Iconic architecture through the lens of Instagram: the case studies of the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao and the Dongdaemun Design Plaza, Seoul

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Abstract

Architecture has played an enormous role in the branding of cities, initially through cultural institutions such as museums, which have become the preferred platform for the expression of iconic architecture to boost the image of a city's modernity and economic prosperity, and to express its civic pride. In recent years the seemingly endless potential of social media has allowed the consumption of architecture to surpass the boundaries of space and time. The instant image sharing and dissemination of Instagrammably photogenic iconic architecture has made the notion of 'iconicity' more questionable than it might have been before the social media era.

This research aims to explore the manner in which contemporary iconic architecture is represented in social media, with a specific focus on the manner in which such architectural imagery moulds 'iconicity' in architecture; in doing so, it investigates the ways in which city image is incorporated into the social imagery of architecture. Using the two case studies of Frank Ghery's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao and Zaha Hadid's Dongdaemun Design Plaza and Park in Seoul, the thesis scrutinises user-generated photographic images and accompanying textual descriptions, which were downloaded from Instagram. The empirical work involves a two-part multi-method approach combining visual content analysis and discourse analysis, using an adaptation of Panofsky's Iconology, which was borrowed from art history. A general picture of the representational practices of Instagram images was gained through content analysis; this is followed by qualitative readings of individual images using Panofsky's iconographic-iconological method.

The results demonstrate that there are key elements that convey architectural iconicity in Instagram images. These include: (a) the heightened aesthetics of image-taking through the maximisation of aesthetic value in the portrayal of a building; (b) verbal texts alongside an image, which deliver information on the building; and (c) geographic associations through geo-tagging and hashtagging, and textual components, such as a caption and comments. The findings further indicate that, given that a majority of images are depicted in relation to architectural context, this context, in other words, the place in which a building is situated, is essential for the reception and perception of iconicity in the building.

The present study is cross-disciplinary in nature, which serves as an important contribution to academic research into place branding by bringing together architecture, city branding, and social media. This is the first time that the Panofsky model of iconology has been applied to the field of place branding.

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List of Abbreviations

ABR	Arts-based Research
API	Application Programming Interface
DDP	Dongdaemun Design Plaza
GMB	Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Research Context

Iconic architecture is the key to a successful aesthetic interpretation of urban landscapes. If any global city is considered, instantaneously an image of its most iconic architecture is likely to come to mind: Paris has the Eiffel Tower, Sydney its famous Opera House, whilst Bilbao has the splendid Guggenheim Museum. Such constructions were designed for immediate recognition: a signature brand for their home city, as well as their architect (Zukin, 2014). The last century or so has been witness to a previously unencountered artistic appetite for iconic buildings and this has led to the rapidity of the growth of architectural iconicity, marked by exceptional creativity and innovation (Al-Kodmany and Ali, 2013). City planners and developers are emphasising originality more strongly than ever, with many cities investing heavily in entirely unique designs. This has altered the development of urban landscapes and led to the evolution of new terminology such as 'starchitect' (an architect who makes a name for themselves by designing distinctly original projects).

The drive for visually iconic urban landscapes is not just a modern trend. Kostof (1991) describes how cities have always been characterised by their most eminent constructions. In modern times, the drive to build iconic buildings is intimately related with urban community development. For example, according to Harvey (1989), there has been a clear move from managerialism to entrepreneurialism in urban governance, with modern day architects now keen to achieve fame by designing impressive constructions. Likewise, local regulators are more and more concerned with benefitting from market competition in the pursuit of macroeconomic targets (Adam, 2012). Consequently, urban centres have turned to showcasing their space to ensure their continued relevance in a global environment in which there is a requirement for them to compete in the 'image' market; it is this which results in dramatic outcomes from their planning and development strategies. The city is considered a product and is viewed as being a marketable commodity (Pasquotto and Medrano, 2014). Whereas in the past, the icon status of a

building developed as a result of its physical uniqueness and the development of its social significance over time, in the modern age, inter-urban competition has given rise to a boom in iconic architecture, leading to specific buildings being purposely constructed as icons (Carmona, 2010). Cities have a long history of visual branding—from cliché tourist snapshots to famous film scenes, the mental images people hold of any city become its essence; with endless iterations, this essence evolves into a meme or logo for the city's brand (Zukin, 2014).

Architecture has been highly influential in the branding of cities, initially via the design of cultural organisations such as museums which became the stage of preference for iconic architectural expression in promoting modernity, economic prosperity and civic pride as part of a city's brand (Klingmann, 2007). The trend for creating iconic architecture took a major leap forward with Gehry's masterful 1996 success, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao – a building which placed a previously economically depressed town in Spain on the map, transforming it into a major tourist attraction. Other European cities, followed by cities in the US, and subsequently worldwide, were quick to follow this trend, in an attempt to ensure themselves a place on the global map (Moix, 2012). The Bilbao paradigm (Nijman, 2000) was also rolled out to cities which already possessed their own architectural icons, for which they were envied (Moix, 2012). This led to an increased debate over both the theory and practice of creating iconic architecture, in which recurring themes include the origins, structure, dynamics and significance of iconicity in architecture (Sklair and Gherardi, 2012). These have all been studied from mainly social and political standpoints, in a range of disciplines which include geography, sociology, architecture, urban studies and more.

Whereas previously, the experience of architecture was limited to actually visiting buildings or viewing selected pictures on television, or in films, magazines or postcards, today, modern technology has demolished any barriers isolating architectural discourse. Smart mobile devices are now commonplace and social media platforms have replaced many traditional forms

of communication, with phone calls and text messages becoming shorter and shorter, and communication becoming simpler than ever before (Serafinelli, 2018). In this context, visual communication has become one of the most popular forms of communication, leading to Jenkins' (2006) concept of 'media convergence' to describe the significant transformations that digital media have contributed to the richness of social communication. In the modern world, individuals have a much greater part to play in the status of iconic buildings. By sharing photographs and their opinions of architecture online, individuals are able to create and influence the discourse surrounding architecture. The apparently infinite potential of social media has permitted the consumption of architecture to transcend the limits of space and time (Kushner, 2014). For example, a selfie in front of the Eiffel Tower becomes an element of the 'collective consciousness' immediately it is uploaded online. This phenomenon takes place far more quickly and with significantly greater social impact than was achievable for buildings in the past. It may even be argued that photographs of buildings have become more highly valued than the facility to visit it and view it in person (Higgot and Wray, 2012).

Currently, the rapid take up of digital technology and the utilisation of mobile communications give rise to fundamental questions relating to iconic architecture: in the social media age, what is it that makes a building iconic? Furthermore, how can the feelings of people towards iconic buildings be comprehended?

1.2. Purpose of the Research

Iconic buildings define a city, providing clues to its history, ambitions or the way in which it wishes to be perceived (Tomlinson, 2014). According to Xu (2015, p. 117), iconic buildings represent the 'construction of a spectacle'. Iconic architecture may also be defined as buildings and spaces which are acclaimed by both those working in and around architecture and also by the general public as architecture which possesses a special symbolic or aesthetic appeal (Sklair, 2010). For Broda (2006), the term iconic architecture refers to a building which

has been designed by an acclaimed architect, has been constructed on a dramatically impressive scale, is innovative, is easily recognisable by the general public, functions as a flagship for a well-known organisation, and/or plays a part in an urban landscape revival.

Architecture is emulated and transmitted via a variety of modes: photography, stamps, guide books, and so on. The media sensationalises building designs via publicity networks (Krupar and Al, 2012). Iconic architecture, in particular, is specifically targeted at a visual consumer - either the visitor in front of the building or, most probably, the viewer of media images in the press, on television or in film. It is a prerequisite for a successful building that it generates a robust association with place via a form which is immediately recognisable, a form that is both distinctive and widely distributed via the media (Jones, 2009). As previously mentioned, it may be argued that photographs of buildings have developed greater value than the ability to stand in front of the building in question to observe it directly (Higgot and Wray, 2012). Consequently, contemporary debates regarding iconic architecture are heavily influenced by photographic depictions. In order to better understand the relationship between iconic architecture and the media, it is helpful to return to Sklair (2006), who, according to Carmona (2010, p.127), argues:

> Much of the fad for iconicity is attributable to the architectural and popular media, where discussion and knowledge of buildings and design are based on highly selective images and accounts of building design and development, which, inter alia, fetish buildings and are propelled by an incessant search for novelty and sensation. In such discourses, buildings and spaces are consumed as images rather than experienced as places.

Recently, visual social media posts have been subject to increasing popularity as communication mechanisms. As Serafinelli (2018) notes, social media and smart mobile devices drive photography in the direction of novel forms of interactivity which blend the representative and communicative functions of images. Smart mobile devices have enhanced both the quantity and variety of

visual social media images distributed over online communities, forums, social media platforms, and so on, driving their evolution towards one of the most visible transformations of conventional photography functions, that is, the snapshot culture. Derived from the spontaneity of snapping photos and sharing them (Chalfen, 1987), the snapshot culture recognises the capabilities of smart mobile technologies as primary influences which allow individuals to participate in taking and sharing pictures.

Instagram represents one of the top visual social media platforms, in terms of popularity, currently in existence, both with respect to the number of active members and the number of uploaded pictures. This means that Instagram is one of the most influential mass media phenomena to develop within the social media age (Toscano, 2017). An element of its influence rests upon the fact that Instagram has generated a process of democratisation with regard to image-making. That is, it permits anyone, regardless of abilty, to be a photographer. The outcomes of this have been wide-reaching, especially for the travel industry as individuals step forward en masse to share their adventures and experiences. In 2017, a study conducted by Schofields Insurance found that over two fifths of young adults purposely travel to places that they think will offer 'Instagrammable' photographs (Hosie, 2017). Amateur photographers now have the tools to create compelling photographs and promote accompanying narratives online. Over 40% of study respondents admitted to picking holiday destinations based on predicted reactions to their Instagram photos after the trip. As Magasic (2016) explains, this is one of the most important ways in which digital technology has changed travel. With countless blogs, websites, and photo diaries to pore over, even those who don't get to experience a country in person can still consume it from the comfort of their home.

In *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, Panofsky (1991) says: 'Essentially, perception is alien to notions of infinity. From its inception, it is bound by specific spatial restrictions that are related to the limitations confines of our ability to perceive and understand' (p. 30). Photographs create their own spatial restrictions by disrupting potential infinitudes and tying context to the border, outline, screen, or frame. Photographs (especially when shared on social media

platforms) have the ability to distort our perspectives on architecture and create viewpoints that are very distant from the original intent of the creator. Photographs make three dimensional buildings flat. Furthermore, images shared online provide only a small piece of the architectural subject. Thus, viewers must shape their perceptions to fit the amount of information offered – their perspective is moulded to the image form. On Instagram (a smart phone application that enables users to capture, apply filters and share photos on that site as well as on other social networks), for example, the viewer is presented with a distinctly formatted 'Instagram square' (since launch, Instagram has required all images on the platform to be crammed into a perfectly proportioned square), a characteristic version of Panofsky's spatial restrictions. However, the phenomenon is essentially reversed because the limited Instagram frame actually influences the way in which the user 'sees' the building. It changes its configuration by cutting parts off and subverting the envisioned architectural features. On Instagram, furthermore, creators are encouraged to expand the impact of their photographs by adding comments and observations. They own the images and can, therefore, instigate any kind of dialogue they desire. For amateur photographers, the intention is to share not just a piece of architecture but also a narrative – a story influenced by personal values, experiences, and cultural references (Garau and Ilardi, 2014).

From a cultural perspective then, the changes in perception that have to occur for a building to become iconic in a viewer's eyes are worth scrutinising. There are some notable problems with notions of iconicity. Contemporary sharing and dissemination make the concept more questionable than it perhaps might have been before the advent of social media. The issue is not so much with context and its restructuring, but with the reconfiguration of attribution and the tendency to reinvent or disregard its provenance (Williams and Lew, 2014).

De San Eugenio Vela et al. (2017) have argued how the greater the 'imageability' of a place is, the simpler it becomes for an urban setting to produce rich visual images within the minds of tourists and other viewers. This immediate aesthetic constitutes an excellent fit for social media as sharing platforms evolve from flashes of emotion, experience, excitement and

exhilaration. The term ‘iconicity’ possesses a similar definition, especially in regard to architecture. It relates to a building’s immediate visual attraction and also to its capacity to generate memorable images (Lynch, 1960). Photographs used to be a physical depiction of these images. However, in the digital age, they not only possess an aesthetic value, but are also generated and shared en masse, at the same time as being ultimately only short-lived. These photographs become representations stationed between tangible objects and viewing subjects. It seems that ‘iconicity’ is acquired via the multiplication of images of a building without limit, whilst memorability is also retained.

In what way do individuals relate to the concept of iconicity in architecture in today’s social media age? Whilst the significance of iconic architecture is broadly known, describing and validating a building’s iconicity has represented a difficult challenge as no detailed investigations, especially with an empirical slant, have been undertaken to date. Individuals, via their continuous employment of smart mobile technology, promote photography, modifying the content and the manner in which the resulting pictures are shared. Furthermore, technological developments play a part in the reinforcements and circulation of photographs over the Internet and social media platforms. Although it has a long history, photography has only recently become accessible and visible via online participatory media, and this provides an approach to the evaluation of architecture and the concept of its iconicity. To investigate how individuals depict iconic architecture in these novel visual approaches, this thesis examines the way in which relationships evolve between individuals, visual technologies, practices and images and the architectural urban landscape.

1.3. Research Aims and Objectives

When considering an architectural photograph, it can be said that one of its core qualities is the ‘assumption of truth’ (Higgott and Wray, 2012, p.3). The viewer takes it for granted that what they are seeing is a true representation. This is the case for most photographic mediums. According to Barthes (1981), however, regardless of how it is viewed, a photograph will always possess a certain

amount of invisibility. We do not truly see its nature, despite this unspoken assumption of truth. At a surface level, this is easy to grasp. No matter how accurate or clear the photograph, it will always be an interpretation of sorts. It can never be the true object. Barthes believes it is more logical to say a photograph is 'made' rather than having been 'taken.' When photographing a building, the object becomes a component of a created artefact, with the viewpoint and framing adding to the line-up of tools. Even so, the fact that a photograph is rooted in the visible and viewable does give it a legitimacy that few other mediums can match. The problem is that the 'assumption of truth' disregards the subjective nature of purposely picking and choosing what makes it into the frame.

There are some concepts at play here, but they can be broken down into simple, practical realities. For example, it is clear that two photographs of the same building are likely to be very different, even if they are taken from the same location, with the same equipment. There may be pros and cons in relation to this phenomenon, but there is not enough research to make any firm conclusions. Hence, this study is concerned with the democratisation of photography, with social media sharing, and with the proliferation of perspectives and viewpoints that are now available to people. The research intends to disrupt the traditionally conservative method of investigation and explore a diverse range of photographic mechanisms using the case study method.

To reiterate, this study accommodates the notion that photographs are not a product of complete truth. They are a version of truth that has been constructed by an individual with unique values and viewpoints. This study therefore begins with a discussion of this phenomenon and what it means for the applications of photography, particularly in a world where images can be shared in an instant.

Iconic architecture can be seen to to be playing an increasing role in the branding and marketing of particular locations around the world, according to Jones (2009), who has suggested that celebrity architects and city authorities have been complicit in this. The current and evolving nature of the media today

has enabled public involvement and discussion to develop from the time a project is announced throughout its development and finally to completion. These current circumstances pose the fundamental question of the notion of architectural iconicity and the process of building iconicity in the age of social media and information. Furthermore, an important question asks how the collective image of an iconic building influences the conceptualisation of a building/place and plays a role in place branding. It will be worthwhile to see and track this process through social and other media and to see how this contributes to the branding of a place. The development of architectural icons and how they become symbolic of a place is a process that is fundamentally linked to the age of social media and architectural iconicity is now key to place branding.

This study researches social media as a means of examining this issue and examines user activities on a social media platform to explore particular questions related to this subject. The idea of how 'iconicity' is defined, expressed, and transmitted to and perceived by the public may change over time and in relation to different locations, which informs the starting point in my research. The aim of this research is thus to explore the relationship between iconic architecture and place (city) branding with a specific focus on social media representation. It is proposed that the objectives of this research comprise three elements, the first of which is to understand the way in which iconic buildings are represented via social media. Following this, the iconicity of buildings will be analysed in terms of the particular attributes and elements that define this term. Finally, the influence of the social media images of the iconic buildings will be explored from the perspective of how this has a consequent effect on the overall perceptions of the city. This research addresses the following objectives:

1. To examine how iconic buildings are represented via social media

2. To explore the essential elements and/or attributes that convey the iconicity of buildings in social media entries

3. To investigate how the social imagery of iconic architecture feeds back

into people's perception of a city

1.4. Theoretical Framework

For this thesis, social media representations of iconic architecture were theoretically evaluated, visualised and analysed and features representing architectural iconicity in social media entries were described. Whilst iconic architecture or 'starchitecture' has been intensively examined both inside and outside the discipline of architecture, existing studies have failed to ask key questions concerning representation and experience. These questions include asking about: the ways in which individuals experience iconic architecture; the ways in which iconic buildings are conveyed across social media; how people choose to portray iconic architecture in social media; how such architectural iconicity is conveyed via social media; and the ways in which these depictions then influence an individual's perceptions of the city.

To address these questions, I utilise an empirical case study methodology which is dependent upon an amalgamation of visual content analysis and an arts-based research method known as Panofsky's Iconographic-Iconological method. Panofsky (1953, 1955) formulated the most recognised form of Iconography/iconology, which has been used to explore, categorise and interpret visual artifacts in the field of art history. Iconography/iconology has been used to expand our understanding of artistic artefacts from the Italian and Northern Renaissance (Panofsky [1939] 1972; Panofsky [1955] 1982). Today, however, it has blossomed into an interdisciplinary analytic approach that can tell us much about the interplay between art history and social sciences. Founded upon a dataset of more than 500 Instagram posts of two iconic buildings, the Dongdaemun Design Plaza (DDP), Seoul and the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (GMB), this investigation focused on examining the ways in which iconic architecture is depicted on the Instagram platform. Selective subject choice combined with visual techniques applied to the images photographed, enable Instagram users to communicate and control individual impressions and perceptions of the chosen buildings within their specific urban

context; my thesis categorises the findings as typical social representations of iconic architecture.

Kember and Zylinska (2012) proposed that the last fifty years have witnessed the evolution of the ubiquity of photography to such an extent that our actual ‘sense of being’ is intrinsically linked with being photographed; in addition, our strategy for making sense of the world has come to revolve around perceiving the world as ‘imaged’. Whilst an individual’s experience of place has always been influenced by communication–either informal chats on street corners or news reports produced by the mass media, the expansion and differentiation of media technologies has given users the ability to immediately share their perspectives and images with a distant audience (Boy and Uitermark, 2017). Castells (2013) has commented that the primary characteristic of wireless communication is not the mobility feature, but the feature of continuous connectivity.

The way in which iconicity within architecture is perceived and/or redefined by individuals can be comprehended in a variety of ways. This research takes an approach in which social media, in itself, is not the primary focus, but rather represents a lens through which a wider range of associations can be construed. One approach is to consider the connection between iconic architecture and social media as a membrane which filters pictures and impressions: only some get recorded and shared, the majority do not. Such selectivity is not unique to digital media—the history of photography has frequently noted how photographers exhibit discrimination and do not view all images to be equally valuable (see, for example, Bourdieu and Whiteside, 1996; Sontag 1977). Today, however, pictures can be uploaded and shared immediately, with mobile technologies permitting users to immediately and indiscriminately share thoughts and images on their timelines or to post them on Instagram (Sarvas and Frohlich 2011).

The drive underlying this research is to examine the photography of iconic architecture as a means to understand how individuals ‘consume’ architectural concepts. An analysis of Instagram photographs together with an analysis of

any textual components accompanying the images, provides case studies which concentrate on the ways in which individuals visualise their experience of iconic buildings. This research was also considered to be an opportunity to trial experimental social media and visual research methodologies. The data collation processes generate techniques for producing a meaningful but finite dataset for evaluation. The interdisciplinary approach to engaging with the Instagram posts model an examination of visual images via an art-based interpretation methodology - which has only been applied infrequently in social science-in addition to more common analytical methodologies, including content analysis for large volumes of visual data.

This thesis is founded upon the theory that iconic architecture represents a primary marketing tool for promoting a city (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990; Kavaratzis, 2004; Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2007). According to Castillo-Villar (2018), the goal of city branding is to generate an attractive image for tourists and investors, in addition to consolidating a local identity for residents. However, a city's image is likely to be an intricate and multi-layered reality which requires conceptualisation for appropriate management. Such objectives can be attained via the management and communication of the city's image and the communication of this image, together with the design of the urban landscape, has been acknowledged as an effective instrument for this aim.

City marketing is generally approached from the standpoint of marketing theory (Hospers, 2009). It can be investigated from the perspectives of urban planning and tourism sociology. This thesis makes use of theories proposed by Lynch (1960) and Urry (1990) to set theoretical foundations for interpretation of correlations between human, architectural features and technological interactions. Lynch and Urry highlight the importance of identifying objects or occasions within the urban landscape that are suitable for photography (Hopers, 2009). Lynch's classic '*The Image of the City*' (1960), presents the finding that people view a city primarily as a built image, comprised of separate paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. On the other hand, Urry, a sociologist, argued in his '*The Tourist Gaze*' (1990) that for the majority of individuals the city constitutes a (photo)graphic image. The research of Lynch, Urry and

associates emphasises how critical it is for city marketers to study the urban environments for built forms and (pseudo-) authentic attractions which are amenable to photography. Where a city does not lend itself to the production of imageable and scenic features, city marketers will have a difficult job on their hands. Cities could find a wider application for these image carriers in the urban environment in order to visualise the proposed narrative, and thereby to enhance the imageability of the city. Urry (1990) provides theoretical support for why city marketing and photography are mutually reinforcing. He views a city as a (photo)graphic image which requires reproduction in order to attract visitors.

Research into architecture and branding has primarily been concentrated in the area of city (place) branding (see, for ecample, Kavaratzis, 2004, 2009; Mayes, 2008; Hankinson, 2010; Riza, 2015; Castillo-Villar, 2016). The present study is cross-disciplinary in nature, which means that it could serve as an important contribution to academic research into city branding by creating a closer relationship between architecture and place branding. This relationship is yet to be explored in great depth within the field of place branding. Furthermore, such research can also provide significant insight into this relationship from the perspective of new and social media, which has so far received little research attention.

1.6. Structure of the Thesis

The remainder of this dissertation comprises five chapters. The first two of these contain literature reviews; one on iconic architecture, the object of this research; and the second on methodological issues. Chapter 4 looks at research design and method and the following chapter is concerned with the data analysis. The final chapter discusses the findings and concludes the research.

Chapter 2 of the study contains a brief overview of its objectives. This is followed by a breakdown of the topics to be discussed. For clarity, they are divided into smaller thematic sections and include: (1) the definition and history

of iconic architecture; (2) iconic architecture and the media; and (3) iconic architecture and city branding. Most current knowledge in the field of iconic architecture stems from the disciplines of architecture, sociology, geography, and urban studies. The topic of place branding is also an interdisciplinary field approached from multiple perspectives. This dissertation, hence, uses interdisciplinary methods from different disciplines; architectural theories and sociology on the one hand, and branding, tourism, and visual and media studies related to the theoretical approach and methodology on the other hand. The literature review of this project is divided into four sections, providing the theoretical grounding and context for the research. The first section provides reference to the current state of research on iconic architecture, ranging from its origin and history to current debates on the 'Bilbao effect'. In particular, the current boom in iconic architecture is explained in comparison with the iconic architecture of the past, revealing the direction contemporary iconic architecture is moving in. The second section presents the close relationship between architecture and (media) representations and how architectural perception is formed; this is explained from an architectural theory perspective. The focus of this section is to highlight how a shift in the communication environment from traditional media to new media will affect people's understanding of architecture and their view of it. This section provides insights into how architectural images are constructed and shared in a social media setting, and how these images are received and interpreted by the public. The third section covers current research on iconic architecture in the museum context, illustrating the possibility that iconic architecture relates to city branding. In the final section, debates around and criticism of iconic architecture are reviewed.

Chapter 3 gives a full description of the methodological issues related to this research. Ordinarily, this part of the research would appear at a later point, but there is a good reason for addressing it early in this case. For one thing, the methodological literature review is not typical. While it provides a comprehensive overview of the available literature on this subject, it is designed to be a functional methodological tool that brings together both traditional review elements and a more empirical perspective. There is more information on this in

Chapters 4 and 5. Furthermore, the primary method used in this research is based on a lesser known model of iconology formulated by Panofsky (1953, 1955). Not only is it a less familiar method in my field, it also moves away from typical and common quantitative methods. The Panofsky method uses smaller samples to produce statistically valid results, which can seem like an oxymoron to some. Therefore, it was deemed necessary to provide a more detailed description of the methodology and its benefits for this research. The theoretical conceptualisations discussed in this part of the study bring together theories from the fields of visual studies, tourist photography, the tourist gaze, social media research and 'iPhoneography.'

This research is exploratory and inductive in nature, involving 'primarily an inductive process of organizing data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among categories' (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993, p. 479), such that conceptual themes are not identified a priori. In Chapters 4 and 5, there is a focus on the empirical components of the study. They bring together ideas from content analysis and the Panofsky theory on iconographic-iconological method. The goal is to thoroughly examine the way in which the imagery of iconic buildings is represented and consequently, how their iconicity is formed. How the different elements of this mixed analytic approach fit together and what inferences will be drawn from the chosen approach are described in Chapter 4, which gives a summary of the research design. In Chapter 5, the content analysis forms just the first part of the evaluation. This is followed by a comprehensive evaluation of the chosen Instagram images, with a modified version of the Panofsky theory used to assess the textual and visual depictions of iconic buildings. This process is employed because it introduces an innovative method for constructing iconological readings of visual images. As a result, it provides justification for a methodical use of iconology for the purposes of social media research. It should be stressed that the combination of these two analytical approaches are designed to be rigorous and thorough. The goal is to gain a full and complete (or as far as possible) understanding of iconic buildings and the ways in which people generate visually facilitated encounters and perceptions of them.

In the last chapter, there is a discussion of what the theoretical innovations and empirical findings actually mean and what kind of impact they have for both academic literature and practice. This chapter begins with a brief summary of the study results based on evidence gained from data analysis. The second sub-chapter of this chapter discusses and interprets research findings, focusing on how we should and can utilise the varied theoretical concepts introduced in Chapter 2 and 3, and empirically obtained results from the 2-stage analysis of content analysis and the Panofsky model. It explores the results of the empirical analysis, particularly in relation to the three major objectives at the heart of this research. They are (1) the representational practices of iconic architecture on social media, (2) examination of the key elements and/or attributes of ‘iconicity’ of buildings in social media entries, and (3) investigation of city narratives in social imagery of architecture and the implications for city branding. In the remainder of this chapter, the contributions from this research are discussed from methodological perspectives as well as conceptual and theoretical ones. The limitations of the study are identified, explained, and discussed in conjunction with logical, legitimate solutions. This is an important part of the process, as future studies should take steps to eliminate these weaknesses and investigate concepts that, perhaps, may not have been presented as thoroughly as they could have been.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

For the present dissertation, the research objectives are both empirical and interpretive in nature, and focus predominantly on three key concepts, namely iconic architecture, city branding, and Instagram (social media). On the face of it, these concepts appear self-explanatory, yet since they make up the comprehensive framework for this study, deeper exploration of each terminology is definitely required. In this chapter, the following concepts will be discussed: iconic architecture, city branding, and media. This theoretical background will then be applied as a basis to explore the empirical material, highlight new themes, and to generate a deeper insight into the relationship between iconic architecture and city image.

The context of this relationship, as well as a definition of the iconic architecture, architectural iconicity and its origins, will be presented. There will more a predominant focus on the recent trend towards iconic architecture heightened by the 'Bilbao Effect' and starchitecture. First and foremost, various definitions of iconic architecture and the contemporary notion of architectural iconicity will be analysed. This will primarily address the first two research objectives of exploring how iconic architecture is shown through social media and the essential factors that portray the iconicity of buildings through social media. This will be further examined in the data analysis in Chapter 5

The concept of city branding will be at the core of the second section of the chapter. This section will further explore iconic architecture in terms of the building's location, explaining the association between iconic architecture and city branding. I draw on the notion of place branding as conceptualised by, for example, Zenker and Braun (2010) and Lucarelli & Berg (2011). The notion of city branding will also be compared with the concept of corporate branding, and subsequently, an in-depth explanation of similar terms (place promotion and place marketing) that have often been used to replace the term place branding will be given. The idea of 'iconomy' by Terry Smith (2006) will serve as an example to explain the growing importance of iconic architecture in an image-

saturated society. Moreover, another perspective regarding the relationship between architecture and the city in which it is located is discussed by examining theories like ‘imageability’ (Lynch, 1960) and ‘tourist gaze’ (Urry, 1990).

In the final section, important theories related to architectural representation will be assessed, and the primary focus here will be on the interrelationship between architecture and media, which is a key theme running throughout this research.This interrelationship is also at the heart of Beatriz Colomina’s (1996) famous assertion that it is only possible to understand modern architecture in terms of its interaction with the mass media. This part of the chapter conducts an in-depth investigation into architectural semiotics, and this fulfils the research design criteria outlined in Chapter 4. Furthermore, it demonstrates the role played by social media in iconic architecture and city branding, which is going to be further examined in Chapter 3.

2.2. Iconic Architecture: A Historical Perspective

2.2.1. Defining Iconicity

What is an icon? According to the Oxford Dictionary, an icon is ‘a person or thing regarded as a representative symbol or as worthy of veneration.’ The word ‘icon‘, originating in Greek orthodox religious belief venerated images as ‘windows into heaven‘ (Adam, 2012), derived from the Greek word *eikon* signifying ‘likeness, image or similitude‘ (Jencks, 2005). Icons in history were ‘sacred images representing the saints, Christ, and the virgin as well as narrative scenes such as Christ's Crucifixion’ (Brooks, 2001, para. 1). They were typically crafted in wood and used in a ceremony in Byzantine and other Eastern churches (Brooks, 2001). In terms of semiotics, the term has maintained a similar meaning: ‘a sign that carries resemblance to its referent’ (Pipinis, 2014, p.436). Multiple disciplines, including but not limited to architecture, art history, visual comunication studies, religious studies, computer sciences, and cultural studies, have theorised the term ‘icon‘ differently (Isozaki,

2005). For instance, while icons in art history more often carry religious connotations, which were latent in the early period of use of the term, academic research into icons carried out in cultural studies and political science shares broader definiton of the word beyond its religious connotations. Related to icons, the sociologist Jeffrey Alexander (2008, p.782) notes:

> They root generic, social meanings in a specific and `material' form. They allow the abstraction of morality to be subsumed, to be made invisible, by aesthetic shape. Meaning is made iconically visible as something beautiful, sublime, ugly, even as the banal appearance of mundane `material life'. Iconic consciousness occurs when an aesthetically shaped materiality signifies social value.

In the context of architecture, Charles Jencks in his 2005 book *Iconic Buildings*, `the most frequently cited source on the subject of the icon' (Van Raaij, 2008, p.152), explained the proliferation of an icon in architecture, arguing that 'the successful landmark has to be both enigmatic and expressive, it must suggest much more than it names, and leave the final interpretation, if it ever comes up, to the critics, the public, and the detectives of the mystery' (Jencks, 2005, p.11). Thus, the ability of an icon to represent an idea, a culture, or emotion remains an intergral part of its conception throughout different disciplines.

What is iconic architecture? When did it emerge? To approach these questions, it is helpful to revisit Charles Jencks' famous claim that an icon is and should be an 'enigmatic signifier' (2005, p.33). For Jencks, the postmodern iconic building should be over-coded, allowing for numerous metaphorical references. As seen in the case of the Swiss Re Tower, nicknamed the Gherkin, by Norman Foster, which plays a pivotal role in his argument, the building is associated with various objects, such as a gherkin, a cigar, a bullet, and so on, defying an unequivocal reading. As such, iconic buildings should offer 'a new and provocative image', which often stems from animate or inanimate objects not particularly charged with meaning. Matteo (2011), in *Iconoclastia: news from a*

post-iconic world, depicted an icon as ‘a project aspir[ing] to be exceptionally expressive’, arguing that ‘in the contemporary city everything is potentially iconic’; his approach, in contrast to that of Jencks, is rather critical, stating as one of the characteristics of the icon its expressive autonomy and disconnectedness from its context. Sklair (2006, p.25) claims that:

> [an] architectural icon is imbued with a special meaning that is symbolic for a culture and/or a time, and that this special meaning has an aesthetic component. It is this unique combination of fame with symbolism and aesthetic quality that creates the icon. Iconicity persists, but not necessarily forever.

Going even further, he distinguishes between professional (architectural) icons and public (popular icons), which means making a distinction between buildings that are famous within the architectural community and those that are famous beyond that community. An iconic building is, for Kaika (2011), an urban totem that is ‘not only a means of expressing/signifying existing elite power, but also as one of the most effective means for instituting new elite power, and constituting new social relations as real or naturalised during moments of social, economic, or political change’ (p.5). Her view is similar to that of Sklair in that iconicity in architecture, therefore, can best be conceptualised as ‘a resource in struggles for meaning and, by implication, for power’ (Sklair, 2006, p.21). Iconicity was described by Pipinis (2014) as a status that a building can obtain via a process known as ‘iconification’. A multitude of parties are involved in this process, including the client commissioning the project, the architect, the users who place symbolic values on a building, and the public recognising the icon. According to him, iconicity is never unchanging and everlasting, but rather that the duration of a building’s iconic status could be expanded or reduced, depending on the physical and social aspects surrounding the building.

Given the arguments by different scholars, indeed, it can be concluded that the icon is a self-fulfilling prophecy (Van Raaji, 2008); that is, the icons elicit

associations from the public which have been directed by the architects. This all depends on matching up what the architects intend with what the public associates the building's form with, as with Herzog & de Meuron's Beijing Olympic Stadium, also known as the Bird's Nest. Ultimately, to confer on a building iconic status has not only involved spectacular and innovative design, but has always revolved around 'complex social, cultural, and economic practices that would confer agency upon the building, and convert it into a powerful signifier of a social order' (Kaika, 2011, p.981).

2.2.2. The Rise of Iconic Architecture and the 'Bilbao Effect'

According to The Guardian (2004), there have always been icons within architecture. For hundreds of years, these constituted monuments dedicated to maintaining state or religious power, and therefore comprised buildings such as churches, cathedrals and town halls (Kaika and Thielen, 2006). The most outstanding historical precedent for iconic buildings is buildings designed for religious purposes: the cathedral, grand mosque, and so on, have always provided a symbol of the combination of both worldly and transcendental power (Murphy, 2012). In Egypt, the pyramids were constructed to convey the power of their instigator. Similarly, the Parthenon in Athens and the Colosseum in Rome represent characteristic architectural icons of ancient civilisations. The Parthenon especially, provided a religious focus, in addition to being a symbol of civilisation and was erected on the top of the mountain within Athens. Conversely, the Colosseum functioned primarily as a meeting venue where Roman citizens could congregate for state-led functions. Cathedrals in the Middle Ages contributed to the establishment of a city and could therefore be considered equivalent to modern monuments (Brizotti-Pasquotto and Medrano, 2014). The development of a modern, industrialised and secular society, led to the surrender of the powerbase held by the state, church and aristocracy to the emergent bourgeoisie (Kaika and Thielen, 2006). Moreover, faith in God lost its hold or was often relinquished in favour of attracting money and technology. Jencks (2005) has summarised this effect, explaining how the development of

contemporary iconic architecture can be thought to derive from two driving forces: the economic upturn (initiated by the Bilbao effect) and the downturn in religious and social narratives which had previously nurtured public discourse and society. Based on Jencks (2015), Pipinis (2014, p.436-437) puts forward the argument that:

> the void left by weakened ideological movements that previously caused people to build monuments to deities, great ideas or leaders is being filled with iconic buildings as monuments for those who have power today - the economic power. Typically, that would be corporations and institutions willing to manifest their authority and importance through fancy headquarters or public facilities reflecting their identity, values and image as well as the budget. Iconic architecture is thus informed not only with the architect's experience, taste and creativity, but also with the client's values, visions and financial abilities

Sklair (2005) highlights that contemporary iconic architecture has emerged from a transformation in architectural practices and reception of architecture, which has been induced by capitalist globalisation. From the perspective of architectural history, as Murphy (2012) notes, the development of modern iconic architecture can be divided into three periods of architectural production. The first is the development of what has become nicknamed 'decon' (short for 'deconstruction' or even 'deconstructivism'); an exuberant formal architecture that grew in contradistinction to both 'postmodern' and 'high-tech' architectures, and was famously linked, for better or for worse, to various trends in post-structuralist philosophy. The second period is thought to have begun with the building of the Bilbao Guggenheim Museum by Frank Gehry, marking the sudden transition from 'decon' to what has become known as iconic architecture. At this point, the architects that were considered challenging and even 'avant-garde' would become the most famous in the world due to their being increasingly commissioned to build large prestigious buildings such as cultural institutions. From within this milieu, can now be seen the development of a new methodology of design, as the digital technologies that were introduced and

experimented with in the 1990s have been disseminated widely enough to be substantially affecting contemporary practice.

