re-subjectivisation of the subjects pictured. In viewing protest imagery, such as the selected images of Catalogue Set C, the body does not just receive the image but experiences the image as a locus of reflexivity and likeness (Belting 2005, 305-309). According to Thrift (2008, 8-9), the re-subjectifying performance of bodies is not always easily expressed and interpreted logically. Additionally, he argues that technology can structure and guide perception. Hashtags can be considered a visible link that connects the imagery of networked social movements, and algorithms are an asignifying link. Both signifying and asignifying elements compose the iconologies of networked social movements. By aiming their activism toward the camera, the activists of #AmINext and FMF engage with a virtual audience, showing an awareness that their cause may be seen on a global scale, thus, playing an active role in forming the image of the movements.

Further, it was argued that the iconologies of #AmINext and FMF are likely influenced by the continuous circulation of imagery composed by assertions of equality (Azoulay 2008, 12). The imagery of #AmINext was determined to have a strong performative element. The performative element of #AmINext uses body politics that focuses on making the hidden realities of GBV seen. The bodies of the activists are both sites of mourning and living testimonies to acts of violence that often occur behind closed doors. Many of the documents of #AmINext also focus on the messages of individual women. As Gilmore (2020, 31) suggests, the testimonial activism of movements like #AmINext has the potential to speak to ideologically adjacent movements such as #MeToo and #TimesUp.

The images of FMF feature recollective images. The photographs of the wounds inflicted on the bodies of protesters and the looming police presence at the protests conjure memories of the police brutality faced by anti-apartheid protesters. However, as demonstrated by Catalogue Set A, the recollective imagery does not just point to apartheid, but also images from the Civil Rights Movement, the 1981 Brixton Riots, and more recent protest movements connected to BLM.

Ultimately, the images of #AmINext and FMF construct bodies as affective and affected sites of disruption. It was determined that the iconologies of #AmINext and FMF are not uncomplicated representations of the movements but are multifaceted perspectives

formed through metadata, images of the past, present and images that prefigure an alternative future.

7.2 Contribution of Study

One of the contributions of this thesis is the broadened reconceptualisation of iconicity as a category of image interpretation. Although there has been a push for iconicity as a mode of interrogation in literature studies, rhetorical studies and cultural sociology, the term has not been intensely interrogated in art history, visual culture studies and digital media studies. Inspired by Rancière's concept of *imageness* as referring to the sensible relations between images, I posit an expanded understanding of iconicity as more generally referring to the underlying qualities of images that inspire a sense of likeness, resonance, recognition and memory recall *when perceiving other images*.

My conception of iconicity deviates from its current use in studies of iconic images as referring to the qualities of images that make them iconic (Hariman and Lucaites 2015; Rigney and Smits 2023; Merrill 2023), and from the cultural sociological perspective where iconicity refers to the sensual qualities of icons as derived from a material source (Alexander 2010; Bartmanski 2014). As previously quoted in Chapter Three, the current view of iconicity is best summed up by Hariman and Lucaities (2015, 29, my emphasis added), who state, "Iconicity is about how something that is *distinctively particular, concrete, material*, and otherwise in and indubitably *part of a present moment*, can nonetheless speak to us about a world to come".¹⁷⁹

Although I understand the foundations of the materialist view of icons as deriving from perceiving certain visual moments as pertinent to the era in which they were taken, I also find the present definitions of iconicity lacking contemporary applicability. As shown in the flower power photograph comparison in Chapter Three, the resonance inspired by images, particularly in montage or image cluster form, does not necessarily make the images "distinctively particular", but rather in their echoing of familiar visual forms.

Even though likeness, resonance, recognition and memory recall are undoubtedly part of what lends to an image becoming iconic, focusing on *iconic power* in the sociological sphere has led to the asignifying aspects of imagic communication being disregarded. As such, I concur with Gunning (2008), who uses the term iconicity to refer to recognition and relationality. Terms such as likeness, recognition and relationality over materiality, particularly and presentism allow for an expanded interpretation of images particularly in the digital age where memory recall is augmented by digital technologies.

¹⁷⁹ I acknowledge I am at risk here of oversimplifying Hariman and Lucaites's (2018, 304) approach to iconicity as they have more recently acknowledged that a broader understanding of iconicity could be academically beneficial. However, I have not been able to locate an updated version of their definition of iconicity.

In my exploration of what makes the selected images of Catalogue Set B political, I provide a practical application of Rancière's theories on the *sensus communis*, the politics of visibility and aesthetic images. I position the selected images of Catalogue Set B as aesthetic images that construct the politics of apartheid. Although an application of Rancière's theories to South African documentary photographs has been conducted by Bester (2015), my specific application of Rancière's (2010b, 20) aesthetic image provides a generative view of apartheid politics in the images as heterotopias.

Additionally, the iconological analyses conducted in this work provided insight into how affective narratives are formed in NSMs and networked social movements. Catalogue Set C is positioned as affective images of the activists of #AmINext and FMF that potentially speak imaginatively to other related social movements. The images focus on body politics, highlighting acts of violence, and many of the placards express the outrage of the protesters by referring to political figures, current events or expressing a collectiveness through hashtags. The images are compositions that challenge their respective political and social issues that also create lines of resonance through hashtags, the bodies and gestures of the protesters, as well as the messages portrayed in their protest signs.

Concurrently, there are asignifying aspects that arrange the images, such as the algorithms of SNS that sort the most relevant imagery according to the search terms, even if that imagery is critical of the movement. To use an example from the documents analysed in this thesis, Document 45, which features in the Top X results for the #AmINext hashtag within the stipulated parameters, uses the #AmINext hashtag to critique the movement. The #AmINext iconology, curated on X via hashtags, therefore includes an image that does not support the movement. The intertwining of multiple perspectives in the iconologies of the movements problematises one of the long-withheld characteristics of new social movements as comprised of a self-composed "collective" identity (Korostelina 2007, 22). The meeting of various types of imagery under the hashtags thus requires negotiation on the more dominant narratives associated with the movements. However, as also shown, the syncretic formulation of the identities of social movements allows for a more significant potential to connect to other movements, whether they be social movements from the past, present, or future.

7.3 Limitations of Study

This thesis has several limitations related to a non-definitive approach to the term icon, a superficial approach to some of the theories mentioned, and the limited number of images analysed.

Although I reviewed various definitions of the term icon in Chapter Two, my own positioning in this thesis reverts between the Peircean conception of icons as a sign of resemblance, the icon as a cultural symbol and the icon as an umbrella term for different types of images. This approach may appear to be contradictory and uncritical; however, I believe grappling with the term in its many definitions allows for a greater engagement with its different forms and acknowledges the varying use of the word across disciplines.

Additionally, as I have contended with multiple political situations, as well as various types of imagery across different time periods and across platforms, some relevant theories and political situations are not outlined in detail. For example, although mentioned throughout the work, affect theory is not profoundly unpacked and is not vigorously applied. The public sphere theory was alluded to but not adequately addressed, even though it is relevant to discussions on the performance of democracy, public communication on the Internet, and public dissent. Rancière's theories on aesthetics and politics, additionally, critique Habermas' linguistic approach to political interactions (Russell and Montin 2015, 2). The reason that the public space is not engaged with deeply in this thesis is simply for the sake of focus and brevity, although it is acknowledged that deeper engagements with the notions of "public" and "space" could contribute additional depth to this research.

There are also limitations concerning the number of images analysed and coded as credibly constituting the iconologies of the apartheid era and the selected movements. Apartheid spanned forty-eight years, and many documentary photographs were taken during that time. The image-collection in this thesis is mainly concentrated on the sixties and is limited to two documentary photographers. Image-collection from other eras may lead to diverse results. Although I do recognise that concentrating on the sixties may not accurately reflect an *expansive* anti-apartheid iconology, I also posit that the curated PCI from the sixties shows a burgeoning awareness of concurrent political situations where the photographers are potentially constructing the politics of apartheid for its comprehension on a global stage.

The sample size of the #AmINext and FMF images could also be considered limited. The reasoning behind restricting the sample size is that I did not want to force a view of the role of images as narrativising the movements that does not mirror their actual representation on SNS. Many posts that include the #AmINext and #FeesMustFall hashtags are text posts without images. Some of the images, as demonstrated by D41, were screenshots of text posts. Other images were not rich in visual information; for example, a search of #FeesMustFall on X yields repetitive images of Dlamini posted by activists calling for his release following his arrest in 2016. That is not to say that the abovementioned image results are irrelevant to the iconology of the movements, especially as they speak to the

visual compositions of the movements as generated by Internet platforms, but that they present additional interpretative issues that extend beyond the scope of this thesis.

7.4 Suggestions for Further Research

I curated a number of images in Catalogue Set A to suggest the movement of visual forms; however, the image map can be expanded on to reveal more connections, relations, and resemblances. Themes could be collated from iconological image curations from other places worldwide. As shown in many of the case studies from *The Visual Memories of Protest* (2023), such as those conducted by Alice Mattoni and Anwesha Chakraborty (2023), who trace the movement of Mahatma Gandhi's (1869-1948) image in contemporary protests in India or Smits and Ruben Ros's (2023b) tracking of the *Tank Man* photograph's appearance in the Hong Kong pro-democracy protests.

The tracings of iconicity as part of a *sensus communis*, as was conducted in Chapter Four, could be applied to other image sets. For example, a recurrent image that I came across that challenged the migrating police-dog image are images of protesters' dogs which could function as a counterimage (Fig. 7.1 and Fig. 7.2). Whereas the German Shepherd is an image of racialised police enforcement and excessive force in the name of regulation, the counterimage of the protester dog is often captured in a relaxed posture with a poster sign denoting the social movement affiliation or views of its owner (Fig. 7.2).

Relatedly, both Catalogue Sets B and C could also be expanded. In Catalogue Set B, additional documentary photographs could be curated to collate more themes. For example, a more focused analysis comparing the gestures of anti-apartheid protest imagery with the protest imagery of #AmINext and FMF could yield interesting results. A large-scale quantitative study on repeated gestures in apartheid-era documentary photography could produce a complex visualised data map à la, one of Lev Manovich's creations.

With Catalogue Set C, it would be interesting to see where precisely the iconologies of FMF and #AmINext iconologies overlap with networked social movements such as BLM and #MeToo in the form of a networked map of hashtags and images. In the form of an interactive map, one could visualise the exact intersecting images that connect the movements. The expanded definition of iconicity as concerning the relations between images provides diverse avenues of research, not limited to iconic imagery and the semiotic

translation of images but also iconological research concerning how images use their “imageness” to communicate.



Figure 7.1: A Tunisian woman carrying a dog gestures with her middle finger at police officers during a demonstration in Tunis on Jan. 30. Photograph by Anis Mili, 2010. Tunis. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/02/04/tunisia-protests-arab-spring-2011-revolution-police-brutality-ben-ali-black-lives-matter/>.



Figure 7.2: A dog with a sign reading "I bite racists" during a Black Lives Matter protest in Newport, United Kingdom. The death of an African American man, George Floyd, while in the custody of Minneapolis police has sparked protests across the United States, as well as demonstrations of solidarity in many countries around the world. Photograph by Matthew Horwood, 2020. Newport. <https://www.facebook.com/share/sF5ZHQE81NJTty7o/>.

7.5 Concluding Statement

A personal interest in image-worlds ignited the spark for writing this thesis from times beyond my present experience. As a born-free Indian South African, my understanding of apartheid is derived from the experiences relayed by my parents and relatives, the photographs I have studied throughout this work, and in the systemic traces that endure in South African structures. During one instance in my research journey, after having coded Cole's photograph (D24) of the segregated taxi rank on Paul Kruger St. in Pretoria (Fig. 7.3), I found myself opening the Google Maps Street View (Fig. 7.4) of the crossroad, searching for a similar angle of the photograph. I traversed the virtual road as if I were a time-traveller from the past, searching for repeated forms in a changed streetscape. What was once a road marked by material separation is now a bustling bus station with no hints of what was once there except for the familiar shapes in the background architecture.

The feeling of being a time-traveller also underpinned my explorations of #AmINext and FMF. Even though I watched the unfolding of both social movements in real-time, in re-exploring the movements from the future, I found myself searching for traces of what I had seen and felt in the past. In this sense, I adopted the role of a digital flâneur in my research journey. As articulated by Jeremy Aroles and Wendelin Küpers (2022, 404), "This iterative engagement with digital worlds testifies to the importance of the notion of instinct and intuition in the practice of flânerie; the flâneur is primarily an instinctive and intuitive explorer, who rejoices in the discovery of new landscapes or the same with new eyes". As I conclude this thesis, I wonder where my wandering will take me next and what will kindle my imagination.

*Of this strange, awe-inspiring scene
Such as one earth one never seen,
Today the image once again,
Obscure and distant, captures me.*

- Charles Baudelaire ([1857] 2008, 205)



Figure 7.3: A screenshot of Document 24 from Catalogue Set B. Screenshot by Author, 2024.

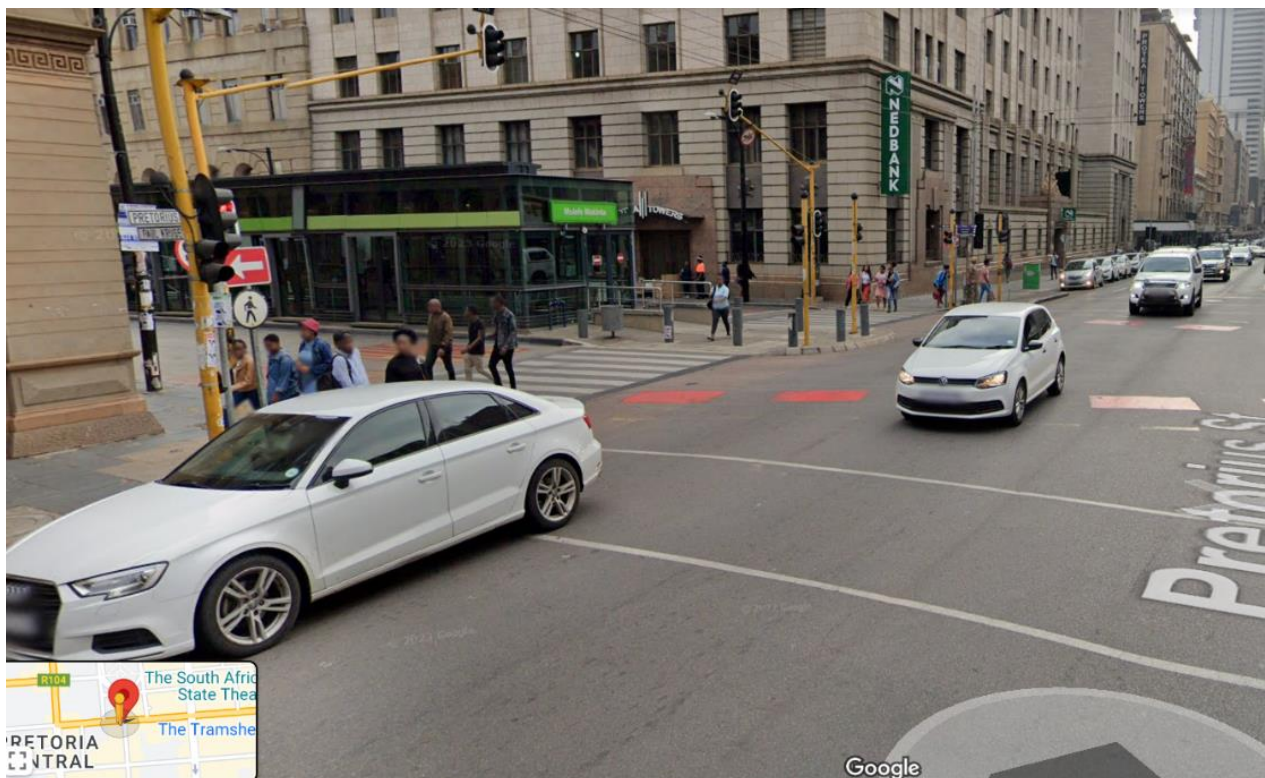


Figure 7.4: A screenshot of the intersection between Pretorius St., and Paul Kruger St. Google Street View. Screenshot by Author, 2024.

