

REVIEW

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for the application for the scientific degree Doctor in the field of higher education 8. Arts,
professional field 8.2. Fine Art,
Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof Asen Diamandiev "-
Plovdiv, doctoral program Applied, Fine Arts and Design
of Mariana Todorova Kamburova and the documents submitted for the award of scientific
degree Doctor as well as scientific work on topiv:

TIME AND TRANSFORMATION IN PHOTOGRAPHY

Academic supervisor: Assoc. Prof Boris Minkov, PhD

The dissertation of Mariana Kamburova submitted to me for review consists of a text part of 147 pages, including the bibliography and an appendix of 36 pages. Instead of an introduction, the dissertation presents sequentially: the object of the research, issues of the dissertation and areas and status of previous researches, followed by three chapters, conclusion, contributions and bibliography. The bibliography includes 61 sources (13 in Bulgarian, 5 in Russian, 15 in English and 28 online sources).

I. Relevance and significance of the scientific work

The present dissertation is focused entirely on the study of the notions of time in photography and the transformation of objects in space, which are subject to time through the means of expression in photographic language - both technical and artistic. It is not known whether such a theoretical study exists in Bulgaria.

The importance of the researched topic is dictated by the need to systematize the photographic theories in which time, space, memory and the related photographic transformations of the image are considered and analyzed. According to the doctoral candidate, the notion of time as a part of “the photographic study, documentation and storytelling and events of a purely social and even intimate nature is underestimated”. This paper offers different perspectives on the notion of time in photography.

II. Objectives, scope and methods of the scientific research

The object of the research are some new photographic approaches for transforming time in photography and especially in working with the so-called “found photography”. The aim is also to trace the development of the photographic image in authors who use a conceptual approach to recreate time and space in their works. The study examines this connection through observations in the history of photography, trends, styles and authorial interpretations. The concepts of time and space in the photography of G.K. Pondopulo, Louis Delluc, Vsevolod Pudovkin, Walter Benjamin, Andre Bazin, Yuri Bogomolov, Susan Sontag, Roland Barthes, Tsocho Boyadzhiev.

III. Main parts of the scientific research

The first chapter of the dissertation examines the emergence of photography in the XIX century, presents it as the "new media", which becomes more than just a document that seals a specific period of time. It becomes a witness to events and begins to preserve the historical memory of society. In this chapter, the candidate focuses on Nicéphore Niepce and Louis Jacques Mande Daguerre in France and William Henry Fox Talbot in England, who manage to capture the fleeting image and seal it on a plaque. Through Daguerre's diorama, which is the first attempt in art to capture and visualize concentrated time, Mariana Kamburova analyzes and compares the photographic theories and processes of Daguerre and Talbot, drawing our attention to an established problem of long exposure time in portraiture. He considers time as a technical factor, stereographic image and chronophotography.

The second chapter of the dissertation examines various photographic theories, starting from the very beginning of this new era in the development of the visual arts, which was marked by the emergence of photography in the ninth century. Wanting to define the transformation of photography from objective to subjective, Mariana Kamburova seeks in the prerequisites for the emergence and development of photographic theories. In search of answers, the doctoral candidate considers the new media as a factor in the visual culture, which gives rise to the first conflict between the subjective and the objective. On the one hand, there is the desire of the artists to create artistic works, and on the other hand, photography is a characteristic of the media for the objective expression of temporal reality. The chapter examines important literary studies by Walter Benjamin, of G.K. Pondopulo, Louis Delluc, Andre Bazin, Roland Barthes, Susan Sontag and others. There are numerous examples with the photographs of August Sander, Edward Steichen, Dorothea Lange, Robert Frank, Lewis Hine. The candidate also pays special attention to the statement of Prof Tsocho Boyadzhiev in his book *Philosophy of Photography* about the moment and its timelessness, that the human imagination builds time, but in a photograph there is always a moment that contains "before" and "after"; "defines the moment as a 'super-time from which the whole past, the whole present and the whole future can be unfolded'¹" The second chapter ends with a well-structured table that presents the various photographic theories.