Many academic publications (see, for example, Jencks, 2005; Murphy, 2012), have confirmed that the Museum in Bilbao was a catalyst for the contemporary emergence of the trend for modern iconic architecture. The so-called ‘Bilbao Effect’ is in essence a concept which emerged in the 1990s and 2000s amongst post-industrial cities in a bid to copy the success of Frank Gehry’s Guggenheim Museum, which transformed Bilbao from a failing industrial city in Northern Spain to a cultural hub. Bilbao is a key example of the way in which a dramatically designed cultural institution commissioned by a city government can assist in locating any city on the map, permitting it to reinvent itself with its own striking architecture. Following the launch of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao in 1997, an emergent interest in trophy architecture has arisen in cities along with a demand for celebrity architects and their signature designs, leading to the proliferation of ‘starchitecture’. It is generally believed that starchitecture constitutes a significant means of attracting increased investment, tourism and cultural prestige, and this has been the view for a considerable time. Twenty years following its opening, Bilbao remains the best urban regeneration project model advocating the use of iconic architecture. Globally, municipal governments have subsequently embarked on applying the magic equation comprising a starchitect and a world-class cultural institution (preferably a branded art museum), which subsequently leads to international acclaim and consequently high tourism revenues (AMA, 2015).

It is perhaps inconceivable to attempt to offer an explanation for iconic architecture without taking the worldwide boom in museums into consideration. Recently, the trend with museums has been to define themselves by way of iconic architecture, in this way seeking to assume the role of the cultural hub of cities (Sashi, 2011). By nature, museums comprise a key element of a city’s social and cultural existence and are often viewed as landmarks within the city (Ozorhon and Ozorhon, 2015). Arising from this symbolic value in the city and their key placement within the city’s cultural life, museums have emerged as the new cathedrals of cities, defining the status of the city, as previously the

cathedral did (Jencks, 2005). In the last half of the 20th century, especially subsequent to the 1970s, a dramatic worldwide development of museums took place; this phenomenon has been termed the ‘museum phenomenon’ (Fyfe, cited in Macdonald, 2011, p.4). At around this time, the idea of ‘museum as spectacle’ (Sherman & Rogoff, 1994) seemed to offer an explanation for this new museum trend which featured mega-scale exhibitions and ‘starchitect’-designed museum buildings. It is clear that the opening of the Bilbao Guggenheim Museum by Frank Gehry functioned as a catalyst for this new museum trend.

Smith (2006) introduced the term ‘iconomy’ to refer to the visual image economy and ‘iconomy’ is possibly a good example to demonstrate the contemporary status of museums as an economic and cultural powerhouse for cities (Rodeš, 2014). From a historical perspective, the striking design of museum buildings is not actually a new phenomenon (Pierroux and Skjulstad, 2011). However, today, the status of museums is even stronger with museums becoming striking city landmarks, exemplars for city development and primary assets in the competition with other cities (Tzortzi, 2015). This model for the transformation of second-tier cities into brands via museum ‘iconisation’ has been implemented in a number of cities. Foster (2004, cited in Ozorhon and Ozorhon, 2015) described this strategy as enabling the museum to exhibit its demonstration value over and above anything else—this is the key feature which draws people and this in itself is worthy of respect. The modern trend promoting the tight association linking museums, architecture, digital media and branding is growing, as museums increasingly seek the prestige and value resulting from intense promotional campaigns (Steiner, 2000). In current times, novel museum architecture has become a key element of the ‘brandscapes’ of architecture (Klingmann, 2007), as marketing campaigns are engineered not only to promote the brand value of the museum collections and exhibitions, but also to determine the brand appeal of a museum as a ‘destination’, as defined by its location and architecture (Caldwell, 2000). Indeed, it is impossible to debate iconic architecture without reference to museum architecture and the associated underlying politics and economics responsible for it.

Currently, the second wave of the 'Bilbao Effect' is being witnessed (AMA, 2015). The number of commissions of starchitects around the globe has grown even larger and moved away from Europe and North America towards the rapidly expanding economies of the Gulf, the Far East and Central Asia. According to AEA Consulting (2015), a cultural consulting firm based in New York, approximately $200 billion has been committed to investment in the construction of art districts around the world in the next 10 years. The construction of three new museums in the Saadiyat Island cultural district in Abu Dhabi is one of the best examples: Guggenheim Museum by Frank Gehry, the Louvre by Jean Nouvel, and a Performing Arts Centre by Zaha Hadid. Another example is Hong Kong's M+ Museum, designed by Herzog & de Meuron, in its cultural district in West Kowloon. The 'Bilbao Effect' is not just about regenerating rusting post-industrial cities but also about establishing the long-term growth strategies of city states undergoing massive urbanisation to become more resilient economic powers and cultural powerhouses at the same time. These city states are pursuing progressive values to associate themselves with by means of advanced construction technologies and innovative designs (AMA, 2015). As Therbon (in Johns, 2011) notes, a desire to stress severance from the past - including symbolic distance from previous political regimes–often motivates a transformation of the built environment in general.

2.2.3. Starchitecture

By combining the words 'star' and 'architect', the term 'starchitect' was created. This word is used to define highly ranked architects and design agencies who are recognised by their peers and the general public as having celebrity status in the field for creating iconic masterpieces (Reutscaja and Neuno, 2009). The term 'starchitecture' was originally used as an informal word to designate film stars in the 1940s who simultaneously designed houses. Self-esteemed architects had already been media favourites long before Frank Lloyd Wright's view that the architect must be a prophet (The Hedgehog Review, 2014). The term has frequently appeared in the press since French newspaper *Le Monde*

used this term in its 27-28 July 2008 special edition on architectural projects in Monaco (Gravari-Barbas, 2015).

According to Ryan (2007), 'the field of architecture, like the field of fashion, could be viewed as a battlefield where competition for resources and status forms part of its central dynamic' (p.13). Stevens (1998) has analysed the field of architecture in terms of Bourdieu's cultural theories (1977, 2013), identifying the dichotomy between the sub-fields of mass and restricted production within the profession. He states that a whole set of structured oppositions is present between the two sub-fields, which can be further explained by Ryan (2013, p.159):

> These include mass-market, large-scale production versus unique objects; anonymous designer versus signature architect; and economic and functional criteria versus aesthetic and symbolic criteria. Architects in the field of restricted production, like Koolhaas, formed part of a group of 'star' or 'celebrity' prize-winning international architects responsible for designing high-visibility buildings and enjoying a strong media profile.

Robert Gutman's typology of architectural firms positions 'strong-delivery firms', practices that seldom wins awards but build a lot, in contradistinction to 'strong-idea firms', based around a charismatic 'star' architect with a clear architectural 'signature' (Gutman, 1988, p.55-59). Some senior partners from these 'strong-idea firms', with individual celebrity and marketability, are today's 'starchitects' (McNeill, 2005).

There is a strong consensus in the architectural journals about who can be named a starchitect (Molina and Waine, 2015). The names that come up frequently include Frank Gehry, Zaha Hadid, Norman Foster, Daniel Libeskind, Renzo Piano, Jean Nouvel, Herzog & de Meuron, Santiago Calatrava, Richard Rogers, Tadao Ando, OMA (Office for Metropolitan Architecture) and its head Rem Koolhaas, SANAA (Seijima and Nishizawa and Associates). There exists a limited pool of architectural firms that are repeatedly invited to major

architectural competitions (Knox, 2011). A heavy reliance on the dozens of celebrity architects is pointed to by Sudjic (2006, p.296):

> Sometimes it seems as if there are just thirty architects in the world…Taken together, they make up the group that provides the names that come up again and again when another sadly deluded city finds itself labouring under the mistaken impression that it is going to trump the Bilbao Guggenheim with an art gallery that looks like a train crash, or a flying saucer, or hotel in the form of a twenty-storey high meteorite.

The style of a starchitect has to be absolutely characteristic and in most cases the aesthetic factors seem to be more important than the functional (Molina and Waine, 2015). Starchitectural buildings usually break the habits and rules of economical elegance and therefore tend to be technically challenging, sometimes just for its own sake. Starchitects can produce novel, unique, and sculptural architecture that almost automatically becomes instantly 'iconic' (Jencks, 2005, 2006; Sklair, 2006). Clients prefer to gain instant recognition of their buildings by using starchitects' media and public influence and in this way expect these edifices to act as indicators of cultural power (Ryan, 2007).

Celebrity, branding, and brand extensions are central to the success of starchitects (Knox, 2011). Stars of architecture tend to cooperate with brands. Examples include Renzo Piano's watch for Swatch, Mario Botta's fountain pen for Caran D'Ache, Jean Nouvel's perfume flask for Yves Saint-Laurent, and Zaha Hadid's collaboration with American singer Pharrell Williams for Adidas trainers, to name just a few (Ryan, 2007). Such small devices cannot be considered significant achievements for architectural stars and the most probable answer to the question of why they do it is that it attracts media interest, which is an important factor in star status. To maintain celebrity status, as Jencks points out, starchitects need to keep the media interested, with a judicious mixture of fame and controversy (Knox, 2011). It seems that architects have discovered that a certain amount of scandal is inevitable in the creation of

an icon, as happened with the Eiffel Tower and the aforementioned Sydney Opera House and New York Guggenheim Museum; strong criticism arouses interest in the same way as approval, especially if expressed simultaneously in different sources (Molina and Waine, 2015).

Gehry's sculptural design perhaps culminated in Bilbao in terms of public approval and cities have increasingly sought for Gehry's unique designs as 'a badge of distinction' (Castell, 2008, p.13). In these circumstances, starchitects have become brands, and the view of 'the architect as a marketable commodity' has markedly increased (Kanna, 2014, p.196), though the concept of an architect as a commodity is nothing new. Thus, it could be argued that starchitects benefited from the 'Bilbao Effect'. For example, Berlin's Jewish Museum designed by Daniel Libeskind could be weighed against the Bilbao Guggenheim in terms of concept and the far-reaching effects it had on the city where it was erected. During the 2-year period between the completion of the construction and its opening, more than 300,000 tourists visited the museum, which was completely empty; there was nothing to see at the museum but the building itself. This could be a good example demonstrating the Bilbao formula; it proved that it was not the building's function, but architecture itself, which drew hordes of visitors (Henryforbes, 2015).

The growing number of iconic buildings being contructed with a radical design, has sometimes been met with strong disapproval in architectural criticism in recent years (Van Raaji, 2008). Wide-ranging debates are unfolding in the academic literature and the media around iconic architecture or starchitecture. One can find countless debates in the media regarding whether starchitecture still has a place. Major print media such as the New York Times and The Guardian have covered stories with headlines such as *'Here's to the Demise of Starchitecture!'*, 'The Bilbao Effect: is *'starchitecture' all it's cracked up to be?'*, and *'Are superstar architects ruining city skylines?'*, to name just a few. For instance, Witold Rybczynski, in his recent New York Times piece *'Are superstar architects ruining city skylines?'*, criticised starchitects for their disregard of local culture and context, producing buildings that do not fit their surroundings. Instead, he favoured 'locatecture', which means local architectural talent

(DeChillo, 2014). In 2015, Peter Buchannan wrote in the Architectural Review: 'Architecture, once the encompassing mother of the arts, completed by painting and sculpture and carrier of cultural significance and meaning, has become reduced to superfluous spectacle' (Buchanan, 2015, para.5). Iconic architecture has often been associated with inappropriate, cost-intensive, and ostentatious design, which seeks instant popularity and recognition without considering functional and practical needs. Against these criticisms, Zaha Hadid's right-hand man Patrik Schumacher, in his recent posts on Facebook, argued that the denunciation of starchitects and their iconic buildings is 'superficial and ignorant,' and 'all-too-easy point-scoring which indeed usually misses the point.' (Scott, 2015, para.1). Architectural critic James Russell, in 'The Stupid Starchitect Debate, reacts against Beverly Willis's New York Times piece 'Here's to the Demise of Starchitecture!' by dumping on her choice of words. 'The last few years has seen the rise of the snarky, patronizing term starchitect (a term I refuse to use outside this context, much to the annoyance of editors seeking click-bait)' (Russell, 2014, para.2).

One of the major criticisms surrounding iconic architecture is the homogenisation of the city. Architecture critics like Jencks (2005) point to the serial reproduction of iconic buildings by celebrity architects, arguing that it will eventually homogenise the visual identities of cities and weaken their competitiveness on the world stage. The last few decades have also been characterised by increased competition and the quest for ever more unique cities. The search for distinctiveness has led city authorities to commission starchitects and their projects as 'emblems' (Biau, in Molina, 2015, p.4). However, despite the distinction strategies of cities, it is clear today that the same architectural and urban signatures are found in every city around the world. It has been claimed that this results in homogenisation or 'placelessness', as different cities fundamentally adopt similar strategies (Relph, 2016).

Another frequently raised issue in relation to iconic architecture is the commodification of a place. By seeking to sell or market the place, urban strategy using iconic architecture necessarily commodifies and distorts the place, by making its exchange value its primary quality (Carmona, 2010). The

archetypal form of iconic architecture designed by starchitects-for instance, cultural buildings like museums-will succeed not because people come to view the art within, but because they spend money in the café, restaurant and souvenir shop. They offer an exterior architectural statement that says less about the art and more about the opportunities to consume that such iconic imagery inevitably implies (Kastner, 2014). As Evans (2003) points out, many iconic cultural buildings attempt to set up a coherent sense of their own identity and have no clear idea of what their practical role may be beyond the need to simply be iconic.

In defence of iconic architecture, Jencks (2015, para.23), in his recent essay in the Architectural Review, wrote:

> For despite many architectural critics attacking the genre, and Deyan Sudjic and Rowan Moore declaring it dead since the crash of 2007, iconic buildings have only increased in number. Let me repeat the pressing syndrome: if icons are constructed with as much frequency as they have been since the 1990s, and global celebrity society shows an ever-increasing dominance of the media and politics, then the profession better sharpen its theory and practice of this overpowering genre.

2.3. Iconic Architecture and City Branding

2.3.1. City Branding

> *Cities have always been brands in the truest sense of the word. Unless you've lived in a particular city or have a good reason to know a lot about it, the chances are that you think about it in term of a handful of qualities or attributes, a promise, some kind of a story. That simple brand narrative can have a major impact on your decision to visit the city, to buy its products or services, to do business there, or even to relocate there* (Anholt City

Brand Index, 2006, p.2).

The marketing of urban places dates back to the 19th century (Kavaratzis, 2004). In those days, it was simply limited to place promotion rather than the implementation of marketing as a whole enterprise. However, city branding as a proper subject of study began to surface in the 1970s in the wake of the industrial decline and economic depression generated by the oil crisis. It began with the efforts of New York City, which was hit by the municipal financial crisis in 1975 and was almost on the verge of bankruptcy. It was during the 1980s, led by pro-business policies, that cities became more reliant on entrepreneurial initiatives. The management of cities was becoming more business-like, and cities chased after overflow mobile capital attributable to deregulation and the influx of sovereign funds. (Zukin, 2014). In the context of international competition between cities, cities put even more emphasis on strengthening their competitiveness based on positioning a city and improving its attractiveness (Anttiroiko, 2014). Over the past three decades, city (place) branding has finally blossomed as a research domain (Oguztimur and Akturan, 2015). Arguably, the 20th century's technology-induced globalisation has placed unprecedented strain on municipal governments and mode of governance, and consequently many cities have put increasing efforts into answering the question about how a city can be branded and managed (Merrilees et al., 2012).

'Place branding', a term typically employed interchangeably with 'place marketing' and 'place promotion', is an umbrella term that covers concepts of nation branding, region branding and city branding (Lucarelli & Berg, 2011). The branding construct originated in the late 19th century when branded consumer goods like Quaker Oats and Gillette first came onto the market (Low and Fullerton, 1994). The American Marketing Association first used the word 'brand' as 'a name, term, sign, symbol or design, the key purpose of which was to identify the goods and services of specific seller and to make them stand out from their competitors ' (Kotler et al., 2005, p.469). Although there has been a great deal of criticism for being too product-oriented, this definition has stayed

strong throughout contemporary literature (Wood, 2000) and many view this as a suitable framework for exploring anything relating to brands (Kerr, 2006). Nonetheless, 'place brand' as a term has received multiple definitions from different researchers (Braun, 2008; Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013) and there are obvious variations between these definitions.

One of the broadest definitions has been proposed by Zenker and Braun (2010, p.5), who define a place brand as 'a network of associations in the consumers' mind based on the visual, verbal, and behavioural expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values, and the general culture of the place's stakeholders and the overall place design'. In a manner resembling corporate brands, a place brand exists in the minds of the audiences. Typically, branding is comprehended as an expressive communication with strategic aims (Schultz et al., 2000). In addition, 'place branding' has been defined as the 'purposeful symbolic embodiment of all information connected to a city in order to create associations around it' (Lucarelli and Berg, 2011, p.21). It has also been defined as a 'continuous process interlinked with all marketing efforts and with the whole planning exercise' (Kavaratzis, 2007, p.704). Whilst most of the ideas underlying place branding have been acquired from corporate branding literature (see, for example, Dinnie, 2004; Kavaratzis, 2004), place branding is thought to differ significantly from product and service branding, as it involves much greater intricacy with respect to the quantity of organisations and stakeholders involved and only restricted control can be exerted over the branding process and the diverse target groups (Kavaratzis, 2009). From among the aforementioned terms used for place branding, for consistency and clarity, I will adopt the term city branding because the subject of this study is cities. According to Vela (2013), this tends to create a 'corporations versus places' dichotomy within the context of branding and permits the evolution of a comparative analysis from which the potential arises to specify basic variations encountered in brand construction in both. Whilst there is some degree of convergence between the objectives of corporations and places, that is, the generation of a positive image and reputation, the path taken to achieve such objectives are significantly

different. Divergences result from the inherent public-domain character of places, indicating that the two activities involve working environments with radically divergent social implications. The management of the place domain involves politics and public goods, whereas the management of the domain of corporations involves business management and private ownership.

Although the literature does not always necessarily discriminate between the three terms of place promotion, place marketing and place branding, there is a subtle differentiation. Place promotion primarily concerns generating positive communication; place marketing is primarily concerned with balancing supply and demand; whilst place branding is primarily concerned with the creation, maintenance and formation of a positive place identity (Boisen, 2015). Key difficulties which have had a negative influence on the field of place branding since its conception, are the misconceptions of the terms marketing, branding and promotion (Kavaratzis, 2018). The literature and practice of place promotion, place marketing and place branding need an acknowledged comprehension of what these three concepts actually refer to and how they can each be implemented (Boisen et al., 2018). Whilst scholars have proposed a number of theoretical frameworks and definitions, both scholars and practitioners regularly apply them synonymously. Boisen et al. (2018) tried to redress this matter. They propose how these three terms should be applied, along with a keen appreciation of why and how these terms should be distinguished. They argue that place branding, in contrast to place promotion and place marketing, is identity-driven, and its objective is to sustain and/or enhance the reputation of the place; that is, its objective is reputation-management. Its primary task, therefore, is one of image management, which places emphasis on abilities to influence both coordinated promotion (that is, place promotion), and also the generation of product-market combinations (that is, place marketing). This approach creates the perceptions and the associations that people have of the place in question. Generally, branding is viewed as an expressive communication with strategic goals (see, for example, Schultz et al., 2000).

According to Vela (2013), furthermore, the ideas underlying the communication

of places have undergone a transformation from the initial baseline of promotion (communication for its own sake, with no particular long-term strategy and with merchandising constituting the sole objective), to a development towards the selling of places (which is firmly associated with advertising and the marketing of cities with respect to culture), then progressing on to marketing strategies (which require the large-scale inclusion of business dynamics into place management and communication), resulting eventually in the current status quo. This current environment is defined by the branding of places, so that emphasis is placed on the brand and its ability to discriminate and place certain spaces with the primary objective of projecting an image to an external audience, with the aim of moving it beyond being a tourist attraction, to it also having the capacity to attract talent and skills, investment capital, infrastructure and so on.

Although these ideas have gained increasing academic popularity, certain gaps in knowledge remain. First, irrespective of its popularity as an academic research subject, place branding remains a predominantly practitioner-led field (Therkelsen and Halkier, 2011). This is in part a result of the fact that the majority of theoretical frameworks are not founded on studies of actual city policies, but merely transposed from corporate frameworks constructed for products, services and companies. Furthermore, a lack of empirical evidence exists in the research domain. Lucarelli and Berg (2011) have identified that place marketing and place branding are drawing attention in academia and are considered emergent international research domains, although typified by a fragmented and multidisciplinary theoretical foundation. The empirical backbone of the research domain primarily comprises single case studies; moreover, none of these existing theoretical frameworks have been empirically tested (see, for example, Acharya and Rahman, 2016; Green at al., 2016; Lucarelli and Berg, 2011).

2.3.2. Iconic Architecture, Iconomy, and City Branding

In today's image-saturated society, where the global preponderance and availability of images fuel our economy, the spectacle is everywhere, and is

inescapable. It is truly difficult to find any place in which the spectacle does not attract us. Debord (2012) in ‘Separation Perfected’ in his book *The Society of Spectacle*, notes that actual experience has largely been subsumed into vicarious representation through the use of images. His view, which echoed Karl Marx's hypothesis that 'commodity fetishism' forms the basis of our society, states that the spectacle must not be solely a desirable image but also be meaningful. He further argues that, ‘the spectacle is not a collection of images, rather it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images’ (para. 4). Therefore, it could be argued that images are not just collections but afford mediation between individuals and societal relationships, thus driving general economy and society at large.

‘The spectacle is capital accumulated to the point that it becomes images’ (Debord, 2012, para. 34). Debord also argues that repetition of an image builds until it becomes capital. Today's social structure, in which possessions rather than simply being, are fundamental to fulfillment, underpins the new visual order. Visual communication allows images to achieve fetish status with society's capitalist approach assigning value. The idea of 'iconomy' was promoted by Smith (2006), following Debord's concept of capital amassing through images. This newly-coined word describes an amalgamation of images and the economy. The iconomy encompasses all types of interactions between people, cultures, interest groups and others which almost entirely take place through the exchange of real and imagined visual images. If it is possible to visually represent a place, person, object or other concept, that image can gain entry to the iconomy. Where such an image achieves high recognition through repetition, it may become an iconotype, ‘an image that, usually through repetition, stands out in the image flow’ (Smith, 2006, p.22).

Smith (2006) places the visuality key in today's society as founded in architecture, citing the cultural attributes associated with architecture from which a number of cultural programmes have recently developed. Such circumstances have directly led to a society of spectacle in which imagery has attained a quantifiable exchange currency. Iconic architecture generates attributable images which are linked to a city's culture as a means of drawing global

attention with respect to people, goods and capital; it also extends to include wider influences as a focus for an all-encompassing economic and cultural strategy. In this way, the image of an iconic building is subsumed within the image of the city itself, and ideally leads to boosted economic confidence. One such example, Smith (2006) mentioned, is the Sydney Opera House in Australia. This building is universally recognised, consists of unique design features, and has been consistently promoted as representative of the country, thereby achieving the status of an icon. The latter part of the twentieth century experienced a sea-change in architectural design processes and the spectacle values of a unique design. The new concepts have reached fruition in a number of projects such as the office buildings of the world's corporate financial centres, but also cultural buildings and other educational constructions, of which the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao would be the most discussed, spectacular example. The ‘iconomy’ is fueled by these and similar developments that illustrate architectural manifestations of long-standing underlying architectural operations and processes. The phenomenon has both advantages and disadvantages, according to Smith (2016), who suggests that an iconic building may represent more than its inherent cultural value characteristics, but also become a central core around which a business or industry accumulates. The 'Bilbao effect' is apparent in the economic success that the Guggenheim Museum has achieved, including the transformation of the urban and societal landscape, in addition to its cultural influence which receive more attention but is arguably less important. Thus, cultural (icon), economic (economy) and political opinion all feed into the 'iconomy' thereby acknowledging the complexity of the interaction between these powerful forces.

The goal of place branding is the appropriate management of a place’s reputation. In particular, it aims to enhance name awareness, whilst creating a distinct, credible, authentic, sincere, unforgettable and co-created image, in addition to engendering loyalty from potential future tourists, investors, traders, expatriates, and so on. From this perspective, the point of departure of city branding could be a city’s image. Making an attractive city has a lot to do with image creation, which in turn spurs interest and investment in the region and

also engenders local support for the project. According to Lynch (1960), the image of the city is defined as the ‘mental image of that city which is held by its citizens’ (p.2). Cuthbert (in Kumic, 2006) highlighted the importance of the physical environment and design of a city in in the global economy, stating that ‘this is fundamentally political since a major benchmark for successful cities is their capacity to generate a promotional image that can be broadcast internationally’. As Baudrillard (1998) asserts in his book *The Consumer Society*, modern society is driven by the economy of consumption, where culture is redeveloped as capital. This cultural capital is produced as a ‘sign’ and an ‘exchange value’ and turns into a commodity in itself.

Given the heightened focus on using city image and urban design to generate capital (Kumic, 2006), architectural landmarks have subsequently been regarded as ‘expressions of group identity’ (Kaika 2010, p.457), and these buildings are the primary factors influencing the city image. Nonetheless, since landmarks change, the city image can also change. The present study therefore concentrates on exploring contemporary iconic buildings and the impacts that their iconicity has on the city image.

Arising alongside contemporary discourses on architecture and design is the relatively new phenomenon of ‘place branding’. How iconic buildings will be effective as branding tools becomes another issue of concern. Parkerson and Saunders (2005, p. 247), in an attempt to find answers to successful city brand building, argue that what make a city stand out most are sociocultural and man-made elements, the uniqueness of which enables a city to improve its competitive edge over other cities and creates brand equity. In accordance with this, Mayes (2008) has proposed that enhancing the actual physical construction of places should also constitute a focus for city branding and assist in informing the public of how places can be experienced and used within cities. In the past, architecture and urban design have represented power and authority, highlighting the accomplishments of cities and nations alike (Julier, 2014). However, in current times, marketing has assumed a key role in drawing people, tourism and investment to a city. Under such circumstances, it is perhaps not surprising that emerging cities have employed imposing

monumental architectural projects as a promotional gambit to arouse public interest on a global scale. In particular, the reveal of major architectural projects in these 'emerging' cities has generated huge publicity. 'Cities cannot only enjoy the social and economic benefits from high-profile buildings; they can also embark on the fast track to position themselves as well-recognised city brands' (Sari, cited in Sklair, 2010, p. 143). Iconic architecture has become more important in branding a city to the extent that, as Dovey (1999) puts it, 'like corporations without logos, cities without icons are not in the market' (p.159).

Certain scholars have begun to turn their attention to how architecture relates to city branding. Existing research incudes topics such as the role of architecture and design (see, for example, Hospers, 2009; Muratovski, 2012), infrastructural projects (Lange et al., 2010), iconic buildings (see, for example, Riza, Doratli, and Fasli, 2012), spatial planning (Boland, 2013) and the living environment and aesthetics (Harmaakorpi et al., 2008). Furthermore, extensive research has been undertaken into the topic of place-making using architecture and urban design. Carpo, for example, explored how the opportunity to obtain the images of the classical orders, which can be printed and reproduced, relates to the birth of 16th century Renaissance architecture (Carpo, in Desiderio, 2013). In the modern context, Colomina (1994) investigated the way mass culture and media representations influence the construction and promotion of the 'International Style' against the backdrop of 1930's America. In a similar vein, Mendelson demonstrated the role played by promotional images and materials in the transformation of an underdeveloped outskirt of a city into a tourist magnet, in the context of Cuba (Mendelson, 2004, cited in Desiderion, 2013).

Notably, scholars like Lynch (1960) and Urry (1990) have been emphatic about the critical and fundamental importance that the city features which are to be instrumental in city marketing must be imageable and photogenic, with eye-catching built forms. Image is of paramount importance when formulating communication strategies with the rest of the world (Hospers, 2009). To better understand the relationship between a city and architecture, according to Hospers (2011), it would be necessary to return to Urry (1990, 2002), who has argued that people mainly visit a city to 'gaze' at signs, like famous buildings

and beautiful landscapes, which means tourism involves getting away from home to search for visual experiences that people cannot easily see in their everyday life. Three types of urban image carriers have been identified: the built environment, hallmark events and famous personalities (Lynch, 1960; Ashworth, 2009). Lynch (1960) argued that most people perceive a city mostly as a set of built objects. Interestingly, he found that because of their differing 'imageability' that is, the ease with which parts of a city makes a strong mental impression on people. For tourists in particular, predominant image carriers are landmarks which can be easily identified and recognised. If a city is not imageable enough with its unique features, it will be difficult to brand a city. By the same token, iconic buildings as well as their architects may belong to one of the most 'imageable' features so that a city can be gazed upon more than anything else. It is well known that mediagenic iconic buildings benefit from the reputation of 'starchitects' and consequent publicity in the international media, and thus attract tourists from around the world (Smith, 2005). However, over time, this theory has been the subject of criticism for overemphasising the visual and material fabric of the city (Hospers, 2009). However, more recent research in sociology of tourism has countered the criticism of Lynch's work. Urry asserted in *The Tourist Gaze* (1990) that for many, the city is a (photo)graphic image. It is not sufficient for a city merely to possess image carriers in the built environment, it is vital that the chosen city features are photographed, reproduced and shared via social and other media.

Whilst the concept of the tourist gaze has not yet been fully ascertained within a city branding context, it implies a great deal for cities who aim to distinguish themselves from competitor cities. In this context, city branding could assume significant power in drawing the tourist gaze (Cassinger and Thelander, 2015). City branding requires the selection of photogenic sites within a city and then rapid reproduction and deployment of images of these sites via media platforms. Since most consumers typically only visit those places with which they are familiar via photographic images and so on, city branding represents a means to enhance the generation and deployment of these images. As demonstrated in the Paris example, the Eiffel Tower remains the architectural feature which

has been reproduced most often (Crandall et al., 2009). Tourists do not want total surprises: taking a snapshot is part of the process they undertake to confirm what they are expecting to see. Instagram even suggests that its users should take photographs of the identical locations which have been photographed most frequently before: the emergence of digital photography combined with social media has validated the ‘Matthew effect’. In addition, it is simple for cities to determine suitable image carriers, as well as to elucidate and potentially construct new ones, which will all ultimately add to the improved imageability of the city (Cassinger and Thelander, 2015). This is the way by which city branding marketers are able to manipulate and focus on the tourist gaze.

2.3.3. City Branding and Social Media

One factor influencing the success of the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, is generally acknowledged to be the global visibility obtained via exposure to the global media during the period of the internet boom (Plaza and Haarich, 2009; Plaza and Haarich, 2015). The museum opened in 1997, just in time for the internet boom, which shook up global communication. Striking design by a starchitect is not a sufficient condition for a museum to gain iconic status. The frequent and intense exposure in the international media accelerated the branding of the museum and its city.

Over the past decade, social media has grown into a highly sought-after information source (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008). The reputation of a place is accordingly influenced by the online word-of-mouth generated on social media platforms (Litvin at al., 2008). Social media has been well-adopted in place branding (Sevin, 2016). In particular, the relatively low cost of operation on social media platforms has made this new medium an attractive tool for cities that otherwise cannot afford to rely on more expensive traditional media platforms (Sevin 2013). Social media are defined as ‘a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content’ (Kaplan

and Haenlein 2010, p. 61). Some alternate definitions include: 'the tools, platforms, and applications that enable consumers to connect, communicate, and collaborate with others' (Williams and Chinn, 2010, p. 422); or 'the sharing of information, experiences, and perspectives throughout community-oriented websites' (Weinberg, 2009, p. 1). Social media have also been defined by Eisenberg (2008) as platforms upon which interaction and relationships between people occur. Practitioners and researchers all agree that social media are various online platforms that facilitate interaction and relationship between their users.

A place brand creates a narrative about a place, which can be recognised by outsiders and which develops a sense of community among its residents (Vivant, 2011). Branding typically commences with a narrative (Vivant, 2011) which is founded both internally and externally to the place in question (Power and Jansson, 2011). Internally, iconic buildings, such as the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, draw upon culture and architecture and help to create a distinctive image of a place (Plaza et al., 2015). The Guggenheim Bilbao narrative tells of a decrepit, post-industrial city which has pirouetted into becoming a cultural and tourism global centre. City aesthetics and symbolism include ideas relating to technological innovation, creativity and culture. This semiotic notion, giving rise to meanings underlying a city's existence, constitutes a key element of a city brand which will draw tourists, investors and residents who are aligned with such narratives. This inner narrative also assists in further shaping and communicating an image of place external to the city via a 'brand channel' (Power and Jansson, 2011). The brand channel, such as the media, comprises large numbers of associated entities, which taken together are key in formulating place image and influencing perceptions of that place.

The media reflects the inner narrative and at the same time actively shapes it by determining what specific features of a place are publicised (Plaza et al., 2015). It reproduces and distributes information about a place repeatedly, so that the imagery of a place is accumulated. It is these accumulated images through the media that drive the development of a place brand. In the context of place branding, the proliferation of images of iconic architecture enables people to be

catapulted into that image and consume these images even more (Plaza, 1999). Expanded brand channels fuelled by digital technology and the consequent increased image accumulation, generate increasing demand for place, and ultimately reinforce a brand, attracting more visitors. Empirical research (for example, Laroche et al., 2013) showed that social media has a positive influence on the user-brand relationship, which simultaneously generates positive impacts on credibility and brand loyalty as well. A recent study on the use of photographs in destination brand communication through social media demonstrated that photographs are highly likely to facilitate the communication of emotional values (Kim and Stepchenkova, 2015). In this framework, the question about how iconic buildings can create brand value could be discussed.

With a shift away from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0, contemporary communication technologies have provided new platforms for creating meanings for places, most notably through social media (referred to as web 2.0), which enables place brands to transcend the restraints of space and time, in the process of a series of branding activities, such as communication, negotiation, projection, and assessment (Andéhn at al., 2014). Different types of social media include: social networks (for example, Facebook, LinkedIn); social messaging (for example, WhatsApp, Snapchat); blogs and microblogs (for example,Twitter); media-sharing sites (for example, Instagram, Flicker, and Snapchat for photos; YouTube for videos virtual pin boards for Pinterest and Polyvore; SlideShare or Prezi for presentations); review sites (for example, TripAdvisor); and wikis (for example, Wikipedia). Although the sharing of information tends to be associated with textual and narrative methods (such as blogs and written reviews), the sharing of experiences is associated with the generation of multimedia content online. Munar and Jacobsen (2014) assert that photographs or short videos sent from mobile devices are steadily emerging as replacements for the traditional postcard.

As brands are increasingly manifested in social media based on user interaction, they become even more characterised by their volatility. User-generated content on social media platforms is incorporated into the projected brands, and the meanings and associations attributed to brands are created through profound

consumer-brand interaction. This operational mechanism is fundamentally different from that of the traditional media with limited consumer involvement (Smith at al., 2012). It has been argued that ‘web 2.0 provides services that invite users to engage in direct and strong participation’ and ‘with the advent of user-generated content, every individual might potentially influence the way in which [a territory] is perceived and evaluated’ (Florek, 2011, p.83).

The modern digital revolution has also improved the capacity for direct engagement between travellers, so that travellers can easily create and share content, which can be highly influential in the future destination choices of these travellers (Kavaratzis, 2012). With increased numbers of travellers photographing landmarks of a destination and then sharing these on social media, social media has evolved to be one of the primary channels for the dissemination of destination information and has modified forever the way in which a destination communicates internally and externally with the outer world. Particularly on social media platforms, the influence of content has increased, mainly due to the application of hashtags. A hashtag is a kind of label or short link indicated by the prefix of a ‘#’ sign, which assists users in searching effectively for messages relating to a specific subject. Originating on Twitter, it has now migrated to other social media platforms where it has evolved into an essential social media communication tool. Now, all it takes is one click of a hash-tagged word to collate all tweets, messages and photos relating to that same subject, worldwide, and consequently, this tool is able to instantly transform a piece of knowledge on a global scale (Oliveira and Panyik, 2015).