CATALOGUE SET A

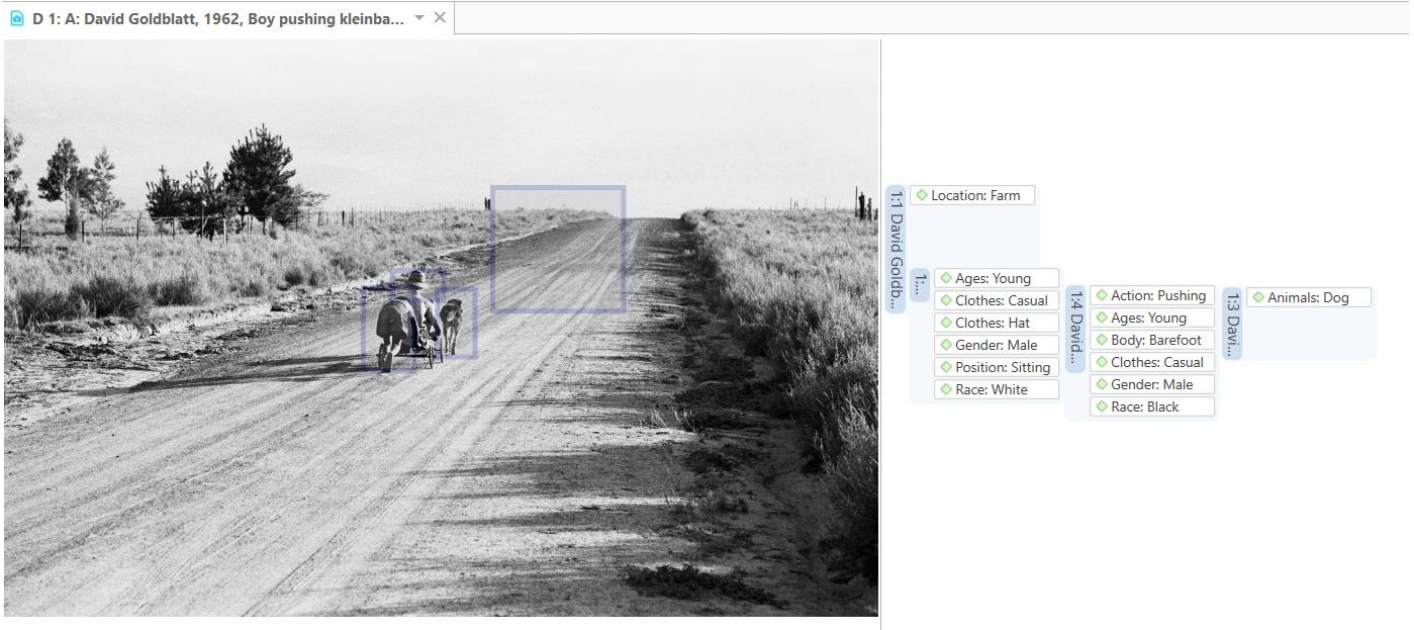
Catalogue Set A can be viewed using the following link:

https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVKEU35AI/?share_link_id=852691515165

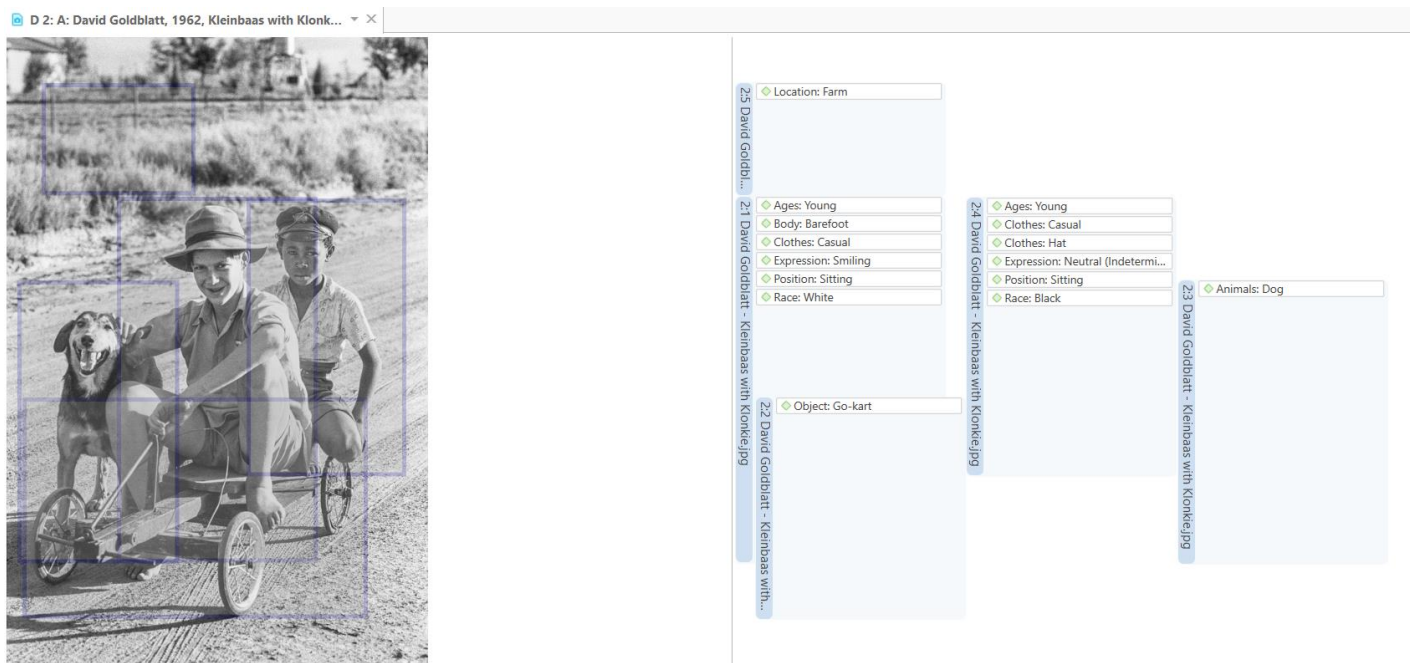
CATALOGUE SET A PHOTOGRAPH LIST
1. <i>Korana girl</i> . Photograph by Alfred Martin Duggan-Cronin, n.d. Kimberley, South Africa. https://www.artthrob.co.za/02jan/listings_gauteng.html .
2. <i>Bishop Jacobus G. Xaba and his family (?)</i> , from <i>The Black Photo Album/Look at Me</i> . Photograph by Deale, ca. 1890. Bloemfontein, South Africa. https://artblart.com/tag/santu-mofokeng-the-black-photo-album/ .
3. <i>The 'Crawlers'</i> . Photograph by John Thomson, ca. 1876-1877. London, United Kingdom. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Thomson,_The_crawlers.jpg .
4. <i>Chao-chao-fu Bridge, Kwangtung</i> . Groups of people gathered on the bridge and began throwing stones. A vertical crack can be seen on the glass plate. Photograph by John Thomson. ca. 1868-1872. Guangdong, China. https://visualisingchina.net/blog/2018/07/06/a-darkly-mysterious-instrument-through-china-with-john-thomson/ .
5. <i>The Burroughs Family</i> . Photograph by Walker Evans, 1936. Hale County, United States. https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887323566804578553393940328854 .
6. <i>At a Segregated Water Fountain</i> . Photograph by Gordon Parks, 1956. Mobile, United States. https://www.gordonparksfoundation.org/gordon-parks/photography-archive/segregation-in-the-south-1956 .
7. State troopers swing billy clubs to break up a civil rights voting march in Selma, Ala., March 7, 1965. John Lewis, chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (in the foreground) is being beaten by a state trooper. Lewis, a future U.S. Congressman sustained a fractured skull. Attributed to AP Photos, 1965. Selma, United States. https://apimagesblog.com/historical/2020/3/3/selma-1965-marches-and-bloody-sunday-violence-led-to-voting-rights-act .
8. <i>State police stand firm with their billy clubs against demonstrators who attempted to break through their lines for a march on the courthouse in Selma, Ala., March 13, 1965</i> . Attributed to AP Photos, 1965. Selma, United States. https://apimagesblog.com/historical/2020/3/3/selma-1965-marches-and-bloody-sunday-violence-led-to-voting-rights-act .
9. <i>Walter Gadsen attacked by K9 united</i> . Photograph by Bill Hudson, 1963. Birmingham, United States. (Berger 2011, 36).
10. <i>A Police Dog Bites a Football Fan at Orlando Stadium</i> . Photograph by Alf Kumalo, ca. 1960, Johannesburg, South Africa. https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection-wide/wppaspec/oc1/Inen/sd1/abB5ogE2OOOgto/pt8oSn8onvv41S#wppa-container-1 .
11. <i>The Ultimate Confrontation</i> . Photograph by Marc Riboud, 1967. Washington D.C, United States. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Ultimate_Confrontation#/media/File:Jan_Rose_Kasmir.jpg .
12. <i>Rioters held back by police at National Front Demo</i> . Photograph by Chris Steele-Perkins, 1977. London. England. https://www.magnumphotos.com/newsroom/society/antiracism-fascism-policing-london-chris-steele-perkins-peter-marlow/ .
13. <i>Race Riots in Lewisham</i> . Police making an arrest. Photograph by Peter Marlow, 1977. London, England. https://www.magnumphotos.com/newsroom/society/antiracism-fascism-policing-london-chris-steele-perkins-peter-marlow/ .
14. <i>Demonstrators Protest on the Steps of the Los Angeles City Hall Against Raids by Police at the Black Panther Headquarters</i> . Photograph by Wally Fong, 1969. Los Angeles, United States. https://why.org/articles/decades-later-a-new-look-at-black-panthers-and-their-legacy/ .
15. <i>The Black Panthers March in Protest of the 1968 Trial of Co-Founder Huey P. Newton in Oakland, California</i> . Attributed to Bettman Photographs, 1968. New York, United States. https://www.businessinsider.com/black-panther-party-what-is-huey-newton-2020-6 .

16. <i>Members of the Movement for Colonial Freedom and the Black Sash Movement March to South Africa House to Deliver a Memorial to Prime Minister Strijdom of South Africa. They Carry Signs With the Slogans “Apartheid is Evil, Colonialism is Evil.” “Bantu Education is Education for Slavery,” and “Abolish Pass Laws.”</i> Attributed to Hulton Deutsch, 1956. London, England. https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/members-of-the-movement-for-colonial-freedom-and-the-black-news-photo/613513970 .
17. <i>Student from WITS University Hands Flowers to Policeman.</i> Photograph by Marco Longari, 2016. Johannesburg, South Africa. https://correspondent.afp.com/crazy-day .
18. <i>Policeman Grabs Student Protester.</i> Photograph by Justin Sullivan, 2015. Pretoria, South Africa. https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=663375930504266&set=pcb.663376550504204 .
19. <i>Black Lives Matter Demonstrations in New York, New York.</i> Photograph by Steven John Irby, 2020. New York, United States. https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/has-black-lives-matter-changed-the-world .
20. <i>A Student Protester Hands Flowers to a Police Officer Tasked With Preventing Students From Reaching the Front Gate of the House of Representatives Complex in Senayan, Central Jakarta, on Tuesday.</i> Photograph by Anggie Angela, 2019. Jakarta, Indonesia. https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/10/01/flower-power-students-in-jakarta-hand-out-blossoms-as-sign-of-peaceful-protests.html
21. <i>“I Stopped Wearing my Black Lives Matter T-Shirt but Still Got Arrested, Punched and Harrassed”.</i> Photograph by Mel D. Cole, 2020. New York, United States. https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2021/oct/20/black-lives-matter-new-york-george-floyd-protests-black-mel-d-cole-best-photograph .
22. <i>A Protest in Johannesburg in the Wake of Mrwetyana’s Death.</i> Photograph by Guillem Sartorio, 2019. Johannesburg, South Africa. https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-death-of-uyinene-mrwetyana-and-the-rise-of-south-africas-aminext-movement .
23. <i>Image from the Tunisian Revolution.</i> Photographer unknown. 2011. Tunis, Tunisia. https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/questioning-tunisian-revolution-its-motives-and-outcome/ .
24. <i>Peaceful Copy. A Policeman Holds a Poster and Flower at the Protest March Against Femicide and Gender Based Violence Outside Parliament in Cape Town. Parliament’s Gate Is in the Background.</i> Photograph by Anso Thom, 2019. Cape Town, South Africa. https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-09-05-one-voice-at-the-cape-town-protest-no-more-no-fking-more/ .
25. <i>Tunisian Security Officers Hold Back Protesters Outside of Parliament in Tunis.</i> Photograph by Fethi Belaid, 2021. Tunis, Tunisia. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/7/26/clashes-outside-tunisi-as-parliament-building .
26. <i>Johane Gumede, a University Student, Carries a Placard of Uyinene Mrwetyana, Whose Rape and Murder in August Spurred a Wave of Protests, During a Demonstration at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.</i> Photograph by Ryan Lenora Brown, 2019. Johannesburg, South Africa. https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2019/0919/Am-I-Next-protests-South-Africans-push-to-renew-fight-against-rape .
27. <i>Protesters marching in Lower Manhattan.</i> Photograph by Mel D. Cole, 2020. New York, United States. https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/10/the-next-reconstruction/615475/ .
28. <i>Clashes Broke Out Between Protesters and Police Outside the Cape Town International Convention Centre.</i> Photograph by Esa Alexander, 2019. Cape Town, South Africa. https://www.facebook.com/TimesLIVE/photos/public-order-police-face-a-high-volume-assault-outside-the-cape-town-international/10158008569929617/?paipv=0&eav=AfaUHKozBYdMKg9D6H7ljjY7_MFDI10KFHpjQ8bXnx7HrS8NOUnt2Yv_S72WLQHdeY&_rdr .
29. <i>I Voted.</i> Photograph by Andreas Georgiou, 2015. Pretoria, South Africa. https://photocontest.smithsonianmag.com/photocontest/archive/2015/ .
30. <i>Strong Shaeera Kalla argues with a police officer as thousands of WITS students gathered in Johannesburg this week.</i> Photograph by Ihsaan Haffeejee, 2015. Johannesburg, South Africa. https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2016-10-21-lets-protest-shaeera-kallas-words-that-launched-the-fees-must-fall-movement/ .

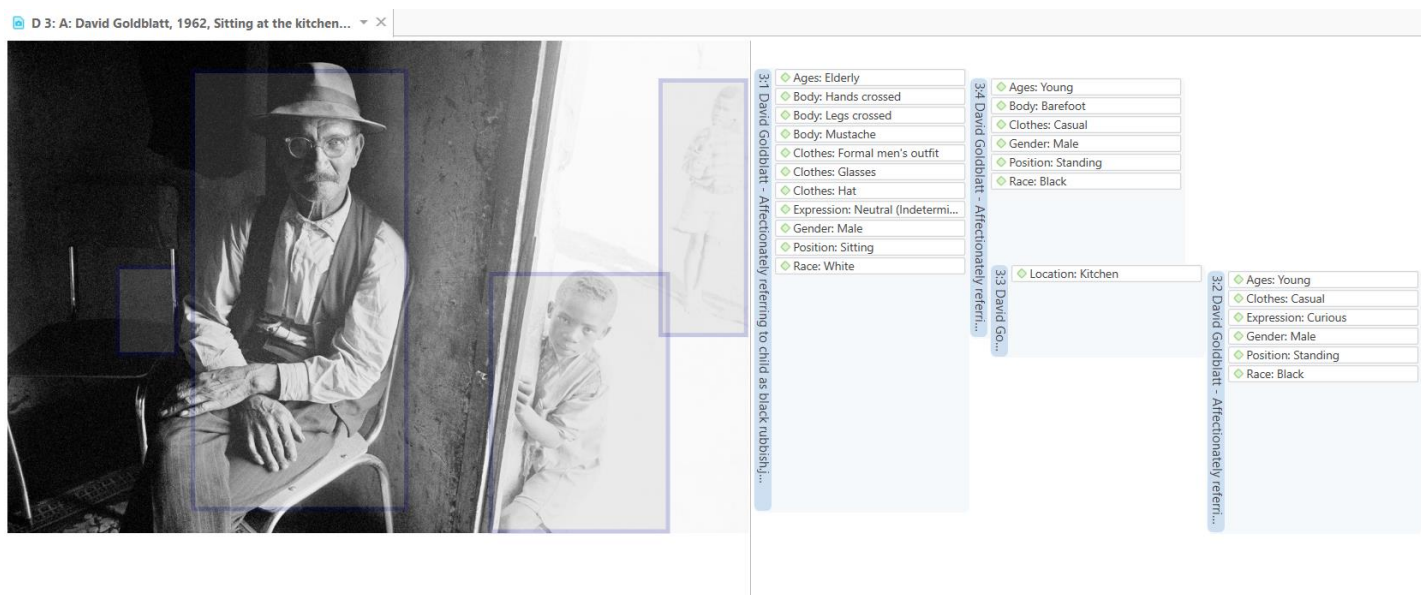
CATALOGUE SET B



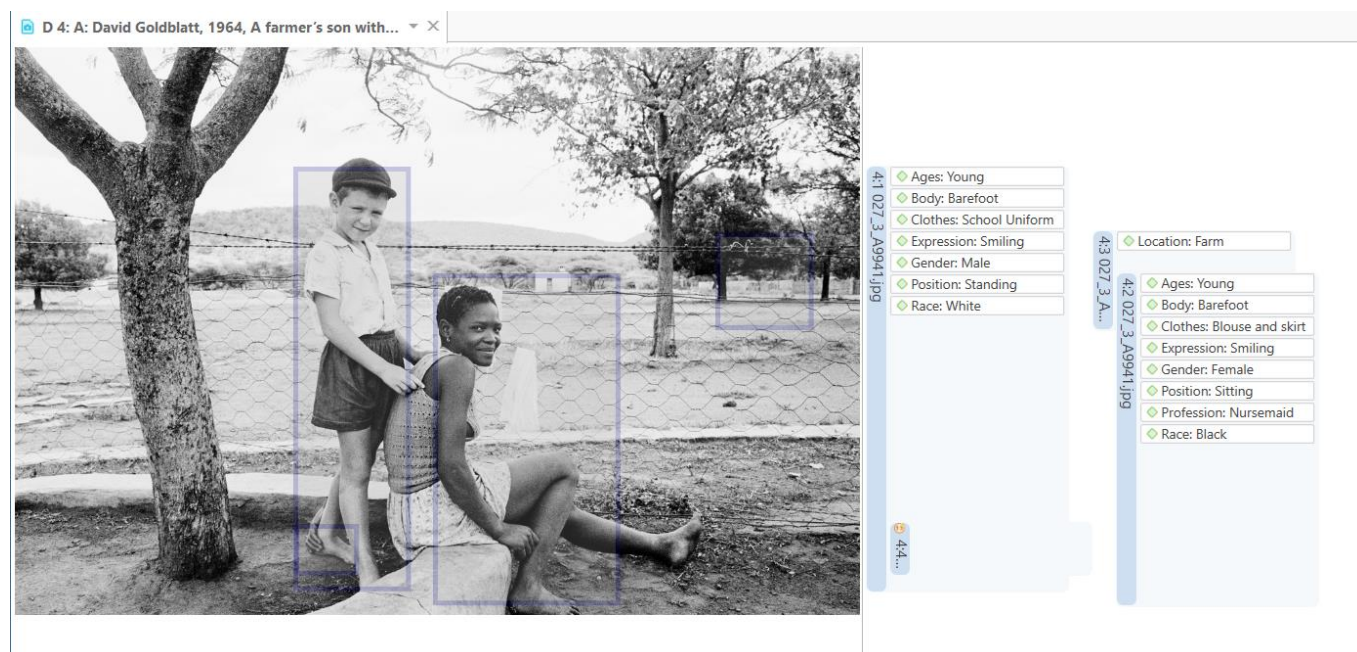
Document 1: *Boy pushing kleinbaas uphill*. Photograph by David Goldblatt, 1962. Randfontein, South Africa. <https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/Inen/cv0/abSome-Afrikaners/pt3082>.



