sciendo

Art History & Criticism / Meno istorija ir kritika 16
ISSN 1822-4555 (Print), ISSN 1822-4547 (Online)
https://doi.org/10.2478/mik-2020-0008

Tomas PABEDINSKAS
Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania

PERSONAL PHOTO ALBUM AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY: THE CASE OF ROMUALDAS POŽERSKIS' PHOTOGRAPHS AND DIARY

Summary. History and memory have been the conceptual core of many Lithuanian photography based contemporary art works as well as international curatorial art projects, including authors from different Baltic countries. On the one hand, this indicates the relevance of the subject related to photography and memory; on the other hand, it also shows the overexploitation of personal and historical memory in contemporary photography and in contemporary art in general.

In this context the article analyses Romualdas Požerskis' personal album photographs from the years 1971–1975 and his written diaries from the years 1965–1985. The photographs captured Požerskis' and his friends' leisure activities, mainly rides on motorcycles across Lithuania and one trip to Tallinn, Estonia. The diary reflects the key historical events of the time, describes Požerskis' attitude to it and reveals his personal emotional, intimate experiences. The beginning of the seventies was the time when the now famous Lithuanian photographer Požerskis was still a student, who did not consider himself a creative photographer. However, his photographs and diary from this period have been published in a book "Restless Riders" in 2017 putting this visual and written material in between the private and the public, and in between creative photography field and visual history of the country's past.

The aim of the article is to show how personal photography can help to restore or even create collective memory. To reach this aim the article addresses the respective tasks of explaining the importance of photography's emotional content in building up a collective memory and revealing how the way in which Požerskis' personal photo album and private diaries relate to collective memory is distinctive in the context of photography-based Baltic contemporary art.

The article claims that the "Restless Riders" case is different because of its emotional content unmediated by interdisciplinary presentation, art's conceptual framework or amendments to its visual form. Although it is impossible for the beholder to restore the emotional experience of the author, it is not difficult to let the photographs trigger his or her own memories or imaginary vision of the past. This in turn fills the personal story of photographer with emotion and lets it be seen as part of a liveable historical narrative. This narrative, visualized and made public has the potential to add up to the cultural myth, or in other words, common memory and assumptions, which support the identity of community and nation.

Keywords: personal photo album, memory, collective memory, alternative youth culture, hippies in Lithuania, Romualdas Požerskis.

INTRODUCTION

Photography as a medium has always been associated with memory. The photographic picture is by its nature a material trace from the past (no matter how recent or distant), created by light on light sensitive material. American poet and writer Oliver Wendell Holmes called photography a "mirror with a memory" already in 1859[1] and more recently authors such as French philosopher Roland Barthes[2] and American writer Susan Sontag[3] continued to study complex relations between photography, past and memory in their key texts. These relations turned even more complicated with the invention of digital photography; however the cultural habit of perceiving photography as a trace from the past still prevails in today's society.

Memory has also been the conceptual core of many Lithuanian photography-based contemporary art works. Some of them reflect the role of amateur photography in preserving or rather triggering personal memory. Gytis Skudžinskas' project "Album" (2013–2014) reflected on photography as material

object and treasured souvenir from the past, Arūnas Kulikauskas' series of photographs printed from found interwar negatives titled "Misty Dwell of The Past" (1989) provoked the thought about personal stories becoming part of History, and Antanas Dilys' series of found photographs "Recovered Memory" (2011) makes one feel how lost anonymous photographs can "address us and affect by their kitsch simplicity, their intimacy, and their unexpected resemblance to post-modern or conceptual photography".[4] There are even more examples of similar creative projects: performative "Burning Slides" by Aurelija Maknytė (2012– on-going) or Vitas Luckus' "A Take on Vintage Photography" (1969–1983).

Another part of art projects based on appropriation of non-art photography is related not to the personal, but to historical memory. These projects use not only personal amateur, but also documentary photography. Vytautas Stanionis junior's prints from his father's negatives for passports "Photographs for Documents" (1987), and Kęstutis Grigaliūnas' numerous projects (exhibitions and books) based on material from Soviet security service archives reflects a dramatic period of Lithuanian history after World War II. Deimantas Narkevičius' video work "Disappearance of a Tribe" (2005) traces the history of the socialist period in Lithuania through the author's father's personal photographs, and the Soviet past is also the subject of Indrė Šerpytytė's work "Pedestal" (2016), using photographs from Lithuanian Central State Archive.

