

**AN INVESTIGATION OF SYRIAN
CONFLICT
PHOTOGRAPHY ON FLICKR**

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**AN INVESTIGATION OF SYRIAN
CONFLICT
PHOTOGRAPHY ON FLICKR**

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Abstract

This thesis contains a detailed study of Syrian activist photography group, Lens Young Dimashqi. LYD's depiction of the Syrian conflict, from 2012 to present, is boosted by the increased connectivity fostered by social media. Using image-based social media site Flickr, LYD provide a rare and unique insight into the country's conflict, particularly in Damascus where the group are based.

The case study provides an opportunity to interrogate the practices of amateur photography in conflict zones, how these practices differ from that of professionals, and the access to potential audiences and networks enabled by Flickr. To further understand this media landscape, this research comparatively examines the professional global digital media company, Getty Images. The research therefore engages in debates about the role of 'citizen as witness', the blurring boundaries between professional and amateur, and the place of social media in news-making.

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1. Introduction

“In revolutions the camera becomes a weapon no less important than any other”

(The Creative Memory of the Syrian Revolution)

Photographs have altered the way people witness events, playing a pivotal role in the conduct of war and peace, and shaping public understanding and memories of critical events (Anden-Papadopoulos, 2013: 755). It was in the interwar years between 1918 -1939 that photojournalism was established as a widespread practice in newsprint media (Allan, 2011). Understood broadly as a process of visual ‘documentation and storytelling’ (Griffin, 1999), photojournalism has not historically received the scholarly attention it deserves. However, through technological advancements in the late 1990s and early 2000s, as well as spectacular global events such as 9/11 and the Boxing Day Tsunami 2004, the availability and power of visual information has significantly shifted photojournalistic practices. The increased accessibility and use of digital cameras, camcorders and camera-phones has seen the increase of ‘ordinary citizens’ participating in making news, and amateur photography and video ‘have become a powerful and problematic’ source for professional news organisations (Anden-Papadopoulos and Pantti, 2011).

The development and power of the Internet has been crucial to the global distribution of photographic images. Roberts (2005: 2, cited in Schwalbe et al, 2015: 465) argues that the internet, with regards to photojournalism, “has turned solid ‘gates’ into little more than screen doors”, whereby photos and news stories are no longer in total control of the traditional gatekeeper, as there are now more routes through people can gain news related information. This is particularly down to the development of social networking sites, which have allowed for the circulation of images through audience-to-audience sharing, where content is (to some extent) controlled by the user (Schwalbe, Silcock, and Candello, 2015). It is important to keep in mind however, that

whilst Roberts (2005) and Schwalbe et al (2015) are right to say access to news has become more 'democratic', that a lot of the news people encounter through social media sites has its original source in the professional news media.

However, potential for such 'networking' (Castells, 2010), testimony, witnessing and activism by non-professional actors has led some scholars to investigate the role of the public in crisis and conflict photography, and question the conventional rigidity of the boundary between professional and amateur photographers. Some of the most important images of disaster and conflict in the 21st century have been taken by 'average citizens' (Anden-Papadopoulos and Pantti, 2011), such as the 9/11 attacks (2001), the London Bombings (2005), and more recently the Arab Spring (2011), through which capturing images has become a 'ritualised response' to crisis and conflict (Mortensen, 2014).

In order to further an understanding of the constantly changing landscape of photojournalism and its relationship to social media, this dissertation will investigate the photographic practices of Syrian-based activist photography group Lens Young Dimashqi (LYD) on the image-focused social media site, Flickr. Because of a government imposed media blackout in Syria, and the lack of access to the country for international journalists, LYD provide a rare and unique insight into the country's conflict, particularly in the capital of Damascus where they are based. The case study provides an opportunity to ask questions about the practices of amateur photography in conflict, how these practices differ from professional practices, and the access to potential audiences, networking and archiving enabled by Flickr. To further understand this media landscape and the nature of the change in practices, this research comparatively examines the professional global digital media company Getty Images. As an organisation that "serves over 1.5 million customers in over 200

countries worldwide”¹, it is suitable to compare practices and to interrogate the mechanisms of LYD on Flickr and Getty Images. In asking such questions, this research furthers some of the key debates about the role of the ‘citizen as witness’, the blurring and shifting boundaries between professional, amateur, activist, and the place of social media in news-making. This is demonstrated through a number of overlapping similarities found between LYD and Getty Images, such as the reproduction of iconographic stereotypes of war in LYD, and the presence of a number of Syrian photographers in Getty’s Syrian conflict collection.

Before I continue, I want to briefly explain a number of the key terms (though this will be done in more detail in the literature review). These are amateur, professional and activist. The term ‘amateur’ is commonly associated with ‘witnessing’ (Allan, 2011), and is practiced by ‘ordinary individuals’ who may take pictures as a hobby, or are ‘compelled’ to do so as a passer-by to an event. Work by the likes of Allan (2011) on amateur photographers has sought to define them as fundamentally different to professional photographers, as the former are seen not to be trained, whilst the latter adhere to strict rules and regulations as part of their occupation. However, scholars agree (Allan, 2011; Anden-Papadopoulos and Pantti, 2011) that the application of such terms in dichotomous ways is done so loosely at times, and there is no longer a clear-cut binary between them. Activists, or ‘digital activists’ (Mortensen, 2011), who are the focus of this research, arguably sit at the intersection of professional and amateur, as they are partisan (amateur) rather than supposedly objective (professional), though engage at a semi-professional level (Mortensen, 2011) and are often competent photographers (Ashuri and Pinchevski, 2009). In many cases, they also produce images for distribution via global media, are committed to a cause, and gain access to areas and issues that professional cannot (Mortensen, 2011).

¹ <http://wherewestand.gettyimages.com> - accessed 22nd May 2016

Scholarly work (Poell and Borra, 2012; Faulkner, forthcoming 2016) has therefore paid attention to the role of activists who use social media. Activist collectives are not new to the 21st century, and have been ever-growing communities who have grown from oppression, racism, and violations of the basic right to freedom. For example, Afrapix was set up in South Africa in the anti-apartheid years during the 1980s. It was a documentary photographers' collective and photo agency established by a small group of black and white political activists (Badsha and Hughes, 1985)². Additionally, the ActiveStills collective was established in 2005 and is made up of Israeli, Palestinian and international photographers who have a 'strong conviction that photography is a vehicle for social and political change'³. These kinds of activist collectives preceded the emergence of digital photography and the distribution of photographs through the Internet, and are communities which have used photography as a tool to narrate their story. Furthermore, the case of LYD demonstrates that their activism is boosted by the increased connectivity fostered by social media. These kinds of agencies have created a new arena for the dissemination of alternative pictures, and social media has given activists new possibilities and a direct interaction with the audience through which they can carve out alternative space for their political photography.

1.1. Research Design

LYD's relatively small collection of 223 images on Flickr, uploaded to the site from June 2012 to February 2016, were first of all categorised into groups including 'children', 'guns and men', and 'everyday life', with each image analysed for different formal and content-related qualities. The group's comparatively small collection of photographs allowed for an in-depth analysis of their visual representation of the conflict.

² <http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/afrapix> - accessed July 2016.

³ <http://www.activestills.org/about.php> accessed July 2016

Because of the large number of images of the Syrian conflict on Getty, the most active month on LYD's Flickr site has been selected for comparison. This is the month of October 2014, yielding 6,172 images from the Getty Images site. As this is still a large number of photographs, a sampling process that selected every 4th produced a more manageable 1,543 images. These were categorised into groups, noting both overlapping and diverging themes in comparison to LYD's Flickr images.

1.1.1. Lens Young Dimashqi

LYD formed in June 2012 amidst the aftermath of the Arab Spring of 2011 in Syria, which saw a revolutionary wave of demonstrations and protests, provoking reactions from the Assad government, and a civil war, which is still at the time of writing going on. LYD are one of many activist groups working in Syria who have taken to social media to express solidarity with the revolution, or anti-Assad sentiments. They include the Aleppo Media Centre, Youssef from the side and Young Syrian Lenses to just name a few (Halasa, Omareen, and Mahfoud, 2014). LYD began with just 5 photographers, before expanding to around 20 during the first few months. As a group of young photographers, they formed as a collective with members from across the country coming together under the prefix, Lens Young, followed by the name of the city e.g. Lens Young Dimashqi (Damascus) and Lens Young Homs (Homs). Provoked by the media blackout in the country and propagandistic reporting of state media LYD set up accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Google+ and Instagram. The decision by LYD to use social media, is suggestive of both the attraction of social media for activists as a direct communication with audiences, and opportunities that are available, as social media is likely the only viable option through which to distribute their imagery.

The subjects photographed vary from the landscape of Syria, the destruction of homes, to shelling, bombing, casualties and death. However, all of the images are uploaded under the same rules "they will contribute to informing the world

about what is happening in Syria”⁴. Furthermore, images are recorded on mobile phones, tablets, as well as DSLR cameras, and provide an alternative to traditional forms of news reporting, enabled through these diverse ways of capturing images, and distribution via social media.

1.1.2. Getty Images

Getty Images is a supplier of images for businesses, with over 80 million images available to customers. It also has one of the largest collections of images of the Syrian conflict, and so it can be judged as setting a photojournalistic industry standard for the reportage of the Syrian conflict. They supply stock images for businesses and consumers, as well as working with photojournalists to supply photographs for the news, at a fee for distribution. They are a profit-orientated organisation. Their three main markets are creative professionals (advertising and graphic design), the media (print and online publishing), and corporate (in-house design, marketing and communication departments). They function as a successful and wide-reaching business with ‘250,000’ photographers and ‘content creators and hundreds of media and content partners’, with ‘2,000 global employees in more than 20 offices around the world’ uploading images to their main site daily (<http://www.gettyimages.co.uk>: accessed 27th May 2016). They have a team of contemporary press photographers and they also work in a broker relationship with other outlets such as Anadolu Agency and AFP, whereby they redistribute the images produced by different photographers who work for the different wires services (Gursel, 2016). Unlike LYD, Getty Images photography of the Syrian conflict does not tell one homogenous story, as different photographers’ visual narratives and practices are pooled in one place, are circulated through other outlets, and made into ‘news’ through appearance in particular publications (Hill and Schwartz, 2015: 207).

⁴ (<http://dimashqilens.com/en>).

The thesis will first of all detail the relevant literature, in order to engage with some of the key scholarly debates in this area of work, and highlight where this research sits in relation to it, as well as to provide points of departure. I will then set out the methodology for the research, detailing the sampling and analytical methods used to conduct a comparison between the LYD and Getty, before getting into the two substantive chapters. The first of these will analyse LYD on Flickr, and the group's most important themes and categories, whilst the second will compare this practice with Getty Images representation of the Syrian conflict.

1.2 Locating LYD

Before I go on however, I want to give some geographical context to LYD. Here I will consider the work LYD in Damascus and the surrounding areas in spatial terms, quantifying the most common parts of the city they document, and pinpointing these locations on a map. This will give a better sense of the geographies of LYD, as well as activist photography more broadly, particularly in a war zone as they move around and cover much of the city, whilst other parts are left undocumented due to occupation by enemy forces. This mapping exercise is not intended to give concrete answers to how and why LYD document different parts of the city, but to pose some questions about the (limited) geographies of LYD and activist photographers, and how this may affect the content of their imagery. In order to collect this data, I relied largely on location tagging that accompanies images on Flickr, as well as mentions of place names in descriptions, plotting these locations on an ordinary satellite map of Damascus, using Map Fling.

The graphs below show that in 2012, shortly after the start of the uprising, LYD predominantly photographed Old Damascus and the Centre of the city due to the eruption of protests there, and the epicentre of the ensuing revolution. As the graph demonstrates, this begins to change into 2013 and 2014 as the list of places in which LYD are active becomes longer, and certain places more

frequently documented, particularly Jobar, Barzeh, and Hameh. This shows a movement east, following the Free Syrian Army, and away from regime control of West Damascus. Geography therefore, if the images did not already, suggests the status/position of the group as activists: they avoid the government in favour of the relative safety and protection of the Free Syrian Army.

Figure A: Annual Count of Image Locations

2012		
Barzeh, near Damascus	1	
Jobar, Damascus	1	
Old Damascus	2	
Damascus City Center	2	
Zamlaka, located in Gouta near Damascus	1	
		7
2013		
Jobar, Damascus	4	
Qaboun, Damascus	1	
Daryya, Damascus	1	
Gouta	2	
City Center, Damascus	1	
		9
2014		
Al Yarmouk – Damascus	1	
Al Yarmouk Camps – Damascus	8	
Gouta Damascus	11	
Yalda (South Damascus)	4	
Babila (South Damascus)	1	
Jobar	27	
Qaboun	3	
Barzeh	23	
Between Jobar and Zamilka	1	
Qaboun - Eastern Damascus	8	
Zamika	2	
Techreen	1	
Daryya	1	
South of Damascus	4	
Douma (Eastern Gouta)	13	
Damascus - Syria	3	
Old Damascus	5	
Ein Tarma	1	

Tadamoun	1	
Dukhanyeh	1	
Jadedet Artouz	1	
Daryya	1	
None	3	124

2015

Qasioun – Damascus		1
Jobar		4
Douma		7
Darrya		7
Bait-Sahem		1
Gouta		6
Yarmouk Camp		4
Qaboun		2
Damascus City Centre		1
Al-Qaboun		1
Doma		4
Eastern Ghouta		12
South of Damascus		7
Ain Turma		1
Al Hameh		1
Old Damascus		1
Eintarma		1
Teliani		1
Abu Rumaneh		1
Hameh		1
		64

Figure B: Map of Damascus

(<http://geocrusader80.blogspot.co.uk/2013/02/mapping-damascus-over-time.html>)

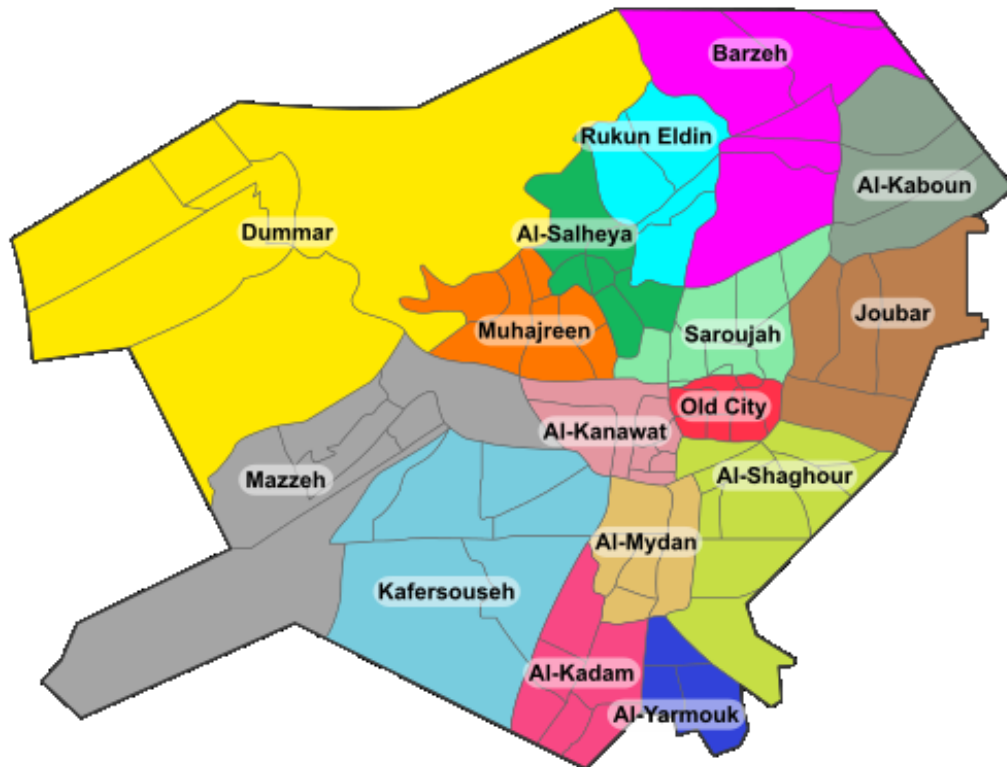


Figure C: Overall Location Count (2012-2015)

Abu Rumaneh	1
Ain Turma	1
Al Hameh	1
Al Yarmouk Camps - Damascus	13
Al-Qaboun	1
Babila (South Damascus)	1
Bait-Sahem	1
Barzeh, near Damascus	24
Between Jobar and Zamilka	1
Damascus - Syria	3

Damascus City Center	4
Daryya, Damascus	10
Doma	4
Douma (Eastern Gouta)	20
Dukhanyeh	1
Eastern Ghouta	12
Ein Tarma	1
Gouta	19
Hameh	1
Jadedet Artouz	1
Jobar, Damascus	36
None	3
Old Damascus	9
Qaboun - Eastern Damascus	10
Qasioun – Damascus	3
South of Damascus	11
Tadamoun	1
Techreen	1
Teliani	1
Yalda (South Damascus)	4
Zamlaka, located in Gouta near Damascus	3

Figure D: Bar Chart of Overall Location Count (2012-2015)

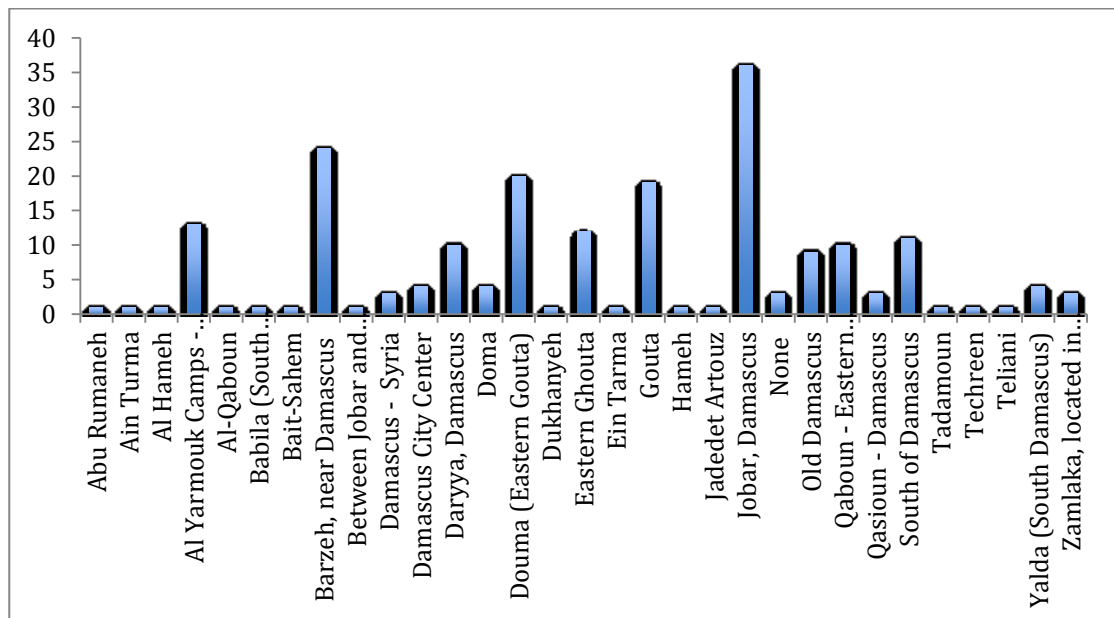
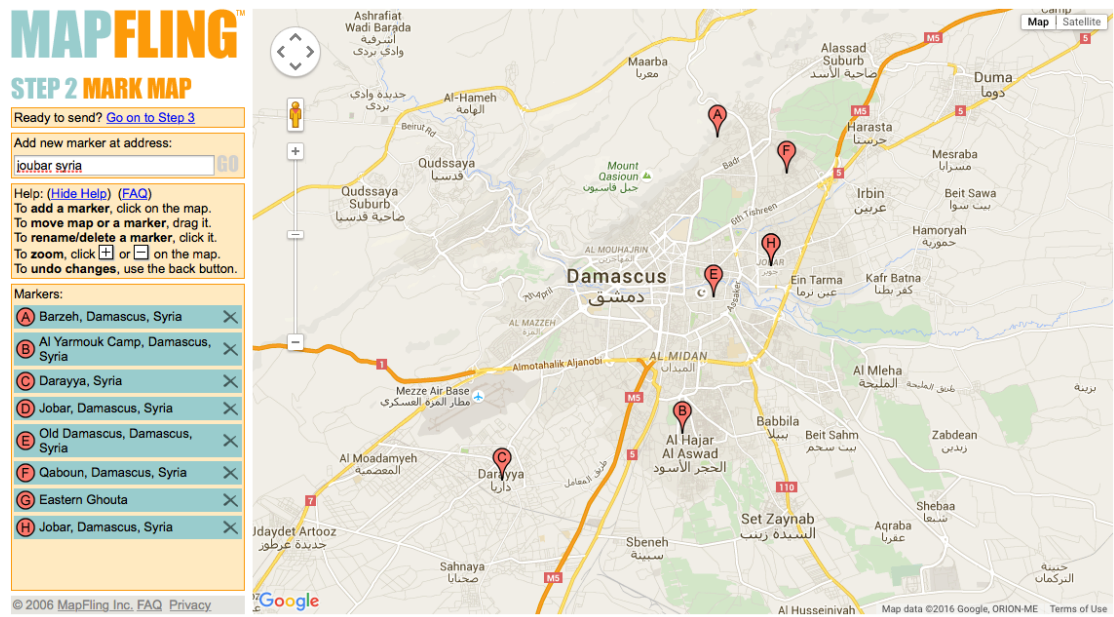


Figure E: Map of Damascus (Map Fling)



2. Literature Review

Diverse photographic and journalistic practices have been made available through access to technology, the growth of social media, and the influence of both of these things in news making. As Mortensen writes, “some of the past years’ most widely disseminated, most debated and most spectacular images have been produced and distributed by non-professionals” (Mortensen, 2014: 143). As a result, many scholars (Allan, 2013; Allan and Thorsen, 2014; Anden-Papadopoulos, 2014; Mortensen, 2014) have sought to intervene and attempt to define this diverse plethora of photographic practices as ‘amateur’, ‘professional’, ‘citizen’, ‘citizen witness’, ‘activist’, ‘collective’, and ‘community photographer’, engaging in debates about journalistic standards, ethics, and gatekeeping. Concerns with these various photojournalistic positions are also framed within the context of media platforms, which range from mainstream news channels, websites, newspapers and magazines, to blogs, forums, and of course social media.

