Between the Civil War and World War II the illustrated press in America gradually came to use photography as a news medium. This major development in visual information was the outcome not simply of technical advances enabling recording of the visible with a minimum of human input,1 but also of complex cultural changes involving a host of different players.2 This essay uses specific examples to investigate the circulation factors at work in the publication of press photographs, with a view to a better understanding of the goals and issues involved. Before reaching the reader, a photograph went through technical transitions symptomatic of editorial requirements; the circulation of images from one magazine to another was an indication of the divergent roles assigned to them in different countries; and relocation by press figures triggered transfers of ideas and skills that were subsequently adapted to the new context. Analysis of these transitions from one medium to another and of the circulation of images, subjects, and personnel is particularly appropriate to the booming American setting, but equally important is the need for a wider perspective that stresses the links with Europe. This approach also entails eschewing strict notions of information and authenticity, in favor of close focus on images whose aesthetic analysis sheds light on the editorial requirements and rationales that have guided the publication of news photographs through the decades. In this volume’s introduction, François Brunet highlights how several corpuses of

"Brigadier-General George A. Custer," from Harper’s Weekly, March 19, 1864 (detail, see fig. 6).
American photographs (from nineteenth-century surveys to Farm Security Administration campaigns, especially) entered the history of American art through multiple moments and modes of circulation and recirculation. In his recent analysis of the market of portrait photographs in 1850s London, Geoffrey Batchen advocated for “a history for photography rather than a history of photographs,” which would explore the role of photographic reproducibility. This paper adds another layer to these considerations on reproduction and circulation by analyzing examples of three modes of circulation—technical, editorial, and human—through which photographs have been embedded in the illustrated press. In doing so, it aims to highlight the specific, concrete ways in which they have contributed to the dissemination of visual news, but also to stress the extent to which, in the American context most particularly, press photography has operated as a “formal paradigm in . . . the field of artistic creation,” in Gaëlle Morel’s terms.

**Technical Transitions**

Photography became a tool in the news illustration process—as it did in the practice of painting—in the mid-nineteenth century. The earliest recorded use dates from August 26, 1843, when the French weekly *L’Illustration* published an engraving “from a daguerreotype”
of the San Juan de Ulúa Fort in Veracruz. Nothing distinguishes this illustration visually from the others on the same page, apart from the specific mention of its photographic origin. L’Illustration began publication in Paris in March 1843, a year after the Illustrated London News and four months before the Illustrirte Zeitung in Leipzig; all three used woodcuts to illustrate current events and in the process gave rise to a new kind of press entity. At the time, woodcuts were the sole means of producing images in relief that could be associated with type in the composition of a newspaper page. Whatever their provenance—drawing, painting, engraving, photograph—all the images offered to the editors of these weeklies had to pass through the hands of a woodblock engraver if they were to appear in the press. Regularly, then, although not as a matter of course, the photographic halftones of landscapes, cityscapes, public celebrations, and, above all, portraits were transformed into black hatching by wood engravers.

In the United States, Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper was launched in 1855 and was followed two years later by Harper’s Weekly. Until the late nineteenth century, these two periodicals were the country’s main sources of visual information: on the eve of the Civil War, they enjoyed a combined print run of 250,000. War photography has since drawn considerable attention, and such exhibitions as WAR/PHOTOGRAPHY: Images of Armed Conflict and Its Aftermath (2012–2013, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston) and more specialized ones like Photography and the American Civil War (2013–2014, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) have been accompanied by meticulously documented benchmark catalogues. In both of these examples, however, the matter of press diffusion of war photographs is scarcely, if at all, addressed; thus the context in which these images found a broad public and contributed to the shaping of a shared visual culture has been neglected. Many Civil War photographs were used as models by engravers working for Harper’s Weekly and Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper. A recent count shows 344 war engravings bearing the caption “from a photograph” in Harper’s Weekly and 203 in Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper over a similar period. In terms of subject matter, these images include numerous portraits of soldiers, war-damaged buildings, and a few photographic curiosities such as horses in movement. A third of this corpus is attributed to Mathew Brady (1823?–1896).