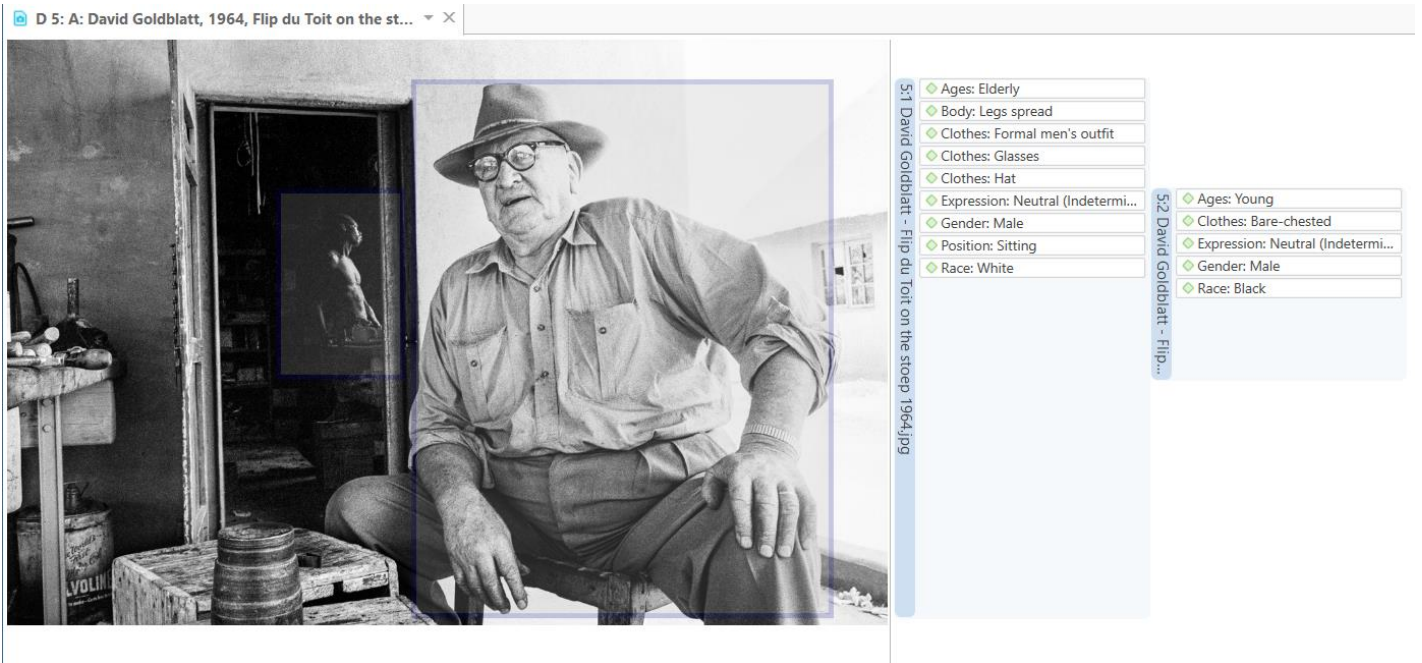
Document 2: *Kleinbaas with Klonkie, Bootha Plots*. Photograph by David Goldblatt, 1962. Randfontein, South Africa. <https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/Inen/cv0/abSome-Afrikaners/pt3081>.



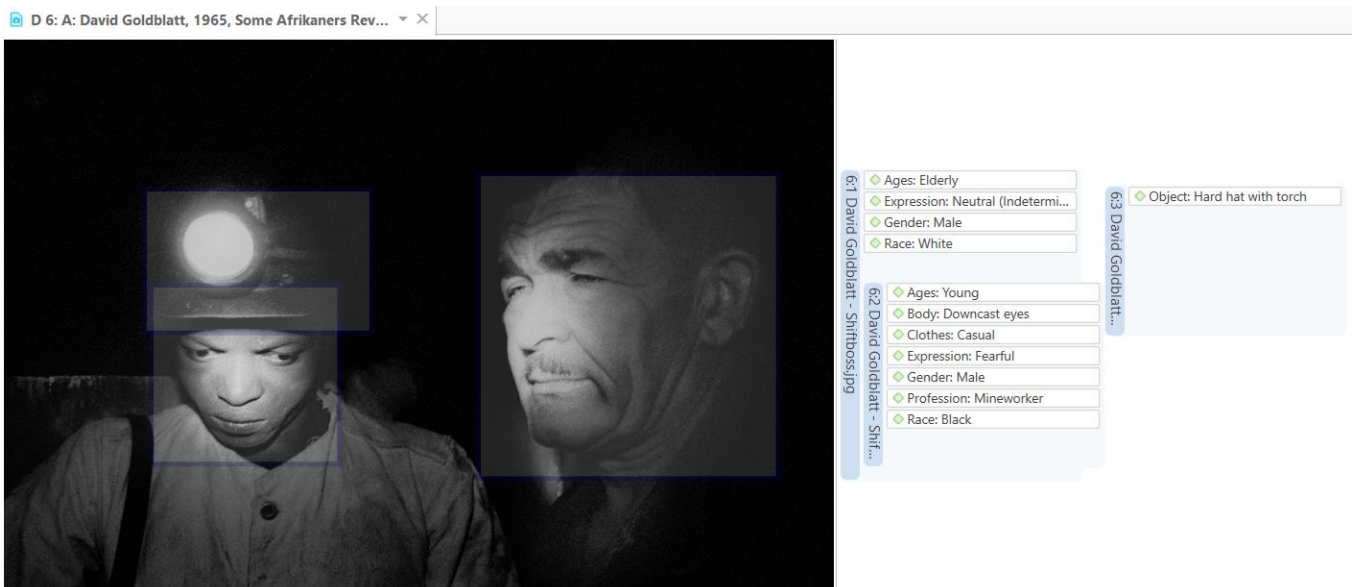
Document 3: *Sitting at the kitchen door, he said, affectionately, to the child, "Ja, wat maak jy hier jou swart vuilgoed"* (Yes, what are you doing here you black rubbish or Yes, what are you doing here, you little black scoundrel). Photograph by David Goldblatt, 1962. Randfontein, South Africa. https://www.goodman-gallery.com/store/shop?ref_id=30432.



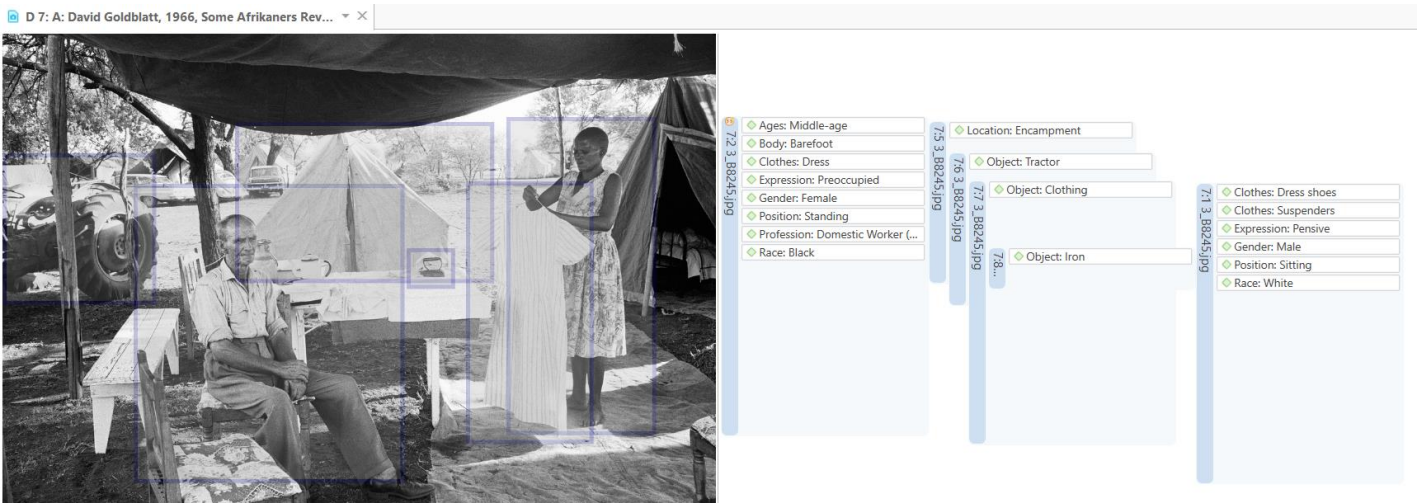
Document 4: *A farmer's son with his nursemaid*. Photograph by David Goldblatt, 1964. Nietverdiend, South Africa. <https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/Inen/cv0/abSome-Afrikaners/pt3059>.



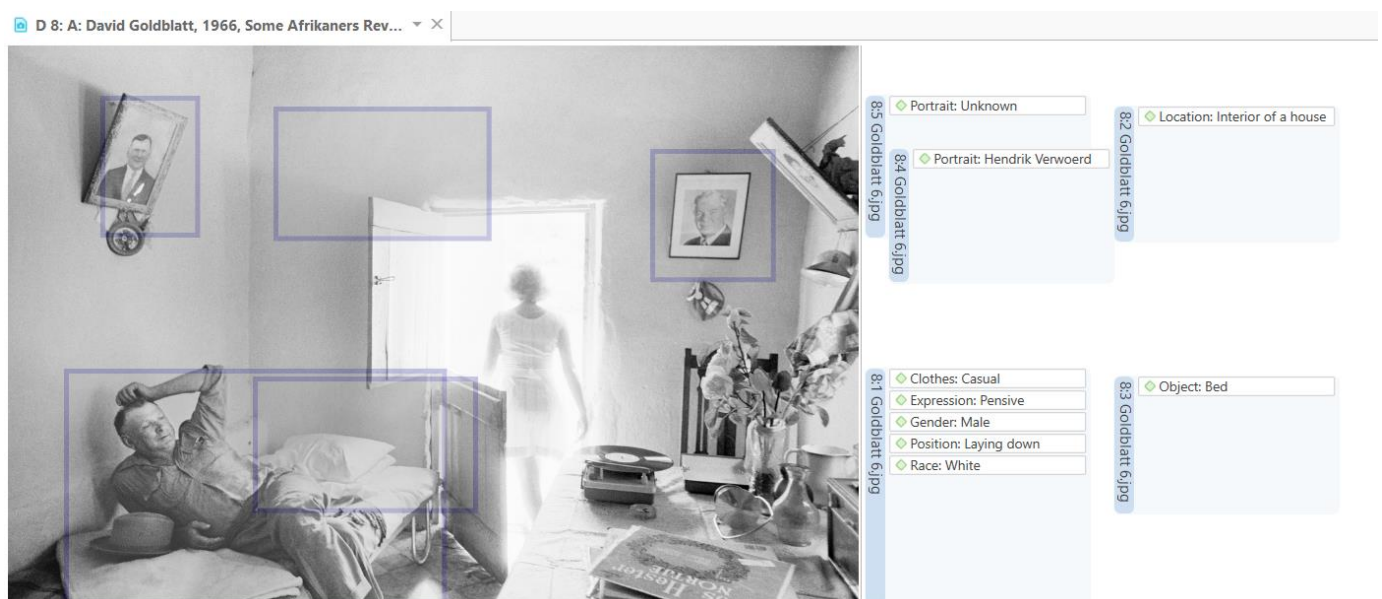
Document 5: *Flip du Toit on the stoep of his farm workshop*. Photograph by David Goldblatt, 1964. Nietverdiend, South Africa. <https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/cv0/abSome-Afrikaners/pt3090>.



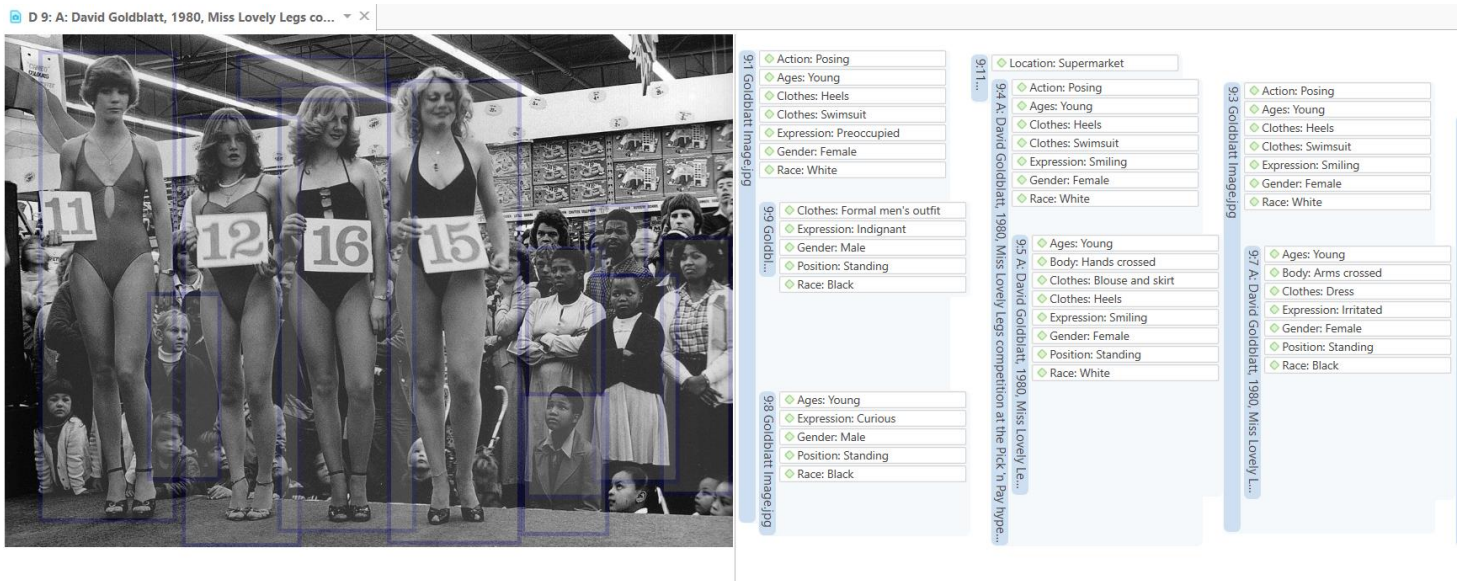
Document 6: *Shiftboss with 'his piccanin'*. Photograph by David Goldblatt, 1965. Randfontein, South Africa. <https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/cv0/abSome-Afrikaners/pt3106>.



Document 7: *Encamped at the boeresport*. Photograph by David Goldblatt, 1966. Near Nietverdiend, South Africa. <https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/sd1/abSome-Afrikaners/pt3109>.