It is the purpose of this chapter to situate the photographic practice of Lens Young Dimashqi (LYD) within these academic debates, and demonstrate that rather than being able to pigeonhole the group into one category or another, that photojournalists operating outside of the mainstream occupy several problematic positions along the amateur-professional ‘continuum’ (Allan, 2011). This literature review is split into three parts: the first of which deals with the definitional debates, tracing the different arguments and identifying what is meaningful to LYD; the second will briefly discuss the role of social media; and the third section will move on to engage with the aesthetic and symbolic qualities of war and conflict photography, in order to help discuss the iconographies that permeate LYD’s images.

2.1 Key Debates on Terms

Whilst much of the debate about the presence of amateur photography in 21st century news, whether mainstream or on social media sites, appears to construct the phenomenon as something new, Allan (2011) traces the practice of amateurs in photojournalism as far back as the 1840s. Amateur photographers played an important role in wars such as the Mexico-America War (1846-48) and the Crimean War (1853-56). Often accompanying the military, photographers played “a vital role in helping to establish precedents of form and practice of continuing relevance today” (Allan, 2011: 43). Rather than being professional photographers that we see ‘embedded’ in the military today (Allan and Zelizer, 2004), these were ‘ordinary individuals’, who felt ‘compelled to witness’ (Allan, 2011). By the time of the First World War, amateur photography had “secured a comfortable place as a popular pastime, with relatively inexpensive, reliable cameras affording the casual hobbyist as well the dedicated enthusiast a convenient way to document everyday events of personal significance” (Allan, 2011: 54). In his short historiography of amateur photojournalism, Allan (2011) ultimately asks what ‘journalistic impulses or ethos’ these photographers may have had in their practice.

Since this time, professional photography has established a code of conduct and a set of ethical standards, notwithstanding challenges however such as from TV in the 1970s, relegating amateur photojournalism. In the last 15 years however, amateurs have gained new currency, particularly with the development of the camera phone and social networking sites. Scholars agree that crisis events such as 9/11 and the Boxing Day Tsunami were key ‘turning points’ (Allan, 2014), as mainstream news media was reliant on visual reportage from ‘eyewitnesses’ armed with their phones, and in later technological developments 3G or wireless connections which allowed for instantaneous reports.

However, the term ‘amateur’ has become vague and clumsy in its application. It is often used to describe the average person with a camera phone, used as a device that ‘enables witnessing’ (Anden-Papadopoulos, 2014). Such

documenters are not photographers but considered 'citizens' (Allan, 2013; Allan and Thorsen, 2014). Despite conceding that the term amateur has indeed become 'overused and vague', Anden-Papadopoulos and Pantti (2011: 9) maintain that "the fundamental characteristic of amateur imagery is that it is not governed by the same standards of ethics, or aesthetics, as professional photojournalism". Professionals in contrast, are attached to institutions and organisations, are paid, and adhere to strict codes of practice. However, as Becker (2011) points out, 'professional' photographers such as the paparazzi, whose 'sensational' imagery, considered to be 'unethical, too close and emotionally excessive', has for many years appeared in sensationalist tabloid newspapers, pose a 'dilemma' for this binary definition. Whilst Becker acknowledges that this binary is being 'challenged and redrawn', they go on to describe amateur photography as having a 'haphazard look', which signifies 'intimacy, closeness and an insider's view' (2011: 30).

Allan (2011:57) furthers a critique of the binary distinction between amateur and professional, which is 'not clear-cut' and 'does not withstand close scrutiny'. He argues that the practices of 'competent' and 'skilled' amateurs may at the least 'blur into the semi-professional'. He calls for scholars to move on from the 'binary' of amateur-professional, referring to it rather as a 'fluidly contingent continuum' (Allan, 2011: 57) along which many different photographic practices may be placed, including that of LYD.

Perhaps in response to the vagueness of the term 'amateur' highlighted above, scholars have sought to respond and give depth to the 'ordinary' person with access to a camera who records events, such as 'witness', 'eyewitness', and 'citizen witness' (Frosh and Pinchevski, 2009; Allan, 2013; Allan and Thorsen, 2014; Anden-Papadopoulos, 2014). The 'civic dissent' of citizens with camera-phones (Anden-Papadopoulos, 2014), and the 'spontaneous actions of ordinary citizens' (Allan, Sonwalker, and Carter, 2007), striving to 'connect with others' via social media (Allan, 2013) dominates much of the literature on the development of camera technology and social media. Indeed, much space has

also been given to mainstream media outlets for the ordinary citizen to create news, with dedicated pages for 'citizens' on websites such as *BBC Your News*, *CNN I-Report*, and *YouTube Direct* (Allan, 2013).

In terms of my own research focus on Syria, social media and non-professional photographers have contributed hugely to visually represent the conflict. The Arab Spring as it started in Tunisia, was arguably born via Facebook, as activists organised demonstrations and distributed images on the social networking site. News channels and newspapers have quickly adopted the visual testimony of ordinary people from around the globe, from places where they cannot access with the immediacy required to keep up with the pace of social media, as it offers 'raw, immediate and independent' coverage (Allan, 2013: 96).

However, scholarly terms and work still largely rely these terms (citizen, witness etc.) to refer not to dedicated photographers, but to accidental ones: average 'citizens' compelled to 'bear witness' as a terrible event transpires around them, or at times of 'civic protest' through social networking (Allan, 2013). The terms 'citizen witness' and 'eyewitness' therefore remain conflated with 'amateurism'. Additionally, such amateur footage is seen by some professionals as putting photojournalism in crisis, as Allan (2015: 1) observes that "news organisations finding themselves in the awkward position of being largely dependent on 'amateur content' to tell the story of what transpired on the ground".

Furthermore, the very term 'citizen' implies belonging to a nation state (Mortensen, 2011; 2014), with which comes rights and obligations, and is therefore not universally applicable, particularly in the case of LYD, whose nation state lies in ruins and whose citizenship remains unstable. Whilst attending to the practice of activists as 'self-generated journalism', with the aim of taking control of the 'flow of information', Robinson and Schwartz (2014) focus on the United States, through which activist photographers work to 'negotiate citizenship' within the nation state.

Mortensen (2011) therefore proposes the term 'eyewitness picture producers', as citizen is lacking in universality and amateurs may indeed 'operate in a professional manner'. Within this conceptual understanding of non-professional photographic practice, Mortensen makes room for activist photography, or 'digital activists'. Far from being amateur citizens caught up in a conflict, "activists engage on a semi-professional level in producing and distributing images targeted at the global media in order to raise awareness of their causes" (Mortensen, 2011: 68). In this one statement, Mortensen makes what she calls the 'digital activist' much more complex than appears in much of the debate on amateur citizens.

This digital activism, split into three parts, can be applied to the photographic practice of LYD in that the group 'engage semi-professionally', as they operate within a structured network, have a website, a mission statement, use proper equipment, and are 'competent' (Ashuri and Pinchevski, 2009). Secondly, they 'produce and distribute images for global media', through image-focused social media site Flickr, producing recognisable iconographies of war, such as the innocence of children and the mastery of the landscape shot. Lastly, they are committed' to 'raise awareness', though in a problematic way for 'professionalism' due to their partial view of the Syrian conflict. Fundamentally however, as Mortensen (2011: 68) further points out, "images by activists grant the public insight into areas of tension, to which the media has no other access". Dispelling the problematic notion of 'citizen', which implies a stable nation-state and guaranteed protection of rights for the individuals that belong to it, Mortensen (2011) moves towards a more inclusive idea of the 'witness', in order to 'enable further understanding of contemporary protagonists and practices'. As opposed to the accidental 'citizen witness', for Mortensen (2011: 73) "eyewitnessing has become a choice, an option and a mass phenomenon".

Furthermore, though not focusing on a conflict or warzone, Baroni (2015) has developed the idea of the 'community photographer', conducting a similar

comparison to my own research in order to determine how mainstream photojournalists and community organisations can collectively contribute to empowering people in Brazil's favelas. For Baroni, the community photographer can be defined as an "independent professional photographer whose practices and routines are not imposed by media organisations, that is, a photographer who controls the flow of his or her own work" (Baroni, 2015: 1). Whilst Mortensen's notion of the 'digital activist' operates semi-professionally, as arguably LYD do, Baroni's community photographer's practice is professional. The key difference between the Brazilian community photographer and mainstream photojournalists, Baroni argues, is that their reportage is from 'inside to outside', rather than the other way around. Their motivation for visually recording the favelas, rather like LYD work in Syria, is to show "genuine representations of the places they live" (Baroni, 2015: 12). She argues that unlike the mainstream professional, community photographers tend to view the act of photographing as 'political', as a "means of producing alternative sources of information ... to influence people's conceptions" about the favelas (Baroni, 2015: 12). Whilst she considers them to be 'independent professionals', they differ from mainstream professionals in that they have little or no income and is not their sole profession, usually "regarded as one thing among many they undertake in order to make a living" (Baroni, 2015: 13).

Similarly, Faulkner's (forthcoming, 2016) work on the ActiveStills collective further complicates the binary distinction between amateur and professional. He describes the group as being engaged in 'creative activism', who use 'photography as a political tool', and refers to them simply as 'a collective'. Like Baroni's (2015) community photographers, Faulkner (forthcoming, 2016) notes that they are mostly professional photographers, who in order to participate must also be 'motivated by a political understanding of the conflict, and to work collectively'. Like LYD, ActiveStills began life as a Flickr account in 2006, before developing a website and sale of their images for the benefit of the collective, in order to continue working and exhibiting. They also do not attempt to represent the issues with 'balance' as mainstream journalists do,

instead report “from a politically informed viewpoint and with political objectives in mind” (8).

Efforts have clearly been made by the likes of Mortensen (2011), Baroni (2015) and Faulkner (forthcoming, 2016) to challenge the vague and overused terms of amateur and professional, citizen and witness, in order to better understand politically motivated groups, who often operate in a professional manner outside of the mainstream media. They demonstrate that groups such as LYD cannot be unproblematically situated as amateurs compelled to bear witness. Rather, they occupy a space somewhere on Allan’s (2011) ‘amateur-professional continuum’, as ‘digital activists’ compelled not simply to witness, but to consciously ‘raise awareness’ (Mortensen, 2011) through reporting from ‘inside to outside’ (Baroni, 2015). As Anden-Papadopoulos (2013: 754) nicely puts it, groups such as LYD can be thought of as “camera-wielding political activists and dissidents who put their lives at risk to produce incontrovertible public testimony to unjust and disastrous developments around the world, in a critical bid to mobilize global solidarity through the affective power of the visual” (Anden-Papadopoulos, 2013: 754).

2.2 Social Media

The issues raised above inevitably lead to questions about *how* such public testimony and global solidarity is mobilised and distributed, as activists outside the mainstream have had only fleeting access to the professional spheres of news media. Since the start of the Iraq War 2003, activist groups have been able to take some control of the flow of their own information through access to the Internet and networking sites. The rise of the public Internet began in the early 2000s, which saw the widespread use of mailing lists, emails, online shopping, forums and personal blogs and websites. Since this time, high speed Internet and wider global coverage is now widely available at affordable prices, allowing people from all over the world to create what (Castells, 2010) has called ‘the network society’. The global network of flows has been furthered

socially by the emergence of social media sites such as *Myspace* (2003), *Flickr* (2004), *Facebook* (2004) and *Twitter* (2006), expanded further by a mobile revolution in which the Internet has been put into the hands of people on the move, allowing people to share and discuss at almost all times. In this time, public content also entered into a relationship with mainstream news, as 'citizen videos' and images often incorporated into news channels and websites in what Wall and El Zahed (2015) have called 'collaborative newsclips'.

Seen by some as a more authentic form of news, it is argued that social media content gives viewers a fuller and more immersive view of events transpiring. As Taubert (2012, <https://dailycrowdsource.com>: accessed April 2016) claims, the modern audience now wants more than just the 'talking heads' of mainstream news, they want to live 'vicariously' through the images, and now expect a '360 degree view of the story' which is provided through social media. Similarly, for Meikle (2016: 175), social media not only gives those producing the content a voice, but also gives them responsive listeners, as "the news doesn't just talk to us, but we can now talk back, and perhaps more importantly, we are also now all the more likely to talk to each other about what we are hearing". However, with regards this content reaching a wider public through the mainstream, through 'shared gatekeeping' (Wall and El Zahed, 2015) and the ability of 'ordinary citizens' to break major stories (Allan and Thorsen, 2009), the relationship is still rather fraught, and the supposed power and agency that social media gives people – particularly activists – remains to be seen. Whilst celebrating their own case study example of *The New York Times*, Wall and El Zahed (2015: 166) pay critical attention to the general power dynamic in the relationship between social media and public content, and the mainstream arguing that:

"some news outlets have sought to contain citizen journalism by both encouraging it and at the same time segregating it into its own, lesser section of online websites... In order to maintain control over the overall narrative and more broadly journalistic authority, these new forms are

adopted and used in ways similar to existing elements even if their fit with such roles is imprecise” (Wall and El Zahed, 2015: 166).

Whilst the power of social media remains in question, scholars have explored its important new role in conflict and crisis reporting. For example, Alper (2013) focuses on how the ‘day-to-day’ experience of US soldiers in Afghanistan has been distributed through the mobile application (app) Hipstamatic and Instagram. Images are filtered through the app, and made to look ‘amateurish’ in order to produce authenticity, and to attempt to “clearly demarcate the real from the artificial” (Alper, 2013: 1244). Similarly, Allan (2014) examines the potential of ordinary citizens to ‘witness crisis events’, and the potential for such imagery shared across social networking sites to “reinvigorate photojournalism’s social contract to document conflicting truths”. Furthermore, Procter et al (2013) explore the images produced on Twitter during the 2011 UK riots, treating images on Twitter as a ‘subject in their own right’. In this case, Twitter is used as a way for its users to ‘communicate their experiences and thoughts’, and a platform on which images can be viewed sometimes in real-time and sometimes after-the-fact.

Poell and Borra (2012) also discuss the potential of Twitter, YouTube and Flickr as ‘alternative journalism’ platforms in times of protest, and the potential of social media to provide ‘crisis reporting’ in areas where professionals have no access (Anden-Papadopoulos and Pantti, 2013). They ask an important question however: “to what extent do social media allow activists to realize the ideals of alternative journalism, which have been developed in response to mainstream reporting practices?” (Poell and Borra, 2012: 697). Whilst not focusing particularly on imagery, Poell and Borra’s work raises critical questions about what kind of power and agency social media sites, such as Twitter, give to activists online.

For LYD, whilst they do use other social media sites, Flickr is their primary source through which to distribute their images. Whilst much of the scholarship

focuses on Twitter and Facebook, particularly their uses in revolutions and protests (Eltantawy and Wiest, 2011; Lotan et al, 2011), there is some limited work on Flickr. Unlike the others, Flickr is specifically a “public image storing and sharing service” which “allows owners to title, tag, and describe images, and organise them into sets” (Van House, 2007: 2719). Van House (2007) finds that Flickr allows the creation of a “coherent narrative... an easy chronology of images for memory, identity, narrative”, as well as space for ‘maintaining relationships’, ‘self-representation’ and ‘self-expression’.

2.3 Conflict Photography

Whilst the first two sections have dealt with how and where LYD are situated in terms of being a semi-professional activist group, using Flickr as their choice of social media, here I will give some academic context to some of the common iconographies of war that permeate Syrian conflict imagery.

By iconography I mean the recognisable, meaningful (Tulloch and Warwick Blood, 2012) and ‘socially embedded’ (Heck and Schlag, 2012) context of the image, and the ‘social construction of meaning, developed through codes, signs and connotations’ (Manzo, 2008). Previous work on how iconography functions in war and conflict photography, as well in other crises, has focused on children (Burman, 1994; Wells, 2007; Manzo, 2008), women (Heck and Schlag, 2012), and pain/death (Sontag, 2003; Dauphinee, 2007; Ebbrecht, 2010; Kennedy, 2012; Tulloch and Warwick Blood, 2012), in attempts to understand how narratives of compassion, innocence, survival, hope, rescue, and empathy are constructed.

For example, Kennedy (2012: 306) argues that photojournalism in war, with a particular focus on the Vietnam and Iraq wars, has adopted an ‘ethics of compassion’ through “visual frames, repertoires and motifs”. These narratives, Kennedy argues, promote compassion as a response to suffering of distant others, operating within the interests of the West (as rescue, white savior, or

intervention narratives) and are contingent on the ‘recognition and identification’ of the connotations within the images. Lenette (2016) has recently expanded on this notion of familiarity in her work on refugee photography, in which she posits that Christian iconographies such as images of exodus (masses of fleeing refugees) and Madonna and Child, are invoked in order to stimulate empathy amongst western audiences. Similarly, Ebbrecht (2010: 86) argues that the Holocaust has become the ‘master paradigm’ of familiar imagery that migrate across culture as ‘emblematic signs’. Recurring not just in photography, but also in film, the infamous images of concentration camps, ghettos, and malnourished bodies have provided “a model for the representation of other war experiences”, as “a specific pattern of codes and conventions was generated through repetition and constant circulation of the same iconic images” (Ebbrecht, 2010: 91). Many of these images are of course of death, survivors, children, landscapes and oppression, and as Ebbrecht argues, have contributed to the ways in which various media since the end of the Second World War have actively constructed icons (Tulloch and Warwick Blood, 2012).

The different contexts and motivations for the use and construction of these iconographies, provides a useful backdrop for the mobilisation of familiar narratives in the imagery of LYD, one of the most important of which is children. As Ruddick (2003: 341, cited in Manzo, 2008: 632) states,

“If I sift back through the countless images of the Third World that have confronted me through the media . . . one persistent iconography dominates. This is the tight-shot close-up photograph of a single child—usually (apparently) not older than ten or eleven, looking, wide-eyed, directly into the camera” (Manzo, 2008: 632).

Scholars have written about the mobilization of the iconography of children in international development (Manzo, 2008), in crises/emergencies (Burman, 1994), and in war (Wells, 2007), with the common narratives of ‘innocence,

playfulness and hope' (Wells, 2007). Wells' work focuses particularly on the use of pictures of Iraqi children in the British press during the invasion of Iraq in 2003, which were used in order to construct narratives about motivations and outcomes of the war, particularly around its legality, and its potential 'liberation' of Iraq, with the image of the child at its center. Rather than simplifying the way this image is used, Wells (2007) points to the multiple ways such icons can be deployed and read, as they found *The Daily Mirror* newspaper to construct an anti-war narrative around the Iraqi child, as a victim of the US-UK shock-and-awe attack on Baghdad, whilst *The Guardian* newspaper at the time constructed a narrative of liberation, deploying the image of the child as a signal of hope, and 'in need of adult care' (Wells, 2007: 62).

Manzo (2008), whose work contrastingly focuses on the iconography of childhood in NGOs and International Development, argues that through the use of images of children in the Third World, NGOs express 'institutional ideals and humanitarian values'. Similarly to Wells (2007), Manzo also points to child image as the 'carrier of multiple meanings', as it can be read as both a metaphor for the majority world, and as a signifier of humanitarian identity. Through both of these readings, Manzo (2008) argues that there is a tension between colonial practices and humanitarian principles, as she puts it, "shifting parallels between the iconography of childhood and the colonial iconography of savagery" (Manzo, 2008: 635).

However, as Manzo (2008) also points out, NGOs, much like the British newspapers in Wells' (2007) work, are not solely reliant on the iconography of the innocent child of hope, as lone adults, and the image of the woman also function to offer signs of courage, hope and survival (Manzo, 2008). Furthermore, the mother and child rarely appear alone in images, more often than not they in fact appear together, evoking Christian images of 'Madonna and Child'. Briggs (2003) dates this iconic image back to the 1950s, as international aid agencies mobilized 'pity and ideologies of rescue' in order to

position some 'within a circle of care', and within debates around transracial adoption (Briggs, 2003: 181).

In Heck and Schlag's (2012) context, the female body becomes politicized through narratives of securitization, where the insecure female body is made safe by western intervention in the war on terror. Thus, the 'endangered female body is politically powerful' (Heck and Schlag, 2012). In the War on Terror, it is specifically the image of the Muslim woman, and her body, upon which various narratives of security and insecurity are inscribed, as "gendered slaves in need of 'saving'" (Ayotte and Husain, 2005: 113), denying women their subjectivity.

Furthermore, images of the body in pain and death, which are not exclusive to children and women, are the "primary medium through which we come to know war" (Dauphinee, 2007: 139). It is the image of the injured soldier or civilian after an attack that dominates newspapers and news channels after a disaster, particularly if that disaster is abroad. As Sontag (2003) argues, we may indeed come to know something of a war, but the pain remains at a distance. She further contends that western audiences have an 'appetite' for bodies in pain in the news, as they evoke sympathy and thus exempt the privileged viewer from complicity. The image of the body in pain stands in for something we can never imagine (Sontag, 2003). Dauphinee (2007) concurs that images of pain attempt to make visible what is essentially 'unimageable'. It is unimageable, unimaginable, and therefore at a distance. As Dauphinee (2007: 140) concludes:

"the imperative to make pain visible through contemporary technologies of visual representation actually works to contain and delimit the experience of pain by locating it so firmly in the distant and disconnected bodies of others that our ability to engage is relegated to that of observation, which severely limits the possibility of making response" (Dauphinee, 2007: 140).