For instance, Cassinger and Thelander (2015) demonstrated that recently, visual social media has been incorporated into city branding strategies in order to involve citizens in a process of city image co-creation. The case of the Swedish city Labdskrona explains its place branding strategy-called ‘rotation curation’-in which visual social media is deployed to engage citizens in co-creating images of the city. Rotation curation refers to the serial contributions of a large, diverse group of people to a single social-media platform such as Twitter or Instagram. Labdskrona appears to be among the first to have adopted the rotation curation on Instagram, and afterwards, other cities followed suit.

Each week, different citizens manage the city's official Instagram account and upload their photographs of the city. In doing so, the city government is able to encourage its citizens' participation and create a sense of community among its people, promoting the positive images of the city. This case shows that incorporating Instagram into a city communication strategy does not mean that novel images are always created, rather images are synchronised, as they are customised to the conditions of Instagram as a medium.

From a practical perspective, the nature of social media creates both threats and opportunities for city branding. Under the traditional media, the city brand was controllable by brand managers (Florek at al., 2006), whereas in the present new media setting, 'for managers, social media constitutes a means by which control over the brand is lost, and arguably more so than in any other setting in which brands are attributed with meaning' (Andéhn et al., 2014, p.135). This is because social media not only provides users with opportunities to create, share, and collaborate with brands on their own, but also allows users to shape brand meanings, which may be different from the ones projected by brand managers (Pongsakornrungsilp and Schroeder, 2011). This whole new scene of increasing brand co-creation by users suggests a new direction for corporations, such as employing consumers in their brand (see, for example, Arvidsson, 2005). This is not necessarily confined to corporate branding. City branding is no exception.

A growing body of research is appearing around the subject of online city branding (Oguztimur and Akturan, 2015). Common themes have included the role of city council websites as a tool for place brand communication (Florek et al., 2006), local companies' websites influencing post-industrial branding of cities (Truenmann et al., 2004), analysis of the official websites of municipalities (Sáez et al., 2013), the international positioning of a city using online branding (Björner, 2013), and city marketing through social media (Zhou and Wang, 2014). Most studies are centred around the use of the internet and websites as city branding tools, and research into social media in the context of city branding is still lacking. However, the theoretical knowledge in the field of city branding in general has been criticised as still being weak and a 'robust theory

is not under construction', despite an abundance of articles and books (Gertner 2011, p.101). This is partly because the mulitidisciplinary nature of the field means the academic community does not accept the discipline as a scientific research domain as it originates in the adoption of paradigms borrowed from other disciplines (Gertner 2011). Another reason for this could be that scholars are failing to keep up with the fast-changing, mobile-led trends in communication and as a consequence, academic theory does not advance.

2.4. Architecture and the Media

2.4.1. Architecture, Representation, and the Media

It is a common statement that the media, including broadcasting, the printed press, and online forums among others, have a powerful and inevitable influence on how architecture is manifested and perceived. From traditional media to new media, advances in technology have decided and even defined the power and the impact of the media. Thus, the relationship between media and architecture has been a recurrent line of enquiry in the field of architecture throughout history. This fundamental role of the media in the production and reception of modern architecture is well documented, as evidenced by various publications such as Kieller's *Film as Spatial Critique* (2007) - in which film space is viewed as an implicit critique of actual space - and Wilson's *Image, Text, Architecture* (2016), which raises issues regarding architectural photography and architectural criticism, to name just a few.

The representation of architecture in the media, as Wilson (2016) states, is the product of a complicit relationship. Art historian Summers (2010, p.3) defines representation in the following way:

> Representation is often linked to resemblance and to the more general question of imitation; but, even more importantly, the question of pictorial representation has also

> always been entangled with philosophical representationalism – according to Webster 'the doctrine that the immediate object of knowledge is an idea in the mind distinct from the external object which is the occasion of perception.' In the long western discussion of artistic representation there are typically three factors: a thing, its actual image, and a mental image. This third term, in being called an 'image' at all, is likened to a work of art made by the mind, and has a special status; it is itself a representation that is always interposed between anything and its actual image; and it is, moreover, spoken of as if providing the model or 'intention' for the actual image

To bring this into focus, it would be useful to quote Beatriz Colomina's well-known claim (Colomina, 1996, p.13) that modern architecture can only be understood in relation to its engagement with the mass media:

> The building should be understood in the same terms as drawings, photographs, writing, films, and advertisements; not only because these are the media in which more often we encounter it, but because the building is a mechanism of representation in its own right.

This point is further illustrated in her essay *Architectureproduction* (2002, p.209):

> Until the advent of photography, and earlier of lithography, the audience of architecture was the user. With photography, the illustrated magazine and tourism, architecture's reception began to occur also through an additional social form: consumption. With the enormous amplification of the audience, the relation to the building changed radically. The audience (the tourist in front of a building, the reader of a journal, the viewer of an exhibition or a newspaper advertisement, and even the client who is often all of the above) increasingly became the user, the one who gave meaning to the work. In turn, the work itself changed.

Banham (in Blackman and Harbord, 2010), in the same vein, notes that the majority of iconic buildings of the 20th century are known as photographs rather than bodily experiences. Similarly, Rattenbury, in the introduction of her book *This is not architecture: media constructions* (2002), has illustrated that even unbuilt, imaginary, projects have more or less the same position in the architectural canon, when they are represented in the media, as built projects – sometimes a better one. She further argues that architecture is not only conveyed but also actually defined by media representations, by a refined construct of drawing, photographs, newspapers, and so on, whose greatest concern is the representations in themselves rather than the built forms:

> But even in the most physical understanding of architecture, the media that describes it shape what we understand it to be, and the way we design and build it. This constructed representation defines what we consider good, what we consider fashionable, what we consider popular (Rattenbury, 2002, p.22).

A high level of image consumption accelerated by the mass media and consumer culture representing the 20th century placed photography in a privileged spot as an unquestionable resource for displaying architectural projects, among other means of language and communication (Muñoz-Vera, 2005). With regard to the spread of photographic images in capitalist society, Sontag, in her book *On photography* (1977, p.16), argued:

> The industrialization of photography permitted its rapid absorption into rational—that is, bureaucratic—ways of running society. No longer toy images, photographs became part of the general furniture of the environment - touchstones and confirmations of that reductive approach to reality which is considered realistic. Photographs were enrolled in the service of important institutions of control, notably the family and the police, as symbolic objects and as pieces of information.

What does it mean that a building is iconic? As previously mentioned, Sklair (2006, 2010) viewed symbolic/aesthetic judgement as a key constituent of ‘iconicity’. To understand how ‘iconicity’ in architecture is formed, it would be more apt to approach architecture from a philosophical perspective. Goodman (1988), one of the most influential figures in contemporary aesthetics, suggested that a building is a symbol, which explains why some buildings are considered as architecture or even a work of art, and others just a building or construction. Since a building is a symbol, it can also function cognitively and convey a variety of meanings. That is, a building can convey social, cultural, and historical meanings in addition to its practical function. We also judge and evaluate the aesthetic features of a building, such as its materials and forms. Capdevial-werning (2011) states that, drawing on Goodman’s *Languages of Art* (1968), a classic of analytic aesthetics, the aesthetic experience of a building involves interpreting a building as a symbol, and is a dynamic and cognitive process. He adds (p.91):

> Aesthetic attitude is not a state of passive contemplation wherein an object is aesthetically perceived, but rather an active process wherein the appreciator interacts with an object, looking for meanings and contrasting it with her previous experiences and knowledge. That aesthetic experience is cognitive does not mean that feelings and emotions are excluded, or that experience cannot be pleasant or unpleasant. It means that emotions and feelings are already cognitive and they are central for aesthetic experience insofar as they contribute to the advancement of understanding.

According to Capdevial-werning (2011), however, there are some peculiarities to be considered in the aesthetic experience of architecture. First of all, the experience of a building usually begins with the perception of the work, which could be in the form of an image, plan, description, and so on. This perception is cognitive in that it can be also affected by prior knowledge. That said, all different types of architectural representations, such as photographs and drawings, may shape our perception of a building. Previous conceptions and

knowledge of a building can help us to distinguish it from others, and furthermore, can predetermine our perception of the same building. Perception of an architectural form is not a one-sided act which has been frequently captured by a camera (Alihodžić and Kurtović-Folić, 2010).

In understanding how an architectural form is composed, and how its composition has an influence on our perception and memory, it would be helpful to turn to the Gestalt Theory of perception, which is the core of perceptual processes. Gestalt theory, which was developed by German psychologists in the 1920s, is a series of theories of visual perception, describing how people group together visual elements into groups or 'unified whole' when the separate elements are organised together in a specific way (Desolneux et al., 2007). The term Gestalt means a 'unified whole', which carries different and greater meanings than its individual parts when certain principles are applied: similarity, proximity, closure, continuation, figure/ground, and symmetry and order. According to the psychology of perception, to remove an object from the context falls under the realm of selective attention (Alihodžić and Kurtović-Folić, 2010). Thus, identifying the basic characteristics of the architectural object is important for a selection stage. Although the characteristics, such as the practical function and various symbolic meanings, of an architectural object are important in the perceptual process, however, the appearance of the architectural form is even more important (Alihodžić and Kurtović-Folić, 2010). It is important to be aware that architectural objects are never isolated. Unlike other forms of art, Capdevial-werning (2011) states, architecture is perceived through all five senses, through vision, hearing, touch, smell, and even taste. There is also another difference, in terms of size, between architectural work and other forms of art. For instance, a painting can be experienced as a whole, yet a building cannot. A building is perceived as either surrounded by or surrounding. Perception of an architectural work is thus limited by time and in sequence; interior and exterior, front, back, and facades are perceived respectively. Any architectural form has an extensive number of attributes, such as the size, number of storeys, proportions, colour, materials, and so on (Alihodžić and Kurtović-Folić, 2010). However, the structure and meaning of an architectural

object are the most essential physical characteristics which express the object. All the perceptions become ‘unified’, creating a ‘whole’ that has never been perceived in that manner. Accordingly, perception can already be a construction (Capdevial-werning, 2011).

As stated in the previous section, globally well-known iconic buildings have gained their iconic status by undergoing an extensive ‘process of ritualisation into everyday life’ (Kaika, 2011, p.17). Nowadays, and more clearly than before, however, it seems that people involved in architecture, including but not limited to the media, architectural critics, and architects, focus more on acquiring an iconic status. It is not surprising that commissioning starchitects is one of the commonly used rituals in this process of iconising buildings. Zizek (1989) introduced the notion of ‘phantasmic seduction’ (p.1) to refer to ‘a process through which iconic status is conferred upon buildings through the imposition of levels of abstract ritualisation, rather than the performative participation in public ritual’ (p.1). This abstract participation referred to in the work of Zizek (1989) can be enacted through a number of practices, among which media representational practices play a pivotal role (Kaika, 2011). Through a range of architectural critics’ opinions and opinions, sometimes praise, expressed in the media on newly-erected or even yet-to-be-erected aspiring icons, the general public are requested to endorse a building’s iconic status as real (Kaika, 2011). Interestingly, however, something happened that had never been imagined: social media. This takes the lead in the current trend in architectural image consumption, substantially influencing the way architecture is being discussed.

The majority of individuals are able to identify by sight buildings which they have never visited. Such an ability is due to photographic evidence, rather than the experience of actually visiting the site. The interdependent associations between photography and architecture has provided a rich area for research since the birth of photography in the 19th century. Ever since that time, architecture has demonstrated itself to be a good subject for photographers and, conversely, photography has constituted a vital element in architectural communication (Redstone, n.d.). As evidenced in the burgeoning quantity of research literature on architecture, the photographic image has functioned as

an essential instrument for increasing the general public's experience of architecture (Wong, 2007). With the development of modern technology, greater realism is possible in the digital representations of architecture (Ploemen, 2012). It is via such representations that buildings are designed, recorded, taught about and debated. As a consequence of the rapidly evolving digital environment over the last few years, images have been endlessly reproduced, with visual perceptions of images increasingly replacing information available for detection by the other senses.

The impact of digital technologies on architectural design practice have generated an evolving stream of architectural projects to be published, built or unbuilt. Photographs of buildings which are published in print media, provide people with the sense that they virtually visit buildings and get to know them for themselves (Lehman, 2013). This becomes even more the case with social media today, where people share travel photos of buildings with other people around the world and instantly buildings can gain fame. Consequently, the published image of a building is a representative factor in deciding whether the building is successful or not (Ploemen, 2012). As architecture, driven by the evolving cultural context, is shifting toward disembodiment, it tends to transcend its boundary as a static object, challenging the existing notion of place and physicality (Zellner, 2011). In a similar vein, the cultural critic Walter Benjamin argues that a cultural value for a building can be defined, interpreted, exaggerated, or even invented by a single photograph of it (Campany, 2014). Once again, it might be said that the architectural value of a building has an inescapable connection with photography. Architects may start to design bearing photographic representations in mind, and the public has begun to understand the built environment through the medium of photography. Since the imagery of a building is an inseparable part of architectural experience, or can even replace the actual experience, it is no wonder that photography may be part of 'the very same networks of spectacle' (Campany 2014, para. 40).

These days the purpose of photography has debatably changed from preservation to communication, and the impetus for this change has come from mobile technology and social media photo-sharing (Hand, 2012). Now,

photographs are primarily taken with a view to sharing and distribution, in preference to preservation. Consequently, it can be argued that digital photography is now more geared towards communication than memory-making, confirming that the purpose of communication has superseded that of preservation. Traditionally, the purpose of amateur photography was to generate idealised images that people wished to view (Cassinger and Thelander, 2015). Individuals produce pictures of their life and their identity via a series of selections of what to photograph and what to save and what to share. The primary purpose of photography is to document and curate pictures for future recall. However, digital technology has transformed the whole amateur photography environment. Cameras have been far more accessible, and innovative techniques for image distribution have evolved. This has led Van House (2011) to conclude that pre-planned photography is waning whilst spontaneous photography is on the rise. Since more or less all aspects of life are now considered suitable photographic subject matter, the breadth of subject matter has obviously been enormously extended.

Social media is viewed as the means by which the paradigm in photography has shifted from transmission to communication, and this has led to a co-creation facility for users who produce and share their images (Cassinger and Thelander 2015). Visuals are of increasing importance in social media, in part because they permit individuals to communicate quickly and simply. Instagram, Flickr, and Tumblr could be argued to constitute the most visual social media networks. Instagram is a visual social media platform where users take pictures, and then an online photo-sharing and social networking service permits users to manipulate the pictures using digital filters and editing apps, and then upload and share them on a variety of additional social media platforms, including Facebook and Twitter (Silva et al., 2013). Instagram was launched in October 2010 and has subsequently attracted in excess of 400 million monthly active users, with greater than 80 million pictures uploaded daily, and greater than 40 billion pictures shared by 2016 (Instagram 2016). The amazing success of Instagram demonstrates that visual images, such as photos and videos, have evolved to be the primary online social currencies (Rainie et al., 2012). A key

attribute of Instagram is its 'liveness', and this has helped to separate it from other visual social media platforms (Weilenmann et al., 2013). As photos are shared live, mostly at the time when they are taken, user comments also typically occur at this time. Moreover, Instagram is not merely an isolated social media platform, where instagramming activity occurs solely on the Instagram platform; it can be linked to other social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook, and this enables Instagram posts to rapidly spread beyond the Instagram platform itself. According to the recent research (see, for example, Ferrara, 2014), a natural comparison arises between Instagram and other photo sharing platforms, particularly Flickr. The two platforms are different in terms of features and target users. In terms of target audience, Flickr provides more professional-oriented features, such as high-resolution photos and thematic grouping, whereas Instagram, targeting mobile users, is more like an amateur photo-blog with features like quick photo taking, editing via filters, and a minimal interface. While Instagram can be seen as another version of Twitter based on image sharing, Flickr is more like a complete photo sharing platform with the additional features of social networks.

2.4.2. Architectural Semiotics

Architectural space is not just created with the use of measurement, but is also the outcome of socio-cultural processes, in which people are involved, constantly redefining it and changing its meanings (Juodinyte-Kuznetsova, 2011). Accordingly, it would be helpful to use semiotics as a tool in order to understand architectural expressions (see, for example, Juodinyte-Kuznetsova, 2011; Ramzy, 2013). Juodinyte-Kuznetsova (2011, p.1271) emphasises the suitability of semiotics in architectural research, citing Reiner (1982):

> Architecture is a specific kind of spatial semiotics. In a narrower sense it is referring to buildings and how its meaning gains the form and appeals to our senses. The building combines two processes. The first whereby the building comes into existence and the second whereby the meaning of the building changes after daily use. The subject

cannot be left out of the semiotics of architecture. Just as in spatial semiotics, so in architectural semiotics a subject (designer, builder, user, etc.) produces the meaning.

There have been attempts in architecture to analyse architectural forms from the semiotic point of view, but these have been limited (Ramzy, 2013). Thus, it would be useful to turn to semiotics in tourism research, where a variety of research themes are researched using semiotics as a methodology.

There is an increasing focus on the visual, visual image, and visuality in tourism literature (see, for example, Rakic and Chambers, 2011). Image has been a key element of tourism (see, for example, Rakic and Chambers, 2011; Moscardo, 2012). It has been argued that actual visitors spend time and effort finding and/or creating visual images to return home with as personal souvenirs or status symbols. In particular, the theme of the representation of places has been frequently researched in the tourism context (Moscardo, 2012, for example). Thus, semiotics in tourism literature on place image might offer some helpful directions for improving understanding of architectural representations. More specifically, most tourism research into visual images is centred around destination images, choice, and evaluation, with a focus on understanding the role that visual images play in the production and reinforcement of representations of tourist places and the people that use and/or live in those places. These issues are analysed by the application of semiotics, which has been theoretically applied under the themes of sign, images, representations, and tourist experience (Tresidder, 2011).

Semiotics, the study of signs, is understood as 'the study of not only what we refer to as 'signs' in everyday speech, but of anything which 'stands for' something else' (Chandler, 2007, p.2). Semiotic theory has gained recognition as a useful analytical tool across multiple disciplines over the past few decades. It has been mostly applied in analysing market research, advertising, corporate and brand identity, consumer behaviour, organisations, and even multinational corporations (Pennington and Thomsen, 2010), whereas semiotics in the tourism context has been used to address such subjects as tourist experience,

authenticity, destination image, tourist behaviour, illuminating the role of subjectivity in drawing different meanings from the same experience (Metro-Roland, 2009).

The Swiss linguist Saussure (1983) viewed a sign as being composed of a signifier and a signified, which is a sound (the shape of the signal) and a concept, privileging an arbitrary relationship between two elements. Hence there exist various signifiers across languages for similar concepts. Saussure's model is a linguistic one for addressing closed systems of language, thus in his theory there is no place for physical objects, which are non-linguistic signs. On the other hand, the American philosopher Peirce (1974, 1998), who, along with Saussure, is one of the two leading scholars of modern semiotics, established a triadic relationship consisting of object, representation and interpretant. Unlike Saussure's theory, Peirce's extra-linguistic focus provides a useful alternative designed to explain non-textual objects. For instance, objects like landscapes and buildings, which have meanings but do not emerge from the structures of language, can be interpreted using Peirce's model (Gottdiener, 1995; Claval, 2005).

Barthes's theory of semiology (in Bell, 2014), which is based on the Saussurean model, will be useful to understand the perception of visual images, providing a hint of the complexity of meanings conveyed through (photographic) images. Tourists decode the messages within the images of a destination immersed in the language of visuals. This decoding of images is the foundation of semiotics, the concept of a sign, as being the relationship between the signifier and the signified (Bell, 2014). Urry (2002) explains how photographs can amplify the anticipatory aspect of human experience, highlighting what he calls the 'hermeneutic circle' where the tourists go in pursuit of images from tourist brochures, TV, and websites, and capture them for themselves. He explains (p.129):

> much tourism involves a hermeneutic circle. What is sought for in a holiday is a set of photography images, which have already been seen in tour company brochures or on

TV programs. While the tourist is away, this then moves on to a tracking down and capturing of those images for oneself. And it ends up with travellers demonstrating that they really have been there by showing their version of the images that they had seen before they set off.

Additionally, Jenkins (2003) describes 'a circle of representation' within the context of Urry's (2002) tourist gaze, examining how the signs and images within tourism marketing impact on tourist behaviour (see figure 2.1). She found that tourists are drawn to the sites they had seen before they went to the destination and have their photographs taken in front of them to demonstrate they have been there, perpetuating the images projected by the tourism marketers.

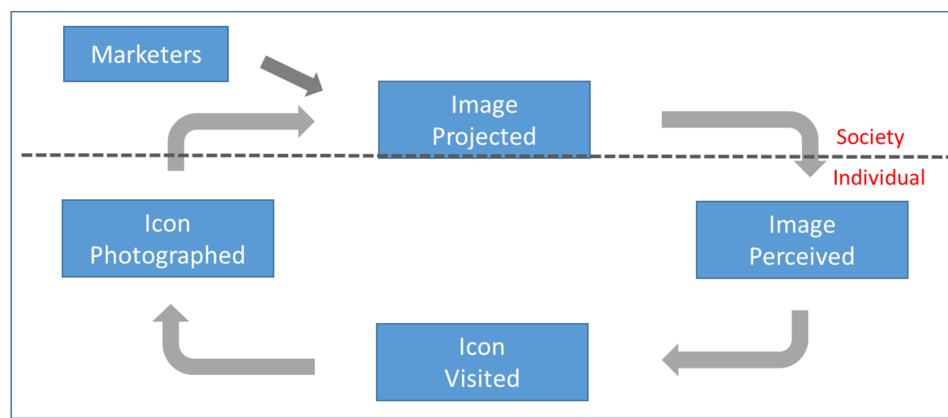

Figure 2.1. The circle of representation for tourist destination images (after Hall, 1997)

Jenkins' (2003) model signifies the role of the individual tourist within the semiotic interpretation process. As the model indicates, tourists capture the destination images projected collectively by the mass media, perpetuating and disseminating the projected images or representations, and the cycle therefore continues. However, it is argued that these images can be interpreted depending on where they are placed and on the individual backgrounds of the

tourists, even though they are socially and culturally embedded. That said, the projected images are located within the social area of understanding and meaning, while the perception, negotiation, and interpretation of images create various individual readings. As a result, she notes that multiple layers of additional symbolism based on an individual's social and cultural background are placed on the existing stereotyped images or icons. In the digital age, moreover, technology plays a growing role as a catalyst in changing the dynamics of media consumption. Tourists are increasingly becoming mediators and co-producers of a place image in the circle of representation. This can be supported by some of research (see, for example, Mansson, 2008), focusing on consumer co-creation. Consumers are increasingly contextualising the convergence of media and tourism consumption, breaking out of the original role of passive tourists in the circle of representation where tourists mostly search for and repeat the projected images. Mansson (2008) favoured the term 'mediatised tourism', a perspective beyond the notion of Jenkins' (2003) circle of representation. Recent tourism scholarship is paying more attention to social media, in which the consumption and production of media occur simultaneously. The consequence of social media is that tourists are increasingly becoming consumers as well as producers of tourist places, thereby having a strong influence on the reproduction of spaces (Larsen, 2006). This shift in power, accelerated by social media, has also been witnessed in the field of architecture. In sum, the point I wish to emphasise here is that by referring to how tourist places are semiotically constructed and represented in the media, it may be possible to direct the public's engagement to iconic architecture. More specifically, the way in which images of a destination are accessed, photographed, captured, presented, and shared, would probably provide some insights into the similar process iconic architecture is presumed to go through.

Within Peirce' semiotic theory, signs relate in three ways to their objects, symbols, icons, and indices (Metro-Roland, 2009). Each act of semiosis draws on collateral information (Metro-Roland, 2009), 'which occurs on the basis of previous knowledge comprised of the common ground of a community, of a group, of a given society, and which allows the members of this community to

share and handle meaning' (Lorusso, 2015, p.173). Peirce's notion of collateral information allows us to better understand how knowledge from other people and sources forms tourists' interpretation of a destination (Metro-Roland, 2009). Similarly, by paying greater attention to the fact that the meaning-making process in the tourism experience is subject to new interpretations, it will be possible to obtain some clues as to how information, visual or textual, shared via social media, shapes people's interpretation of, and perceptions of, the built environment.

2.4.3. Insta-Architecture: Iconic Architecture and Social Media

Until twenty years ago, architecture could only be experienced by physically visiting the buildings in person or by viewing selected architectural images on printed media which had passed the screening and approval process of a magazine editor. Today, people can view iconic buildings on the other side of the globe with merely one scroll of an Instagram feed on their smartphone. Thanks to the galvanizing force of social media, indeed, the consumption of architecture has overcome the historic limitations of time and space. A 'selfie' taken in Paris with the Eiffel Tower in the background 'becomes a part of our collective consciousness', and this happens faster and with more authority than with buildings of the past' (Kushner, 2014, para. 3). As Colomina (1994) puts it, in an instant age, where the proliferation of smartphones has put photography at the fingertips of the masses and Instagram is the rising visual medium, massively circulated architectural images have disembodied the building from the site and communication has finally come to grips with the fast pace of architecture (Kernebone, 2014).

However, one might assume that the plethora of images shared via social media diminish people's actual involvement in spaces and spatial experience, as 'the digital image capture is sufficient to consummate the occasion of being there' (Coyne, 2012, p.173). According to Edwards (in Coyne, 2012), however, digital photography, on the contrary, can enrich the sense of place and materiality. This is because, as Urry (1990, 2002) puts it, consumers tend to

repeatedly visit what already exists in the cultural circuit. Humans have a propensity to value what others value. In the same vein, Sontag (1977, p.9) writes:

> As photographs give people an imaginary possession of a past that is unreal, they also help people to take possession of space in which they are insecure. Thus, photography develops in tandem with one of the most characteristic of modern activities: tourism. For the first time in history, large numbers of people regularly travel out of their habitual environments for short periods of time. It seems positively unnatural to travel for pleasure without taking a camera along. Photographs will offer indisputable evidence that the trip was made, that the program was carried out, that fun was had.

Regarding the increased use of massive volumes of images circulating on Instagram, this might not discourage people from actually visiting iconic buildings and/or the cities where these buildings are located. Despite such accessibility to any iconic buildings in the world, these represented images heighten the resolve to go there instead. It has been said that one of the major activities in travelling is to discover special landmarks in a new place, as distinct from where we live (see, for example, Urry, 1990). According to a recent Facebook survey, more than 80% of people use Facebook on a trip and approximately 50% post photos when they return home (Coldwell, 2015a). Photo-sharing social media apps such as Flicker, Tumblr, Pinterest, Snapchat and so on are shaping our attitudes and behaviour with regard to travel. For instance, Instagram, the biggest photo-sharing social network, could be best described as Twitter focused on images and videos. The number of Instagram active has already reached 300 million across the globe since its launch in 2010. Instagram has offered people access to a new creative world, which was previously beyond their reach. Among the most tagged subjects are #travel and #holidays (Coldwell, 2015b). Architecture is among the most popular genres on Instagram. Some users have hundreds of thousands of followers, reaching wider audiences than specialized print magazines. Instagram has also emerged

as a visual diary for both amateur and professional travellers through easy and instant photo updates on the travel blog, and even further, it has developed into being a platform for modern digital storytelling, where a photo conveys a story and stimulates emotions, which in turn influences the followers (Coldwell, 2015b).

Given this pehonomenon, a number of questions can be asked. How has communication about architecture changed in the social media age? What paths does an architectural building take when it circulates in the form of an image? What role does social media play in the promotion of a building project? A more fundamental question in the context of this research study concerns what iconic architecture means in an age of social media and information.

In the past, in order to hear opinions about their work, architects necessarily relied on the voice of critics, because they did not have access to the public's opinion. Now, new media has broken down the barrier surrounding architectural discourses. Today, an individual person who is keen on architecture, could be a user or sometimes an architectural photographer, or another time an architectural critic on an online forum, even though comments and critique can entail simple expressions, such as 'I love that or 'I am in Paris' (Kushner, 2014). However, mobile apps, such as Instagram and Snapchat enable people to engage with architecture in new ways. Besides delving into the world of 'selfies', that is, people actively participate in the promotion and dissemination of architecture, whose examples include identifying the object of image, evaluating a project, catching up with architectural trends, and browsing buildings on social media (Schianchi, 2014). Kaika (2011) likened media representational practices to those of religious experience, citing Pascal's famous claim that 'even if you do not believe, kneel down, act as if you believe, and belief will come upon you' (p.983). That is to say, the general public has been excluded from participation in the process of the so-called 'iconisation'; opinions provided, for instance, in the media or by architectural critics had more influence on this process in the past. However, the rise of the new media scene has brought about a convergence between physical and virtual spaces. In the past, architecture used to be relatively hidden to the public. Now it receives wide public attention

and is analysed regularly thanks to social media; therefore, the power of the established architectural critics has been dwarfed by the public, the actual user of architecture.

2.5. Conclusion

In recent years the second wave of the Bilbao effect has been witnessed around the globe, focusing mostly on the establishment of iconic cultural buildings, and the power shift in the field of architecture, accelerated by social media. In the past decade, people have also been strongly influenced and affected by major changes in the development of technology, different forms of communication and alterations in meaning, and a shift in the balance of power that these activities permit and encourage has been evident (Rose, 2014). Researchers stress the significance of the global use of ubiquitous digital technologies, which allow ordinary people to create, edit and distribute texts and images to any audience they choose, be they virtual or real. When combined with neoliberal globalisation, the two forces introduce a new world of global communications which has the key features of ‘provisionality and instability’ (Kress, 2009, p.6). Self-realisation in a consumer-focused world creates noticeably less rigidity in social forms, and this correlates with the fluidity of modern practices of communication. Indeed, modern audiences, versed in self-reflection, may not only welcome but express a preference for a world based on uncertainty (Rose, 2014). Against the backdrop of the meteoric rise of visual social media and the rising number of iconic art museums across the globe, this research seeks, through case studies, to explore the way iconic architecture relates to the city in these respects. The topic of the visual and spatial relations between a city and its architecture is nothing new. However, it has often been suggested that recently there have been some changes in the way iconic architecture shapes the positions from which the city is seen and understood, in the context of the ever-changing environment around us which is being created by a hyper-visual culture and digital technology. In addressing the research questions arising from the aforementioned circumstances, visual research

methods using digital technology-based images seems timely and constructive.

Chapter 3. Methodological Issues

3.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to offer a deep insight into the research design and methods used in Chapters 4 and 5, thereby explicating the methodological frameworks. It might seem unsual to have the methodological discussion so early in this thesis, however there are two key reasons for this: firstly, a comprehensive review of the academic literature will be presented in Chapter 3, however this will not be a conventional literature review, but rather will serve as a substantive theoretical contribution created through the literature review process that has taken place in Chapter 2. More specifically, basic theories and research into social media and photography was explored in Chapter 2, which served as the starting point for the overall framework, whilst Chapter 3 focused on presenting key concepts from social media and tourist photography as a way to contextualise the research findings. Further related literature is subsequently reviewed in other chapters which the literature is relevant to, instead of being piled together in Chapter 2 Literature Review or Chapter 4 Research Design as an independent literature review section. Secondly, one of the key methods used in this research is arts-based (namely, Panofsky's iconographic-iconological method), and this method is not commonly used in social science. It is predominantly applied when understanding renaissance art in the field of art history, and thus it may appear somewhat strange to readers who are used to seeing other visual research methods like content analysis and semiotics. I therefore believed it to be crucial to offer a concise and comprehensive statement about the methods early in the thesis, since this will help readers who do not know anything about the approach to comprehend the analysis given in chapters 4 and 5, which refers to the research design and findings. It can also aid in eliminating unnecessary methodological confusion.

There are two mains sub-chapters in this chapter, one of which focuses on visual research methodologies and the other on tourist photography and Instagram. The first sub-chapter begins with a brief outline of contemporary visual culture that has created academic interest in a variety of related topics

like the conventions of visual perception and its social influences. It will also explore the how visual themes can be created and reproduced. Such topics have been at the heart of many research projects and have lead to the creation of methodological approach that specifically tries to provide insight into experiences from an artistic perspective (Pentassuglia, 2017). The sub-chapter will explore arts-based research and other visual analytical frameworks and approaches in order to offer logical reasons why Panofsky's method, one of the arts-based methods, is suitable for this research. After this, the sub-chapter will explore iconography and iconology, their origins and history. It will also explore Panofsky's three level-method, which is a crucial empirical basis for the methodological framework.

The second sub-chapter will investigate Instagram, since it is the subject of the present research and a key methodological tool. In this research Instagram will be explored in terms of the tradition of tourist photography. The sub-chapter begins by presenting a brief overview and history of tourist photography. A primary aim of this chapter is to provide a context for the research results found in chapters 4 and 5 into context. Thus, Urry's tourist gaze (1990, 2002) is explored in the sub-chapter in terms of the social media aspect (with specific focus on Instagram). Work from other researchers will also be used here to support the theory (see, for example, Larsson; 2006, 2008; Jansson; 2002).

3.2. Visual Research Methodologies

3.2.1 Visual Culture and Visual Research

There is much evidence to suggest that the modern world is increasingly dominated by visual artefacts (Heck and Schlag, 2013). As Rose (2011, 2016) puts it, the realm of the visual plays a key part in the cultural construction of social life and experiences, particularly for modern western societies. This growing understanding of the importance of imagery and its role in extending a textual and linguistic approach to society was succinctly addressed in the early 1990s by Mitchell's (1994) notion of 'pictorial turn', the so-called visual turn.

Mitchel suggested that in contemporary culture the visual has been acknowledged as being as significant as language and in turn deserves greater critical observation. In the 1960s, the concept of the ‘linguistic turn’ proposed by Rorty (1967) drew attention to the impact of language on society, culture, and daily life. In a similar way, the ‘pictorial turn’ emphasises the significance of imagery and pictures and encourages greater and more critical awareness of visual culture.

In ‘What is an image?’, the first chapter of his book, *Iconology: Images, Text, Ideology*, Mitchell (1986) describes images as ‘a far-flung family which has migrated in time and space and undergone profound mutations in the process’ (p.9). He explains that every image, no matter whether it is created ‘verbally,’ ‘mentally’ or ‘physically’ requires interpretation. In short, the significance of the image is determined by how it is received. The suggestion is that images are not tangible or real, in the sense that they have no meaning before becoming part of a fundamental relation between an image producer and an observer. This is a complex idea and to understand it, it is necessary to reassess the ways in which images are received and interpreted. To be more precise, there is a need for new and innovative ways of constructing, processing, and utilising images, particularly from social and scientific perspectives.

The popularity of visual modes of connecting and interacting has become increasingly clear over the last several years as information technology has grown in ability and complexity (Knonlauch et al., 2008), particularly through applications such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram. While the prevalence of visuals has not been ignored in academic research, there is a need to extrapolate the patterns and meanings of ‘visual modes’ and ‘visual language’ as a form of digital communication, one which has a narrative and lexicon of its own (Ellen, 2016). Qualitative data on social media, and particularly this area of it, are lacking in comparison to the data collected and analysed on traditional media sources. Quantitative data has become a focal point of social media research, particularly through a Big Data analysis which notes and catalogues metadata (such as tags, locale of origin, and time posted) as performed by Hochman and Manovich (2013); or through object recognition

software and automated content analysis, in which computers recognise and categorise known patterns, according to Yazdani and Manovich (2015). These analyses are useful for the trend-tracking of images on social media platforms, and for understanding the 'who', 'where', and 'what' characteristics of online users' posting. This constitutes a vast improvement on earlier studies on social media, in which images were only included as a corollary to the study, and were analysed for the frequency by which certain terms or patterns were used with written captions, contexts, or content, (Huffaker and Calvert, 2005; Jean Kenix, 2009; Siles, 2012). According to Manovich (2016), however, quantitative data-mining and content analysis strategies are not capable of elucidating the 'how' and 'why' aspects of posting and trends. They are also not oriented to the human experiences of posting on social media, in that there is no easy way of quantifying esoteric social meanings or cues associated with linguistic style, dialectical choices, and collective expression–despite their numerous uses in quantitatively recognising modalities such as subjects, topics, objects, and events. In image terms, however, 'expression' can be produced by colour, lighting, frame, placement, camera angle, or details in the image.