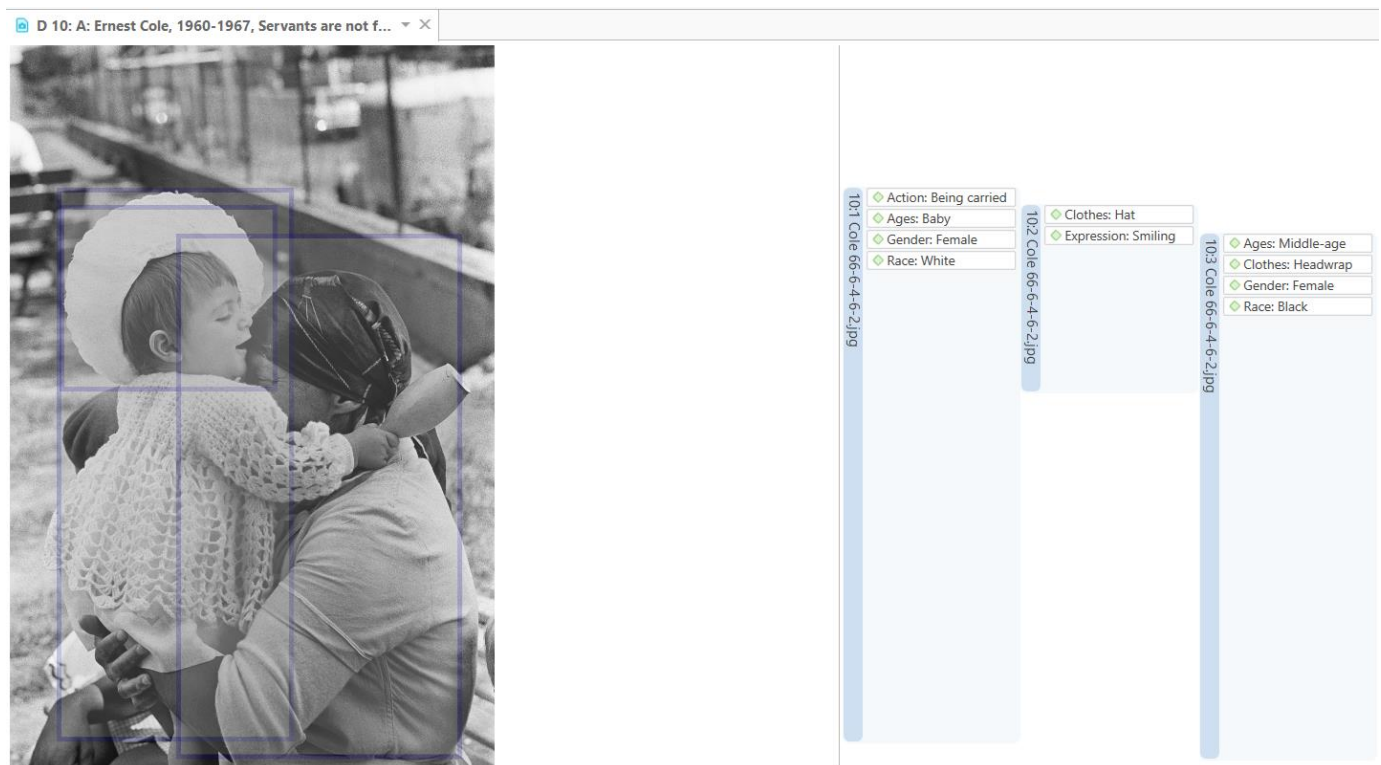


Document 8: *Nel lounging on single bed, with gramophone*. Photograph by David Goldblatt, 1966. Gamkaskloof, South Africa. <https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/cv0/abSome-Afrikaners/pt3067>.



Document 9: *Miss Lovely Legs competition at the Pick 'n Pay hypermarket*. Photograph by David Goldblatt, 1980. Boksburg, South Africa.

<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/cv0/abIn-Boksburg/pt3787>.



Document 10: *Servants are not forbidden to love. Woman holding child said, "I love this child, though she'll grow up to treat me like her mother does. Now she is innocent."* Photograph by Ernest Cole, A: 1960-1967. Witwatersrand, South Africa.

<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt12020>.



- 11:3 Ernest Cole 3.jpg
 - Object: Handcuffs
 - Body: Open hand
- 11:2 Ernest Cole 3.jpg
 - Body: Open hand
 - Race: Black
- 11:1 Ernest Cole 3.jpg

Document 11: *Handcuffed blacks were arrested for being in a white area illegally. (According to Julian Bahula the law forbade pictures like this being taken of people being handcuffed by the police.)* Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960. Transvaal, South Africa.
<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/sd1/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt12068>.



- 12:3 Ernest...
 - Location: City sidewalk
- 12:4 Em...
 - Object: Shop sign
- 12:2 Ernest Cole 14.jpg
 - Ages: Elderly
 - Body: Open hand
 - Clothes: Formal men's outfit
 - Clothes: Hat
 - Clothes: Suspenders
 - Expression: Indignant
 - Gender: Male
 - Position: Standing
 - Race: White
- 12:1 Ernest Cole 14.jpg
 - Action: Touching another person
 - Ages: Young
 - Body: Open hand
 - Clothes: Casual
 - Expression: Determined
 - Gender: Male
 - Position: Standing
 - Race: Black
- 12:5 Em...
 - Ages: Elderly
 - Expression: Fearful
 - Gender: Female

Document 12: *A white pocket being picked. Whites are angered if touched by anyone black, but a black hand under the chin is enraging. This man, distracted by fury, does not realise his back pocket is being rifled.* Photograph by Ernest Cole, 1967. Transvaal, South Africa.
<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt12051>.

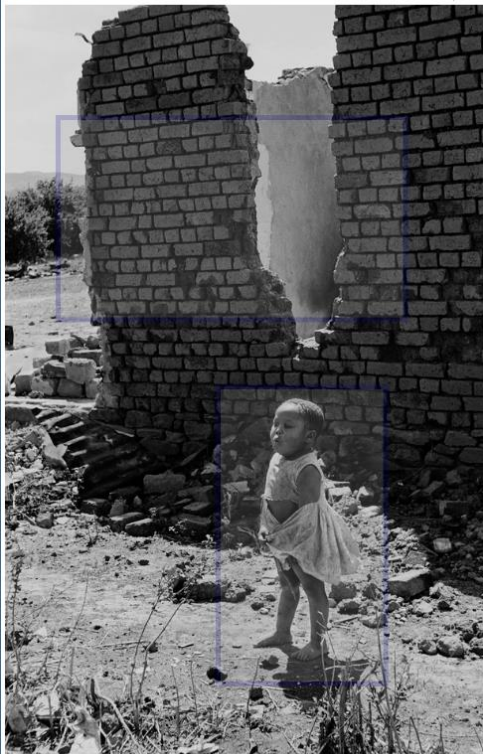


13:1 Ernest Cole 100.jpg
 Action: Touching another person
 Clothes: Formal men's outfit
 Gender: Male
 Position: Standing
 Race: Black

13:3 Ernest Col...
 Object: Pass Book

13:2 Ernest Cole 100.jpg
 Action: Having fingerprints tak...
 Clothes: Casual
 Clothes: Torn clothes
 Gender: Male
 Position: Standing
 Race: Black

Document 13: *Fingerprinting is necessary step in issuance of all-important pass legalizing workman's presence in white area for duration of his job.* Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1958-1966. Transvaal, South Africa. <https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/sd1/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11898>.



14:2 Ernest Cole 27.jpg
 Location: Demolished building

14:1 Ernest Cole 27.jpg
 Ages: Young
 Clothes: Dress
 Clothes: Torn clothes
 Expression: Neutral (Indetermi...
 Gender: Female
 Position: Standing
 Race: Black

Document 14: *Child's home, in area declared a "black Spot," has been destroyed.* Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa. <https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/sd1/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11996>.



151 Ernest Cole 13.jpg

- Action: Holding a child
- Ages: Young
- Body: Hands crossed
- Body: Tears
- Clothes: Dress
- Clothes: Torn clothes
- Expression: Sad
- Gender: Female
- Position: Standing
- Race: Black

152 Ernest Cole 13.jpg

- Action: Being carried
- Ages: Young
- Body: Closed eyes
- Clothes: Dress
- Expression: Sad
- Gender: Female
- Race: Black

Document 15: *Grace Matjila, hungry and without proper clothes for school, tearfully tends her little sister.* Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.
<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt12025>.



164 nm11432124-te...
 Text: Blue riband (shop sign)

165 nm11432124-te...
 Location: City sidewalk

161 nm11432124-teaser-xx.jpg

- Action: Slapping
- Ages: Middle-age
- Clothes: Formal men's outfit
- Gender: Male
- Race: White

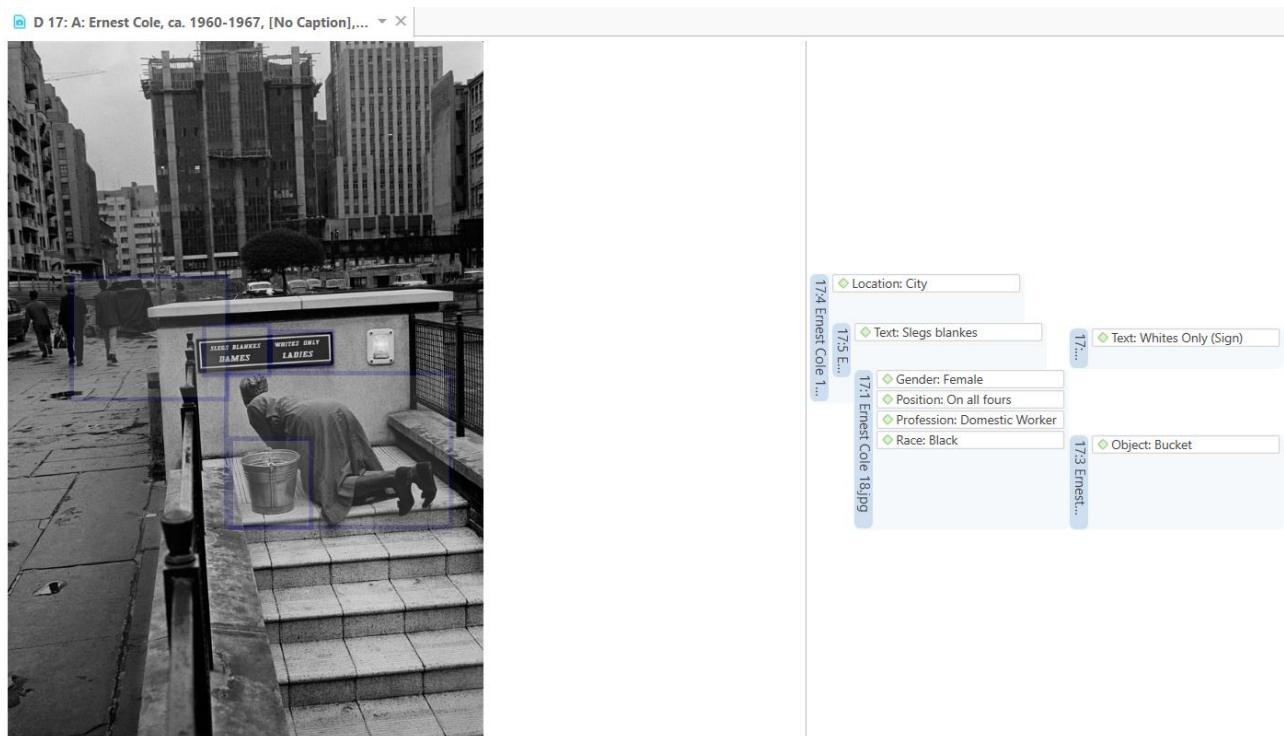
162 nm11432124-teaser-xx.jpg

- Action: Slapped
- Ages: Young
- Gender: Male
- Race: Black

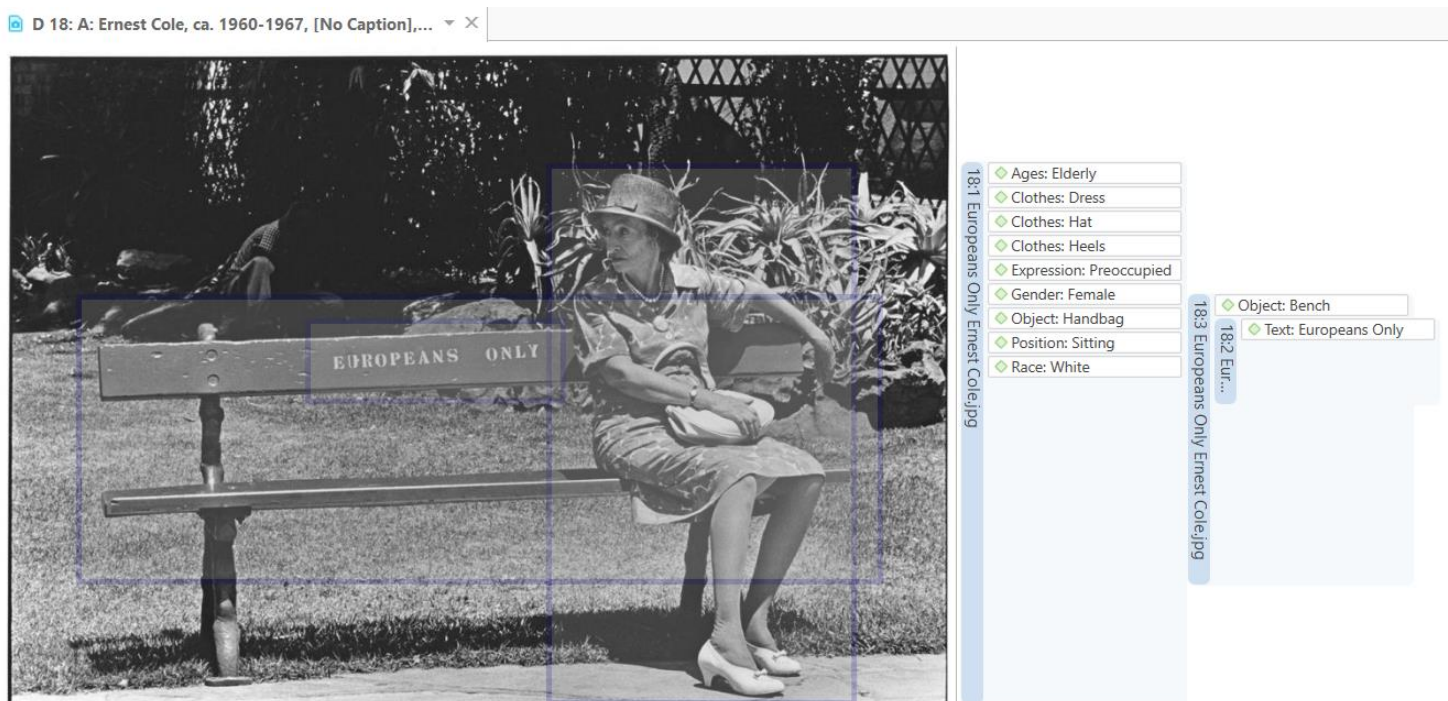
163 nm11432124-teaser-xx.jpg

- Action: Begging
- Clothes: Torn clothes
- Gender: Male
- Race: Black

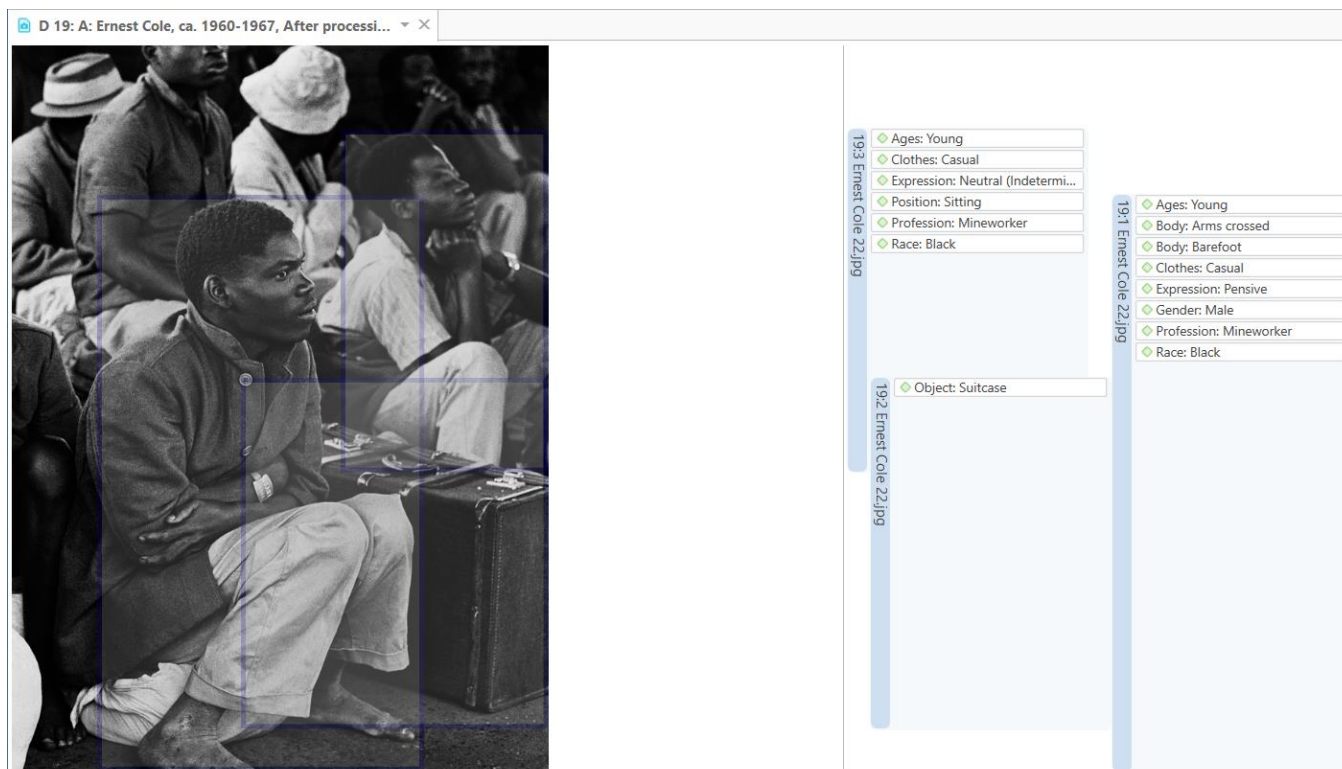
Document 16: *"Penny baas, please, baas, I hungry" This plaint is part of nightly scene in the Golden City, as black boys beg from whites. They may be thrown a coin, or... they may get slapped in the face.* Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Johannesburg. South Africa.
<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt12059>.



Document 17: [No Caption]. Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.
<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/Inen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11982>.



Document 18: [No Caption]. Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.
<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/Inen/sd1/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11965>.



Document 19: After processing, they wait at railroad station for transportation to mine. Identity tag on wrist shows shipment of labor to which man is assigned. Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1968. Transvaal, South Africa.

<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/sd1/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11894>



Document 20: As old group leaves, new one arrives, driven to mines by failing crops. Man with cane is signing on despite wooden leg, result of mine accident. Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.