Some of the images published at that time have met with considerable critical success, among them one of General Grant outside his headquarters tent in 1864 (fig. 1), reprinted in the photojournalism

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chapter of Beaumont Newhall’s seminal history of photography, first published in 1937. Credited to Brady and now in the National Archives in Washington, DC, this big (8 × 10 inches) wet collodion negative was taken in Virginia, most likely after the Battle of Cold Harbor in which thousands died and victory went to Confederate general Robert E. Lee. In Newhall’s book, tight focus on the subject has eliminated all the visual flaws characteristic of collodion plates, which enables a revealing comparison with the cover of *Harper’s Weekly* of July 16, 1864 (fig. 2). Should we see in this portrait of Grant—leaning against a tree, staring wearily into space—a man utterly dejected after a last bloody attack he will maybe regret all his life? I will settle here for comparing the original with the reproduction as a way of grasping the passage from one medium to another. As Newhall points out, the illustration “lacks photographic quality.” Nonetheless, the reproduction is fairly faithful and adheres to the overall composition of Brady’s photograph. We do notice ostensibly “visual” modifications, such as the branch added on the left to balance the one on the right in an image vertically divided by the tree trunk Grant is leaning on, the way the blurred foreground has been corrected by the engraver to make it recognizable, and the addition of shadows of the chair, the tree, and Grant, creating a mass of interlocking geometric shapes on the tent. Despite these pictorial modifications, though, the most radical change is technical. The engraver has shown real savoir faire in conveying the halftones of the Brady photograph, but there can be no mistake about the *Harper’s* image: this is an engraving, an image made of black hatching. In the transition from one medium to another, the technological “translation” and stylistic additions have made it impossible to recognize the photographic origin of the weekly’s image of General Grant—except by referring to the caption that reads “Photographed by Brady.”

A year later, on July 1, 1865, *Harper’s Weekly* published a group portrait captioned “Sherman and His Generals.—[Photographed by Brady, Washington, D.C.]” (fig. 3). The original, now in the Library of Congress, was taken at the Grand Army Review, held in the capital May 24–25, 1865, to celebrate the end of the war (fig. 4). The solid poses, the gazes avoiding the lens, and the hands plunged into pockets, hidden behind the back, or resting on the back of a chair all add up to a somewhat curious scene for the contemporary eye; they are, however, characteristic of the long exposure times required by wet collodion studio photography. In the reproduction in *Harper’s Weekly*, we once again observe the technical alteration that stamps the transition from photograph to engraving, but equally striking this time are the
engraver’s changes to the configuration. Brady’s picture is perfectly composed, with the six generals set on either side of the central figure, Sherman, and regularly spaced in a way allowing those seated in the foreground to be intercalated with those standing behind them. We immediately perceive the *Harper’s Weekly* engraving as more crowded and lacking the visual rhythm of the placement of the figures in the photograph. In fact, two new figures have been added: General Kilpatrick (upper left) and General Blair (upper right), both of whom took part in Sherman’s march to the sea but were absent when Brady’s photograph was taken. To give a more accurate idea of Sherman’s staff, the engraver has added in what was missing from the photograph. There are other modifications, too, of a more aesthetic order: the small table to the right of the group has been removed and the one to the left, blocked in the photograph by an unfortunately placed post, has been retouched to round off the image in the manner of a studio portrait. The illustration is indeed captioned “photographed by Brady,”

5
Albumen silver print, 10.078 × 14.095 in. (25.6 × 35.8 cm).
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, 20711.1.
but the editors have attached more importance to the factual composition of Sherman’s staff and the rules of the classical (group) portrait than to an accurate rendering of the photographic record.

In 1866, a year after its publication in Harper’s Weekly, Brady gave George Barnard (1819–1902) permission to reproduce the image in his album Photographic Views of Sherman’s Campaign: sixty-one albumen prints showing the main stages of the final offensive (fig. 5). The result contains similar alterations: General Blair has been added on the right (seated), elegant geometrical shapes emerge on the rug, and the composition is framed by a heavy curtain to the right and a perfectly outlined table to the left. Analysis of this move, not only from one medium to another (photograph to engraving), but also from one visual form to another (negative to positive), demonstrates that the authenticity value accorded to the photographic document was all but a nonissue for the press and for the producers of a war photography album aimed at an elite readership. At this level, photographs were seen as images intended to represent an event or idea as exactly as possible—content-wise and aesthetically—so as to capture the attention of a specifically targeted public. In this context, corrections and additions due to the engraver or the printer were considered not shameless manipulations of reality but a necessary formatting process shaped by a dual urge to please and inform.