Buildings are structural objects which are experienced both visually and aesthetically. Therefore, it is understandable that they request a sufficient representation and acknowledgment in an artistic manner (Christmann, 2008). The principal purpose of images is to attract and stimulate their audience's senses through poignant and vibrant representations, and, as a consequence, they enable both perceptive and sentimental responses to be generated within their audiences. However, it is important to acknowledge that the message which images can portray are not unbiased. They have the power to powerfully demonstrate conceptual and socio-political ideologies regarding the way in which the world should be viewed socially, politically or culturally (Campt, 2012). Van Leeuwen (2008) states that, when referring to word and image, it is widely acknowledged that words generate specific thoughts and clarifications, whilst images generate versions of the world which have been designed to position the viewer with a specific ideological preference. Barthes (1977b) is renowned for believing that a photograph alone enables too many understandings to be

found and, therefore, must always be accompanied by text in order to clarify and stabilise an image's meaning. When an image is presented alone with no text, the image is 'a message without a code' (p.17) and an uncertainly 'floating chain of signified' (p.39). The long-standing concept that an image necessitates some form of text as 'anchorage' (p.37) has continually enabled text to be considered as superior to the form of visual representation. However, on the other hand, Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) believe that the image is 'an independently organised and structured message, connected with the verbal text, but in no way dependent on it–and similarly the other way around' (p.18). This statement indicates that text and visual representations are both founded on the same sociocultural codes but that each form of representation is not inherently reliant on the other and each are able to stand alone and generate varying meanings. Therefore, Kress and Van Leeuwen stress the importance of acknowledging a 'visual grammar', a culturally constructed uniformity which regulates visual forms of representation.

3.2.2. Visual Analytical Frameworks and Approaches

The recent growth in visual research methods across the social sciences is to some degree related to contemporary visual culture, although the relationship between the two is yet to be explored. A visual research method is a method using visual materials as evidence when investigating research questions. The types of visual materials being dealt with and the procedures these materials are subjected to are diverse (Rose, 2014). As a research methodology, visual research, which stems from visual anthropology, visual ethnography, and visual sociology (Collier and Colier, 1986), uses a variety of visual materials, such as photography, videos, and films with the purpose of understanding culture, on the principle that 'valid scientific insight in society can be acquired by observing, analysing, and theorising its visual manifestations: the behaviour of people and the material products of culture' (Margolis and Pauwel, 2011, p.1). The visual data used could be either two – or three-dimensional materials, such as images, objects, or computerised representations. These materials are usually ones

which are found, generated, elicited, or collected specifically for the research context and purpose. That is, some visual materials are created by the researcher or the research participants. Others are simply 'found' visual materials.

Rose (2011) suggests a theory of critical visual methodology using 'found visual images' (p.12) as a way to investigate visual culture. In her methodology, image itself and its production and reception by the audience are given equal weight. Her methodology can be employed in qualitative as well as quantitative studies, and can cover multiple modalities, including but not limited to compositional interpretation (Rose, 2016); thematic analysis (Guest, 2011); content analysis (Krippendorff, 2012); and pictorial metaphor analysis (Forceville, 2002). However, in line with the objectives of this research, this chapter presents the qualitative methods that are more suitable for researching photographic images on social media.

According to Bell (2001), visual content analysis is a methodical, observational technique utilised for looking at the methods used by the media for documenting and presenting specific events, scenarios and people. Visual content analysis enables the specific classifications of examples of visible content. However, it does not investigate singular images or singular 'visual texts'. Alternatively, it does permit the portrayal of areas of visual representation by clarifying the components of one or numerous distinct fields of representation, periods or different forms of images. Additionally, it is also considered as having a restricted level of significance in the field of research and, therefore, it should be used as required yet does not adequately analyse how the media portrays and illustrates specific people or events. Typically, visual content analysis separates framed still images (found in publications) or series of representation (scenes present in movies or television). However, unlike semiotic analysis, content analysis categorises each of the texts on particular scopes to highlight and clarify the sphere or totality. Visual content analysis is not focused on 'reading' or understanding the texts singularly. On the other hand, semiotic analysis is qualitative and is typically concerned with addressing each individual text or text-genre in a similar method to how a critic may investigate and scrutinise a

specific piece of artwork or the cultural connotations of a certain film or genre of film.

Content analysis delivers a quantified dimensional explanation of representational practices of images. A background 'map' of the pictorial explication and representation of the images can be delivered through the use of this methodology. Once the researcher has carried out a content analysis, they are then able to attempt to understand the particular images or imagery in a qualitative manner. This qualitative approach is typically semiotic or an additional text-focused method. Characteristic or striking instances can be extensively assessed and examined in order to complete the qualitative explanation of what the data represents and what the underlying message is. Researchers are able to form quantitative overviews regarding visual and additional spheres of explication, built on the foundations of authentic arrangement and monitoring, when content analysis is utilised. However, preferably, researchers who utilise content analysis should also enhance and extend their research findings further by thoroughly analysing characteristic examples. Content analysis should be considered, particularly when researchers are investigating and analysisng visual texts, as only one appropriate method. Furthermore, like all research studies, the authenticity and dependability of the data generated entirely depends on the levels of accuracy maintained throughout the theory and, henceforth, its distinct results and variables.

Visual analysis contains two key methods which can be a suitable approach to data analysis for this research (Van Leeuwen, 2001): iconography and the visual semiotics of Barthes (1975, 1977). The two identified methods within visual analysis both have the same identical queries at their centre: firstly, representation (what is represented by images and how this representation is portrayed) and, secondly, hidden meanings of the images (what ideas and principles the things, places and people visible in the image express). Barthian visual semiotics focuses on considering the individual image, and considers cultural meanings as coming from a communal understanding shared by all individuals who are in some way assimilated into contemporary popular culture;

such cultural expressions can be evident simply in the content and visual format of the image. Iconography, on the other hand, simultaneously focuses on the context – looking at how the image is manufactured and distributed - and on the the reasoning behind the expression of visuals and cultural meanings' initial historical development (Van Leeuwen, 2001).

According to Van Leeuwen (2001), the principal notion at the core of Barthian visual semiotics is the layering of meaning. Denotation is the first layer, essentially assessing who or what is being depicted in the visual representation. Connotation is the second layer, essentially assessing the principle thoughts and philosophies which are conveyed via what is visually represented and through the specific form in which it is represented to the viewer. Denotation, to Barthes, is a moderately uncomplicated question. It is believed that with denotation, there is no 'encoding' into some form of foreign language-like code which demands previous knowledge before the meaning is able to be discovered. Essentially, the primary layer, denotation, is established through the action of identifying and distinguishing what or who is present, what they are doing and so forth. Connotation is the second layer of meaning. This layer encompasses a wider spectrum of notions, thoughts and principles which the individuals, places and things could possibly 'stand for', what they 'are signs of'. The previously established layer of recognition and interpretation can then be overlaid and extended by connotation. Connotation can be generated via cultural links and relations which are inherently associated with the represented things, places and people through particular 'connotators', particular elements of the methods of representation; for instance, particular photographic techniques which can be adopted.

Representational meaning, iconographical symbolism and iconological symbolism are the key layers of pictorial meaning which are identified in iconography. 'Denotation' has considerable similarities to the notion of 'representational meaning'. It is the 'primary or natural subject matter' (Panofsky, 1970, p.53) and a representation based on the principle foundations of people's life experiences; it also takes into account the technical conventions and stylistic resolutions which are an element of the representation. At the level of

Iconographical symbolism, the ‘object-signs’, to quote the lexical choices of Barthes (1977a), do not only signify a specific place, thing or person, but additionally the notions or philosophies inherently associated with them. This is summarised by Panofsky as ‘secondary or conventional subject matter’ and is further clarified below:

> [Iconographical symbolism] is apprehended by realising that a male figure with a knife represents St Bartholomew, that a female figure with a peach in her hand is a personification of veracity, or that two figures fighting each other in a certain way represent the Combat of Vice and Virtue. In doing this we connect artistic motifs and combinations of artistic motifs (compositions) with themes or concepts. (1970, p. 54)

Iconological symbolism can also be considered, as expressing ideological meaning. To pay attention to this symbolism during analysis is to ‘ascertain those underlying principles which reveal the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion’ (Panofsky, 1970, p.55):

> When we try to understand [Da Vinci's Last Supper] as a document of Leonardo's personality, or of the civilisation of the Italian High Renaissance, or of a peculiar religious attitude, we deal with the work of art as a symptom of something else which expresses itself in a countless variety of other symptoms, and we interpret its compositional and iconographic features as more particularised evidence of this ‘something else’. The discovery and interpretation of these ‘symbolical’ values (which are often unknown to the artist himself and may even emphatically differ from what he consciously intended to express) is the object of ‘iconology’, as opposed to ‘iconography’.

Iconography utilises contextual research and textual analysis unlike Barthian visual semiotics. In order to fully support its construct, iconography also includes extensive documentary investigation and intertextual comparisons and, consequently, whilst ensuring the utmost respect is maintained for artwork throughout history, this enables iconography to gain a understanding of what

'object-signs' means. It is commonly contended that, although art works may have a renewed meaning and, therefore, interpretation in the present day, iconography still prefers the 'original meaning' of art works from throughout history. This is essentially correct. As a result of social and cultural developments in the modern world, it is of course true that tourists in the present day interpret Renaissance and medieval paintings, for example, in a different manner to that of the artists' generation. It is stated that the 'patina of age' of art works is a crucial element of their modern-day understanding, although, this was evidently not an objective of the artists (Panofsky, 1970, p 38). Panofsky comprehends that the 're-creative experience of art' is entirely reliant on the 'cultural equipment of the beholder' (1970, p.40). An array of varying readings will occur.

Barthian visual semiotics and iconography are suitable for analysing the representational ('denotative') and symbolic ('connotative') meanings of the things, abstract things, places and people which are present in the varying forms of images (Van Leeuwen, 2001). If both expressions are considered during analysis, unambiguous conclusions can be drawn regarding whether the represented components, and components of style, can be understood as symbolic, and for differentiating more traditionally accepted forms of symbolism from the wider spectrum of iconological symbols. The principle difference between the approaches looking at representational and symbolic expression begin primarily with the objects which they investigate – modern-day images as opposed to art works. Pieterse's book, *White on Black* (Pieterse, in Van Leeuwen, 2001) provides an example of how iconography can be effective for analysing modern-day images as well in its utilisation of iconography to study how black people have been represented by white people. Secondly, an additional variance between the two approaches is that Barthian visual semiotics is entirely focused on textual debates, when discussing specifically its unequivocal theoretical devices, while iconography also makes use of opinions which are obtained from archival exploration along with analysis and intertextual comparison.

Both of the approaches accept that symbolism can be interpreted in varying manners, mixing 'objects accepted and plainly recognised as symbols with real buildings, plants or implements on the same level of reality – rather unreality' (Panofsky, cited in Van Leeuwen, 2001, p.14), or 'disguised'. For instance, in a Renaissance painting, the preferred method of analysis is iconography because the rise in naturalism generated a growing attentiveness to presenting symbols in the pretext of 'reality'. On the other hand, Barthes' preferred method of study was photography. It is widely believed that Barthes had a minor role in the overall weakening of the belief in naturalism, along with the rise of the 'constructivist' strength which was inherently a consequence of the new digital age, as Barthes acknowledged photographs, even ones from documentaries, as symbolic and representational creations.

3.2.3. Arts-based Visual Research

According to Huggins (2015), what is seen is seen and interpreted is profoundly influenced by culture. Social behaviour has been to an extent determined by certain images that have presented a visual representation of difference and social power, and photography has been the medium that has done most to shape social behaviour. Photographs can be transitory in nature and their pliancy is furthered by the nature of their production. Huggins (2015) considers that they are associated with a variety of interactions, both embodied and subjective, and that the way they are understood is impacted by the large number of processes involved in their production, including the way they are made, their consumption and even their subsequent abandonment or disposal. Since the 1990s, scholars have demonstrated increasing interest in the concept of 'seeing' and accepted that this is a process that is influenced by culture and social direction. This academic curiosity about visual culture has furthered research into a range of related themes such as the conventions of visual perception and its social influences, as well as how visual themes are produced and reproduced. These themes have been the subject of countless research projects and publications and have resulted in the emergence of a

methodological approach that seeks to understand certain experiences through the potential of art (Pentassuglia, 2017).

Arts-based research (ABR) is a way of facilitating an understanding of experiences and behaviour through artistic forms and processes (McNiff, 2008). It is also categorised into other terms such as arts-informed methods and artistic research, but all are characterised by the use of various forms of art by research participants and researchers (Eaves, 2014). Barone and Eisner (2011) argue that ABR enhances human understanding by using expressive forms to communicate meaning, while Butler-Kisber (2008) suggests that the use of a non-linear form allows fresh meanings to be determined and considered. ABR has become more popular because it has the ability to make connections between form and content, according to Leavy (2015), a view that is echoed by Roberts (2009) who talks about it being a multi-layered approach.

The introduction of art into what has always been considered a scientific process has been controversial but this relationship has been rewarding, with Leavy (2015) pointing out that art and science share more similarities than might originally have been supposed, as both attempt to shed light on aspects of human existence. The ‘art’ in ABR may be drawn from a range of disciplines, from the literary through to performative and from visual arts through to multimedia. The artworks may therefore range from experimental writing and dance across to installation art and film and may even use a mixture of certain artistic elements. Barone and Eisner (2011) comment on the ability of ABR to move beyond traditional communication in order to bring comprehension to incomprehensible issues or subjects. This methodology also has the reputation of being able to connect with participants or stakeholders in a way that traditional methods have not, with McNiff (2008) purporting that this level of engagement is crucial in being able to understand and analyse experience.

Holm (2010) furthers the subject of the line being blurred between art and science through the topic of art-based visual research, which has many similarities with ABR. This type of research is more of an overarching term that describes the use of the visual arts to study human experience; again, it may

comprise a variety of media including photographs, graphics and diagrams, video and film. When an image-based methodology is used today, it has usually been influenced by ground-breaking work in the visual anthropology or visual sociology fields, according to Weber (2008) and Holm (2010). An arts-based visual research project or study may use a variety of forms of visual art. In terms of methodology, this could begin with visual images being used within research and progress through to the collection of image-based data as an alternative to traditional verbal methods. The traditional division between participants and researchers may also be challenged by art-based visual research as the researchers may be equally as engaged as the participants in the image-making or interpretation process. The creative process and the method by which this is analysed offer the potential for a more extensive and far-reaching understanding of complex subjects such as social phenomena because an aesthetic dimension is added. Barone and Eisner (2011) suggest that artistic goals run alongside scientific goals in arts-based visual research and the synergy between these is notably powerful.

Austin and Forinash (2005) advise that ABR is characterised by the artistic methods used, a view that Sinner et al. (2006) also support. However, some arts-based research approaches can be compared to other visual approaches, with Prosser (2007) suggesting that visual methods more broadly are those that use visualisation to examine a particular phenomenon, whether the visual element is developed, disseminated or used as an analytic tool. These elements can be developed by participants, researchers or both and may even be created by another party outside the research project. A range of visual methods may be considered for research, including videography, reflexive photography and photovoice as well as line-based or one-dimensional methods like drawing and comic books. Other methodologies such as visual replay (Alexander et al., 2016) and visually-related approaches like concept mapping and social network analysis might also fall under the umbrella term of visual methods. While scholars including Leavy (2015) posit that the artwork is predominantly the work of the researcher and is the ultimate final product of the research, others such as Ledger and Edwards (2011) argue that the arts can be

used across the span of the project. The aesthetics themselves will be of varying importance, depending on the individual researcher as well as the selected methodological framework (see, for example, Cole and Knowles, 2008). Furthermore, the researcher may categorise their methods as being either arts-based or arts-informed.

Visual research has been presented with an exciting new direction created by the digital technologies and social media platforms that have been expedited by the rapid advance of the Internet in recent years (Holm et al., 2017). The transformation of digitally-mediated communication from a largely text-based means of communication to a predominantly visual one has been facilitated largely by smartphones and their associated cameras, along with reasonably-priced and easily accessible mobile broadband. The practice of taking, editing and sharing photographs and other images is constantly evolving with new technology and has become a more seamless process. Users of social media platforms are constantly bombarded with imagery from others as well as those they create themselves. This entire process suggests that methodological development in terms of arts-based visual research is necessary as social media is a vital area for development. Digital ethnographers such as Pink (2012) have suggested that social media is an area that is worthy of exploration in research terms as digitally-mediated communication is only likely to increase its already substantial presence. This may be in more general terms or could focus on particular apps or programmes that are focused on the visual as a means of communication, particularly Snapchat, Tumblr and Instagram.

Grace (2010) uses the term ‘general aesthesia’ to describe how new media is able to amplify particular aspects of visual images, going on to consider how a more generalised sensitivity has emerged to everyday audio-visual spaces. In this new world, pictures have become the new channel of mass expression and exemplifies everyday creativity. Przyborski (in Schreiber, 2017) also elaborates on how visual imagery has become as powerful as language in allowing people to express themselves aesthetically and considers that this is explicit with regard to content and used in a more iconographic sense in terms of motifs. Meanwhile, while the stylistic nature of content is implicit, its aesthetics

communicate messages to others in a more iconological sense. The detail of the chosen image is also key and could be said to comprise visual sense-making, with Schreiber (2017) highlighting the distance of the camera from an object or scene and others such as Kanter (in Schreiber, 2017) focusing on the way in which an image is cropped or framed. The composition and perspective of an image is another consideration that is noted by Przyborski and Haller (in Schreiber, 2017). Social and habitual norms are each involved in constructing the concept of what is considered to express beauty; what is worthy not only of being photographed in the first place, but also deserving of showing and sharing online. According to both Bourdieu (1996) and Panofsky (1955), pictures are theorised as an aesthetic product and a way of communicating visual sense-making that is either implied or unequivocal. The use of pictures on social media has become the dominant means of communicating with others and in a sense allows the user to paint a picture of who they are. The technical structure of the chosen social media platform also influences this means of communication; for example, Instagram tends to feature pictures that are considered to be of a certain artistic value. Instagram images are usually posted either because of their inherent beauty and visual appeal or for their dramatic content, with the accompanying text usually being relatively minimal (Holm et al., 2017). This latter feature can make analysis challenging but the visualisation and digital mediation of society in general terms points to a significant future for art-based research. New technology has enabled a proliferation of images that is an enthralling proposition, one which furthers the involvement of art-based visual research and has a far-reaching scope in the future.

3.2.4. Iconography and Iconology

It should be noted that contemporary iconology takes a great deal of inspiration from the work of Ripa (Eberlein, in Müller, 2011). This makes sense because Ripa envisioned iconology as a system of study which would move beyond the arts and visual artefacts by fully embracing them all. The term 'iconography' refers to the study of images. It is at once a strategy and a framework for

evaluating the components and ideas contained in visual artefacts. In its infancy, it was used as a way to directly and closely scrutinise artworks. Early iconography was often used to describe the way some art theorists would create connections between artefacts and textual sources. It owes a lot to the pivotal text, Iconologia (1593), by Ripa. This book did more than just reference and explore existing interpretations. If no conceptual precedents could be found, it constructed new frameworks designed to introduce innovative meanings and interpretations.

Iconography, in its modern form, was devised during the first half of the 20th century by the art historian Aby Warburg, who is commonly referred to as the founding father of the iconographic-iconological approach, which was further refined by Panofsky, a colleague of Warbug (Müller, 2011). Throughout the 20th century, formalism, which focuses on form and style, headed by the art historian Heinrich Wolfflin, was also prevalent in art history (d'Alleva, 2005). Formalists argued that the context and meaning of artwork need to be disregarded in favour of direct, unadulterated interaction with it. They contended that a work of art must be consumed and allowed to delight with its formal attributes, such as material, colour, shape, composition, and line instead of being enjoyed for its representation of a story, idea, and nature. Warburg and his team formulated modern iconographic theory as a response to this, opposing such requests to engage with art on a purely formal level. For Warburg, a work of art is deeply and intrinsically linked to a given period's social life, religion, philosophy, science, politics, and literature. Panofsky (1982) expresses this idea a little more clearly with the assertion that 'In a work of art, "form" cannot be divorced from "content": the distribution of colour and lines, light and shade, volumes and planes, however delightful as a visual spectacle, must also be understood as carrying a more-than-visual meaning' (p.168).

Iconological viewpoints focus on the identification of visual motifs and their cultural and social interpretations. They also attempt to investigate equivalences within other cultural dimensions such as the law, literature, and philosophy. Panofsky's approach provides a critical art historical perspective of the recognition that pictorial meaning is socially mediated (Rampley, 2001). In this,

the work of Panofsky is deeply rooted in the philosophy of 'symbolic forms' which was devised by Cassirer (d'Alleva, 2005). Crucially, the notion of 'significant form' is not the same as formalist ideals. The formalist seeks to remove all cultural associations. On the other hand, Cassirer believes that significant forms are rich in cultural meaning. Cassirer suggested that images reflect the core ideas and principles (symbolic values) of the host culture. Therefore, works of art can be seen as 'documents' describing key aspects of an artist, philosophy, politics, society, religion, and more.

However, there are other traditions of the image interpretative approach. They include the Marxist-inspired strategies of figures like Berger (1972), who believes that modern capitalist structures have a vested interest and insidious reasons for utilising images to convince the general public to make purchases (to coax people into buying goods and services) and to 'bewilder' them (to hide the genuine truth of their existence). Berger suggests that distinct 'ways of seeing' (specifically, constructing and interpreting images) are closely tied to and influenced by different types of social, economic, cultural, and political systems.

The debate over where such meanings are to be identified has raged for some time. On the one hand, formalists believe that meanings exist exclusively inside the artefact. Yet, semioticians and iconographers claim that while it does exist within the piece, it is also fundamentally connected to and interacting with broader ideas and contexts (d'Alleva, 2005).

The earlier work of Warburg used the term 'iconography,' but it was swapped for 'iconology' in 1908, to referr to a specific method of visual interpretation (Müller, 2011). In 1932, Panofsky published a seminal article (Panofsky, 1982), presenting a three-level method of visual interpretation, which was first entitled 'iconography' and later 'iconology.' For Panofsky, Mannheim's concept of the 'sociology of knowledge' (1952) also played a further part in the evolution of his renowned iconographic–iconological framework. Both Panofsky and Warburg would go on to influence many scholars in their era.

Mannheim (1952) released an article entitled The Interpretation of 'weltanschauung' (a world view) in 1923. In this piece, he describes the aforementioned movement as 'the global outlook of an epoch' (p.33). Yet, he also casually makes reference to a three-stage strategy for interpretation which accounts for three dimensions of meaning: documentary, objective, and expressive. Mannheim also discusses the importance of 'objective correctives' and their impact on interpretation. Therefore, when Panofsky (1982) uses the word 'weltanschauung,' it provides not only an indication of his Germanic heritage but also reflects a very influential text and its impact on his own work. Later, Panofsky would modify this framework and apply it to the context of art history. This is not such a difficult feat, because both disciplines (art and sociology) seek to gain deeper insights into how individuals and social groups process different cultural artefacts. Furthermore, they both want to learn about how, in turn, the visuals influence the cultural principles and beliefs of a given time.

One of the biggest challenges in this approach is that the terms 'iconography' and 'iconology' are not always used in the correct manner. Sometimes, they are used interchangably and this contributes to the sense of impenetrability around them (Serafini, 2010). In both Warburg's and Panofsky's understanding, however, iconology as a method went beyond iconography. According to Panofsky (1982) the distinction is very clear and can be seen in the very words themselves. He points to the etymological background of both terms and explains that the suffix 'graphy' of the term iconography is related to the ancient Greek word 'graphein.' It means the act of writing. For Panofsky, the definition indicates a purely descriptive practice which attempts to produce objective and impartial depictions and categorisations of art symbols. In contrast, the suffix 'ology' of iconology is associated, in this context, with the broader term 'logos.' This means 'reason,' 'thought,' or 'idea.' Even though iconography was, to begin with, the most prominent school of thought and the most common way to describe the study of styles and types, Panofsky embraced iconology as an enhanced strategy of synthesis and a way to learn more about the interpretations of symbolic forms. Consequently, Panofsky (1982) asserted that

‘Iconology is a method of interpretation which arises from synthesis rather than analysis’ (p.32). It is to be noted that, whereas iconography settles for just identifying visual motifs and giving them specific meanings, iconology utilises visual artefacts as more than a way to gather more information about the visuals per se; the visuals are perceived as indicators of the broader political, cultural, social, religious, and historical context of the time when the visuals were created and utilised.

In more recent years, Mitchell (1986) has attempted to restructure the definition of iconology by positioning it as central to both the visual and linguistic realms and by making heavy use of ideology for this new framework. According to Mitchell (1986), iconology is the evaluation of both ‘what images say’ and ‘what to say about images’ (p.1-2). Mitchell notes that the former is concerned with describing and interpreting visual motifs, whereas the latter involves the recognition of how images use narrative to make it appear as if they are conveying their own ideas and messages. In short, he focuses on the messages and narratives behind the images. He goes on to suggest that the consistent, constant ebb and flow of reciprocal redefinition – tied as it is to shifting cultural and social ideals–represents a delicate index of ideology, which can be broadly described as ‘the structure of values and interests that informs any representation of reality’ (p.4).

From a modern perspective, iconography is most accurately defined as ‘a qualitative method of visual content analysis and interpretation’ (Müller, 2011, p.285), which is greatly influenced by cultural ideals and shaped by research subjects particularly within the social sciences and humanities. This does, to some degree, tie in with the Warburg claim that iconology/iconography is a comparative and interdisciplinary framework based on intense scrutiny of visual and textual sources, and that it is primarily concerned with the visual interval on both a spatial and a temporal level (Rampley, 2001).

Ultimately, it can be said that no image arises or is created pure or without meaning (Belting, 2005). Yet access to all images depends upon the specific nature of the medium, because this has a direct impact on how they are

processed and what value they hold for the viewer. It is clear than that the how of the image directly influences the what of the image (the question of what it is designed to serve or what it is an allusion to or for). This can make it difficult to separate the how from the what, because the two are closely interlinked and form the fundamental core of the image. Nevertheless, the how is, to a large degree, influenced by the physical form of the image (sculpture, painting, and so on). Consequently, modern iconology needs to address this duality and differentiate between the image and its physical form, with the latter being treated as a 'carrier' or medium.

According to Alloa (2016), Panofsky wanted to transition iconology into iconography via semantic evolution. Thus, the first stage of his movement involves a change to the basic terminology. Iconology then provides the right moniker for the most sophisticated stage of the reconstruction – the evaluation of concepts of meaning. From a twentieth century perspective, the theorist represents a desire to restructure the iconological agenda and give it a new foundation which is not bound by physicality or literality.

The question here is whether Panofsky's model can be generalised to include disciplines other than art history. While iconology will always be a system created to evaluate and interpret art, there is much support for the idea that Panofsky's three stage analysis doesn't have to be restricted to the world of art galleries and museums (Heck and Schlag, 2013). Elkins (2001) puts forward the following view:

> The variety of informational images, and their universal dispersion, as opposed to the limited range of art, should give us pause. At least it might mean that visual expressiveness, eloquence, and complexity are not the proprietary traits of 'high' or 'low' art, and in the end it may mean that we have reason to consider the history of art as a branch of the history of images, whether those images are nominally in science, art, writing, archaeology, or other disciplines (P.4).

There has been an increased assimilation of new forms into art and also a growing trend to investigate a more diverse selection of images, including ones which may have once been considered beyond the scope of art (Danto and Goehr, 1997). As Cosgrove and Daniels (1988) explain, Panofsky related the method of ‘reading what we see’ to built forms as well. More specifically, he paved the way for the development of an iconography designed for buildings, architecture, and landscapes of all varieties. It is important to acknowledge the fact that iconography supports a deeper awareness of the precise stylistic components of an image itself and its context. On the other hand, the iconological approach allows for the interpretation of the symbolic narrative of images and acknowledges how they enact what is seen in them (Heck and Schlag, 2013). This rigorous emphasis on the visual realm, in relation to its cultural, historical, social, and political environments, is exactly why iconology is such an essential tool far beyond art history.

3.2.5. Panofsky’s Three-Level Method

Some would argue that the greatest contribution from Panofsky was the construction of a framework used to define images without relying on their presumed artistic value. It has inspired an ongoing artistic-historical reassessment of typologies of images which have not been properly investigated until now. They include mass images, moving images, and images from outside western cultures. The strategy is called the ‘iconological method.’

Panofsky, in his texts, *Meaning in the Visual Arts (1955) and Studies in Iconography* (1939), outlines three levels of iconographic/iconological interpretation (see table 3.1 below). Every level has a distinct ‘Object of Interpretation.’ Each one requires its own specific forms of ‘Equipment for Interpretation.’ And, finally, each level adheres to a particular ‘Corrective Principle of Interpretation.’ Every level carries its own strategy and objective. To reiterate, this three-level process now forms the basis of modern iconology. It resides at the very core of the understanding of what it means to interpret and see an image (the Act of Interpretation).

Table 3.1. Panofsky's three-level method of image interpretation

Object of interpretation	**Act of interpretation**	**Equipment for interpretation**	**Corrective principle of interpretation**
I *Primary or natural subject matter* (A) Factual, (B) Expressional, constituting the world of artistic motifs	*Pre-iconological description* (and pseudo-formal analysis)	*Practical experience* (familiarity with *objects* and *events*)	*History of style* (insight into the manner in which, under varying historical conditions, *objects* and *events* were expressed by *forms*)
II *Secondary or conventional* subject matter, constituting the world of images, stories and allegories	*Iconographical analysis*	*Knowledge of literary sources* (familiarity with specific *themes* and *concepts)*	History of *types* (insight into the manner in which, under varying historical conditions, specific *themes* or *concepts* were expressed by *objects* and *events*
III *Intrinsic meaning or events*, constituting the world of 'symbolical' values	*Iconological interpretation*	*Synthetic intuition* (familiarity with the *essential tendencies of the human mind*), conditioned by personal psychology and *'Weltenschauung'*	History of *cultural symptoms* or *'symbols'* in general (insight into the manner in which, under varying historical condition, *essential tendencies of the human mind* were expressed by specific *themes* and *concepts*)

*Sources: Based on Panofsky (1939, 14-15)

The first level (pre-iconographic description) is basic and straightforward. It involves an uncomplicated description of what it seen in the image. The only skillset which is required is the ability to use personal experiences to identify different symbols (Howells and Negreiros, 2012). For this reason, it prompts the

viewer to engage only with what they can see with their eyes and to hold back from using external references to make deeper allusions. They must try to outline all of the visual components in an unemotional manner and avoid impressing their own cultural prejudices onto the image. This stage is, therefore, concerned with primary or natural subject matter. According to Panofsky (1982), it deals with the realm of artistic symbols and motifs; what is literally seen on the page or canvas. There is no deeper social, cultural, or historical interpretation needed at this point. It should be pointed out that, for Panofsky, it is really important that the first stage be influenced by the 'corrective principle' of the history of style, whereby scholars and art historians would allow their perceptions and judgements to be channelled through the stylistic context of the image. Consequently, all of their identifications and interpretations would be rooted in stylistic and historical scholarship (Winget, 2009). Once the majority of the visual components have been identified, it is time for the next stage (iconographic analysis).

The second level, called iconographic analysis, focuses on not just the specific people or items depicted in the image, but also the underlying concepts (Van Leeuwen, 2001), which are also referred to as the secondary or conventional subject matter. One great example given by Panofsky involves the famous painting of 'The Last Supper.' When the artwork is viewed during the first stage, it is just a group of male figures having a meal together. However, when cultural knowledge is applied, the painting regains its religious significance, but only because most viewers have seen or heard about the narrative before (Howells and Negreiros, 2012). If there was a lack of cultural awareness of the last supper, the artwork would not have the same meaning. According to Woodrow (in Hope, 2010), the second stage can be considered part of the realm of iconography, because it connects visual motifs to concepts and themes, namely conventional meaning. This stage is about the meaning, both symbolic and specific, which requires some cultural knowledge to work with.

The third and final level of the Panofsky's framework is called iconological interpretation. As Van Leeuwen (2001) explains, this is concerned with intrinsic meaning or content and represents the realm of 'symbolic values' (p. 40). It is

the most complex and intricate of all the processes. This can make it very hard to define and pin down. For one thing, this level of interpretation can involve viewer perceptions which do not match what the producer of the artefact was aiming to say or show. In this stage, the viewer makes their own interpretation of the image, taking into consideration the period in which it was created, the location of its origin, the style or medium selected by the creator, the agenda of the owner or presenter, and a whole host of other external influencers. The important thing is that, as Howells and Negreiros (2012) suggests, this third stage happens at a mostly unconscious level. It leads to interpretations which the creator almost certainly did not intend to convey. Therefore, it represents a symbolic, instinctive, and more fundamental sphere of image processing than the first two stages. Often, these types of interpretation encapsulate the mood, feelings, values, principles, and characteristics of a nation or a period (Hasenmueller, 1978).

One interpretation of Leonardo Da Vinci's 'Last Supper' can serve as an example of Panofsky's rationale. In this case, there are thirteen men in the primary pre-iconographical description, all of which are clad in colourful togas, and are side-by-side on a long dining table with food and drink. They are all animatedly talking together, with some appearing surprised and others sad. The scene is situated within an architectural interior and the scene is framed by three large windows opening out over a mountainous backdrop. In the subsequent iconographic stage, the traditional meaning is presented when a viewer recognises the scene as a depiction of the biblical 'Last Supper' and the primary figure is actually Jesus Christ, and that the man turning his face from the viewer, and taking a loaf of bread simultaneously with Christ, is Judas. It is in this second stage that the iconographical analysis reveals the true subject matter through a process of joining object representations to the relevant themes and concepts, which are famous and familiar aspects from artistic and literary sources. Only those who understand Christian culture and the traditional background can understand the above interpretation. Someone who has never been familiar with these biblical stories will not acknowledge the scene as being that of the last supper, and may misunderstand the true meaning of the painting.

Iconography in its typical sense, is created by linking symbolic artistic motifs with themes or concepts associated with conventional subject matter. At this stage of iconographic interpretation, the Last Supper is seen to have its conscious origin in the Christian cannon as described by the relevant biblical narrative (Holly, 1985). As themes and concepts pertaining to particular historical eras are not always self-evident and are frequently discovered only within the literature and art of the relevant historical period, the appropriate analytical vision required to ensure correct identification of images is an understanding of the history of types. Most scholars would be content to end here with the meaning of the representation being fully elucidated; however, Panofsky encourages keen viewers to look deeper for further intrinsic meaning or content, and consider the artist's intention, the Weltanschauung (or the worldview from which this representation originated), and also the cultural importance of the work, and its wider symbolism (Gérin, 2013). This is achieved via 'synthetic intuition', moulded by the viewer's own psychology and Weltanschauung. Lastly, the third stage of iconographic interpretation is defined as Iconography in a deeper sense, or Iconology. This is concerned with intrinsic meaning or content and aims to comprehend the association between a work and the wider context in which it was envisaged. The 'Last Supper' is now viewed not merely as a 'document' of Leonardo's personality but also as an expression of the world view at the time of the High Renaissance. The work is re-sited within the context from which it was first examined in isolation at the first iconographic interpretation level. Whilst attainment of the third level is the ultimate target of Panofsky's approach, according to Gérin (2013), the pre-iconographical description and the iconographical analytical stages offer the requisite controls to restrict the remit of the interpretation aimed at discovering the intrinsic meaning. This is especially vital when the viewer tries to analyse a work from an alternative historical era, or a geographically or culturally foreign context.

It should be noted that, from a theoretical perspective, these three stages of interpretation are consecutive. The viewer moves through each in turn. In reality, however, this rarely happens (d'Alleva, 2005). The progression actually varies

depending on who is viewing the image. For instance, the scholar who applies the iconographic/iconological method, would take an integrated approach and engage with all the stages at once (Müller, 2011). This can be viewed as a comprehensive, assimilated interpretation of all the meanings extracted from the artwork. Another issue with the method is the notion of 'innocent eye' (d'Alleva, 2005), which is required for pre-iconographic analysis. As semiotics claims, viewers meet a work of art with their individually shaped knowledge, experience, and values. Thus, it may not be always easy to transition from the second level iconographic analysis to the third level iconological interpretation, as individual gaps in terms of cultural background and knowledge as well as personal pre-conceptions may make the interpretative process more complicated.