<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/sd1/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11896>.

D 21: A: Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967, During a "swoop" ...



21:1 Ernest Cole 30.jpg

- ◆ Ages: Young
- ◆ Body: Handcuffed (presumed)
- ◆ Clothes: Casual
- ◆ Expression: Angry
- ◆ Gender: Male
- ◆ Race: Black

21:3 Ernest Cole 30.jpg

- ◆ Object: Handcuffs

21:2 Ernest Cole 30.jpg

- ◆ Action: Touching another person
- ◆ Ages: Middle-age
- ◆ Clothes: Uniform
- ◆ Expression: Smiling
- ◆ Profession: Police officer
- ◆ Race: Black

Document 21: During a "swoop" police are everywhere, checking passes. Checks go on in the townships, too. A student who said he was going to fetch his textbook is pulled in. To prove he was still in school he showed his fountain pen and ink-stained fingers. But that was not enough; in long pants he looked older than sixteen. Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.
<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/Inen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11995>.

D 22: A: Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967, During a "swoop" ...



22:1 Ernest Cole 29.jpg

- ◆ Action: Touching another person
- ◆ Clothes: Uniform
- ◆ Gender: Male
- ◆ Position: Standing
- ◆ Race: Black

22:4 Ernest Cole 29.jpg

- ◆ Ages: Middle-age
- ◆ Body: Hand in pocket
- ◆ Clothes: Formal men's outfit
- ◆ Expression: Pensive
- ◆ Gender: Male
- ◆ Race: White

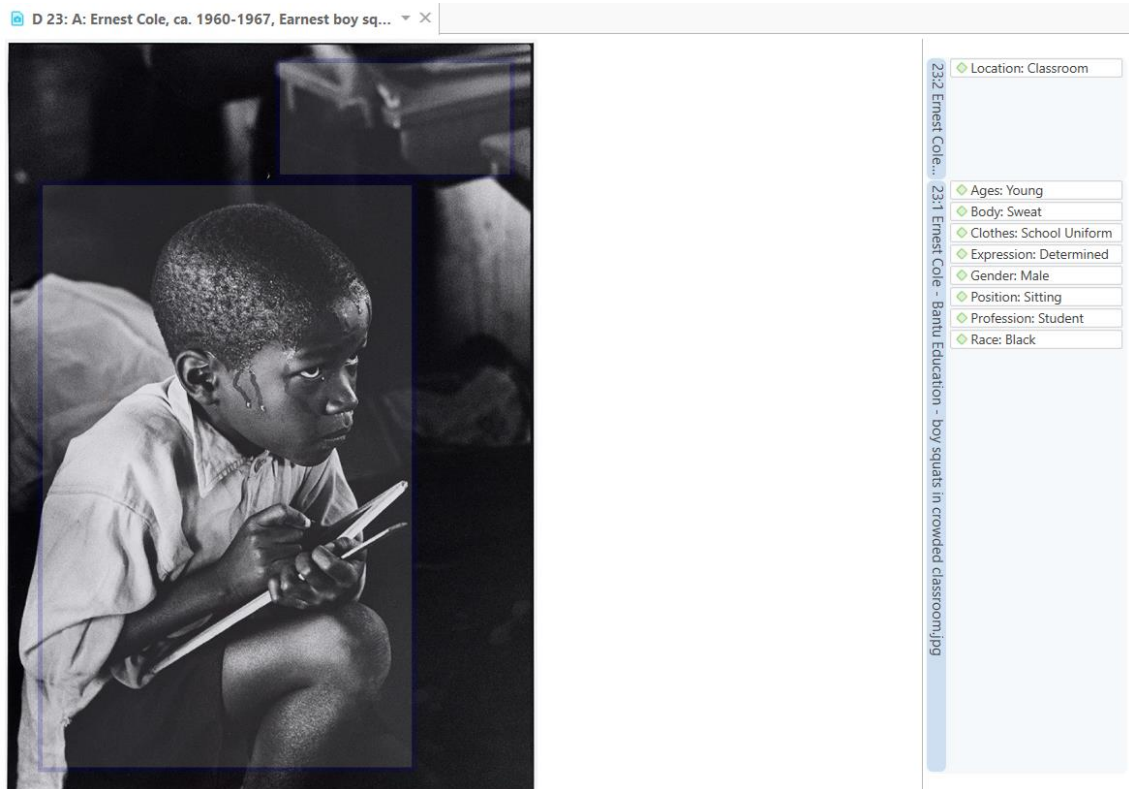
22:3 Ernest Cole 29.jpg

- ◆ Ages: Middle-age
- ◆ Clothes: Uniform
- ◆ Expression: Fearful
- ◆ Gender: Female
- ◆ Position: Standing
- ◆ Profession: Domestic Worker (...)
- ◆ Race: Black

22:2 Ernest Cole 29.jpg

- ◆ Ages: Young
- ◆ Body: Closed eyes
- ◆ Body: Thumbs up
- ◆ Clothes: Formal men
- ◆ Expression: Neutral ()
- ◆ Gender: Male
- ◆ Position: Standing
- ◆ Race: Black

Document 22: During a "swoop" police are everywhere, checking passes. Young boy is stopped for his pass as white plainclothesman looks on. Checks go on in the townships, too. Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.
<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/Inen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11993>.



Document 23: *Earnest boy squats on haunches to follow lesson in heat of packed classroom.*

Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.

<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/Inen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt12040>.



Document 24: *No Caption.* Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.

<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/Inen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11983>.



25:1 Ernest...

25:5 Ernest...

25:6 Ernest...

25:6 Ernest...

25:3 Ernest Cole 36.jpg

- Action: Walking
- Clothes: Uniform
- Expression: Preoccupied
- Gender: Female
- Object: Satchel
- Position: Standing
- Profession: Police officer
- Race: White

25:4 Ernest Cole 36.jpg

- Ages: Elderly
- Clothes: Dress
- Expression: Preoccupied
- Gender: Female
- Object: Handbag
- Race: White

Document 25: *No Caption*. Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.
<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11975>.



26:3 A: Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967, Pensive tribesmen, newly recruited to mine labour, await processing...

- Ages: Young
- Clothes: Blanket
- Clothes: Casual
- Clothes: Hat
- Clothes: Torn clothes
- Expression: Curious
- Gender: Male
- Position: Standing
- Race: Black

26:2 A: Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967, Pensive tribesmen, newly recruited to mine labour, await processing...

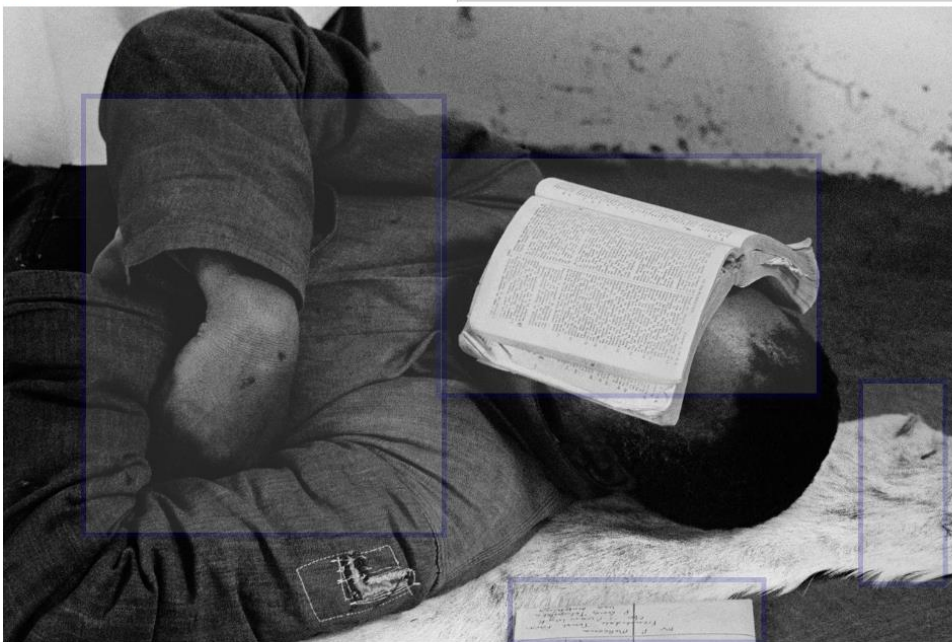
- Action: Holding newspaper
- Ages: Young
- Clothes: Casual
- Clothes: Hat
- Clothes: Torn clothes
- Expression: Neutral (Indetermin...
- Gender: Male
- Position: Standing
- Race: Black

26:1 Ernest Cole 12.jpg

- Action: Holding suitcase
- Ages: Young
- Clothes: Casual
- Clothes: Hat
- Expression: Curious
- Gender: Male
- Object: Suitcase
- Position: Standing
- Race: Black

Document 26: *Pensive tribesmen, newly recruited to mine labour, await processing and assignment*. Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.
<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/sd1/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11886>.

D 27: A: Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967, Piet [Mokoena...



27/3 Ernest Cole 19.jpg
 Action: Sleeping
 Gender: Male
 Race: Black

27/1 Ernest Cole 19.jpg
 Object: Book (Bible)

27/4 Ernest Cole 19.jpg
 Object: Animal fur

27/2 Ernest Cole 19.jpg
 Object: Letter

Document 27: *Piet [Mokoena] falls asleep with Bible on his face. Africans say : "When Europeans came, they had the Bible and we had the land. Now we have the Bible, and they have our land."* Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Mafikeng, South Africa.

<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/Inen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11964>.

D 28: A: Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967, Police check pa...



28/...
 Location: City
 Action: Reading
 Ages: Middle-age
 Clothes: Uniform
 Gender: Male
 Position: Standing
 Profession: Police officer
 Race: Black

28/5...
 Object: Pass Book

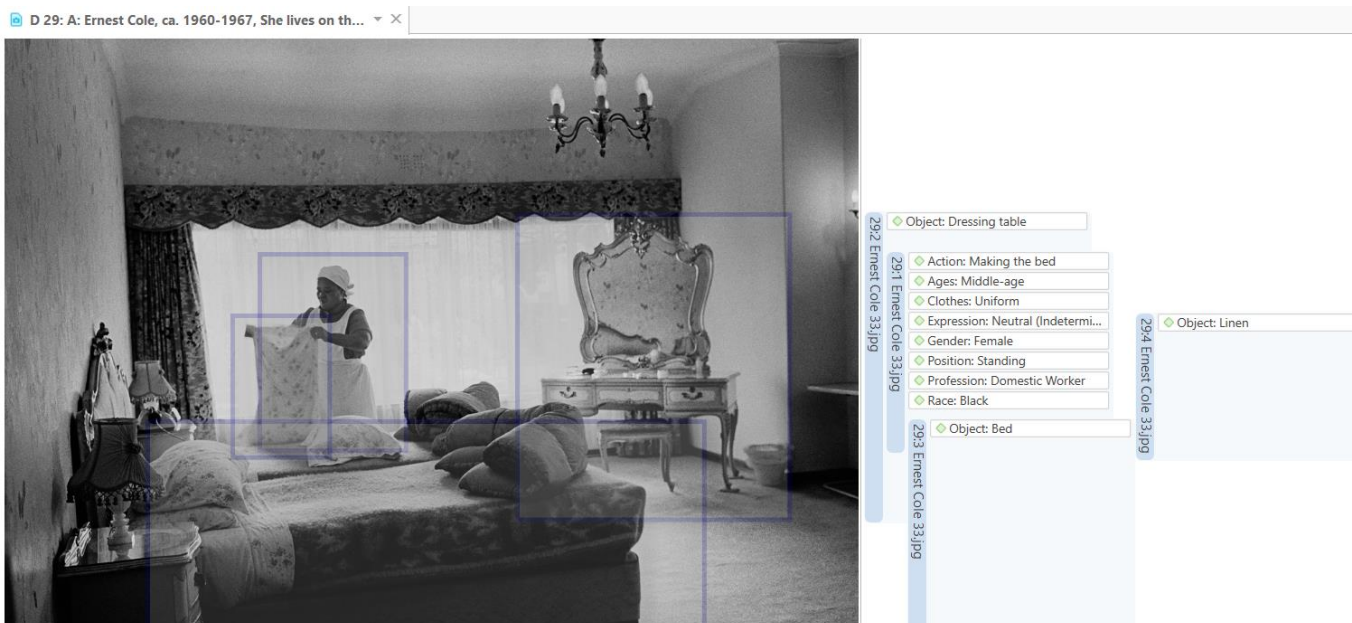
28/1 Ernest Cole 26.jpg
 Action: Reading
 Ages: Middle-age
 Clothes: Uniform
 Gender: Male
 Position: Standing
 Profession: Police officer
 Race: White

28/4 Ernest Cole 26.jpg
 Ages: Young
 Body: Downcast eyes
 Clothes: Hat
 Expression: Neutral (Indetermi...
 Position: Standing
 Race: Black

28/3 Ernest Cole 26.jpg
 Clothes: Formal men's outfit
 Clothes: Hat
 Gender: Male
 Position: Standing
 Race: Black

Document 28: *Police check passes for employer's signature, proof that taxes are paid, and legality of presence in white area.* Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.

<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/Inen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11989>.



Document 29: *She lives on the edge of opulence, while her own world is bare*. Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.

<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/sd1/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt12015>.



Document 30: *[No Caption]*. Photograph by Ernest Cole, ca. 1960-1967. Transvaal, South Africa.

<https://www.plparchive.com/explore/collection/wppaspec/oc1/lnen/cv0/abHouse-of-Bondage/pt11978>

CATALOGUE SET C

D 31: B: [No Caption] @recognised_sa 12 August 2... X



recognised_sa • Follow

recognised_sa #gbv #nonviolentmovement #notonmyname #saveoursisters #womenslivesmatter #aminext #aminextprotest #capetownphotography #capetownstreets #womenslivesmatter #justice #capetown #southafrica #peraphotogallery #equality #saveourwomen #mybodyisnotyourcrimescene #notall #donotrape #130w

314 [No Caption] @recognised_sa 12...

- Hashtag: #AmiNext
- Hashtag: #AmiNextProtest
- Hashtag: #CapeTown
- Hashtag: #CapeTownPhotogra...
- Hashtag: #CapeTownStreets
- Hashtag: #donotrape
- Hashtag: #Equality
- Hashtag: #gbv
- Hashtag: #Justice
- Hashtag: #MenAreTrashMove...
- Hashtag: #Mybodyisnotyourcri...
- Hashtag: #NotInMyName
- Hashtag: #PeraPhotogallery
- Hashtag: #ProtestPhotography
- Hashtag: #SaveOurSisters
- Hashtag: #SaveOurWomen
- Hashtag: #Socialills
- Hashtag: #SouthAfrica
- Hashtag: #WomenLivesMatter

312 [No Caption] @re...

- Object: Poster Sign
- Expression: Neutral (Indetermi...

315 [No C...

317 [No Caption] @recognised_sa 12 Au...

- Gender: Female
- Race: Black

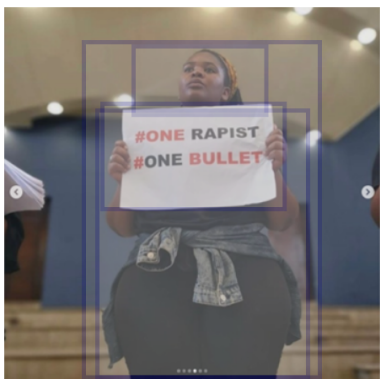
313 [No Caption]...

- Text: My only sin is having a va...

Liked by courtneyjadesoos, and others
JUL 14, 2021

Document 31: [No Caption]. @recognised_sa, 12 August 2020.
<https://www.instagram.com/p/CBbll3epQ9c/?hl=en>.

D 32: B: #OneRapist#OneBullet - the.end.of.gbv Ins... X



the.end.of.gbv • Follow

the.end.of.gbv #aminextza #aminextprotest #gbv #enoughis-enough These are some of the protesters posters from students from UCT
57w

325 [D35]...

- Hashtag: #AmiNextProtest
- Hashtag: #AmiNextZA
- Hashtag: #enoughisenough
- Hashtag: #gbv
- Clothes: Casual

323 [D35] #OneRapist#OneBullet - the.end.o...

321 [D35] #OneRapist#OneBullet - the.end.of.gbv instag...

- Ages: Young
- Gender: Female
- Object: Poster Sign
- Text: #One rapist #One bullet

324 [D35] #One...