The third chapter of the thesis examines the photographic interpretations of time or more precisely: the transformation of time in photographs - the place and role of temporal transformations in "found photography". Mariana Kamburova examines the ideological basis and development of "found photography" through the definitions of the poet Lautréamont and the artist Max Ernst. In this part of the chapter, attention is paid to the photographs of Christian Schad and Eugene Atget.

The systematization and the very process of quantitative accumulation of "found photography" leads to a change in the context of the photographic image, which is transformed from personal space to public in order to the summarize historical changes. These photographs become "a collection of physical evidence that life has a history and a duration". The doctoral candidate focuses on the "lost-

¹ Boyadzhiev, Tsocho, *Philosophy of Photography*, first (Sofia: "East-West", 2014)., P.221

found" archives of memory - the archives of Erik Kessels, Jean-Marie Donat, Thomas Walter, Joachim Schmid, Claude Ribuyo, in Bulgaria - the photographic archive with "found photographs" of the young author Tihomir Stoyanov. The thesis also discusses the works of Amy Friend, Carolle Benitah, William Mokrinski, Thomas Hauser, Paul Hertz, David Schouder and others.

IV. Conclusions

With the clarification that the dissertation is a personal point of view, through which we consider the time and transformation of objects in the context of both the history of the medium and their interpretations in the field of photographic art, the candidate offers us concepts for understanding them. Referring to the established arguments that photography has more than one way of expressing time, which is not only a mathematical quantity and outlines a complex way of presenting temporality, Mariana Kamburova selects, analyzes and systematizes authors that make time leading theme of their works, which can be used for future research in outlining a new photographic field, without claiming to be a detailed and complete study of all possible ways in which photography can express time.

An important part of the candidate's conclusions is the statement that "the ideological expression of time in photography is a phenomenon that expresses the connection of the photographic art with the photographic technologies in order to build a new photographic field. These trends are shaped by the status of the environment as one of the many technologies that redefine the time and transformation of the subjects, which in turn outlines the content through the form".

V. Contributions to the dissertation

The contributions of the dissertation are presented by the doctoral candidate in seven main areas, and I will mention only four of them, determining my choice based on their importance, set by the goals and objectives of the dissertation:

- For the first time, the study examines contemporary current theories on time and transformation in photography by contemporary authors.
- The dissertation analyzes and systematizes authors that make time leading theme of their works, which can be used for future research in outlining a new photographic field.
- The dissertation presents and systematizes in a table basic concepts for understanding the time of the considered photographic theories, which will serve to facilitate the study of the problem.
- • The dissertation introduces the concept of *photochronotope*.

Here I would like to make a recommendation to the candidate: the research could be expanded, to allow for a more in-depth analysis of the time and transformation in photography, viewed through the prism of some of the social sciences it mentions (visual anthropology, sociology), or why not some genres in the fine arts that use the photographic image as the basis of visual composition. Time as an idea is present in the work of many contemporary visual artists in Bulgaria. With preference to graphic art, which increasingly uses modern transfer techniques of the photographic image, I would point out authors

such as Vasil Kolev - Vasillio; the graphic pencil drawings of Anton Terziev; Krassimir Krastev - RASSIM® and others.

Mariana Kamburova has three main publications on the topic of the dissertation: two of them are published in the Year Book of AMDFA in 2017 and 2018 (Kamburova. M. 2017, *Contemporary concepts of time in photography. The contribution of a collection* / Kamburova. M. 2018, *Time, Space, Transformation, Memory - Photographic Theories*, and one in the Collection of scientific reports "Spring scientific readings", AMDFA in 2020 (Kamburova. M. 2020, *Ghost Moments*).

VI. Conclusion

The presented dissertation *Time and Transformation in Photography* is the result of an independent research on a significant problem for the art of photography, developed on the basis of a study of extensive literary and visual material and is undoubtedly with contribution value.

The abstract correctly reflects the content of the dissertation. The candidate has structured the content of her work very well, she clearly presents the goals and objectives of the research. There are also the abovementioned contributions of the dissertation.

All this gives me reason to convincingly vote and call on the other members of the scientific jury to vote in favor of the awarding Mariana Todorova Kamburova with the educational and scientific degree Doctor in the professional field 8.2. Fine Arts for the needs of the Department of Applied Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof Asen Diamandiev" - Plovdiv.

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Sofia

/Assoc. Prof Kalina Hristova, PhD/