In line with the principles of *ut pictura poesis*, which is translated as 'As is painting, so is poetry' (Gérin, 2013, p.162), iconology is designed to interpret images as texts. The aim is to avoid using too many visual aspects of art. It is clear than that Panofsky was always unconcerned with the types of meaning which are conveyed via imagery alone. His interest and passion were always for the interpretations extracted from the external influencers on images (Bohnsack, 2009). This is something which Imdahl (in Bonhnsack, 2009) has discussed in a negative light. He does not agree with 'formal compositions' and 'forms' being afforded such a small amount of interest and therefore constructed a framework which is referred to as 'the iconic.' This is designed to elicit meaning from the formal compositions of an image. While the Panofsky framework continues to be an invaluable resource, it has been challenged by some academics. The most prominent point of contention is that it focuses too much on subject matter (particularly literary references) and does not place enough focus on form (Rampley, 2001).

Imdahl's approach is primarily concerned with the internal relationships and formal composition of visual artefacts (Philipps, 2012). This is because Imdahl believes that images need more than just a recognising gaze (wiederkennendes sehen) with the ability to interpret a visual index and its interconnected rhetorical allusions. Sometimes, an image prompts the viewer to engage in a

new manner and to gain a novel perspective on how we see; Imdahl (in Bohnsack, 2009) refers to this gaze as the seeing gaze (sehendes sehen) (p. 304). The natural end point of the process, according to him, is the formation of a cognising gaze (erkennendes Sehen). Imdahl argues that there is a distinction between the recognising view and the seeing view, because the latter is rooted in more than just the physical objects. It is deeply connected to their interconnections with the broader social and cultural milieu of the artwork. It is this differentiation which forms the foundation of the 'iconic' ('Ikonik' in German), Imdahl's framework for visual interpretation. This method is centred on the importance of formal composition and 'innocent' pre-iconographical interpretations. He actually suggests that these iconic evaluations have the freedom to resist from the attribution of iconographical definitions and iconographical awareness. In other words, they can withdraw and exist separately from textual awareness.

One of the most recent attempts to restructure Panofsky's interpretative framework is provided by Bohnsack (2009), who aimed to create a system for the social sciences. He suggested a method inspired by the Panofsky perspective on iconology, the Imdahl concepts of iconic interpretation, and the documentary method applied by Mannheim (1952). The important thing to know about Mannheim's framework is that it emphasises the importance of the '(conjunctive) space of experience' (Bohnsack, 2009, p. 302). This applies when the creator of the artefact and the people they are depicting (or the landscapes and scenarios) are from the same time period or cultural milieu. Bohnsack's method questions not just what meaning is drawn from social phenomena, but also how images are produced what impact key social and cultural movements are likely to have on the methods chosen for visual interpretation. In his work, he differentiates between the pre- and iconographic level of interpretation and reflexive interpretation (Bohnsack, 2009), as discussed below.

Bohnsack (2009) uses the work of Imdahl (p.309) to split the reflexive stage into three parts. They are planimetric structure, scenic choreography, and perspectival projection. An evaluation of planimetric composition is essential for the value of any broader interpretations, as it makes up the core of the visual

analyses. It is not reliant on existing awareness or knowledge on the part of the researcher. It is actually critical for the researcher to perceive the image as a self-referential object during this process. For Bohnsack, the pre-iconographic stage should involve the definition of depicted items, individuals, colours, and arrangements in the front and back sections of the image. The iconographic stage, on the other hand, would normally incorporate a cognitive envisioning of narratives and activities which could, feasibly, have occurred as part of the scene or environment. Within this framework, however, no case-specific awareness is applied. The theorist utilises only common sense and logical reasoning when making assumptions and interpretations. The third and final stage attempts to disregard all connections to connotative definitions. What is taken from the image should be rooted only in its physical and formal composition.

Amongst the vast corpus of visual techniques which have been proposed within the fields of the social sciences and humanities, strategies can be identified that relate to their respective analytical focus (Rose, 2016). Rose (2016) has described how an initial distinction can be made between the three locations where the meanings of an image are construed: the image production site; the current location of the image itself; and the site(s) where the image is viewed by various audience(s) (Rose, 2016). It is possible to primarily examine the technological, compositional, or social angles of images (Rose, 2016). Furthermore, Rose (2016) suggests that an emphasis on light, colour, spatial arrangement, and composition indicates expressive content or the assimilated impact of subject matter and visual form. In her work, she identifies three key modalities which play a role in the critical interpretation and awareness of images. They are technological (forms and tools which are created to be observed), compositional (formal approaches and constructions such as content, colour, or spatial arrangement), and social (the assortment of political, cultural, economic, and social values which influence an image) (p.16-17). As this relates to the way in which visual artefacts align with contemporary debate on iconic architecture, it is interesting to focus predominantly on the social features of the images under investigation. This thesis aims to unpack the way in which

iconic architecture is captured, shared and perceived by Instagram users; how the Instagram audience makes sense of the images portrayed on Instagram posts; and the way in which alternative standpoints are combined. That is, the visual aspect of iconic architecture, its discursive developments, and narratives with respect to the city from which the iconic building originates will be discussed. It is hoped that this will lead to a deeper understanding of the way in which architectural iconicity is developed for public consumption.

In this undertaking, it is critical to remember that the subject matter of an image can only be examined with reference to the common-sense understanding of the contemporary audience, in addition to the socio-structural, political and cultural contextual influences (Bandtel and Tenscher, 2014). Panofsky's iconology represents one approach which places a particular focus on 'the historically specific intertextuality on which meaning depends' (Rose, 2011, p. 191, 204). Iconological interpretation emphasises the part played by the active audience in the inference of meaning. This approach is not restrained to intrinsic compositional features, and it does not assume hegemonic messages or the use of image to manipulate a particular response. Therefore, a framework amalgamating the theoretical models of cultural studies and the empirical techniques underlying iconology have been found to be most appropriate to the current research question, which aims to reconstruct the contemporary visual debate surrounding iconic architecture.

3.3. Instagram and Tourist Photography

3.3.1. The History and Growth of Tourist Photography

Prior to conducting an exploration of what Instagram contributes to the architectural debate, it is first necessary to try to characterise Instagram by providing a summary of the history of everyday photography from sources within sociology and media studies. Since Instagram also draws investigators from a broad spectrum of alternative disciplines, including for example geography, and computer science, it has been useful to utilise sources from

these fields in the subsequent chapter. In addition, since Instagram can be considered the latest trend relating to everyday photography, Chalfen's (1987) concept of 'Kodak culture', represents a clear early example of discourse surrounding everyday photography. The advancement of photography has been coined the 'Kodak Culture', with the company slogans such as 'We capture your memories forever' becoming highly important. Its focus on the building and celebration of family memories is a fundamental component of this photographic culture. Bourdieu (1996) believed that this largely influenced the communication of familial values and the development of truths related to important familial milestones. The notion that the key objective of taking photographs is to allow memories to be remembered has been at the heart of photography theories for a very long time (Barthes 1981; Sontag 1977). However, it was not until photos began to be shared via networks and digital technology that photography's role in social communication became more significant. As far as Instagram is concerned, this definitely marks a crucial change in the relationship between the terms that were earlier presumed to play a mediating role between the personal, the private and the public. Technically speaking, this allowed for the social conditions of photo identification to be restructured and redeveloped, and this, in turn, generated vast changes in the agency possessed by the user (Cobley and Haeffner 2009). Instagram has turned the art of photography into more of a social ritual, as was previously identified by Bourdieu (1996).

Tourism and photography are inextricably interwoven; indeed, if one travels, it is almost certain that one will be involved in photography or photographing of some form or another (see, Echtner and Ritchie, 1993; Galí and Donaire, 2015; Jenkins, 2003; Lo and McKercher, 2015; Urry, 1990, 2002). Photography can be said to be a defining characteristic of tourists qua tourists, according to Markwell (1997), though it is not exclusive to tourists or tourism. According to Walker and Moulton (1989), Gardner (1990), and Larsen (2005), for generations, many people have decided to take accounts of their experiences on holiday by taking pictures, viewing them later or showing them to others to partake in their memories. In *Origins of Sightseeing*, Adler (1989) posited that the convergence of post-Renaissance travel and science with the recording of

‘things’ and ‘phenomena’ through a shift to objectification is the context for photography. After the 16th century, the discovery of new territories and the fever of secular travel meant that sightseeing was a means through which people who travelled could understand and see such new worlds and phenomena while being sure they would not be overcome by their comprehensiveness and magnitude. Hillman (2007) stated that photography is, in the main, a means by which we can show that an individual has visited a particular destination; according to Chalfen (1979), a photograph evidences the panoply of diverse life forms, which are exotic, authentic or different from the prosaic and the routine. According to Barthes (1981), it is almost illogical that nostalgia can be related (rendered as a sentiment of the ‘no-longer’) by the capturing of an instant and transporting it across a spatial as part of a ‘that has been’. Consequently, the practice of photography is therefore primarily to encapsulate an emotive and reminiscent sentiment of self, other people, time and location.

The hermeneutic circle of representation, which Jenkins’ (2003) ‘circle of representation’ draws on, was devised by Urry (1990); in this, tourists act as ‘producers’ of images that can be seen and consumed by prospective travellers and as ‘consumers’ of images that have been created by other tourists. There is, therefore, a monumental cycle of producing images and reproducing images in the area of tourism and the tourist. Of all the means of demonstrating information via a visual form, the part played by tourists as both the creators of pictures and re-creators of pictures is through the art of photography, specifically, photographs taken on holiday. According to Urry (1990) the tourist as an image producer shares their image on the circle and thereby assimilates original visual elements of the city which are then incorporated into the conventional image, altering, renewing, and expanding it. More succinctly, a warping of destination image may result from photographs that are shared on the circle. Indeed, the tourist photographer is signalled by pre-existing images of destination portrayed in advertisements or through other channels, thus embarking on a question to locate and see the promised vistas to subsequently photograph them and recreate the image for another (Man, 2016). The images

that already exist within a photographer's existing culture are, as shown by Crawshaw and Urry (1997), predominantly responsible for influencing the photographs that will be taken by that tourist photographer. Nevertheless, the tourist gaze is now not shaped to such an extent by the mass media, and its capacity will dissipate as the separation that divides mundane life and tourism becomes less distinct. Rather, tourists believe that—as opposed to searching for an unprecedented or outstanding experience—the tourist gaze is now more concerned with societal connections, thereby indicating that microcosmic influences of societal interactivity are the shapers of tourist photography practice. Today, when there are half a billion photographs being shared each day, the extraordinary is being renegotiated and redefined with increasing rapidity (Garlick, 2002).

Although photographic practice and norms remove the visual stimulants from the places where they were originally envisioned, according to Garlick (2002), the visual stimulants themselves are rearranged into sites of self-representation, which then contribute to the creation of self-identity and memory. There are several reasons why individuals capture their holidays, and the activities therein, through pictures and video; nevertheless, there are two aspects of particular note—in accordance with the findings of extant studies, however, these have repercussions regarding the creation of meaning as part of the production process. Conversely, images are returned to the homestead for later inspection and viewing or else uploaded onto the internet via social networking websites. Such practices corroborate the argument made by Garrod (2009) that images and thus films are also an element of a larger cycle, the hermeneutical cycle; this cycle sees individual tourists produce and then reproduce the destinations they have visited to show other tourists and individuals that they have indeed visited those locations. On the other hand, according to other scholars (see, for example, Haldrup and Larsen, 2003), collating times and places via film and photographs has been the subject of contemporaneous deconstruction, and many tourists return and become part of a narrative as active agents within the context of the process of image creation and production.

As a result of the increased prevalence of social media use, mobile camera technology and other technological trends, the act of sharing photographs online and over the internet is becoming more and more common (Oeldorf-Hirsch and Sundar, 2016). Indeed, as of January, 2017, almost two-thirds of the world's population now has mobile phones (wearesocial, 2017), meaning that many of these people can take a photograph and then immediately share the image with their friends or others over social media websites and apps like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and others. For instance, Instagram, which reached 700 million monthly users as of April 2017, up from 600 million in December 2016 (Business Insider, 2017), has shared over 40 billion photos since the app's creation in 2010 (Omnicore, 2017), and Snapchat's over 350 million monthly active users (Wallaroo media, 2017) create 4.8 billion 'snaps' per day (Business Insider, 2017). These phenomena, namely, the democratisation of image creation and sharing, or circulations, has notable repercussions on how individuals see, experience and recall the world around them (Pocock, 2009; Hunter, 2008). Additionally, such image democratisation has had an impact on tourism as well, as now a significant and crucial part of tourism, such as the creation of the tourist gaze, destination decisions and destination image is hugely influenced by image democratisation (see, example, Schmalleger and Carson, 2008). As a result, more contemporaneous studies and research into tourism have begun to focus on tourist photographic practices. There are several important studies looking into social media and the role of tourist photography starting to emerge in this sphere. One of these is a study of the perceived image of the Catalonian city of Barcelona and its perceived image through an assessment of Flickr photographs by Galí and Donaire (2015). Additionally, a further study by Stepchenkova and Zhan (2013) has compared and contrasted images of Peru as collated from Flickr and from destination-management organisations. An assessment and exploration of tourist photographs by Stylianou-Lambert (2012) was undertaken, using data collected from both Picasa and Flickr regarding tourist visits to Cyrus' Rock of Aphrodite. A study of Arabian Muslim photographs concerning travel has also been conducted by Pengiran-Kahar et al. (2010).

Mitchell, in his work *The Reconfigured Eye: Visual Truth in the Post-Photographic Era* (Mitchell, 1994), identifies the beginning of the 'post-photographic' era as the initial years of the 1990s. He makes the argument that this is because the eary-1990s was the time when digital images overtook emulsion-based photographs in terms of prevalence. Furthermore, 'a worldwide network of digital imaging systems is swiftly, silently constituting itself as the decentred subject's reconfigured eye', concludes Mitchell (1994, p. 85). Photography has, traditionally speaking, been spoken of in terms of memory, history, loss and absence (Murray, 2008). Other scholars (see, for example, Barthes, 1981) have made similar arguments that photographic practice and meaning has been restricted to the means to store and keep instants in time. The connection between photography and its societal role and importance, and history and memory is essential.

However, photography has changed, and with the increased role and prevalence of digital technologies, it has become a means to support memories of personal and public events, from daily routines, which Peterson (2009) terms 'common banality' (Peterson, 2009) to 'vernacular creativity' (Burgess, 2007). Here, it can be argued that every new or original form of technology - from digital cameras, and camera-phones to visual social media platforms - have shifted people further from photographing and retaining photographs for personal reasons towards sharing them more publicly; indeed, photo-making has now transformed into a process of photo-sharing (Oeldorf-Hirsch and Sundar, 2016). According to Chalfen (1987), as photographic practice made the transition to digitised formats, people who took photographs were nevertheless motivated to take them for the same reasons and motives in the past; the construction of personal and group memories, the retaining and maintaining of societal relationships, and self-expression (Van House et al., 2004). Gye (2007) highlights the fact that the mobile phone grants particular allowances which change former photo-sharing processes and functions, permitting new practices. Furthermore, a culture less concerned with the sharing of particular photographs to a viewership as an art form has resulted due to continued advancements in technology; rather, according to Muller and Edwards (2007),

contemporary photography has become more of a means to log one's life through a constant realm of images shared within and among a community.

3.3.2. Instagram and iPhoneography

Imagining travel experiences is undergoing a peak in popularity because of the ever-present role of smartphones and social media platforms in showcasing individual trips. According to Magasic (2016), non-professionals photographing their trips has become one of the more pre-eminent ways that digital technology has elevated certain storytelling aspects of travel, which also boosts the imaginative travel experience for a whole host of online users following travel blogs (or even their friends) on social media. For example, one survey conducted by Schofields Insurance indicated that over two-fifths of millennials travel to locations that would be considered 'Instagrammable' in order to take vacation photographs (Hosie, 2017). Network perception has become a key factor in travel experiences, as over forty percent of survey participants reported that the reactions friends and family will have when viewing their Instagram posts about their vacation was a critical instigator for the travel destination choice.

Visuals have become the most sought-after features of social media platforms over the past few years; the Facebook-owned social media Instagram, for example, has seen one of the quickest user growth rates compared to all other major platforms (Gretzel, 2016). Visual communication and language are becoming a kind of *lingua franca* for young users on platforms. Instagram, which is primarily a photograph/video-based platform that allows a caption and comments as the only written section for each post, places limitations on content type much in the same way that Twitter does with its (newly expanded) 240 characters. Like Twitter, it only allows a maximum of 2200 characters (counting thirty hashtags) with a cropped, square-cut image for posting. These unique features have interesting effects in creating context and content through a medium that does not allow total freedom in expression.

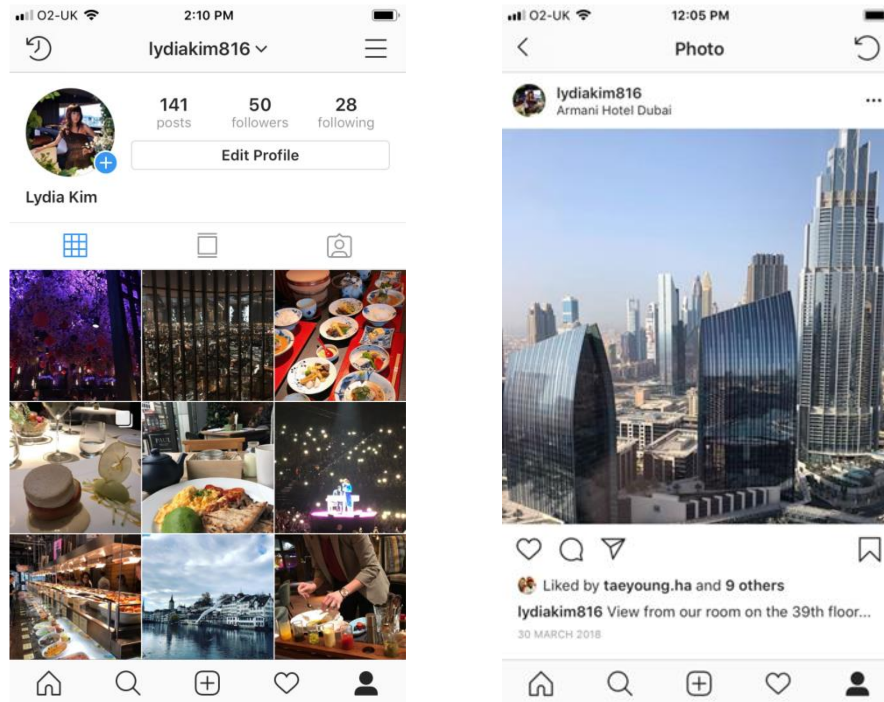

Figure 3.1. Instagram screenshot from @lydiakim816 (Author, 2019)

Instagram posts are organised from newest to oldest on both user profiles and in a list on the ‘feed,’ set either to private (only seen by user and their approved ‘followers’) or public (all users can see the post on the web) (see Table 3.1). Each social media platform has a few features in common, such as a user not being required to follow those that follow their accounts, that profiles can be created and customised, that privacy settings can be manipulated by the account holder, and that the platform can find and suggest that you add other users you may know (Zappavigna, 2016) (see, Table 3.2). Referred to as ‘friends’ on some websites like Facebook and ‘followers’ by those like Twitter, these connected users form the major apparatus through which users interact with social peers on these social media services. All social media platforms also have several traits in common, such as the ability to find content through searches, the ability to archive content, to reproduce content, and to scale content for certain kinds of desired audiences (Boyd, 2010). Instagram content

(visual content) can perhaps best encapsulate the notion of 'spreadable media,' as users take and share images from other accounts with their own audiences for their own reasons as part of a broader, cooperative paradigm of digital conversation (Jenkins et al., 2013).

Table 3.2. Comparison of social media

	Instagram	**Facebook**	**Twitter**	**Pinterest**	**Snapchat**
Focus/ purposes	Dominantly mobile app for sharing pictures and videos	Largest social network; a wide range of service including groups, events, games, and personal messaging	Micro blogging social site that post messages known as 'tweets'	Scrapbooking; discovery and curation of other users' content	Mobile app for sending pictures and videos that disappear after being viewed
Uploading content	Photos Videos	Photos Videos Content (only in groups) Customised content	Photos Videos	Photos Videos	Photos Videos
Launch year	2010	2004	2006	2010	2011
Monthly active users (as of July 2018)	1,000 millions	2,196 millions	336 millions	200 millions	255 millions
Demogra-phic focus (as of January 2017)	59% 18-29 years old; 68% female	65% over 35 years old; 60% female	37% 18-29 years old	79% female	71% under 25 years old; 70% female

Instagram's infrastructure has allowed users the ability to move beyond posting pictures from smartphones, and it has extended to allowing users to record and post brief videos, both of which can be manipulated within the app (Gretzel, 2017). Instagram's internal culture also has a self-oriented tendencies, due to the promotion of 'selfies,' the fact that pictures cannot be broken into albums, and because of the fact that, until very recently, it did not allow users to tag other users in photographs and films. Filters are an essential feature of Instagram's platform and allow amateurs the opportunity to freely alter their media with tools similar to those of professionals; as such, the posts generated by Instagram users are occasionally comparable in quality to professional renditions, and are usually of a far higher quality than other social media platforms.

As of September 2017, Statista reported that Instagram had reached 800 million monthly active users. The demographic targeting of each social media platform is different to its competitors', and Instagram is most popular with younger age groups; Smith (2016) recorded that thirty-two percent of American teenagers list Instagram as their go-to platform, and the vast majority (ninety percent) of users are under the age of 35. Sixty percent of total users are daily users, and 3.5 billion 'likes' are submitted to posts each day, which marks it as having amongst the highest engagement rates across social media platforms (Smith, 2016). Encapsulating this is the fact that over forty billion photos in total have been shared up to 2017, according to Lister (2017), and approximately 95 million videos and photos are posted daily by users.

This implicates that travel experiences are not merely being changed by pervasive technologies and social media platforms – the very norms and practices of travelling are being altered at the level of tourist behaviours, and the notion of contemporary tourism itself is undergoing sweeping changes (Molz and Paris, 2015; Miller, 2013). As Molz and Paris (2015) note, 'as new technologies reconfigure the spatial and temporal parameters of social life, we

can no longer say that being together is the opposite of being apart, or that being away necessarily means that one is absent' (p.180).

The creation of a digital image on a smartphone device goes through a process different from that of computer-based and professional manual practices (Alshawaf, 2016). The process of taking photographs, editing them and then sharing the created product is all achieved on a smart phone. At the same time, as Keep (2014a) notes, the camera phone had a significant role to play in the reconfiguration of human-photography relationships in the last ten years (referring to 2004–2014). Furthermore, camera phones have nurtured the re-interpreting and remediation of the tropes related to traditional photography and cinema. Keep and Berry (cited in Keep 2014b, p.130) state:

> The advent of the mobile camera phone has transformed image capture from a consciously planned activity to one that can occur spontaneously. Capturing a moment in time is not just the creation of a visual artefact to aid the remembrance of past events, but also a means of enabling individuals to locate themselves in the present.

According to Keep (2014b), mobile technology over the decade from 2004 resulted in the expansion of the definition of a mobile phone toward the formulation of the new term 'liquid aesthetic' and the creation thereof, an aesthetic in which perennial progression and development in both communicative and mobile phone technologies are ever-moving and continually determining then re-determining the camera phone's creative and technical limits. As a conclusion, this process is said to have supplanted the Kodak movement by the mobile-moment. The increased popularity of smartphones and of the iPhone especially has meant that a single tool is able to deliver digital images, images which subsequently become an element of visual social media (Gómez Cruz and Meyer, 2012; Gye, 2007; Keep, 2014b). Roberts (2011), in her book *The Art of iPhoneography*, has defined iPhoneography as 'the process of taking and then processing (including enhancement and editing processes) of

digital images with the use of an iPhone' (P.11). As suggested by this newly coined word, iPhoneography, mobile phone cameras are portable and ready-to-hand always, and are also able to edit and process both video and images while being connected to the internet (see, for example, Favero, 2014;; Gye, 2007; Halpern & Humphreys, 2016). Indeed, it can be said that the rapid growth of current visual communication is very much due to mobile phone devices. In a similar vein, Larsen and Sandbye (2013) in their book *Digital Snaps: The New Face of Photography* corroborated the statements made by other researchers, including Keep (2014a; 2014b), Garde-Hansen (2014) and Kalin (2013), in stating that personal photo albums, which used to be private, have now evolved, thanks to mobile phone devices, into a means by which the public can see or grab a snapshot of the lives of people.

There are a variety of visual social media platforms. For instance, platforms such as Flickr, which was initially created as a platform for sharing professional images, and YouTube, which enables users to edit their videos and enhance them,offer no image specificity or immediacy. Other platform such as Hipstamatic, Phhhhoto, Instagram and Snapchat are those that have seen a notable upsurge in popularity over the last half decade; these platforms are the most valuable means of assessing present well-known and used digital marketing and visual communicative means and tools, in particular, iPhoneography (Alshawaf, 2016).

Instagram's fame and popularity is augmented by its capacity to boost particular societal experiences and retain stable and sound aesthetical aspects. Instagram, as well as introducing its idiosyncratic squared images format, also incorporated an aspect that could recreate and convey a 'nostalgic and retro' look through its filters. By permitting the manipulation of photographs, and textual and graphical overlays, there have been several applications that have complemented the functions of Instagram. Several images that share a hashtag may also be seen beside one another as a group. As a result, Instagram has now become an abundant source of information (Kelly, 2014). On Facebook—though more so on Instagram—the primary mechanism concerns image interaction, through posting images and viewing the images of others (Brown et

al. 2016). More than anything else however, users are allowed and encouraged to comment on images and 'like' them as well as to insert hashtags which can add a topical category to the images and link them to other users in comments. With the use of comments, furthermore, Instagram also permits discussions—using various mechanisms—with the individual that made the image as well as their wider societal circles.

In many ways, it can be said that Instagram was the foremost app to distinguish itself by reflecting a particular and well-defined visual aesthetic (Alshawaf, 2016). It can allow users to make all their images into squares through cropping, creating an aesthetic of uniformity and consistency in the app while also providing several features which can simulate the quality or characteristics of older pictures taken by older cameras, such as Polaroid cameras. Several translations and new interpretations of a single image can be made through the use of different digital filters (Keep, 2014a). For example, one can utilise a sepia filter or a black-and-white filter on an image and dust, scratches or other aesthetic changes so that the picture can evoke feelings of age. In addition, the emulation of traditional and heritage media practices can be placed over the image and thereby create a temporal shift. Furthermore, many photographic filers may be utilised that can make a digital image appear as if it has been taken by an analogue device. As a result, a feeling of defamiliarisation concerning the experience of ordinary objects can be created and simultaneously, by altering the original colour pallet of the image itself, the psychological gulf between the viewer and the image can be increased (Peng, 2017).

3.3.3. Tourist Photography, Social Media and the Tourist Gaze

'The gaze' has long been a central figure of theoretical analysis for how and why humans fixate upon certain qualities as opposed to alternatives, as discussed by the philosophers Foucault, Sartre, and Lacan (Magasic, 2016). Foucault's (2012) theory of the gaze inspired Urry's theory of the 'tourist gaze,' which has become the bedrock for understanding the social and historical

conceptualisation of tourism, including factors such as mutual habits, engagements, and social stratums evident in how tourists act in the modern age (Molz, 2012). The tourism industry revolves around directing attention to objects or others and alternatively having that attention cast back onto tourists themselves, but Urry elevates this analysis further by incorporating a comprehensive social paradigm encapsulating how places and the people in them construct and conduct themselves under the 'tourist gaze.'

With the creeping centralism of technological achievement, the concept of the tourist gaze has become seeped in technology as formed and informed by Claude glasses, the camera obscura, and digital photography, amongst many others. Communication and visualisation technologies have begun to coincide and mutually reinforce each other, and the tourist gaze has taken on new social and mobile parameters. Travellers are able to keep in touch with their social circles at home and on the road and report (and control) the narratives of their journeys in virtual ways. Since 1840, when Thomas Cook conceived 'packaged tours' and Louis Daguerre and Fox Talbot invented the camera, photography and tourism became inexorably bound, according to Urry (2002). More precisely, the experience of modern tourism could not be complete or comprehensively expressed without photography after 1840 (Urry, 2002). This phenomenon increased the number of people who were aware of travel destinations through postcards and advertising, which enticed them with images of faraway places – this practice has been enormously increased and elaborated upon by personal devices like smartphones, which are able to record and share visual experiences immediately. It has fundamentally transformed the connections between the gaze, the construction and consumption of a place, devices, personal narratives, and social relationships as a whole.

Larsen (2006, 2008) notes that studies on tourism photography have previously centred on the importance and intricacies of representation through the visual items that tourists and the tourism industry have provided, such as postcards, photos, brochures, and other forms of print media. However, Larsen (2006) and Crang (1999) have introduced further innovations to the study of tourism behaviours, habits, and the presentation of travel as informed by photography.

As Gretzel et al., (2010) argue, the nature of a online world is that it provides high connectivity for the travel blogger and potential interaction and engagement on the global internet consumer base, even if they have little professional experience in being a blogger or photographer. With regard to the theory of the gaze, this indicates a shift of two trends. First, it means that tourists have moved beyond playing a passive role of visual consumer and have begun to use these destination sites as a way to construct and share their own ideas of meaning to online platforms (Kang and Gretzel, 2012; Pera, 2017). In using Foucault's theory of the panopticon (1975), this means, secondly, that the knowledge that tourists accumulate about the nearly unlimited visibility that they can gain via an online audience alters their behaviour while journeying. Tourism and photography have become simultaneous behaviours, but Jansson (2002) also notes that the tourist gaze has become increasingly defined by the viewing and usage of images and photographs as well, although he argues that tourism is still fundamentally operated by the tourism industry. However, the ability to upload images to social media has given tourists a medium to be able to relay and share their own beliefs about the purpose of their own tourist encounters, and either challenge or reinforce the narratives propagated by the tourist gaze.

Jansson (2002) argues that in the future, emotional metrics experienced in response to audience attention, feedback, and participation may increasingly become a motivation for people picking where and when to travel. This may be particularly so since audience reactions are more easily measured and analysed through social media than in the physical realm. Tourist experiences and destinations are being transformed in terms of their use because of the changing role that the virtual world plays in how enterprises, dwellers, and tourists project their travel narratives (Pan et al., 2011). Jansson (2007) further states that the pervasive social media presence also allows people to travel to places in a non-physical sense by experiencing the sights both emotionally and mentally, and that this is perhaps shortening the distance between actually going places and simply 'imaging' what this destination is like. However, people who blog or photograph about the place that they are travelling to tend to show a positive narrative bias within the tourist gaze, intending to influence others'

choices about where to travel without necessarily sharing the total truth of the experience (Tasci, 2009).

3.4. Conclusion

By extensively covering a range of topics from diverse fields, including visual sociology, tourism, and communications studies, this chapter has sought to provide a comprehensive overview of the available literature that will serve as the theoretical foundations for the research design and data analysis methods to be utilised in the following chapters 4 and 5. Seemingly fragmented topics have one thing in common; they are all under the direct and indirect influence of visual culture, which the analytic approach in this research will set forth as a premise. In particular, since current photographic representation on social media has, more or less, its roots in tourist photography, it is essential to review current trends and theories on Instagram in general and its photo-taking practice in relation to tourist photography. Given societal, cultural, and technological changes driven by visual culture, Panofsky's method, which is a lesser known approach in social science, seems to be a suitable choice for addressing the issues raised in this research.

As well as exploring the aesthetic and formal aspects of objects, art historians have created complex tools for interpreting art, starting as far back as the Nineteenth Century as a history of styles (Gérin, 2013). Panofsky conducted research into iconology during the 1930s, and this work built upon early formal and stylistic perspectives and is now broadly recognised and accepted as a solid foundation for developing interpretative concepts and methodologies. The key purpose of iconology is to explore motifs and their associations as a means of interpreting artworks, and to place them within the wider networks of images and concepts.

Panofsky's methodological approach to attain a better comprehension of Renaissance artworks involves three formal and empirically regulated phases of analysis which individually progress from part to entirety and then back again: firstly, constituents of images and formal aspects are identified iconically and

pre-iconographically; secondly, an iconographic interpretation seeks to identify the manifest meaning underlying the image and the intention of its creator; lastly, an iconological interpretation involves material characteristics, the production context and an understanding of the historical conditions in order to deconstruct covert meanings and unspoken features (Panofsky, 1955, 1972; Rose, 2016).

However, the progression through Panofsky's tripartite approach outlined above, resembles the swing through the hermeneutic circle, changing the focus from specific to general and then back to specific again with renewed interest and improved comprehension. The circular flow of the methodological circle, *interpretation-circulous-methodicus*, as Panofsky termed it, leads the viewer to re-experience the fabric of meaning in which the subject of the examination was once entrenched. With the context elucidated, the viewer is historically armed to return to the work reinvigorated and to comprehend it in some ways perhaps better than its original creator did, since the network of relationships - social, cultural, political, theological, and so on - which formulate its conditions of existence have been subject to an analytical and sympathetic viewer. To comprehend the text from within, it must be re-experienced or, in Panofsky's terms, the 'unifying principle which underlies' the production of the 'visible event' must be understood.

Through the pre-iconographical descriptions and iconographical explorations, it is also possible to gain additional insight into how representations offer specific responses to the work, in addition to extra understandings of formal or contextual subtleties that can impact the intrinsic meaning embedded in the work and which can generate a more casual glance (Gérin, 2013). These concerns were very much understood by Panofsky and thus he was insistent that the description and analysis of the iconography relevant to a piece of work was crucial in determining its success.

The field of marketing along with other disciplines demonstrate the need for more visual research in tourism studies that use more theory-driven methods (Park and Kim, 2018). For instance, art and media theories allow for a more compositional interpretation of images in the aesthetical domain to be achieved,

as well as aesthetic quality (Bell & Davison, 2013). There is also a connection here in tourism research to emotions and psychology. When interpreting tourism photography, semiotics and rhetoric are also important to consider, especially since the visual image is highly polysemic in nature. Many tourist research studies that take semiotics into account have been published, however it remains a rare topic for visual researchers. With a foundation in the study of signs, semiotic knowledge in the tourism context could be subject to further theoretical development, particularly in relation to media tourism, visual marketing, branding, and so on. In conclusion, this research suggests that the methodological diversity of visual research should be re-examined, and the research scope should be widened in accordance with eclectic methodology choices that far exceed the traditional norms.

Although visuality and visual culture play a significant role within tourism studies, critical gaps remain in the manner in which visual research methodologies in tourism studies have been performed.These research contexts include many aspects, the first of which is the primary role of visual representation in the development of destination images and the second of which refers to the meaning that lies behind tourist photographs. In recent times, studies into tourism photography have found a development in theoretical techniques, even though these techniques appear to have limited scope. They also found that a variety of visual research methodologies (for instance, psychoanalysis, discourse analysis, visual ethnography, semiotics, and so on) are being used in qualitative research methodologies to assess visual representations and the relevant meanings of visual content that is often used. Using this approach, many researchers have conducted tourist experience studies that have limited scope and relevance for destination representation.

By recognising that such deficiencies exist, the research can use this as a starting point, since the research is based on the assertion that visual research in the field of tourism studies is largely under-developed and focuses primarily on using interpretation methodologies. This issue is connected to the selection and use of visual images as research data in a seemingly unified interpretation method of semantic content analysis (interpreting objects, individuals, settings

and activities depicted in images). This is largely acknowledged throughout empirical research in the field, which tends to prefers to use analysis tools that are data-driven (Bell & Davison, 2013). Often, this strategy overlooks the other visual aspects of images, including light, colour, texture, composition and perspective, which are created both aesthetically and scientifically. Such aspects often portray less common tourism-related phenomena when considered as part of an interdisciplinary approach.

4. Research Design and Methods

4.1. Introduction

It is hard to mathematically quantify the phenomena under investigation in the present research (for example, the meanings of images generated by users on social media); this calls for a variety of approaches than can explore the various manners in which reality can be built in certain contexts, such as through pictures, language, images and cultural artefacts. The sole dependence on qualitative research tools can be too restricting, since there are many aspects of visual data that must be counted and quantified. In the present thesis, pluralistic research designs will therefore be used. Such designs do not allow for a rigid separation of quantitative and qualitative methods. This research uses methodological pluralism as a fundamental basis, and uses methods ranging such as content analysis and Panofsky's iconographic-iconological method, which is a term that is interchangeably used with iconography or iconography/iconology. Nonetheless, the term iconographic-iconological method was chosen in the present research, since there are evident differences between the meaning of the terms iconography and iconology. I feel that using the term iconographic-iconological is more fitting, since it covers both notions more accurately.

