Visual Literacy and Interculturality: Assessing ‘The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media’ (AIEVM)

Visuell läskunnighet och interkulturalitet: Utvärdering av metoden ‘Interkulturella mötens självbiografi genom visuella medier’ (AIEVM)

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Abstract

This study examines the intersection of visual literacy and interculturality, exploring how visual media can serve as a tool for understanding and navigating intercultural encounters. In a contemporary world oversaturated with images, where discerning between realistic and manipulated visuals is challenging, and isolated images often lack the power to instigate social change, this essay argues for a critical approach to visual culture and communication. Drawing on interdisciplinary frameworks in visual ethnography, visual anthropology, and critical pedagogy, the paper investigates the transformative potential of participatory visual approaches to enhance intercultural competence and foster social change. While acknowledging the inherent limitations of traditional visual documentation, such as subjectivity and the challenge of representing complex realities, the core argument is that through active, participatory methods, images can be strategically utilized for diverse purposes, significantly increasing visual literacy through dedicated image education. Specifically, it assesses the "Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters Through Visual Media" (AIEVM) as a pedagogical and research instrument, highlighting its capacity to foster self-reflection, facilitate dialogue, and empower individuals to articulate their intercultural experiences. By emphasizing the role of visual arts in education and activism, this work underscores the importance of cultivating visual literacy as a crucial skill for effective intercultural communication in an increasingly visual world.

Keywords: Visual Literacy, Interculturality, Visual Media, Photo Elicitation, Photovoice, Intercultural Competence, Visual Ethnography, Arts-Based Research, Pedagogy, Intercultural Communication

Sammanfattning

Denna studie utforskar skärningspunkten mellan visuell läskunnighet och interkulturalitet, och undersöker hur visuella medier kan fungera som verktyg för att förstå och navigera interkulturella möten. I en samtid övermättad av bilder, där det är svårt att skilja mellan autentiska och manipulerade bilder, och där enskilda bilder ofta saknar kraften att initiera social förändring, argumenterar texten för ett kritiskt förhållningssätt till visuell kultur och kommunikation. Med utgångspunkt i tvärvetenskapliga ramverk från visuell etnografi, visuell antropologi och kritisk pedagogik, undersöker uppsatsen den transformativa potentialen hos deltagande visuella metoder i syfte att öka interkulturell kompetens och främja social förändring. Samtidigt som studien erkänner de inneboende begränsningarna hos traditionell visuell dokumentation, såsom subjektivitet och svårigheten att representera komplexa verkligheter, är huvudargumentet att deltagande metoder kan öka den visuella läskunnigheten. Specifikt undersöks metoden "Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters Through Visual Media" (AIEVM). Uppsatsen belyser dess förmåga att främja självreflektion, underlätta dialog och ge individer möjlighet att artikulera sina interkulturella erfarenheter. Genom att betona de visuella konsternas roll inom utbildning och aktivism, betonar detta arbete betydelsen av visuell läskunnighet för interkulturell kommunikation i en alltmer visuell värld.

Nyckelord: Visuell litteracitet, Interkulturalitet, Visuella medier, Fotoelicitation, Photovoice, Interkulturell kompetens, Visuell etnografi, Konstbaserad forskning, Pedagogik, Interkulturell kommunikation

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> Consciousness alone cannot affect social change; one must act to transform. (Powell & Serriere, 2013, 4)

INTRODUCTION

According to Powell and Serriere (2013), the arts and Visual Culture have transformative potential in shaping social reality and advancing social justice. They offer unique opportunities to challenge societal norms and favor new perspectives on justice and democracy (Powell and Serriere 2013, 3). Drawing also on Greene (1977; 1995) and Dewey (1934), I explore the role of arts as central in democratic participation based on the idea of "wide-awakeness" (Greene 1995). Works of art are not fixed in meaning; their significance is open to various interpretations, depending on the viewer's perspective and the context in which they are viewed. This interpretive process enables individuals to combine imagination with critical perception, thereby envisioning ideals such as freedom, justice, and equality, and motivating action toward achieving them.

Visual Culture amplifies this transformative potential by challenging dominant visual representations and unframing conventional norms of interpretation, i.e., the culturally, historically, and socially shaped frameworks through which images and artworks have traditionally been understood. These norms often limit the range of meanings that art can convey. By disrupting them, Visual Culture encourages new ways of seeing and thinking, disrupting traditional frameworks and enabling more critical and imaginative engagement with visual media (Powell and Serriere 2013).

This study investigates how participatory photography can overcome the limitations of traditional visual documentation in intercultural contexts. It explores how photography can evolve from static representation into a dialogical and educational tool. In this essay, I will explore different image-based methodologies and discuss the potential of photography for engaging with social issues, favoring intercultural literacy, and driving social action. While images-based practices such as traditional photojournalism and documentary photography have always played an invaluable role in documenting reality (Goldberg 1991), uncovering hidden truths (Fidler 1997) and prompting critical reflection, allowing us get to know cultures and realities in parts of the world that otherwise we would not able to see (Newton 2009), with the advent of the new digital era they are no longer strong enough to effect meaningful transformation (Sontag 2003). These practices alone are no longer sufficient to drive significant societal or cultural change. I argue that a photograph, no matter how compelling,

remains static unless it engages viewers in an active understanding, through dialogue and interaction. Images alone are often more effective at triggering emotional responses than fostering deep comprehension (Sontag 2003). As Azoulay (2008) explains, they require narratives—through written, oral, or multimodal means—to convey meaning and catalyze action. While they may prompt compassion and memory, they rarely inspire the kind of transformative engagement that narratives can offer (Sontag 2003). In other words, for pictures to engage in a transformation, they need to be accompanied and enriched by narratives, whether these are conveyed through written words, oral communication, or sounds.

The core research problem guiding this work is how photography can function as an active, participatory, and transformative tool for social and intercultural engagement, rather than a passive form of visual representation. I argue that photography, when integrated into dialogical and reflective frameworks, can enhance critical media literacy, empower marginalized voices, and foster meaningful intercultural encounters.

Theoretically, this study draws from visual culture studies, critical media literacy, and intercultural communication theory, with reference to authors such as Susan Sontag, Ariella Azoulay, Maxine Greene, and John Debes. Methodologically, it takes an interdisciplinary and practice-based approach, drawing on visual ethnography, participatory photography, and arts-based pedagogy.

A crucial theoretical tension framing this work is the debate between Susan Sontag and Ariella Azoulay on the political and ethical implications of photography. Sontag (1977, 2003) critiques photography as a technology of power that can manipulate viewers, fostering passivity and emotional detachment. She argues that images, especially those depicting suffering, risk numbing audiences rather than mobilizing them, potentially reinforcing unequal power dynamics between the observer and the observed. Conversely, Azoulay (2008) conceptualizes photography as a space of citizenship and shared responsibility, where photographs establish a “civil contract,” inviting viewers into active, ethical engagement. This participatory ontology transforms photography from a passive witnessing practice to a dialogical one, capable of shifting power relations and enabling co-constructed meaning. This study aligns with Azoulay’s vision while remaining critically aware of Sontag’s concerns, emphasizing that photography’s transformative potential depends on accompanying dialogical and narrative frameworks that promote active understanding and social action.

While this topic is deeply connected to ongoing global challenges around migration, representation, and cultural misunderstanding, I have chosen to approach education and participation over direct political critique. I am aware that all visual practices carry political implications. In line with Azoulay's (2008) political ontology of photography, I understand participatory photography as inherently political, not in its advocacy or witnessing alone, but in its capacity to shift power relations and promote co-constructed knowledge. Therefore, this essay centres on educational and participatory practices. This orientation informs the pedagogical and intercultural dimensions of the study.

The final section of this essay introduces and applies a specific methodology to a personal photographic project: the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM), developed by the Council of Europe. This visual-reflective tool is designed to enhance critical awareness of media representations and their impact on our understanding of cultural *others.* By applying AIEVM, I demonstrate how improving visual literacy, particularly among youth and adults, can foster intercultural dialogue, challenge stereotypes, and promote ethical engagement with media.

1. BEYOND PHOTOGRAPHY: SEE, NARRATE, CHANGE

Photography is defined as the art, science, and practice of creating durable images by recording light or other electromagnetic radiation, either electronically by means of an image sensor, or chemically by means of a light-sensitive material such as photographic film. It involves capturing visual images by using a camera, which allows light to enter through a lens and be recorded. But what is photography, really? Is it merely a means of recording reality, or does it construct reality as it records it? Can photography be neutral, or is it always embedded in power relations, ways of seeing, and cultural assumptions? What kinds of truths can photography claim to represent? And perhaps most importantly: what can photography do in the world? Can it challenge dominant narratives, empower communities, and act as a catalyst for social change? These are some of the questions that guide this chapter, as I explore photography not only as a technical medium but as a complex cultural and political tool, as it serves multiple purposes, ranging from artistic expression, documentation in fields like journalism and science, to everyday use in capturing personal moments. Photography can be considered a medium with the capacity to communicate, inform, raise awareness about crucial issues, and shape a viewer's perception of a represented reality, whether it concerns people, cultures, or events. Just like historical records and writings, photography can play a crucial role in creating visual historical traces. War photographs, such as those from Vietnam

or the Spanish Civil War, have shaped collective memory and visual historiography (Griffin 2010).

Photography has also been used over the years to express both force and counterforce in colonial societies. In the context of conquest or exploration, photography can become a gesture of domination, a force in action contiguous to other types of coercion. In the context of European expansionism, photography became an instrument of colonial inclusion as a material vehicle for expressing violence and controlling bodies (Foliard 2022). Photography is also widely used in social sciences, for exploring both distant cultures and overlooked aspects of one's own society (Pink 2007). Particularly in recent decades, photography has been increasingly used in social justice projects. Visual methods such as Photovoice involve participants in taking photographs and reflecting on their meanings, giving them an active role in the research process (Wang and Burris 1997). Other approaches use pre-existing photographs as starting points for discussion or analysis, aiming to center lived experience and amplify voices that are often marginalized. Photography, then, is not merely a passive act of representation. It is an active medium of narration, capable of documenting, challenging, and transforming social realities. Its role shifts depending on who wields the camera, in what context, and with what intention. In this sense, photography can indeed be a tool not only for information and memorization, but also for communication and potentially for social change, especially when embedded in participatory and critical frameworks. This participatory dimension of photography leads to the next chapter, where I will explore the field of visual ethnography. If photography can function as a means of narrating social realities, visual ethnography provides the methodological and theoretical framework within which such narration becomes situated, intentional, and reflexive. The turn toward ethnographic practice is thus a logical continuation of this chapter: from understanding what photography can do, to how it has been methodologically employed in the study of culture, power, and representation.

2. VISUALITY & SOCIAL SCIENCES: FRAMEWORKS AND METHODOLOGIES

2.1 VISUAL ETHNOGRAPHY: A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Historically tied to anthropology, ethnography as a research method relied on photos and detailed observations to generate insights about *other* cultures worldwide. Its goal has often been to document and describe the social practices, values, and cultural behaviors of non-western cultures (Barrantes-Elizondo 2019; Erickson 2018). This approach originates from nineteenth-century European colonialism, when missionaries, travelers, and explorers portrayed these societies as primitive (Kazubowski-Houston and Magnat 2018). Ethnographers of the time described their work as "writing about people," producing detailed accounts of local cultures, often in colonial contexts (Erickson 2018). From a Western standpoint, anthropology used ethnography to objectively analyze non-Western, Indigenous, and American Indian populations, presenting them through a European male perspective. For instance, under nineteenth-century British imperialism, photography became a colonial tool for categorizing *other* cultures, reflecting Eurocentric ways of understanding the world. European ethnographers viewed the o*ther* as different, often inferior, to Western culture, and this was especially pronounced in visual representations, where ethnographers depicted non-Western groups as savage or uncivilized. The audiences for these early ethnographic studies were mainly academic or elite circles in Europe, and the findings often reinforced ideas of racial and cultural hierarchy, positioning *whiteness* as superior. From the mid-1900s, ethnography evolved into what became known as "salvage anthropology," using tools like photography and video to document cultures perceived as endangered by colonial influence. The rise of visual sociology in the 1960s introduced methods such as photo-elicitation to explore lived experiences from within participants' own cultural contexts. In the 1980s, a participatory and reflexive turn challenged positivist models and questioned the authority of the ethnographer. This postmodern critique exposed the colonial and Western-centric lens of earlier ethnography, emphasizing how race, class, gender, and whiteness shaped representations of otherness. By the 1990s, critical and constructivist approaches gained prominence, encouraging collaboration with participants and promoting more ethical, socially engaged research.

In today's research landscape, visual ethnography has evolved into an approach that destabilizes the colonial authority of the researcher by creating collaborations with the participants and integrating visual materials like photography and film (Pink 2007, 2013). Rather than imposing external interpretations, visual ethnographers now center participants'

perspectives and narratives, situating them within their own cultural contexts. This shift represents a commitment to social justice, as it enables researchers to explore practices, values, and identities using visual and multisensory tools. Visual ethnography of decolonization thus aims to challenge traditional views of *other*, promoting cultural diversity and imaginative expression. Researchers use visuals as cultural probes, favoring spaces where participants can co-create meaning and develop nuanced, context-specific narratives that resonate within their communities (Becker 2013). By incorporating visuals with text, visual ethnography allows researchers to capture nuanced social realities and their complexity. In recent years, the field of ethnography has expanded to incorporate multisensory approaches that go beyond visual data collection (Pink 2014). If traditionally visual ethnography has focused on the use of visual data as a primary source of information, a more recent multisensory approach calls for the inclusion of other sensory modes to fully engage with the lived experiences of individuals in their daily lives.

In the context of decolonizing ethnographic practices, visual ethnography challenges the dominance of "ocular centrism," or the overemphasis on vision as the primary mode of knowledge production. Moving away from these visual-centric methodologies is essential for capturing alternative ways of knowing and representing the embodied experiences of marginalized groups. Visual ethnography that adopts a decolonial stance examines the embodiment of marginalized groups, focusing on how cultural practices are intricately linked to the sensory and spatial dimensions of place.