However, Sontag (2003) argues that these images of pain are reliant on the context in which they are received. She would argue that images of distant bodies in pain hanging on a wall in museum would indeed be, as Dauphinee (2007) argues, mere observation as they belong in newspapers surrounded by words. Even so, Sontag (2003) doubts their power to 'move' people, or to give a full understanding, that they simply provide a momentary glimpse and have a 'haunting' effect (Sontag, 2003: 83). Butler (2009) further argues that there are varying degrees of 'precarity' inscribed on the body in pain when they are framed in war. In short, that in the visual representation of war, some lives are worth more than others, and that this influences the ways in which different bodies are represented in conditions of pain. In her own words, Butler (2009: 38) states that "one way of posing the question of who "we" are in these times of war is by asking whose lives are considered valuable, whose lives are mourned, and whose lives are considered ungrievable".

3. Methodology

This research deploys a qualitative approach in order to investigate the visual documentation of the Syrian conflict by LYD. The research focuses primarily on a collection of photographs from LYD's Flickr site, whilst also sampling a set of photographs of the conflict on Getty Images online database as a means of

comparison. The first section of this methodology will provide descriptions of the group Lens Young Dimashqi, particularly in relation to their Flickr account, as well as Flickr more broadly, before going on to describe Getty Images. Justifications for their suitability for the research will also be made. The second section will detail the sampling methods used to select images from the different groups' photographic databases, whilst the third section explains the analytical method used to examine the images. The final section reflects on some of the important ethical considerations that arise when researching social media and conflict photography, and on the limitations of this piece of research.

3.1 Aims and Objectives

1. To investigate the role of social media as a political platform, through the work of the activist group LYD
2. To explore the photographic practices of professional and amateur photographers in conflict photography

3.2 Case Studies: LYD, Flickr, and Getty

3.2.1 LYD

Whilst a number of photographers and images of the conflict from Syria could have been used as a case study for this research, LYD presented interesting questions as they are a small group of around 20, all working together for the

same cause, largely limited to one geographic area, and who align themselves explicitly with the Free Syrian Army.

3.2.2 Flickr

Flickr is the primary outlet for the groups images, and though they do upload images to Twitter, Facebook and to their website, Flickr is perhaps most suitable as it is a solely photographic space. Therefore, whilst LYD's output on other social media sites may have been utilised to broaden the scope of data for this research, I have chosen to focus on the group's Flickr site as the analysis of visual imagery is central to this dissertation. Flickr is where Lens Young Dimashqi began their photographic story of the conflict. In addition to this, and in comparison to Facebook and Twitter, Flickr is much easier to access. This is largely because they do not use an algorithmic timeline, which Facebook and Twitter have adopted, and so the images on Flickr remain constant and visible, and do not require additional software to be accessed.

Flickr is characterised by Van Dijck (2013) as an 'online photo news site', a 'memory service' and an 'archival facility' (Van Dijck, 2013: 90). It does not focus on one type of usage (for example personal or political) or one kind of photographer (professional/amateur), catering to a 'heterogeneous pool of photo enthusiasts' (Van Dijck, 2013: 94). In the social media ecosystem Flickr is not currently in the top five platforms. However, as of 2016 it still has a staggering "51 million registered members, 80 million unique visitors per month and 6 billion pictures on the site" (Van Dijck, 2013: 90). Flickr is branded as a network experience. It is not, according to Van Dijck (2013), a community builder, but rather thrives on groups that flourish in spite of the corporate owners making a half-hearted commitment to the platform communities. Therefore, it is not difficult to understand why LYD use Flickr so consistently. As LYD told me via email conversations:

"The good web site was Flickr because it is kind of professional place to exhibit your photo. All the users are professional photographers. Facebook now is hard

after his limitations in reaching photos. Now he ask for more advertisements and that needs a lot of money. Our work is not changing the situation, but I see our work is important for the future more than for now”.

As can be seen in this email excerpt, Lens Young Dimashqi see Flickr as a legitimate and professional site where their images will be taken seriously, and viewed by a large amount of people. They also acknowledge the limitations of other sites, such as Twitter and Facebook which use algorithmic timelines, and have more corporate interests. Social media outlets control what its users see first on their timeline, through monitoring what they have looked at and liked. Twitter states that “tweets you are likely to care about most will show up first in your timeline. We choose them based on accounts you interact with most, tweets you engage with, and much more” (<https://support.twitter.com/articles/164083> - accessed 12th June 2016). This power over what users see on social media through the algorithmic timeline is one of the reasons why Flickr was chosen for this case study as the images on this site remain constant, they are in date order and do not move in a hierarchy with popularity or disappear when images have not been viewed as frequently, constituting a stable accumulative archive. This accumulative aspect allows for the establishment of a point-of-view: a particular narrative. Lens Young Dimashqi are also aware of their own limitations as a group, as whilst they would like to be seen as serious ‘professional’ photographers, they lack the funding to be able to access other outlets more widely.

3.2.3 Getty Images

In order to address the aims of investigating how LYD’s photographic practice complicates the professional/amateur binary, Getty Images was chosen as a suitable agency to compare. In stark contrast to LYD, Getty Images is a global digital media company that serves over 1.5 million customers and Getty Images

works at targeting three main markets in the distribution of its images: creative professionals, the media and corporate. They function as a business with 2,000 global employees in more than 20 offices around the world and 250,000' photographers uploading images to their main site daily.

They additionally work with other wires such as AFP and Anadolu Agency as a distributor and broker and are a large online data portal for clients to tap into and make major profits from distribution of photography. The reason that Getty Images was selected for this study and not another picture agent was because it is one of the largest online photo portals for image distribution in the world. It is easy to access, all I had to do was set up an account and I was able to have access to all the photography on the website. Due to the small scale of the project and time, Getty Images did not pose restrictions and enabled a large search to be conducted looking at different wires and brokers who uploaded to Getty and gave a rich source of imagery on Syria.

3.3 Sampling Process

There are a total of 223 images on LYD's Flickr site, compared with 98,667 on Getty Images site, yielded by typing a combination of words (Syria + conflict) into the search bar. Here I will detail the processes by which I took appropriate samples of images from both sites.

3.3.1 Flickr

The sample of images taken from LYD's Flickr page begins in July 2012, when the group was created, through to 1st February 2016. All of the available 223 images on the groups Flickr site were selected, in order to get a broad understanding of what LYD photograph over a sustained period of time. This is also due to the fact that this is a relatively small database of images, compared with Getty, and is therefore a more practical number of photographs for this research.

In order to be able to save the images from LYD's Flickr site, each image was screen grabbed/screenshot as Flickr has copyright restrictions over the images, and all images are 'all rights reserved', and therefore cannot be 'saved' conventionally. I then transferred each individual image into a Microsoft word document, with information relating to the image, such as the caption of the image and its description. Additionally, I also wrote the date the image was taken and the date it was uploaded to Flickr. I copied and pasted both English and Arabic tags which the group use to describe the images, as they use keywords such as 'Syria, conflict, and Assad' to help the viewer find other images that are linked to that LYD photograph.

3.3.2 Getty Images

An initial search on Getty Images was conducted in March 2016, in which 98,667 images of Syria, the surrounding area, refugees and camps along with mass images of demonstrations across Europe, and leaders meeting to discuss the crisis, yielded from typing in keywords 'Syria + conflict'. This is one of the largest databases of photography taken by professionals of the conflict.

However, these initial findings are problematic in that they first of all offer a very broad view of the conflict, such as images of European leaders discussing the refugee crisis, and secondly that there is not the space within this dissertation to analyse all of these images. I therefore identified the most active month in which LYD uploaded photographs to Flickr, in order to have a solid rationale, and a reasonable sample for comparison. This was the month of October 2014, in which LYD had uploaded 41 images to their Flickr account. The dates between 1st October 2014 and 31st October 2014 were entered into the search engine, yielding a total of 6,172 images. However, this was still too large a number to realistically manage, and so I used a more selective sampling process taking every 4th image, narrowing the total down to 1,543 images.

3.4 Data Analysis

I followed the same method of analysis for both LYD's Flickr account and the Getty Images sample, first of all grouping the images according to identified themes and categories. This allowed me to get a broad overview of what kinds of themes each sample of images dealt with, where they overlapped and where they differed. Once categorised into these thematically organised and manageable groups, a discourse analysis was conducted in order to produce a closer reading and elicit meaning from individual images.

3.4.1 Content Analysis: Identifying Themes

In order to effectively analyse the number of images on both LYD's Flickr account and Getty Images, the images were categorised into themes. Using content analysis, the images in each theme were quantified in order to get a sense of which were the most popular and common, and to identify patterns between LYD and Getty Images. Whilst I first of all identified as many as 15 themes (Images of children; Religion; Language; Syria before conflict; Up close destruction; Death; Casualties; People; War; Conflict zones; Guns; Landscape (Distance); Political rallies; Protests; Citizens coming together), these intersected with each other significantly, and so I began to narrow them down (see figures F and G).

Figure F: LYD Themes

Categories	Count
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Children	60
Men and Guns	49
Close-Up Destruction	38
Everyday Life	37
Pain and Death	18
Landscape	9
Protests and Demonstrations	9
Old Syria	3
Total	223

Figure G: Getty Images Themes

Landscape	1040
Children	246
Men and Guns	127
Protests and Demonstrations	69
Pain and Death	60
Up-Close Destruction	1
Everyday Life	0
Old Syria	
Total	1543

Whilst a great deal of thought went into categorising the images according to particular themes in the images, I am aware that this is a very subjective process, in which I would ascribe my own reading and meaning to the images, and therefore comes with limitations. These may have been interpreted

differently by other people, as Sturken and Cartwright (2003) argue that images mean different things to different people, and are indeed shaped by 'conscious and unconscious associations' based on experiences.

Children

This theme had any images of children between the ages of new-born up to 18 years old, they could be in all different environments such as schools, playing in camps or collecting food and wood for shelter. As long as a child was present in the photograph it was grouped into this section. Again, this is subjective, and age is not always easy determined. 'Young person' might have been used in its place, however I wanted to engage here with the widely used image of the child in war photography, and the wide range of literature about children in war photography.

Men and Guns

Men and Guns is a broad category, therefore the images are taken across a variety of locations, illustrating vast amounts of narrations. However, I made the decision that any image that had any weaponry/guns/bullets on show within the image would fall under this category. I chose to analyse men within this category also, as men were present in so many images of weaponry.

For example, this could be an image of a man sitting with a Quran reading with a gun next to him, or a man firing bullets from a gun across the Syrian cities. No matter if the images were at peace or conflict if 'guns' were present in the image then they would be situated under this category.

Close up destruction

Close up destruction are images of destruction on buildings the attacks and the destruction but all the images are close up shots. They show the rubble, empty homes and brutality on the city.

Everyday Life

The theme of everyday life is also a broad and perhaps somewhat vague term, though I used it to mean any images of Syrians going about everyday tasks such as eating, shopping, talking, and moving. All the images were around the city of Damascus following people performing everyday tasks.

Pain and death

The theme pain and death contains all images of pain such as attacks on citizens, they show the brutality of the conflict so images of make shift hospitals, blood and wounds are present in this category. This section also contains images of death, so images of citizens who have died, funerals, grave yards and mourning.

Landscape

Images of landscape far away are images that are long shot landscape photographs looking across Damascus. They are long ranged images looking across a wide area usually showing the destruction on a larger scale or the differences in different parts of Damascus so where LYD and Assad supporters live.

Protests and demonstrations

The images in this theme are images of people coming together to make a statement or are expressing disapproval of or objection to the regime and Assad. The images show groups of people together, unifying with flags and banners walking the streets of Damascus.

Old Syria

This theme is of images of Damascus before the conflict and destruction, the images are places that LYD remember such as mosques and landmarks places that held importance to the photographers, which have been destroyed in the conflict. In a sense they are a reflection back to what was before the war.

3.4.2 Discourse Analysis

Whilst this initial content analysis is useful in ‘finding patterns’, as Rose (2016) puts it, which involves ‘applying labels’ (Banks and Zeitlyn, 2015) and identifying what the image denotes, a closer reading of the images themselves is needed in order to draw out the more complex connotations within them. I therefore moved beyond a more basic content analysis of ‘what is there’ in the image to examine how meaning is made through signs, and the subjective reading of the researcher. In this sense, the images are analysed for what they connote, which rather than being an objective analysis of simply reading the image for something waiting to be read, involves bringing one’s own assumptions and cultural knowledge to it. As Banks and Zeitlyn (2015: 10) put it, “the properties of the images, and the interpretation of readers, are not fixed”, drawing on Barthes’ (1964)[1977] post-structuralist declaration of the ‘death of the author’, in a plea to acknowledge the existence of meaning beyond what the creator intended.

Through this reading, my own assumptions and knowledges were brought to the image, recognising their intertextual qualities, and the ‘external narrative’

(Banks and Zeitlyn, 2015), that is their social context and social relations within which they are embedded. Therefore, common iconographies and visual motifs found within the images such as children in conflict, and their connotation of innocence, naivety and tragedy of war, are 'read' in a broader narrative that exists beyond the image itself. This analysis has been conducted across both LYD's and Getty Images photography samples, through which similarities and differences have also been identified.

3.5 Ethical Considerations and Reflections

Conducting research into online images, particularly with a sensitive subject matter, poses many ethical questions. First of all, regarding the email correspondence with Lens Young Dimashqi in order to obtain some information about why they use Flickr, for example, I have obtained their consent to use these conversations in my dissertation. They have asked to remain anonymous in order for them and their families to remain safe in Syria, and I will keep any information from them confidential. I have also undertaken a small mapping project of the group, in order to locate their activities as photographers within the Damascus area, and as I realise their volatile position in the country due to their open alignment with the Free Syrian Army, this information will remain strictly confidential and un-published. The group have been regularly informed and updated via email as to what I am doing with their information, and the photography on Flickr.

With regards to the photography from both Flickr and Getty Images, as these will solely be used for the purposes of this dissertation, and not published in any other format, the images were acquired through screenshots as they are copyright protected and all rights for use are reserved by the groups.

4 Lens Young Dimashqi

This chapter will examine how LYD depict the Syrian conflict through their photography on Flickr, focusing on what shape their photographic practice takes as a group of activist photographers, and what kinds of themes and issues they deal with. Through the use of both content and discourse analysis, a number of overlapping and intersecting themes and sub-themes have been identified, and categorised accordingly. These themes are: children, men and guns, everyday life, pain and death, and protests and demonstrations. Each of these different categories and their iconographies will be discussed separately, and their meanings drawn out in order to understand how LYD operate as an activist group of photographers.

4.1 Children

The largest identified theme (60 images) is that of children, categorised as so due to children being most prominent in the image (though they intersect with destruction, everyday life and pain/death in which children are often framed). It is not surprising that images of children are the most common in LYD's collection, as the visual documentation of children in wartime has been common in the representation of past conflicts, particularly in the Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan Wars, and more recently in the Syrian refugee crisis. Children in these images, which have reached audiences on TV, in newspapers, and on social media, raise questions about the ethics and morality of war, through constructing the child as innocent victim. As Moeller has noted,

“in today's competitive news environment, children are perceived to be one of the few surefire ways to attract eyeballs – on-line, in print, and on television. In debates over such diverse issues as foreign policy, Internet regulation, healthcare, the environment, and control over tobacco and alcohol, children have become proxies for all sides”. (2002: 36)

Children, then, are well documented – though not just in war, as Moeller explains – as they foster an emotional response through their youth and innocence, which if lost in conflict represents the loss of childhood, of a generation, and of hope for the future. Therefore, their presence also encourages sympathy and can signal hope, not just for the child, but for the country or people of whom they are representative. As Moeller further argues, “children are a synecdoche for a country’s future, for the political and social well-being of a culture. Stories about children are sentimental. They employ the same emotional hooks that ‘tearjerker’ movies do” (2002: 39).

With these considerations in mind, I will think about what kinds of messages these photographs of children connote, through an analysis of 10 of the 60 images identified with this category. The first reading of the images looked at the number of children present within the frame, thinking about the potentially different effects of focusing in on one child or a pair or a group of children. There were 39 images in which only one child occupied the frame, 11 with two children, and 9 in a group (of more than 2), whilst one was a collage. Within these images, most children’s (41) faces can be seen, showing expressions and emotions, whilst the child’s face was not visible on the other 19, instead showing the back or the side of them (See figures). Where the child’s face is visible, I moved on to examine whether or not the children are smiling, finding that in 23/60 they are, and in 21/60 they are not, demonstrating the differing images of hope and misery, optimism and pessimism that are present within the images. There are also a number of children using hand gestures in the images, many of which are of peace, victory and love, common in war photography (figures 5 and 6). Interestingly, despite humanitarian concerns in Syria, the children do not appear to be ill, or in any pain or suffering, instead representing snapshots of everyday life in Syria in which children are shown to be resilient in playing, eating, and learning.

Figure 1, taken in the town of Gouta on World Children’s Day in November 2013, is a close-up shot of two young boys embracing each other as friends,

grinning at the camera. The photograph does not show the destruction that may be around them, though their hands are clearly visible gripping one another, which are dirty – a stark reminder of their conditions, or simply evidence of their boyish youth? Their smiles and embrace however, and the tag ‘friends forever with the hope’ signals both a brotherly bond and optimism for the future. The description of the image reads, ‘This picture took in Gouta Near Damascus, 20 November Children's Day’.

Figure 5, also taken in Gouta on World Children’s Day, is a similar image of four younger boys in a close-up shot, at eye line height with the viewer. All look to their left at something out of shot, whilst holding up their fingers in a ‘victory’ or ‘peace’ sign. Like the two boys in Figure 1, the four friends are smiling in tune with the celebratory nature of World Children’s Day, their happiness, their unity in embrace, suggests that the children of Syria, are the country’s hope, despite fears of a lost generation. Whilst Figures 1 and 5 show young boys, Figure 6 taken on New Year’s Eve shows a young girl in a close-up, making a heart shape in front of her face with her hands, framing her large dark eyes through the symbol of love. Similarly, to Figure 5, this is a performance of peace, love and hope to the camera. This question of performance raises further questions about the photographer’s proximity and access to the subjects they are photographing.

Figures 7, 8, 9 and 10 also show medium and close-up shots of young children, demonstrating the beauty, innocence, and resilience of children in war. Figure 7 obscures any background and the locality where the girl is, and her head, with dark curly hair, and her hand in her mouth biting her nails perhaps nervously, are all foregrounded. However, figures 8, 9 and 10, are less close, and bring into focus some of the background and surroundings in which the photograph is taken. Figure 8 shows a young boy and girl, possibly siblings, in a close up shot, grinning cheekily at the camera, their eyes meeting the gaze of the viewer, the boy’s hands held up to his mouth mischievously. This image however, brings into deep focus the destruction behind them and rubble lies on either side of

them. Buildings stand tall in the back of the image, a lone tree stands in the near deserted square, empty of people apart from one man on a phone, clad in green (military). Yet the children in this image, do not concern themselves with what's behind them, looking only at the camera in some ways performing for the camera, or just perhaps ahead to the future, to the viewer for help, or as the tagline reads to 'Take a photo of us so our traveller brothers and sisters will see us', to Syria as it exists beyond the confines of the photograph, and perhaps in solidarity with refugees. We do not know who they are, if they are refugees or living in an area that has been besieged but LYD have an expectation that the image will be seen by others somehow.

Similarly, Figure 9 is a close-up shot of a young red haired girl, also showing some of her surroundings which are more blurred and out of focus. The bright hair and big eyes of the young Syrian girl are foregrounded. It is possible to tell that she is stood in an alley, darkened by tall buildings around her, making her features stand out even more. She is also pointing to her left, out of the frame, whilst the tagline reads 'as if she is a girl from wonderland', signalling her beauty, her innocence, and dream of escape. Figure 10 also shows a young Syrian girl, standing in the centre of the frame, arms folded, in a pretty dress, resembling the imaginative escapism of Alice in Wonderland, as she looks off to the right out of frame (though the previous figure of the red haired girl carries the tagline 'as if she is a girl from wonderland'). Helping to further resemble the freedom of Alice in her stories, she is framed less closely than in other images, she is in the open, in her surroundings, rather than within the confines of a claustrophobic close-up. It signifies the freedom of youth, its fragility in war, and again hope that Syrian children will one day be free.

In a departure from the others described above, which are generally quite hopeful and optimistic, figures 2, 3 and 4 show the harsh, grim reality for children living through the civil war. Figure 2 has a young girl looking up at the camera in a high angle shot from the parental perspective of the adult. The tagline and description signals the importance of food, as it reads 'hungry with

the soup again', 'again' suggesting it is the only food available to them, thanks to the regime. Figures 3 and 4 also show the vulnerability of children in wartime. They scarp for materials, for food, and for shelter. Figure 3 shows a young boy, in a medium-long shot, side on, warming his hands over a small fire. In an image that resonates with those of the 'slumdogs' of the shantytowns of India, the tagline signals the loss of childhood as it reads, 'I have no school to go, and I used to collect woods since I was in Gouta'. The image situates the anonymous boy in his stark surroundings, with bare brick walls, ash or rubble covered floor, alone and fending for himself. He is old before his time and abandoned by the world. Figure 4 similarly depicts three young girls in a medium-long shot, pushing a trolley in front of what appears to be a scrap-heap, or perhaps a pile of rubble from destroyed buildings. Whilst one of the girls stands on the trolley as the others push, the tagline reading 'oh come on... get down... my hands are hurting me... it is my turn to get on and sit down', the trolley is more likely to be for collecting scrap or food (signalled by the heap behind them), rather than as a toy for the children to play with. This again suggests the loss of innocence, a toy pram replaced with a scrap trolley, in an image showing them in their brutal surroundings.