Other examples illustrate even more overtly this need to adapt photographic forms to the editorial goals of the American press of the 1860s. To illustrate twenty-three-year-old George A. Custer’s promotion to the rank of brigadier general, Harper’s Weekly used an image—Custer urging a splendid steed along at full gallop—that only an illustrator could have produced (fig. 6). Likewise, the cover of Leslie’s Weekly of January 28, 1865, featured Captain Loring and Lieutenant Colonel Flory’s escape from a Confederate camp, “from a photograph by Lilienthal.” Just how had Theodore Lilienthal (1829–1894), working with a heavy, cumbersome camera whose glass plates called for long exposure times, been able to capture the largely nocturnal flight of the two Union soldiers? In both cases, it is probable that while the illustrators resorted to photographic portraits for the faces, the narrative compositions and stylistic touches were entirely their own work. Thus photographs served as sources of inspiration for a picturesque staging of current events.

Examination of the circulation of these images from one medium to another makes it clear that photography created no great enthusiasm among editors and that the caption “from a photograph” was relatively
"Brigadier-General George A. Custer."
Ryerson Image Centre, Toronto.
AN HISTORICAL DAY ON THE YALU

By FREDERICK PALMER, Collier’s War Correspondent attached to the Japanese General Staff in Manchuria.

There is the spot where the battle took place, and looking at it, one is filled with admiration for the skill and daring that went into the planning of the operation. It was a well-chosen site, with the river running through the village, while the surrounding hills provided cover for the Japanese forces. They had prepared their positions carefully, and the battle was fought with great determination.

The river was narrow and meandering, with steep banks on either side. The Japanese troops were well-organized and well-trained, and they fought with great tenacity. The battle was fierce and bloody, but in the end the Japanese emerged victorious.

I was present at the battle, and I can still recall the sound of the gunfire and the cries of the wounded. It was a day that I will never forget, and I am grateful to have been able to witness such a historic event.

With a view to the future, I look forward to seeing more of these battles, and to seeing what the future holds for the region. The Yalu is a river of great significance, and it will be interesting to see how the future unfolds.

Les temps restent durs. Nous ne voulons plus neer à nos ruses et prêter l’embarras de nos voleurs. Nous dressons le balots des propitiatoires de la mort, trievant l’abominé et mes truculent sur nos raccourcis. L’équipe fragonçaise se tient première. C’est un point seul pour nous une satisfaction municipale. Ce succès nous a inspiré une remise de la mode des affaires et il s’est produit que, sur le marché lourdaud noyan- nant, les baronnies françaises virent être fort demandées. Il est bien que les barley cartes se montrent magistrales et que l’empan du châble et M. Leclerc fût chargé des dépêches en sucre. Mais l’exemple est en lui mes sœurs- durs d’heurtoirs semblent avoir reçu une impression que, pendant plusieurs années, ils ne furent pas contrôlés.

Les chefs d’État encouragèrent ces efforts. Les publics les virent avec bonheur, sur les marchés et représentant des moutons. Qu’a-t-il pas subi ? On les voudra uf de bétise. Le rôle de toute époque est de prendre un titre à prendre. On s’endort que de le dire, et d’échapper, mais les quais de la Seine, dans une eau où l’est, le port de Billon- cour et la pointe de Beyne. Vous verrez qu’au Change, un chien vous aime après l’époque. Elle semblera à ses dents, un décalage qui s’accentue. Le lendemain était de cette métamorphose :

À Grand-Prix. Il n’ accepte pas qu’un président français abandonne une partie touristique, mais il a une quittance d’une des présidents de l’état-major. Ceux qui sont, bouchent une fenêtre donnant sur la Seine, il y a un quart de siècle, de deux salles de l’histoire de la Seine, presque la totalité de ses intérêts. Ceux qui sont, bouchent une fenêtre donnant sur la Seine, presque la totalité de ses intérêts.

Il n’a pas possible de presque faire crier. Il s’est endormi après l’époque. Il n’a pas possible de presque faire crier. Il s’est endormi après l’époque.
rarely attached to the illustrations published during the Civil War. We see too that these Civil War photographs were used like all the other image material acquired by the weeklies: they contributed to the illustration process through the agency of the draftsman or the engraver, but their identity was sacrificed, together with their formal qualities, in the interests of a match with illustrational norms. It would seem, then, that while news images certainly conveyed information, they also met predetermined aesthetic criteria. As a guarantee of the efficacy of the images and the commercial success of the periodicals, this subtle balance was for decades endlessly considered and reconsidered by press editors and adapted to the requirements of their readership.