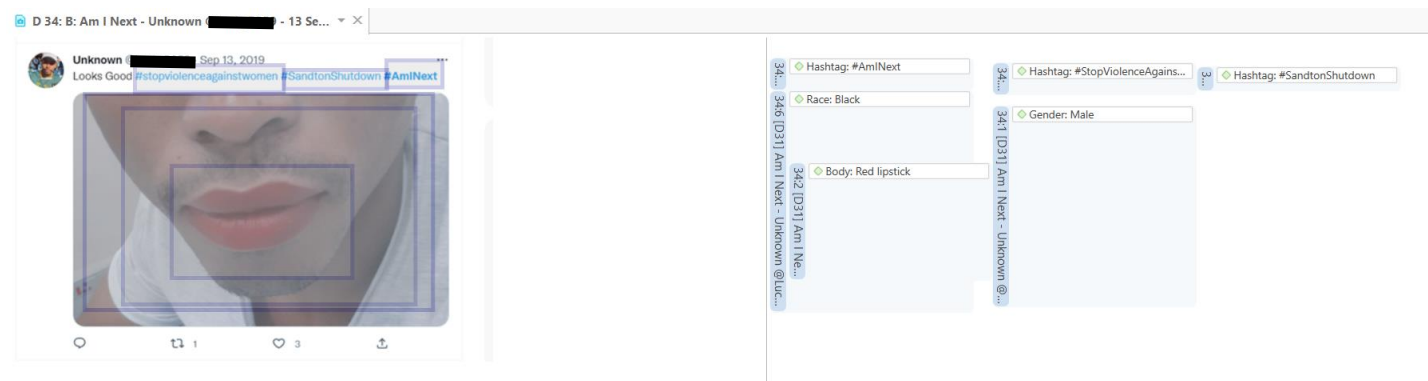
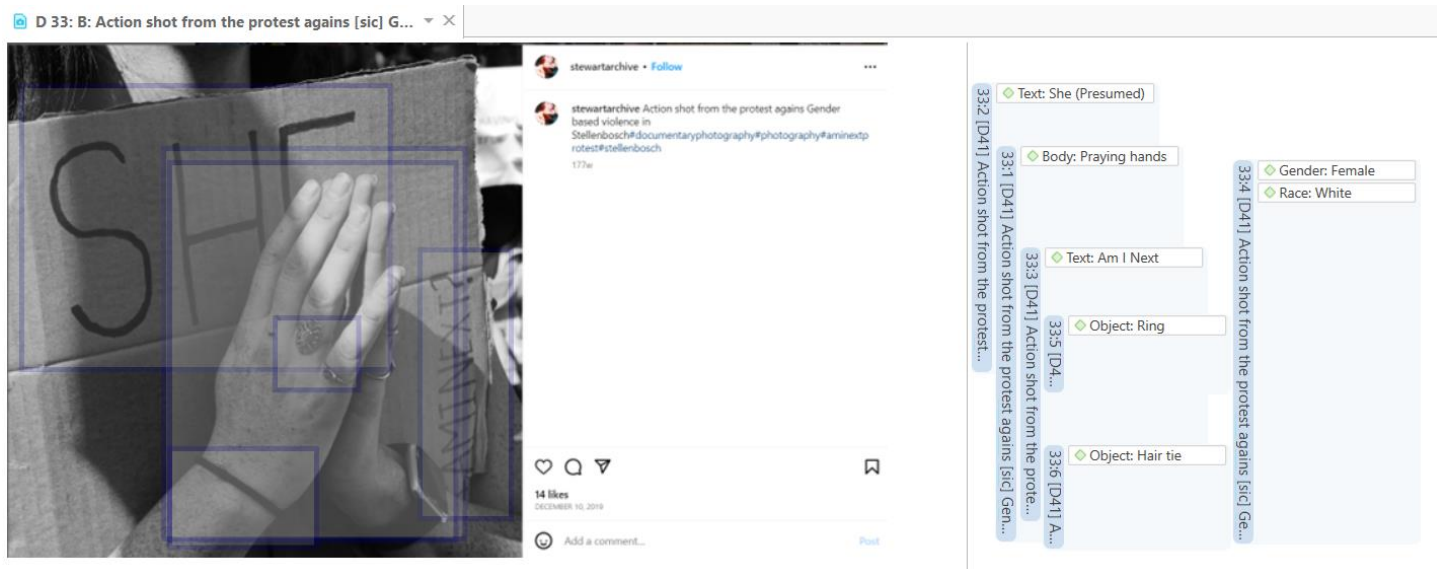
322 [D35]...

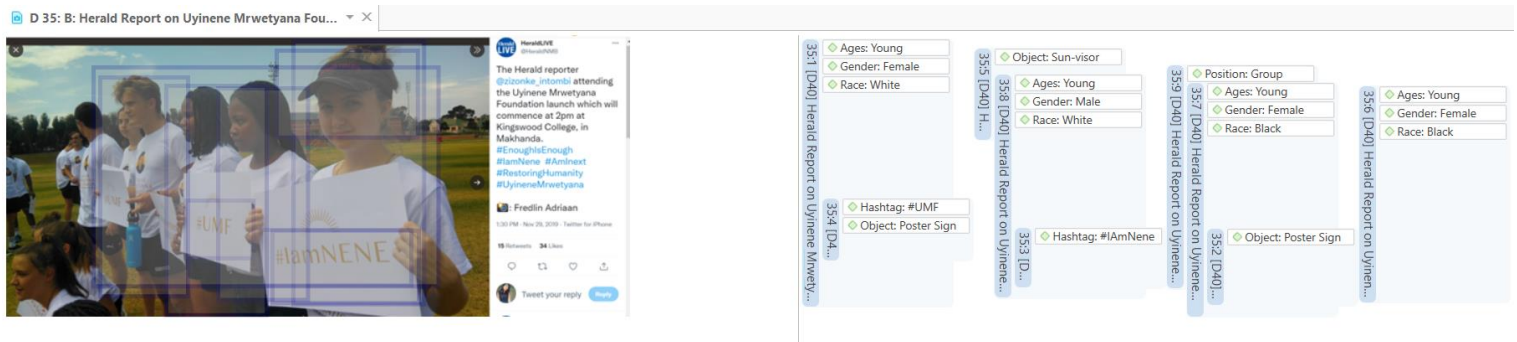
- Clothes: Headwrap
- Expression: Neutral (Indetermi...

1 Like
JUN 22, 2021

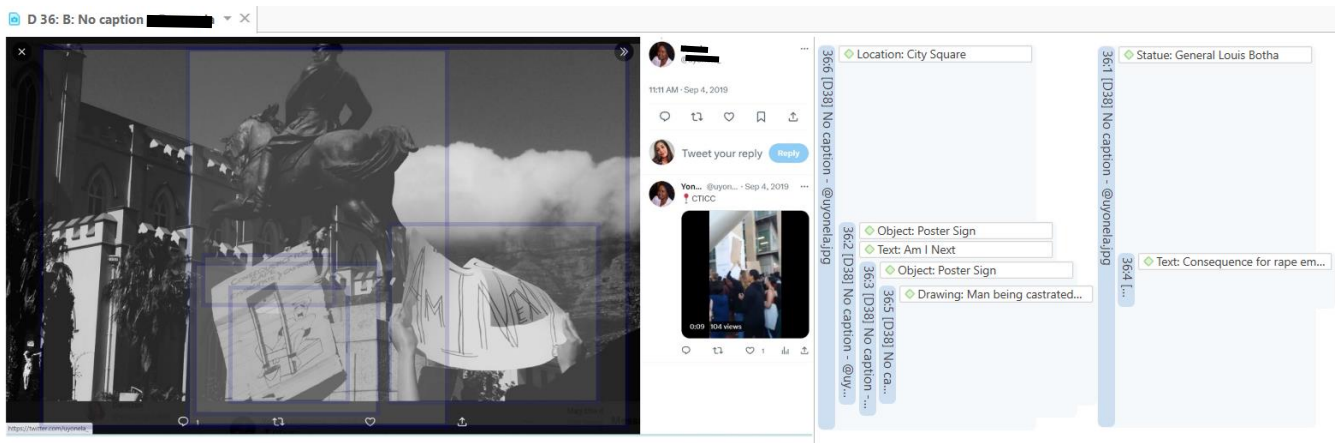
Add a comment... Post

Document 32: #OneRapist#OneBullet. @the.end.of.gbv, 22 June 2021.
https://www.instagram.com/p/CQbryN0Bbv1/?hl=en&img_index=4.





Document 35: *Herald Report on Uyinene Mrwetyana Foundation, Kingswood College in Makhanda*
 @HeraldNMB, 29 November 2019.
<https://twitter.com/HeraldNMB/status/1200376484768231425/photo/1>.



Document 36: *No caption*. @yonela, 4 September 2019.
https://twitter.com/___Yonela/status/1169176151119544320.

D 37: B: No Caption @starryeyedphotographers Ins...



starryeyedphotographers • Follow
Botswana, Mokomene

starryeyedphotographers #stopkillings #stopkillings #trendingnow #trending #stoptheviolence #ProjectXi Gender based violence #stophumantrafficking #stopkillings #stopabuse #stopkillingswomen #limpopo #amixnextprotest #polokwane #polokwanephotographer #gauteng #pretoria #sandton #mpumalanga #capetown #durban #zimbabwe #trending #trendingnow #trendingafrica #trendingafrica #ProjectXi

60 likes
August 25, 2020

Add a comment...

37:1 [D43] No Caption @starryeyedphotographers Instagram - 25 Au...
Gender: Unknown
Object: Bandage
Location: Township

37:2 [D43] No Caption @starryeyedphotographers Instagram - 25 Au...
Object: Poster Sign
Text: Am I Next

37:3 [D43] No Caption @starryeyedphotographers Instagram - 25 Au...
Hashtag: #AmiNextProtest
Hashtag: #CapeTown
Hashtag: #Durban
Hashtag: #Gauteng
Hashtag: #Limpopo
Hashtag: #Mmpumalanga
Hashtag: #Polokwane
Hashtag: #PolokwanePhotogra...
Hashtag: #Pretoria
Hashtag: #ProjectXi
Hashtag: #Sandton
Hashtag: #StopAbuse
Hashtag: #StopHumanTrafficki...
Hashtag: #StopKillingUs
Hashtag: #StopTheViolence
Hashtag: #Trending
Hashtag: #TrendingNow
Hashtag: #TrendingZA
Hashtag: #Zimbabwe

Document 37: *No Caption*. @starryeyedphotographers, 25 August 2020.
<https://www.instagram.com/p/CEUaqnoIGFQ/?hl=en>.

D 38: B: No Justice No Peace - @amberina.grace Se...



amberina.grace • Follow
Cape Town CEO, Western Cape

amberina.grace No justice no peace.
@amberina.grace Cape Town #amixnextprotest September 2019
Edited - 95w

31 likes
March 15, 2021

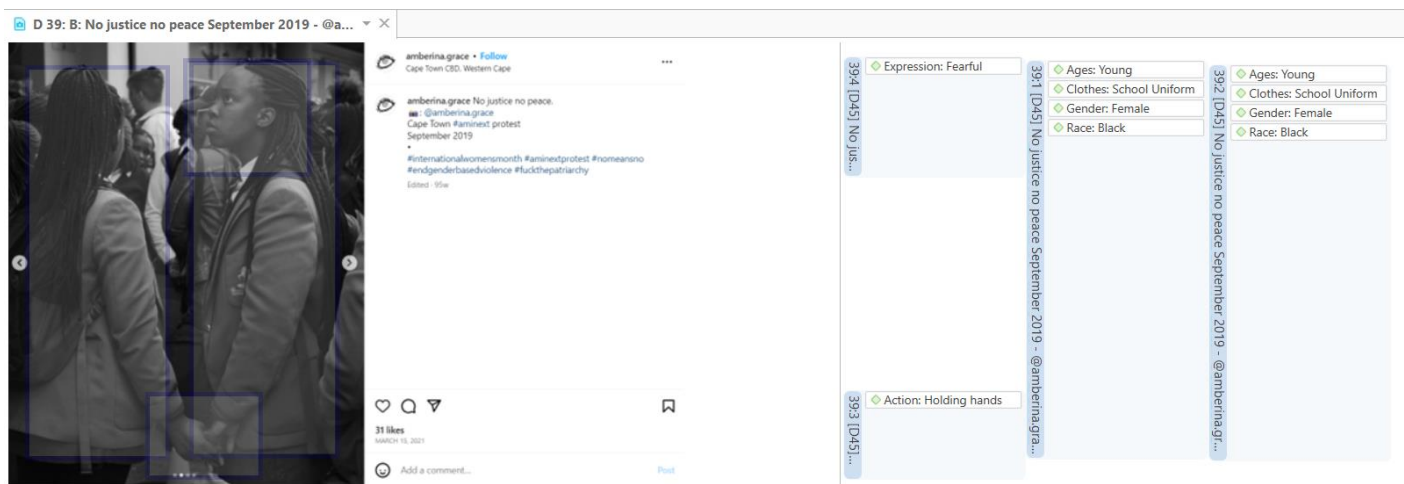
Add a comment...

Hashtag: #AmiNext
Hashtag: #InternationalWome...
Ages: Middle-age
Profession: Police officer
Race: Black
Object: Skullcap

38:1 [D36] No Justice No Peace - @amberina.grace
Hashtag: #NoMeansNo
Hashtag: #AmiNextProtests
Hashtag: #FuckThePatriarchy

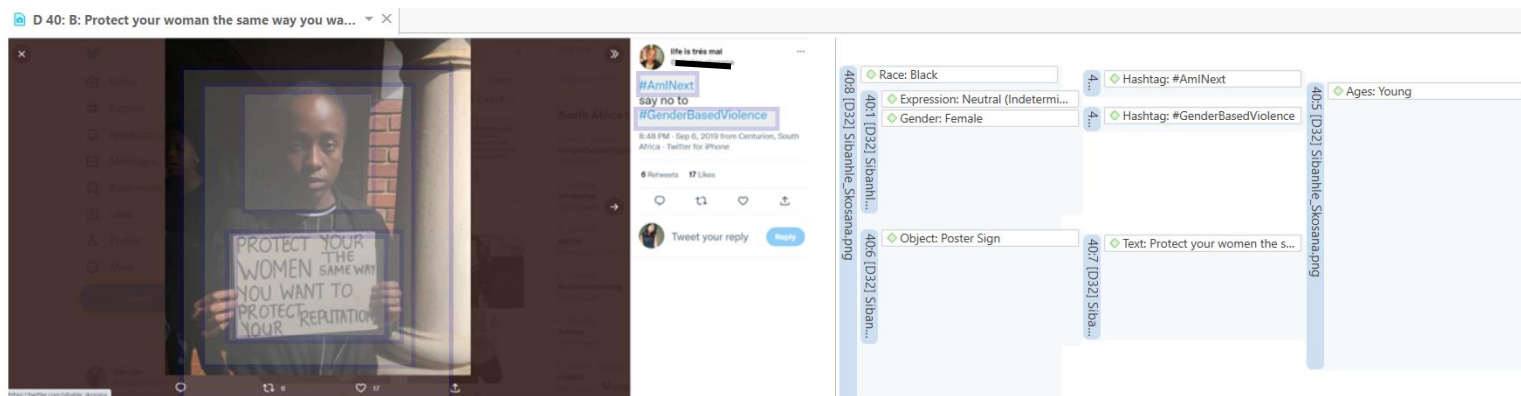
38:2 [D36] No Justice No Peace - @amberina.grace
Ages: Young
Clothes: Casual
Gender: Male
Race: Black
Clothes: Bandana
Text: Rape

Document 38: *No Justice No Peace – September 2019*. @amberina.grace, 15 March 2021.
https://www.instagram.com/p/CMcJp5vHJmK/?hl=en&img_index=4.



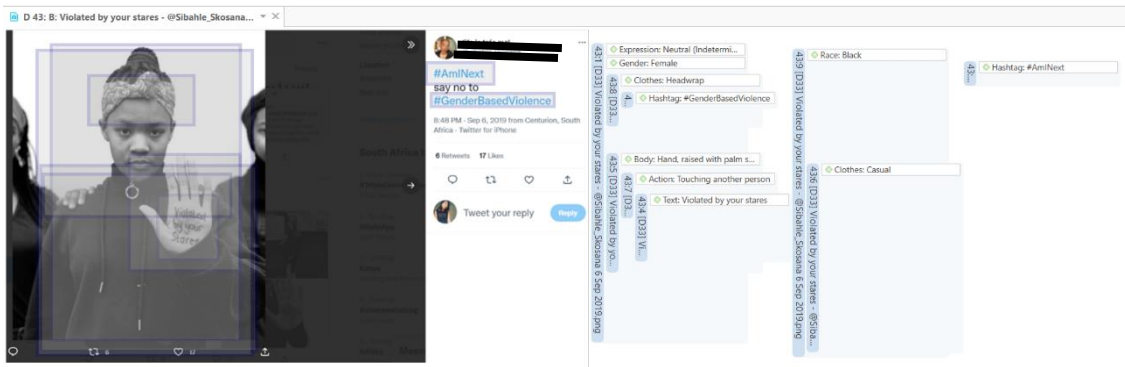
Document 39: *No justice no peace, Cape Town protest, September 2019.* @amberina.grace, 15 March 2021.

https://www.instagram.com/p/CMcJp5vHJmK/?hl=en&img_index=4.

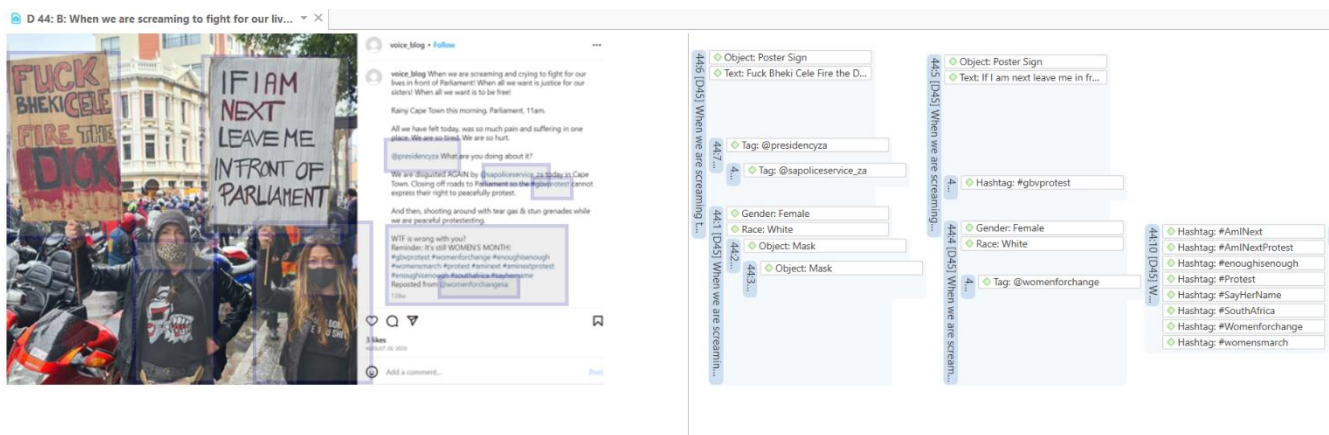


Document 40: *Protect your woman the same way you want to protect your reputation.* @ibahleSkosana, 6 September 2019.