The representation of children in LYD's photography is by no means homogenous, as the images depict children's solidarity, hope, and playfulness, alongside their vulnerability, innocence, and poverty. It cannot be determined that LYD have a particular goal in their depiction of children, though the images of both optimism and pessimism have the power to elicit emotional responses from audiences, and as Moeller (2002) has argued, serve as 'proxies' through which political messages may be conveyed.



Figure 1
LYD

Title: "Friends forever with the hope!"

Taken: Syria - Gouta

Date: 20/11/2013

LYD Description: This picture took in Gouta Near Damascus, 20 November Children's Day. They are a children in the besieged area, without food, schools, safety. But they are smiling and the have the hope.



Figure 2
LYD

Title: Hungry with the soup again

Taken: Yarmouk camp, Damascus, Syria.

Date:16/03/2015

LYD Description: A hungry little girl in Yarmouk camp got some soup the only food there. She is looking at the photographer and she was saying that her father went to looking forr a loaf of bread for her to eat, and one thing I know that we don't have any bread any more so that was impossible since two years because Assad regime still besiege the zone since 3 years.



Figure 3
LYD

Title: " I have no school to go, and I used to collect woods since I was in Gouta."

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh Fields

Date: 10/10/2014

Description: N/A



Figure 4
LYD

Title: "Oh come on,,, get down,,, my hands hurting me,,, it is my turn to get on and sit down"

Taken: South of Damascus - Yalda

Date: 21/09/2014

Description: N/A



Figure 5
LYD

Title: " The Syrian child wants happiness .. The Syrian child in besieged Gouta in World Children's Day "

Taken: Gouta

Date: 20/ 11/2013

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 6
LYD

Title: All of you here, happy new year!

Taken: Damascus, Syria.

Date: 31/12/2014

LYD Description: From Damascus among the war, we would to say to all of our followers

All of you here

happy new year !

Thank you



Figure 7
LYD

Title: Syria - Gouta
Taken: Syria - Gouta
Date: 08/10/2014
LYD Description: N/A



Figure 8
LYD

Title: " Take a photo of us so our traveler brothers and sisters will see us. "

Taken: Syria - South of Damascus - Yalda

Date: 19/ 09/2014

LYD Description: hope right from seige.



Figure 9
LYD

Title: As if she is a girl from wonderland
Taken: Syria - The south of Damascus
Date: 17/09/2014
LYD Description: N/A



Figure 10
LYD

Title: Lojain ...

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh

Date: 08/10/2014

LYD Description: N/A

4.2 Men and Guns

This section demonstrates the diversity of LYD's photography, as images of the innocence of infancy sit alongside those fighters with automatic weapons. Men and Guns is the second largest identified theme (49 images) on the Flickr account. As mentioned in the previous section, these images also intersect with other categories such as destruction, everyday life and landscape. This category is defined by 'weaponry': a vast range of images from close up sniper shots, to images of men praying in which guns are present. Not all images are explicitly of fighting and conflict, but overlap with religion and peace. These kinds of images are fairly typical visual documentations of war. The western media from the Crimean War to today's wars (Israel-Palestine and Iraq) have seen the generic use of the male protagonist, sniper, hero and male symbol played out to them through photography. The protagonists are often accompanied by the AK-47 or Kalashnikov, which has come to symbolise a number of armed conflicts, and is one of the most recognisable weapons in the world (Kahaner, 2010).

The first readings established there were 45/49 images containing adults who were all men. All were reasonably young. This is typical in the documentation of the male role in wartime as hero. The man defends their family and land, in the name of their country. The images were further categorised into sub categories, and 15 of the images were of men aiming guns into the distance, whilst 10 of the images were of everyday life such as cooking, praying and talking. Furthermore, there are 8 images of men with their backs to the camera looking away into the space surrounding them, 4 images taken of the frontline, and men preparing for a siege gathering together and waiting. 4 images were taken of the men waiting around when fighting was not taking place, and 3 images were taken of men undergoing military training. This category included guns and tanks: 3 of the images were of guns placed on the floor and 2 images of stationary tanks. They show the everyday life of men fighting against the regime and something of their experiences, rather like the embedded

photographers that experienced the Iraq War alongside US soldiers. Due to the confidentiality of the group's activities, it is not possible to definitively say they are 'embedded' within any Syrian rebel group, however the closeness of the photographer to the soldiers or rebels is suggestive of the similarly embedded photographers during the Iraq War.

Figures 11, 12 and 13 are close-up shots of male 'anti-government fighters' aiming guns. Figure 11 is a blurred image in which you cannot see the fighter's face, the gun is in focus at the front of the shot, whilst the anonymous gunman is out of focus. The barrel of the gun is pointing to something out of the frame, behind the camera, performing or posing for the photographer.

Figure 12 is an image of a male posing with a gun, in an over-the-shoulder shot of a man looking down the scope of a sniper rifle. The weapon is in focus, taking precedence over the person holding it. Through the scope of the weapon, the gunman takes aim at a distant enemy, though he is most likely posing for the camera. The image has connotations of the hunter image associated with such imagery, made famous by Hollywood films such as *Enemy at the Gates* (2002) and *American Sniper* (2014).

In contrast, figure 13 foregrounds the profile shot of the man's face. Only half the sniper rifle is shown as it stretches out to the left of the frame, the length of it disappearing out of the image. The man has one eye shut looking at his target, his concentration is demonstrated through this image. The man is wearing a traditional Arab 'keffiyeh', the chequered black and white scarf that is synonymous with Arab warfare.

It is worth further commenting on the focus on the gun as the subject of these images, rather than on the man carrying them, and the power of the AK-47 rifle which appears in two of these three images. The symbolism and use of the AK47 across war photography is very prominent. It is described by Chivers

(2011) as being an “instrument of repression and the most lethal weapon”, an iconic image that spans decades of war photography.

The symbolism of the AK47 is important as Hodges (2010: 1) states,

“turn on the radio or television news and you will hear a reporter talking of assailants carrying Kalashnikov-type assault rifles or insurgents armed with AK47’s. Pick up any broadsheet or tabloid newspaper and you will find at least one photograph of an AK47. Often the picture will be on the front page; sometimes it will be hidden inside on the international news page; but even if you know nothing of guns you will instinctively recognise the distinctive curve of the Kalashnikovs ammunition magazine”.

The remainder of the images differ from the above, in that they do not foreground either the weapon or the male fighter in the same way, though both are of course present. Figure 14, 15, 16 and 17 are images of ‘everyday life not fighting’ with 10 images taken. These images could fall into other categories, but because they have weapons present they have been selected for discussion in this section. Figure 14 ‘The rebels (FSA) in Jobar front line’, is a medium shot of five men walking in single file in a fighting zone in Jobar, in which they are part of the resistance against Assad. The image does not reveal information of where they are walking to and nor can their faces be seen. They are climbing up a slope, and the image gives a sense of participation with the movement as if the viewer were moving with them, as the camera is positioned in line behind them. This is a generic image of troops moving together, and such images are common in WW1 photography, often in silhouettes over hills, anonymous soldiers and men off to fight a war.

Figure 15 is a medium shot of a soldier from ‘free Syrian army’ in Jobar, showing the young man from behind, walking towards a partially collapsed building, amongst which some wild greenery is growing, nature taking back hold of the damaged landscape resonating with those famous deserted images

of Chernobyl, in which nature reclaims a land abandoned by people. The soldier, who is small in size, and has only a small frame, unlike that of a trained soldier, is carrying weaponry with his head tilted to the ground. Both of these images give a sense of embeddedness, much like in the Iraq War 2003 where the American and British Armies attached reporters to military units involved in armed conflict, as the cameraman seems to be following him, documenting his moves. In the Iraq War there were significant problems with embedding journalists, as Allan (2005: 374) has argued, they were “only providing a snapshot of the war”. Furthermore, Tumber and Palmer (2004) believe the public was receiving a ‘distorted picture’ of the Iraqi conflict. In fostering a sense of participation, and thus subjectivity of the soldiers, these particular photographs get up close and personal with the Free Syrian Army.

Figure 16 is different to the previous images discussed as it documents ‘everyday life,’ but from a quiet, reflective moment illustrating the strengths of religion. The image is a medium close up shot of a Free Syrian soldier on the front line in Jobar in the month of Ramadan. At the centre of the image is a free Syrian army fighter reading the Qur’an, he has his back to the camera and his head down reading, on his lap he has a gun. To the left of the image is a seat that has only been half captured and it is empty, just above the seat where the oil barrel and sand bags surround the image is another Qur’an. In the foreground of the image there are numerous sandbags and two oil barrels, and in the right hand corner there is a walkie-talkie device. The image has strong connotations with a WW1 setting in a trench when soldiers would sit down to have a rest, a moment of quiet and silence. The empty seat and the second Qur’an which is placed on the oil barrels implies a sense of absence that somebody is no longer there, possibly a comrade is fighting, missing or dead.

In a similar image that reflects upon peace and religion in warfare, figure 17 is a medium shot of 16 rebel (Free Syrian army) men praying in Qaboun, Damascus. The men are all facing in the same direction to the right of the image towards Mecca. The men are all praying on rugs, which are different colours and sizes.

The image is situated in a home or a building with shoes in the left hand corner scattered on the floor, across the back of the image is a washing line with clothes hung, perhaps signalling the presence of a woman. There is a set of ladders in the centre distance of the image and above this is a gap where the rubble has crumbled and formed a gap. To the right of the image is a window with curtains and placed on the floor are two guns positioned against the wall. The image connotes tranquillity and a moment of respite, but the guns are a constant reminder of the conflict. The image allows for an understanding for the importance of religion and moments of prayer and silence in conflict. Furthermore, the ladder in the centre back forms a route in for the men to pray but also a route out. The light above the ladders outside give the illusion that things are transpiring and that life continues whilst they are praying.

However, it is worth mentioning the seeming contradiction of war and peace, and violence and religion, and particularly the conflation in western media of images of Islam, or the Qur'an, prayer mats, and Muslim men wielding guns. Whilst religion and the pursuit of peace is clearly important for these fighters, it is impossible to ignore the potential impact these images might have on a western audience, reinforcing stereotypes of Islam as a religion naturally associated with violence and patriarchy (though there is an assumption here that all fighters are male). On the other hand, familiar iconographic images of war such as the sniper, the AK47, troops in line, and destroyed buildings in combination with Islam and religion, may provide western audiences with a fresh perspective unseen in western media, and thus potentially challenging rather than reinforcing stereotypes.



Figure 11
LYD

Title: South of Damascus – Fighter from Free Syrian Army

Taken: South of Damascus

Date: 20/9/2014

LYD Description: Fighter from Free Syrian Army



Figure 12
LYD

Title: Damascus – Barzeh – FSA, Free Syrian Army is ready.

Taken: Damascus – Barzeh – FSA

Date: 26/05/2014

LYD Description: Free Syrian Army is ready



Figure 13
LYD

Title: Fighters from Free Syrian Army (The rebels)

Taken: Syria – Damascus – Jobar

Date: 11/05/2014

LYD Description: A fighter who is with Free Syrian Army (The Rebels against the Assad regime)



Figure 14
LYD

Title: The rebels (FSA) in Jobar front line

Taken: Jobar

Date: 07/11/2014

LYD Description: It's fighting zone and the shelling didn't stop. They are the rebels (Free Syrian Army).

We asked them that we want to take some pictures, and they allowed us to work and they guide us to the safer area. In these places you will not take your time to take many pictures, you just want to take then go away directly.



Figure 15
LYD

Title: Jobar – Soldier from Free Syrian Army

Taken: Jobar

Date: 08/09/2014

LYD Description: These people are not ISIS



Figure 16
LYD

Title: Damascus – Jobar Front Line – Free Syrian Army

Taken: Jobar

Date: 06/07/2014

LYD Description: Free Syrian Army Soldier reading Quran near the front line in Ramadan month.



Figure 17
LYD

Title: Fighters from Free Syrian Army (The rebels)

Taken: Syria – Damascus – Qaboun

Date: 11/05/2014

LYD Description: A group of fighters who are with Free Syrian Army (The Rebels against the Assad regime)

The rebels or Free Syrian Army (FSA) is Syrian people fighting for freedom against Assad regime the dictator.

4.3 Pain and Death

Pain and death is another significant theme of the LYD's Flickr images, which has a total of 18 that have been identified. It was expected that this section would have had a greater amount of images due to the nature of conflict photography. As Dauphinée (2007, 139) states, "images of the body in pain are the primary medium through which we come to know war, torture and other pain-producing activities". However, pain and death, as with the other categories, are ever present throughout LYD's imagery and is a constant threat in everyday life, in images of men and guns, and of children.

The images in this section show the brutality of the conflict, any pain or injuries inflicted, the effects of war such as the destruction, but also the extreme which is death and the mourning process that people go through. When I undertook the initial readings I found that 4 of the images were of adult men in hospital who had suffered injuries, 3 images were of children in hospitals, 6 images of dead bodies being prepared for burial, 3 of graves and finally 1 image of scattered blood from an attack. I have taken a selection of 5 of these images to discuss more closely.

Figure 18 is a medium shot of a man, standing in the foreground in focus to the right of the frame, staring to the bottom left corner of the image. His gaze does not meet that of the viewer, instead looking down, dejected, demoralised and in pain. The man is older, his head is bandaged and his face and shirt are covered in blood. In the back of the image to the left, slightly faded and not in focus, are two men working around a body that is partially naked. The man's face is not visible, and only the lower half of his body is lying limp, covered in blood and dirt. The description to the image states 'after the shelling on civilians areas in Ein Tarma by Syrian Regime'. This allows for a contextual understanding that the people within this image have been through a shelling attack, and this is where they have come for safety and help. The camera captures both the wounded older man in the foreground, as a survivor of the

attack, whilst the bloodied and limp body in the background is less fortunate. His anonymity, his head and face obscured by the doctors, suggests that this could be any Syrian man, and represents the pain suffered on behalf of all Syrians.

Figure 19 taken in Douma – Damascus, the caption reading ‘Just a little unknown girl’ is a medium shot of a young girl sat in a hospital. In the centre of the frame she is seated, her face not on show to the camera as it is covered by the hands of an man wrapping a bandage around the child’s head. Similar to the obscured face of the man in figure 18, titled the ‘little unknown girl’ can also be read as representing other children of Syria, and the pain which they suffer. The child’s face is covered in blood and she is dressed in a yellow top and a denim-beaded dress. The man who is wrapping the bandage to the right of the image is wearing gloves to dress her head. The surrounding of the image is out of focus, with a table in the background containing medical equipment and to the left a drip is hanging, though the focus is on the little girl.

Unlike figures 18 and 19, figures 20, 21 and 22 show death and mourning. Figure 20 taken in Daryya, West Damascus, captioned ‘Goodbye bro, see you there’ is a high angled medium shot of a corpse lying in the centre of the frame, wrapped in cloth preparing for burial. The cloth is white in contrast with the stretcher that the body lies on it is clinical and pure, preserving the purity of the sacrificed martyr. The term martyr can be read from the part of the tagline that reads ‘see you there’, implying the brothers, or brother in arms, will meet again in heaven. The face of the man that has died cannot be seen, which reflects the theme of anonymity and wider symbolic representation acknowledged in other images, but also preserving the dignity of the dead. To the left of the image is a man kneeling down looking over the body and around the image you can see the legs and feet of 5 other people who are observing the body, though only the ‘bro’ or brother who is kneeling can be seen actually in mourning, whilst the rest of the mourners remain anonymous, lending an intimacy to the image, between the fallen and his brother.

Figure 21 is an image taken in Jobar, Damascus and is captioned “Cry bro, nobody in the entire world looks at you” and is a close up eye level shot of men carrying a body for burial. Slightly to the left of the image is a corpse being carried by a group of men. The body is wrapped in green cloth, the head is covered by a white cloth and only the nose and mouth of the dead man can be seen. In focus to the right of the body is one of the mourners, his grief-stricken face positioned powerfully next to the body. However, the tagline, combined with the lone crying man, also draws attention to the ignorance of the world and media, leaving the man to grieve on his own, to allow the wider Syrian family to continue to die. Whilst other images attempt to reach out to the viewer by allowing the eye of the subject to meet the gaze of the spectator, the caption text of this image explicitly and angrily calls out the world’s media for its indifference.

Figure 22 taken in Barzeh, is a shot of a lady in a headscarf kneeling at a grave, showing the woman from behind looking down onto the cemetery. The caption allows us to understand that the image is of a ‘mother weeping her son’s death’ and surrounding the lady are another 4 graves. The woman is representative of the ‘mother of the nation’, common in much war photography, as the grieving mother and symbol of the country, she is the invisible matriarch of Syria, her face unseen by the viewer. Whilst women are common in much conflict photography, this image is one of very few images of women represented by LYD on the Flickr account. LYD particularly focus their images on the older grieving mother, and not on young Syrian women. This gender disparity in LYD’s imagery will be attended to in the following chapter on the comparisons with Getty Images.

Whilst sympathy is perhaps garnered implicitly in the previous two sections in images of young children, and men going to war, throughout images of pain and their accompanying captions I would suggest that sympathy is sought for more explicitly. Images of bodies in pain and mourning, the ‘primary means’

through which we 'come to know war' (Dauphinee, 2007), serve as a means to shed light onto the direct consequences of war in order to reach the hearts of audiences. However, it is not possible to determine whether or this is achieved, and further work must be done to answer questions by the likes of Moeller (2002) and Butler (2009) about whose lives are 'grievable', and whether or not western audiences are in a state of 'compassion fatigue'.



Figure 18
LYD

Title: "What was that"

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Ein Tarma

Date: 14/10/2014

LYD Description: After the shelling on civilians areas in Ein Tarma by Syrian Regime.



Figure 19

LYD

Title: Just A little unknown girl

Taken: Douma - Damascus, Syria

Date: 28 /01/2015

LYD Description: A little girl was injured yesterday after the Assad regime bombed Douma near Damascus and many people was killed. she was crying and so sad and scared. We should Mention about Douma. It has besieged since 3 years and the people there in very hard situation during the life without food,electricity , heating tools and the safe. Every day someone from the civilians dies just because the people has supported the revolution.



Figure 20
LYD

Title: "Goodbye bro, see you there"

Taken: : Daryya, West Damascus, Syria.

Date: Date 17/02/2015

LYD Description: This photo was taken in Daryya in west of Damascus for a man was saying goodbye for his brother who killed in the bombing of the regime on this zone. Notable Daryya has been besieged since more than three years, and the people there have suffered from hunger and the bad daily life because the regime bomb them everyday.



Figure 21
LYD

Title: Cry bro, nobody in the entire world looks at you.

Taken: Jobar, Damascus, Syria.

Date: 20/01/2013

LYD Description: This picture was captured in a martyr funeral in Jobar, Damascus. He lost his brother and the regime army which was supposed to protect people, killed him. Through this period, people were still demonstrating, and the regime was facing these demonstrations by shooting on peaceful people.

The world was silent, all this period.. or actually to be honest they spoke, but did not do any thing !!!

Notice :we're sorry if this picture bothers you, but this is the reality, and in Syria death is something very normal.. at least now.



Figure 22
LYD

Title: Mother do not cry...

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh

Date: 20/06 /2014

LYD Description: ' in the martyr's cemetery of the neighborhood , a mother is weeping her son (martyr)'

4.4 Protests and Demonstration

Images of protest are not new and are not uncommon in photography; we have seen over a long period of time citizens coming together to rally for something they strongly believe in, exemplified perhaps by the black rights movement in the USA, and to the present day in the Arab Spring of 2011. Protest and activism is key to the wider revolution, and so these images symbolise what the group LYD are themselves trying to do. Whilst it is central to their cause, only 9 images make up this small category, perhaps as public protests and demonstrations have been consistently quashed by the regime. The regimes crackdown on protests is reflected in the date of some images in this section, some of which date back to 2012, as LYD reflect on events gone past such as the first revolutionary movements of Syrian citizens. This attests to their declaration of documenting such images for 'justice in the future', as an archive of evidence, and as a memory bank.

The first reading of the image allowed for the images to be further categorised with 7 of the images being of citizens coming together as a large group to protest, and 2 of the images of just one citizen on their own protesting. I then went on to do a further analysis about what the images depicted, as 6 of the images were protests against the Assad government, 2 where people came together to protest about the deaths of 'martyrs' by the Assad regime, and finally 1 image relating to Damascus being under siege by the government.

Figure 23 is an image captioned 'Moment from the revolution Four years ago..'. It is a high angled landscape shot, a bird's eye view looking over a large group of people, who are seemingly all men, gathered in a square in Jobar. It gives a sense that the viewer is looking from above at the image, and at the events that are unfolding, though practically the angle of the shot demonstrates the large size of the demonstration. This image was moments before the revolution began in March 2011, and depicts a group of people huddled together using their arms to create a wall, who are all looking away from the camera. There

are around 12 rows of men huddled together and around the edge there are again men and a few women standing around the buildings, though not taking part in the demonstrations. Only one man is looking back up to the camera on the left on the second row, every other person is facing away from the camera. The image signifies a unified group of people, coming together, embracing change and wanting action. Whilst figure 24 is an image of 'a martyr funeral who perished from hunger in besieged refuge', the image depicts over 400 people coming together to commemorate, celebrate and indeed protest a man's death. Similar to figure 23, it is a high-angled long shot from behind the protest in Al-Yarmouk. At the forefront of the image, people are facing away from the camera huddled together, and there are three Palestinian flags to the left flying high into the air, reflecting the fact that Al-Yarmouk is a huge Palestinian refugee camp. The very fact that LYD have documented this, and put the non-Syrian flags into focus, also demonstrates a resistant, transnational, and pan Arab solidarity.