**From One Magazine to Another**

In the course of the 1890s, the use of the halftone process by the press brought serious competition for wood engravers. The earliest reproductions using this photomechanical method respected photography’s shades of gray but were visually monotonous and lacked the powerful, eye-catching contrasts of wood engravings. Nonetheless, for publishers they saved time and money and offered greater layout flexibility, factors which saw them gradually but definitively take over as news vehicles in the illustrated press. The visual adaptations previously effected by the engraver now fell to retouchers whose brushes eliminated superfluous details, corrected blur, and prioritized information within the image. This new use of images also stimulated and facilitated the passage of photographs from one magazine to another—a new form of circulation that highlighted the different roles attributed to the same photographs in different countries.

During the Spanish-American War in 1898, *Collier’s Weekly* published photographs by James H. (Jimmy) Hare (1856–1946), who had taken the initiative of covering the fighting. Some years later, as relations between Japan and Russia became strained early in 1904, war had clearly become a major issue for the American press, and *Collier’s Weekly* sent an entire team of journalists to Asia—including Jimmy Hare, who followed the Japanese army and sent regular batches of pictures not only to *Collier’s* but also to European periodicals like the *Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung* and *Die Woche* in Germany, the *Illustrated London News* in England, and *L’Illustration* and the daily *Le Matin* in France.

In their issues of June 25, 1904, *Collier’s Weekly* and *L’Illustration* published the same picture of Jimmy Hare handling developing trays.
the hills of the far end of the valley. These were the principal herbage reserves, of this type of timber.symbolic of a period in the Russian past. A small stream trickled from the hill into the valley, and the occasional small cottage stood by the side of the road. The houses were of wood, with thatched roofs, and the gardens were well kept. The peasants were busy in their work, and the children were playing in the fields. The children went to school in the morning, and came home in the afternoon.

Shifting Images

The Russian Army

The Russian Army was the largest and most powerful force in the world. It was composed of men from all parts of the Russian Empire, and was well trained and disciplined. It was divided into three main branches: the land forces, the naval forces, and the air force. The land forces were the largest and most powerful, and were divided into four main branches: the infantry, the cavalry, the artillery, and the engineers. The infantry was the backbone of the army, and was divided into three main types: the foot soldiers, the light infantry, and the heavy infantry. The cavalry was the fastest and most formidable, and was divided into three main types: the Cossacks, the infantry cavalry, and the horse artillery.

The Russian Army was well equipped, and had a wide range of weapons. It had a mix of rifles, bayonets, and swords, and a variety of artillery pieces. It also had a large number of horses, which were used for transportation and as a source of power for the railway system.

The Russian Army was well known for its loyalty and discipline, and was respected by other nations. It was also well respected for its effectiveness in battle. The army was well organized, and had a clear chain of command. The officers were carefully selected and trained, and were expected to lead by example. The soldiers were well disciplined, and were expected to obey orders without question.

The Russian Army was also known for its strict adherence to tradition. The officers were expected to follow the traditions of the army, and were expected to lead by example. The soldiers were expected to follow the orders of the officers, and were expected to obey the laws of the land.

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SCÉNES DE GUERRE

Entre toutes les photographies qui nous sont présentées en pages éditées de l’histoire de la guerre, nous en avons choisi une seule, parce qu’elle est typique et que, par-delà les cahiers, elle témoigne de la réalité de ce que nous évoquons. Nous la reproduisons ici, avec l’autorisation de l’éditeur.

La scène est classique : des soldats en position de combat, des chevaux prêts à l’attaque, des signaux de l’artillerie à l’arrière. La réalité de la guerre est bien représentée dans cette photo.

Le texte en haut de la page est en français.

L’entrée de la passe de Mou-Tsou-Ling : une campagne de victoires, instaurée par nos forces armées. — L’auteur espère que les détails seront rendus aux soldats.


10
Pages 136–37 from L’Illustration, August 17, 1904. Ryerson Image Centre, Toronto.

Thierry Gervais
La critique des "opérateurs" par la major Tisserand.
outside his photography tent (figs. 7 and 8). Beside it, the American magazine placed a portrait of journalist Frederick Palmer surrounded by Korean villagers. Set at the top of the page, the two images formed a visual preamble to the clashes on the Yalu River, as experienced and recounted by Palmer. In *L’Illustration*, the photograph of Hare was the only illustration on the page and the subject of an article titled “Photography at War,” which described the difficulties and dangers facing the photographer in the field and warned readers of the effect of these conditions on the quality of the images: “Not to speak of the serious risks run by a war correspondent, photographer, or journalist, when we know the circumstances behind these results—the rudimentary facilities, the delicacy of handling required by the art of
photography—we can only express surprise and would not dream
of stinting on our respect and admiration for our bold, inventive
contributors. . . . Think of all the courage this represents . . . and do
not be too severe if from time to time we show you an image that
is slightly less than perfect.”