Ethnographers must position themselves within the research context, not only observing but also actively engaging with the daily practices and cultures of the research participants. This active engagement allows researchers to become attuned to the lived experiences of individuals, providing a richer understanding of how cultural practices are enacted and performed in real time. By integrating visual methods, ethnographers can document these practices in a way that respects and reflects the participants' embodied experiences. The researcher's own embodied presence in the research environment is integral to understanding how the participants' lives are shaped by and contribute to the spaces that they inhabit. Visual ethnography, therefore, becomes a "place-making process" (Pink 2008) focusing on shared practices, such as photographing, walking, observing, and interacting, to capture the lived experiences of participants in a more holistic and situated manner. In this way, visual ethnography demands a commitment to collaboration, reflexivity, and a deep understanding of how marginalized individuals both shape and are shaped by the spaces they inhabit (Azzarito 2023).

Having explored ethnography as a foundational methodological and epistemological approach, it is now important to consider how broader perspectives on visual meaning-making can inform my research. Visual media, such as photography and video, have become integral to ethnographic work, not only as tools of documentation, but also as epistemological frameworks. This shift marks a move from text-based analysis to a more sensory and multimodal approach, where the focus is not merely on what photos represent, but how they narrate, shape, and are shaped by the context, relationships, and emotions involved. Building on this, the following chapter, will explore how different disciplines within the social sciences have approached visuality, examining how their approaches can deeper our understanding of photography as both a research method and a communicative practice.

2.2 MULTIMODALITY AMONG VISUAL METHODOLOGIES

During the 1990s, the debate about the relationship between anthropology and cultural studies deepened. A merging of new perspectives emphasized that anthropology cannot dismiss the contribution of cultural studies, especially crucial for disciplines such as ethnography that employ visual media. This shift is closely connected to the concept of multimodality, which recognizes that meaning is created through the interaction of multiple semiotic modes, such as visual, verbal, spatial, and performative elements, rather than through single modes in isolation (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001). Thus, objects, images, texts, and performances are not only studied as isolated artifacts but as part of complex networks of communication that reflect and shape people's identities and social relationships (Harvey 1996).

Rather than simply analyzing social behavior or treating cultural objects as written texts, the focus has shifted toward understanding how diverse narratives, spoken, visual, or performed, gain significance through their interrelation with lived experiences and interpersonal connections. Visual media like photography and video have become integral to ethnographic work, serving simultaneously as research tools and objects of analysis. Furthermore, these technologies have become key topics in fields such as visual anthropology and media studies, fostering a growing dialogue between ethnography and the arts.

Scholars like Da Silva and Pink (2004), and Coover (2004) demonstrate how ethnographic approaches can inform photographic and hypermedia practices, while photographers increasingly adopt ethnographic perspectives in their creative processes. This interdisciplinary exchange enriches anthropological understandings of representation and enhances the analytical potential of visual methodologies. In contrast, sociological

approaches to visual ethnography have been somewhat slower to incorporate interdisciplinary influences, though many visual sociologists integrate scientific principles treating visual data as part of experimental sociology (Grady 1996; Prosser & Schwartz 1998).

2.2.1 VISUAL ANTRHOPOLOGY & VISUAL SOCIOLOGY

As previously mentioned, the entire 20th century was marked by a debate centered on whether photography and video could serve as rigorous tools for social science. Critics argued that visual methods were too subjective and, for this reason, lacked systematic precision. In the 1980's James Clifford, above all, argued that all ethnographic work, including visual methods, constructs "partial truths" rather than objective realities. This critique represented a turning point for the debate, encouraging an acknowledgment of the subjective nature of both written and visual representations. After that, ethnographers like David and Judith MacDougall, for example, used reflexive filmmaking to explore how meaning is co-constructed between anthropologists and their subjects. By the 1990s, there's been a shift from scientific realism to considering the broader conceptual possibilities of visual methods. David MacDougall (1997) proposed that anthropology could benefit from adopting "image-and-sequence-based" thinking, challenging the discipline's reliance on textual forms. This period also saw the rise of new literature exploring the intersections of photography, film, and ethnography, further establishing visual anthropology as a legitimate field. In the early 2000s, advancements in technology, such as digital video and hypermedia, expanded the scope of visual anthropology. These tools enabled innovative practices, from multimedia ethnographic representations to applied visual methods. Visual anthropologists began engaging with contemporary debates about how visual media interect with other sensory experiences and cultural narratives. In the 21st century, while visual methods are now widely accepted, their integration into mainstream anthropological discourse remains a work in progress (Pink 2007). Today, visual anthropology as a field of practice is mostly made by videos, while (usually historical) pictures are mostly used as analytical enquiries.

Photography and sociology, as explained by Becker, were born on the same day, and their paths of growth have intertwined throughout history to some extent sharing the same focus on social inquiry. Photographers have historically navigated dual roles as artists and social documentarians, producing works ranging from commercial advertisements to artistic creations for galleries, as well as capturing sociopolitical movements like the civil rights movement of the 1960s or contemporary social problems to give voice to, such as immigration, poverty, race. In sociology, visual methods gained prominence in the mid-20th century, particularly for observing and recording everyday life and social phenomena that

often elude perception due to their dynamic or "invisible" nature. The incorporation of visual data helped establish the qualitative dimension of sociological research as a scientifically credible field, traditionally overshadowed by quantitative approaches. This happened in the late 60s and 70s, when functionalism was challenged by conflict theory (Harper 2016). Social photography, emerging in the late 19th-century in Britain and later flourishing in the 1930s in America, exemplifies the use of visual media to document everyday realities and social conditions. Similarly, social documentary cinema, pioneered by Norman Grierson in 1930s in Britain and further developed in Canada, established itself as a significant tool for representing social life. These developments have enriched anthropological and sociological research, sparked epistemological debates and underscored the educational value of visual methods (Farnè 2017). There is a connection between visual sociology and documentary photography, but they are distinct disciplines. In 1974, Becker noted how the two disciplines have similar subjects and employ comparable methods, but they maintain different outcomes. One side, documentary work relies on impactful images or narratives, while sociology involves a process of investigation grounded in social theory (Becker 1974).

2.2.2 VISUAL ARTS & ACTIVISM: DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY AND PHOTOJOURNALISM

> Activists can't separate photography and politics. An activist's magnetic truth north doesn't point north exactly; it points to the wrongs that need to be righted. (Bogre 2012, 7)

To understand the political and transformative currency of photographic methods, we must stay with and explore the documentary tradition in photography and photojournalism. These practices have historically played a central role in shaping public discourse and visualizing forms of social injustice. From their inception, they have aimed not only to represent reality, but to provoke emotional and political engagement; to educate, persuade, and sometimes disturb. In this section, I examine how documentary photography and photojournalism have evolved as tools of both representation and activism. Tracing the origins and transformations of photography from early war photography to contemporary digital media enables a deeper understanding of its capacity to serve as a communicative and interventionist method in research and beyond. The term "documentary" was introduced by John Grierson in a review written for the New York Sun in 1926 and defined as 'the creative treatment of actuality'

(Hardy 1966). From the Latin “docere”, *to teach,* the intention behind it is not only informing but also educating the audience, engaging them on a deeper level. Documentary photography as a genre started in the 1930s, aiming to capture realities that the majority of people would never have the chance to experience firsthand. Often combining factual representation with emotional resonance, it always pursued a “truth” in storytelling. The documentary Umbrella encompasses a diverse range of practices, including landscape photography, architectural documentation, ethnographic studies, street photography, war photography, and even crime-scene imagery.

Famous documentary photographers like Sebastiao Salgado view their work as a form of activism, using photography to communicate about human rights issues and provoke debate. In an interview conducted by Ken Light (2010), he states, "Everything that happens in the world must be shown and people around the world must have an idea of what's happening to the other people around the world. I believe this is the function of the vector that the documentary photographer must have, to show one person's existence to another. [...] The most interesting function of this kind of photography is exactly this: to show and to provoke debate and to see how we can go ahead with our lives. The photographer must participate in this debate. [...] Documentary photographers have a slice of the responsibility; they must provoke a discussion." (Salgado in Light 2010, 111)

Unlike traditional documentary photography, which often focuses on identity and memory, activist photography aims, by definition, to inspire action and engage with social problems directly, not just highlighting the problems but also pushing for solutions. The camera has then a power that goes beyond simply evoking emotional reactions in the viewers and has to do with shaping the representation of situations, historical moments and people involved. The power of photography is not only represented by the act of the photographer to press a recording button in front of a scene, but also by the purpose, which is to capture and spread to the public eye what is happening. The cameras have the power to shape how a subject is portrayed, either positively or negatively, and while this feature is common to all types of photography, it is amplified in photojournalism due to the outcome, which is the institutional authority of the press and its wide audience. (Good and Lowe 2020).

The first use of a photograph for journalistic purposes dates to the Crimean War in 1855 and has to be connected to Roger Fenton, a photographer travelling from America to Crimea to document the war. In the early 20th century, Lewis Hine pioneered the use of photography for social reform, notably in campaigns against child labor. The field advanced significantly in 1935 when the Associated Press began transmitting photographs via wire, enabling images

to accompany written news in real time. By 1999, the adoption of digital cameras became widespread among journalists, revolutionizing the speed and efficiency of photojournalism. War photography belongs to activist photography, as in the form of Photojournalism. Since its inception, it has carried an inherent activist message by making the realities of war accessible to civilian audiences. The advent of war photography shifted perceptions of war from heroic to starkly realistic, influencing public opinion. When digital technology emerged in the 1980s, many photojournalists struggled to foresee the dramatic shift in image-making that would take place by then. Initially, they continued to use film, converting processed film into digital images for distribution; then the high price of early digital cameras and the difficulty of switching entire news operations to digital initially slowed down its widespread use. Gradually, production costs became more affordable; newspapers often provided cameras on loan to photographers. Some photojournalists showed resistance to the digital shift, and kept on working with film and paper, but most photographers began to adapt to the change, leading to what Dennis Dunleavy describes as the "age of the instant," where moments are captured and viewed instantly on camera screens, and immediately transmitted and published (Dunleavy 2007). The rise of digital technology and social media in the late 20th century has transformed the industry even more. Still photographs are now combined with other tools, such as video, audio, and multimedia presentations to adapt to the spread of the news across multiple platforms. While social media provides new opportunities for distribution, they also threaten traditional roles by allowing amateurs to contribute content at lower costs. The belief that anyone can be a journalist or photojournalist discredits the fundamental values of objectivity, neutrality, and a mechanistic worldview behind the new *visual journalism.* Moreover, the diffusion of editing software has increased photo manipulation consistently leading to a gradual loss of credibility in the profession by the public. Readers no longer trust everything they see because with the rise of the web and computers, images are no longer static; they can be altered, manipulated, and are "malleable, changeable, fluid" (Long 1999). As digital photography increased, many media commentators began to declare that photojournalism was on the verge of extinction. A 1999 UNESCO Courier article even posed the question in its title: "Photojournalism: the last lap?" (Roskis 1999).

2.3 SUBJECTIVITY, IMMOBILITY AND LACK OF SOLUTIONS: THE LIMITS OF VISUAL DOCUMENTING

> Although the camera is an observation station, the act of photographing is more than passive observing. Like sexual voyeurism, it is a way of at least tacitly, often explicitly, encouraging whatever is going on to keep on happening. To take a picture

> is to have an interest in things as they are, in the status quo remaining unchanged (at least for as long as it takes to get a 'good' picture), to be in complicity with whatever makes a subject interesting, worth photographing including, when that is the interest, another person's pain or misfortune. (Sontag 1977, 12)

> Harrowing photographs do not inevitably lose their power to shock. But they are not much help if the task is to understand. Narratives make us understand. Photographs do something else: they haunt us. (Sontag 2003, 89)

Institutions like the Duke Center for Documentary Studies claim that documentary work fosters progressive change and justice. While well-intentioned, this perspective underestimates the ethical complexities inherent in the medium. I argue that documentary and photojournalistic domains often unintentionally propose a selective frame of a matter and permeated with cultural biases. Theorists including Abigail Solomon-Godeau, Martha Rosler, Sally Stein, and Susan Sontag, have largely challenged the essentialist view of documentary photography. They argue that photographs don't naturally belong to the category of documentary, because of some intrinsic qualities or the photographer's intent; all photographs can be documentary because they represent reality to some extent, since they capture something was happening in front of the camera in a specific moment. The focus needs to be on how photographs are used. However, some documentary photographs reinforce dominant ideologies, upholding rather than questioning power structures (Harper 2012). Authors such as Rosler (1989) argued that documentary photography often transfers images of powerless people to privileged audiences, who view them with a sense of superiority. This reinforces power imbalances and promotes exoticism, tourism, and self-serving career goals rather than change. Further criticisms also describe this dynamic as visual colonialism, especially in depictions of foreign cultures, reinforcing power imbalances between photographer and subject (Bogre 2024). Photographs are never neutral and for this reason can hardly serve as objective records of truth: images are covered with symbolism and shaped by the photographer's intent, background as well as by technical choices, such as framing, composition and lighting. Even though photographs capture reality, they are also filtered through the viewer's subjectivity. As Lewis Hine observed, "While photographs may not lie, liars may photograph." (Hine 1909, 357)

David Campbell, Director of Communications at World Press Photo, in the article "Why It's Time for Visual Journalism to Include a Solutions Focus," published in 2018, argues for a solutions-oriented approach in photojournalism. This approach moves beyond simply documenting problems to explore and believes the field can achieve greater audience

engagement and promote meaningful action. Campbell emphasizes the idea that while photographs alone cannot change the world, they can draw attention to underreported stories and amplify diverse perspectives, but advocates for something more. This approach frames communities as active agents rather than passive victims, helping to build empathy and sustained engagement. Campbell also critiques the general journalism's tendency to focus on negative news, a pattern reinforced by audience behaviors such as n*egativity bias*, which draws people to bad news even though it can leave them feeling helpless and bring to disengagement and criticism.