Flags come into even more focus in Figure 25, titled 'The sun of the freedom', taken in Old Damascus. The description states the image was taken three years ago before the fighting started in Old Damascus when the youth were able to protest and were fearless. Whereas today, the people of Old Damascus are unable to protest due to fear of getting arrested or shot. The image, blurred and distorted by the glare of the sun on the lens, is also of citizens protesting, perhaps again about the death of a man, as in the bottom right of the image is a portrait of a smiling man being held up. In the image you are only able to see the backs of citizens heads, arms raised up holding flags, which are foregrounded along with the brightness of the sun. I have found this focus on flags important, as the people that LYD photograph are against the government of Assad, though they still demonstrate an alliance and patriotism with the country and their heritage, which the flags come to represent. This image however, does not show the current flag of Syria, instead the protesters are carrying the 1963–1972 Syrian Arab Republic flag, which has come to be the flag and the symbol of Syria's uprising. This flag demonstrates the Syrian

opposition to the government and illustrate a time when Syria achieved independence in history, the use of this flag suggest what the people want, which is independence and freedom. As with other images discussed in this chapter, the brightness of the sun, in combination with the old revolutionary flag, collectively symbolise hope.

Finally, Figure 26 is an image that was taken in Barneyh Street in Damascus and is titled 'The proper place of the children killer'. The image is of the bottom half of a man, his face obscured as the camera focuses on his revolutionary act of stamping on a picture of Bashar al-Assad. In the background of the image, there a 3 cars parked and a view of a street to the right of the image. The particular action in this image is most interesting, with the protestor standing on the image of Assad but also the scattering of the other government leaders on the floor. Standing on something with a shoe in Islam is considered a great insult, as Gammell states that "the shoe is considered dirty because it is on the ground and associated with the foot, the lowest part of the body"

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/3776970/Arab-culture-the-insult-of-the-shoe.html>). Therefore, his act of hitting or stomping on something is seen and regarded as something quite low and disgusting. This image connotes anger and disgust towards the government, and in a sense is an act of rebellion against them and their views. However, what is also important in this image is the shadow of the photographer, and a secondary observer whose shadow can be seen to the left, holding what looks like a camera phone, drawing the viewers' attention to the importance and revolutionary potential of capturing dissent on camera.

Arguably, as an activist group, all of LYD's imagery is a protest against the Assad regime. Due to the ongoing conflict however, it is fair to assume that it is difficult for activists or civilians to protest publicly. Therefore, this accounts for the fact that the number of images that make up this category is small, and the majority are a number of years old, dating back to the beginnings of the uprising.



Figure 23
LYD

Title: Moment from the revolution

Four years ago..

Taken: Jobar, Damascus, Syria

Date: 01/07/2012

LYD Description: This picture was captured for one of the demonstrations during the revolution beginning period in Jobar, Damascus, Syria.

It was majestic view when I saw those people together, they broke the wall of fear and they were ready to sacrifice for their dignity and their freedom.

Standing unarmed against the fire of the bloody Syrian Regime's security and army.



Figure 24
LYD

Title: A martyr funeral who perished from hunger in Al-Yarmouk besieged refuge.

Taken: Syria – Damascus – Al-Yarmouk besieged refuge

Date: 11 /01/2014

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 25
LYD

Title: The sun of the 92reedom

Taken: Damascus, Syria

Date: 20/09/2012

LYD Description: This picture was took three years ago before fighting start in one of the demonstrations in the Old Damascus. It was so hard to make a demonstrations because the army's Assad regime and the mercenaries spread in everywhere in the city to arrest or shot any people make any thing from the revolution. But the youths were not scare from any thing and they made this demonstration in the old city and . Now there is no demonstration in Damascus because the regime has arrested most of those youths.



Figure 26
LYD

Title: The proper place of the children killer

Taken: Barneyh St, Damascus, Syria.

Date: 08/09/2015

LYD Description: During the protests in 2012 a group of youth made this activate in one of Damascus city center's streets, pour glue and put some pictures for Bashar Alassad on it and run!.

It was so hard to do that and while you doing that you are as a hero and you sacrifice for the revolution because many people have been arrested after many demonstrations and activates like this one.

4.5 Everyday Life

The final theme I will address for this analysis, and the fourth largest identified theme with (37 images), is that of everyday life, categorised as so with any images of normally banal, everyday tasks such as walking, cycling, eating and moving around the city of Damascus. Images of movement are common images of war, seeing people moving around, coming together and in some cases migrating as a result of war. I will therefore think about what kinds of messages these photographs of everyday life connote, in a close discourse analysis of 8 of the 37 images from this category (though I have considered and categorised all 37 before focusing in on 8).

Before I do however, I will briefly outline the methodology behind this. The first reading of the images began with looking at what each image portrayed in the theme everyday life and I identified 'movement' as a key observation as 6 images were of people moving around on bikes, and 5 images were of people moving around by foot in the city. I also observed 7 images of close up shots of a person after attacks or reflecting on events that had transpired who were in thought or shock. There were additionally images of food with 3 images of people cooking, 3 images of citizens in Yarmouk camps queuing for food from soup kitchens and 1 image of a man selling fruit and veg at a market stall in Damascus, and 1 image of a man looking for firewood to cook food.

Furthermore, in this section there were 2 images of religion, which included men praying, and reading the Qur'an and 1 image of people talking together about daily events. There are also images of the homeless in 4 images, on the floor either curled up or lying sleeping that have lost family and homes due to the attacks. I have put the images of people looking for bodies in the rubble (3 images), though of course they could be put in the theme of pain and death, but as the images do not actually show bodies in pain, I have placed them within this section as the images depict people moving around and looking. Though looking for the dead is not an everyday norm, the images depict people gathering and moving, and looking for the dead has become part of everyday

life in Syria. Finally, there is one miscellaneous image of a jasmine flower that does not obviously fall into any category, and has been placed in this category due to its connotations to life and the future, and the everyday of nature.

Figure 27 is an image that has been taken in Jadedet Artouz, southern Syria, near Damascus by the group in 2014. This area was part of the resistance to the Assad regime but has been suppressed by heavy bombing and massacres in 2013. The image is a long shot of an older boy riding a bike and a younger girl on the back cycling into the distance away from the camera. To the centre left of the image is an old van parked to the side of the road, though you cannot tell if the van is in use or has been abandoned, and mobility therefore restricted to walking or cycling in times of war. The road winding to the left connotes a sense of movement and freedom, and cycling away from what is transpiring in Syria. The road symbolises a path to or from somewhere, in this case away from danger and war, to the possibility of freedom, or the unknown of what is at the end of the path. In terms of the everyday, the children in peacetime might be riding home from school, or simply enjoying playing outside on a bike. The image is quite rich in colours as the green from the tree, the yellow chippings scattered on the floor and the girl's yellow skirt are a contrast to the dark greys and black images in the previous sections.

Figure 28 captioned "I don't know how he can drive" is also a long shot image of Gouta in the winter when snow is falling. To the left of the image there is a person on a bike cycling into the distance through the snow. The person is carrying two water bottles on the back of their bike, and the description of the image states that 'Gouta is a besieged area and has not had any electricity, food and the snow has destroyed crops'. The image reflects the struggles faced by the people on a daily basis, and the impact socially and economically on society if you do not follow Assad.

Figure 29 is a long shot image of a man, also from behind obscuring his face, in the left hand corner walking away from the image in Barzeh in North Damascus

and is captioned 'Where this road is going to end ..' . The elderly man is walking away from the shot and he is pulling in his right hand a pink and black shopping trolley used to carry shopping, and in his left arm a scrunched up blue and white bag. Surrounding the man and the rest of the image is rubble and debris scattered all over the floor, there is no distant horizon in this image just an enclosed image of the man and debris. The image gives a sense of being enclosed and not being able to get out and being quite claustrophobic, as there is no path or landscape. The image is just of the man and the rubble and in a sense connotes people who cannot leave or get out and this is their daily life and reality. In contrast to the open and unknown winding road the children on the bike follow in figure 27, this elderly man is heading towards more rubble, to which the tagline suggests there is no end. However, all three of these images demonstrate the importance of mobility, or immobility, in the conflict, as the anonymous and faceless subjects of the images move around either on foot or bike, contained by the 'endless road' and the hopeless utopia of 'another place'.

Similarly reflecting immobility in everyday life, figures 30 and 31 represent life in refugee camps, though focus more on hunger and food than on containment in space. Figure 30 is taken in Yarmouk, a refugee camps for Palestinians set up in 1957, but since 2011 has seen Syrians flee there for shelter. The image is captioned 'The faster's soup line' and was taken in 2014. The image is a long shot of the camp, at the centre of which there is a long queue of 20-25 people queuing into a white van, the 'relief committee' bringing aid and food. The people are all queuing facing the van holding buckets and pots for the items they are going to collect. Surrounding the rest of the image are buildings that have been attacked and shelled, they are still shelters for the people that live in Yarmouk but they look unsafe and have been badly damaged since 2011. To the top right of the image there is a small hint of light coming through projecting onto the image. The images resonate with images the west have seen for many years of Africa, where NGO's take aid to countries who have faced war, poverty and famine and queue in long lines for food given by the west, though also with

depressing images of unemployment lines that dominate western news in times of austerity.

Figure 31 again has connotations with global poverty and the images we have seen in the West taken of sub-Saharan Africa in the 80s, 90's and 2000's of poverty and famine. The image is close up shot, taken in Yarmouk camp in 2015. The image depicts three women up close, as you can only see their faces queuing for a pot of soup that is being handed over in the frame by an anonymous male arm. The image puts the viewer in the position of the man handing the soup to the women, and are therefore encouraged to identify with the situation unfolding in front of them. The women look unclean, faces dirtied and tired by conflict, and their expressions show struggle and are worn. Not only is this reflective of war however, but is part of the everyday life of these women as providers, and the disruption of that role.

Figures 32 and 33 are both images of seemingly homeless men. Figure 32 is taken in the centre of Damascus and is a medium shot of a man covered in a blanket, lay on the floor huddled up. Surrounding the man to the right are bin bags and to the back left of the image there is a bike and cardboard boxes. Figure 33 captioned 'A story of a man' taken in Hameh, Damascus in 2015 is a long shot image of a man sitting on a road with one shoe off. In the landscape to the right you can see buildings which are homes that have not (yet) been destroyed by shelling. The man sits on the left, on the floor and from the description states he is 'an educated man who speaks French, English and Arabic and he entered prison for a fake crime 15 years ago and left it by amnesty, he questions the Syrian regime and why we started the revolution'.

Images of everyday life are filled with symbolism of people's everyday struggles, particularly surrounding mobility, food and shelter. Many of the images involve people on bikes and/or on roads, suggestive of constraints on the ability to move, and both hope and fear about what lies at the end of that road, such as figure 29 captioned 'where is this road going to end'. Like the

images of protest and demonstrations however, these images also serve as archival documentation of life continuing, and of a banal survival in the harshest of conditions.



Figure 27
LYD

Title: Take me to another place.. I can't live here anymore.

Taken: Jadedet Artouz, Damascus, Syria

Date: 11/11/2014

LYD Description: This picture was took in Jadedet Artouz near Damscsus. This town was one of the participants in the revolution but the regime has succeeded to suppressing the people there by arresting many of them and bombing it and one of the biggest Massacres has happened there by the Assad regime in 2013 and more than 100 person and 600 wounded.



Figure 28
LYD

Title: I don't know how he can drive

Taken: Gouta, Damascus, Syria.

Date: 07/01/2014

LYD Description: This picture took two days ago in Gouta near Damascus , it's the trapped besieged area sinc three years and the people there don't have electricity and enough food, and the snow now damaged all the crops that the people there depend on.



Figure 29
LYD

Title: Where this road is going to end ..

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh

Date: 15/10/2014

LYD Description: ' a part of the destruction in Barzeh '



Figure 30
LYD

Title: The faster's soup line

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Yarmouk

Date: 14/10/2014

LYD Description: Relief committee distribute the soup on the faster's in the Yarmouk camp



Figure 31
LYD

Title: The hunger in Yarmouk camp

Taken: Yarmouk camp, Dmascus, Syria

Date: 20/03/2015

LYD Description: This picture was taken in Yarmouk camp 10 days ago for a woman waiting on the soup line and she was so hungry and she hopes to get the soup for her family. The soup is the only food for people in Yarmouk camp since two years because Assad regime has been besieging the area since 2012 and a lot of people dead from hunger.



Figure 32
LYD

Title: it's cold

Taken: Damascus City center

Date: 13/04/2015

LYD Description: A homeless man covered him self with this blanket because the cold weather in Damascus City center.



Figure 33
LYD

Title: A story of a man

Taken: Hameh, Damasc

Date: 22/12/2015

LYD Description: This person is called (teacher Mamdouh), an educated man compared with his generation. He speaks French and English and edit texts in Arabic.. Hafiz (memorizer) of Holy Quran, but forgets some of it a little.. He entered prison for a fake crime for 15 years and left it by an amnesty. He studied most of his studies while he was in jail. His mind couldn't understand all this and finally he became like this. His story is an instance to show how stupid the Syrian Regime is. And to answer "why did we start a revolution?".

Despite taking a relatively small sample from LYD's large collection of images of the Syrian conflict on Flickr, this chapter has demonstrated that the group's photography is wide-ranging and diverse. Through their images of children, LYD draw upon well-established iconographies of conflict and crisis, mobilising empathy as they convey both hope and fear for the future through the beauty and resilience of childhood, and the loss of innocence. LYD's photographic practice also raises questions about their embeddedness within the Free Syrian Army and the conflict, as they take close-up and subjective shots of soldiers, through which the iconic AK-47 and the everyday life of soldiers take precedent. The activist group also raise ethical questions 'regarding the pain of others', as they willingly represent pain and death, evoking sympathy for fallen soldiers, martyred civilians and injured children.

The images, though partial, do allow for an insight into Damascus that Western news organisations do not have access to due to the media blackout imposed by the Assad government. They allow for an understanding into how the landscape is changing, showing first hand perspectives of attacks and destruction. The images do tell a story of a place that has been cut off from the West and act as a form of narrative for the outside to see what is transpiring. Not everyone will see the images uploaded by LYD to Flickr and other social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram but for those who look, they offer an alternative perspective and story of a group's journey through the conflict and offer a different outlook to how the West and Assad represent the conflict.

The following chapter will compare and contrast LYD's photographic practice, aesthetically and thematically, with that of professional photographic agency, Getty Images, in order to gain a better understanding of how LYD function as an activist group.

5 Getty Images

This chapter will investigate how LYD operate and function as conflict photographers in comparison to those who work for, and contribute to, a professional service: Getty Images. It will demonstrate that there are important and striking differences between professional and activist photographers, as the contrast between the two opposing camps has been well documented in the literature. However, there are also instances where their practices intersect, such as in the documentation of men and children, showing that certain iconographies and motifs of war transcend these binaries. In addition to this, the use of Syrian photographers on Getty Images, and their positioning as activists, complicates distinctions between professional/amateur, and journalist/activist.

Whilst LYD are an integral part in the understanding of the conflict, documenting it from a unique embedded position, and archiving for future justice, they do not shape western news the way Getty Images do. LYD photojournalists have a different relationship to the news, accessing social media sites such as Flickr, Twitter and Facebook. As has been lauded in much literature on New Media, social media is altering the way publics receive news, posing questions about the impact on the way they 'witness' conflict more generally (Van House, 2007; Alper, 2013; Wall and El Zahed, 2015; Meikle, 2016).

In order to explore some of these issues similarities and intersections between the two organisations will be examined, demonstrating that aspects of war iconography are common across the two platforms and similarities can be found, before going on to discuss some of the key differences between their photographic practices.

5.1 Similarities

Similarities are small in comparison to the differences, though they are still significant as they demonstrate how aspects of war iconography are similar between LYD and Getty images, and how different photographers often document the same specific content when photographing the Syrian conflict. I will focus here however, on two particular similarities which deserve attention. First of all, the common iconography of the child, which is among the biggest themes among both sets of photographers, and secondly the presence of Syrian photographers, some of which are openly allied with the Free Syrian Army, on Getty Images.

5.1.1 Children

Getty Images' second largest identified theme was children, with a total of 985 images. The images of children make up a large contribution to the Getty archive just as they do for LYD on their Flickr account. This allows for comparisons to be drawn and demonstrates that visuals of children in wartime are very common. This has been discussed in the analysis of LYD's Flickr images, as children are well documented – though not just in war, as Wells (2007) explains they foster an emotional response through their innocence and playfulness. Their presence encourages sympathy, and signals hope, not just for the children but also for the country or people of whom they are representative and come to symbolise. Images of children employ a sense of sympathy and act as tearjerkers to move the viewer emotionally who is witnessing the image (Moeller, 2002).

This can be seen in Figures 34 and 35, Getty Images photographs taken by Turkish and Syrian photographers respectively, which depict boys in two different settings. The first, is of a small group of Kurdish boys taken near the Syrian border at the south eastern village of Yumurtalik, Sanliurfa province and credited by BULENT KILIC, AFP and Getty Images. A medium shot shows the

boys having fun, smiling and running towards the camera. Similarly, Figure 35 captioned 'Syrian refugees face hard living conditions in Azaz' Azaz' is a medium-close shot of two boys in a Syrian refugee camp near Esselame on the outskirts of Aleppo taken by Syrian photographer Salih Mahmud Leyla⁵ and distributed by Anadolu Agency and Getty Images. At the centre of this photograph are two young boys. The boy on the left is looking at the camera and the boy to the right is crouching over with the other boys arm around him. Their hands are visible gripping one another, and the boys are covered in mud from the legs down. Surrounding the backdrop of the image to the left are makeshift homes made out of plastic. These are images of boisterous youth, of innocence, naivety, but also of solidarity, and can be read alongside Figures 36 and 37, photographs taken by LYD which also depict smiling, happy boys gripping one another, showing signs of peace and victory, friendship and brotherhood. Figures 38, 39, 40 and 41, also by LYD, similarly depict the smiling and resilient faces of young children, and demonstrate that both sets of photographers have a keen sense of humanity, that transcends political agendas (Wells, 2007).

⁵ Salih Mahmud Leyla was a Syrian born in Anadan district of Northern Aleppo, before the conflict broke out he was a qualified computer technician but as the conflict broke he started photographing the clashes in northern Syria filed reports regarding concerns of people living in the conflict zone. Leyla had received war reporter training program at Anadolu Agency. He died October 08, 2015 after a car bomb exploded in Hireytan region of Aleppo, Syria.



Figure 34

Getty Images

Title: TURKEY-SYRIA-CONFLICT-KURDS

Credit: BULENT KILIC / Staff

Date: 24/10/2014

More from this photographer

Getty Images Description: Kurdish boys play in a field on October 25, 2014, near the Syria border at the southeastern village of Yumurtalik, Sanliurfa province. Turkey said on October 24 that hundreds of Syrian rebels are to reinforce Kurdish fighters defending the border town of Kobane as Washington voiced confidence that its fall to jihadists could be averted. Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region also plans to send reinforcements to Kobane, which has held off a relentless assault from the Islamic State (IS) group for more than five weeks. AFP PHOTO / BULENT KILIC (Photo credit should read BULENT KILIC/AFP/Getty Images)



Figure 35
Getty Images

Title: Syrian refugees face hard living conditions in Azaz

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date: 17/10/2014

Getty Images Description: ALEPPO, SYRIA - OCTOBER 17: Syrian refugees living in a camp near Esselame Border Gate struggle to survive in rain and mud become after rain in the Syrian town of Azaz, on the outskirts of Aleppo, Syria on October 17, 2014. (Photo by Salih Mahmud Leyla/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 36
(LYD)

Title: "Friends forever with the hope!"

Taken: Syria - Gouta

Date: 20/11/2013

LYD Description: This picture took in Gouta Near Damascus, 20 November Children's Day. They are a children in the besieged area, without food, schools, safety. But they are smiling and the have the hope.



Figure 37

(LYD)

Title: " The Syrian child wants happiness .. The Syrian child in besieged Gouta in World Children's Day "

Taken: Gouta

Date: 20/ 11/2013

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 38
(LYD)

Title: All of you here, happy new year!

Taken: Damascus, Syria.

Date: 31/12/2014

LYD Description: From Damascus among the war, we would say to all of our followers

All of you here

happy new year !

Thank you



Figure 39
(LYD)

Title: " Take a photo of us so our traveler brothers and sisters will see us. "

Taken: Syria - South of Damascus - Yalda

Date: 19/ 09/2014

LYD Description: hope right from seige.



Figure 40
(LYD)

Title: As if she is a girl from wonderland

Taken: Syria - The south of Damascus

Date: 17/09/2014

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 41
(LYD)

Title: Lojain ...

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh

Date: 08/10/2014

LYD Description: N/A

Figure 42 taken in Damascus in Syria by Yusuf el Bustani⁶ is a shot of homes in the Arbin district of Eastern Guta that have been destroyed by fighter aircraft of the Assad regime due to airstrikes. At the forefront left of the image there is a teenage boy walking among the debris, the boy is looking to the left of the image and up and the viewer does not meet his gaze. Surrounding the boy is debris from the attacks; homes have been destroyed as well as cars and paths, which lie on either side of the photograph. The image is quite dark in colour, with browns, greys and blacks, and in the back of the image are children walking around. This image allows for an understanding for what is transpiring on the ground in Damascus and gives an understanding as to who is being affected – much like in the photography of LYD, for whom this is their sole purpose.