Interest in memory appears in landmark curatorial projects, which summarize not only Lithuanian, but international tendencies in the field of contemporary photography. They reveal still another aspect of the subject – the regional specificity of personal and historical memory. The exhibition curated by Vytautas Michelkevičius "Generation of The Place: Image, Memory and Fiction in The Baltics" included works by young artists from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. "The narrative of memory and its relationship with the medium of photography has evolved as the most prominent thematic line"[5] of the exhibition, with the focus on the late Soviet and post-Soviet experience of one generation, born in Baltic countries between 1975 and 1985. There was also an earlier example of exploring regional memory through photography – the exhibition in Kiel (Germany) and publication "The Memory of Images: Baltic Photo Art Today"[6] in 1993.

Alongside the curators, researchers also focused on the relations between photographic images and memory in Lithuanian photography and contemporary art. Lithuanian photography critic and researcher Agnė Narušytė claims, that in the late '80s and early '90s "art" and documentary photography were equally important in the process of restoring historical memory. She also states that two decades later creative photography "reveals the imperfection of the process of remembrance and the imperfection of the photograph as the memory tool".[7] This in turn means the questioning of the very base of collective identity, according to Narušytė. Estonian art theoretician Peeter Linnap notes that photography took a similar role in Estonia: "memory, biography, and life stories of ordinary people were important for art in the 1990s".[8] On one hand he notes that enhanced interest in this subject was due to the previous political and ideological restrictions, which were characteristic of the former Soviet countries. On the other hand, he admits that it is "associated with the emergence of "small stories" instead of big narratives in our postmodernist age",[9] which relate to the Western culture and critique of the originality and objectivity of the image. Latvian art and photography historian Alise Tifentale pointed to the related tendencies in Latvia in the '90s: "curators and art historians engaged in a quest for "alternative" and "unofficial" art and attempted to make visible the oppressed art of the Soviet time"[10] including collections of photographs initially conceived as private diaries to be shared with closest friends. Thus, it seems, photography took the same role in all three Baltic countries: it helped to restore memory, but also to dismantle its great narratives.

In this context the article analyses Romualdas Požerskis' photographs from 1971 to 1975 (among them a few pictures taken by Požerskis' friend Zenonas Langaitis) and his written diaries from the years 1965–1985. The beginning of the seventies was the time when Požerskis was still a student, who did not consider himself a creative photographer,

although later in the same decade Požerskis debuted in the field of creative photography and soon became established as one of the best known representatives of the so-called Lithuanian School of Photography. It was essentially a humanist trend in photography with the emphasis on Lithuanian national identity and traditions, which dominated the Lithuanian photography scene from the 1960s until the beginning of the 1980s.

Požerskis' photographs and diary from the period prior to his creative debut have been published in a book "Restless Riders" (2017).[11] Originally photographs were meant only for the author's personal photo album and close circle of friends, and the diary – only for the author himself. The photographs captured Požerskis' and his friends' leisure activities such as parties and listening to music records, but mainly rides on motorcycles across Lithuania and one trip to Tallinn, Estonia. The diary, which covers a longer period of the author's life, reflects the key historical events of the time, describes Požerskis' attitude to it and reveals his emotional, intimate experiences. After this material was published in the book it balances between privacy and publicity, and between creative photography and visual history of the country's past. These visual and written personal stories became available for a relatively wide audience and supplemented the common imaginary of the period.

The 1970s were still a period of Soviet occupation in Lithuania, the country in which Požerskis was born and lives to this day. As anthropologist and researcher of alternative cultures of Soviet period Egidija Ramanauskaitė has mentioned, "over three decades that had passed since the start of the Soviet occupation, the political system had stabilized enough in Lithuania to give an external impression that the tension of Soviet life had eased and that society had become accustomed to living under new circumstances".[12] However, those who did not conform to the system or did not pretend loyalty to the regime still risked "expulsion from the Communist Youth League and thereby from any university position, or the loss of any future opportunity to study at one".[13] Despite this, since the late 1960s, pupils and students began to show a bold interest in Western culture, undermining the Soviet system in the process. Part of Lithuanian youth attempted to follow Western fashion, music and the hippie movement, which were restricted and at times suppressed by the Soviet regime.