On the other hand, integrating solutions-focused perspectives into visual journalism could help to reframe marginalized communities as active agents of change rather than passive victims. This shift not only engages marginalized communities but also helps readers connect more deeply with stories, facilitating longer-lasting discussions and reducing polarization. Documentary and photojournalistic practices are also conditioned by other factors, such as institutional pressure, the audience's expectations, and marketability. As Harper notes, for a documentary to succeed, it must pass through cultural gatekeepers and appeal to audiences. This often leads to the selection of visually impactful images at the expense of authenticity. On a large scale, this has also an influence on how a story is told and framed (Harper 2012). What emerges from this reflection is a certain immobility of photography as a tool for social justice in contemporary society. The issue I am seeking to address in this thesis is that nowadays traditional disciplines that uses visual material in their methodology, such as documentary photography, photojournalism, visual anthropology, and social anthropology, are either obsolete or solely useful to inform, but they can hardly foster social change. The reason why this is relevant in an intercultural context is that documentary photography and visual journalism are often used to depict intercultural encounters, differences, and conflicts – and thus become powerful mediators of how we perceive the other. In other words, the visual representation of interculturality is itself conditioned by many of the structural limitations discussed above. Images that aim to inform about cultural differences can end up exoticizing, essentializing, or reinforcing dominant perspectives. Even photographs with activist intent may fail to move viewers beyond curiosity

One of the reasons why is the phenomenon of overexposure (Sontag 2003) and desensitization; "the shock of photographed atrocities wears off with repeated viewing [and] does not necessarily strengthen conscience and the ability to be compassionate" (Sontag 1977, 20). The sheer volume of images of suffering in modern media has desensitized viewers, making them less likely to take action. The web is overflowing with photographs of

every kind, to the point that our eyes have become accustomed to seeing visual representations of violence juxtaposed with fashion contents and self-care suggestions. Violence is normal, far from us, an external and too wide phenomenon we don't have power to change, or we can't empathize with. So, we are passive auditors, unmoved even in the face of cruelty. In my view, even reportage photography, which once had the potential to be effective, is no longer impactful on a large scale. This is where interculturality becomes central to my project; photographic representations of otherness often intersect with global inequalities and colonial legacies, shaping how we relate to difference. Thus, restoring the critical potential of photography also means rethinking how visual media can support intercultural dialogue. How to restore an active and meaningful role to the visual arts, and specifically to photography, in raising awareness among its audience? How to make photography a useful tool to provoke minds, spark doubt, and inspire action?

Drawing on Sontag's distinction between understanding and haunting (Sontag, 2003), i.e., between the cognitive engagement and the emotional impact, I argue that photographs often only haunt the audience, provoking unreflective feelings, which can paralyze rather than engage in critical thinking, but when paired with captions, contexts, and narratives, they can transcend their emotional impact to inspire reflection, rational thought, and moral action. Narratives then assume a crucial role in transforming a viewer's affective response into an actual engagement. Moreover, some visual methods today adopt participatory and dialogic approaches, where subjects become co-creators of meaning. This shift opens a space where photography can become both a method of representation and a tool for intercultural encounters. Hence, in the following chapters, I will present and critically analyze certain visual methodologies that I consider effective in fostering audience engagement at the micro level and contributing to social change at the macro level, especially when they challenge dominant visual narratives and involve collaborative processes.

3. REFRAMING INTERCULTURALITY THROUGH VISUAL ARTS

3.1 COMMUNICATION, INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AND VISUAL LITERACY

Intercultural competence has become increasingly essential in various global contexts, especially in education and work settings, where people often interact across cultural boundaries. While multiculturalism refers to the coexistence of different cultures, encompassing racial, religious, and cultural groups, which manifest through behaviors, values, and communication styles, interculturalism, on the other hand, is a dynamic concept

referring to evolving relationships between groups belonging to different cultural backgrounds. Unlike multiculturalism, which focuses on coexistence, interculturality emphasizes interaction and dialogue at local, regional, national, and international levels.

In this context, a crucial role is played by intercultural communication. Communication is the process of transmitting information, ideas, feelings, and knowledge through symbols, words, images, and figures. It is an exchange of meanings (Solomon, Olufemi, and James 2012), a social process that enables individuals in a society to share ideas and emotions (Pate and Dauda 2015). Regardless of the form it take, communication aims to transfer meaning between a source and a receiver, expecting feedback in return. Communication and culture are strictly connected, where with culture we mean a system of learned group-related perceptions, including verbal and nonverbal language, attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors that are collectively accepted and expected (Zou, Wildschut, Cable, and Sedikides 2018). "Culture is communication and communication is culture; culture not only dictates who talks to whom, about what, and how the communication proceeds, it also helps to determine how people encode messages, the meanings they have for messages, and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted" (Hall 1959, 186).

Intercultural communication occurs when individuals or groups belonging to different cultures meet and exchange values and meanings (Cucoş 2001). These exchanges may be implicit, unconscious, or intentional, and they unfold through verbal and non-verbal channels. The process is inherently complex, gradual, and situated. Effective intercultural communication requires more than cultural awareness; it demands a deep respect for, and preservation of, diverse cultural values, including one's own and those of others. When effectively practiced, intercultural communication improves mutual understanding of individual and collective identities, strengthens interpersonal relationships, mitigates conflict and mistrust, and ultimately enhances cultural and social cohesion (Argyriadis, Argyriadi, and Drakopoulou 2023)

This communicative process is supported by intercultural competence, which encompasses the capacity to navigate cultural differences ethically and effectively. Intercultural communication relies on intercultural literacy, and at the same time, intercultural literacy grows through intercultural communication, in an ongoing process where both continuously shape and enhance each other. The more efficient our intercultural communication is, the more our intercultural competences improve and vice versa. The more we improve our intercultural competences, the more efficient our communication will be. I argue that visual

arts, and consequently visual education, represents an intercultural encounter, which can enhance and facilitate intercultural communication, towards an improved intercultural competence.

3.2 EDUCATING VISUAL LITERACY

> Visual Literacy refers to a group of vision-competencies a human being can develop by seeing and at the same time having and integrating other sensory experiences. The development of these competencies is fundamental to normal human learning. When developed, they enable a visually literate person to discriminate and interpret the visible actions, objects, symbols, natural or man-made, that he encounters in his environment. Through the creative use of these competencies, he is able to communicate with others. Through the appreciative use of these competencies, he is able to comprehend and enjoy the masterworks of visual communication. (Fransecky and Debes 1972, 9)

Visual literacy refers to a set of skills that individuals develop through the act of seeing, combined with other sensory experiences. These skills are essential for learning, allowing individuals to interpret, analyze, and communicate visual information effectively. Visual literacy is fundamental especially in the 21st-century, with the rise of digital media. It is closely linked to multimodal literacy, which recognizes that communication today happens through multiple formats (text, image, video, sound, etc.). Being visually literate means understanding how images are created and interpreted. Similar to language literacy, visual literacy involves both decoding (understanding existing images) and encoding (creating meaningful images). It includes recognizing elements like color, light, perspective, body language, and composition, which shape how an image is understood. Interpreting visuals also requires considering social, cultural, and historical contexts, as well as evaluating the accuracy and purpose of an image. A visually literate person can recognize and understand visual elements and use them creatively to express ideas and communicate with others. Additionally, visual literacy enhances one's ability to appreciate and critically engage with visual media, from artworks to everyday imagery. Essentially, a visually literate individual can “read” and “write” in visual language, much like a verbally literate person does with words. This means they can interpret images, create visual compositions, and translate between visual and verbal communication. Moreover, they understand the fundamental structures of visual language, much like grammar in written language, and develop critical awareness of visual messages. The growing presence of visual media, such as television, film, advertising, and digital platforms, has made it crucial to understand how images shape perception and meaning. Just as verbal language follows grammatical rules, visual language

follows its structure. Scholars like Noam Chomsky and Charles Carpenter Fries have explored the parallels between linguistic structures and visual communication, demonstrating how images can be "read" and "constructed" with intentional meaning. Visual language exists in both spoken and written forms. Spoken visual language includes body language, gestures, and facial expressions, used consciously or unconsciously to convey messages. Written visual language includes photographs, films, and other recorded visual media. Both forms rely on core components, like those found in verbal sentences. In education, visual literacy goes beyond simply exposing students to images. Unlike traditional audiovisual approaches that focus on transmitting information through visual media, visual literacy emphasizes active engagement. It empowers both teachers and students to critically analyze and create visual messages, implementing a deeper understanding of how images function as a powerful mode of communication in today's visually saturated world (Fransecky and Debes 1972). Visual literacy is, then, important for critical thinking, as it helps individuals recognize manipulation, bias, and misinformation in images. Research shows that students often struggle with deep analysis of visuals, treating them as simple illustrations rather than complex sources of meaning. To improve visual literacy, educators should teach students not just through images, but about images, helping them analyze and discuss visuals with the same depth they apply to written texts.

3.3 ARTS AS INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTER

Since culture is often expressed visually through photographs, films, advertisements, and artworks, visual literacy plays a crucial role in understanding cultural perspectives. Both visual literacy and intercultural literacy emphasize critical thinking and encourage questioning assumptions. Intercultural literacy can be defined as the set of skills, attitudes, language abilities, and identities that enable effective participation in cross-cultural environments. Being interculturally visually literate allows individuals to analyze how images shape cultural identities, influence perceptions of the *other,* and even reinforce or challenge stereotypes. When people engage critically with images from different cultures, they develop greater cultural awareness and empathy. Artistic and visual projects can encourage intercultural dialogue by allowing individuals to express their own cultural experiences visually and interpret those of others. This approach helps build transcultural identities, where people develop a sense of belonging beyond their own cultural background.

4. COLLABORATION IN IMAGE-BASED METHODS: NEW TOOLS FOR EMPOWERMENT, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

This chapter will delve into the potential of visual methods in research to uncover and amplify the experiences of individuals from marginalized identities, by inviting them to actively participate in the process. If it's true that the way we see things is shaped by what we know (Berger 1977), the visual can be positioned as a powerful tool for representing silenced voices and exploring the complexities of lived experiences. Encompassing photos, videos, drawings, collages, and media texts, creative visual approaches can offer participants the opportunity to construct meaningful representations of their experiences, facilitating self-reflection and cultural relevance (Gauntlett and Holzwarth 2006). These methods can access aspects of life that may resist traditional language-based approaches, enabling participants to reframe scenarios and exercise agency. To understand the methodological and ethical foundations of my proposed framework—AIEVM—it is essential to first explore how collaboration plays a central role in today's image-based research practices. The following chapters offer a structured overview of key participatory and pedagogical tools that reimagine the role of both the image and the subject in research: photo elicitation, participatory visual research, and image-based pedagogies. These approaches foreground co-creation, reflexivity, and dialogue, marking a shift from extractive modes of knowledge production to more horizontal and inclusive research practices. By setting up my analysis within these traditions, I aim to clarify the methodological roots and epistemological commitments of AIEVM. The reader is therefore invited to engage with this chapter not only as a survey of techniques, but as a necessary foundation for understanding the collaborative, ethical, and critical dimensions that will shape the next chapter's proposal.

4.1 VISUAL ELICITATION

Photo-elicitation is a method "based on the single idea of inserting a photograph into a research interview" (Harper 2002,13), founded by Collier and Collier's (1986) during their anthropological work on the impact of environmental factors on community members' mental health (Azzarito 2010). This decision was made because photographs, when included in the interview process, could both help to dive into the researcher's research interest and could explore human lives, social interactions and culture in a deeper way, since they "are charged with unexpected emotional material that triggers intense feeling and divulge truth" (Collier and Collier 1986). As a matter of fact, the images used in photo-elicitation act as

memory anchors, helping participants reflect on and narrate their daily experiences more deeply and meaningfully. They function as neutral intermediaries that ground the interview in shared visual references, effectively bridging the perspectives of researchers and participants. This creates a collaborative and reflexive space where memories, emotions, and personal stories can be shared. Additionally, visual stimuli can trigger unconscious responses, sparking discussions that delve into aspects of participants' lives that are difficult to express in words. Photo-elicitation has gained widespread popularity across numerous academic disciplines due to its effectiveness in amplifying participants' voices. It has been successfully employed in diverse fields such as mental health, family studies, community research, identity exploration, cultural studies, education, public health, psychology, marketing, sports, history, and beyond (Lapenta 2011).

Since Collier's original use of the methodology, more recent variants of photo-elicitation have been introduced, and generally they involve participants more, asking them not only to produce but also to interpret the pictures. Recently, there has been increasing interest in *collaborative production methods*, which emphasize positioning participants as storytellers by enabling them to produce photographs that authentically and creatively represent their own experiences. Unlike traditional photo-elicitation, where researchers control image production, these participatory approaches involve either participant-generated images or the coproduction of images by both researchers and participants. This shift toward more collaborative methods reduces power imbalances and enhances participant agency, allowing them to actively shape how their experiences are documented and communicated. These approaches, often termed reflexive photography or auto-driven methods, prioritize participant empowerment and voice. By enabling participants to produce or select images themselves, they amplify personal perspectives while fostering a richer, more participatory research process. When researchers and participants collaborate to create images, participants gain greater influence over what they wish to express, articulating their narratives in culturally resonant ways. Rather than controlling the research narrative, the researcher acts as a facilitator, supporting participants in exploring and documenting their lived experiences under conditions that they define. This methodology not only enhances agency but also deepens the authenticity and relevance of the visual representations produced. Lately, Photo-elicitation has been proposed as an innovative research method, recognizing its importance in amplifying the voice of individuals from traditionally marginalized communities (Azzarito 2010).

4.2 PARTICIPATORY VISUAL RESEARCH

Participatory Visual Research (PVR) represents a qualitative method embraced by activists, educators, and researchers in action-oriented projects. Its core purpose is to empower participants to investigate, confront, and challenge social inequalities. Departing from traditional qualitative methods of participatory action research (PAR), prioritizes visual approaches, such as photography, film, documentaries as central data sources. PVR allows participants to use images to share and communicate their lived experiences by visually representing the spaces in which their lives unfold (Azzarito 2010). These visual representations are crucial not only because they grant researchers access to personal or private spaces that might otherwise remain unseen but also because they enable the articulation of experiences in spatial terms, highlighting the significance of where events occur. Participatory photography directly engages with the socio-spatial dimensions of people's lives, offering deeper insights into how lived spaces shape and are shaped by human experiences. Through this reflective act of looking and creating, participatory photography can be a transformative tool, enabling participants to explore and challenge the power dynamics within their contexts. By capturing and presenting these socio-spatial realities, photography not only communicates experiences but also serves as a medium for deeper understanding and potential social change (Winton 2016).