Figure 43 is also a landscape shot of a street that was heavily damaged in the besieged rebel bastion of Douma, north east of the capital Damascus and taken by Abd Doumany⁷. The image depicts in the distance four children walking on a path into the distance all holding hands. Surrounding the children to the left and right is rubble and an empty building, the building stands tall but debris surrounds the image and though the children meet the audience's gaze first, the surrounding area meets the viewer's eyes not long after, a reminder of the situation in Damascus. The caption states this was the first day of Muslim holidays, Eid al-Adha, which the children are celebrating, walking into the distance.

⁶ Yusuf el Bustani lives in Syria in Duma, a local activist and works for Anadolu Agency supplying photography of the conflict.

⁷ Abd Doumany is a Syrian born freelance photographer who lives in Douma and documents the Syrian conflict. He has been covering the news and events of the Syria uprising since the beginning. He started his career in photojournalism as a freelance photographer with Reuters in 2013, and then he continued covering Syrian conflict in 2014 with AFP, upon recovering from an injury. He was awarded in 2016 the World Press Photo Award for General News and particularly photographs Douma's Children. Abd Doumany through social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter aligns himself with the free Syrian Army and documents the conflict on these outlets less neutral and more biased to his political opinion. [Does social media offer an alternative outlet for photographers?](https://www.afp.com/en/agency/awards/afp-syrian-photographer-abd-doumany-won-silver-prize-china-international-press-photo-contest-chipp-war-and) <https://www.afp.com/en/agency/awards/afp-syrian-photographer-abd-doumany-won-silver-prize-china-international-press-photo-contest-chipp-war-and>.



Figure 42

Getty Images

Title: Syrian children walk among the debris of houses...

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date:18/10/2014

Getty Images Description: DAMUSCUS, SYRIA - OCTOBER 18: Syrian children walk among the debris of houses after the fighter aircrafts of Asad regime forces airstrike on Arbin district of Eastern Guta on October 17 in Damascus, Syria, on October 18, 2014. (Photo by Yusuf el Bustani/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 43

Getty Images

Title: SYRIA-RELIGION-ISLAM-EID

Credit: ABD DOUMANY / Stringer

Date: 04/10/2014

Getty Images Description: Syrian children walk on a heavily damaged street in the besieged rebel bastion of Douma, northeast of the capital Damascus, on October 4, 2014, on the first day of the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha which marks the end of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and is celebrated in remembrance of Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son to God. AFP PHOTO/ ABD DOUMANY (Photo credit should read Abd Douamany/AFP/Getty Images)

5.1.2 Syrian Photographers at Getty

Whilst I will discuss the location of Getty Images as starkly different to LYD's in the following section, I first of all want to address the fact that Getty Images do use Syrian photographers, some of whom consider themselves 'activists', and have died for their causes (such as Salih Mahmud Leyla, Figure 35). Though Getty Images' photography predominantly takes place beyond Syria's borders due to limits on foreign access, as will be discussed later, Figures 42 and 43 taken by photographers for Getty Images show a rare glimpse of the conflict from within Syria, in Damascus, the same location in LYD are based. Whilst discussed in the differences section, figures 44 and 45 are both images taken by Syrian photographers distributed on Getty. Abd Doumany, the photographer who took figure 44, is a 25-year-old Syrian freelance photographer born in Damascus, and now based in Douma. 'Before the war broke out he was studying medical studies', his profile on World Press Photo states. Abd started taking photographs in his third year of his studies at a protest in Douma as he "wanted to reach the world" as he felt there was an absence of free press within Syria and there was not any neutral reporting. He has had no photojournalist training and started with using his iPhone. He was awarded in 2015 Silver prize in the China International press photo contest of war and disaster and 2016 Spot news picture of the year (<http://www.worldpressphoto.org/collection/photo/2016/general-news/abd-doumany>: accessed 24th March 2016).

Figure 45 is taken by Baraa Al-Halabi and was taken by a Syrian photographer who works for AFP since 2013 and lives in Aleppo Syria. He also was not a photographer until the war broke out. These photographers, rather like Getty, have access to spaces from which western media organizations are restricted.

Getty are a collecting point for photographers to come and distribute their work, but also a place for selling, and that has the power to distribute globally. The photographers in figure 44 and 45 are similar to LYD in that they are on the

ground documenting the conflict, the key difference being that Getty Images has the power to provide paid work, whilst also holding the power to pick and edit who they want, and what images they distribute. Even though the photographers are impartial and live in Syria, Getty Images are able to edit the images, decide which to distribute and what they feel will sell, as Bishara states “the journalist becomes a tool, just an instrument in the hands of the editors” (Bishara, 2013: 40). I found that all 5 Syrian photographers who took images, explicitly on social media align themselves with the Free Syrian Army, and want justice. They use western photo outlets such as Getty Images as a way of making money. But they have much in common with the photographers of LYD, and demonstrate a blurring of the boundaries between professional and amateur, journalist and activist. The use of such photographers, particularly those who are openly partisan, poses problems for the professional/amateur (and activist) dichotomy, demonstrating that this is not clear cut, as professional agencies such as Getty pool together a wide range of images from disparate photographers.

The images discussed in this section have enabled a comparison to be drawn between LYD and Getty Images in the kinds of themes that the photographers document in conflict, particularly that of children who no matter what the agenda, help sell news stories, and foster sympathy. Children are common in war iconography (Moeller, 2002 and Wells 2007; Manzo, 2008). We are able to understand the role of Getty as a photo outlet who has an agenda to make a profit and sell images. They know what images will sell and work around the current news and media outlets for distribution and profit. This particular comparison also raises questions about LYD: do LYD imitate professional photographers? Do they follow what they document on global news outlets? Or is this particular aspect of war iconography (children) so pervasive and powerful that LYD cannot avoid it?



Figure 44

Getty Images

Title: SYRIA-CONFLICT-SCHOOL-CHILDREN

Credit: ABD DOUMANY / Stringer

Date:22/10/2014

Getty Images Description: Syrian children attend a class at the Nabaa Al-Hayat centre for education and psychological support for children in places undergoing crisis in the rebel-held Eastern Ghouta region on the outskirts of the capital, Damascus, on October 22, 2014. Overall, some 4,000 Syrian schools have been destroyed, damaged or used to house the internally displaced in three years of warfare, leaving the educational system on the verge of ruin, said a report in May by the Damascus-based Syrian Centre for Policy Research in conjunction with the UN Development Programme and the UN Palestinian refugee agency. AFP PHOTO / ABD DOUMANY (Photo credit should read ABD DOUMANY/AFP/Getty Images)



Figure 45

Getty Images

Title: SYRIA-CONFLICT-DISPLACED

Credit: BARAA AL-HALABI / Stringer

Date: 27/10/2014

Getty Images Description: Displaced Syrian children attend a class in the Bab Al-Salama camp for people fleeing the violence in the Syria on October 27, 2014 on the border with Turkey. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) say some 6.5 million people have been displaced within Syria itself since the start of the conflict. AFP PHOTO/BARAA AL-HALABI (Photo credit should read BARAA AL-HALABI/AFP/Getty Images)

5.2 Differences

It is not surprising considering that both sets of agents work under different codes, conducts and ethics, and for different reasons, that there are significant differences in their depiction of the conflict. The key differences identified here are that of women with children (mother), the depiction of schools, the geographical location of the images, and captions.

5.2.1 Location

One of the main differences when the analysis was undertaken was the location of where the photograph had been taken. Getty images particularly concentrate on a wider perspective and different location. They document a vast area; this is because they have freelance photographers in all different locations as well as the money and means to move around. Additionally, they work with a variety of agents who supply Getty with images so they have an archive that is rich in material, working with AFP, Anadolu Agency and other wire services. As previously mentioned in the similarities and footnotes 1-4 and Figures 44 and 45, Getty Images works with wire services that work with Syrian photographers to document the conflict from the inside.

The majority of the images archived by Getty Image in October 2014 particularly focused on diaspora and mass movement of people, particularly documenting the mass movement of the Syrian Kurdish refugees crossing borders into Turkey or who are living in make shift refugee camps in the Sanliurfa province of Turkey. LYD focus on looking particularly at the inside of Damascus and what is happening within the capital, where much of the fighting is between the regime and the Free Syrian Army. Whereas Getty Images document the airstrikes led by the US and Turkey, taking place along borders where ISIS fighters are located. They receive images from all different sources, including multiple picture agencies and from their own hired photographers, enabling a range of images from all over different locations.

Figure 46 is a landscape shot of an explosion in the Syrian city of Kobani, during a reported suicide car bomb attack by the militants of Islamic State (ISIS) group on a People's Protection Unit (YPG) position in the city center of Kobani. This image was taken on the outskirts of Suruc, on the Turkey-Syria border, in Sanliurfa province, Turkey by Gokhan Sahin⁸. The image is looking out across the horizon with the explosion at the center. Already it is possible to see a difference between the two agents, as this image resonates with what western audiences are used to seeing of the middle east: car bombs, suicide attacks, and landscape shots of anonymous cities with mushrooms clouds lingering over them. It also demonstrates the relative safety of the professional Turkish photographer who is at a distance from the bomb.

Similarly, taken by the same Turkish photographer, Figure 47 is a long landscape shot looking across from a hilltop on the outskirts of Suruc on the Turkey-Syria border, following an air strike in Kobani. The photographer is looking out on to the border of Syria, to the right is a Turkish military tank sat on the border, smoke is rising up the center of the images from an attack in Syria. Both images give a sense of how close the conflict is with Turkey, from the outside looking in. This seems to be a typical way of documenting the conflict that Getty Images use, as they do not have strong access to Syria. The photographers are restricted by the border therefore they document from the outside looking in, the same way in which foreign audiences see the conflict.

⁸ A Turkish citizen who lives on the outskirts of Suruc.



Figure 46

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds Battle IS To Retain Control Of Kobani

Credit: Gokhan Sahin / Stringer

Date: 20/10/2014

Getty Images Description: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 20: (TURKEY OUT)

An explosion rocks Syrian city of Kobani during a reported suicide car bomb attack by the militants of Islamic State (ISIS) group on a People's Protection Unit (YPG) position in the city center of Kobani, as seen from the outskirts of Suruc, on the Turkey-Syria border, October 20, 2014 in Sanliurfa province, Turkey. According to Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, Turkey will reportedly allow Iraqi Kurdish fighters to cross the Syrian border to fight Islamic State (IS) militants in the Syrian city of Kobani while the United States has sent planes to drop weapons, ammunition and medical supplies to Syrian Kurdish fighters around Kobani. (Photo by Gokhan Sahin/Getty Images)



Figure 47

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds Battle IS To Retain Control Of Kobani

Credit: Stringer / Stringer

Date: 09/10/2014

Getty Images Description: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 9: Turkish tanks hold their position on a hilltop on the outskirts of Suruc on the Turkey-Syria border, following an air strike in Kobani, on October 9, 2014 on the Turkish-Syrian border in the southeastern town of Suruc, Turkey. Islamic State fighters have reportedly seized more than a third of the town of Kobani on the Syrian border, despite US-led air strikes in the region. (Photo by Gokhan Sahin/Getty Images)

Furthermore, Figure 48 is also a landscape shot, of Syrian Kurds fleeing clashes and crossing the borders into Turkey. The image is taken looking down from the cattle van, the photographer Ozge Elif Kizil ⁹ is looking across Yumurtalik, a transition point of Suruc in the district in Sanliurfa in Turkey. The image depicts a mass of people carrying and moving quickly across the border, resonating strongly with the images of WW2 in ghettos across Poland and Germany, showing mass movement and displacement across Europe.

Figure 49 taken by Ozge Elif Kizil again is another image taken of refugees, also taken from inside a cattle truck looking down onto the refugees. The image is a long shot image panning down onto men gathering in a truck and in the distance. There is a sea of people moving around and crossing the border. The caption states 'Syrian Kurds fleeing from clashes crossing into Turkey, who have fled due to clashes between the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) militants and pro-Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) forces'. The images are very different to what LYD upload who focus on the effect of the conflict on the citizens inside Damascus and the attacks by the Assad government, whereas the agency Getty on their archive particularly focus on a broader scope looking at the mass people and border crossings. Recently in the last year the mass movement of Syrians moving across borders has been a focal point of Western News, and so Getty Images will be aware of the political and economic climate, what images sell and what agenda the news will have.

In summary, the difference in location between Getty Images and LYD is stark, as LYD's photography suggests closeness and embeddedness, following rebel groups and depicting 'everyday life' within conflict zones. Here however, the images suggest distance from the conflict, as photographers are largely positioned on the fringes, depicting displacement at the borders, and long-shots of explosions in the background. This proximity is also suggested in the following categories.

⁹ Who is a photojournalist for Anadolu Agency and lives in Ankara, Turkey.



Figure 48

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds fleeing from clashes crossing into Turkey

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date: 03/10/2014

Getty Images Description: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 3: Syrian Kurdish group, fled from clashes between the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) militants and pro-Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) forces, wait to leave the registration center, handling by Turkish Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), to go their settlements after crossing with a group into Turkey from Yumurtalik transition point of Suruc district in Sanliurfa, Turkey on October 3, 2014. (Photo by Ozge Elif Kizil/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 49

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds fleeing from clashes crossing into Turkey

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date: 03/10/2014

Getty Images Description: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 3: Syrian Kurdish group, fled from clashes between the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) militants and pro-Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) forces, wait to leave the registration center, handling by Turkish Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), to go their settlements after crossing with a group into Turkey from Yumurtalik transition point of Suruc district in Sanliurfa, Turkey on October 3, 2014. (Photo by Ozge Elif Kizil/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)

5.2.2 Women and Children

Firstly, whilst LYD represent children extensively within their Flickr account, Getty Images' archive differs in that they depict children with women. As has been discussed, women are largely absent from LYD's account of the conflict, I can only speculate this is a result of cultural and religious reasons. It is considered a polite gesture to gain the permission of the husband before photographing their wife. I can therefore only make a speculation that the reason that LYD do not take many photographs of women, as it might be a disruption of normal life or since the civil war these women might not have a husband present, or the women have fled to safe zones leaving the men to fight. There are of course a range of regimes of gender distinction at play here, including the gender of the photographer (male), though further investigation is beyond the scope of this thesis. In contrast, Getty Images have no attachment to Syria, or Islamic culture, and rather than being focused on documenting the atrocities committed by the Assad regime, they seek to document images that will sell. Therefore, unlike for LYD, women are not out of bounds and in fact an important part of their subject matter in the refugee camps that Getty chose to focus their narration.

Images of women are frequent on Getty Images but they are portrayed as victims of the conflict, as the majority of the women represented in the images are of refugees and are fleeing Syria who are living in refugee camps. Academic work on the representation of Muslim women in the Middle East suggest that Muslim women are "much more likely to be identified through their connections with family members or as religious worshippers than are men. Middle Eastern men are more likely to be portrayed through their 'professional capacity'" (Kamalipour, 1997: 54). These boundaries and relations are usually domestic, so it is not surprising to see children accompanying them often in the images, creating a maternal bond as a form of narrative and a connection for the view of mother and child, with strong connotations of the Christian iconography of 'Madonna and Child' (Lenette 2016).

Figure 50 is a shot of a woman holding a baby, and to the right of the image is a smaller child crying grabbing hold of the lady's headscarf. The lady is looking directly at the camera; she is not smiling just gazing straight forward. She is holding a baby which is crying and her right hand takes over quite a large area of the shot in which she wears a gold wedding band. Surrounding the lady are other children and one other woman to the left. The caption tells the audience that these women are Syrian Kurds who have fled Syria, and are refugees in Turkey.

Figure 51 is an up close portrait shot of a Syrian woman who is carrying what looks to be a baby close to her body in a yellow blanket, though the child's face is not visible. The woman looks frightened and distressed as her eyes meet the camera and the gaze of the audience. Surrounding the lady are bags of aid to the right, stacked high and to the left is the landscape of sand and gravel. The caption states she has 'fled from the clashes between Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Syrian Kurdish armed groups in Ayn al-Arab city'. The lady is waiting to register after she has crossed the border. Similarly, Figure 52 is a medium up close landscape shot of a woman on her knees holding a small boy. The woman is looking up to the sky, or the person who is taking photograph, or possibly someone who is not in the photograph who she is talking to. The photographer is at eye level height with the young girl on the floor to the left of the image. The image caption allows us to understand that these people have fled Syria and are seeking refuge in Turkey and are waiting for documentation.

Figures 50 to 52 demonstrates the role of the female in the conflict, as victims caught up in the war, which LYD do not document at all. LYD on their archive only document 9 images of women and they are all elderly, who is either mourning, baking or gathering objects for fires (the Muslim woman is represented in the West as a victim, and oppressed; the Muslim woman in revolution as symbolic 'mother of the nation'). In Getty images however, the maternal bond is a key feature, documenting the child with it's mother

demonstrates a connection of love, and reaches out to the western audience who is then able to empathize.

Whilst children do appear on their own, as demonstrated above in discussing the similarities with LYD, they do not appear with men. Getty Images document women and children: the women are either crossing borders into Turkey or living in refugee camps with their children. Whilst there are images of men crossing borders, they are not represented as being with children and so whilst the mother is absent in LYD images, the father is absent in Getty Images. I can only assume the reason for the absence of men with children is that they do not sell and have the same effect as a woman with a child would. Images of mother and child show the vulnerability of the weakest in war, and the 'endangered female body' which must be protected and saved (Heck and Schlag, 2012).



Figure 50

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds take shelter in Turkey's Sanliurfa

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date: 02.10.2014

Caption: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 2: Syrian Kurds fled from the clashes between Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Syrian Kurdish armed groups in Ayn al-Arab city, cross into Turkey through Yumurtalik border crossing and registered at the centers set up by Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) in Sanliurfa, southeastern province of Turkey on October 2, 2014. (Photo by Ibrahim Erikan/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 51

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds take shelter in Turkey's Sanliurfa

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date: 02/10/2014

Caption: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 2: A Syrian Kurdish woman fled from the clashes between Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Syrian Kurdish armed groups in Ayn al-Arab city, carrying her baby, as she waits out to be registered after crossing into Turkey through Yumurtalik border crossing in Sanliurfa, southeastern province of Turkey on October 2, 2014. (Photo by Esber Ayaydin/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 52

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds take shelter in Turkey's Sanliurfa

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date:02.10.2014

Caption: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 2: Syrian Kurds fled from the clashes between Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Syrian Kurdish armed groups in Ayn al-Arab city, cross into Turkey through Yumurtalik border crossing and registered at the centers set up by Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) in Sanliurfa, southeastern province of Turkey on October 2, 2014. (Photo by Veli Gurgah/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)

5.2.3 School

Following on from discussing the representation of children and their environment (with their mothers), Getty Images also represent children within school's surroundings. There is a distinct difference in the representation of schools and education between both sets of photographers, as whilst LYD depicts demolished, empty and bombed-out schools, symbolizing the destruction of education, Getty Images show children in functioning makeshift schools in refugee camps as they do not have the same access as LYD. The images vary with the different kinds of locations; images taken in camps show some sense of opportunity and unity whereas the images taken in Syria show disruption and a lack of opportunity.

Figure 53 is a landscape medium shot of 20 children all sat around in an L shape looking at someone, possibly a teacher. The children have attended a class at the Nabaa Al-Hayat centre for education and psychological support for children in places undergoing crisis in the rebel-held Eastern Ghouta region on the outskirts of the capital, Damascus. The caption states "4,000 Syrian schools have been destroyed, damaged or used to house the internally displaced in three years of warfare, leaving the educational system on the verge of ruin, said a report in May by the Damascus-based Syrian Centre for Policy Research in conjunction with the UN Development Programme and the UN Palestinian refugee agency". The caption tells us a lot more about the situation within Syria and the destruction of the education system, but the photograph shows the positive side to these horrors, showing the children still being able to get a chance to gain an education and offering support and help through this conflict.

Similarly, Figure 54 is a landscape long shot of 25 children sat at school desks facing forward in an education/school environment, in a makeshift classroom set up in Bab Al-Salama camp for people fleeing the violence in Syria. Again the image shows the positive side that these children, though they are living within camps, are still being offered an education. The caption explains further the

situation and the displacement of '6.5 million people' due to the Syrian conflict. The image shows the refugees learning, whereas the images that LYD upload to their Flickr are completely different they show the brutality of the conflict and the effect on the buildings, photographing the destruction and debris.

In contrast LYD school imagery show of loss and desertion, of emptiness and the loss of innocence. As Figure 55 is an image of the interior of a school in Daryya in West Syria that was 'destroyed by bombing by the regime'. The image caption states that 'Here was a school'. It shows a classroom with tables and chairs, though partially destroyed and damaged due to the bombing, and the tables and chairs are scattered across the floor, surrounded by debris and other objects that would have been the focal point of Syrian children's learning on a daily basis. At eye level in the background of the classroom there is a blackboard covering the back of the photograph with a chalk illustration of children sitting in 4 rows, resembling an American elementary school, and showing the viewer the happy faces of animated children that would have populated the classroom before the conflict. The children in the illustration are putting their hands up and smiling. The chalk drawing juxtaposes and sharply contrasts with the deserted learning space that sits in front of it, demonstrating the very real effect of the conflict on children.