This attentiveness is to be seen in the
treatment of the image: where the American magazine crops the
photograph slightly so as to enhance its content in small-format
reproduction, L’Illustration takes its brush to the foreground and
background, heightening the contrasts and softening the edges of the
image so that it merges into the page.

Thus the French weekly brought special care to photographic
layout and greater freedom to graphics and image orchestration
generally. Ten days apart, the two magazines recounted the clashes in
the Muo-Tienling Pass and chose the same photograph of a Russian
soldier wounded in the throat. In a long text spread over three columns,
Collier’s Weekly described in the first person the different phases of the
battle as observed by the journalist, stressing the strategic skill of the
Japanese officers and the “stupidity” of the Russian military (fig. 9).
The picture of the wounded Russian soldier appears here as an
illustration of the article, placed at the bottom left of the page and
separated from the text by a thick black border. The narrative, which
makes no direct reference to the photograph, and the layout, which
clearly separates text and image, offer the reader two distinct
approaches, which coexist on the page rather than actually coming
together as an account of the events.

Things are done differently in
L’Illustration, which leaves less space for the text and offers a complex
layout that plays with the shape of the images, using silhouetting to
generate visual effects and overlaying to interconnect the pictures (fig.
10). The text itself is not an eyewitness account but a description of
the images: “From among all the photographs we have received these
last few days, we have chosen a series, taken on the Japanese side.”

The French editorial team, which usually called on its illustrators to
create the images it needed, now had to find a way of dealing with the
photographs that were coming in, and resort to a series provided a
solution that enabled use of Jimmy Hare’s snapshots. The result was
a visual account with a beginning and an end, and graphic effects—
silhouetting, overlays—whose visual rhetoric was at once narrative
and eye-catching.

The publication of Hare’s photographs of the encounter between
the two armies at Liao-Yang in the late summer of 1904 underscores
this difference in the treatment of news images. In the United States,

7. — Le général Kuroki surveillant les opérations de ses troupes.

8. — M. Haras s'arrête de photographier pour donner ses soins aux blessés.

9. — Les troupes de réserve se déploient sur la colline.

10. — La pente est escarpée et difficilement accessible aux troupes japonaises.

11. — Vue générale du champ de bataille.

12. — Cadavres russes et japonais au sommet de la colline.

13. — Le combat fut le plus acharné.

LE CHA-HO PHOTOGRAPHIÉE HEURE PAR HEURE

Written by Cultur's Works.
Collier’s Weekly devoted seven pages of its November 5 issue to an account of the battle. Images played a prominent part but revolved around an article by Frederick Palmer titled “The Greatest Battle since Gettysburg.” The article opened with a large picture on the left-hand page, while another image served as a frontispiece and a third was placed like an illumination, introducing the text. The remaining images were rectangular, sometimes interacting symmetrically but without any actual link between them. The last double page was entirely given over to illustrations beneath the title of the article: four photographs taken after the battle, simply laid out, all of the same format, and each accompanied by a one-line caption (fig. 11). Hare’s photographs also went to L’Illustration, which devoted its center spread to the story in the December 10 issue. Usually allotted to large drawings by leading illustrators, this very special spot offered readers a series of small photographs—sixteen in all—under the heading “A Day’s Fighting between Yen Tai and the Cha Ho, Photographed Hour by Hour” (fig. 12). Laid out in four lines, the images were carefully sequenced: beginning at the Japanese headquarters, they follow the photographer as he advanced toward the “line of fire.” To ensure that the reader could accompany him through the battle, the editors numbered the images, indicating their order in relation to the unfolding of the action. This layout provided a visual account independent of the articles and the rest of the issue, and gave the reader/spectator the impression of having direct access to the conflict. On this double page, it was no longer a matter of representing a battle scene, but of presenting the actual battle, “hour by hour.”

Thus an examination of the circulation of Jimmy Hare’s photographs from one continent and one magazine to another reveals the editorial teams’ work of mediation. While the task had hitherto been that of the illustrators, halftone reproduction of photographs brought with it a new editorial post, that of the art director whose task was to choose the images and organize their layout so as to give them meaning and visual appeal. The same Jimmy Hare photographs were laid out differently, in response to differing journalistic aspirations and the specific expectations of the readership of each magazine. The pictures of the Russo-Japanese War published in Collier’s Weekly followed the illustrative habits developed for engravings, the intention being to complement the journalist’s personalized narrative. By contrast, L’Illustration covered the same events with an anonymous text based on images whose organization on the page suggested both narrative and spectacle. More extended and systematic study of such differences
might enable larger interpretations, concerning, for instance, the role of differing national and professional traditions; for our present purposes, it is enough to stress the editorial process of circulation and multiple publication as it fashioned the historical apparition of Jimmy Hare’s photographs—and their different aesthetic treatments as illustrations.