On the one hand, the relevance of the analysis of photography's relation to the memory is manifest in above mentioned art projects and in the attention it has had from research over recent decades. On the other hand, it also indicates overexploitation of the personal and historical memory in contemporary photography and in the art context in general, especially when it comes to the Soviet period. So the general aim of the article is to show how personal photography can help to restore or even create collective memory. To reach this aim the article addresses the respective tasks of explaining the importance of photography's emotional content in building up a collective memory and revealing how the way in which Požerskis' personal photo album and private diaries relate to collective memory is distinctive in the context of photography-based Baltic contemporary art.

The analysis of questions related to photography is mainly based on the phenomenological insights of Barthes, which help to explain our relations to the past time and history mediated by photography. The explanation of collective memory is based on the writings of researcher and artist Svetlana Boym, who defines the different functions of historical memory in the present time. By linking both theoretical approaches it becomes possible to define relations and interactions between photography, personal and collective memory.

PHOTOGRAPHY'S EMOTIONAL CONTENT AS THE BASIS FOR COLLECTIVE MEMORY

It is worth discussing the photographs of "Restless Riders" in the context of the turn to studies of emotions or affect studies, which according to Danish researcher Mette Sandbye is an important tendency in the research of vernacular or amateur photography.[14] She argues that photography studies have been too much oriented towards semiological analysis and discourse critique. Sandbye proposes to focus on the perspective which aims to understand the affect, emotions and feelings as the essential

part of the cultural, social and political world and not only as the individual perception of the world not worth the analysis. Aesthetical analysis usual in the field of creative photography, a semiological approach or critique of ideology can present vernacular photography as excessive, that is, as the repetition of established social, cultural and visual schemes. But the analysis of emotional content and lived personal experience can help to see vernacular photography as unique in most cases. Barthes, who in spite being a semiotician took a phenomenological approach to photography in his book "Camera Lucida",[15] also represents this approach. He formulates the phenomenological theory of the ontology of photography, based on his own emotional response to certain photographs. These phenomenological insights by Barthes can also help to better understand Požerskis' photographs.

Of course there are photographs of "Restless Riders" which perfectly follow the stereotypes of amateur photography and express very conventional self-representation of rebellious youth (Fig. 1). But there are still more of Požerskis' and his friends' photographs which captured the emotional content and lived experience of the moment in spontaneous ways not complying with the established conventions and schemes of vernacular photography (Fig. 2). There are also plenty of mundane details, or in Barthes' words, "partial features", whose presence in a photograph can seem unimportant, but can trigger a strong emotion or revive the experience of the past (for instance, a back of a small mirror or a spool on the table) (Fig. 3). The technological "imperfection" of analogue photography itself can become this "partial feature" or a photograph's *punctum* (Fig. 4). It is also the sign of immediate recording of the reality, not restricted by the concepts of a "good" photograph. In the words of Barthes, such kind of photos can be called untamed photography. He argues that there are two ways to tame photography: the first consists of making photography into an art; the other means of taming the photograph is to generalize, banalize, make it widespread and belonging to a crowd consuming popular culture.[16] But in the case of "Restless Riders" it is hard to tame the photographs in either way: it is not art photography and the authors did not assume the role of the artists at the time. The photographs of the private



Fig. 1. Trip to Tallinn, by Romualdas Požerskis, 1972



Fig. 2. Zenon's Birthday, by Romualdas Požerskis, 1974



Fig. 3. Trip by the sea, by Zenonas Langaitis, 1973



Fig. 4. Easter, by Zenonas Langaitis, 1973

album were not, of course, meant for a broader audience and did not belong to the "society of the spectacle",[17] which in fact did not exist in Lithuania at that time. However, nor can one classify "Restless Riders" photographs as a common family photo album either, because they are too unconventional in terms of the captured events as well as the visual language of the photographs.