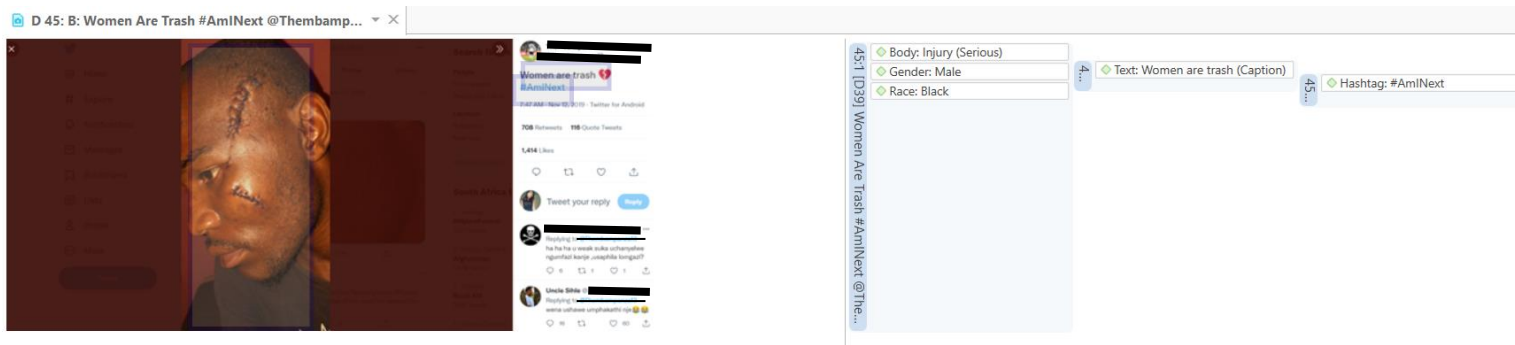
https://twitter.com/sibahle_skosana/status/1170046231332216832/photo/1.



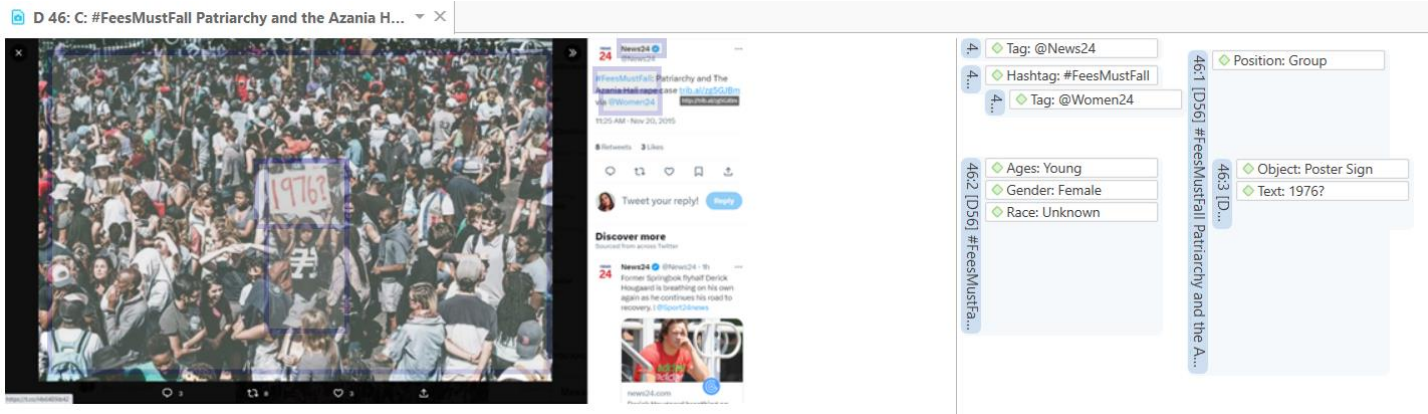
Document 43: *Violated by your stares*. @ibahle_Skosana, 6 September 2019. https://twitter.com/sibahle_skosana/status/1170046231332216832/photo/3.



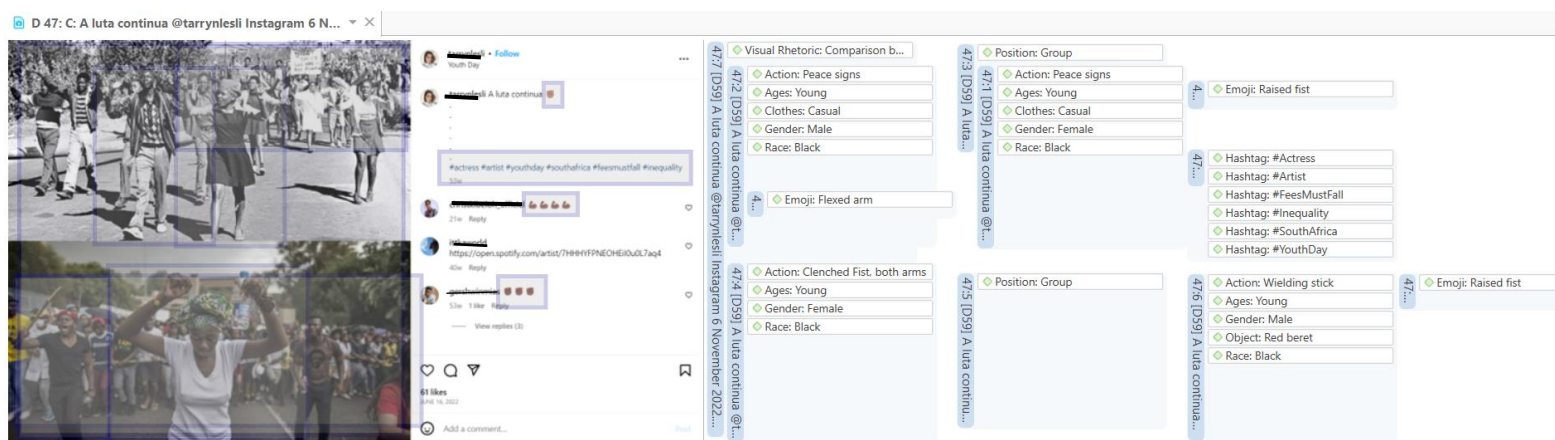
Document 44: *When we are screaming to fight for our lives in front of Parliament*. @voice_blog, 29 August 2020. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CEfTuQiHYC1/?hl=en>.



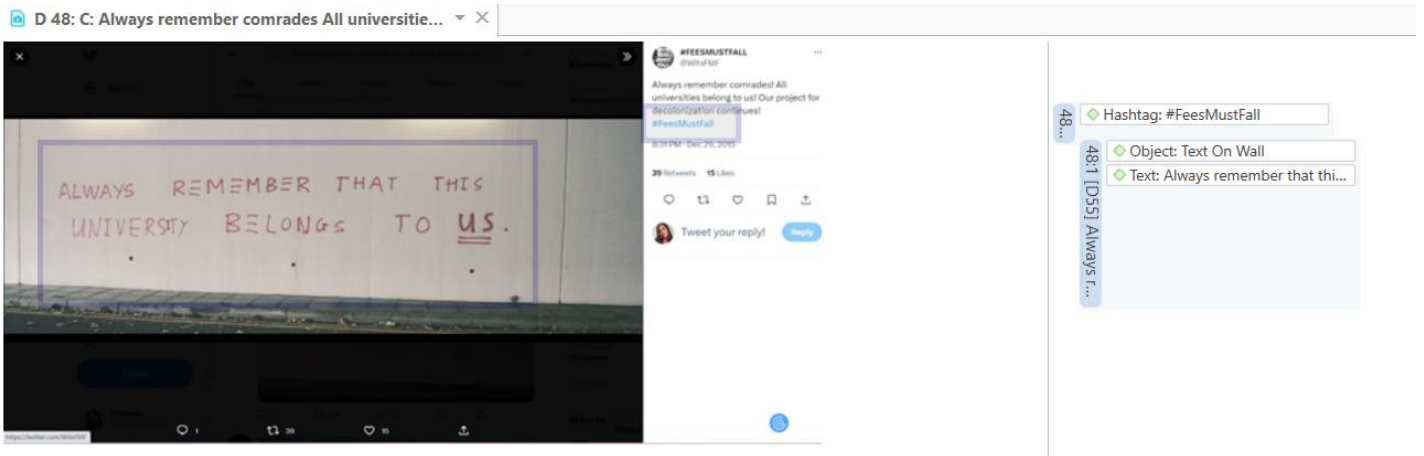
Document 45: *Women Are Trash #AmINext*, @Thembampanza1, 12 November 2019. <https://twitter.com/Thembampanza13/status/1194129460263559168/photo/1>.



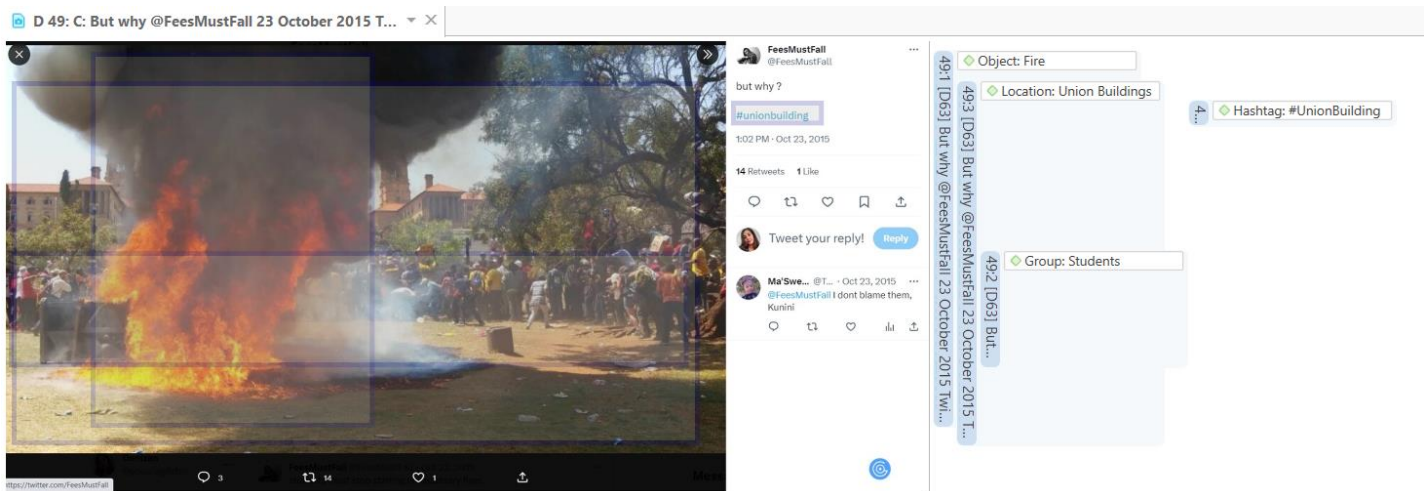
Document 46: *#FeesMustFall Patriarchy and the Azania Hall rape case*. @News24, 20 November 2015.
<https://twitter.com/News24/status/667634764329914368/photo/1>.



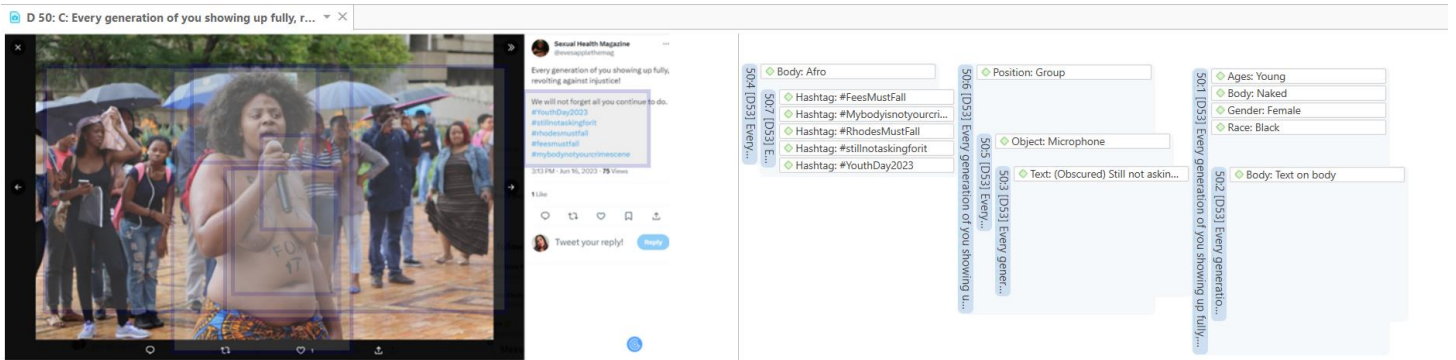
Document 47: *A luta continua*. @tarryn, 16 June 2022.
<https://www.instagram.com/p/Ce27qpurw9m/>.



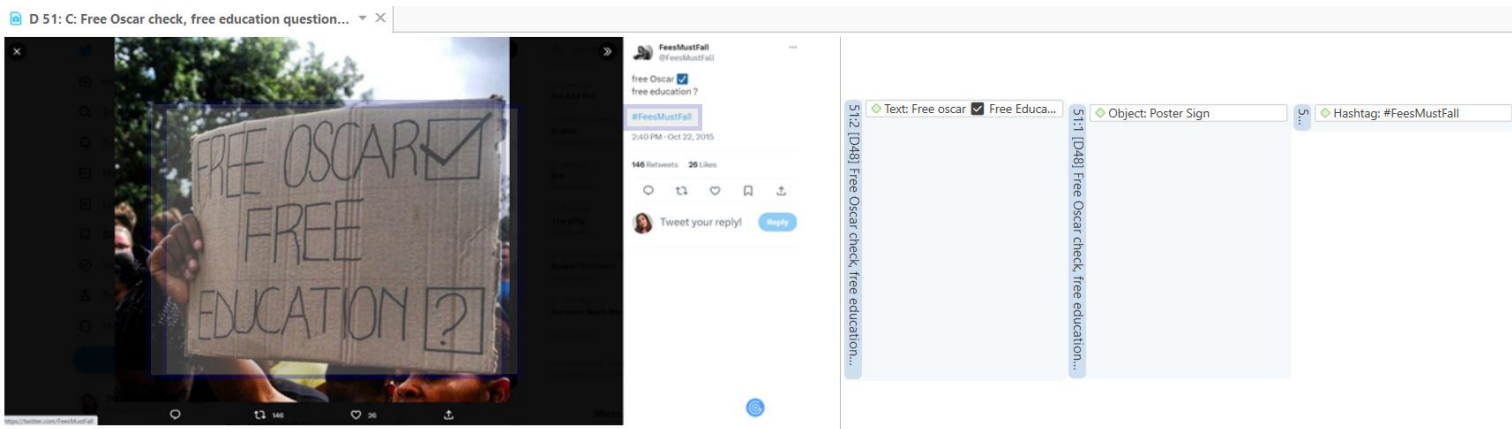
Document 48: *Always remember comrades All universities belong to us Our project for decolonization continues.* @WitsFMF, 29 December 2015.
<https://twitter.com/WitsFMF/status/681905428779941889/photo/1>.



Document 49: *But why ?* @FeesMustFall, 23 October 2015.
<https://twitter.com/FeesMustFall/status/657512341282668544/photo/1>.



Document 50: *Every generation of you showing up fully, revolting against injustice.* @evesapplethemag, 16 June 2023. <https://twitter.com/evesapplethemag/status/1669694736871964675/photo/3>.



Document 51: *Free Oscar check, free education question mark.* @feesmustfall, 22 October 2015. <https://twitter.com/FeesMustFall/status/657174776058900480/photo/1>.

D 52: C: Is there a God Is he out there Is she out the...

Is there a God? Is he out there? Is she out there? #FeesMustFall #Fees2016 #Fees2017 I just take a look around

6 Retweets 1 Quote 4 Likes

Tweet your reply! Reply

523 ID...

- Hashtag: #Fees2016
- Hashtag: #Fees2017
- Hashtag: #FeesMustFall

521 ID511 Is there a God Is he out there Is...

- Ages: Young
- Body: Injury (Moderate)
- Gender: Female
- Race: Black

522 ID511 Is there a God Is he out there Is...

- Ages: Young
- Clothes: Headwrap
- Gender: Female
- Race: Black

Document 52: *Is there a God Is he out there Is she out there.* @ockPaper_Czer, 5 December 2016.
https://twitter.com/RockPaper_Czer/status/805812180629286913/photo/1.

D 53: C: Lovelyn Nwadeyi explaining that the MC w...

Lovelyn Nwadeyi explaining that the MC was wrong to introduce her as a leader of #FeesMustFall. No leaders there.