**Men on the Move**

This study of the treatment of images and the readily observable differences between two magazines’ coverage of the same events raises the question of the movements of the men who carried out the work of editorial mediation. The interwar years saw many Europeans flee Nazism and go into exile in North America, among them German pressmen who began fresh careers in the New World. The launch of *Life* magazine by Time Inc. in New York in November 1936, together with the coming of the photographic essay concept, throws interesting light on this migration and points up the influences at work in defining an editorial line and a visual identity.²⁵

Only a few weeks after Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933, Ullstein, publisher of the illustrated magazines *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* (*BIZ*), *UHU*, and *Die Dame*, began losing control of its publications; and between 1933 and 1935, most of its leading figures, among them Kurt Korff, Kurt Safranski, Martin Munkácsi, Felix H. Man, and Alfred Eisenstaedt, left Germany. The majority went to North America, where they began anew in the illustrated press.²⁶

In New York, then, European inspiration among press publishers was not just rhetorical effect to attract readers but a thoroughgoing intercontinental transfer of skills.

In New York in December 1934, Time Inc.’s Henry Luce (1898–1967) and Daniel Longwell met with Kurt Korff (1876–1938) and Kurt Safranski (1890–1964) to share their experiences as publishers. As, respectively, former editor in chief of *BIZ* and former manager of Ullstein’s magazine division, the two had played a considerable part in the success of *BIZ*, which in 1931 had a circulation of 1.9 million.²⁷

This success was founded on serials written by such renowned authors as Vicki Baum and scrupulous attention to the choice of photographs.²⁸ On the agenda at the Time Inc. meeting was a plan for a general news magazine—those attending were shown a mock-up prepared by Safranski²⁹—and how to get it running in North America. From then on, the two German émigrés went their separate but complementary ways: Korff worked as a consultant for Time Inc.
As late as 600 A.D., the Japanese were about as barbarous
as the tribes of North Europe. But when they looked
abroad for a civilization to copy, the nearest to hand was the
magnificent culture of great China and they borrowed it
almost intact—laws, sciences, trades, alphabets, art, clothes,
and religion. They did such a fine job of adapting that today
they look down on the Chinese as an amiable, cruel and
underprivileged people that has left its great past far behind.

The great Japanese virtues of today are the old Chinese
virtues of Confucius—submission, loyalty and decorum.

Japan has built a singularly effective civilization on its
Chinese models. Loyalty and deference are virtues primarily
useful, not at all odd to other people. Every Japanese
inhabits both a mass of loyalty and properties. His
whole life is stylized far into the ethical social, moral and
legal codes, written and unwritten, that cover every situation
he can possibly get into. He is taught to act always by the
codes. Hence he is not embarrassed because he always
knows that he is doing the “right thing.” His pedantry, as
impressive to foreigners, is merely conventional. He is
taught not to take seriously any individualistic impulse that
comics to him and to trust those who God has put above
him. He finds himself more of a man when he discipline
himself than when he “experiences” himself. And he is hap-
pier in a surrounding crowd. The result is that the Japanese
are not much good by himself (Japan has produced almost no
great writers, artists or scientists) but expert in the mass.
This man’s fudai is in lower fire rites by bashing his appearance in front of an uninsured house. This suite of Shintoism still has a multitude of Japanese believers.

A store-boat elephant celebrates the landing of U.S. Contramour Perry at Shimonoseki in 1853. The basketed adoration gold hearse and says more than the blanket, the store’s row.

Religious ministers plait bamboo robes for their supper before a restaurant. They hide their faces with baskets which are also used to conceal arrested persons on land.

Ancestors of the whole Buddhism congregation at Tomamųjii are remembered in this battalion of wooden statues in the temple alms. The masses are not their real ones but the Buddhist masseLines given after death. The Buddhist religious boring edges out Japan’s nature, producing Shotokan.

