

Abstract

Contemporary constantly expanding content of social media like Instagram brings the medium of photography to new contexts. Photography becomes an instrument of immediate communication and its historically defined functions are an object of change. The continuity of Instagram content creating, the personal perspective of its users, the constant presence of camera accompanying them are aspects analogous to the artwork of Nan Goldin. Goldin's photo essay *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* (1986) has a character of visual diary that captures the life of her community with almost obsessive continuity. It's also captured from deeply personal perspective depicting intimate moments and describing Goldin's personal relationships. Publishing of *The Ballad* and formation of Instagram is divided by more than twenty-five years and both events and its meanings are profoundly different. This thesis nevertheless presumes that comparison of these, in many aspects alike phenomena can help describe the change of the function of the media of photography, explore contemporary tendencies in photography aesthetics, the meaning of Instagram's content to its users and provide general understanding of the role of shared photography in social and historical context. The methods of comparison are semiotic visual analysis, social-semiotic visual analysis and observation.