To start this chapter, the overall research design is presented, which is to explore the method for collecting data from Instagram. The following section will provide a brief outline of two case studies, namely the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (GMB) and the Dongdaemun Design Plaza (DDP). An explanation as to why these particular cases were chosen for investigation will also be given. After this, the chapter will proceed to outline the ethical considerations that were applied in the present research and how these were managed. At present, no solid foundation for ethical regulations or guidelines for managing ethical issues exist within the field of social media research. Since the research focuses on

images found on the internet, issues pertaining to anonymity and informed consent inevitably exist, and the measures put in place to address these issues are outlined. Subsequently, the fourth sub-chapter focused on outlining the data collection process. An in-depth discussion explaining the three key components in the data collection process was given: 1) the extraction of Instagram data; 2) the reviewing and cleaning of the collected data; and 3) the coding of the data. The last section will discuss the data analysis method. In this case, multi-level data analysis using visual content analysis and Panofsky's iconographic-iconological method. This distinct collaboration of both content analysis and Panofsky's method incorporates the benefits of quantitatively managing the important contents and composition of the visual data, which is achieved via manual coding of individual photographs taken from Instagram. It also recognises the importance of selecting appropriate samples from the data for deep qualitative reading. This is accomplished through the implementation of Panofsky's three-level method.

4.2. Research Design

This research will examine user-generated photographs of iconic buildings uploaded to a popular visual social media platform Instagram, to explore how images of iconic buildings are framed and represented via user-generated photographs and accompanying textual descriptions. The media landscape has undergone an enormous transformation since the advent of digital media, to the extent that traditional media channels have given way to new media sources (O'Neill, 2013). The discourses arising from the media represent an important part of the process by which people construct meaning (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989). Indeed, audiences no longer act as passive receptors. This research reports the empirical findings from a multi-level investigation of social media photographs, exploring: 1) how iconic buildings are represented on social media; 2) what the essential elements and/or attributes that convey the iconicity of buildings in social media entries are; and 3) how the social imagery of iconic architecture feeds back into people's perception of a city. These objectives were

addressed through a multi-level examination of subject photographs, combining visual content analysis and Panofsky's iconocgraphic-iconological method.

My research method is based on both visual and textual data collection. Associated text data linked to an Instagram image, for example a caption or comments, is extracted. Among Instagram data extraction tools, thus, the chosen tool is Iconosquare, which is a French-born third-party tool that allows Instagram content to be searched for and viewed online using Instagram API, without logging into Instagram (Laestadius et al., 2016). Iconosquare permits posts to be easily screen-captured for qualitative analysis and eliminates the risk of including private posts linked to a personal Instagram account.

Instagram posts related to a specific topic can be searched for using hashtags: users upload posts to Instagram with certain hashtags, which means posts cannot be searched for using terms that are not hashtags. Hashtags create a link to all other uploaded images that have used the same hashtags (Cavazos-Rehg et al., 2016). An initial search was conducted in the Instagram application in order to garner the most frequently used tags on Instagram for each case. Many Instagram posts tend to include more than one related hashtag. To avoid collecting duplicate posts, I chose one hashtag for each case, a hashtag which is solely related to a case museum and has the most posts among related hashtags. Even though more posts are tagged with #guggenheim and #guggenheimmuseum than #guggenheimbilbao, for instance, the chosen hashtag is #guggenheimbilbao. This is because the former two hashtags include images from Guggenheim Museum New York as well, making it possibly difficult to separate images from the Bilbao branch from images from the New York one.

The Instagram posts selected for use in this research are publicly accessible using the Instagram public API. This enables users to see Instagram data. Nonetheless, it does not enable the user to choose a specific time frame to gather data from, but instead gathers a certain amount of recent posts that possess each hashtag. Therefore, Iconosqaure was used to assemble Instagram posts tagged with #guggenheimbilbao and

#dongdaemundesignplaza over a period of 2 weeks from 1 November to 14 November 2016. Data collected for each hashtag provided additional information, such as the URL of the Instagram post, the caption, the username, the location, the date that a post was uploaded, and the post's hashtags. Given my research aims and objectives, I will not consider collecting metadata for each post except for images and textual components, such as hashtags, captions and comments.

An initial image set was reviewed in order to identify a categorisation scheme and create an initial codebook, which consists of a code and description of the criteria for what should be coded to a coding category. After this, a small number of sample (n=30) waspilot coded. Coding categories to be used in this study are based on inductive coding. A manual categorisation of the images was conducted. Developing the relevant image content categories is a challenging task as image involves more complex features than text (Hu et al., 2014). The category scheme in my research is aimed at incorporating the many ways in which architectural iconicity is defined, perceived and interpreted.

4.3. Case Studies

4.3.1. Selection of Cases

Over the past 20 years an unprecedented cultural obsession with iconic buildings and the image proliferation of architectural iconicity, replete with outstanding creativity and originality has been witnessed (Al-Kodmany and Ali, 2013). As stated before, architecture has played an enormous role in the branding of cities, initially with cultural institutions such as museums, which have become the preferred platform for the expression of iconic architecture used to boost cities' images of modernisation, economic prosperity, and the civic pride (Klingmann, 2007). This trend towards creating more iconic architecture grew enormously with the success of Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao in 1996. Other cities in Europe, the US, and worldwide, soon followed suit to put themselves on the global map (Moix, 2012). The Bilbao paradigm (Nijman, 2000) was also disseminated to cities that already had their

own architectural icons and were even envied for this (Moix, 2012). Despite rich research into iconic architecture, mostly with reference to global political-economic trends like neo-liberalism and urban entrepreneurialism (Patterson, 2012), the question of how contemporary 'iconicity' in architecture is defined is yet to be proved. The idea of how 'iconicity' is defined, expressed, and transmitted to and perceived by the public may change over time and in relation to different locations, which informs a starting point in my research.

Reid (1996) argues that the utilisation of case studies is the primary method through which to study systems and processes, regardless of field or topic, because case studies comprise specific qualitative data accumulation and analysis types. Case studies provide researchers with the critical ability to look at small aspects of information as parts of a whole conceptual picture, especially how these aspects connect with one another (Gummesson, 2000). Case studies must be selected specifically to get at the heart of the meaning in a research project, in order to elucidate something deeper about the subject, location, or theory of the phenomenon studied (Patton and Appelbaum, 2003).

In the context of relevance as well as the available resources for this research, the selected cases are the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (GMB) and the Dongdaemun Design Plaza and Park (DDP), Seoul. Envisioned by the Canadian-American architect Frank Gehry, the Guggenheim Museum has fundamentally altered the socio-economic landscape of Bilbao, a small, Basque Spanish port since it was opened in 1997 – a phenomenon labelled the 'Bilbao effect' because of the depth of its impact on the city. It has been widely hailed as the modern masterpiece of 20th century design, attracting vast viewership turnouts and visitors yearly (Cook, 2017). By contrast, the recently opened DDP in Seoul - the capital city of South Korea with a population of 10 million - was designed by the late British architect Zaha Hadid, who is described as the 'uncrowned queen of contemporary iconic architecture', and 'one of the most sought after and in-demand architects of the 21st century' (Aref, 2011, p.267). With over 950 projects that span the globe from the Far East to the US, from the Gulf to Europe, her name has become a trusted brand that is easily recognized and revered in the male-dominated starchitect stratosphere (Decoist, 2013).

While unprecedented in Seoul, this building fits into a current international trend of iconic architectural development.

When cities are experiencing a downturn in economics, planners will look for a 'silver bullet' to improve the situation. This could involve developing opportunities for new industries or companies to move in to the area, building sports facilities, playing host to a large cultural event or investing in iconic buildings or attractions (Carter, 2016, p.236). A well-known illustration of this is the 'Bilbao Effect' created by the triumphant use of the GMB in the city as a silver bullet. Moore (2017, para.2) stresses that GMB is, without doubt, 'the father of "iconic"architecture, the prolific progenitor of countless odd-shaped buildings the world over'. Since the debut of the GMB, a list of international architects have built iconic buildings that have been subject to publicity and controversy alike (Jencks, 2005). The current starchitecture trend is in line with the Bilbao Effect, a phenomenon which began at Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. Hong (2012) points out that this tendency is also evident in Seoul, with the creation of the DDP by Zaha Hadid, one of many aspiring Bilbaos. Not all cities were as successful as Bilbao, however and the capital of South Korea, Seoul is an example of where a silver bullet did not create quite such an economic turnaround. Seoul suffers from being in a difficult geographic location that is not on the radar as a destination or stopover route for the average traveller. A project commenced to replace the existing sports stadium and flea market with a building designed to illustrate Seoul's ambitions to be a world hub for design and fashion whilst embodying the push to rebrand and regenerate the city (Hwang, 2014). The stunning and unusual DDP was designed and developed by Zaha Hadid who died in 2016, just three years after her project was completed. It was hoped that it would be as iconic a landmark as the GMB (Seoul Design Foundation, 2011). In this research, I intended to identify and select a new iconic building in Asia, where I am from, and explore its development, focusing particularly on any indications of intended iconicity and iconic outcome. I thus chose the DDP in Seoul, which is a recent and less well-known iconic building, as well as the truly iconic GMB.

4.3.2. The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (GMB)

Figure 4.1. Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (Author, 2016)

Unsurprisingly, the Bilbao Guggenheim Museum (GMB) has often been equally compared to the original New York City Guggenheim Museum, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright (Cook, 2017). It cost €84 million to build the infrastructure, in addition to €36 million to fill the museum with novel artwork within the 11,000 m^2 of exhibition room in the 24,000 m^2 -size building. Many visitors have described its form as reminiscent of a sculpture, with metallic detailing and glass curtain walls illuminating the middle atrium of the museum. Aesthetically, no expense was spared on the interior of the building, as titanium lines nine of the nineteen total gallery rooms, and limestone clads the walls and ceilings of the remaining ten. The 45m ceiling of the atrium is shaped as a metallic bloom, centring around an expansive skylight, illuminating the art housed within. The three floors of the building flow outwards from the atrium through metallic and glass elevators, stone stairways, and sloping footpaths.

The zone upon which the Guggenheim was constructed in Bilbao was a fading shipbuilding and steel-girded industrial area in the 1980s, right next to the water. Many industrial cities in Europe at this time were beginning to lose their profitability, and Bilbao became a central fixture of mid-1990s investments to reinvent the identity of their post-industrial urban centres. In an effort to bolster the health of Bilbao, the local government promoted a new image as a high-tech nexus, in which an artistic marvel became the heart of the city instead of a new manufacturing plant. The extent of Bilbao's success in recreating itself both as an art centre and a tourist destination, focused on the Guggenheim, has made it a key case study in urban studies for how investment and vision can fundamentally alter a city's course (Heathcote, 2017). Plaza et al. (2015) argue that the GMB has placed Bilbao, which is an otherwise non-cosmopolitan locale, into the same category as art hubs such as Paris, and within the first year, the GMB attracted over a million tourists–a number which has remained stable since 1997. The return on the 100 million dollar building cost was made within five years, with the total investment amount covered in a decade; the musem has become a central part of the Basque public fund of the city (with $33.5 million made by 2006), according to Areso (2007) and Plaza et al., 2013). The success of this investment strategy, which features art museums and the tourism industry that sustains them, has been a model for other cities in industrial decline, who are attempting the restructure their city of utility into one of art and design..

4.3.3. Dongdaemeun Design Plaza Seoul (DDP)

Figure 4.2. Dongdaemun Design Plaza, Seoul (Author, 2019)

The £280 million DDP is a large urban redevelopment project which was opened to the public on March 21, 2014 and constructed on the former site of the Dongdaemun Stadium. This stadium was originally built in 1925 during Japanese colonial rule and stood at the centre of Seoul for 82 years, enduring the Korean War and witnessing South Korea's transformation from a dictatorship to a youthful democracy (Seoul Design Foundation, 2011). In Eastern Seoul, the Dongdaemun quarter has had the reputation, since the Dongdaemun Stadium was built, as Seoul's athletic centre, as well as being the location of the ancient Great East Gate and the citadel of the Chosun Dynasty Old Seoul City. The diverse foundations of its historical heritage have long been a draw for visitors, especially since it was further transformed into a wealthy high-fashion quarter in the 1960s. Up until 1983, the Dongdaemun quarter also

functioned as the symbolic national sport centre which held all national sporting events for the whole of South Korea.

Consisting of a design museum, art galleries and exhibition spaces, retail stores, a convention auditorium and a park, covering a total building area of 38,000 ㎡, the DDP defines itself as a multi-cultural complex. This building is the world's biggest asymmetrical, freeform construction with free-flowing curves, constructed from 45,133 aluminium cladding panels (Lee, 2014). Its innovative architecture is unique, constructed to conform with the futuristic vision of its creator, Zaha Hadid. Its metallic exoskeleton is illuminated at night, and entering the building is frequently compared to descending into the bowels of a spaceship or entering the jaws of a serpent (Artpremium, 2016). Many people have commented that it resembles an alien rocket which has landed in the heart of the capital, and these views have earned it a reputation as one of Korea's predominant landmarks and sent it soaring to the top of Instagram's most-tagged Korean destinations in 2015 (Visitseoul, 2015).

As a significant element of the regeneration plans for the Dongdaemun district, the project originated from 'Design Seoul' initiatives led by the then-mayor Oh, to reconstruct the original key heritage site of the city by constructing monuments and landmarks, in the same manner as his predecessor, Lee, who had achieved recognition for the Cheonggeycheon stream in the downtown centre which had been converted into a popular park area (Park, 2015). However, as with many other cities, this project also attracted criticism from locals who insisted that the city's preference for a starchitect of international calibre, as well as the mayor's political ambition and desire for a prominent legacy symbol was not in accordance with their best interests (Lee, 2013). Seoul represents a key case in point of the way in which the state and its quangos can achieve high architectural accomplishments from well-formulated design policies (Artpremium, 2016). In 2003, the Korean government described a five-year plan (concluding in 2007) to firmly establish South Korea as the architectural capital of East Asia, with a robust design-focused national framework set to launch it into the New Millennium. From the start, the Seoul

local government accepted that the rebranding of the city was a key to drawing new attention and new visitors. This challenge was enormously successful, with the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design acknowledging Seoul's potential in 2007 and instigating a huge domestic programme - 'Design Seoul' - which formulated a package of novel architectural transformations throughout the city. The culmination of this success came in 2010, with Seoul being recognised as the World Design Capital.

4.4. Ethical Considerations

This research utilises a visual research methodology which makes use of Instagram photographs found online. Such new visual research methods permit novel avenues for personal expressions but should have a conscientious concern for risks which may be exacerbated by the revealing and potentially explicit nature of the photographs identified. However, concern for specific ethical dilemmas and challenges related to the burgeoning potential of visual methodologies (see Clark 2012; Gubrium and Harper 2013; Rose, 2016) have only been highlighted relatively recently. There is a general consensus that a number of ethical issues faced by visual investigators are shared with all social research investigators. Bryman (2016), for example, identifies four overarching ethical concerns which should be given consideration when conducting any social research: harm to participants; absence of informed consent; invasion of privacy; and deception. However, another concern potentially impacting both participant and investigator is the issue of anonymity. Anonymity in visual research studies is challenging to protect, particularly on publication of results. Such publication can be particularly deleterious if the images were obtained online with no reference to the image producer(s) (Banks, 2018). However, such results may be very difficult to anonymise, particularly considering that images may constitute disclosure, even where personal identifiers are lacking (Casilli and Tubaro, 2017). Whilst it has been generally asserted that visual approaches are able to expose key details which text or word-based approaches cannot, this advantage relating to visual research may be undermined in the absence of

consideration as to how anonymity can be guaranteed (Shepherd, 2017).

Another ethical challenge which prudent visual researchers need to address is that of obtaining the informed consent of study participants. This is of particular importance when utilising online images and other information. The challenges faced by investigators are intensified by the widely available relational data gathered and utilised by Facebook, Google and other popular social media platforms (Casilli and Tubaro, 2017). Social media is widely acknowledged for its influence in blurring demarcations between public life and private life and is highly influential in entangling already complex issues of informed consent (see "Using social media", 2018; Warr et al., 2016).

Consequently, ethical decision-making relating to online investigations currently remains an intricate, context-dependent grey area, where individual investigators are expected to hold responsibility for their own decisions (De Jong and Rogers, 2017). In some cases, researchers have asserted that they have no duty of care to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of every individual with data in a public social media dataset by obtaining informed consent in each case (Bryman, 2016). In addition, other researchers have compared research into public online communications with research into publicly available material, arguing that informed consent is not required (Kozinets, 2010). For example, Kosinski et al., (2015) have argued that public social media data is freely available to all users and is not limited to merely users' friends, and therefore, does not necessitate informed consent from participants: if the data is anonymous and untraceable to specific individuals and there is no interaction with these individuals, then it is safe to assume that such data was made public intentionally. Conversely, other researchers hold that individuals ought to have to explicitly opt in to permit their data to be gathered for research purposes (Haimson, 2016), arguing that public availability does not automatically confer acceptability regarding the use of such data for research purposes; rather, they suggest social norms and practices as a more appropriate assessment benchmark (Frankel & Siang, in Kosisnski et sl., 2015).

Whilst the academic debate relating to internet ethics may be characterised by

ambiguous and equivocal in relation to specific cases, my view holds with the arguments proposed by Bryman (2016), that the ethical implications of utilising social media derived material for research require careful consideration, so that issues of informed consent, invasion of privacy and possible harm caused to participants can all be addressed. As a major element of this research project involved photographic images derived from Instagram, a full analysis of the ethical implications associated with the research use of these images was required.

According to Markham (2012), where the content of social media material is identifiable – that is, where the face and/or name of the person who posted the material is present in the post – researchers must either obtain specific consent from that individual, de-identify the image (for example, by blurring the image and erasing the name) or, employ ethical fabrication. My preference for this thesis was to employ a de-identification strategy, whereby I removed personally identifying information from Instagram posts to be included in the published thesis. This data de-identification is only applied to direct identifiers, which include usernames and the subject's face in a photograph. Whilst the Instagram posts within the dataset are public, this thesis did not include any pictures enabling identification of the individual posting the content. This approach appears to be in accordance with the standard ethical research best practice within the relevant research community (see, for example, Bryman, 2016) which does not require an individual's consent to utilise images, but advocates the blurring out of any identifiable features. In the end, the decision that I came to was that including the images resulted in greater benefit than harm, particularly considering that my thesis aims to contribute to a comprehensive study of online representation of iconic architecture, with associated vital theoretical and practical implications.

4.5. Data Collection

This research aims at exploring the ways in which the photographic image online shapes the perception of iconic buildings. By investigating the images,

texts, and interactions on Instagram posts, this study will interpret how iconic architecture is represented on social media and what perceptions of it are formed. Instagram posts tagged with #guggenheimbilbao and #dongdaemundesignplaza were downloaded through Icononsquare during the two-week time frame from 1 November to 14 November 2016, yielding 1,089 posts with #guggenheimbilbao and 814 posts with #dongdaemundesignplaza.

Iconosquare (called Statigram until 2014) is a popular and dominant Instagram social media management and analytics application. In 2016, it was named as an official Instagram partner (Iconosquare, 2019). It is authorised to access Instagram content and grants users access Instagram content without having to log in to Instagram itself. As the ability to search Instagram is only accessible via the apps on smartphones and tablets, Iconosquare uses its own search engine facility to access Instagram images on any device, including a laptop or desktop computer. This means that users of Iconosquare can capture Instagram posts efficiently to use for qualitative analysis without having to worry about accidentally accessing posts that are linked to a private Instagram account.

Laestadius (2017) described three methods that researchers could apply to Instagram data collection: a) extrication of data straight from the Instagram API, b) use of a third-party application that will extract the data for researchers or c) data collection directly from the Instagram user-interface. The first method, whilst giving researchers a much greater degree of flexibility and expediency, requires researchers to have a high level of technical knowledge and ability. Using this option to analyse data would require researchers to learn new skills, or employ experts in the field to assist them; these options are expensive and prolong the time needed for research (Burgess and Bruns, in Laestadius, 2017). The second option - using a third-party application, such as Iconosquare to collate data - is a more cost-effective option. A third-party application download data from Instagram's public API (Application Programming Interface). The final method is free of charge to a researcher, but as it involves manually searching posts on Instagram and presenting the data using tools such as EndNote or the screenshot software available on a device, it is incredibly inefficient. This

approach is unwise for anyone wanting to analyse considerable amounts of metadata.

Taking these considerations into account, therefore, I have decided to adopt Iconosquare, which provides an easier way to view, track, and manage a large amount of Instagram posts. Iconosquare was employed to search for two hashtags over two weeks, and an excel spreadsheet was created to store the resulting data. Data collected for each hashtag also included the unique Instagram post identification number, a user name, location, the URL for each post, the caption and comments, post date, the number of 'likes' and 'followers', all the hashtags used in the initial post, and the filter choice. Each post in the spreadsheet (see Figure 4.3) was traced back to the poster's account page, screenshotted, and saved (see Figure 4.4).

In order to decide on the appropriate time period for collecting a manageable amount of data for the study, traffic was observed for the selected hashtags – #guggenheimbilbao and #dongdaemundesignplaza – for one month prior to the study, and the average number of Instagram posts uploaded per day was monitored. As a result, a two-week time period was decided on for the research, recognising that this was the data saturation point. There is some disagreement regarding this term (Guest et al., 2006), however, data saturation can broadly be described as the moment no new content is generated, (Green and Thorogood, 2018). This can be further described as when no unexpected data will be collected and new patterns can no longer be seen (Gaskell, 2000). The two hashtags in this study, #guggenheimbilabo and #dongdaemundesignplaza, were ascertained to create enough activity in a phase of pre-data collection that the hashtags generated a decent sample size with posts from multiple visitors meaning that the data collected could be considered meaningful (Rose, 2011, 2016). This would provide suitably diverse content, from museum trips to special exhibits, open-air festivals and other events, whilst at the same time limiting the dataset to a manageable size. Qualitative research methods, as opposed to quantitative methods, often use a smaller data sample since they mostly focus on gaining a thorough comprehension of the observable facts (see Boddy, 2016; Dworkin, 2012; Sandelowski, 1995). Such studies often examine

the reasons for a specific issue, along with the situations creating it, the set of accompanying social interactions, subcultures and the various meanings surrounding it. Furthermore, arts-based visual content analysis tends to be more inductive in its approach and does not depend on hypothesis testing or generalise about wider population interests.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	Date	Type	Username	Caption	Likes	Comments	Number of t	Filter	Country	Coordinates	User full nan	Instagram URL	Media direct URL
44	2016-11-14 22:52	image	agallirra87	This is your ho	19	0	6	Normal	Museo Gugg	43.2680999 -	Jorge Arrillag	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMz	https://scontent.cdnins
45	2016-11-14 21:00	image	matpat08	All'interno del	55	2	30	Normal	Guggenheim	43.26354253	Matteo Panic	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMz	https://scontent.cdnins
46	2016-11-14 19:47	image	_rokaba_	□the Guggenh	23	0	8	Normal	Museo Gugg	43.2680999 -	Rosie Baird	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMz	https://scontent.cdnins
47	2016-11-14 19:45	image	_rokaba_	□the Guggenh	15	0	8	Normal	Museo Gugg	43.2680999 -	Rosie Baird	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMz	https://scontent.cdnins
48	2016-11-14 19:45	image	_rokaba_	□the Guggenh	21	0	8	Normal	Museo Gugg	43.2680999 -	Rosie Baird	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMz	https://scontent.cdnins
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50	2016-11-14 18:06	image	tonyparsley	#guggenheimb	35	3	13	Inkwell	Museo Gugg	43.2680999 -	Antonio Aqu	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMz	https://scontent.cdnins
51	2016-11-14 17:07	image	spaininyourb	#Bilbao #gugg	9	0	6	Reyes			SpainInYourI	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMz	https://scontent.cdnins
52	2016-11-14 16:33	image	maferleonv	#apocalyptic #	24	0	4	Hefe			Ma Fernand	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMz	https://scontent.cdnins
53	2016-11-14 16:02	image	ro_garpe	#richardserra	72	0	22	Juno	Museo Gugg	43.2680999 -2.9345		https://www.instagram.com/p/BMy	https://scontent.cdnins
54	2016-11-14 15:52	image	anabolena6	LoveArt #art #	70	1	13	Normal	Museo Gugg	43.2680999 -	Ana	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMy	https://scontent.cdnins
55	2016-11-14 15:51	image	agussamper	#bilbao #gugg	29	1	2	Clarendon	Museo Gugg	43.2680999 -	Agustín Sam	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMy	https://scontent.cdnins
56	2016-11-14 15:22	image	zephyrus_ac	Getting ready	13	3	10	Clarendon	No 32 The O	51.463089 -(	Zephyrus Ad	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMy	https://scontent.cdnins
57	2016-11-14 14:54	image	itxas86	Este es un hon	42	5	24	Lark			Itxaso EA	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMy	https://scontent.cdnins
58	2016-11-14 13:38	image	paul_rudder	All the feelings	73	9	16	Ludwig	Guggenheim	43.47039255	Pablo Da Per	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMy	https://scontent.cdnins
59	2016-11-14 12:17	image	zephyrus_ac	I can't wait , g	13	2	10	Clarendon	No 32 The O	51.463089 -(	Zephyrus Ad	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMy	https://scontent.cdnins
60	2016-11-14 12:15	image	white__swa	More Ghery, C	80	0	4	Normal	Museo Gugg	43.2680999 -	Blanca Cisne	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMy	https://scontent.cdnins
61	2016-11-14 11:25	image	lutxi_luu	#Bilbao #Eusk	14	1	8	Rise			Lutxi	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMy	https://scontent.cdnins
62	2016-11-14 11:09	image	ful_mar	#bilbao #gugg	47	1	14	Normal	Museo Gugg	43.2680999 -	fulvia margh	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMy	https://scontent.cdnins
63	2016-11-14 09:54	image	japitugueda	□□□ #colors #u	22	2	10	Normal			Cristina Mart	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMy	https://scontent.cdnins
64	2016-11-14 07:06	image	bilbaomola	Lunes. Muy lu	568	12	14	Normal			Esti □ Bilbac	https://www.instagram.com/p/BMy	https://scontent.cdnins

Figure 4.3. Screenshot of Instagram data extracted via Iconosquare

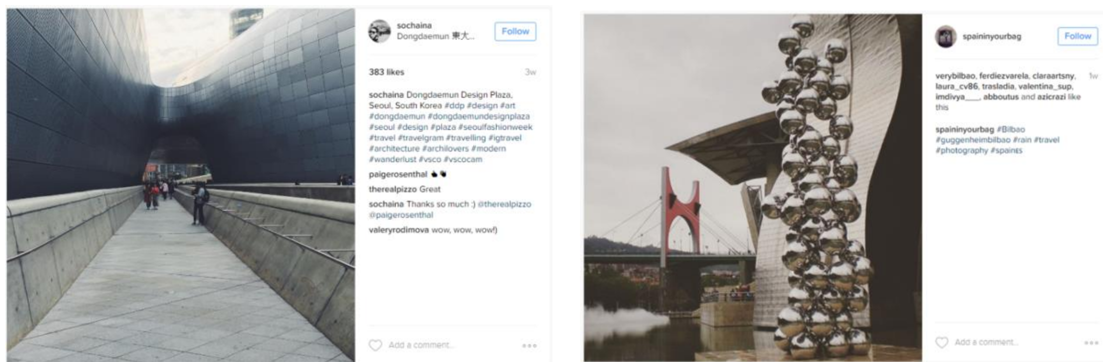


Figure 4.4. Screenshot of Instagram posts in datasets

It is important that researchers study their data enough to make sure that the samples used encompass any amendments that have been added post-data collection and do not include any deleted or private posts (Laestadius, 2017). However, it is also important that a time limit is imposed for these changes; as

otherwise the data reviews could be endless (and no researcher has the time to never finish a study) and no meaningful conclusions could be drawn from data that is constantly changing. A study on the deletion or amendment of posts by Jang et al. (2015) showed that, in general, the numbers of posts deleted by teenagers topped out after a week with just a few seen after two weeks. Therefore, a period of two weeks after the initial data collection should suffice when considering deletions and amendments of Instagram posts. For this study a two-week period was applied to ensure no deleted or private posts were included in the analysis and a fixed record of the data was created via screen-capture.

All photographs were then reviewed in order to select only those that met the requirements: a) only posts with photographic images were chosen; videos and pictures of the subject building in the form of drawings, illustrations, and posters were excluded; b) only publicly available images were selected; c) posts not written in English were also excluded from the dataset, as the language proficiency may differ depending on languages. Details such as the time the photograph was posted, usernames, URLs, hashtags, and the number of comments, followers, and likes were also extracted through Iconosquare along with the content of posts. The final number of posts (photographs) used for content analysis was 262 for #guggenheimbilbao and 243 for #dongdaemundesignplaza. The unit of analysis for the content analysis was a photographic image of an Instagram post. Textual components and other meta data included in a post were analysed in the following stage, that of the discourse analysis.

The use of the theoretically informed coding scheme outlined in Chapter 5.2 serves as the cornerstone for the multi-level visual research method used in this study. Charmaz (1990) asserts that the primary aim of 'coding' is to categorise data and identify any relationships that exist within this data, whilst simultaneously exploring the lived experience of the people involved and how this can be evaluated. In the present research, coding was predominantly inductive in nature, and variables were selected according to the elements that were visible within the dataset. Nonetheless, this process was also aided by

findings from existing literature, such as the 'visual grammar' of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996). This includes various parameters of subject selection and photography techniques. Instead of using typical methods used to assess large-scale content of visual data, the present research is not dependent upon technology to automatically count and code images (such as through automatic visual recognition technology that automatically analyses visual data according to the computer vision and deep learning), this study took a more holistic and detailed approach to interpreting and coding all of the photographs (Saurette and Gordon, 2016). A theoretically informed knowledge base was used as a foundation upon which to start this research, which was obtained from the literature and methodological review outlined in Chapters 2 and 3, however no solid assumptions were made in advance regarding what would be found in the data. Each photograph was thus coded independently prior to the conduct of content analysis.

4.6. Method of Data Analysis

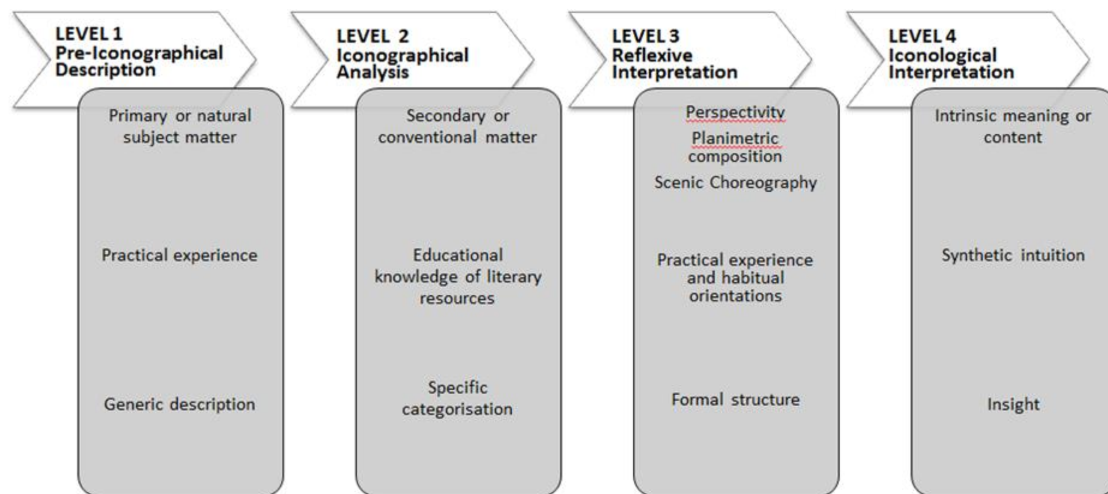
First of all, a visual content analysis allowed a quantitative overview of the types and frequency of social media images of iconic buildings, providing the so-called background 'map' (Bell, 2001, p.27) for further qualitative study. Secondly, Panofsky's revised frame work of iconographic-iconological method (see Figure 4.5), a type of discourse analysis in broad sense was undertaken to provide a qualitative investigation of the composition and strength of images. This research acted on the assumption that user-generated texts (captions and comments) attached to the images might reinforce the inherent meanings of visual representations (Seko, 2013). Rather than thinking about visual meaning as a separate entity, downloaded images were explored in collaboration with the user-generated texts that accompanies them. The findings from the integration of the analyses both of the visual content analysis and the Panofsky's analysis provided a detailed picture of people's engagement with iconic buildings and a better understanding of how architectural iconicity is translated into visual imagery.

This thesis used a dual-methodology which amalgamated visual content analysis and iconographic-iconological method to examine how iconicity in architecture is transposed into visual imagery. Firstly, in order to examine the 'loudness' or variety of visual images, the visual content analysis was carried out, using two cleaned datasets of over 200 Instagram posts for each hashtag; these were sorted via purposeful sampling of the entire dataset which was downloaded over a 2-week timeframe. During this phase, only photographs within posts were examined and any textual information associated with the images was not subject to content analysis. Image theme categories were deduced from the themes arising within the data. In addition to the contents of images, visual techniques of the images were also examined to determine the underpinning image messages. In order to do this, the 'visual grammar' of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) was used. This comprises a range of parameters, including: subject choice; image processing tools such as lens and filter; and photographic techniques, including, but not restricted to, focus, framing, lighting and angle. Amongst a wide range of potential variables, this research focuses on examining the following three parameters: 1. subject choice; 2. distance and focus; and 3. image processing (for example, the use of filters). Various kinds of photographs were identified in the content analysis and the examination of image composition.

The method I applied to analyse the meanings of the images extracted from Instagram was an adaptation of Panofsky's iconology, which was originally devised for the interpretation of a work of art in art history. My goal here is to reveal the semantics and narratives embedded in photographic images of iconic buildings. My interest in this thesis lies with processes of meaning production, where mediated content is understood to be a means of making sense of architectural iconicity that simultaneously builds on and (re)produces existing architectural discourse. Thus, my analytical framework integrates Panofsky's three strata interpretation method of the visual with the extended version of Panofsky's approach by Bohnsack (2009), who draws on Imdahl's (1996, cited in Bohnsack, 2009) iconic approach looking at the three factors of perspectivity, planimetric composition, and scenic choreography. The rationale behind this

combined interpretation method is that only the reconstruction of both the meaning of a picture and its formal composition uncover a picture's entire semantics (Militz, 2016). In this research context, the chosen integrated approach is used to interpret the intention and motivation of the image producer (in Instagram captions and hashtags) as well as the audience reception (comments).

Figure 4.5.Panofsky's revised framework of iconographic-iconological method



*Sources: based on Bohnsack (2009) and Imdahl (1996)

Various social science scholars drew on Bohnsack's version of Panofsky's method as an analytical tool for image interpretation to investigate how images are represented, allowing for the marriage of sociological analysis and visual methodology: refugee photographs (Lenette, 2016), protest photographs (Phillips, 2011), election posters (Philipps, 2015), family vacation photographs (Nentwig-Gesemann, 2006), and visuals including videos and photographs in relation to country image (Militz, 2016) and farm labour representation in advertisement (Stewart, 2016). Some of these scholars (Lenette, 2016; Philipps, 2011; Netwig-Gesemann, 2006) provided step-by-step analyses guided by Panofsky's strata method in their data analysis, whereas the remainder

presented comprehensive final outcomes without illustrating the separate interpretation for each level. For this research, each stage of the method is described to show the way in which each level of interpretation is interlinked and to arrive at findings regarding the forming or manifestation of iconicity.

The first step, as a basic level of understanding, is to simply state what can be seen without any connections being made regarding the meaning of images, as guided by Panofsky. Visual content analysis, which was conducted ahead of applying Panofsky's interpretation, serves as a foundation for pre-iconographical description. Based on the findings of the visual content analysis of 500 Instagram posts, 6 photographic images were selected as prototypes. I first defined the elements of the subject matter in the image and carried out a formal analysis of its physical manifestation.

The second level, iconographic analysis, concentrates on the conventional meaning of what can be seen in a picture by connecting the image to a known or recognizable story. A sort of control mechanism that restricts the scope of the interpretation in the final step of iconological interpretation is established at this stage, as well as the pre-iconographic description (Gerin, 2013). As well as the pre-iconographic description, iconographic analysis serves as a crucial control tool that can restrict the scope of the interpretation, and can allow for the subsequent development of intrinsic meaning.

The third step involves reflexive interpretation, in which visual aspects of form, colour, line, composition, scale or technique are further explored. The outcome of the visual content analysis already performed acts as a grounding for this stage, as the content analysis deals with some of the formal qualities in an image to be analysed in this reflexive interpretation, including types of angle, image format, shot length, and filters.