Figure 56 is again an interior of a school, in Barzeh in Damascus, taken by LYD. The image is captioned "Ask these walls who did this? They will answer you". Like figure 55, it shows the disruption of the child's life, as the whiteboard lies on the floor shattered, and what is left of tables and chairs lay strewn on the floor broken. Unlike figure 55 however, there is no colour, and resembles more closely the dull greys of the previous images, though bright white light beams through a large window (or where the window used to be) to the left of the image, which could symbolise hope, of something beyond the depressing darkness of the school. However, the absence of children, even of books or any other sign that this was ever a classroom, more powerfully symbolizes the complete loss and destruction of a generation and future.

The contrast in images from figure 52/53 to 54/55 are quite striking and they show the different agendas of both groups. Getty Images show the positive work of NGO's helping the children gain an education whereas LYD focus on the destruction, the impact of the conflict and the ruins. They offer different perspectives for different reasons, LYD want to share their story and show the horrors and brutality but Getty Images want images to make profits.



Figure 53

Getty Images

Title: SYRIA-CONFLICT-SCHOOL-CHILDREN

Credit: ABD DOUMANY / Stringer

Date: 22/10/2014

Getty Images Description: Syrian children attend a class at the Nabaa Al-Hayat centre for education and psychological support for children in places undergoing crisis in the rebel-held Eastern Ghouta region on the outskirts of the capital, Damascus, on October 22, 2014. Overall, some 4,000 Syrian schools have been destroyed, damaged or used to house the internally displaced in three years of warfare, leaving the educational system on the verge of ruin, said a report in May by the Damascus-based Syrian Centre for Policy Research in conjunction with the UN Development Programme and the UN Palestinian refugee agency. AFP PHOTO / ABD DOUMANY (Photo credit should read ABD DOUMANY/AFP/Getty Images)



Figure 54

Getty Images

Title: SYRIA-CONFLICT-DISPLACED

Credit: BARAA AL-HALABI / Stringer

Date: 27/10/2014

Getty Images Description: Displaced Syrian children attend a class in the Bab Al-Salama camp for people fleeing the violence in the Syria on October 27, 2014 on the border with Turkey. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) say some 6.5 million people have been displaced within Syria itself since the start of the conflict. AFP PHOTO/BARAA AL-HALABI (Photo credit should read BARAA AL-HALABI/AFP/Getty Images)



Figure 55

LYD

Title: Here was a school.

Taken:: Daryya, west of Damascus, Syria.

Date: 15/03/ 2015

LYD Description :A Children's School in Daryya in the west of Damascus that was destroyed by the bombing of the regime while he has been besieging it since three years.



Figure 56

LYD

Title: " Ask these walls who did this? They will answer you"

Taken: Damascus - Barzeh I

Date: 03/09/2014

LYD Description: A part of the destruction in the schools of Barzeh caused by Al-Assad forces shelling

5.2.4 Captions

Finally, one of the most telling differences that demonstrates a clear binary between professional Getty and activist LYD, is the captions that are used to describe the photographs. Getty Images remain neutral, providing simply descriptions in their captions, whereas LYD are clear about their political position in relation to the images. LYD take the photos, make any alterations and edits and in a way they are their own editors for their Flickr account. They are in a sense embedded journalists, a term used in the media coverage in the 2003 invasion of Iraq where the news reporter is attached to the military unit involved in armed conflict. That is not to say that they are limited to location and movement, missing crucial information through sole attachment to the military, but that they are attached to Damascus by location. They are documenting from the inside out with a key agenda (Baroni, 2015). They as a group make their own judgments and decisions as to what they photograph and document and they make direct engagement with the audience.

Getty Images are trained to look at both sides, and are experienced in understanding the violence of both sides of conflict. They report different things and talk to both sides to form a description. Bishara (2013) states professional practices keep a “balanced objectivity” where they are “purportedly neutral, in the middle, idealized as rational, even-handed, and interested in the common good”, quoting from official sources such as NGOs for statistics on displacement, number of deaths, and information about fighters involved (Bishara, 2013). They like to secure knowledge which Bishara states is a “unity of concept... that seems to originate in abstract Western thoughts” (Bishara, 2013: 2). They will sell to a variety of people with diverse viewpoints. As Gürsel states “images ‘move’ from photographers cameras to editors screens, were captioned and colour-corrected, and then get ‘pushed’ out to potential clients (Gürsel, 2015: 111). Getty Images as an organisation have all different levels of people, processes and ranges of rigorous tasks

before an image will get publicized, even the captions go through a team of staff before circulation.

Figure 57 taken in Nabaa Al-Hayat centre near Eastern Ghouta caption states “Syrian children attend a class at the Nabaa Al-Hayat centre for education and psychological support for children in places undergoing crisis in the rebel-held Eastern Ghouta region on the outskirts of the capital, Damascus, on October 22, 2014. Overall, some 4,000 Syrian schools have been destroyed, damaged or used to house the internally displaced in three years of warfare, leaving the educational system on the verge of ruin, said a report in May by the Damascus-based Syrian Centre for Policy Research in conjunction with the UN Development Programme and the UN Palestinian refugee agency”. This is professionally written, in a journalistic manner, quoting qualified reports and research to give some context to their images.



Figure 57

Getty Images

Title: SYRIA-CONFLICT-SCHOOL-CHILDREN

Credit: ABD DOUMANY / Stringer

Date: 22/10/2014

Getty Images Description: Syrian children attend a class at the Nabaa Al-Hayat centre for education and psychological support for children in places undergoing crisis in the rebel-held Eastern Ghouta region on the outskirts of the capital, Damascus, on October 22, 2014. Overall, some 4,000 Syrian schools have been destroyed, damaged or used to house the internally displaced in three years of warfare, leaving the educational system on the verge of ruin, said a report in May by the Damascus-based Syrian Centre for Policy Research in conjunction with the UN Development Programme and the UN Palestinian refugee agency. AFP PHOTO / ABD DOUMANY (Photo credit should read ABD DOUMANY/AFP/Getty Images)

Furthermore, figure 58 taken in Kobani in a refugee camp states “Kurdish refugees from the Syrian town of Kobani walk besides their tents in a camp in the southeastern town of Suruc on the Turkish-Syrian border, October 19, 2014. Kurdish fighters in Syrian city of Kobani have pushed back Islamic State militants in a number of locations as U.S. air strikes on ISIS positions continue in and around the city. Since one month more than 200,000 people from Kobani flee into Turkey”. The captions are long, with the events that have taken place, dated, and contain statistics, giving as much information as possible to a potential buyer for their images to create news.



Figure 58

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds Battle IS To Retain Control Of Kobani

Credit: Gokhan Sahin / Stringer

Taken: 19/10/2014

Getty Images Description: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 19: Kurdish refugees from the Syrian town of Kobani walk besides their tents in a camp in the southeastern town of Suruc on the Turkish-Syrian border, October 19, 2014. Kurdish fighters in Syrian city of Kobani have pushed back Islamic State militants in a number of locations as U.S. air strikes on ISIS positions continue in and around the city. Since one month more than 200,000 people from Kobani flee into Turkey. (Photo by Gokhan Sahin/Getty Images)

Finally, figure 59 follows a similar line, including detailed information about the geographical location of where the images are taken. This, of Syrian children walking among the debris of houses, in the district of Eastern Guta, states “DAMUSCUS, SYRIA - OCTOBER 18: Syrian children walk among the debris of houses after the fighter aircrafts of Assad regime forces airstrike on Arbin district of Eastern Guta on October 17 in Damascus, Syria, on October 18, 2014”. It is factual, written to describe and inform rather than analyze or evaluate or to change your opinion.

The captions used by Getty images describe what has happened, the location and the information surrounding the image, who was there, and when these events unfolded. In some cases, Getty further describe information surrounding the conflict by using statistics from refugee and NGO agencies. They do not force their opinion on the viewer, they just document what they saw and give some key information with dates and locations. However, LYD are subjective and direct, as an agent they make their own judgments and do not remain impartial when describing the events as they unfold for example in figure 60 taken in Jobar, Damascus, Syria, titled ‘Cry bro, nobody in the entire world looks at you’. The caption and description states:

“this picture was captured in a martyr funeral in Jobar, Damascus. He lost his brother and the regime army which was supposed to protect people, killed him. Through this period, people were still demonstrating, and the regime was facing these demonstrations by shooting on peaceful people. The world was silent, all this period.. or actually to be honest they spoke, but did not do any thing !!! Notice: we're sorry if this picture bothers you, but this is the reality, and in Syria death is something very normal.. at least now.”

Whilst it is not to say that Getty Images’ photography does not encourage sympathy, LYD through their captions actively seek it, and through this particular image, not only ask the world for it, but criticise them for not caring,

and try to foster a sense of guilt and shame. LYD documentary allows us to hear from Syrian photojournalist, it permits a brief disruption of the norm of balanced objectivity.



Figure 59

Getty Images

Title: Syrian children walk among the debris of houses...

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Taken: 18/10/2014

Getty Images Description: DAMUSCUS, SYRIA - OCTOBER 18: Syrian children walk among the debris of houses after the fighter aircrafts of Asad regime forces airstrike on Arbin district of Eastern Guta on October 17 in Damascus, Syria, on October 18, 2014. (Photo by Yusuf el Bustani/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 60

LYD

Title: Cry bro, nobody in the entire world looks at you.

Taken: Jobar, Damascus, Syria.

Date: 20/01/2013

LYD Description: This picture was captured in a martyr funeral in Jobar, Damascus. He lost his brother and the regime army which was supposed to protect people, killed him. Through this period, people were still demonstrating, and the regime was facing these demonstrations by shooting on peaceful people.

The world was silent, all this period.. or actually to be honest they spoke, but did not do any thing !!!

Notice :we're sorry if this picture bothers you, but this is the reality, and in Syria death is something very normal.. at least now.

Furthermore, Figure 55 taken inside a school in Daryya, west of Damascus, and states “Here was a school” and the description “A Children's School in Daryya in the west of Damascus that was destroyed by the bombing of the regime while he has been besieging it since three years”. In addition to this when describing images of schools in figure 56 in Barzeh caption states ‘Ask these walls who did this? They will answer you” and the description states “A part of the destruction in the schools of Barzeh caused by Al-Assad forces shelling”.

Another example in figure 61 taken of two boys next to one another in Gouta, titled ‘Friends forever with the hope!’ and the description states “This picture took in Gouta Near Damascus, 20 November Children's Day. They are a children in the besieged area, without food, schools, safety. But they are smiling and the have the hope”. The final caption I will discuss is figure 62 of the back of a mother mourning the death of her son in Barzeh the caption states ‘Mother do not cry... and the description states “in the martyr's cemetery of the neighborhood , a mother is weeping her son (martyr)”. The very use of the word ‘martyr’ suggests a closeness, and an allegiance with their ‘brothers in arms’.



Figure 61

LYD

Title: "Friends forever with the hope!"

Date: 20/11/2013

Location: Gouta Near Damascus

LYD Description: This picture took in Gouta Near Damascus, 20 November Children's Day. They are a children in the besieged area, without food, schools, safety. But they are smiling and the have the hope.



Figure 62

LYD

Title: Mother do not cry...

Date: 20 /06/ 2014

Location: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh

LYD Description: ' in the martyr's cemetery of the neighborhood , a mother is weeping her son (martyr) '

LYD within their captions are very personal, they put across their own judgments and feelings to the viewer which is one of the most striking difference that this group performs as citizen/amateur journalists. Bishara states that images and texts are “often already the product of many hands and minds, that the one or two perspectives represented in a final text necessarily flatten out much more complex stories and positions” (Bishara, 2013).

The images produced by Getty Images have been worked on by editors, journalist and staff that a specific to caption writing. The National Union for Journalists states that journalists must “strive to ensure that information disseminated is honestly conveyed, accurate and fair” (<https://www.nuj.org.uk/about/nuj-code/>). In this process LYD use a personal informative tone by saying things like “Mother do not cry” and “Friends forever with the hope”. The language the group uses to convey their message is subjective and can alter the viewer’s opinion, and this is the biggest difference why LYD are not professional photographers and sit under the umbrella of activist/amateur. They do not remain neutral and are objective politically, regarding the conflict on Flickr and on their other social media outlet.

This comparative analysis between LYD on Flickr, and Getty Images, has demonstrated that there are instances of both confluence and divergence between a professional and amateur group, and the practices of their journalist and activist photographers.

It has been argued and shown that some of the most striking differences in their photographic practices are their geographical location, representation of the mother figure, differing narratives of schools and education, as well as the stark contrast in caption writing. Whilst these differences, particularly the breadth and diversity of location which is accompanied by a wide range of issues (e.g. ISIS, refugees, airstrikes etc), and captions, clearly posit Getty as a professional service. On the other hand, LYD’s containment in Damascus, and

their politically explicit and emotionally charged language in captions, positions them as activist photographers.

However, this distinction is problematized by examining some of the similarities. The iconographic image of the innocent child is one that permeates both sets of photographers' practice. In addition to this, whilst Getty's use of international photographers, in this case many of them Turkish and Syrian demonstrates their wide-reaching professional capabilities, the use of Syrian photographers poses further problems for the journalist/activist dichotomy. Their position as Syrians arguably compromises their journalistic codes of impartiality and objectivity, and is demonstrated beyond their photography, as a number of them identify as 'activists', some of whom have been killed in Syria.

What does underpin LYD however, is their starkly different relationship with the news. As 'embedded' activists, without professional photography credentials, they are forced to take advantage of social media sites such as Flickr, in order to maximize their outreach, to garner sympathy and witnesses of their plight, rather than to turn a profit. In this way, the case of LYD demonstrates that image-focused sites such as Flickr provide an important platform for such voices, and in conjunction with other social media is altering the way an international public receive news, and witness conflict.

6 Conclusion

This dissertation has investigated the photographic practice of Syrian activist group LYD on Flickr. Since their formation in 2012 shortly after the Arab Spring of 2011 and amidst a civil war in Syria, LYD have represented various aspects of the conflict from a unique vantage point within the country. The research has found that LYD's photographic representation of the conflict focuses primarily on children, men and guns, pain and death, protest and demonstration, and everyday life. Situated within the restricted media space of Syria, using social media as their outlet of choice, LYD provide an insight into the conflict beyond mainstream news. However, as this research has found, this does not mean to say that their photographic practice and their imagery wholly differs from the mainstream. Well-established conflict iconographies and motifs run throughout their work. In order to further this insight, a comparative analysis with a mainstream professional service, Getty Images, was conducted. This found that there were some important similarities and differences, both of which contribute to conversations about the designation of the terms professional and amateur.

6.1 Key Findings

LYD's photography is wide-ranging and diverse. The group draw upon well-established and iconographic depictions of conflict and disaster, as they mobilise a variety of meanings, such as hope and fear for the future of the nation, embodied in the Syrian child; and the symbolic importance of the AK-47 and the masculine hero who holds it; and martyred bodies in pain and death.

Images of children constituted the largest category in LYD's photography on Flickr. They mobilise connotations of innocence, peace, hope, fear and optimism. Children are shown embracing one another, smiling, running and playing, whilst in other images they are shown scavenging for food, and framed in their harsh surroundings. The second largest theme identified in the group's

photography was that of men and guns, defined by the presence and focus upon the AK-47 and the sniper rifle, and the masculine protagonist. Many of these images foreground weaponry, others simply follow the soldiers walking, and some depict the banality and calm of their everyday lives, sitting, and praying with guns at their sides. Their closeness and proximity to the Free Syrian Army raises questions about LYD's embeddedness, not just within Damascus and Syria, but through their open alliance with the Free Syrian Army and the subjective and sympathetic portrayal of its fighters. In addition, there were a significant number of images of pain and death, though not as large a number as might have been expected. These images show the physical brutality of the conflict, the mourning of Syrian people, of grievable lives and of bodies in pain and death, raising some ethical and moral questions of what is representable in amateur and activist photography. LYD also represent, somewhat nostalgically, older images of protest and demonstration. Whilst only a relatively small category of their images, perhaps due to the regime's repression of such peaceful demonstrations, they signal an important aspect of LYDs activism, as a movement for 'future justice', in their words, and as an archive for that future.

The comparative analysis with Getty Image's representation of the Syrian conflict found that there are important similarities and differences in their photographic depiction of the conflict, and that there are blurred boundaries between professional and amateur photographic practice. Getty Images have a very different relationship with the news however, and this can be found in the differences identified by the comparative analysis. Similarities can be seen, however, demonstrating that different photographers often document the same specific context. In this case, the common iconography of the child, one of the largest themes amongst both sets of photographers, and the presence within Getty Image's representation of photographs by Syrians. Key differences that were found between the two groups are important markers between the professional and the activist. LYD's location within Damascus, demonstrated by their close-up access to soldiers and civilians within Syrian borders, is markedly

different to Getty's broader geographical scope, enabling them to document refugees at and beyond Syrian borders, airstrikes against ISIS, and long shots from the outside of cities looking in. This reach, and location outside, is also reflected in Getty photographers images of women, something largely absent from LYDs Flickr account, as mothers, victims, largely in refugee camps, through which both geographical and cultural distance is at play. Their representation of schools and education is furthermore a reflection of such distance, as well as ideological positioning. Whilst LYD show bombed out schools, the destruction of Syria's future, Getty demonstrate humanitarian hope and optimism, of children in makeshift schools in refugee camps. These images represent temporary spaces of dislocation, where the child can continue to thrive thanks to humanitarian aid. Lastly, captions are perhaps the most telling of differences, demonstrating that there is a binary between professional and *activist*. Getty's captions show impartiality, in basic descriptive information about the images, absent of political positions, unlike the partisan LYD.

6.2 Importance of Research

This research makes important contributions towards knowledge about the Syrian conflict, photojournalism, social media, and activism. It has foregrounded the activist group LYD in order to primarily further an understanding about the ongoing crisis in Syria, seen and narrated from a unique embedded position by the group using Flickr, and complimented by a comparative analysis with Getty Images representation of the same conflict. In this sense, the dissertation contributes to academic knowledge on several levels.

Firstly, in conducting an in-depth analysis into how LYD function as activist photographers of the Syrian conflict, this research has provided a detailed contemporary case study into how an activist group like LYD are making use of social media, specifically Flickr. Research has been conducted into looking at

Syria and how the public have actively engaged in documentation through writing, painting, posters, art and photography but to date no work has actively looked at one group in such detail and how they narrate the conflict.

Secondly, through the comparative analysis with Getty Images, it has contributed to debates around terms such as activist, professional, and amateur, scales along which both Getty and LYD problematically are situated. It allows for a greater understanding into how roles in photography have changed, and how in recent years such roles (activist, professional etc) complicate news-making, and alter the way in which publics both make and receive news.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

In order to further knowledge about how LYD function as an activist photography group, a number of avenues for further research have opened up as a result of this research.

Firstly, it would have been beneficial to the dissertation if a larger sample over a longer time period had been taken from Getty Images. Whilst I believe the rationale behind taking the month-long sample was sound and did enable a comparative analysis to be made, yielding some interesting results, it cannot be said to be generalizable. Thus, the inclusion of a larger sample that looks at Getty's broader representation of the conflict, in a project with larger scope than my own, would enable the researcher to identify further overlaps and disparities between Getty Images and LYD.

Furthermore, examining LYD's use of social media sites other than Flickr would be beneficial in terms of understanding their broader goals and agendas in terms of their audience reach, and to identify whether they are consistent across platforms. Flickr was chosen for this research as it is image focused,

meeting the needs of the aims to analyse the group's photographic practice. However, it would be useful to understand LYD further in terms of their activism, as there is more room for text, trends, and hashtags on Facebook and Twitter, for example. Extending the study to other platforms then, would allow further scope to understand their different, or similar, photographic practices. In doing this more expansive research, it would also be useful in the age of social media news, to understand not just how LYD use these outlets to distribute images, but if and how audiences engage with these images.

Similarly, the research could also extend beyond Getty Images. Whilst Getty is a huge international agency that provides many of the photographs to Western news agency, and is precisely the reason why they were chosen for the research, it would be beneficial to see to what extent activist images, including LYDs, from Syria make it into Western news organisations such as newspapers and TV news.

In addition to this, upon reflection, some of my key findings might be explored in more detail. For example, the absence of women in the photography of LYD, which further came to light when compared with Getty. As it is not possible to confidently determine why such images are absent from their Flickr site, further comprehension of the group's motives may be obtained if I were to communicate with them via email. Speaking with the group more generally, in a larger project, may reveal their agenda, the reason and context behind their often provocative captions, and their ethical, moral and political standpoints.

Reflecting upon these possibilities for further research, and other avenues this dissertation may have taken, I conclude that this research has provided but a glimpse into the constantly expanding and shifting world of activist photography on social media. That said, it does give a detailed and specific account of the photographic practices of one such group in one of the bloodiest conflicts of recent times, and helps to both further understand, and problematize some of the key debates in photojournalism concerning

professional, amateur and activist photography. As has been outlined through this dissertation, there are many differences and overlaps that arose in the comparative analysis with Getty Images which, as has also been argued, contributes to understandings of activist photographic practices in the way conflict iconography perpetuates stereotypical images of war, and complicates binary notions of photographer roles. However, this dissertation has given much deserved coverage to a group of ordinary Syrians who on a daily basis put their lives at risk to document the conflict that destroys their home, archiving this destruction 'for future justice' in their words, and are able to do so through Flickr. Social media, and technologies such as the camera phone which have accompanied its rise, have given voice to such people, and have given various publics the chance to be able to participate in making news.

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9 Appendix



Figure 1
LYD

Title: "Friends forever with the hope!"

Taken: Syria - Gouta

Date: 20/11/2013

LYD Description: This picture took in Gouta Near Damascus, 20 November Children's Day. They are a children in the besieged area, without food, schools, safety. But they are smiling and the have the hope.



Figure 2
LYD

Title: Hungry with the soup again

Taken: Yarmouk camp, Damascus, Syria.