4.2.1 PHOTOVOICE

Photovoice is a methodology developed by Caroline Wang and Mary Ann Burris in the 1990s. It is considered a participatory action research methodology because it integrates photography into participatory action research, allowing participants to lead the research process and narrate their everyday life experience (Foster-Fishman 2005). Specifically, participatory photography engages individuals belonging to often marginalized communities, equips them with cameras, and invites them to express their viewpoints about different topics through visual storytelling. Participants are highly encouraged to take an active role in the research process: they document their surroundings and then engage in discussions about the image they produce. These discussions often culminate in a public sharing of photographs. In the process, the researchers are usually only facilitators. Their role is mainly motivating participants to work collaboratively and guiding participants in critically analyzing the social and political contexts captured in their photographs (Wang and Burris 1997). The five core principles of the Photovoice method, as declared in the Photovoice Statement of Ethical Practice (2023, 10), are: choice, creativity, partnership, sustainability and cultural sensitivity.

The first principle refers to the clear choice that participants are provided with about the content of their work and the direction of the project. The second principle regards the importance of creativity, which is individual, and always needs to be motivated as it represents the core of the activities. Then, Photovoice's partnership with other organizations and a network of experts, essential for the method to be successful. One crucial aspect regards sustainability and the environmental impact; Photovoice creates sustainable projects with formed and available staff and training, at the same time trying to contain the impact on the environment. Finally, attention towards sensitivity; every project is built on cultural sensitivity principles, and makes sure the context, the behavior, the language and image contents are always appropriate.

Terminology is carefully considered to ensure respect and inclusivity. For example, words like "empowerment," "vulnerable," or "hard-to-reach" are avoided to prevent reinforcing power imbalances or negative connotations. Instead, terms like "underrepresented voices" and "issue-affected groups" are used, emphasizing sensitivity to individual and group identities. The steps for conducting a photovoice study can be flexible based on each project's purpose and context: identify and engage a target audience, such as policymakers or community influencers, assemble a group of individuals to participate in the Photovoice project, which usually should be between seven and ten, introduce the Photovoice approach to participants and guide a collective discussion, ensure participants provide informed consent, propose an initial topic or theme for photography, distribute cameras to participants and provide instructions on their use, allow participants ample time to capture photographs, convene to analyze and discuss the photographs together, collaborate with participants to design a format for presenting photographs and narratives to policymakers or community influencers (Wang and Burris 1997). The first meeting is usually operational: participants have introduced one another and given instructions about the methodology of Photovoice, comprehension of risks, ethics and responsibilities. Then, the researcher usually chooses a general topic, inviting the participants to choose a specific problem to address related to it. The decision is a brainstorming process, where the participants collaborate and decide together. Then, introductory training sessions are provided to show the participants the basic functions of the camera. A range of camera types can be employed in the projects, such as disposable, polaroid, film and digital camera; however, since the focus of the projects is on the meaning behind the images rather than their technical quality, the trainings mostly focus on how to frame and compose an image to convey a specific and desired narrative, and how to evoke specific reactions in the audience. The amount of time spent taking pictures can vary

for each project and depends on the availability of participants and photographed people and the issue addressed. Generally, projects last between a few days and some weeks. When the shooting time is over, the participants meet and discuss the photographs. Each participant usually shares their images and the stories behind them with the group. As already anticipated, the focus of Photovoice is the interpretation of photographs rather than their aesthetic aspect, so this phase is crucial because it allows for a critical dialogue and enables understanding of the participant's point of view on the general topic.

This process's execution depends on the project. Wang and Burris, for example, use a specific technique called "SHOWeD", which is based on questions that the participants must answer: what do you See there? What is really Happening here? How does this relate to Our lives? Why does this relate to Our lives? Why does the situation, concern or strength exist? What can we Do about it? (Wang 1999). After the sharing moment, the group starts with a data analysis. Helped by the facilitator, the participants discuss the content of the photographs, and since Photovoice is action-oriented research, the findings are codified as issues to address. In this phase, both individual' and multiple group narratives are considered. Before presenting the findings to an audience, an important step consists of identifying and selecting a target. The audience may include both peers and the public, but also people holding enough power to facilitate political discussions: local politicians, school administrators, officials, or media outlets. There might be a last step, which contemplates an exhibition to share photographs and the stories with a larger audience, sometimes followed by a public talk where participants can answer questions about the project (Sutton-Brown 2015). Today, photovoice projects are no longer limited to the UK but have also become international. Moreover, the organization offers training courses for those who wish to learn and apply the method.

4.3 IMAGE-BASED PARTICIPATORY PEDAGOGIES

I will now explore the relationship between social change and education, focusing on two pedagogical approaches that, building on Participatory Visual Methods, suggest the use of Visual Arts, specifically photography, with children. Citing Maxine Greene (1995), "Encounters with the arts have a unique power to release the imagination", because of an "informed engagement", and this transform, open and make possible an *otherness*, a different way of seeing or looking (Greene 1995, 27). This suggests that education through visual arts can guide students to think and imagine possibilities beyond what is fixed and predetermined, by carefully examining and understanding what is currently in front of them and represented

by images (Stern 2012), and act to change them. Finally, by facilitating an informed engagement and alternative ways of seeing, educators can create meaningful opportunities for students to critically engage with visual media and reimagine their relationships with the world (Powell and Serriere 2013).

4.3.1 WENDY EWALD & THE LITERACY THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY PROGRAM

Historically, photography has been framed as the work of individual "heroes," typically male, who independently capture and define their subjects. This perspective ignores the inherently collaborative nature of photographic practices, which involve interactions among photographers, subjects, archivists, and viewers, and the broader context of production and reception. Wendy Ewald was one of the first photographers who redefined photography as a collaborative act, questioning the photographer's authoritative role and developing methods that actively engaged their subjects. Inspired by her personal experiences and her desire to see the world through others' eyes, Ewald focused on empowering marginalized groups, particularly children, to use photography to tell their own stories. Her approach transcends merely teaching technical skills. She emphasizes the importance of framing and subject selection, ensuring that the images reflect the perspectives and stories of the individuals behind the camera (Azoulay 2016). For instance, in her Literacy Through Photography program, Ewald integrated writing with photography to deepen students' engagement with their work. The term "visual literacy" is credited to John Debes, whose dictionary defines the term as: "the ability to recognize and understand ideas conveyed through visible actions or images" (Fransecky and Debes 1972, 33)

Students would write about their lives, extract images from their writing, and photograph those ideas, later writing stories based on the photographs they created. Literacy Through Photography (LTP) is a teaching method and philosophy designed to help children engage with their surroundings by photographing scenes from their daily lives and using those images to inspire verbal and written expression. The program focuses on universal themes like self-portraiture, community, family, and dreams, providing both students and educators with tools to explore and express ideas through photography and writing within the classroom. By combining photography with writing and critical thinking, LTP integrates creative practices across various subjects and helps students connect their personal experiences to academic learning. It also allows teachers to better understand their students' lives and encourages peer learning through the sharing of diverse perspectives ((Ewald and Lightfoot 2002).

4.3.2 PHOTO-TALKS AND CARPET-TIME DEMOCRACY

Photo-Talks is a three-year research study conducted by Serriere in a preschool classroom, affiliated with a large midwestern University. English was the common language of the class, even if only eight of the fourteen students who were participants at the site were native English speakers; six international children were learning English as a second language. Serriere's data collection consisted of field notes, audio recordings, social mappings and digital photography. The study was conducted following three main steps: taking photos, uploading photos, and talking about the photos. Before starting, Serriere had to obtain both parents and children's permission to take pictures. Once she began taking pictures, she decided to use a small tripod and avoid the flash, behaving as unobtrusively as possible to minimize the impact of her presence on the students' sense of freedom. In choosing what to photograph, Serriere prioritized capturing a diverse range of interactions and social dynamics; moments of social cohesion, deliberation, and tension but also those involving less vocal or visible children, such as girls entering traditionally male-dominated play spaces and English language learners. The next step involved uploading the pictures: as each morning's free-choice playtime ended, Serriere ended her data collection and uploaded the photos to her laptop in slideshow mode. Then, during cleanup time, the researcher invited children one at a time to view the photographs, specifying that they could leave at any time they wanted. Whoever decided to stay had the chance to control the forward button on the slide show and, so, determine the length of the session, that generally took about three minutes. During this session, the researcher used field notes to engage children in discussions about photographs, encouraging them to reflect on the words and actions associated with the scene. Some children spontaneously led the researcher to the physical space depicted in the photo to reenact or act out the scenario, expressing their understanding of what had occurred. During these sessions, moments arose where the children's play seemed unequal or even oppressive. The researcher, recognizing that imposing her views could conflict with the ideals of democracy, maintained an open approach. However, she took a firm stance that prioritizes equality and fairness over oppression or domination. This led to the categorization of the photo-talks into four distinct themes, each reflecting a unique student's response to the scene presented in the photograph.

1. Getting to know the child: in the initial portion of each photo-talk, the researcher sought to understand the student and how they were making sense of a given situation. This was achieved by asking the children questions about their identities, decisions, and the props they chose in their play. Examples of questions were: "Can

you tell me some of your favorite ways to be?" "Where do you like to play?" "How do you like to play?" "Tell me about what you are doing here?"

2. Envisioning Social Change: the second purpose of the photo talks was to provide children with an opportunity to imagine transforming their social reality. In this step, the researcher explored what "social justice" might mean from their perspective. Questions included, "Here you are doing...?" "If you could change anything about this photo, what would you change?" Or I might say, "Show me some different ways you like to be."
3. Envisioning your "best self" or your "best classroom": the next step was to guide the conversation toward envisioning their "best self" or "ideal classroom". To explore this vision, comparisons were made between photos. Questions such as "Can you show me a photo of your best self?" and "Can you show me a photo of how you like the classroom to be?" were used to facilitate discussion.

Considering fairness and equality: in the photo-talks, it was essential to move beyond simply envisioning one's best self and consider how actions impact others in the broader civic sphere. To facilitate this, the researcher introduced the concepts of equality and fairness to guide the children in comparing photos and exploring possibilities. The questions used included: "Which choice do you think is most equal for everyone?" and "Which choice do you think is most fair?"

For the children, photo-talks created a space to reflect on and reconsider their social lives. The findings highlighted children's ability to articulate and reimagine their actions and experiences. The photo-talk method provides a space for children to challenge the norms of a social status quo that is often enforced within the classroom. Though social change occurred in small, fragmented moments, the process itself is significant. Encouraging students to question, envision, and reflect on public life is foundational to transformative citizenship education. The photo-talks initiated a collective interest among students as they gathered to examine and discuss photographs on a laptop; this collective energy has evolved into a dynamic space for group exploration of images. Serriere then introduced the concept of Carpet-time Democracy. Inspired by Fannie Shaftel's sociodrama (1967) and Augusto Boal's Theater of the Oppressed (1995), Serriere's method can be seen as a structured space for reflection and preparation around the primary activity in early childhood classrooms: play. By integrating reflection and preparation into playtime, this approach transforms it from a mere recreational activity into an opportunity for thoughtful and reflective engagement. The steps are outlined las follows. A picture taken by a student, a researcher or a teacher, is

projected, and it shows children in a classroom dealing with a potential dilemma; those children are then free to explain the context of the photo, telling the class about what happened before the photo was taken. Then, every student is invited to imagine different scenarios about the picture and put them into action. The leader's role is to make the students aware of what is happening in the scene, what changed and what not, while the students are asked to change the scenario and their role in it again and again. In the end, the leader invites the students to reflect on the solutions presented and whether there is a solution which works the best (Serriere 2010).

5. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS THROUGH VISUAL MEDIA (AIEVM)

Interculturality is not just about direct human interactions; it is also profoundly shaped by the visual stimuli we experience daily. As discussed, the media plays a crucial role in constructing our understanding of those who are different from us, often reinforcing stereotypes or, conversely, challenging preconceived notions. I will now introduce a methodology which I found relevant for my research and practically applied: the AIEVM, an auxiliary tool designed to facilitate an understanding of media images, which aims to "encourage people to think about and learn from intercultural encounters they have had either face to face or through visual media such as television, magazines, films, the Internet, etc" (COE 2022a). Developed by the Council of Europe, it responds to the growing need for intercultural competence in an increasingly globalized world. Through a questionnaire, it encourages individuals to critically engage with specific pictures and reflect on their perception of the represented reality. It specifically concerns images representing someone of another culture and present in the media they encounter in media, whether in news, advertisements, films, or educational materials, and how these representations influence their thoughts, emotions, and connect to their attitudes toward cultural *others*. The questionnaire consists of a series of questions regarding the picture and the individual's thoughts and feelings about it. The viewer is guided through a reflective process that explores their initial reactions, the possible intentions behind the image, and its broader cultural implications, with the goal of acquiring awareness of the implicit messages embedded in visual media and develop the ability to question and deconstruct them rather than passively absorb them. By applying this methodology, individuals should become more conscious of their own biases and learn to approach cultural differences with critical awareness and empathy. This is

particularly relevant in today's world, where images circulate rapidly across digital platforms, shaping collective perceptions and influencing public discourse.