This third step focuses on the formal compositional structure of the picture. It requires grasping the inherent laws of meaning through the investigation of formal structure (Bohnsack, 2009). For this interpretation, previous knowledge or conventional meaning gained through the process of the iconographic analysis must be suspended in order not to be influenced by the contextual

knowledge of the researcher. For this reflexive interpretation, Bohnsack (2009) suggested Imadhl's three key dimensions of an image's composition to comprehend the underlying cultural beliefs and premises of an image producer. Stewart (2016, p.135) asks questions regarding these three key dimensions:

> Planimetric structure: where are individuals located and framed on a plane in the photograph? Are they observed on different levels; if so, do they look across these levels or remain separated?
>
> Scenic choreography: How are the individuals arranged in relation to one another, the scenery, and the objects in a photograph?
>
> Prospectivity: Where is the vanishing point in the image, and where is the camera focused? Where are the individuals in the photograph looking?

Bohnsack (2009) indicated that by carefully reconstructing the formal compositions of the image, in particular the planimetric composition of a picture, researchers are able to pursue a harmony with other elements without each component being secluded from each other. As he notes, the methodological tools for image interpretation are:

> to treat the text as well as the picture as a self-referential system, to differentiate between explicit and implicit (atheoretical) knowledge, to change the analytic stance from the question What to the question How, to reconstruct the formal structures of texts as well as pictures in order to integrate single elements into the over-all context, and - last but not least - to use comparative analysis (Bohnsack, 2009, p.318)

Finally, an iconological interpretation is made and the inherent meaning of an image is finally revealed. The intrinsic meaning, namely the iconological interpretation of the artistic proposition, is reached through the previous steps (Gerin, 2013). That being said, the work (in this study, the Instagram image)

was placed in an appropriate network of artistic, cultural, and human concerns by drawing from the context of society, history, politics, and culture in relation to iconic buildings.

4.7. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to describe the methodological framework used to investigate how images of iconic buildings are framed and represented via user-generated photographs and accompanying textual descriptions on a popular visual social media platform, Instagram. This thesis employed a dual-methodology approach, amalgamating visual content analysis and Panofsky's revised iconographic-iconological method to examine how iconicity in architecture is transposed into visual imagery. Firstly, a quantitative overview of the pictures of iconic buildings that appear on social media, as well as their frequency, was explored by using visual content analysis. Subsequently, Panofsky's method was carried out for the qualitative exploration of the images' contents and compositions.

Panofsky created the most recognised formulation of Iconography. It can be used to explore, categorise and interpret images. It is predominantly used to explore works from the Italian and Northern Renaissance (Warburg [1912] 1999; Panofsky [1953] 1971, Panofsky [1955] 1982). It is still very valuable nowadays, and it is here that social media gives way to various opportunities that were previously unavailable to art historians. Much of the time, images are accompanied by interpretative comments. For instance, on Instagram, users share images, or often a gallery of images. Comments invariably accompany the images. On their own, such comments are rudimentary, however when explored collaboratively alongside images, they can be very telling. By considering the comments as an integral part of a relationship with the images, this is the first step in being able to understand the information afforded given to us by collective image data on social media. Indeed, Panofsky's iconographic-iconological method, the second step analysis, reinforces the qualitative data analysis by offering thorough, contextual interpretations of images and enabling

the content to be identified, tracked and investigated theoretically using what Saurette and Gordon (2016) describe as subtle rhetorical methods that frequently serve as the power source of a particular discourse.

5. Data Analysis

5.1. Introduction

The aim of this dissertation is to explore the relationship between iconic architecture and city branding with a specific focus on social media representation. The objectives of this research comprise three elements, the first of which is to understand the way in which iconic buildings are represented in social media. Following this, the second objective is to analyse the iconicity of buildings in terms of the particular attributes and elements that define this term in social media entries. The third and final objective is to investigate the influence of such images in social media entries, in terms of how they might have an effect on the overall perceptions of a city.

Przyborski (in Schreiber, 2017) states that visual imagery is as effective as language in enabling individuals to express themselves, and thus that the content of the images is explicit when used in an iconographic sense. Although content has an implicit, stylistic nature, its aesthetics can be used to communicate messages in an iconological manner. The present research thus applies pluralistic research designs that enable a range of methodological tools to be combined, and together, they can provide a comprehensive insight into the subject matters.

This study consisted of two empirical stages. The first stage was that of visual content analysis. This involved an inductive thematic analysis of Instagram images hashtagged with 2 case studies, GMB (#guggenheimbilbao) and DDP (#dongdaemundesignplaza), with the aim of obtaining a quantitative overview of the types and frequency of social media images of iconic buildings and generating the so-called background 'map' (Bell, 2001, p.27); a catalogue of themes that was used to inform the development of Panofsky's iconographic-iconological method employed in the second stage of the project. Iconography - iconology serves as a method and an approach when investigating visual content and meaning. Muller (2008) describes it as a qualitative method for analysing and interpreting visual content and that, in a Warburgian sense, it can be used to make comparisons primarily relating to temporal and spatial visual

intervals. The analytical framework of the present research used Panofsky's three strata interpretation method, and this was combined with the extended version of Panofsky's that was developed by Bohnsack (2009). Bohnsack also used elements of Imdahl's (in Bohnsack, 2009) iconic approach of perspectivity, planimetric composition, and scenic choreography. Using a combined interpretation method is important because it can identify both the meaning of an image and its formal composition, which allows a comprehensive understanding of the images semantics to be obtained (Militz, 2016).

The primary purpose of the first stage of the analysis was to answer the first objective of examining how iconic architecture is represented on Instagram using the findings from an analysis of photographs. To do this, a total of 505 images were investigated, of which 262 used the hashtag #guggenheimbilbao and the remaining 243 were tagged #dongdaemundesignplaza. Inductive coding was employed to help with thematic classification of the images according to their emergent coding technique. Thematic analysis can be very beneficial for establishing how users show images and also for categorising the subject matter of the images. Here, only the photographic content was explored, which was subsequently coded according to visual techniques in addition to content. Textual components of the images were analysed during the second stage.

In the second stage, Panofsky's method was applied to reveal the semantics and narratives embedded in the photographic images of iconic buildings. For the second stage analysis, a total of 6 Instagram images in the data were chosen from the theme categories gained from the preceding visual content analysis. I am primarily concerned with meaning production, and understanding the mediated content by establishing the architectural iconicity that expands upon and (re)produces existing architectural discourse. The second objective of the research is therefore to explore the specific features and attributes that define architectural iconicity, and this will be completed in this stage. Moreover, an in-depth assessment of both visual and textual components of Instagram posts largely aided in identifying the intention and motivation of the image producer (in Instagram captions and hashtags), in addition to the audience

reception (through comments and likes). This leads into the third objective, which is to explore how the social imagery of iconic architecture feeds back into people's perceptions of a city.

Given the current pull of Big Data, it is easy to become caught up in the inundation of digital traces that are created by social media, both in terms of user-generated content and complicated computational algorithms that underpin social media sites like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. However, Boyd and Crawford (2012) explain that research insights are evident at any level, even on extremely modest scales. For instance, Postill and Pink (2012) conducted research into social media and discovered large data sets to be very beneficial for providing background and context, however, they are not necessarily appropriate for every research question. There are some social practices that cannot be seen during analysis of the metadata, however a small-scale, intimate approach could be useful in such cases to reveal the ways in which users manage their online relationships through the tagging of specific topics. Stephansen and Couldry (2014) point out that, as well as mapping followers or assessing the popularity of specific social tags, the real meanings which underpin the posts can be established through the use of visually rhetorical strategies, which supports Boyd and Crawford's (2012) assumption that the data size must be fitting to research the question of a given study.

5.2. Stage 1. Visual Content Analysis

5.2.1.Coding Frame

The visual content analysis of Instagram photographs of iconic buildings aims to answer the primary empirical research question driving this dissertation: how is iconic architecture represented in social media? This is addressed by analysing the findings from the codebook. The analysis is centred around two key elements: the subject matter, which investigates what is visually represented in the images of the iconic buildings, GMB and DDP; and the visual grammar or compositional elements of the images, which explores how the iconic buildings are framed and composed in the images. There are four parts to the codebook

employed in this research, each of which contains various codes and sub-codes that intend to carry out a specific organisational or analytic function. The three sections are: 1) subject matter; 2) visual grammar; and 3) intertextuality. I briefly outline the purposes of each section and provide tables to demonstrate the constituent codes. Every subject code and the relevant descriptions can be seen in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1. Codes for subject matter

Codes	Sub-codes
Dominant subject	1. Building exteriors Example_The photograph contains images of structural elements of the exterior of a building 2. Artwork Example_The photograph contains images of paintings, sculptures, drawings, photographs, or other works of art displayed in the interior or exterior of a building 3. Interiors Example_The photograph contains images of the internal structural elements of a building 4. Human Example_The photograph contains images of a person or a group of persons, focusing on the images of the human face, a half- or full-body 5. Other Example_The photograph does not reference the above listed subject sub-categories
Exterior	1. Façade; 2. Side/back of a building; 3. Roof/top of a building; 4. Staircase; 5. Details; 6. Square/plaza; 7. Landscape; 8. Other
Interior	1. Gallery/exhibition space; 2. Lobby/hall; 3. Window; 4. Ceiling/cornice; 5. Corridor;. 6. Staircase; 7. Wall; 8. Other
Human	1. None; 2. Single; 3. Group; 4. A few random; 5. Crowd
Artwork *	Common codes for both cases do not exist; sub-codes are discussed in each case analysis

A description of the codes for the visual grammar is in table 5.2. below:

Table 5.2. Codes for visual grammar

Codes	Sub-codes
Type of shot; shot length	1. Long shot Example) The image was shot using wide shots and depicts an overall full view of a building and its surroundings. 2. Medium shot Example) The image was shot to show some part of the subject in more detail while giving an impression of the whole subject. 3. Close-up Example) The image was shot to show close-up detail of the subject matter. 4. Extreme close-up Example) The image was shot to show a high level of close-up detail of the subject matter. 5. Selfie Example) The image was shot with a camera held at arm's length or supported by a selfie stick. 6. Other Example) The image does not reference the above-mentioned sub-categories of photographic shooting technique.
Angle of a view; camera angle	1. Eye level Example) Camera is level or looking straight at the subject. It is a neutral shot. 2. High angle Example) A high angle shows the subject from above. The camera is angled down towards the subject. 3. Low angle Example) A Low angle shows the subject from below. The camera is angled up towards the subject. 4. A bird's-eye view Example) A bird's-eye view is an overhead view of an object. The viewpoint appears as if the viewer is a bird. Sometimes it is referred to as an aerial shot. 5. A bug (worm)'s-eye view Example) A worm's-eye view is an upwards shot taken from the ground, and appears as if the viewer is a worm. It is the opposite of a bird's-eye view. 6. Reflections Example) This includes a photograph shot through a window/glass,

	shiny metallic surfaces of a building, or reflections of the building in puddles. 7. Other Example) The photograph does not reference the above-listed subject sub-categories.
Type of Instagram filters	1. Normal (no filter) 2.Lo-fi Example) It brightens colours through enhanced colour saturation, and can add shadows to an image. 3. Clarendon Example) It intensifies shadows and brightens highlights in a photograph. 4. Juno Example) It makes colours more intense, but only reds, yellows, and oranges. 5. Lark Example) It brightens and intensifies all colours except red. 6. Inkwell Example) This is an Instagram basic black-and-white filter. 7. Ludwig Example) It is an intense filter that can make warm colours appear warmer, cool colours appear darker, and can add pronunciation to shadows and highlights. 8. Gingham Example) It can be used with darker images to add a yellow tone. When used for light images, Gingham provides a brighter and dreamier look. 9. Other Example) The photograph does not reference the above-listed subject sub-categories.

To see whether or not texts are included in a post is useful for organisational and analytical purposes. In organisational terms, it can enable the photographs to be categorised according to those which possess textual components and those that do not. In analytical terms, the codes can help with the process of Panofsky's iconcographic-iconocolgical analysis, thus they can help to establish

how the meanings are accumulated from various texts. Table 5.3 presents a description of the textual codes.

Table 5.3 Codes for texts

Codes	Sub-codes
Texts	1. Text; 2. No text Example_this codes records whether or not an Instagram post has a textual component, such as captions and comments, other than hashtags and geotags

The data collection phase involves the collection of photographs based on particular requirements. Each photograph was screen-captured, renamed with a serial number, and saved individually in a separate word file (see Figure 5.1).

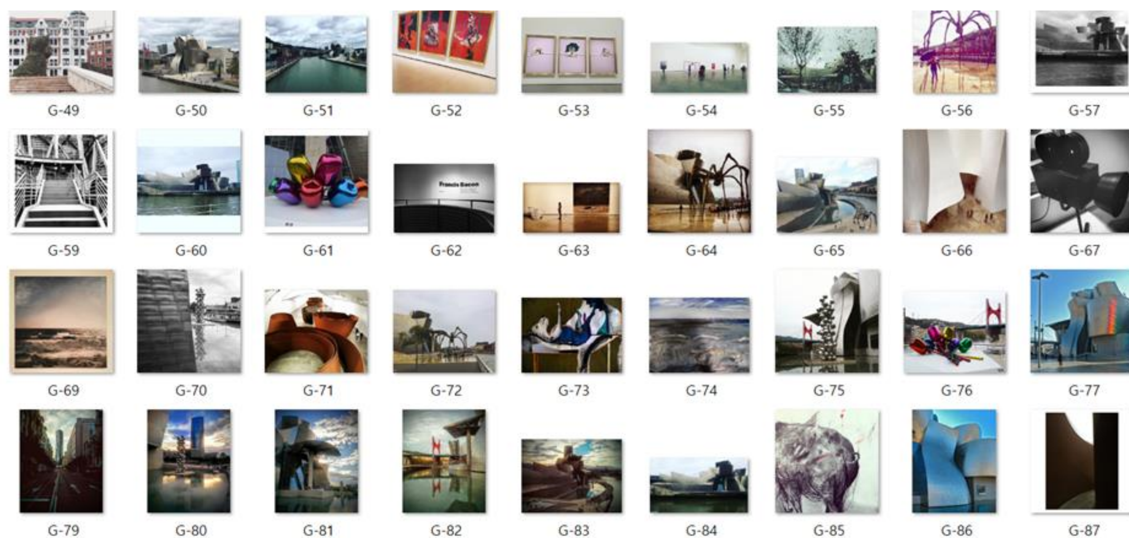


Figure 5.1. Screen-captured list view of the stored image data

Once individual images were exported into word documents, the images then were coded and the data were analysed, using SPSS Statistics 24 for the descriptive analysis (see Table 5.4).

	ID	Museum	Structure	Comments	Followers	Likes	Hashtags	Style	Subject	Exterior
1	G-001	1	2	1	47	4	1	1	1	3
2	G-002	1	2	0	53	19	6	1	1	1
3	G-003	1	2	2	307	55	30	1	3	0
4	G-006	1	2	0	98	21	8	1	3	0
5	G-007	1	2	5	351	14	19	1	1	2
6	G-008	1	2	3	185	35	13	2	1	5
7	G-009	1	1	0	6	9	6	1	2	2
8	G-010	1	1	0	131	24	4	1	2	6
9	G-011	1	1	0	316	72	22	1	2	0
10	G-012	1	2	1	372	70	13	1	2	0
11	G-013	1	1	1	94	29	2	1	2	3
12	G-016	1	2	0	1228	80	4	1	2	2
13	G-017	1	2	1	50	14	8	1	1	2
14	G-018	1	2	1	287	47	14	1	4	0
15	G-019	1	2	2	114	22	10	1	1	2
16	G-020	1	2	4	371	65	13	1	2	0
17	G-021	1	2	1	176	36	6	1	3	0
18	G-022	1	2	7	1491	167	25	1	2	0
19	G-023	1	1	0	94	24	2	1	1	1

Table 5.4. Screen-captured result view on the SPSS of the coded images data

Figure 5.2 and Table 5.5. visually present the content analysis of one of the photographs in the dataset against each variable in the codebook.

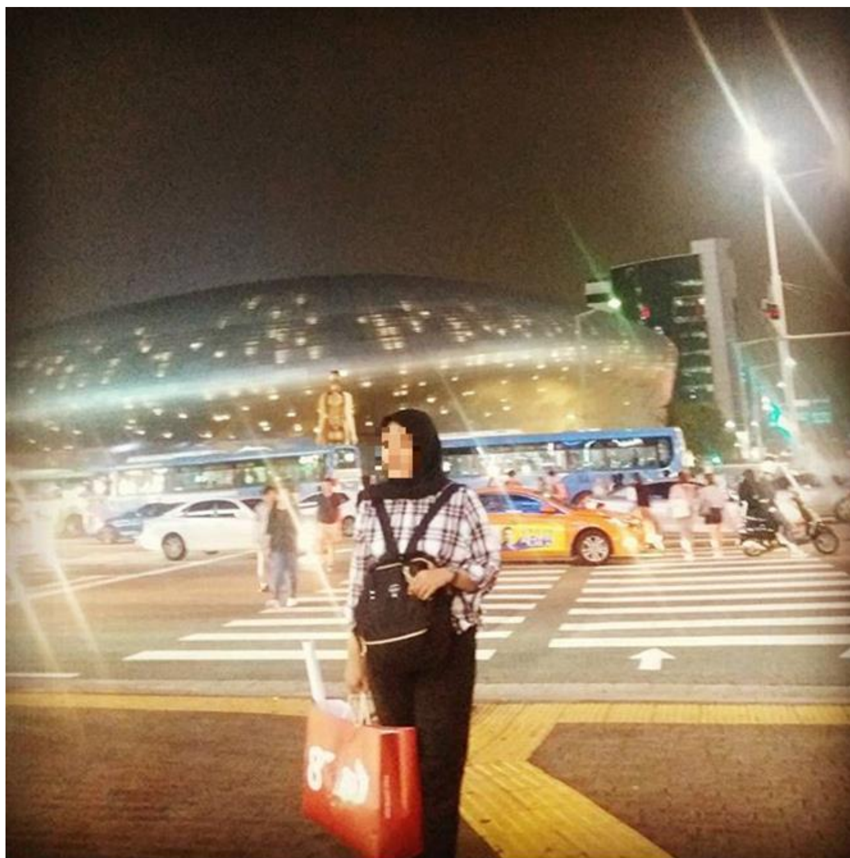


Figure 5.2. Example of a sample photograph for coding

Image No.	Subject Matter		Visual Grammar		
	Subject	Human	Distance	Angle	Filter
D-50	1. Exteriors 2. Artwork 3. Interiors 4. Human 5. Others	1. None 2. Single 3. Group 4. A few random	1. Long shot 2. Medium shot 3. Close-up 4. Extreme close-up 5. Selfie 6. Others	1. Eye level 2. High angle 3. Low angle 4. A bird's eye view 5. A bug's eye view	1. Normal 2. Lo-fi 3. Clarendon 4. Juno 5. Lark 6. Inkwell 7. Ludwig 8. Gingham 9. Others

Table 5.5. Example of the result of sample coding

By analysing the given codes, this chapter doesn't merely offer a quantitative overview of the visual depictions in the images, but also shows the representational practices inherent to Instagram photography by providing theoretical reasoning for the sub-categories that make up the two main elelements: the subject matter and the visual grammar. Both case studies were analysed individually, and subsequently discussed and compared.

5.2.2. Case 1: The Gugenheim Museum Bilbao (GMB)

a. Textual components

The results obtained through the SPSS descriptive analysis corroborated that most of the Instagram posts in the sample included textual components (captions and comments) alongside the photographic images and hashtags. Of the total 262 posts, 74.8% of posts were hashtagged with #guggenheimbilbao, each of these including both a photograph and textual components such as captions and comments.

b. Subject Matter

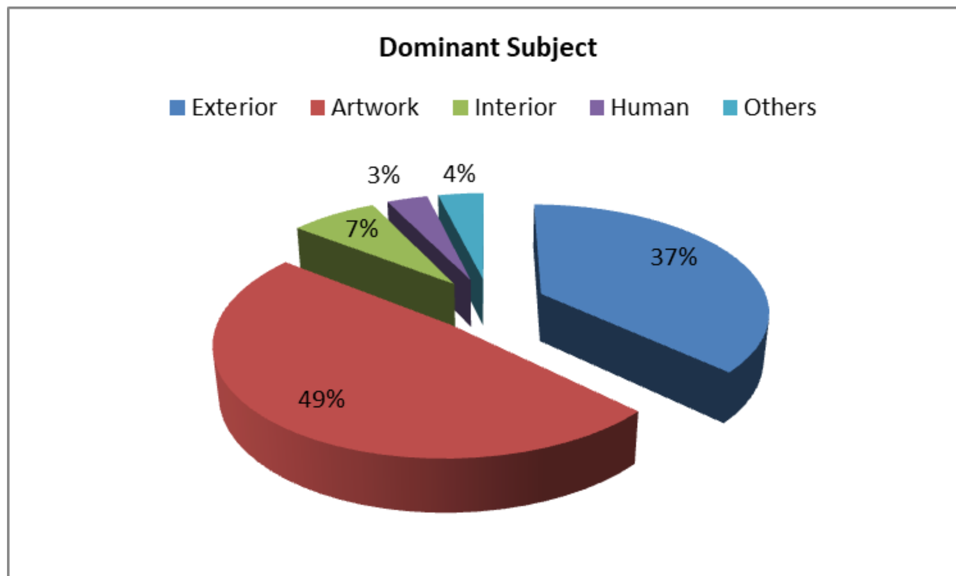


Figure 5.3. Dominant subject for #guggenheimbilbao (n=243)

As can be seen in figure 5.1, the most frequently depicted subject was Artwork (49%), followed by the building's exterior (37%), the interior (7%), and humans (3%). In the case of the GMB, external elements such as the 12m-high Highland Terrier encrusted with begonia flowers and the building's glass atrium exoskeleton, often functioned as the background feature for photography taken by tourists in the area. Depending on the photographer's interest, many of the architectural features were captured, from the building's exterior, titanium, light-refracting walls, to its geometrically-designed interior features.

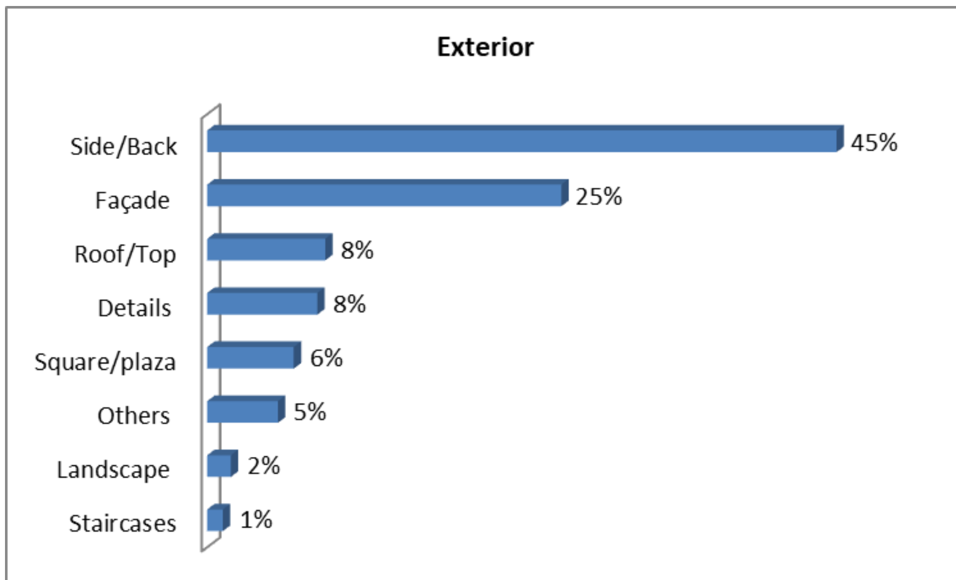


Figure 5.4. Exterior for #guggenheimbilbao (n=179)

With respect to the external elements of the building photographed (see, figure 5.2), the most frequently pictured one is the side and/or rear part of the GMB building (45%), followed by its façade (25%). The dataset included far fewer pictures of the façade of the GMB than expected, which is surprising given its international reputation as a marvel. However, the GMB's placement on the riverfront poses an obstacle for people desiring to photograph its façade, as the pavilion length is too short for tourists to step away and capture a shot that would encapsulate the entire image. Most, therefore, are taken from across the river, where distance can provide full coverage.

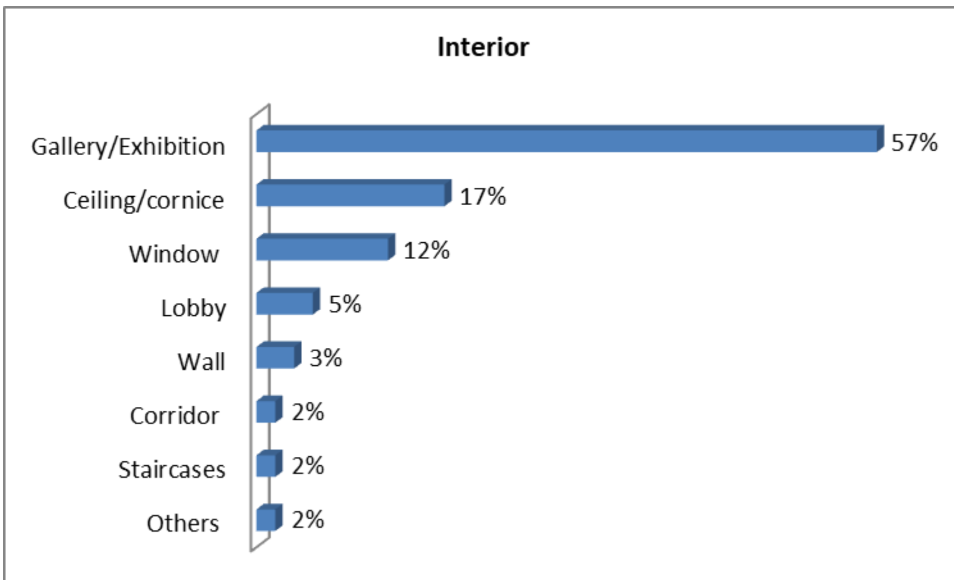


Figure 5.5. Interior for #guggenheimbilbao (n=58)

Interior elements of the building were far less frequently pictured, only accounting for below 10 % of the total number of images from the #guggenheimbilbao dataset (see, figure 5.3). This is not an unexpected result, as interior shots can be gained only by a ticket holder, who can access the inside of the building. The most frequently pictured interior element was the gallery/exhibition space, with a frequency of 57% of the total number of interior images (n=58).

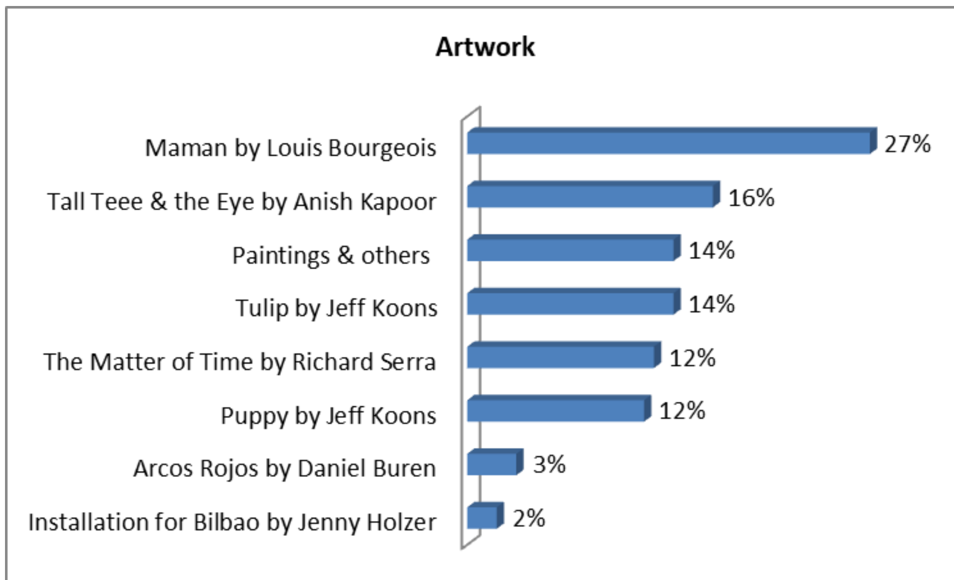


Figure 5.6. Artwork for #guggenheimbilbao (n=153)

Almost half of the entire dataset photographed artwork as a focal subject. Of the 153 artworks photographed, there were 110 outdoor works, which included the Puppy and the Tulip, both by Jeff Koons, Maman by Louise Bourgeois, Tall Tree & the Eye by Anish Kapoor, and Arcos Rojos by Daniel Buren (see, figure 5.4). The most frequently portrayed work of art is Maman by Louise Bourgeois (27%), followed by Tall Tree and the Eye by Anish Kapoor (16%), Tulips by Jeff Koons (14%), and the Matter of Time by Richard Serra (12%).

The spider sculpture Mamán is famous amongst art tourists, and is the most photographed subject at the GMB. It assumes a lifelike pose, towering over the footpath that leads to the main atrium pavilion at a height of 30ft, where its spindly legs can be seen from both within the museum itself and from the nearby La Salve Bridge, which crosses the Nervión River. These characteristics all have a hand in its popularity amongst photographers. A 14 ft-high steel geometric sculpture designed by Richard Serra is the most posted work of art from inside the museum, and is widely considered to be both a piece of exquisite art and an engineering marvel. Metallic circles and panels converge into one another without touching, and also provide space for tourists to walk through the sculpture with parallel panels. It is not posed to suggest how people should walk through it, nor is there a location intended to be the primary viewing

position, yet there are commonalities in the photographing of this object as well, with people taking pictures in between the plates or attempting to capture the entire structure from afar. The pervasive media presence of these sculptures has made them part of the museum's virtual brand recognition, in which they can function as a synecdoche for both the Guggenheim and for the city of Bilbao as a whole. This is perhaps most strongly illustrated on Instagram, where these objects are frequently featured or alluded to through hashtags or keywords in the textual context (Tsur and Rappoport, 2012). They are also geotagged in relation to the museum, and through the tagging system, have become major features of conversation regarding the museum on the platform. The posts in the dataset evince how these sculptures present themselves to tourists empirically.

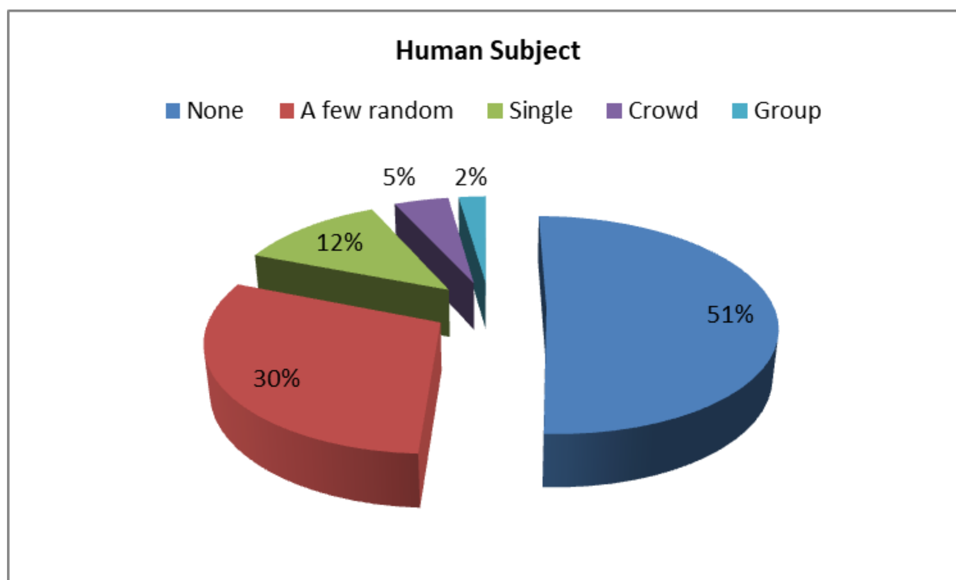


Figure 5.7 Human subject for #guggenheimbilbao (n=262)

As can be seen in figure 5.5, images that have no human subject make up 51% of all those in the dataset for #guggenheimbilbao. Furthermore, the combined percentage of images with no human subject or images with random people, where the human subject is not the primary focus, is 86%.

c. Composition

The perceptions of the audiences of images are controlled by the picture taker or film maker, as they release contextual information on any basis that they see fit. As Kraft (1987) argues, adjusting lighting, frame, and configuration are all tactics utilised by image creators when attempting to influence public opinion.

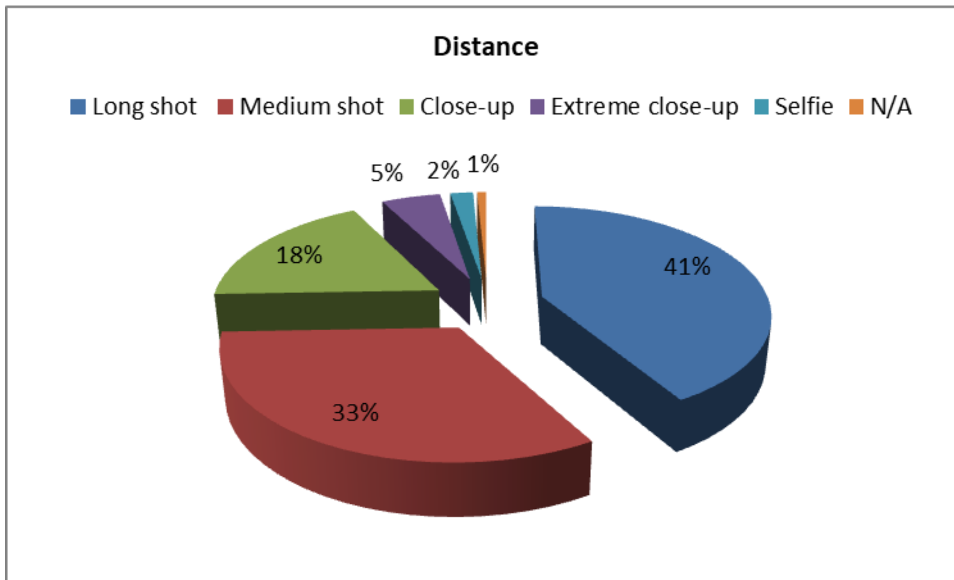


Figure 5.8. Distance for #guggenheimbilbao (n=262)

The most frequently used shot among the images of #guggenheimbilbao was the long shot (n=109, 41%), followed by the medium shot (n=86, 33%), the close-up and the extreme close-up shots (n=47, 18%; n=13, 5% respectively) (see, figure 5.6).

One of the central considerations in framing a picture is the camera shot, which determines the sizing or space components of a picture's composition. Camera shots, which can be close-up, medium-range, or long shots, are selected in order to emphasize certain elements of an image, particularly the scene, its modes, and its attributes. Close-up camera shots are often cast upon an actor's face in order to fully capture all nuances of an emotion, or to show the small details and nuances of an important object. Extreme close-up shots extend even further, and capture minute aspects of things, such as the eye of a human

character. Medium shots back away slightly from the subject or object, but do not capture it in its entirety, in order to capture the focal aspect of the image while also capturing some background visual context; or they can be used when a photographer is physically restricted from being able to take in the entire subject (such as when a building is large, for example). Instead, medium shots focus on points of interest, such as from the waist up on a human subject. Long shots capture all elements of the subject (such as a full human figure) as well as including a good deal of the subject's surroundings, which can emphasize scale and scene. Long shots appear to be the most popular choice according to this dataset, and can perhaps allude to the hypothesis that photographers in this context are interested in providing a broad array of context in their pictures. These image scopes influence the 'modes of address,' which define the way the individuals either take or consume images (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996).

The GMB dataset indicates that long shots are dominantly used for photographs taken of the location, which mostly focus on the building's exterior as well as its surroundings. Images captured indoors mostly focused on the 'Matter of Time' exhibit by Richard Serra, also taken mostly using long shots – understandably, given the size and scope of the artwork. When medium shots were used, these focused on humans. Of the images taken of the GMB, 23% were close-ups, combining 18% of close-up and 5% of extreme close-up, which mostly captured the geometrical inscriptions on Gehry's building. Selfies are the emerging genre of amateur self-portraits, taken in a mirror or from arm's length with a camera phone (Tiidenberg and Cruz, 2015); however, very few images of the Guggenheim Bilbao, only 2% of the total, were identified as selfies. Instead, some self-portraits appeared as reflections in images of works like Jeff Koons' Tulips. That is, all images containing people also contained buildings, artwork, or gallery spaces as significant components of the photographs.