It is emotional content and more unconstrained visual recording of private life that separates the photographs of "Restless Riders" from the excessive repetition of the family album social conventions or from the creative canons of art photography. Such a kind of photography, if only its emotional content is convincing, seems unique and allows getting close to the individual experience of the photographed persons and a photographer him/herself. In this sense "Restless Riders" photographs are more related to the diaristic photography established in the creative field at the end of the '50s than to a family album. The best-known examples of such diaristic photography were created in the USA: Bruce Davidson's "Brooklyn Gang" (1959), Larry Clark's "Tulsa" (1971) and "Teenage Lust" (1983), and Nan Goldin's "The Ballad of Sexual Dependency" (1985). One example of such American photography – Danny Lyon's "The Bikeriders" (1968) was the inspiration for the book "Restless Riders". The title "Restless Riders", which originated together with the book, is also a retrospective reference to the alternative American culture of the '60s and its iconic movie "Easy Rider".

However, Požerskis' photographs and diaries, which tell the story of almost the same time, reveal the different political, social and cultural context in Lithuania during that period. Here the rebellion of the young guys riding their motorcycles could not be so overt as in the West. Individual freedom and youthful pride are often displayed in the background of the socialist regime (Fig. 5). In addition, the rebellion of "Restless Riders" is related not only to the desire for personal freedom, but also to patriotism and ideas about the independence of the Lithuania. The details of personal everyday life intertwine with political topicalities of the time in written diary too:



Fig. 5. Kaunas, by Zenonas Langaitis, 1972

> March 11, 1969
> The second trimester ended, and this trimester I already have four Cs. My Lithuanian teacher is really on my case – she even gave me two Cs for one homework assignment. I'm not going to school tomorrow – there's too much work. Apollo 9 has been up there for 8 days now. Good luck to them.[18]

> November 6, 1972
> The official holidays. Parades marching by, people walking around drunk, but I'm staying away from all that. How many "sheep" there are, rushing off to the demonstrations. Who the hell knows what they're thinking.
> What are these people thinking as they suck up to the authorities?
> Lots of friends at home again, but they grow tiresome. I want to run, get out of here – I can't do this any longer.[19]

The political situation of the time also had its consequences on the personal life of Požerskis. On May 14, 1972, in the second largest Lithuanian town Kaunas, in a small central park – a meeting place for the alternative long-haired youth of the time – nineteen-year old Romas Kalanta set himself on fire. Kalanta left the inscription in his notebook: "The regime is to blame for my death" and his self-sacrifice sparked a mass protest on the streets of Kaunas with calls for freedom for Lithuania. Požerskis photographed these anti-Soviet demonstrations and because of that he was arrested and dropped out of the Kaunas Polytechnic Institute, where he was studying. Požerskis was arrested on the street

while photographing the demonstration and taken straight to the militia headquarters. The photographer was interrogated and on the next day taken to the court where he was sentenced to 15 days incarceration for the official cause of hooliganism. On the same occasion Požerskis was accused of anti-Soviet views and suspended from his studies for one year.

Sandbye argues that articulation of the emotional content of experience helps to create personal history and individual identity. But can such a kind of visual and written self-reflection help to turn private memory into collective memory, which in turn has the potential to become the basis for communal or national identity? Personal photography full of emotional as well as political, historical content allows one to overcome the distance of history, which, according to Barthes, is usually emphasized by photography. He argues that it is History which separates us from many of the photographs, and History is simply that time when we were not born. Barthes argues that History "is constituted only if we […] look at it – and in order to look at it we must be excluded from it".[20] But due to its private origin and obvious emotional content, the photographs of "Restless Riders" do not exclude the viewers from the recorded times, but on the contrary – mentally involve them in it. History is no longer a sequence of facts, but a lived experience for the viewer. Thus photography, which can seem too personal or too mundane to be relevant for broader interest, really can fill History with the content of human experience and restore its continuity and links to the present time.