The AIEVM is not just an analytical tool; it represents an intercultural and unidirectional encounter. It involves the cooperation of three agents, one of whom is passive: the person in the picture, the viewer, and the producer of the image (which in the reported case is me). Those who are shown in the picture do not encounter the viewer, which, in turn, is influenced by the producer's assumptions and intentions. The AIEVM is based on three key principles: first, visual media can shape people's thoughts, emotions, and behaviors toward other cultures, often without them realizing it; second, a reflective tool can help individuals recognize stereotypes and implicit messages about different cultures in media; third, this tool can also increase awareness of the hidden processes behind media production that influence the images people see. The AIEVM is structured according to a model of intercultural competence, which outlines essential elements for understanding cultural interactions. It also incorporates key media literacy skills needed to analyze and interpret media content. Users are encouraged to reflect on their own intercultural and media literacy abilities in a practical way, without relying on technical jargon (Barrett and Byram 2022). In the context of intercultural research, this methodology is invaluable because it allows for an in-depth exploration of how visual media constructs and mediates intercultural encounters. It shifts the focus from passive consumption to active engagement, helping individuals to not only see but also critically interpret and question the cultural messages conveyed by images. In doing so, it contributes to the development of a more nuanced, responsible, and ethically aware approach to interculturality, one that acknowledges the power of visual representation in shaping real-world perceptions and interactions.

5.1 THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S REFERENCE FRAMEWORK OF COMPETENCES FOR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE (RFCDC)

The concept of intercultural communication competence (ICC) refers to the abilities required to interact effectively and appropriately with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. It is not merely about mastering linguistic skills but encompasses a broader set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral abilities that allow individuals to navigate cultural differences with awareness, respect, and adaptability. ICC is frequently used in policy documents and institutional frameworks. One example is the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC), which is a structured model that combines the integration of values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding, generating

twenty key competences.
Fifteen of these competences are required to respond appropriately, effectively and respectfully to images of cultural others encountered in visual media. These include:

- VALUES: such as human dignity and human rights, the valuing of cultural diversity
- ATTITUDES: including openness to cultural differences, beliefs, and perspectives, respect for others, civic-mindedness, and tolerance of ambiguity
- SKILLS: autonomous learning, analytical and critical thinking, active listening and observing, empathy, flexibility and adaptability, linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills;
- KNOWLEDGE AND CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING: knowledge of the self, language and communication, and the cultural and media contexts that shape perception and interpretation.

5.2 INTERROGATING AIEVM AND THE RFCDC: A CONTEXTUAL AND CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

While the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) provides a widely used structure for fostering intercultural communication skills, it is crucial to engage critically with its underlying assumptions, especially when applied in the context of visual media. The framework outlines values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge considered essential for navigating cultural differences "effectively, appropriately, and respectfully." However, these normative terms may not take into consideration the power dynamics, historical inequalities, and media framings that often shape intercultural encounters in practice. In this regard, tools like the AIEVM offer both potential and limitations. While the tool aligns with policy goals of fostering democratic citizenship, recent studies (e.g., Méndez-García and Cores-Bilbao 2021) have shown that the depth of reflection elicited by the AIEVM often depends on the learner's previous critical training. In other words, without pedagogical scaffolding, the tool risks producing shallow or self-referential interpretations, failing to engage meaningfully with bias, representation, or media ideology. My approach to AIEVM in this essay considers it as a tool that can be critically appropriate. Instead of treating its list of competences as fixed outcomes, I treat them as heuristics for interrogating how visual representations function in the reproduction or disruption of cultural norms. When used reflectively, the AIEVM can prompt users to question how visual media shape assumptions about cultural others, what emotions and narratives are attached to visual

stereotypes, and how their positionality influences interpretation. Thus, I propose to read the AIEVM not simply as a tool for assessing competences, but as a mediated encounter—one that involves three agents: the image producer (in this case, me), the viewer, and the person represented. Reflecting on this triangle provides a richer space to develop critical visual literacy, one that moves beyond effectiveness and appropriateness, toward ethical engagement, empathy, and reflexivity. By applying the AIEVM in my research, I aim to explore whether such structured reflection can open new spaces of understanding in the interpretation of visual representations—especially among children and adults navigating complex intercultural contexts.

5.3 LIST OF QUESTIONS AND NOTES FOR FACILITATORS

The AIEVM offers facilitators a structured framework for interpreting participants' responses, facilitating a deeper understanding of the intercultural competences involved. Each question in the AIEVM is designed to prompt reflection on personal experiences with cultural diversity, as mediated through visual media, and is theoretically anchored in the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture developed by the Council of Europe (2018).

The tool enables the identification of key indicators—such as empathy, openness to cultural otherness, critical cultural awareness, and the ability to decenter one's perspective—that emerge through the participants' narratives. These indicators are not only measurable through the responses but can also be strengthened in the process of answering. The full list of questions, with corresponding notes for facilitators, is included in Appendix A for reference.

5.4 A PERSONAL APPLICATION

To support my research, I have applied the AIEVM methodology to a selection of photographs that I have personally taken. I invited twelve participants to engage with a curated set of thirteen photographs taken in Morocco, each depicting individuals, and to reflect on their emotional and cognitive responses. Through a series of guided questions, participants were asked to choose one picture and then encouraged to critically examine their initial impressions, the possible intentions behind the images, and the broader cultural narratives they convey, answering the questions already provided from the official questionnaire. Some of them are close friends, so they were biased by some information they already had about the pictures, specifically the location and the author. I firstly prepared two different versions of the questionnaire, one in Italian and one in English, to prevent as much

as possible the language barrier and allow everyone to understand the questions. Both the questionnaire and the pictures have been placed in an online folder, which has been shared by a link and a presentation letter to every participant comprehensive of the official AIEVM guidelines. This allowed me to extend the research to people I usually don't have the chance to meet in person. Once I received all the answers, I decided the common language I preferred for the analysis, which is English, I translated all the Italian answers and collect everything in a table. The final step has been comparing the results and reading them together with the theorical indicators. Below are the photos chosen by the participants. Coincidentally, some of them selected the same image. This allowed me to compare not only the responses of all participants but also the reflections of different people regarding the same photograph. Some individuals surprisingly provided very similar answers when faced with the same image, while others took different stances, offering interesting and diverse perspectives on the same subject. In this way, I was able to further observe how personal and subjective the interpretation of visual material is, even when the image itself remains objectively the same for everyone. Consequently, this highlights the significance of the viewer's background in shaping the representation of the image.

The AIEVM typically invites participants to select and reflect on media images they have encountered. However, due to the project's contextual constraints, I decided to pre-select 15 photographs I had taken during a journey in Morocco. This choice was based on the belief that these images offered a rich and varied basis for discussion about cultural representation, identity, and perception. Moreover, I decided to pre-select the photographs to keep the scope of the research more contained and manageable. Allowing participants to select images themselves, as is typical in many participatory visual methodologies, would have introduced a wider range of variables and potentially made the analysis less focused. By selecting a consistent visual set, I aimed to create a more controlled research environment that would enable deeper comparative reflection across participants. At the same time, I was aware that this decision introduced a level of researcher influence into a method designed to minimize it. For this reason, I deliberately refrained from offering my interpretations of the images to foreground the participants' reflections. Still, I acknowledge that my gaze as a photographer, shaped by my positionality as a European woman with an interest in visual representation and interculturality, played a significant role in the framing of the project. I consider it part of the dialogical dynamic that participatory photography methods aim to foster.

5.5 RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS

This section examines the responses collected from the AIEVM-based questionnaire, in which participants analyzed and reflected upon photographs I personally took, illustrating people from different cultural contexts. Their responses have been categorized and evaluated according to the Council of Europe's framework for intercultural competences, which includes key areas such as knowledge and critical understanding, attitudes, skills, and action orientation. The goal of this analysis is to assess how participants perceive cultural diversity, challenge (or reinforce) stereotypes, and demonstrate openness to intercultural learning. While many participants exhibit curiosity, empathy, and critical engagement with media representations, others maintain ethnocentric perspectives or struggle with ambiguity. A comparative examination of participants' answers reveals how deeply personal backgrounds, social roles, and lived experiences shape the interpretation of visual stimuli. For instance, several participants selected the same image but provided markedly different insights, highlighting the interpretative richness of visual media and emphasizing how intercultural competence is profoundly influenced by positionality and subjective engagement.

Several participants' interpretations were influenced by their personal and professional identities. For example, Participant 6, a journalist specializing in migrant labor, expressed empathy and curiosity about the subject's life in answer 3b: "I am a journalist, so I wonder about his life and situation." Similarly, Participant 8 in answer 1b connected emotionally to a photo of a woman walking briskly with a child, relating it to her own experiences as a mother: "It catapulted me into memories of my life as a mother, wife and woman…" Such emotional entanglement aligns with Susan Sontag's notion of "the ethics of seeing," where photographs act as mirrors reflecting our own lives and not just windows into the other (Sontag 1977). These responses underscore how positionality mediates image interpretation. One notable thematic cluster concern perceptions of women's roles in pictures. Participant 2 and Participant 9 both responded to a photo depicting a woman cleaning a window, but their interpretations diverge significantly. Participant 2 expressed surprise, reflecting an essentialized and possibly stereotypical view of gender roles in non-Western cultures. The sentence 2b "I was surprised because she is a woman, and I can't imagine a woman of that culture doing a job like that" reveals a stereotypical understanding of gender roles. This reaction can be interpreted as a form of ethnocentric bias, where the participant projects preconceived Western or normative gender expectations onto another culture without questioning their validity or complexity. This lack of critical engagement illustrates a lower level of critical cultural awareness, a key dimension in intercultural competence frameworks, which involves recognizing and questioning one's assumptions and stereotypes. Conversely,

Participant 9 in answer 3d expressed a more nuanced and self-reflective position: “I would like to be seen differently; engaged in work that is not traditionally associated with women. This would help challenge stereotypes…” this participant not only critiques the stereotypical representation but also expresses a desire to transcend and redefine gender roles within and beyond the depicted culture. Participant 9’s response demonstrates critical reflexivity, the ability to critically examine how cultural norms, including gendered expectations, are socially constructed and maintained. This comparison highlights a crucial aspect of intercultural competence, the capacity to move beyond surface-level recognition of difference toward critical intercultural awareness. Some of the participants’ responses show a challenge to their prejudices. Participant 11, reflecting on Image 8 (showing a market scene with people from a different cultural background), writes in question 3e: “At first, I thought this image confirmed my stereotype about this culture being chaotic and disorganized. However, after looking more closely, I noticed the careful interactions, the order in the market stalls, and the smiles exchanged. This made me realize how much my initial judgment was based on biased media portrayals rather than reality. It challenged me to rethink my assumptions and be more open to seeing cultural complexity beyond surface impressions.” This kind of response is particularly valuable because it demonstrates critical self-reflection, a signal of intercultural competence. Recognizing and questioning one’s stereotypes is a difficult but necessary step towards developing more broad perceptions of cultural diversity. The participant moves from an uncritical acceptance of dominant media narratives to a more attentive and empathetic observation of lived realities. This shift embodies the transition from an ethnocentric perspective to a more relativistic and open-minded stance, which is essential for genuine intercultural dialogue and learning.

Looking at the responses to this AIEVM, it is evident that images are not just windows into a scene; they are stories shaped by the viewer as much as by the photographer. The way people react to the pictures reveals just how much our perspectives and backgrounds shape what we see. Throughout this study, participants moved between empathy and detachment, between seeing the subjects as individuals or as symbols of something bigger. Some responses were deeply personal: moments of connection with gestures, posture, a familiar setting. Others questioned the framing of the image, and the lack of context. This is one of the core concerns of my thesis: who controls the narrative in photography, and how does that influence the way we perceive reality? How explanatory is a photograph without a description? How useful is an image if we don't engage with it? How important is it to learn how to read the world around us, interpret images, and train our critical thinking? These findings reaffirm that photography is never just documentation; it is construction. A photograph can testify to something, but it can also omit, distort, or reinforce a perspective, shaping our understanding of cultures, places, and people we may never meet. Some participants saw the images as neutral representations of reality, while others recognized how visual choices, angles, composition, context, can shift meaning. This gap in awareness is precisely why visual literacy needs to be more present in discussions about media and interculturality. What this analysis brings to my thesis is confirmation of photography's dual nature: a tool for storytelling and a tool for power. The way people interpret an image depends on the narratives they have been exposed to, on what they expect to see, and on what they assume is missing. This is particularly relevant in photojournalism, conflict photography, and visual storytelling in migration narratives, where the weight of an image can shape entire public opinions. The responses also suggest that, while many participants reflected on their emotions and cultural expectations, fewer considered what they could do with that awareness. Intercultural competence is not just about recognizing differences; it's about questioning how those differences are represented and what we do with that knowledge. The next step, then, is to push this reflection beyond analysis and into action: to challenge stereotypes not just in thought, but in conversation, in the way we consume media, in the way we tell our own visual stories. If photography is a language, then learning to read it critically is just as important as learning to speak across cultures.

Through the practical application of the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM), I was able to observe the auxiliary value of structured visual tools in enabling critical engagement with images. Rather than substituting the visual material, the AIEVM served as a complementary framework that enhanced participants' interpretive awareness. It encouraged them not merely to describe what they saw, but to interrogate their own perceptions, question underlying assumptions, and reflect on the cultural narratives shaping their interpretations.

This reflective process illuminated how entrenched visual habits, often informed by media discourse or cultural stereotyping, could be unpacked and reconsidered. In informal conversations following the activity, participants expressed how the AIEVM had prompted them to revise their initial reactions and acknowledge the biases embedded in their viewing practices.

This experience also reinforced my earlier critique of the limits of traditional visual representation. While photographs can inform, shock, or emotionally move us, they often fall short of promoting sustained reflection or dialogic engagement. Viewers tend to remain passive, emotionally reactive, but not necessarily reflective about what they see, or how they see it. My findings thus support the idea that visuals alone are not sufficient: without auxiliary tools or dialogical frameworks, images risk being consumed uncritically, reduced to aesthetic or affective impressions.

In this sense, Sontag's idea that images "haunt" rather than "explain" (Sontag 2003) was clearly visible in participants' initial reactions to the photographs. Yet the structured reflection enabled by the AIEVM helped transform this haunting into a process of understanding—turning the visual encounter into a meaningful learning opportunity. As such, the AIEVM demonstrates its value not as a replacement for visual material, but as a necessary complement that activates and sustains critical intercultural engagement.