Pilgrim begins of the Buddhist Sokkot sub are straining for their supper (above). Japan is full of press interests. A Japanese pagoda by instants, the hawking bicycle (at right) is delivering loads of sake: a two-penny kind of wheel versus: largely eaten in offices by keen workers.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
in the experimental department directed by Longwell. He met regularly with members of the team, had lengthy discussions with Longwell, sent out numerous memoranda, and wrote a document titled “Essential Outline for a New Illustrated Magazine,” whose suggestions included covering cultural news, never using the same subject twice in the same issue, and a meticulous choice of images. The strategies underlying BIZ’s success and reputation—among them negotiation of exclusive rights and good rates for photographers—were also brought on board, guaranteeing the quality of the images used. Thus Korff shared his experience in illustration, insisting on the best ways of obtaining, selecting, and editorially enhancing images.

It was in December 1935, after more than a year working in the American press, that Safranski, realizing what was needed in the way of images and what his own skills were worth, got together with Ernest Mayer and Kurt Kornfeld to set up the Black Star photography agency. Mayer had founded the Mauritius agency in Germany in 1929, and he drew on its established network to meet Longwell in 1936 and offer him Black Star’s services. The upshot of the meeting was that for a fee of $5,000 Time Inc. was given a year’s special access to all images taken by Black Star’s photographers and all those the agency acquired overseas. Time Inc. was thus securing the services of experienced, innovative picture editors. Mayer even took credit for convincing the American publishers of the value of the photographic series. Obviously claims like these are hard to verify, but long photographic series began appearing with the first number of Life on November 23, 1936. The editorial board even came up with a definition of these series as a journalistic practice in their own right: the photographic essay. Henceforth the definition extended to all series or groups of images covering the same subject on one or more pages. But before becoming this vague concept, the photographic essay had already been defined in a specific historical situation that reveals just how European ideas had been adjusted to suit the North American context.

In discussions about the journalism profession, Luce’s position was clear-cut: any notion of objectivity was illusory. He urged his editorial teams to take sides and express a point of view. The task was no longer to reflect what was happening but to make it the stuff of an editorial line. In April 1937, the Life editors published the short article “The Camera as Essayist,” sticking closely to Luce’s editorial policy, defining the photographic essay concept, and assigning a specific role to photography: “When people think of the camera in
journalism they think of it as a reporter—the best of reporters: the most accurate of reporters: the most convincing of reporters. Actually, as Life has learned in its first few months, the camera is not merely a reporter. It can also be a commentator. It can comment as it reports. It can interpret as it presents. It can picture the world as a seventeenth-century essayist or a twentieth-century columnist would picture it.”

So where the standard rhetoric justifying the use of photography in the general news press had so far opted for emphasizing the medium’s mechanical character, Life took a contrary stance in presenting the camera not as an incontrovertible recording tool but as a means of recounting, providing evidence, mediatizing, and giving a point of view. The photograph was no longer put forward as a window onto the world but as a representation shaped by the photographer. Thus, the men at Life retained their European colleagues’ attachment to the snapshot, taken without the subject’s knowledge and masking the presence of the photographer, as well as to the impact of the series; but at the same time, they presented the photographer, armed with his camera, as the prism through which news was filtered before being handed on.

Some months later, this clear, uncompromising stance gave rise to the formal addition of the Photographic Essay to Life’s table of contents. A count of the reports published and the photographs reproduced under this heading provides some interesting statistics and an indication of how the editorial discourse was actually put into practice in the magazine. Between 1937 and 1962, 1,292 photographic essays were published, and in 769 cases the section contained only one essay.

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GUARDIA CIVIL

Three stern men, enforcement of national law, are France’s rural police. They patrol countryside, are found by people in villages, which also have local police.

VILLAGE SCHOOL

Girls are taught in separate classes from the boys. Four rooms and four flag readers handle all pupils, some as young as 300 in winter, between the ages of 6 and 14.

FAMILY DINNER

The Guadix eat thick bean and potato soup from common pot on dirt floor of their kitchen. The father, mother and four children all share the one-bedroom.
A CHRISTENING:
While his godfather holds him over a font, the priest Doña Manuel dries the head of one-month-old Horacventura Juana Macion after his baptism at village church.

THE THREAD MAKER
A peasant woman moistens the fibers of locally grown flax as she joins them in a long strand which is spun tight by the spindle (right), then wrapped around it.
Among these long essays, only 418 were the work of a single photographer.\textsuperscript{37} In other words, a substantial number of Life’s photographic essays were put together by members of the editorial team. Picture editors like Wilson Hicks—but also art directors like Bernard Quint (who laid out W. Eugene Smith’s 1951 “Spanish Village” essay)—chose and arranged the news pictures, with the series ultimately subject to the approval of the managing editor.\textsuperscript{38} Thus the photographers were theoretically promoted to the rank of essayists, but in practice the weekly kept a firm hand on its visual content.

