Call for papers

Recent types of news images
Photographs, computer graphics, maps

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Ever since it was first possible to reproduce images, information has constantly been given a more visual dimension that has gone beyond modifying the image of text on a page. From the end of the 18th century, although page layout and typography were used to produce 'text effects', it was not until somewhat later that vision as such was used as a means of communicating information. Without going into the history of the methods used to represent news, it is interesting to underline that the new forms and functions that have succeeded each other throughout this history have never completely eliminated those preceding them, even if they have significantly reduced their use. Thus illustrations were first intended to show an event, and make it seen in the same way as discourse, that is to say as an expression of perceptions of the news,   sometimes in eulogising form, sometimes seen from a distance. Photography has facilitated understanding of reality and increased proximity with distant events to the point of building global visual awareness.

Photography has led to a major upheaval in that it provides a 'certificate of presence' and, as R. Barthes wrote, it 'ratifies what it represents'. This is why, since the end of the 19th century, illustration has strengthened 'realism', leading to the heyday of photojournalism during the greater part of the 20th century and making it the basis of the success of televised news. Photojournalism led to the golden age of the *news magazines* and gave a specific place to the portrait, causing it to evolve considerably. This has been the case in particular for the *celebrity press*, making the *paparazzi* an inevitable though controversial actor in celebrity news. In conclusion, photography has been structured counter to Platonic thinking according to which the idols found in caves are shadows and that the evidence of our senses fools us. The use and acceptance of photography as proof of information refutes Plato's argument, as does its use as testimony. Censorship and propaganda are two examples of how image is used to reinforce messages.

The increased use of computer graphics in the media is a new phenomenon, and it introduces 'codes' in illustration, something that photography appears unable to do, while it projects more general information in a more abstract way, adding to the specific nature of the photograph. In addition, it adds the appearance of scientific truth (often highly statistical) to the 'naturalism' of the photograph and to the information provided on the state of the world. Digital technology has permitted the mental and instrumental construction of the world through its scientific and military applications. Infortmation has made use of these developments, not only for modelling phenomena such as hurricanes or tidal waves, but also for advances in medical knowledge relating to living cells. Digital technology has led to redefining how image is

used in information.

Within less than a generation, the digitisation of images has created upheavals in the environment and role of illustration in information in several directions:

- The use and circulation of photographic images produced by media sources and audiences, the immediate diffusion on mobile terminals of images taken on the spot is an exclusively digital procedure that places those working in photojournalism in a constant state of alert, whether they are agencies, photographers and iconographers.
- Computer graphics, developed at the end of the 1980s, has since been subject to a remarkable boom, since they can either be used for situations that cannot be photographed (ranging from the Gulf War to the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant), or as the bases for journalistic analyses of news, political or electoral events (through the use of tables and maps), economics (charts), social issues (unemployment curves), etc. Computer graphics on web sites have enhanced the potential of multimedia, leading to the production of animated and interactive images that combine technical demonstration with the construction of intelligibility.
- Stage setting information by *data journalism* through animated maps on web sites has recently been exploited by several on-line publishers. This work essentially constitutes a representation in image, of 'data' provided to the public with brief commentaries (for example, the publication by *The Guardian* of the expense accounts of British MPs, or figures showing criminality rates in the *Chicago Tribune*, or through the desire to highlight austere and complex public data useful to the citizen, or as a substitute for general information deemed inaccurate, partial, or misleading (e.g. the map of the social crisis in France with corporate redundancy schemes shown in *Médiapart*).

Orientations of the publication:

Image has always been linked with text (or a sound commentary) to illustrate and inform. However, today, beyond the issue of evolving forms, the multiple roles assigned to images and its uses that are henceforth integrated in the Internet and Web 2.0, the purpose of the publication we propose is to interrogate the modes of perceiving the world offered/dictated by the visual representations of information and news. This leads to several questions:

- What principles does news obey in the development of the images that impose themselves, that confront or coexist with each other? Do these principles include illustration or information, showing, designation, explanation, demonstration, denunciation? In a word, what are the principles underlying the use of images in journalism? On the other hand, are certain images impossible or forbidden? Briefly, on what grounds is it possible to censor or publish images?
- Between the 'realism' of the analogue image, the 'objectivity' and pedagogic nature of computer graphics, and the 'criticism' of the caricature, what roles do the journalistic images diffused play vis-à-vis the public? What of the increased use of stereotyped perceptions and scenarios and the diversification of opinions regarding the news? Do dominant of privileged forms of perceptions of the news exist and what effects of meaning are they likely to produce?
- What is the impact of time and the circulation of images on their social existence? What is the purpose of publishing in a weekly news magazine, photographs of events that have already been seen elsewhere? This shift in time, even slight, l e a d s t o a s t r a n g e e f f e c t : although the photograph published at the time of the event appears to recall only part of this event, an extract so to speak, the photograph published later on seems to provide a wider reference and define the event as a whole. The circulation of images (and their possible transformation) seems to be the source of their symbolic power (napalm in Vietnam, a t a n k in Tien-An-Men Square). What is the purpose of these recalls? Do these practices privilege specific resources

dedicated to the different types of media images diffused? What modifications has the Web brought about in the media ecosystem?

These three questions obviously lead to three possible types of interpretation: the meaning desired by the author/publisher; the meaning of the work itself and all its possibilities; the meaning produced by the reader/spectator. Naturally, these questions also refer to scientific options that may influence problems of editorial expression and the interactions it incorporates, the sociology of reading or receiving information, the intercultural aspects of the globalised planet, the perception of power and the struggles it involves, etc. Lastly, although reflection is necessary on the current circulation of images and their profusion, an approach that also takes into account longer term aspects could be included.

Submission of articles (30.000 to 50.000 signs, including References and footnotes) before 15th May 2012. Contributors should express an interest before 15th January 2012 to :
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The articles will be subject to 'double-blind' assessments; they should include theoretical references, research methods and a corpus reference.

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