CONCLUSIONS

As a passionate social scientist, professional performer, and practicing photographer, I have often questioned how to merge my skills into a practice that combines visual art with social impact and inspires change. For years, I nurtured these three interests in parallel, occasionally intertwining them, yet never thoroughly combining them in a way that felt purposeful. This often led me to conclude that my art was futile—performative acts felt repetitive and uninspiring, offering nothing the world hadn't already seen; photography, meanwhile, seemed merely a representation of reality through my "three" lenses, devoid of deeper meaning. By "futile," I don't mean entirely without purpose, but relatively self-contained, an artistic product with no resonance beyond its aesthetic value. Having mainly worked as a photographer in cultural events, editorial dossiers, and projects involving the performing arts, I have long viewed my work as a personal and aesthetically pleasing interpretation of existing realities—an entertaining endeavor for myself and my audience rather than a revolutionary force capable of provoking thought. Raised in the world of theater and dance, which shaped both my character and artistic vision, I have always engaged with art as both a participant and a spectator. Yet, over the years, a growing sense of resignation and disillusionment has crept in, often accompanied by boredom as I left theaters and museums unmoved by yet another performance or art exhibition, wondering whether aesthetic appreciation was all that art could offer. I have often believed that "art for art's sake" is a better imperative than forcing art to serve political agendas or to embed messages at all costs in what was originally intended as entertainment. In my opinion, a work born out of genuine necessity, or created purely for its beauty and technique, is always preferable to something contrived. But how do I reconcile this perspective with my desire for meaning? In recent times, my disillusionment has consistently guided me toward a single conclusion: education. Art as a tool for growth. Art as a vertical movement, reaching downward to engage children, marginalized groups, and communities in pedagogical acts where art serves as a mediator for change, rather than as a product. This vision inspires me to see art not merely as something to observe or admire, but as a dynamic force capable of fostering understanding, empowerment, and transformation. Thus, my thesis was born—a culmination of years of reflection leading to the conclusion that if there is a way to combine photography and social sciences effectively, it lies in their collaboration and participation with a third key agent: the audience.

Appendix A

Questionnaire and Visual Material for the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM)

This appendix presents the complete set of questions and answers used in the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM) questionnaire.

It also presents the collection of visual media images that were made available to participants as the basis for their reflection using the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM). The images were pre-selected by me and presented to participants in a shared digital folder. Each participant independently chose one image that they found personally relevant or emotionally engaging and used it as the foundation for completing the AIEVM questionnaire.

The purpose of including these images here is to provide a visual reference for the responses analyzed in Appendix B and discussed in Chapter 5. Each figure is labeled according to the participant who selected it (e.g., Image A – Selected by Participant A) and accompanied by a brief descriptive caption when relevant.

image 3 - Photograph by Elena Perota
Taken in Fès, Morocco
February 2023

image 5 - Photograph by Elena Perota
Taken in Chefchaouen, Morocco
February 2023

image 8 - Photograph by Elena Perota
Taken in Marrakech, Morocco
February 2023

image 6 - Photograph by Elena Perota
Taken in Marrakech, Morocco
February 2023

image 10 - Photograph by Elena Perota
Taken in Marrakech, Morocco
February 2023

image 14 - Photograph by Elena Perota
Taken in Fès, Morocco
February 2023

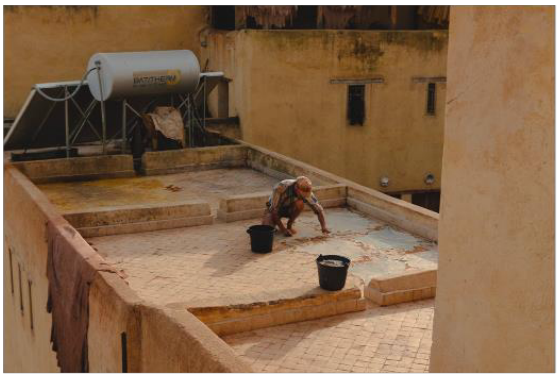

image 15 - Photograph by Elena Perota
Taken in Fès, Morocco
February 2023

#	QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 1	PARTICIPANT 2	PARTICIPANT 3	PARTICIPANT 4	PARTICIPANT 5	PARTICIPANT 6	PARTICIPANT 7	PARTICIPANT 8	PARTICIPANT 9	PARTICIPANT 10
		image 3	image 5	image 6	image 6	image 8	image 15	image 6	image 10	image 5	image 14
	1. The image										
a.	**Give the image a title which says something about it.**	a moment with yourself	at work	Absence	Abandonment and Indifference	Man waiting	The ceiling in the floor	in the street, snapshot of everyday life	Snapshots of everyday life over time	A cleaning lady in the blue city.	Elderly copper metal worker
b.	**What sort of image have you chosen?**	a photograph	a photograph shoot in Morocco	photograph	This is a photograph taken outdoors, precisely in a small street of a probably North African country	it's a photograph	I have chosen a photography that reminds me of labor	a photograph	a photograph	a photograph	a photograph
c.	**Why have you chosen this image?**	I was struck by the figure of the old man alone in a minimal and essential background	because it make me think of something I had never thought of before	I chose this image because it is the only one in which an animal is present	I chose this image because it is the most recent one I have seen of this type	curiosity, first time I had seen a photograph of something like this	I thought about labor and the working conditions. The man is working with the ceiling with his bare hands.	It brought me back to the lives of people in the countryside villages of northern Italy a few years ago.	because I was struck by the lady with her child running in an almost deserted street even though it seemed like a weekday.	it made me think about something I had not thought about before	I choose this image because it evoked many sentiments inside me, I felt like it told many stories.
d.	**Add any other reactions in your own words and say what you think caused your reaction:**	it struck me because it immediately makes me identify with the subject, "feeling" that moment, as if I were sitting there on that bench too	I was struck by the color of the wall	This photo gave me a little sadness because the donney seems a little suffering to me.	The reason that prompted me to choose this image is the compassion that that poor little donkey aroused in me, visibly battered and tired, tied by the halter to a stirrup sticking out of the wall, tied to a miserable cart, and with nothing to suggest the presence of humans. The people present in the photo do not pay any attention to him and his cargo		I liked the dusty sepia colors and the composition of the colors	Two individuals exchanging words and arguments while waiting for something else to happen, or just resting	It catapulted me into memories of my life as a mother, wife and woman. I reflected on how being a woman, but above all a mother, means loving unconditionally, having dedication, protecting and supporting one's own children with anxiety and fear, but with immense commitment, finding a strength and an abilityand a determination you don't even know you have.	At first I became intrigued by the beautiful colors of the photo; blue and orange being contrast colors they emphasize each other in a great way. The next thing I noticed was the person in it.	memories
	2. The contents of the image										
a.	**Who is shown in the image and what are they doing?**	there is an elderly man alone, sitting on a bench and he seems totally immersed in his thoughts	The image depicts a woman with her back intent on a ladder to clean a glass, It struck me because it seemed unusual to me	In the foreground, on the left, we have a donkey attached to a cart, while on the right there are two gentlemen chatting. In the background there is a boy crossing the street	In the foreground, in the left quadrant, there is that poor quadruped, alone and disconsolate, tied to a wall, without water, without food, and with the cart still attached to its pack saddle. Also in the foreground, in the right quadrant, there are two adult human males who are chatting. In the background, a boy is playing football by himself. All the subjects are on the same road, bordered on the sides by presumably residential buildings. The road is a pavement,	man sitting down on the street while wearing a robe looks like he's asleep	A man, around 50 years old, is working hard on the ceiling in the hot sun. His cap is protecting his face. I believe it is afternoon since there are shadows on the ceiling. Maybe he is constructing a new floor of the building or adjusting the ceiling—it's hard to tell. The work is tough, and he is doing it with his bare hands. The time could be 20 years ago or yesterday; it is difficult to determine. There are no safety measures, and the man is working at a great height. There are two buckets with thick grev cement on	A horse and cart on a street with two people presumably talking while resting after a day of work. The scene takes place on a dark street in a cluster of houses that overlook the street itself. In the distance, a boy can be seen playing with a ball. The colors are soft and almost monochromatic.	The image shows a woman carrying her baby on her back in a makeshift baby carrier. She walks with a fast pace towards who knows what destination, perhaps she is going to the market, perhaps she is going to take care of her elderly parents or she is about to go and carry out one of the many errands that a mother or woman usually carries out.	I initially assumed the person to be a woman, engaged in what is traditionally considered female work. At first, I thought they were hanging laundry, but upon closer observation, it became clear that they were more likely washing a window. This realization made me reflect on their background and story once again	a man working on their art
b.	**What was the first thing you noticed about them?**	the way he sits gaze fixed ahed towards his feet	Initially I hadn't noticed the cleaning cloth, at first impact I had imagined she was painting the facade of the building and I was surprised because she is a woman and she's a woman and I can't imagine a woman of that culture doing a job like that.	The first thing I noticed was the impatientness of the donkey	The first thing I noticed was the abandonment of the donkey and the indifference of the people around him.	why is he sitting in that position while wearing those clothes, what's the purpose. He looks asleep also like he's been there for a long time	The big "battery" in the background		That the roads are a bit bumpy, that people wear humble clothes and that the landscape evokes places still in the process of evolving and modernizing.	The brightly-coloured head scarf. Similar to what my grangmother used to wear when I was young.	They are elderly and trying to make a living.
c.	**Are they male/female, older/younger than you or do they belong to a different country, language group, religion or region from yourself? Is there any other thing which you think is important about them?**	He is an elderly man, therefore much older than me. I can't say which country he is in but desirable, given the hat, he should belong to the Islamic religion. I think the most important thing is the moment that man is experiencing	she is a woman whose age i can't define since she is not facing me, she could be the same age as I am	In the photo there are three human subjects: in the foreground there are two male gentlemen who will be about 50/60 years old, while in the background there is a boy. I would say they could come from North Africa	The humans in the photograph are all male. One is very young, and the other two could be my peers. They probably belong to a Maghreb country (Libya, Tunisia, Algeria or Morocco) so they are probably Arabic speakers and Muslim. I find that all three subjects in the photo are perfectly inserted in the context.	male, older than me, from a different country	It is an older man in another country than Sweden. I think it is a country in the Middle East, but you cannot really know where, it could also be in Italy.	Two males, I think the same age, I think around 50, belonging to the same language group and I think also religion. The photo was taken in an Arab country, maybe Morocco. The two people in the foreground are wearing work clothes and slippers. The person in the background, the younger one, is dribbling against the wall in front of him like I used to do when I was young.	They depict a merchant, a man, younger than me, a boy who is trying to buy something, a man seen from behind whose age I cannot define, and the woman with the child who I could imagine to be young. I notice that the street is almost deserted, there are no motor vehicles, nor hand-driven or animal-drawn vehicles. It is probably a small alley in the historic center.	I would assume them to be a woman and older than me. I also think they belong to a different country and language group than me.	Male, older they do not belong to a similar goup as me as far as location / religion
	3.. Your feelings										
a.	**How did you feel when you first saw the image?**	I perceived a deep sense of loneliness but also of peace as if looking at the photo all thoughts vanished immediately reconnecting me to the present moment, a moment of meditation\contemplation	intrigued	The first thing I noticed was the loaded donay and it made me sad	I felt very sorry for the donkey. A docile and tame animal, always used for humble activities related to human life, it is notoriously subjected to beatings and mistreatment whenever its nature pushes it not to comply in ways and times, with the wishes of its human.	I felt curiosity	I thought it was beautiful with the sepia colors and the composition, but also sad. You understand that the man is working very hard.	Memory went back to my adolescence, in the town where I lived I used to see similar images.	It brought back memories of when I was a child, when I went to visit my mother's family in a small town in the south of Italy, where the alleys of the small town were very similar to the one in the photo. Women, especially the middle-aged ones, used to wear a headdress like the one worn by the woman in the photo and those older women also used to wear very long skirts.	I felt quite neutral—calm yet content. However, after a while, I noticed some uncomfortable feelings starting to emerge.	I felt sad
b.	**What do you think caused these feelings?**	I think these sensations came from seeing the old man alone in a context so "clean" and essential almost to perceive a void around, as if the context itself did not exist	the color of the house, which is difficult to observe where I live, due to the urban planning rules that impose colors between yellow and gray, but also of the activity carried out from the woman	The posture of the donkey, the fact that he is still attached to the cart, despite being still and not moving, and with his back loaded	The posture of the donkey, which evokes tiredness, resignation and abandonment, and the indifferent attitude of the two humans near it, which does not suggest that one of the two could be the donkey's human. Since it is very likely that one of the two humans is the donkey's owner, the sense of abandonment and indifference that the photograph inspires in me is even more marked.	the photograph showing something I haven't seen before	I am a journalist so I wonder about his life and situation.	The appearance of people and the context in which they were photographed.	The appearance of a land of memories	The bright colors initially evoked positive feelings, but then I started reflecting on the broader role of women in society. This shift in perspective likely stirred feelings of anger and discomfort.	Because the man is elderly but still having to work to survive, something about it felt unjust. It also reminded me of the hundereds of times I have seen similar people during my travels