Date:16/03/2015

LYD Description: A hungry little girl in Yarmouk camp got some soup the only food there. She is looking at the photographer and she was saying that her father went to looking forr a loaf of bread for her to eat, and one thing I know that we don't have any bread any more so that was impossible since two years because Assad regime still besiege the zone since 3 years.



Figure 3
LYD

Title: " I have no school to go , and I used to collect woods since I was in Gouta."

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh Fields

Date: 10/10/2014

Description: N/A



Figure 4
LYD

Title: "Oh come on,,, get down,,, my hands hurting me,,, it is my turn to get on and sit down"

Taken: South of Damascus - Yalda

Date: 21/0 9/2014

Description: N/A



Figure 5
LYD

Title: " The Syrian child wants happiness .. The Syrian child in besieged Gouta in World Children's Day "

Taken: Gouta

Date: 20/ 11/2013

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 6
LYD

Title: All of you here, happy new year!

Taken: Damascus, Syria.

Date: 31/12/2014

LYD Description: From Damascus among the war, we would to say to all of our followers

All of you here

happy new year !

Thank you



Figure 7
LYD

Title: Syria - Gouta
Taken: Syria - Gouta
Date: 08/10/2014
LYD Description: N/A



Figure 8
LYD

Title: " Take a photo of us so our traveler brothers and sisters will see us. "

Taken: Syria - South of Damascus - Yalda

Date: 19/ 09/2014

LYD Description: hope right from seige.



Figure 9
LYD

Title: As if she is a girl from wonderland

Taken: Syria - The south of Damascus

Date: 17/09/2014

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 10
LYD

Title: Lojain ...

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh

Date: 08/10/2014

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 11
LYD

Title: South of Damascus - Fighter from Free Syrian Army

Taken: South of Damascus

Date: 20/9/2014

LYD Description: Fighter from Free Syrian Army



Figure 12
LYD

Title: Damascus - Barzeh – FSA, Free Syrian Army is ready.

Taken: Damascus - Barzeh - FSA

Date: 26/05/2014

LYD Description: Free Syrian Army is ready



Figure 13
LYD

Title: Fighters from Free Syrian Army (The rebels)

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Jobar

Date: 11/05/2014

LYD Description: A fighter who is with Free Syrian Army (The Rebels against the Assad regime)



Figure 14
LYD

Title: The rebels (FSA) in Jobar front line

Taken: Jobar

Date: 07/11/2014

LYD Description: It's fighting zone and the shelling didn't stop. They are the rebels (Free Syrian Army).

We asked them that we want to take some pictures, and they allowed us to work and they guide us to the safer area. In these places you will not take your time to take many pictures, you just want to take then go away directly.



Figure 15
LYD

Title: Jobar - Solider from Free Syrian Army

Taken: Jobar

Date: 08/09/2014

LYD Description: Note: These people are not ISIS



Figure 16
LYD

Title: Damascus - Jobar Front Line - Free Syrian Army

Taken: Jobar

Date: 06/07/2014

LYD Description: Free Syrian Army Soldier reading Quran near the front line in Ramadan month.



Figure 17
LYD

Title: Fighters from Free Syrian Army (The rebels)

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Qaboun

Date: 11/05/2014

LYD Description: A group of fighters who are with Free Syrian Army (The Rebels against the Assad regime)

The rebels or Free Syrian Army (FSA) is Syrian people fighting for freedom against Assad regime the dictator.



Figure 18
LYD

Title: "What was that"

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Ein Tarma

Date: 14/10/2014

LYD Description: After the shelling on civilians areas in Ein Tarma by Syrian Regime.



Figure 19

LYD

Title: Just A little unknown girl

Taken: Douma - Damascus, Syria

Date: 28 /01/2015

LYD Description: A little girl was injured yesterday after the Assad regime bombed Douma near Damascus and many people was killed. she was crying and so sad and scared. We should Mention about Douma. It has besieged since 3 years and the people there in very hard situation during the life without food,electricity , heating tools and the safe. Every day someone from the civilians dies just because the people has supported the revolution.



Figure 20
LYD

Title: "Goodbye bro, see you there"

Taken: : Daryya, West Damascus, Syria.

Date: Date 17/02/2015

LYD Description: This photo was taken in Daryya in west of Damascus for a man was saying goodbye for his brother who killed in the bombing of the regime on this zone. Notable Darrya has been besieged since more than three years, and the people there have suffered from hunger and the bad daily life because the regime bomb them everyday.



Figure 21
LYD

Title: Cry bro, nobody in the entire world looks at you.

Taken: Jobar, Damascus, Syria.

Date: 20/01/2013

LYD Description: This picture was captured in a martyr funeral in Jobar, Damascus. He lost his brother and the regime army which was supposed to protect people, killed him. Through this period, people were still demonstrating, and the regime was facing these demonstrations by shooting on peaceful people.

The world was silent, all this period.. or actually to be honest they spoke, but did not do any thing !!!

Notice :we're sorry if this picture bothers you, but this is the reality, and in Syria death is something very normal.. at least now.



Figure 22
LYD

Title: Mother do not cry...

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh

Date: 20/06 /2014

LYD Description: ' in the martyr's cemetery of the neighborhood , a mother is weeping her son (martyr) '



Figure 23
LYD

Title: Moment from the revolution, Four years ago..

Taken: Jobar, Damascus, Syria

Date: 01/07/2012

LYD Description: This picture was captured for one of the demonstrations during the revolution beginning period in Jobar, Damascus, Syria.

It was majestic view when I saw those people together, they broke the wall of fear and they were ready to sacrifice for their dignity and their freedom. Standing unarmed against the fire of the bloody Syrian Regime's security and army.



Figure 24
LYD

Title: A martyr funeral who perished from hunger in Al-Yarmouk besieged refuge.

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Al-Yarmouk besieged refuge

Date: 11/01/2014

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 25
LYD

Title: The sun of the freedom

Taken: Damascus, Syria

Date: 20/09/2012

LYD Description: This picture was taken three years ago before fighting started in one of the demonstrations in the Old Damascus. It was so hard to make a demonstration because the army's Assad regime and the mercenaries spread everywhere in the city to arrest or shoot any people making anything from the revolution. But the youths were not scared of anything and they made this demonstration in the old city and . Now there is no demonstration in Damascus because the regime has arrested most of those youths.



Figure 26
LYD

Title: The proper place of the children killer

Taken: Barneyh St, Damascus, Syria.

Date: 08/09/2015

LYD Description: During the protests in 2012 a group of youth made this activate in one of Damascus city center's streets, pour glue and put some pictures for Bashar Alassad on it and run!

It was so hard to do that and while you doing that you are as a hero and you sacrifice for the revolution because many people have been arrested after many demonstrations and activates like this one.



Figure 27
LYD

Title: Take me to another place.. I can't live here anymore.

Taken: Jadedet Artouz, Damascus, Syria

Date: 11/11/2014

LYD Description: This picture was took in Jadedet Artouz near Damscsus. This town was one of the participants in the revolution but the regime has succeeded to suppressing the people there by arresting many of them and bombing it and one of the biggest Massacres has happened there by the Assad regime in 2013 and more than 100 person and 600 wounded.



Figure 28
LYD

Title: I don't know how he can drive

Taken: Gouta, Damascus, Syria.

Date: 07/01/2014

LYD Description: This picture took two days ago in Gouta near Damascus , it's the trapped besieged area sinc three years and the people there don't have electricity and enough food, and the snow now damaged all the crops that the people there depend on.



Figure 29
LYD

Title: Where this road is going to end ..

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh

Date: 15 /10/2014

LYD Description: ' a part of the destruction in Barzeh '



Figure 30
LYD

Title: The faster's soup line

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Yarmouk

Date: 14/10/2014

LYD Description: Relief committee distribute the soup on the faster's in the Yarmouk camp



Figure 31
LYD

Title: The hunger in Yarmouk camp

Taken: Yarmouk camp, Dmascus, Syria

Date: 20/03/2015

LYD Description: This picture was taken in Yarmouk camp 10 days ago for a woman waiting on the soup line and she was so hungry and she hopes to get the soup for her family. The soup is the only food for people in Yarmouk camp since two years because Assad regime has been besieging the area since 2012 and a lot of people dead from hunger.



Figure 32
LYD

Title: it's cold

Taken: Damascus City center

Date: 13/04/2015

LYD Description: A homeless man covered him self with this blanket because the cold weather in Damascus City center.



Figure 33
LYD

Title: A story of a man

Taken: Hameh, Damasc

Date: 22/12/2015

LYD Description: This person is called (teacher Mamdouh), an educated man compared with his generation. He speaks French and English and edit texts in Arabic.. Hafiz (memorizer) of Holy Quran, but forgets some of it a little.. He entered prison for a fake crime for 15 years and left it by an amnesty. He studied most of his studies while he was in jail. His mind couldn't understand all this and finally he became like this. His story is an instance to show how stupid the Syrian Regime is. And to answer "why did we start a revolution?".



Figure 34

Getty Images

Title: TURKEY-SYRIA-CONFLICT-KURDS

Credit: BULENT KILIC / Staff

Date: 24/10/2014

More from this photographer

Getty Images Description: Kurdish boys play in a field on October 25, 2014, near the Syria border at the southeastern village of Yumurtalik, Sanliurfa province. Turkey said on October 24 that hundreds of Syrian rebels are to reinforce Kurdish fighters defending the border town of Kobane as Washington voiced confidence that its fall to jihadists could be averted. Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region also plans to send reinforcements to Kobane, which has held off a relentless assault from the Islamic State (IS) group for more than five weeks. AFP PHOTO / BULENT KILIC (Photo credit should read BULENT KILIC/AFP/Getty Images)



Figure 35

Getty Images

Title: Syrian refugees face hard living conditions in Azaz

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date: 17/10/2014

Getty Images Description: ALEPPO, SYRIA - OCTOBER 17: Syrian refugees living in a camp near Esselame Border Gate struggle to survive in rain and mud become after rain in the Syrian town of Azaz, on the outskirts of Aleppo, Syria on October 17, 2014. (Photo by Salih Mahmud Leyla/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 36
(LYD)

Title: "Friends forever with the hope!"

Taken: Syria - Gouta

Date: 20/11/2013

LYD Description: This picture took in Gouta Near Damascus, 20 November Children's Day. They are a children in the besieged area, without food, schools, safety. But they are smiling and the have the hope.



Figure 37

LYD

Title: " The Syrian child wants happiness .. The Syrian child in besieged Gouta in World Childrean's Day "

Taken: Gouta

Date: 20/ 11/2013

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 38

LYD

Title: All of you here, happy new year!

Taken: Damascus, Syria.

Date: 31/12/2014

LYD Description: From Damascus among the war, we would say to all of our followers

All of you here

happy new year !

Thank you



Figure 39

LYD

Title: " Take a photo of us so our traveler brothers and sisters will see us. "

Taken: Syria - South of Damascus - Yalda

Date: 19/ 09/2014

LYD Description: hope right from seige.



Figure 40
(LYD)

Title: As if she is a girl from wonderland

Taken: Syria - The south of Damascus

Date: 17/09/2014

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 41
(LYD)

Title: Lojain ...

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh

Date: 08/10/2014

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 42

Getty Images

Title: Syrian children walk among the debris of houses...

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date:18/10/2014

Getty Images Description: DAMUSCUS, SYRIA - OCTOBER 18: Syrian children walk among the debris of houses after the fighter aircrafts of Asad regime forces airstrike on Arbin district of Eastern Guta on October 17 in Damascus, Syria, on October 18, 2014. (Photo by Yusuf el Bustani/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 43

Getty Images

Title: SYRIA-RELIGION-ISLAM-EID

Credit: ABD DOUMANY / Stringer

Date: 04/10/2014

Getty Images Description: Syrian children walk on a heavily damaged street in the besieged rebel bastion of Douma, northeast of the capital Damascus, on October 4, 2014, on the first day of the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha which marks the end of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and is celebrated in remembrance of Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son to God. AFP PHOTO/ ABD DOUMANY (Photo credit should read Abd Douamany/AFP/Getty Images)



Figure 44

Getty Images

Title: SYRIA-CONFLICT-SCHOOL-CHILDREN

Credit: ABD DOUMANY / Stringer

Date :22/10/2014

Getty Images Description: Syrian children attend a class at the Nabaa Al-Hayat centre for education and psychological support for children in places undergoing crisis in the rebel-held Eastern Ghouta region on the outskirts of the capital, Damascus, on October 22, 2014. Overall, some 4,000 Syrian schools have been destroyed, damaged or used to house the internally displaced in three years of warfare, leaving the educational system on the verge of ruin, said a report in May by the Damascus-based Syrian Centre for Policy Research in conjunction with the UN Development Programme and the UN Palestinian refugee agency. AFP PHOTO / ABD DOUMANY (Photo credit should read ABD DOUMANY/AFP/Getty Images)



Figure 45

Getty Images

Title: SYRIA-CONFLICT-DISPLACED

Credit: BARAA AL-HALABI / Stringer

Date: 27/10/2014

Getty Images Description: Displaced Syrian children attend a class in the Bab Al-Salama camp for people fleeing the violence in the Syria on October 27, 2014 on the border with Turkey. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) say some 6.5 million people have been displaced within Syria itself since the start of the conflict. AFP PHOTO/BARAA AL-HALABI (Photo credit should read BARAA AL-HALABI/AFP/Getty Images)



Figure 46

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds Battle IS To Retain Control Of Kobani

Credit: Gokhan Sahin / Stringer

Date: 20/10/2014

Getty Images Description: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 20: (TURKEY OUT)

An explosion rocks Syrian city of Kobani during a reported suicide car bomb attack by the militants of Islamic State (ISIS) group on a People's Protection Unit (YPG) position in the city center of Kobani, as seen from the outskirts of Suruc, on the Turkey-Syria border, October 20, 2014 in Sanliurfa province, Turkey. According to Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, Turkey will reportedly allow Iraqi Kurdish fighters to cross the Syrian border to fight Islamic State (IS) militants in the Syrian city of Kobani while the United States has sent planes to drop weapons, ammunition and medical supplies to Syrian Kurdish fighters around Kobani. (Photo by Gokhan Sahin/Getty Images)



Figure 47

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds Battle IS To Retain Control Of Kobani

Credit: Stringer / Stringer

Date: 09/10/2014

Getty Images Description: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 9: Turkish tanks hold their position on a hilltop on the outskirts of Suruc on the Turkey-Syria border, following an air strike in Kobani, on October 9, 2014 on the Turkish-Syrian border in the southeastern town of Suruc, Turkey. Islamic State fighters have reportedly seized more than a third of the town of Kobani on the Syrian border, despite US-led air strikes in the region. (Photo by Gokhan Sahin/Getty Images)



Figure 48

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds fleeing from clashes crossing into Turkey

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date: 03/10/2014

Getty Images Description: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 3: Syrian Kurdish group, fled from clashes between the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) militants and pro-Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) forces, wait to leave the registration center, handling by Turkish Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), to go their settlements after crossing with a group into Turkey from Yumurtalik transition point of Suruc district in Sanliurfa, Turkey on October 3, 2014. (Photo by Ozge Elif Kizil/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 49

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds fleeing from clashes crossing into Turkey

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date: 03/10/2014

Getty Images Description: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 3: Syrian Kurdish group, fled from clashes between the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) militants and pro-Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) forces, wait to leave the registration center, handling by Turkish Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), to go their settlements after crossing with a group into Turkey from Yumurtalik transition point of Suruc district in Sanliurfa, Turkey on October 3, 2014. (Photo by Ozge Elif Kizil/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 50

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds take shelter in Turkey's Sanliurfa

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date: 02.10.2014

Caption: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 2: Syrian Kurds fled from the clashes between Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Syrian Kurdish armed groups in Ayn al-Arab city, cross into Turkey through Yumurtalik border crossing and registered at the centers set up by Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) in Sanliurfa, southeastern province of Turkey on October 2, 2014. (Photo by Ibrahim Erikan/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 51

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds take shelter in Turkey's Sanliurfa

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date: 02/10/2014

Caption: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 2: A Syrian Kurdish woman fled from the clashes between Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Syrian Kurdish armed groups in Ayn al-Arab city, carrying her baby, as she waits out to be registered after crossing into Turkey through Yumurtalik border crossing in Sanliurfa, southeastern province of Turkey on October 2, 2014. (Photo by Esber Ayaydin/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 52

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds take shelter in Turkey's Sanliurfa

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Date:02.10.2014

Caption: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 2: Syrian Kurds fled from the clashes between Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Syrian Kurdish armed groups in Ayn al-Arab city, cross into Turkey through Yumurtalik border crossing and registered at the centers set up by Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) in Sanliurfa, southeastern province of Turkey on October 2, 2014. (Photo by Veli Gurgah/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 53

Getty Images

Title: SYRIA-CONFLICT-SCHOOL-CHILDREN

Credit: ABD DOUMANY / Stringer

Date: 22/10/2014

Getty Images Description: Syrian children attend a class at the Nabaa Al-Hayat centre for education and psychological support for children in places undergoing crisis in the rebel-held Eastern Ghouta region on the outskirts of the capital, Damascus, on October 22, 2014. Overall, some 4,000 Syrian schools have been destroyed, damaged or used to house the internally displaced in three years of warfare, leaving the educational system on the verge of ruin, said a report in May by the Damascus-based Syrian Centre for Policy Research in conjunction with the UN Development Programme and the UN Palestinian refugee agency. AFP PHOTO / ABD DOUMANY (Photo credit should read ABD DOUMANY/AFP/Getty Images)



Figure 54

Getty Images

Title: SYRIA-CONFLICT-DISPLACED

Credit: BARAA AL-HALABI / Stringer

Date: 27/10/2014

Getty Images Description: Displaced Syrian children attend a class in the Bab Al-Salama camp for people fleeing the violence in the Syria on October 27, 2014 on the border with Turkey. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) say some 6.5 million people have been displaced within Syria itself since the start of the conflict. AFP PHOTO/BARAA AL-HALABI (Photo credit should read BARAA AL-HALABI/AFP/Getty Images)



Figure 55

LYD

Title: Here was a school.

Location: Daryya, west of Damascus, Syria.

Date: 15/03/ 2015

LYD Description: :A Children's School in Daryya in the west of Damascus that was destroyed by the bombing of the regime while he has been besieging it since three years.



Figure 56

LYD

Title: " Ask these walls who did this? They will answer you"

Date :03/09/2014

Taken: Damascus - Barzeh I

LYD Description: A part of the destruction in the schools of Barzeh caused by Al-Assad forces shelling



Figure 57

Getty Images

Title: SYRIA-CONFLICT-SCHOOL-CHILDREN

Credit: ABD DOUMANY / Stringer

Date: 22/10/2014

Getty Images Description: :Syrian children attend a class at the Nabaa Al-Hayat centre for education and psychological support for children in places undergoing crisis in the rebel-held Eastern Ghouta region on the outskirts of the capital, Damascus, on October 22, 2014. Overall, some 4,000 Syrian schools have been destroyed, damaged or used to house the internally displaced in three years of warfare, leaving the educational system on the verge of ruin, said a report in May by the Damascus-based Syrian Centre for Policy Research in conjunction with the UN Development Programme and the UN Palestinian refugee agency. AFP PHOTO / ABD DOUMANY (Photo credit should read ABD DOUMANY/AFP/Getty Images)



Figure 58

Getty Images

Title: Syrian Kurds Battle IS To Retain Control Of Kobani

Credit: Gokhan Sahin / Stringer

Taken: 19/10/2014

Getty Images Description: SANLIURFA, TURKEY - OCTOBER 19: Kurdish refugees from the Syrian town of Kobani walk besides their tents in a camp in the southeastern town of Suruc on the Turkish-Syrian border, October 19, 2014. Kurdish fighters in Syrian city of Kobani have pushed back Islamic State militants in a number of locations as U.S. air strikes on ISIS positions continue in and around the city. Since one month more than 200,000 people from Kobani flee into Turkey. (Photo by Gokhan Sahin/Getty Images)



Figure 59

Getty Images

Title: Syrian children walk among the debris of houses...

Credit: Anadolu Agency / Contributor

Taken: 18/10/2014

Getty Images Description: DAMUSCUS, SYRIA - OCTOBER 18: Syrian children walk among the debris of houses after the fighter aircrafts of Assad regime forces airstrike on Arbin district of Eastern Guta on October 17 in Damascus, Syria, on October 18, 2014. (Photo by Yusuf el Bustani/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)



Figure 60

LYD

Title: Cry bro, nobody in the entire world looks at you.

Taken: Jobar, Damascus, Syria.

Date: 20/01/2013

LYD Description: This picture was captured in a martyr funeral in Jobar, Damascus. He lost his brother and the regime army which was supposed to protect people, killed him. Through this period, people were still demonstrating, and the regime was facing these demonstrations by shooting on peaceful people.

The world was silent, all this period.. or actually to be honest they spoke, but did not do any thing !!!

Notice :we're sorry if this picture bothers you, but this is the reality, and in Syria death is something very normal.. at least now.



Figure 61

LYD

Title: As if she is a girl from wonderland

Taken: Syria - The south of Damascus

Date: 17/09/2014

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 62

LYD

Title: Lojain ...

Taken: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh

Date: 08/10/2014

LYD Description: N/A



Figure 63

LYD

Title: "Friends forever with the hope!"

Date: 20/11/2013

Location: Gouta Near Damascus

LYD Description: This picture took in Gouta Near Damascus, 20 November Children's Day. They are a children in the besieged area, without food, schools, safety. But they are smiling and the have the hope.



Figure 64

LYD

Title: Mother do not cry...

Date: 20 /06/ 2014

Location: Syria - Damascus - Barzeh

LYD Description: ' in the martyr's cemetery of the neighborhood , a mother is weeping her son (martyr) '