However, what these photographs restore is not national memory. It rather creates a framework for the collective memory. According to Boym "collective memory […] is not the same as national memory, even when they share images and quotations". Boym explains, that "national memory tends to make a single teleological plot out of shared everyday recollections", whereas "collective memory can be seen as a playground […] of multiple individual recollections". The author also claims, that "one remembers best what is coloured by emotion. Moreover, in the emotional topography of memory, personal and historical events tend to be conflated".[21] This is precisely what photographs and diaries of "Restless Riders" do: they show and tell personal stories, in the background of historical events. Not only the above quoted diary, but also the pictures themselves flatten the personal and the mundane with the historical and political. Photographs do that even more effectively than a written text, which is associated with more abstract imaginary and ideas, than visual culture "focused on individual and mundane details of existence".[22] For example, one of the photographs seemingly shows a very mundane situation – three motorcyclists fuelling their motorbikes in some backyard (Fig. 6). But in the same photograph one can see flowers that decorate the handlebars of the motorbike and the inscription "Lithuania" in English on the fender of the wheel. These small self-made details undoubtedly had huge political meaning at the time the photograph was taken: the flowers were attributes of the then oppressed Western hippy culture and the writing "Lithuania" pointed to the resistance to the Soviet regime and the striving for national state and independence. So here, in this situation the mundane, the personal and the historical intertwine inseparably and all are embedded in an immediate, actual moment of reality.

Can this kind of collective memory, dispersed through different personal stories, nevertheless constitute the common base for the identity of community or even a nation? In Soviet times, the photographs captured the "potential space of cultural experience that one has shared with one's friends and compatriots that is based neither on nation nor religion but on elective affinities"[23] – a space that was missing in official state or public life discourse. Not only the motorbike rides united photographer's friends, they also were drawn to Western alternative



Fig. 6. Trips across Lithuania, by Romualdas Požerskis, 1973

youth culture. Illegal rock music recordings, self-made hippie-style jackets and jeans, and tuned motorbikes carried enormous symbolic value associated with personal freedom and disobedience to the Soviet regime. These ideas and values united the informal youth group, which created its own alternative cultural and social space.

Nowadays, the photographs of "Restless Riders" and Požerskis' diaries can constitute the communal identity retroactively. For instance, the publication of the book "Restless Riders" became the occasion for some of its characters to meet again after the 40 years break and get surprised that they are related to bikers' subculture now, although they had not thought of themselves as bikers when they were riding their motorcycles. Perhaps in the same way photography can unite the strangers belonging to one nation, by visualizing recognizable, if not personally lived, experiences. Photographs may not tell one history, but they can build a common reference for personal stories. The same pictures can trigger the remembrance of individual and different experience: one can just revive the memory of youthful parties and travels through Lithuania, another one can remember the excitement of listening to illegal music recordings and still others will link these reminiscences with the resistance to the Soviet regime. The young generation of the present time can feel "reflective nostalgia"[24] for the times they have never lived, or just play with the signs of the past to connect it to their own present and future (which is quite common in today's pop culture of "nostalgia […]" or "misty memories" and "false recognition"[25] of past experience). In any case, to put it in Boym's words, "Restless Riders" photographs can form a "playground of multiple individual recollections".

In the case of Požerskis this playground is marked by the ideas of nationalism, Lithuanian identity and political freedom. Photographs have captured inscriptions "Lietuva" or "Lithuania" on the bikers' helmets (Fig. 7) and motorbike fenders, and the diary is full of evidence about how important the national identity, the political independence and cultural resistance were for the young men whose life was preserved in then personal images and writings. "We need to be guided by our intellect and



Fig. 7. Zapyškis, by Romualdas Požerskis, 1974

watch how free people live. We have to be loyal to our Homeland, condemn and destroy those who exploit us. We need to love freedom and aspire to it every day",[26] – wrote Požerskis back in 1972. Today all that seems as one of many possible, if somehow idealized, stories on preserving national identity and the idea of independent Lithuanian state. However, this kind of personal story should not be evaluated in terms of objectivity, nor should it be judged as true or false. It should rather be seen as "cultural myths, […] shared assumptions that help to naturalize history and makes it liveable, providing the daily glue of common intelligibility".[27]

POŽERSKIS' PERSONAL STORY IN THE CONTEMPORARY ART FIELD

Building a cultural myth is also what makes "Restless Riders" photographs and accompanying diary different from many other art projects, based on amateur or documentary photography. Cultural myth, in this case, is not based so much on ideology, but on the emotional content of the photographs and text, on emotional experience, which makes history seem

natural and "alive". Even when made public in the book or in the exhibition these photographs and texts remain essentially a diary, not completely converted into art project neither in terms of form or concept. Therefore emotions also remain embedded here and the viewer is not deferred from sentimental perception of visual and written material.