A qualitative analysis also shows that the editors allowed themselves interpretative discretion. The first essay to appear under the new rubric was published on August 30, 1937, with the ambiguous title “The Japanese: The World’s Most Conventional People” (fig. 13).\textsuperscript{39} For this set of thirty photographs, the editors drew on nine different sources, among them freelance photographers (Masao Horino) and agencies (Associated Press, Wide World, Keystone, Pix, and Black Star). At the time, Black Star represented Fritz Henle and, most notably, Yonosuke Natori (1910–1962), thirteen of whose photographs were included. A number of Natori’s original prints are now in the Ryerson Image Centre collection in Toronto, and several of them have been stamped on the back, “Natori—Photographs should not be used for anti-Japanese purposes” (fig. 14).\textsuperscript{40} And so, contrary to his express wishes, Natori’s images make up a substantial part of an exercise in racist propaganda. A photographer’s style could also explain why his photographic series did not appear under the Photographic Essay heading. With its saturated blacks and tight framing, “Spanish Village” by W. Eugene Smith (1918–1978) was stylistically very distinctive, and included compositional references to such biblical scenes as the Lamentation of Christ (fig. 15); it appeared not in the Photographic Essay section, but under the new Pictorial Essay heading (fig. 16) (introduced in 1947), designed by the editors for “the work of the men who both create and record the culture of their times: the artists.”\textsuperscript{41}

A notable outcome, then, of this movement of pressmen from one continent to another was the circulation of their ideas regarding news photography, together with the implementation of those ideas and their necessary adaptation to the North American context. German illustrational practices played a large part in shaping the photographic essay concept as developed in Life between 1937 and 1962, with the aesthetics of the snapshot and the serialization of images becoming standard features of the rhetoric of information. It was in this American setting, too, that the concept of authorship evolved,
The study of the reproduction of images in magazines and the people behind this publication process underscores the ubiquity of photographs that has characterized modern press illustration. These photographs passed from hand to hand and were sufficiently malleable to enable faster and more ample news illustration while also serving the purposes of different discourses. This is why journalistic stances and statements of intent such as the one concerning the photographic essay are indisputable sources of historical information; but their true worth can only be appreciated in light of the actual use to which photographs were put. The study of the pragmatics of visual information also requires an appreciation of the aesthetic character of press images whose history can only dispense with analysis at the risk of
considering them mere windows opening onto the world,\textsuperscript{43} rather than the representations that they are. Brought to light by the examination of their different modes of circulation, the adjustments photographs have undergone and the evolution of their layout over time indicate that the effectiveness of press photographs depends not solely on the conditions of their production but also on their formal aspects, their presentation, and their publication contexts. This means that we must be ready to see these news images not only as vehicles for information, but equally—or maybe above all—as triggers for collective emotion. Published photographs, which enjoyed a wider dissemination than the photographic images by themselves, appear then as inescapable “visual” counterparts to the more consecrated works of the fine-arts tradition.\textsuperscript{44}


6 L’Illustration, Aug. 26, 1843, 404.


10 The inventory of Harper’s Weekly spans January 1861 to December 1865, and the inventory of Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper spans December 1860 to September 1865. They were produced by the author, with the help of Stephanie Hofner, for the exhibition Dispatch: War Photographs in Print, 1854–2008 (Sept. 17–Dec. 7, 2014, Ryerson Image Centre, Toronto).


12 Ibid., 249


14 Copies of this print exist in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and in the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles. The one analyzed for this paper is part of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (reference number 20711.1).


19 Thierry Gervais, “‘The Greatest of War Photographers’: Jimmy Hare, a Photoreporter at the
Turn of the Twentieth Century,” Études photographiques 26 (Nov. 2010): 35-49, from which I am reproducing a few paragraphs here.


21 Collier’s Weekly, Aug. 27, 1904, 12.

22 L’Illustration, Aug. 17, 1904, 136.


29 Henry Luce to Kurt Safranski, Dec. 5, 1956, private collection.


32 Hendrik Neubauer, Black Star: 60 Years of Photojournalism (Cologne, Ger.: Köenemann, 1997).


37 Statistics realized with the help of Elisa Gilmour and Paige Lindsay.


40 See, for example, print BS.2005.071917/43-1887, Ryerson Image Centre, Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada


43 “Photographs opened a window, as it were,” wrote Gisèle Freund in *Photography & Society*, 103.