c.	**If you were the person in this image, would you like people to feel this way about you? Please give your reasons.**	If I were in this image yes, I would like people to feel that they are reconnecting to the present and that a moment of solitude is not necessarily negative but indeed necessary. I wish they wouldn't ask themselves too much what thoughts could cross my mind (as I did with the elderly)	I wouldn't want them to think that this could be a job for men and not for me	The subject of my answers is the donkey so I answered by putting myself in his shoes. I wouldn't want people to feel these feelings so I would like my condition to be different: I would like to be unhooked from the cart, I would like the loads on my back to be placed on the ground, and I would like to have the opportunity to drink and rest before leaving.	If I were the donkey, I would like to be untied and freed from the pack, I would like to be able to eat and drink, and receive attention from my human in recognition of the hard work I have done. Because I am also a living being, perfectly integrated into the life of my family, I would like to be shown consideration, attention and involvement. I would not like to be treated as an unthinking object without emotional capacity.	yes, I am naturally curious	Maybe, but probably I would like to talk with the journalist in real life. Maybe the journalist is wrong, maybe I am constructing my own house, not working for someone else. Maybe there is a green garden under the building where I will relax.	They would probably feel the same way as certain situations have occurred and are occurring anywhere in the world.	There would be nothing wrong with it if it were the reality of the context in which we live on a daily basis.	Not necessarily, as it could be perceived as pity rather than genuine understanding or empathy.	No they would not because we come from different walks of life. I believe in his culture their are many preconceived notions about people coming from outside their country, area and or continent
d.	**Would you like to have an image made of you which looked like this? Please give your reasons.**	Yes, but I would see myself more with my eyes straight ahead contemplating the horizon. This is because I think that the image itself represents a very much part of me, but the position of man denotes his seniority mixed with a sense of resignation	yes, I would be happy to be portrayed while I do a practical job that is commonly considered to be for men	No I wouldn't like it because it would be humiliating	No, I would never want it. I would not want to be in the donkey's shoes. Lately I am developing an animalist conscience that leads me to make considerations aimed at respecting every living being, especially those most defenseless and subjected to men	I am not sure, as I don't know what the man is doing	no, I have never worked with roof construction or laying floors with cement, and it would be a bit strange to take a photo of me like that.	No, I personally don't identify with these characters. For me it's part of a bygone era and therefore difficult to reproduce.	It wouldn't reflect me. I live in a country where these images can be found daily being populated by women and men from other countries like the one where the photos were taken.	I would like to be seen differently; engaged in work that is not traditionally associated with women. This would help challenge stereotypes and show younger generations that women can pursue any path, not just traditional practical roles.	Yes, if this was my reality so that people can be exposed to other walks of life, and create empathy and or commonalities.
e.	**Would you like to meet the person/people shown in the image in real life? Please give your reasons.**	Yes I would like to meet the person in the photograph because he gives me the idea of being a very wise man, a man who has found his deep meaning of life in the essentials and it would be interesting to know his story or even just ask him how he feels at that moment and if he is happy	yes and I would like to ask her how she lives, what she does during her daily life and if that is her home or her workplace	I would say no just because I think we wouldn't be able to communicate. But if I spoke their language or they spoke mine maybe yes	I would say no, I think there could be no dialogue, especially because of the language barrier. However, if I were in their area and they wanted to share a couscous I would not hold back. If we could then strike up a conversation, perhaps with the help of an interpreter, I would try to explain the donkey's reasons.	yes, to ask him what he was doing	Yes I would love to meet the man and talk to him.	Sure, why not! A photo is a snapshot and fixes a very precise moment. The next one can also change the opinion on the people who are photographed	Absolutely yes. I would like to spend a few days in a reality different from mine because I am convinced that it would enrich my culture and my knowledge.	Yes. I would like to talk to them and hear their life story.	Yes of course, because they are elderly they probably have alot of life advice to share.
	4. The feelings of other people											
a.	**Do you think the person/people shown in the image would be pleased with this image of themselves? Please give your reasons.**	I think the elderly would be very satisfied with this image and also very excited to look at it because in my opinion whatever he is experiencing in his inner world the photo manages to retry him perfectly, loneliness, reflection, rest, tiredness, peace ..	I think so, even if I seem to sense that this person is cleaning the windows and has hung out the curtains to dry, we are completely drawn into his intimate daily life, but by not seeing each other's faces, privacy is preserved	I think they would have a different vision from mine; for them it is usual to use the strength of animals to transport things or people so I think they would not agree with my compassion for the donkey	I think they were fine at the time they were filmed. I think they were simply living a normal moment of their existence. I think the well-being of the donkey is closely linked to its functionality, and that such well-being does not require anything more than a handful of hay in the evening before going to sleep, as well as putting oil in the lamp or fuel in the tank of a tractor or a van for transporting goods.	I am not sure, I guess it depends on every person some would mind others would be happy	Yes I believe he would. I think the picture itself Is beautiful and also maybe he thinks it is nice that someone is documenting it.	The photo portrays people who are talking at that moment, it is a moment of real life. Why not. Over time it could be useful and to remember that moment and all that they have shared	The photo captures moments of everyday life: a market stall with a potential buyer selecting products offered by the merchant, a woman briskly walking to attend to her errands, and a man, likely a tourist, strolling at a leisurely pace with a backpack on his shoulders.	Yes, they might feel pleased as they are portrayed as hardworking, and since their face is not visible, it likely feels less personal. However, if this culture places a strong emphasis on women being seen as feminine, well-dressed, and sophisticated, she might prefer to be depicted in attire that aligns more with those ideals rather than everyday clothing.	Yes, perhaps because they would be as it shows them working on their art, which is something to be proud of in my opinion.
b.	**Do you think they would have preferred to be shown differently? Please explain your answer.**	No, I don't think so because deep down this is a real moment, that he lived, not built and therefore representing reality, the truth, a deep truth that only he can know I don't think he would like to change it	I think the person portrayed might want their privacy	No, I don't think so	No, I think they were very happy to be filmed in that context, for them to absolute normality.	yes, everyone acts differently when they think are being observed	Yes maybe looking into the camera, because now he doesn't know about the photo.	I don't think so, because they were portrayed in a casual and spontaneous way.	I don't think so because the photographer has very discreetly and spontaneously immortalised a slice of everyday life.	Not necessarily. However, if the cultural norms emphasize women being seen as feminine, well- dressed, and sophisticated, she might prefer to be portrayed in a way that aligns with those expectations rather than in everyday attire.	Yes i believe so, in my experience people enjoy seeing photographs of themselves.
c.	**How do you think other people from the same group or culture as them would feel about the image?**	I don't know what they might think but I think they would appreciate this photo, I think it represents even just a part of the nuances of the place and the culture\religion and everything in an essential way, the sand color of the structure..the man's clothes, the simple life..	that there is a woman who does the chores	I would say they could have the same vision as me	the same	I have no idea since I am not familiar with that culture	I think they would think it was a good picture of a working man.	I think they wouldn't have any problem seeing photos that document a moment of common life in that specific context.	I don't think so, it would simply reflect their condition and their daily life, perhaps making them proud of having been chosen to bear witness to what they are.	I think this scene likely represents everyday life in the culture where the photo was taken, so local people would probably view it as ordinary and feel neutral about the image.	I believe they would think it is an average working person in their country, I don't believe they would think much of it, as it is a common reality.
	5. Thinking about communication											
a.	**In the image, do the person/people shown use language or gestures to communicate with people in the image or viewers? If so, what language or gestures do they use?**	The subject of the photograph does not know that it is being taken so there is no gesture or particular act of communication for the spectators	there are no gestures that refer to languages, but the clothes refer to the culture	I would say that neither of the two main human subjects was using particular gestures	The hands behind one's back, and the arms along the other's body, make me think that both were comfortable in the ongoing conversation.	no, none	No he is not concerned of what is happening around him.	The two subjects in the foreground are talking, I think they know each other, the first man is standing, supported by one leg emulating the posture of flamingos, leaning with his shoulder against the wall and staring at the lips of the interlocutor; the other in a resting position with his hands behind his hips with the attitude of starting a dialogue.	The street vendor with demonstrative gestures offers his products to the young man who appears to be uncertain about what to buy. The woman waves her arm and lengthens her stride, demonstrating that she is in a hurry. The man with the backpack to the right of the woman walks slowly as a tourist does, looking around.	no	no
b.	**If you were to actually meet the person/people shown in the image, what would you do or say?**	If I had met that person at that moment and "distant" like a passerby, I would have just stopped to observe probably, I would have breathed and smiled and I would have continued, if I had met them directly I think that by showing them the photo I would have asked them how they were doing and what they were going through at that moment	I would ask her if that is her house	nothing	I would like to know if one of the two is the donkey's human, and I would like to try to instill some empathy towards him, but I think I would not be understood, and this even if I spoke their language.	I would ask him about what he's doing	I would ask about the work and the working conditions, and if it was hard work and about the result.	I could ask them for information about the place, but nothing personal, the unknown language would prevent me from asking specific questions.	I would approach the stall and ask for information about the products and their food customs, I am very curious as I love cooking.	Initially, I would show the picture and ask what the situation is and whether it's something they do every day. I'd also inquire about their life story and how they perceive the role of women in their culture.	Ask them how logn they have been working on their craft, and how they learned it and if they enjoy it.
c.	**Do you have any knowledge of their language and/or culture which could help you to understand and communicate with them? If so, what sort of things do you know?**	I don't know anything about that culture and I wouldn't know how to communicate with the subject of the photo	I don't know the language but I have a superficial knowledge of the culture, being a woman and a mother we are biologically equal, but I feel more privileged	no, I don't know anything	no, none	no knowledge as I don't know where the photo is from	Yes I speak arabic, English and Italian. Maybe he would understand me!	No, that's one of the reasons I would avoid being in a different country than mine and not knowing their language, even though I would be tempted and intrigued	Unfortunately, I don't know their language or culture and that's why I'm more curious.	It is difficult to say, since I am unsure where the photo is taken. However, I know the basics of several languages so i would think we had the chance to be able to communicate with each other to some extent. Also, there is always translation apps for help when needed	I speak french, and they speak French in Morocco so we would be able to communicate.

d.	**What do you think you could do to make it easier for you to understand each other?**	In this specific case I believe that images and visual representations could help, or having the possibility of translations through Google or a person familiar with the language	I think it would be enough to look at each other in the eyes	Gestures or some app to translate	In the immediate future, I would use an interpreter.	more context about the photograph	I would use gestures as well as language.	I would get help from a translator, today the internet offers many advantages in this sense.	I would ask for help from my smartphone using technology.	To make it easier to understand each other, I would communicate through gestures and use a smile to show receptiveness. I could also rely on translation apps for immediate help. If the language barrier is significant, having an interpreter could be a good option to ensure more accurate communication.	Someone who understands both cultures, who can 'stand in the middle'
	6. Same and Different										
a.	**Thinking about the person/people in the image and yourself, what do you think are the main similarities between them and yourself?**	I think the main similarity between me and the subject of the photo lies precisely in the moment in solitude that the elderly is living, both human beings, living beings with a unique soul and inner world	the similarity is biological	I don't think there are similarities	I think there can be many. Love and attention for one's work and one's family. Attention to rules and living together. Pleasure in talking with a friend, especially in a family environment.	We are both men, I think that's it	We are both humans, and I think we share many things as humans do.	I don't see any particular similarities except for the boy with the ball in the background.	The similarity could be with the woman with the child, because as mothers and women we are always in a hurry to be able to complete our mission.	gender	That we are both artistic
b.	**What do you think are the main differences between them and yourself?**	I think the main difference comes from the place and the culture of belonging and consequently from the lifestyle, also given the seniority of the man the background and the experiences lived	the difference is cultural	Gender, age, language and religion	Besides language, I would say religion. Then obviously a different approach to the animal genre.	culture, religious beliefs, age, most things probably?	Our age, the place, our different context and work contexts.	Mainly their age, I think also their life path, looking carefully at their posture you can intuit the manual nature of their work, almost certainly hard work.	Age and lifestyle even if the role is common to all mothers.	Cultural background, language, age	That I can assume I have more opportunities in life, that i would not be expected to work at an advanced age.
c.	**Are they like anyone that you know in your own life? If so, in what ways do they resemble them (for example, in the way they look, the way they behave, the way they think)?**	Until this moment I hadn't thought about it but after reading the question I immediately remembered my great-grandfather, his seniority, his perpetually curved posture because he was a war survivor, his gaze into the void	They resemble a girl I saw growing up, of Moroccan nationality born and raised in Italy. Today she lives in London and is in her second degree in psychology and she is starting a doctorate.	no	No, I don't know anyone like them.	no, I don't know anyone like that in real life	Yes I often write about migrant labor and construction work	No	There are similarities with the people who live in our cities from countries like the one where the photo was taken. Italy welcomes people of different ethnicities.	Her posture and clothing remind me of my grandmother.	When i was working for the united nations in Ivory coast we had a kind driver named Fofana that i have kept in touch with. Very kind soul, When i think of him, and what I have seen of his life it does appear that he may also have to work into advanced age in order to support himself and his family.
d.	**When looking at an image, people often compare things in other groups or cultures with similar things in their own groups or cultures. Did you do this?**	I didn't feel like asking myself these questions, I immediately focused and impersonated on that moment and on the subject					Yes I have seen similar scenes in cities around Europe	Yes, it is quite common to ask similar questions.	Yes, when you find yourself in environments, in places different from your own, it is inevitable to make comparisons		This picture reminds me of many images I have taken in Haiti and also in Africa of people using their skills to provoide for themselves. Particularly in Haiti, as there are many artists, such as painters and wood workers.
	Similarities I noticed ...		the curtains hung to dry in the sun	People chatting in the street	The boy playing with a ball in the street. Two friends chatting.	none			Similarities with mom. They are the same all over the world	Hard to find any.	
	Differences I noticed ...		clothing, especially the head covered by a scarf	clothes	Clothing and surroundings.	clothing, the way the street looks, the way he's sitting			The style of the stall is distant from our reality, as is the clothing of the characters.	Architecrture, colourful building, head scarf, the way laundry is hanged	That he has access to copper
e.	**Now you have answered the questions in this section, you could go back to the answers which you gave in the "Who I am" section of this AIEVM and see if you want to make any changes.**	I haven't yet written the paragraph about who I am at the moment but I think I'll ask myself the question about what are the really essential and important things to say to others about myself and about my world and I'm not sure I'll be able to answer exhaustively for myself and for others		none	Done. No changes						
	7. Thinking further about the image										
a.	**Is there anything about the person/people shown in the image that is exaggerated or emphasised? If so, what?**	There is absolutely nothing exaggerated or emphasized in a negative way, the photograph focuses totally on the subject and the sensations that that moment transmits to you in that context are emphasized	I don't find anything forced	no	No, I think all the subjects in the photograph are perfectly placed in their reality	I don't think so	nothing	No, it's a snapshot that captures a moment in the life of two people, real and true, they didn't pose, nor did they pretend to be anything else because they weren't embarrassed.	No, a glimpse of the daily life of ordinary people was immortalized.	In my opinion, no.	no
b.	**Is there anything about the person/people that could have been shown but that is missing from the image? If so, what?**	There is nothing missing in this image, there is everything essential that should be there, in fact I appreciate this, that there are no other elements, distractions	you can't see the face, they probably could have given us more information about the subject portrayed	no	No, I would say no	more of his surroundings, maybe would give more context	Yes the face impression	Who knows, the photo portrays them near a wall, on the corner of a street,it is not known what there is further than that, there could be a shop and at this point their wait in that position would also be justified.	I would have liked to see where the woman with the child was running, what the boy would have chosen to buy, but above all what the tourist who was walking slowly was thinking about.	The person's face	Perhaps more of the surroundings for context
c.	**Does the image present the person/people in a positive, negative or neutral way? Give reasons for your answer.**	I think it represents the man in a neutral way precisely because the photo does not represent an objective reality with positive or negative elements but tries to represent an inner world of which we know nothing and in any case always subjective therefore neutral	the image presents the person in a neutral, typically descriptive way	neutral	Aside from the discomfort that the consideration of the donkey's condition generates in me, I would say that all three people are presented in a positive light: the boy playing, the adults chatting amiably.	neutral	I think neutral, because it tells about an action and daily work	Neutral position, they are taking a break, even if it is unwanted.	Neutral. They are characters who are performing everyday actions	The person is working and the photo does not show the face, so I would say they are presented in neutral way.	Neutral because it shows his skills, but also that he is elderly, with no shoes.