In contrast, many other art projects based on the use of non-art photography tend rather to deconstruct myths related to the history of Lithuania or Baltic countries and encourage viewers to keep emotional distance and engage in critical reflection. Amateur photography used in art projects, although personal, is often detached from the actual person and his or her life story. Without this immediate context of images a viewer cannot get psychologically immersed in imaginary (visual and at the same time imagined) emotional content of the photographs. The work of Skudžinskas, Kulikauskas, Dilys, Maknytė, and Luckus can exemplify this approach. Here photography is either anonymous or made into material for further performative or visual works. Narkevičius even composes family album photographs (still images) into video film (moving image) and creates his own, secondary narrative out of his father's photo album, creating a sentimental, but at the same time detached, perspective on the historic and personal past.

Šerpytytė recontextualizes documentary photography by juxtaposing pictures from different time periods and giving them an "artistic" form of spatial installation. Grigaliūnas also presents photographs from archival documents as installations, but remains quite faithful to the original images, just reproducing them without any significant intrusion. V. Stanionis junior is the one who consciously steps back as an author and makes almost no formal contribution to his father's (Vytautas Stanionis the elder) passport photographs, except for enlarging prints directly from film, not cut or cropped as they were supposed to appear in actual documents. In terms of making no visual changes to photographs and not using interdisciplinary forms of its presentation as well as retaining the immediate link to his father's personal story as well as his own childhood memories, Stanionis' work could be thought to be closest to the discussed "Restless Riders" photographs. However, the very nature, purpose and form of documentary photography cannot equal a personal amateur photo album in terms of emotional expression. It records appearance and identifies, but is not supposed to capture the personality or experience of the sitter.

Curatorial projects "The Memory of Images: Baltic Photo Art Today" and "Generation of The Place: Image, Memory and Fiction in The Baltics" included the authors already established as creative photographers in the art field. The latter, characteristically of contemporary art, was critical not only towards memory, but also the photography medium itself: "[...] in this project I inquire how photography conveys time and space in a post-documentary world, in which all images are indeed constructed",[28] – stated curator Vytautas Michelkevičius.

Clearly, this kind of art project encourages reflection, but is not meant to trigger viewers' memory. Through its critical attitude the majority of contemporary art projects create emotional distance from History or even personal histories, rather than relate it to the present time and collective memory. Photography-based art projects do not build up cultural myths, but rather deconstruct them and thus do not aim or have potential to maintain or create collective memory, or communal or national identity.

CONCLUSION

In the context of Lithuanian and Baltic art works or photography-based projects "Restless Riders" photographs and Požerskis' diary are different because of their emotional content unmediated by interdisciplinary presentation, art's conceptual framework or amendments to its visual form. Apart from transfer from private to public field it has no other intentional reference to the art field or conceptual frame as an artwork. Thus it addresses the viewer without any reservation or pretension with regard to its nature, initial purpose and present status. Although it is impossible for the beholder to restore the emotional experience of the author, it is not difficult to let the photographs trigger his or her own memories or imaginary vision of the past. This in turn fills the personal story told through pictures and diary with emotion and allows

it to be seen as part of liveable historical narrative. This narrative, visualized and made public, has the potential to add up to the cultural myth, or in other words – common memory and assumptions, which support the identity of community and nation.

References

Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography*. London: Vintage, 2000.

Boym, Svetlana. *The Future of Nostalgia*. New York: Basic Books, 2001.

Debord, Guy. *Spektaklio visuomenė*. Kaunas: Kitos knygos, 2006.

Dobriakov, Jurij. *Normalios anomalijos*. Jonava: VšĮ Nerutina, 2017.

Holmes, Oliver Wendell. "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph". *The Atlantic*. June 1859. https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1859/06/the-stereoscope-and-the-stereograph/303361/.