3:56 PM · Jun 4, 2016

9 Retweets 19 Likes

Tweet your reply! Reply

533 ID...

- Tag: @helenzille
- Hashtag: #FeesMustFall
- Ages: Young
- Gender: Female
- Race: Black

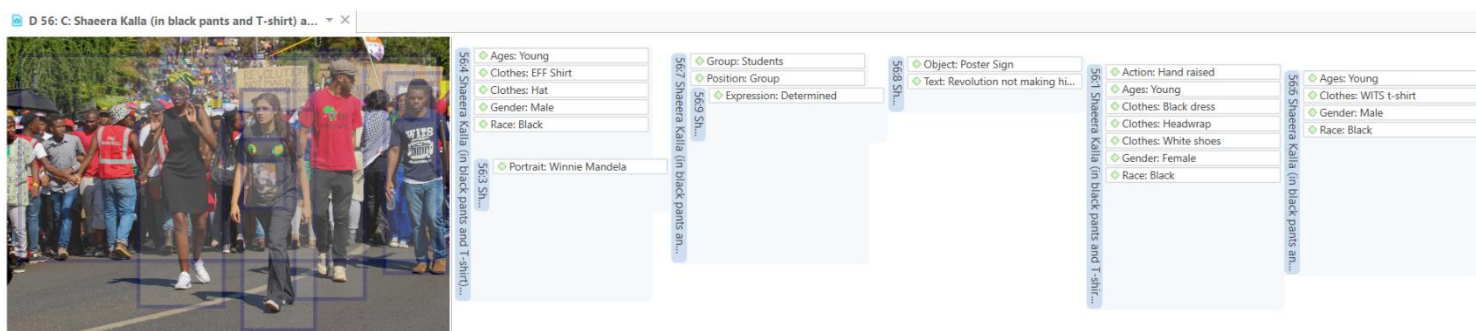
535 ID...

- Portrait: John F Kennedy

531 ID...

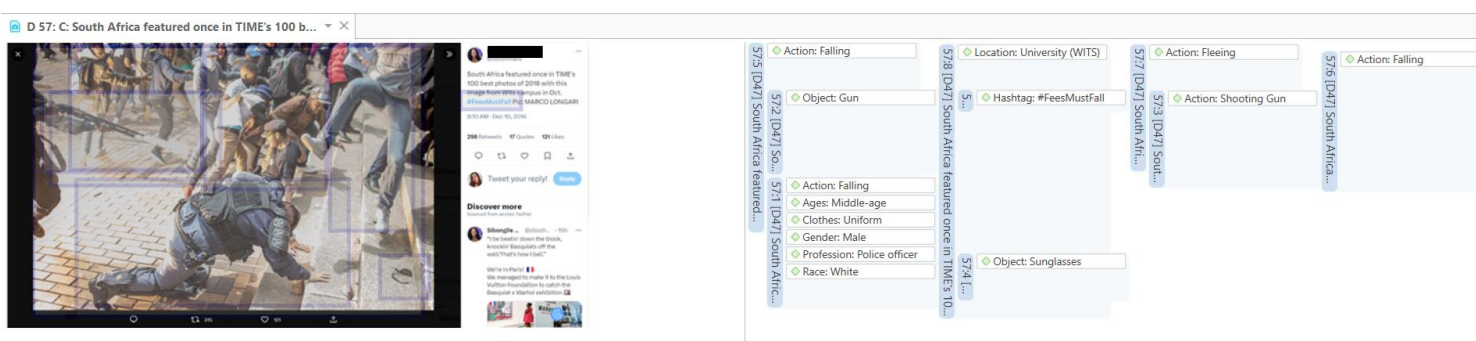
- Text: Iconic authentication and...
- Text: No to US hegemony

Document 53: *Lovelyn Nwadeyi explaining that the MC was wrong to introduce her as a leader of #FeesMustFall. No leaders there.* @helenzille, 4 June 2016.
<https://twitter.com/helenzille/status/739093507391008768/photo/1>.



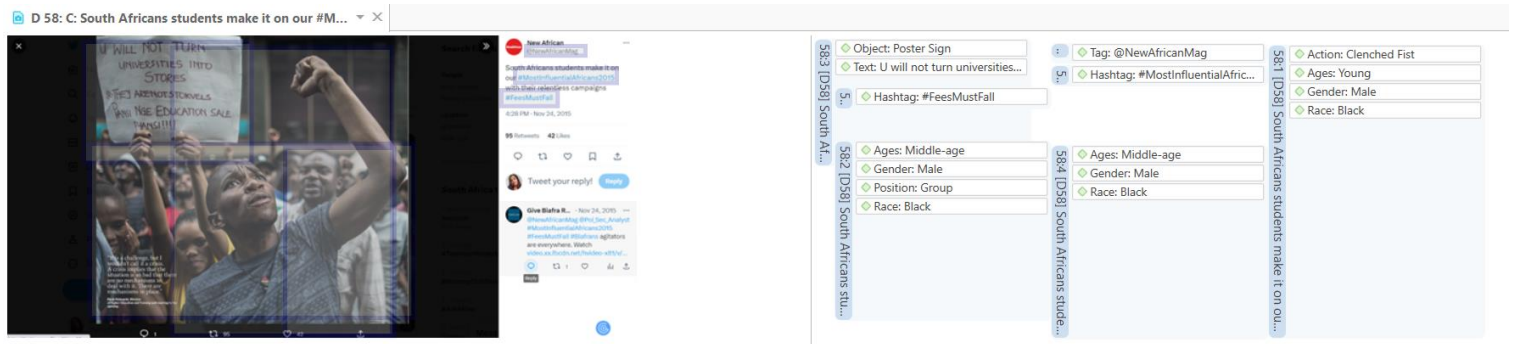
Document 56: Shaeera Kalla (in black pants and T-shirt) at the Fees Must Fall protest, Union Buildings, Next to her is the current SRC president, Nompandolo Mkatshwa. Photograph by Samantha Camara, 14 October 2015.

<https://www.groundup.org.za/article/current-university-model-anti-poor-and-anti-black/>.

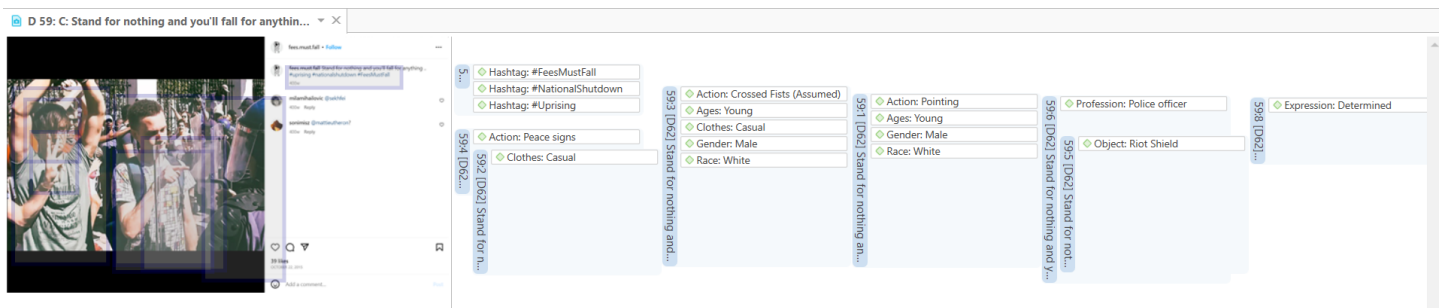


Document 57: South Africa featured once in TIME's 100 best photos of 2016 with this image from Wits campus in October. Photograph by Marco Longari. @boshmafu, 10 December 2016.

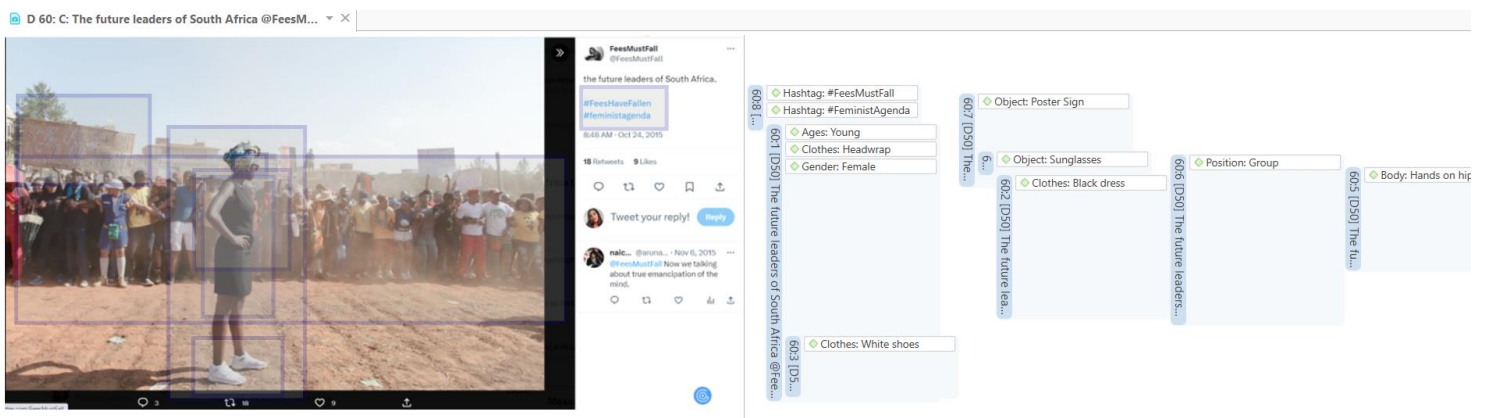
<https://twitter.com/sboshmafu/status/807467406524301313/photo/1>.



Document 58: South Africans students make it on our #MostInfluentialAfrican2015 with their relentless campaigns #FeesMustFall. @NewAfricanMag, 24 November 2015.
<https://twitter.com/NewAfricanMag/status/669160554322370560/photo/1>.



Document 59: Stand for nothing and you'll fall for anything. @fees.must.fall, 21 October 2015.
<https://www.instagram.com/p/9J0pJBhcmT/>.



Document 60: The future leaders of South Africa. @FeesMustFall, 24 October 2015.
<https://twitter.com/FeesMustFall/status/657810763839635456/photo/1>.

APPENDIX A

Catalogue Set B: Apartheid-era photographs

Theme 1: Instances of racial intimacy (D4, D10)

Reoccurring icons and motifs	Iconicity (local)	Iconicity (global)
• Touch and intimacy across racial divides • White children being affectionate with domestic workers • Smiling / fondness / affection • Black women as caregivers to white children • Black and white children's friendships	These photographs implicitly speak to the complexity of racial relations between black and white South Africans during apartheid. These types of photographs question the logic of the apartheid system where black people and white people can show each other care and intimacy in everyday settings despite the real and implied presence of material structures that dictate separation.	Photographs of this type speak to similar images that emerge from the Civil Rights Movement in the United States and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa where there were racist policies that separated the races. These types of images connote themes of racial reconciliation or make visible the realities of lived relationships between people.

Theme 2: Black poverty and suffering (D11, D13, D14, D15, D19, D20, D23, D26, D27)

Reoccurring icons and motifs	Iconicity (local)	Iconicity (global)
• Torn clothes • Black poverty • Improper resting conditions • Restrictions of access • Sweat • Handcuffs • Barefoot • Lack of home/travelling cases • Young black children/teenagers	Photographs from Theme 2 implicitly speak to the ill-treatment of black South Africans during apartheid. These images often represent the suffering faced by black people during apartheid, but also communicate on the resilience and the dignity of black people under an unfair system.	Images that bear resemblance to Theme 2 communicate about black poverty and class inequality because of unequal systems such as Segregation and apartheid. These images also function like nineteenth century social documentary photographs in exposing and showing invisible racial inequalities to an imagined audience.

Theme 3: Black people's conflict with police (D21, D22, D28)

Reoccurring icons and motifs	Iconicity (local)	Iconicity (global)
• Handcuffs • Young men targeted • Passbooks • Fearful onlookers • Unwanted touching • Intimidation • Young black children/teenagers	These types of photographs speak to the unequal displays of force that black people endured under the apartheid system. They also speak to the restrictiveness of the pass-laws and the environment of fear and intimidation that characterised the era. The types of imagery usually show direct impact of the violence on black bodies, such as through bites of police dogs, beatings, or death.	These types of images speak to global experiences of police brutality particularly faced by black people. Frequent visual icons associated with these images include police dogs, clashes with policemen and the violent aftermaths of protests.

Theme 4: Wealth and racial privilege, apartheid (D1, D2, D3, D5, D6, D7, D8, D9, D29)

Reoccurring icons and motifs	Iconicity (local)	Iconicity (global)
• Black Worker/White Boss • Recreational activities and time	These photographs speak to the racial power dynamics during apartheid as well as to lingering colonial racial	These photographs visualise experiences of racism and the invisible

• Affluent surroundings • Prejudice • Comfortability of white people versus hardships of black people	dynamics. In these photographs, a recurrent visual motif is of the white subjects engaging in leisure activities while the black subjects are involved in some type of labour.	labour and social systems that maintain unequal power dynamics under capitalist systems. Photographs from the Segregation era showing separate facilities for black and white Americans are similar to these types of images.
Theme 5: Signage designating racial separation, apartheid (D17, D18, D24, D25, D30)		
Reoccurring icons and motifs	Iconicity (local)	Iconicity (global)
• Material discrimination • Material evidence of separation	These types of photographs highlight how engrained apartheid was in the workings of the everyday. They function as material proof of apartheid, and from a post-apartheid perspective, they make one question how it would feel to not be able to use certain public facilities particularly as a person of colour.	Signs indicating separate facilities for different races are seen during the Jim Crowe era in the United States and apartheid in South Africa. Similar signs are seen in Nazi Germany prohibiting Jewish people from entering certain places and Anti-Irish sentiment signs in Commonwealth countries.
Theme 6: Crossing of racial barriers, causing conflict (D12, D16)		
Reoccurring icons and motifs	Iconicity (local)	Iconicity (global)
• Violence • Touching without consent/unwelcome touch • White vs black conflict • Shock • Anger • Assault	These photographs narrativise the levels of dehumanisation that black people faced during apartheid. Being touched by a black person potentially garners a violent response which speaks to the fear and abject disgust associated with black bodies during this time.	These types of photographs visualise the experience of racism, particularly the dehumanisation of black bodies that has occurred since the transatlantic slave trade.

APPENDIX B

Catalogue Set C: #FeesMustFall and #AmINext images

Theme 7: Performance as activism, #AmINext (D34, D37, D42, D43) & Theme 8: Protest signs, #AmINext (D31, D32, D33, D35, D36, D40, D44)

Reoccurring icons and motifs	Iconicity (local)	Iconicity (global)
• Fake wounds • Bloodied sheets • Posters: Advocating violence against rapists • Posters: #AmINext? Text • Masks • Predominance of individual women protesters	The performative images emulate the physical violence that victims of GBV experience in South Africa using the bodies of the activists as points of reference. Some of the protest signs (D32, D36) advocate for violence against male sexual offenders speaking to the outrage against acts of GBV. These images also speak to the acceptability of violent rhetoric in South Africa. There is political commentary in some images (D32, D36, D44) touching on contemporary political problems such as lack of leadership by police minister Bheki Cele and lack of action by the government. The protest signs using the hashtag #AmINext communicate a networked identification of the activists with the movement, which expands throughout the country.	The predominance of women protesters speaks to feminist global issues that such as sexual and domestic violence. Particularly, the focus on sexual harassment and rape aligns the movement with the #MeToo social movement. Like with the 2020 BLM protests, the presence of masks in some photographs speaks to an urgency to protest certain political issues despite the calls of isolation during COVID-19. The performance activism speaks to a need to visualise violence that often does not occur in the public eye.

Theme 9: Conflict with police, #FeesMustFall (D52, D55, D57, D59)

Reoccurring icons and motifs	Iconicity (local)	Iconicity (global)
• Wounds • Violence/Excessive Force • Chaos • Defiance • Gesture: Crossed fists • Gesture: Peace signs	These types of images showcase the police brutality that students faced during the FMF protest. They communicate unequal displays of violence against the students by university security officers and the SAPS. The images speak to a legacy of police brutality in South Africa that has occurred since the apartheid-era. The gesture of the peace sign (D59) communicates the protesters' intention to peacefully protest, a gesture that was also used in some images of the 1976 Soweto Riots, whereas the gesture of the crossed fists connotes defiance against the police and institutions, likely inspired by the crossed/raised fist of the ANC and Black Consciousness movements.	These types of images speak to historical and current protests, particularly those involving students, such as the March on Washington in the United States in 1965 and the Paris Riots of May 1968. Images of police brutality also recollect the brutal and unequal scenes of violence seen at the 1960 Sharpeville Massacre and the 1976 Soweto Riots.

Theme 10: References to apartheid, #FeesMustFall (D46, D47) & Theme 11: Student leadership, #FeesMustFall (D50, D56, D60) & Theme 12: Protest signs, #FeesMustFall (D51, D53, D54, D58)

Reoccurring icons	Iconicity (local)	Iconicity (global)
• Clenched fists • Pictorial references to 1976 Soweto Riots • ANC insignia • EFF insignia • SASCO insignia	The protest sign insignia during FMF points to both the contemporary political situation and makes references to the apartheid era. Common motifs include South African party affiliations. The images portray the strong female leadership during FMF, characterised largely by women of colour.	The photographs speak to the strong youth presence in protest movements spanning from the Arab Springs to the Black Lives Matter protest

Female leadership		movements. These movements are characterised by youth clashing with police who often adorn riot gear.
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