d.	**Do you think that the image is a stereotype of the person/people shown in the image? If so, why do you think it is a stereotype?**	I don't think it's a stereotype	it is a stereotype because the portrayed figure wears traditional clothes and is carrying out a typical domestic job reserved for women (it would have been less of a stereotype if it had remained what I had mistakenly understood at the beginning, a house painter)	no	I find that the photo describes a situation that could be normal in any part of the globe.	no	No I don't think it is stereotipical	no	no	Could be. An older female doing the practical work.	That many people in morocco are struggling with poverty.
e.	**Do you think this image is fair or unfair as a way of showing this person's/these people's group or culture? Give reasons for your answer.**	I think it's right because as written above it doesn't just give us details and nuances of this culture but at the same time brings us to the same level as that man and consequently erases any barrier and inequality	the image is correct because it is not artificial	the photograph is coherent	I think photography perfectly describes places and people	neutral, neither good nor bad	No I think it is very universal, because labor exists everywhere in the world	Right, for the reasons I mentioned in the previous paragraphs.	In my opinion the shot highlights real life of ordinary people in their culture.	It is most likely an authentic way of showing this person's culture, thus fair too.	I think it is fair, because it is an accurate representation what what they see and come across perhaps on a daily basis.
	8. Thinking about the person or people who made the image										
a.	**Who do you think made the image?**	I know the photographer who took this picture	Elena	a pohotographer	A photographer who convinced people to continue in their business.	a street photographer	I think Elena took the photo	Elena, my youngest daughter. The photo is well balanced and complete. The snapshot develops in a not very long street, in the background a boy in motion with a ball, in the foreground on one side you can see a horse with a cart tied, on the other side two men waiting and talking. There are no particular attitudes, they are not moving and they seem to be in no hurry.	Elena, a photographer capable of capturing the expressiveness and naturalness of people by giving voice to the shots.	It's been taken by my friend, photographer Elena Perota.	I believe it was taken by Elena
b.	**What do you think was their reason for making it (for example, to inform, to entertain, to advertise)?**	I assume the shot was made for pure pleasure during a trip	she took it to capture a moment of everyday life and tell a piece of life while he was passing through that street	I don't know	I think the photographer wanted to immortalize a scene of everyday life to share it with people of different cultures.	found the person interesting	for a reportage	I believe that the photographer needed to capture a moment of real life related to that place in order to be able to document and comment on it upon returning from the trip.	I believe they took these shots out of passion and to bring back a memory from a fantastic journey full of culture and charm of the daily life of a people who still live in a simple way	I would assume the primary reason was to capture the beauty of the colours and local archi- tecture, and the authenticity of the person in work.	Showing daily uninterrupted life of a metal worker.
c.	**If they used stereotypes, do you think they used them deliberately or not? Give reasons for your answer.**	there's no stereotypes	no stereotypes were intentionally inserted	I don't think so	The mistreated donkey, used as any other work tool, I think can be classified as a stereotype of those cultures, used deliberately because it is part of the daily life of those lands.	I don't think so	No I don't think it is stereotypical	no	no	I would say the photo represents everyday life rather than relying on stereotypes. However, given the domestic role of the woman in the image, it could be interpreted as reinforcing stereotypes to some extent.	no
d.	**Who do you think was the main audience the image was intended for?**	I think this photo was taken by the photographer just to capture an authentic moment, a sensation, an image that struck them in particular and that serves to remember and relive those feelings, to go back there with the mind and with the heart	herself pleasure	to everyone	To an audience other than the North African one,	people from a different region	The person who see it in the magazine	For personal use, or to document the journey through a photographic exhibition.	I think to show it to an audience of interested people.	People who appreciate and enjoy photographic art.	Those who are interested in travel / cultural photography
e.	**Why do you think this audience watches or looks at this kind of image (for example, for entertainment, for factual information, to learn how to do something)**	A person would look at this photo, among others probably, to know what could expect from a trip to Morocco and who you could meet and what you could experience during the travel, in a moment of real life, getting lost in the streets without having a "tourist" gaze	to learn more about other cultures	because interested to other cultures	Because interested in different cultures	it's something they don't see where they live	For a social reportage or documentary	Out of curiosity or to gather information for future trips or similar experiences. The photos are made to stimulate and intrigue and also to ask questions.	For pleasure and curiosity. To be able to fantasize about the lives of populations that live differently from us.	To enjoy photographic art.	Authenticity in showing ' everyday life' in certain cultures.
f.	**What attitude do you think this audience usually adopts towards this kind of image? For example, do you think that they always believe in this kind of image/are sceptical about it/enjoy it/learn from it/allow their behaviour to be affected by it?**	I don't think it's an image to believe in or to be skeptical of but just an image to experience, grasp the sensations it gives you and live them fully in that moment, I don't know if all people could feel pleasure but surely it's an image that leads each of us to reflect on our own life	curiosity	I think the public believes in the image because it is true	I think people believe the images they see, and I think the images reflect the idea that, for example, the Western world has of the Maghreb countries.	it's hard to generalize, I guess it would depend on each person's biases	i got touched	We are constantly bombarded by news, videos, photos. Many of these pass quickly and seem insignificant, then you get to photo 6 and you start to make reasonings that go to the unreal, you dream and you find yourself in the same context to feel the heat of the sun that envelops you, the breath of the wind and the scent of the spices that it brings. Poetry	Usually what is proposed to us through the media is looked at quickly without stopping to analyze or simply to get excited as can happen instead when looking at a photo or a painting. Simple curiosity for deepen your knowledge of different lives and cultures.	I would think they believe in it and enjoy it.	Empathy and understanding. I believe they would want to learn from it.
g.	**Do you think this image will make viewers think differently about the people from the group or culture shown? Give reasons for your answer.**	I don't know because in this case when I looked at the image I didn't start from a space of prejudice or previous ideas anyway the image represents a moment of daily life that could be unrelated to any sociocultural context	I think it immediately brings to mind Moroccan culture	I don't think so	As I wrote above, I think that the photographs confirm the idea that people have of that geographical area and its inhabitants.	maybe? It might humanize them by showing an actual person instead	no		I believe that this shot should not lead to judging or analyzing the way of life of other populations to make comparisons, but should arouse emotion or disappointment for the way and context in which it was taken.	Not necessarily. As mentioned, the photo is rather neutral and shows everyday life.	Yes perhaps, giving emphasis on what an artistic culture they have and skilled people of their country.
	9. Finding out more										
	Did you try to find out more about the image and how or why it was made? If so, how did you do it and what information sources did you use?	No I didn't delve into it	the image was taken during a trip. The photographer reported the almost total lack of recognition of her ability to speak, answer, ask, moving daily through the streets of the city. From a European woman used to having a voice and being seen and recognized, to being completely or almost completely invisible and needing a male person at her side to be able to communicate.	No, I didn't search	Question 9 prompted me to do a quick search online, which resulted in the mule and the caftan.	no, I haven't	Yes I look at details. I am interested of the battery and what it is for.	Not yet, but at the first opportunity it will be interesting to see if my perspective is the same as the sensations experienced by the photographer.	I will consult with the artist to find out if what I have expressed reflects his intention.	No, I don't think it's possible, as the picture doesn't provide enough details to determine where it was taken, making it difficult to conduct further research on the situation.	I already had an idea, as I knew already they were taken in Morocco.
	10. Thinking back and looking forward										
a.	**There were some things which I approve of and these are my reasons ...**	I approve of the essentiality of it, the minimalism of the image, the colors, the light, but in particular what it represents	I really like that this is a woman's story and about a woman	I approve of the tranquility of the two gentlemen who talk to each other	The child playing in the street is certainly a lovely image. As is the image of the two adults chatting together.	I don't approve nor disapprove of anything, it's neutral to me	i get moved	I think I would have done the same things the Photographer did, with the freshness of her days and a great awareness.	As I have already said, photography brought me back to the past, making me curious about their present.	As mentioned earlier, I find the colors in the photo to be very beautiful, and all the elements are well aligned.	I think it is great to capture everyday life, to get the viewers thinking and perhaps also those who are not able to easily travel to these locations.

b.	**There were some things which I disapprove of and these are my reasons ...**	I don't disagree with anything	there is nothing that I disapprove	The treatment reserved for the donkey	What I disapprove of is the impression of indifference towards the poor little donkey who gives the impression of being abandoned (he is certainly not abandoned, but if he had a longer halter that allowed him greater movement, if he had a drinking trough and a feeding trough at his disposal and was free from the pack saddle, the impression would be different.	I don't approve nor disapprove of anything, it's neutral to me	I feel sad that he has to work so hard with bare hands	no	no	I did not come up with anything.	Could have been more engaging with direct eye contact, using the subject however this candid image also serves it' s purpose.
c.	**Try to imagine that you are telling someone you know well about the image. Do you think they would have the same opinions as you? Would they approve and disapprove of the same things for the same reasons?**	I think it depends on the character and on the way of living of who is watching, I'm not sure that everyone would react in the same way		It depends on who I decide to tell. Some may not share the extreme attention I have towards animals	I think he would tell me that the treatment of animals in certain cultures is not very sensitive.	I guess it would depend on the person I describe it to	yes, i think so	A photo can tell everything or nothing about a place you have visited, it much depends on the photographer's ability to make it interesting and non-trivial, at the same time a predisposition is needed to be able to read it in a critical and non-trivial way.	It is not certain because each of us interprets the image according to what we perceive and according to our own sensations.	I think they would appreciate how beautifully the contrasting colors emphasize each other and how well everything in the photo is aligned. However, they would not necessarily think about women's role in different cultures.	Some might think you should not take an image of someone without permission, however they are in a public area…I believe most would approve and have similar opinion as me.
d.	**Why might people you know well and who belong to the same group/culture as you have the same reactions as you?**	I don't think everyone would have the same reactions as me because it doesn't represent a fact or an objective reality	I think they might have a good opinion of who took the picture because the image is powerful	Because we have a common thought dictated by our culture: animals tend to be companions	Because the family I am part of and the people I hang out with have a similar approach to animals to mine.	if they have the same beliefs and biases then they might	Because after all we talk about work	Perhaps, but it is never a given, we live in a fickle and very impressionable society.	no	Colorful buildings are so rare in our country that people tend to admire them. Also, many of my clos- est people are aesthetics and thus sensitive to see the beauty in photos.	Because they would already realize that this is the reality of life for many.
e.	**Has seeing the image changed your thinking in any way? How?**	It hasn't changed my way of thinking but it certainly makes me think about the concept of loneliness, present moment and old age	has reconfirmed the stereotype linked to gender and profession	no changes	No, no change of mind.	just made me curious about the story behind it	I reflect more on the details and context	no	no	At least it got me thinking the female role in the sociaty and other cultures even wider than earlier.	No it has not, perhaps because I have had similar experiences.
f.	**Did you or will you do something as a result of seeing this image? If so, what?**	I'll definitely want to talk to the same photographer about her feelings, the moment of the shot and the things I wrote and heard	contact the people who made the image to tell them your thoughts and feelings about the image	I could try to show the image I chose to some people and see if their reaction is similar to mine	I'll probably talk to someone about the effects that mass dissemination of photos and videos can have.	try to find out the story behind the photo	No	When I have the opportunity I will be able to talk about this by analyzing and clarifying what has been stated in the previous points.	Talk to the person who took this shot to share and analyze your impressions.	contact the people who made the image to tell them about your own thoughts and feelings about the image	No, reaffirms that this is a very typical reality for most of the world.
g.	**Has doing this AIEVM changed you in any way? How?**	I think these questions will help me from now on to have a different look at the photographs I will meet, to ask myself different questions	I would stop a little longer to observe what is actually portrayed	no	No, no changes	don't know	yes, maybe	The images that the MEDIA transmit are fast and many times they do not give you a break, sometimes we limit ourselves to giving synthetic answers, rarely we stop to analyze the context as for the photo in question. The human mind is formidable, it collects all this information, puts it in the various drawers on standby and develops it most of the time with surprising results.	It brought me back to reality by reminding me that there are populations who live as we did several years ago.	I am now looking at photos more carefully and taking more time to reflect on my thoughts than I did before.	No, but it has put more emphasis and validation on my thought process.
h.	**Will you do something as a result of completing this AIEVM? If so, what will you do?**	After this AIEVM I won't do anything in particular, but I think I'll have a lot of the photography itself of what I'm looking for of a photo, of an image both to look at and to take myself, or the feeling without judgment	produce more images on the same theme	I will show it to other people	Maybe I'll share the photo with someone in my circle to see if my thoughts are shared	try to find out more about the photo	I will show it to friends and tell that the person who took it is a very good photographer		Congratulations to whoever took this shot	write to congratulate the people responsible for the image	#REF!

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