Kinčinaitis, Virginijus. "Melancholy of Programmed Images". In Algirdas Musneckis. *Recovered Memory*, edited Gintara Česonis, 41–46. Kaunas: Kauno fotografijos galerija, 2011.

Michelkevičius, Vytautas. "Foreword: Why are We Together and in (Our Own) Place?". In *Generation of The Place: Image, Memory and Fiction in The Baltics*, edited Vytautas Michelkevičius, 11–18. Vilnius: Mene, 2011.

Narušytė, Agnė. *Lietuvos fotografija: 1990–2010*. Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2000.

Peeter Linnap. "Estonian photography". In *The History of European Photography III. 1970–2000*, edited Vaclav Macek, 224–241. Bratislava: Central European House of Photography, 2016.

Požerskis, Romualdas. *Restless Riders*, edited Tomas Pabedinskas. Kaunas: Lietuvos fotomenininkų sąjungos Kauno skyrius, 2017.

Ramanauskaitė, Egidija, 2017. "Ideological Fissures in the Soviet Era". In *Restless Riders*, edited Tomas Pabedinskas, 14–17. Kaunas: Lietuvos fotomenininkų sąjungos Kauno skyrius.

Sandbye, Mette. "Looking at the family photo album: a resumed theoretical discussion of why and how". *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture*. 6:1, 25419. 2014, doi: 10.3402/jac.v6.25419.

Sontag, Susan. *Apie fotografiją*. Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2000.

The Memory of Images: Baltic Photo Art Today. Edited B. Straka, K. Nievers. Kiel: Nieswand Verlag, 1993.

Tifentale, Alise. "The History of Latvian Photography". In *The History of European Photography III. 1970–2000*, edited Vaclav Macek, 438–449. Bratislava: Central European House of Photography, 2016.

Žukauskienė, Odeta and Gaižutytė-Filipavičienė, Žilvinė. *Atminties ir žvilgsnio trejektorijos: vaizdo kultūros refleksija*. Vilnius: Lietuvos kultūros tyrimų institutas, 2018.

Notes

1 Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph", *The Atlantic*, June (1859), https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1859/06/the-stereoscope-and-the-stereograph/303361/.

2 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography* (London: Vintage, 2000).

3 Susan Sontag, *Apie fotografiją* (Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2000).

4 Virginijus Kinčinaitis, "Melancholy of Programmed Images", in Algirdas Musneckis, *Recovered Memory*, ed. G. Česonis (Kaunas: Kauno fotografijos galerija, 2011), 43.

5 Vytautas Michelkevičius, "Foreword: Why are We Together and in (Our Own) Place?", in *Generation of The Place: Image, Memory and Fiction in The Baltics*, ed. V. Michelkevičius, (Vilnius: Mene, 2011), 13.

6 *The Memory of Images: Baltic Photo Art Today*, ed. B. Straka, K. Nievers (Kiel: Nieswand Verlag, 1993).

7 Agnė Narušytė, *Lietuvos fotografija: 1990–2010* (Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2011), 32.

8 Peeter Linnap, "Estonian photography", in *The History of European Photography III. 1970–2000*, ed. V. Macek (Bratislava: Central European House of Photography, 2016), 237.

9 Peeter Linnap, "Estonian photography", 237.

10 Alise Tifentale, "The History of Latvian Photography", in *The History of European Photography III. 1970–2000*, ed. V. Macek (Bratislava: Central European House of Photography, 2016), 446.

11 Romualdas Požerskis, *Restless Riders*, ed. T. Pabedinskas (Kaunas: Lietuvos fotomenininkų sąjungos Kauno skyrius, 2017).

12 Egidija Ramanauskaitė, "Ideological Fissures in the Soviet Era", in *Restless Riders*, ed. T. Pabedinskas (Kaunas: Lietuvos fotomenininkų sąjungos Kauno skyrius, 2017), 14.

13 Ibid.

14 Mette Sandbye, "Looking at the family photo album: a resumed theoretical discussion of why and how", *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* (2014), doi: 10.3402/jac.v6.25419.

15 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography*.

16 Ibid., 117–118.

17 Guy Debord, *Spektaklio visuomenė* (Kaunas: Kitos knygos, 2006).

18 Romualdas Požerskis, *Restless Riders*, 42.

19 Romualdas Požerskis, *Restless Riders*, 48.

20 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography,* 65.

21 Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 63–65.

22 Odeta Žukauskienė and Žilvinė Gaižutytė-Filipavičienė, *Atminties ir žvilgsnio trejektorijos: vaizdo kultūros refleksija* (Vilnius: Lietuvos kultūros tyrimų institutas, 2018), 14.

23 Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, 64.

24 Ibid., 61.

25 Jurij Dobriakov, *Normalios anomalijos*, Jonava: VšĮ Nerutina, 2017, 87.

26 Romualdas Požerskis, *Restless Riders*, 48.

27 Svetlana Boym, 65.

28 Vytautas Michelkevičius, "Foreword: Why are We Together and in (Our Own) Place?", 16.

Tomas PABEDINSKAS
Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas, Kaunas, Lietuva

ASMENINIS FOTOALBUMAS IR KOLEKTYVINĖ ATMINTIS: ROMUALDO POŽERSKIO FOTOGRAFIJŲ IR DIENORAŠČIO ATVEJIS

Santrauka

Istorija ir atmintis yra daugelio fotografija pagrįstų Lietuvos šiuolaikinio meno kūrinių ir Baltijos šalių autorius įtraukusių tarptautinių kuratorių projektų konceptuali šerdis. Viena vertus, tai parodo su atmintimi ir fotografija susijusių temų aktualumą; kita vertus, atskleidžia perdėtą asmeninės ir istorinės atminties eksploatavimą šiuolaikinėje fotografijoje ir bendrai šiuolaikiniame mene.

Šiame kontekste straipsnyje analizuojamos Romualdo Požerskio 1971–1975 m. asmeninio albumo fotografijos ir jo 1965–1985 m. rašyti dienoraščiai. Aštuntojo dešimtmečio pradžioje R. Požerskis – dabar žinomas Lietuvos fotografas – dar buvo studentas ir nelaikė savęs fotomenininku. Tačiau to laikotarpio jo fotografijos ir dienoraštis 2017 m. buvo publikuoti knygoje „Neramūs keliautojai“ ir įgyjo „tarpinį“ statusą, balansuojantį tarp privatumo ir viešumos, kūrybinės fotografijos ir šalies praeities vizualios istorijos. Taigi straipsnio tikslas yra dvejopas: parodyti, kaip fotografija gali padėti atkurti ar net sukurti kolektyvinę atmintį, ir atskleisti, kuo R. Požerskio atvejis išsiskiria nemeninės fotografijos panaudojimu pagrįsto šiuolaikinio meno lauke.

Straipsnyje teigiama, kad „Neramių keliautojų“ atvejis yra išskirtinis dėl emocinio turinio, kurį žiūrovas suvokia tiesiogiai – tarp jo ir pirminių, megėjiškų nuotraukų neįsiterpiant taprdisciplininiam atvaizdų pateikimui, meno konceptualaus suvokimo gairėms ar fotografijų vizualios formos pakeitimams. Nors suvokėjas negali atkurti autoriaus emocinės patirties, nesunku leisti fotografijoms pažadinti paties suvokėjo nuosavus prisiminimus ar įsivaizduojamą praeities viziją. Tai, savo ruožtu, asmeninę fotografo istoriją pripildo emocijomis ir leidžia ją pamatyti kaip gyvą istorinį naratyvą. Šis naratyvas, įkūnytas vaizduose ir tapęs viešas, gali prisidėti prie kultūrinio mito ar, kitaip tariant, prie bendros atminties ir įsitikinimų, kurie palaiko bendruomenės ir tautos tapatybę.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: asmeninis fotoalbumas, atmintis, kolektyvinė atmintis, alternatyvi jaunimo kultūra, hipiai Lietuvoje.

Gauta: 2020-04-06
Parengta spaudai: 2020-07-14

PhD Tomas PABEDINSKAS
Associate professor, the Head of Department of Contemporary Arts,
Vytautas Magnus University, Faculty of Arts
Muitinės g. 7-204, LT 44280 Kaunas
E-mail: tomas.pabedinskas@vdu.lt