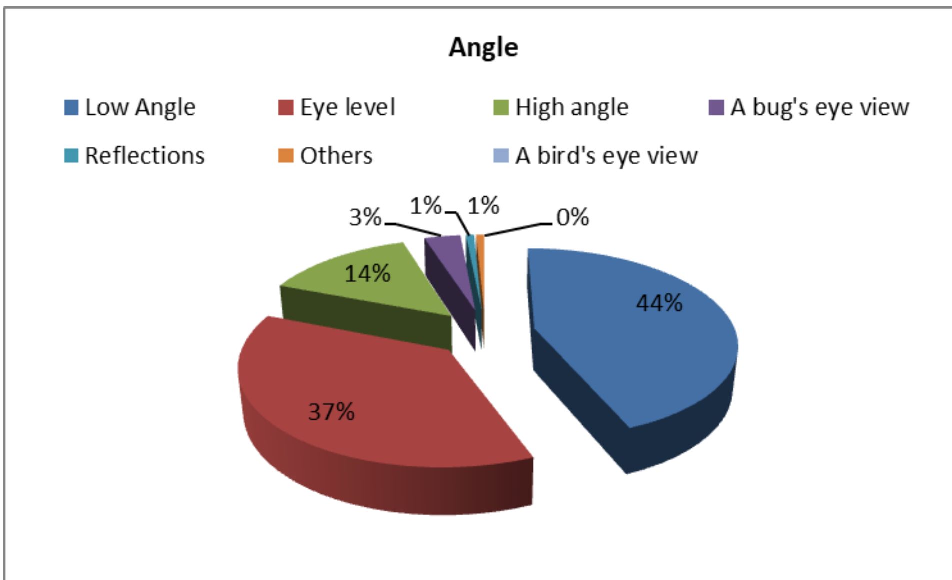


Figure 5.9. Angle for #guggenheimbilbao (n=262)

Point of view, as defined in the art of photography, is based on the direction a camera is pointing when a photograph is taken, whether it is from below, above, or laterally-positioned. These factors can dramatically alter the focus of the photograph and the reception of the audience, as the size and shape of objects can be entirely altered by both camera shots and angles. Angles function to highlight spatial relationships between objects in the photograph, while camera shots direct the viewer towards the subjects, objects, and motifs of the image. These elements are essential for conveying purpose in visual presentations and discourses

With regard to camera angles, the content analysis revealed that the images in the #guggenheimbilbao dataset were most likely to be taken from a low angle (n=115, 49%), followed by those taken at eye level (n=97, 37%) and those taken from a high angle (n=37, 14%) (see, figure 5.7). Those shots from a low angle at the site of the museum were predominantly of the building's exterior and were shot digitally using phones in such a way that the picture taken was stationed below the objects and looking up, or by a method that the camera was held below the height of normal standing level. Low angles can help capture larger sections of architecture and the surrounding environment. In the dataset,

they allowed the imaging of various parts of the GMB, such as the view of the river. Because most of the exterior artwork is large statues, including Louise Bourgeois' Maman and Jeff Koons' Puppy, a great number of these low angle pictures was also aimed at the outdoor art in the GMB dataset. This strategy was optimal for capturing their size in its entirety, as the low angle frame of the photo can better accommodate especially tall objects. It is also the case that low angle shots are useful for directing focus onto a single object while muting background images, which would otherwise largely fill frames taken of large objects from a distance. Many of these types of shots attempted to highlight features of the building or the surrounding art objects, without distracting focus from them – as such, both datasets show a large range of low angle shots that show only the sky as the background. A good example of this kind of photograph is one that is taken of the Guggenheim's titanium exterior, which is shining in the light of day turning into night. Interestingly, a bug's eye view, a shot taken from a low perspective where a bug lives, was only used in the images taken from the #guggenheimbilbao dataset (n=9, 3%). These images are featured its outdoor sculpture, Maman by Louise Bourgeois, the so-called spider sculpture, whose shape allows users to take an unusual shot to capture the characteristics of the mammoth sculpture.

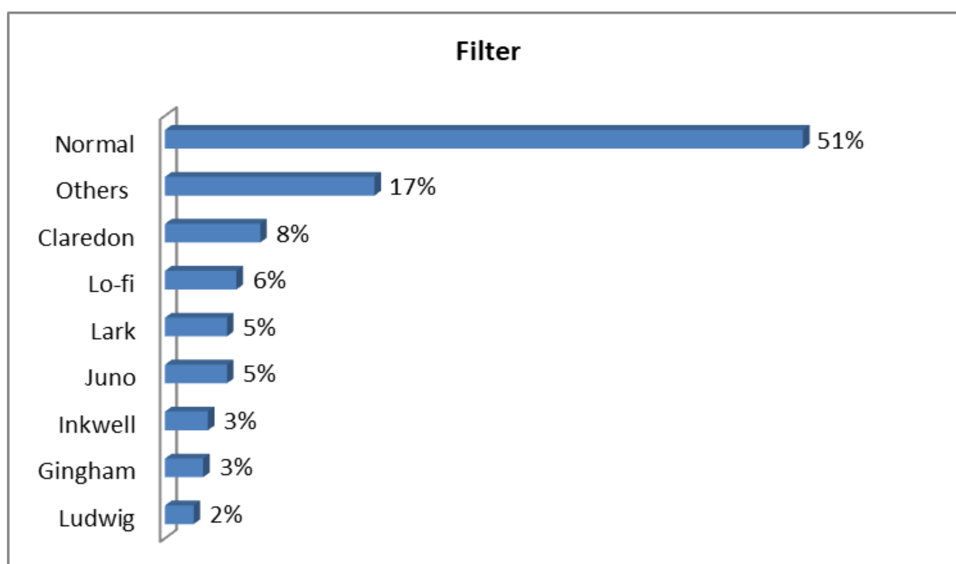


Figure 5.10. Filter for #guggenheimbilbao (n=262)

The addition of cameras, filters, and software after-effects components also allows people to add their own personal experiences and feelings to their Instagram posts. Normal filter, which basically means no filter, where no effect is applied to the image at all, was evident in more than half of the images, n=134, 51% for #guggenheimbilbao. The second most frequently used filter at the GMB was Clarendon, which intensifies shadows and brightens highlights in a photograph. Clarendon is the most popular filter across 119 countries worldwide, perhaps because it provides a universally attractive ability to illuminate light hues, clarify lines, and deepen darks in photographs (Canva, 2016). It could also be popular due to the fact that it is first on the filter rotation after the default, Normal option, pre-manipulation. The remaining filters used in the images of #guggenheimbilbao were Lo-fi (n=15, 5.7%), followed by Juno and Lark (both n=13, 5.0%), and, less frequently Inkwell (n=9, 3.4%), Gingham (8, 3.1%), and Ludwig (n=6, 2.3%) (see, figure 5.8).

5.2.3. Case 2: Dongdaemun Design Plaza Seoul (DDP)

a. Textual components

Of the total 243 posts used in the dataset for this case, 80% were hashtagged #dongdaemundesignplaza , with each post including both a photograph and textual components such as captions and comments.

b. Subject matter

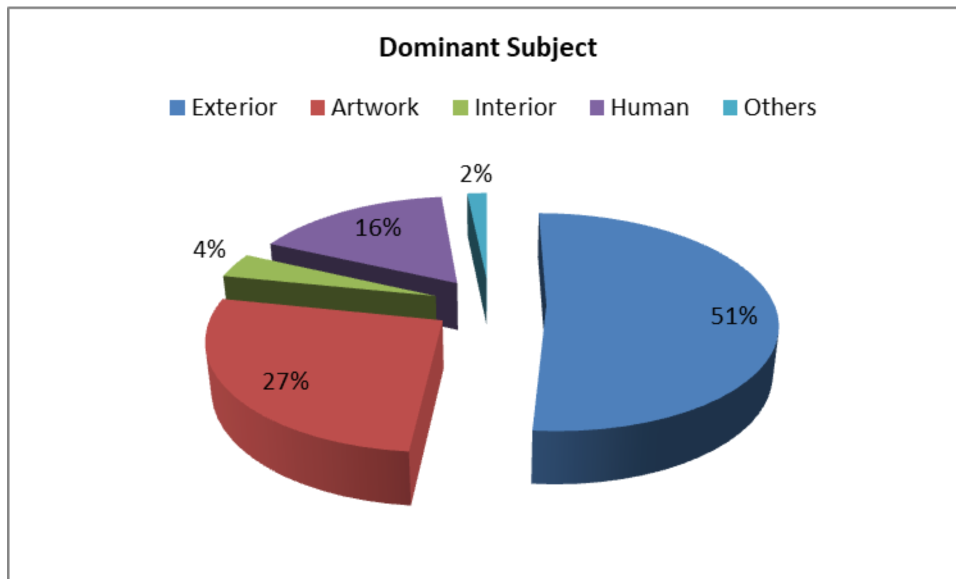


Figure 5.11. Dominant subject for #dongdaemundesignplaza (n=243)

The number of images of the exterior of the building (51%) and artwork-related posts (27%) (see, figure 5.9) far outweighed other kinds of posts, such as, for instance, those with people as a primary subject. The majority of photographs were taken outdoors, depicting the building itself or outdoor sculptures in the background of the building. Depending on the photographer's interest, many of the diverse architectural features of the DDP were captured, these including, for instance, the 25,000 lighted, electronic roses, the flowing footpaths and stairs, and the DDP's high-tech, central archway.

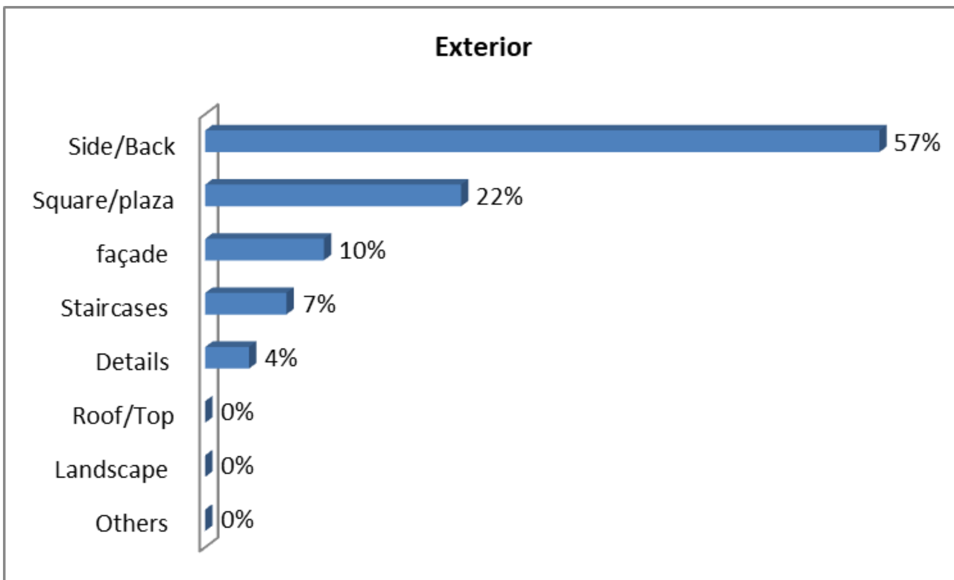


Figure 5.12. Exterior for #dongdaemundesignplaza (n=188)

As can be seen in figure 5.10, with respect to the external elements of the building photographed, the most frequently pictured ones were the side and/or rear part of the building (57%), followed by the square/plaza (22%). The exterior of the building was commonly pictured at a great distance from the site. Without a panoramic camera feature, the size of the DDP can only be fully captured from a distance; in this case, from across an eight-lane, congested highway. It is also best photographed at night due to the effect that the lighting has on its curved structure.

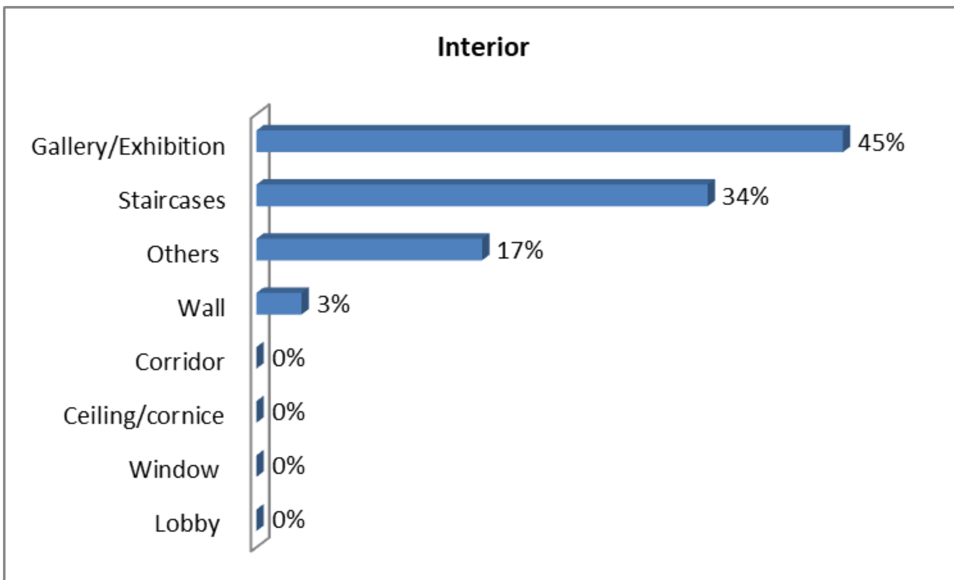


Figure 5.13. Interior for #dongdaemundesignplaza (n=29)

Interior elements of the building were far less frequently pictured, accounting for below 10 % of the total number of images from #dongdaemundesignplaza. The most frequently pictured interior element was the gallery/exhibition space, with a frequency of 45% of the total number of interior images (see, figure 5.11).

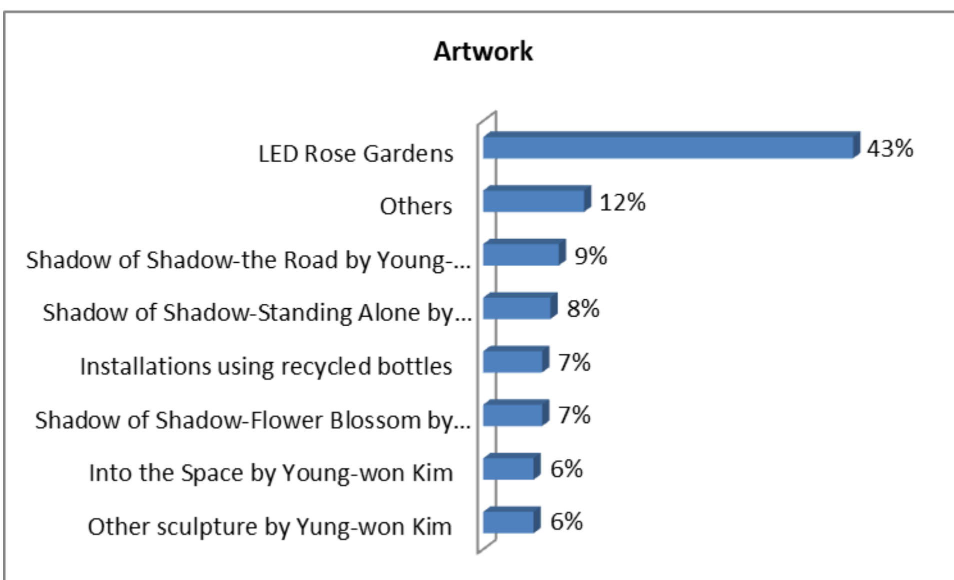


Figure 5.142. Artwork for#dongdaemundesignplaza (n=103)

The DDP is more like a multi-purpose cultural complex than an art museum, and as a consequence, it doesn't have a permanent outdoor artwork collection, which is possibly why more photographs of the building itself than artworks were generated. Nevertheless, the fact that artwork at the DDP accounted for the second largest number of photographs in the sample could be attributed to its temporary outdoor installations, such as the LED rose gardens and the outdoor sculpture exhibition of South Korean Artist Kim Young Won, which was being held at the time of the data collection. Of the 103 images containing artwork, the LED Rose Gardens were depicted in the largest number of photographs (43%), followed by the sculptures of Kim Young Won, each of which are below the frequency of 10% (see, figure 5.12).

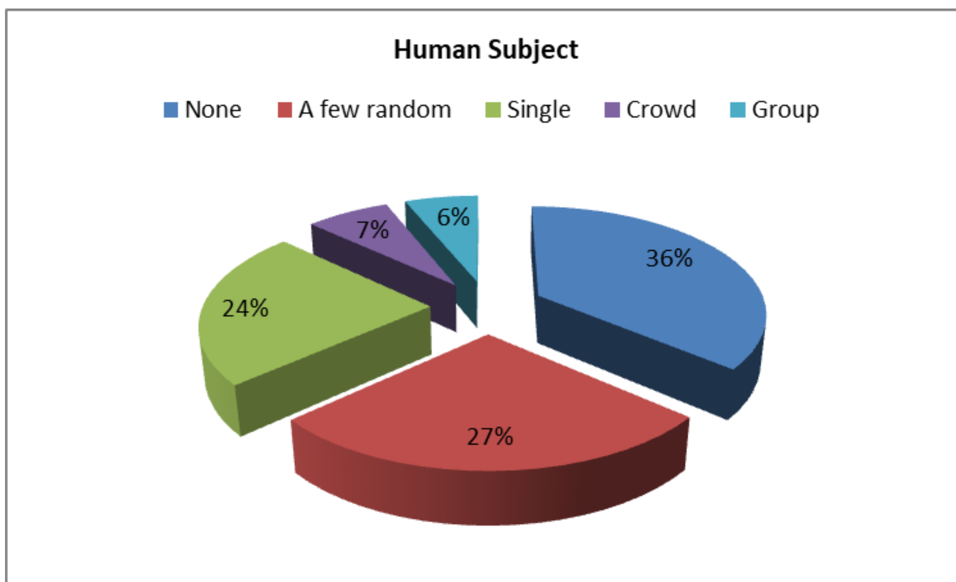


Figure 5.15. Human subjects for #dongdaemundesignplaza (n=243)

The percentage of images depicting human subject was only 16.5% (see, figure 5.13). Photographs taken in museums inevitably feature crowds – as public places, particularly art museums, encourage viewing or standing, people are central aspects to the building's purpose. The datasets recognised when people

were actually the subject of the photo, or when they were inadvertent attendants to the actual subject of the photo. The data indicates that intentional pictures taken of people striking poses are less common than ones either unintentionally capturing humans or not capturing them at all. More specifically, images containing no human subject made up 36% of the total number of images. Furthermore, the combined percentage of images with no human subject or images with random people, where the human subject was not the primary one, was 70%. The datasets of the DDP, as catalogued by Instagram, indicate that visitors were more interested in documenting the spaces, structures, and objects of these institutions than people. They were perhaps also broadcasting their own perceptions of what the purpose and intent of the artwork is, what the conditions of the objects were, and attempting to convey these messages to their audiences visually. At the most basic level, it can be assumed that the museum and its exhibits are more important than the visitors, at least in this context.

c. Composition

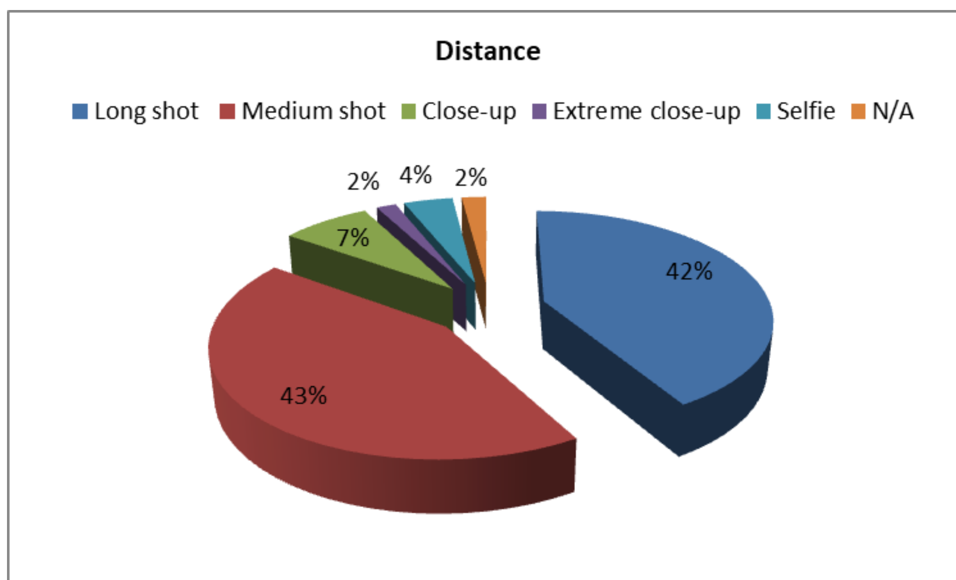


Figure 5.16. Distance for #dongdaemundesignplaza (n=243)

The obtained results show the relation between the visual grammar of the

images and the photographed museum. As discussed above, with respect to the GMB, one of the central considerations in framing a picture is the camera shot, which determines the sizing or space components of a picture's composition. Camera shots, which can be close-up, medium-range, or long shots, are selected in order to emphasise certain elements of an image, particularly the scene, its modes, and its attributes. Images taken of the DDP with a medium shot and a long shot the most frequently chosen shots of the users (n=105, 43% and n=101, 42%, respectively), followed by close-up shots (n=18, 7%) and extreme close-up shots (n=4, 2%) (see, figure 5.14). The dataset of the DDP images therefore revealed a more equal mix of long and medium shots, in which medium shots focused more often on human subjects and long shots centred on the building itself and its visual context. These long shots captured the roads and the buildings in the neighbouring shopping district, while the humans in the medium shots were backgrounded by the DDP itself or the infrastructure inside. The datasets further revealed that the DDP's archive of photos only included 9% of close-up images, which mainly focused on the LED rose garden. Interestingly, other close-up shots at the DDP were also portrait-style photos of humans, which may have been due to the fact that the annual occurrence of Seoul Fashion Week happened immediately before the process of data collection for this study had been conducted.

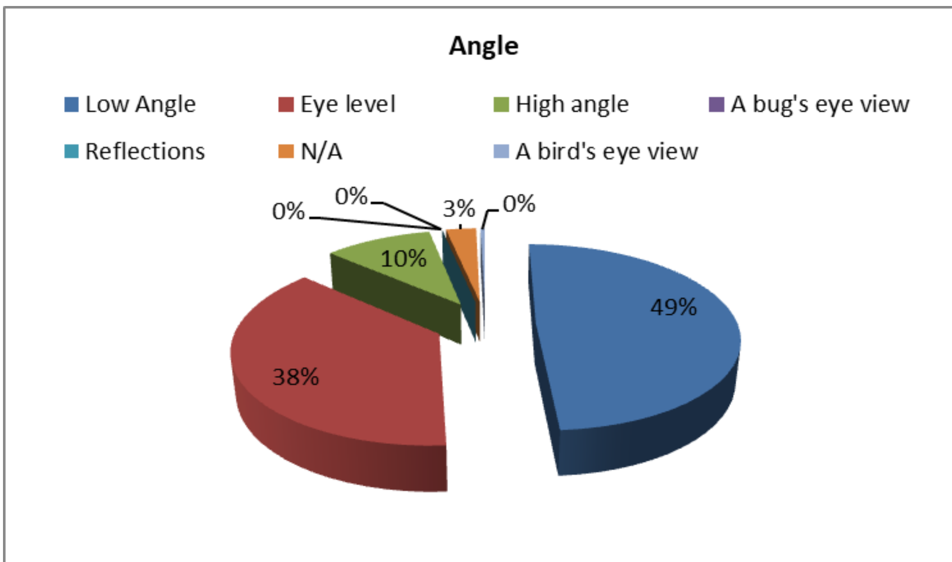


Figure 5.17. Angle for #dongdaemundesignplaza (n=243)

As for the type of camera angles used, the content analysis revealed that the images were mostly taken from a low angle (n=120, 49%), followed by an eye level angle (n=92, 38%) and a high angle (n=25, 10%) (see, figure 5.15). Those shots taken from a low angle were predominantly of the building's exterior and were shot digitally using phones in such a way that the camera was stationed below the objects and looking up, or by the camera being held below the height of normal standing level. Low angles can help capture larger sections of architecture and their surrounding environment. In the dataset, they allowed the imaging of various parts of the DDP, such as its main outdoor staircase preceding the Eight Junction.

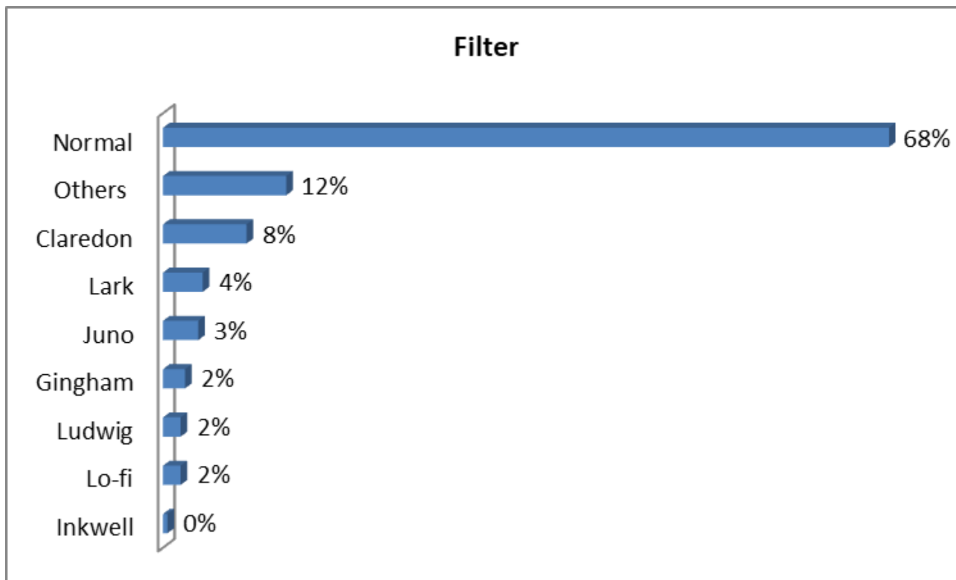


Figure 5.18. Filter for #dongdaemundesignplaza (n=243)

Pictures taken using a normal filter made up more than two thirds of the images, (n=165, 68%) for #dongdaemundesignplaza. The second most frequently used filter was Clarendon (8%), followed by Lark (4%), Juno (3%), and Gingham, Ludwig, and Lo-fi (2% each) (see, figure 5.19).

5.2.4. Comparative Analysis

a. The textual component

In terms of textual components, the SPSS descriptive analysis of the 505 Instagram posts verified that the majority of the images also contained text elements, such as comments and captions, together with the hashtags and photographs. A little over three quarters of the DDP images and almost three quarters of the GMB images contained text elements.

This is in line with Barthes' (1977b) argument that images can have ambivalent meanings, as derived from the context of captioning or how, when, and where they are placed. They are also dependent largely on mutual, unspoken understandings shared by viewers of the social, creative, and communal

understandings assumed in the culture that produced the picture. Associated text or captioning further refines and focuses the attention of viewers so that the photographer can control (to some extent) how the audience interprets the meaning of the image and eliminates alternative insights. This applies to social media, particularly Instagram, as well. The results disclose that most people post images with contingent information that explains the purpose of posting the image (Budge, 2017). A photograph can act as a standalone function as a form of communication in and of itself in social media; however, it remains mostly standard that written messages, signals, or language are also expected elements in visual posts (Green-Lewis, 2017). Tagging and 'hashtagging' are important contextual clarifiers on Instagram; these both communicate directly with the audience of the image poster, but also embed and correlate the image within a comprehensive community of all of Instagram's content. The results indicate that most of the images in my datasets are tagged with both correlated and non-correlated hashtags (for example, #dongdaemundesignplaza, #love, #seoul, #architecture, #passionpassport). Captions were additionally utilised to broadcast the location and meaning of the picture. Thus, the meaningful qualitative data was obtained from the analysis of the visual data alone, but it was when this was combined with analysis of the textual content (tagging, captioning, and commenting) that the full purpose of posts could be fleshed out.

B. Subject matter

As shown in table 5.4, a statistical significance level of .000 was found in the Chi-square (χ^2) test between subject-related variables and the photographed museums. The difference between the GMB and DDP Seoul was statistically significant with regard to the dominant subject depicted in a photograph, the photographed element of the building exterior, and the photographed element of the interior (χ^2=48.661, 74.512, 39.640, respectively, $p<.05$). The most common depiction of both museums was the outside of the buildings and the artwork contained in them or around them. These posts prevailed over other types of images, such as those with people as their main subject matter. The bulk of the

images were photographed outside, showing the structure of the building itself or a piece of art or sculpture outside the building. There were differences between the images of the two buildings, however. For the hashtag #dongdaemundesignplaza, 51% of the images featured the outside of the building, with 27% featuring artwork. Almost the opposite was true for the hashtag #guggenheimbilbao, where artwork featured in 49% of images and the exterior of the building featured in 37% of images.

Table 5. 6 Contingency table for categories of photographs

	GMB (N=262)	DDP (N=243)	Total (N=505)	Chi-Square test	
				$\chi 2$	p-value
Dominant Subject				48.661	.000
Building exterior	97	125	222		
Artwork	127	65	192		
Interior	19	9	28		
Human	9	40	49		
Other	10	4	14		
Element of the building exterior				74.512	.000
Facade	45	19	64		
Side/back of a building	80	108	188		
Roof/top ofa building	15	0	15		
Staircases	2	13	15		
Details	14	7	21		
Square/plaza	11	41	52		

Landscape	3	0	3		
Other	9	0	9		
N/A	83	55	138		
Element of the building interior				39.640	.000
Gallery/exhibition space	33	13	46		
Lobby/hall	3	0	3		
Window	7	0	7		
Ceiling/cornice	10	0	10		
Corridors	1	0	1		
Staircase	1	10	11		
Wall	2	1	3		
Other	1	5	6		
N/A	204	214	418		

In images of both buildings, the most commonly photographed external aspect of the building was the side or back: 57% for the DDP and 45% for the GMB. The next most frequently photographed aspect of the exterior of the Guggenheim Bilbao was its façade at 17%, whereas for the DDP it was the square/plaza of the exterior at 22%.

One predicted result of the study was the infrequency of images taken from the inside of the buildings; these accounted for less than one tenth of the images. This is the case because the interior can only be accessed by ticket-holders, whereas the exterior is viewable by anyone. Among the images taken inside the buildings the most frequently photographed aspect was the main exhibition space or gallery: 57% at the Guggenheim and 45% at the DDP.

It is worth noting is that the frequency of the images depicting human subjects

was much higher in the DDP Seoul (16.5%) than the GMB (3.4%). The nationality of the tourists has important psychological implications for their behaviour (Konijn, Sluimer, and Mitas, 2016), particularly in their motivations for making certain travel choices (Dann, 1993), how available they are to receiving marketing campaigns (Moscardo et al., 2001), and their overall motivation to travel in the first place (Kozak, 2002). It logically follows that the habits surrounding taking photographs may change based on the nationality of the photographer. In corroborating this hypothesis, Burnett (2014) published a study stating that four of the ten cities most prevalently featuring 'selfie'-styled photographers were located in Asia. This can be explained in Asia's cultural roots; selfies have become a predominant means of showcasing one's aesthetic qualities and of expressing them to an audience, a behaviour which has only increased with the introduction of filters and image-altering technology within social media services (Ng, 2017). In fact, the dataset on the DDP is saturated with pictures taken by various Asian nationalities or with text written in one of the many Asian languages. The dataset for the GMB photographs reveals a less obvious social or ethnic trend, with visitors posting from a multitude of nationalities.

Artwork was the most frequently pictured subject in the GMB dataset and the second most pictured one in the DDP dataset. One thing that should be noted here is where the artwork photographed is located at the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, which has long boasted its site-specific masterpiece artworks from the permanent collection, housed both indoor and outdoor. The DDP is not specifically an art gallery but a collection of multi-use cultural facilities, and so, unlike the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, there is no permanent open-air art exhibition. As a result, there are fewer images of artworks than of the building itself in the dataset. However, there are a number of non-permanent installations outside that would account for the high frequency of images of artworks that appeared in the dataset. Open-air installations at the DDP are shown in the context of the main building as an indication to the viewer of the location of the artwork. This can also be seen in the images taken at the Guggenheim.

Photographs taken inside museums inevitably feature crowds – as public places, particularly art museums, necessitate viewing or standing, people are central aspects to the building's purpose. The datasets recognized when people were actually the subject of the photo, or when they were inadvertent attendants to the actual subject of the photo. The data indicates that intentional pictures taken of people striking poses are less common than ones either unintentionally capturing humans or not capturing them at all. Table 5.5 indicates the frequency with which a person is featured in an image. For the #guggenheimbilbao dataset, 51% of images do not contain any people at all, and for #dongdaemundesignplaza dataset, this percentage drops to 36%. Added to this, the number of images containing incidental people, where the people are not the main subject, amounts to 86% for #guggenheimbilbao and 70% for #dongdaemundesignplaza.

Table 5.7. Contingency table for the variables related to human subjects

	GMB (N=262)	DDP (N=243)	Total (N=505)	Chi-Square test	
				$\chi 2$	p-value
Number of people photographed				21.386	.000
None	133	88	221		
Single	32	57	89		
Group	6	15	21		
A few random	79	66	145		
Crowd	12	17	29		

Budge (2017), in her analysis of photo-taking practices by visitors to museums, concluded that most images captured in museums centred on the items on display as opposed to the people in the building, which indicates that the photo-taking culture within museums could be characterized by the desire to emphasise their own personal experiences, or that the building and its objects were of greater interest within the setting. This phenomenon can perhaps be

better explained by utilizing Urry's (1990, 1995, 2002) theory of the tourist gaze, which differentiates between the 'romantic' and the 'collective' gaze. According to Urry (1990, 1995, 2002), the collective gaze is generated by people's social experiences, with gatherings of people being the focal point of photographs. Conversely, the romantic gaze fixates on aesthetically pleasurable objects (1995) and can be characterized as a solitary activity. As Messaris (1997) indicates, in photographs emphasizing scenery or wildlife in travel or conservation publications, the romantic gaze is typically utilized, portraying a non-verbal message about the subject of the image. The datasets of these two museums, as catalogued by Instagram, indicates that visitors are more interested in documenting the spaces, structures, and objects of these institutions. They are perhaps also broadcasting their own perceptions of what the purpose and intent of the artwork is, what the conditions of the objects are, and how they are attempting to convey these messages to their audiences visually. At the most basic level, it can be assumed that the museum and its exhibits are more important than the visitors, at least in this context.

The frequency of images including random people is quite similar in both datasets of #guggenheimbilbao and #dongdaemundesignplaza - 35 % and 34%, respectively. However, the frequency of family portrait photographs of a single person and a group of people is more than double in the #dongdaemundesignplaza image set (30%) than in the #guggenheimbilbao dataset (15%). A total of 129 photographs including human subjects were found in the #guggenheimbilbao set and 155 in the #dongdaemundesignplaza set. People, if they are contained in the photographs at all, are not usually emblematic of themselves; instead, in large crowds, they can be used to provide a scale for the size and magnificence of a building, or how popular an exhibit is. Allowing viewers to forge a relationship spatially can typically only occur when a person understands their positionality in it, and since large crowds have the added feature of being functionally unidentifiable, a person looking at the picture can project themselves into any figure in the crowd, and better situate themselves amongst them.

Visitors may choose to position themselves in photos taken in museums or at

exhibits because they want to establish the fact that they are palpably in the location, according to Budge (2017). Instagram posts seem to lend credence to this hypothesis, as self-posting (or selfies) frequently fit several self-identifying modalities. Visitors may situate themselves in front of a monument, smile, strike a certain mien, or raise the camera to eye level in order to expose and verify their presence at a location. According to Stylianou-Lambert (2012), these practices are in line with social habits that understand the context of these kinds of visual posts, a cultural commonality that moves beyond nationality, socio-economic status, race, or education level.

The strategy of 'visual deceit' or 'trick photography', in which images are deliberately edited in such a way that the connection between the object and subject of the photo is implied to be something more or different than the actuality of the situation, is also occasionally employed in these locations. Any photographer using a digitally-connected device, and especially those on social media such as Instagram, can easily post and upload instances when a special event is occurring, and thus engaging with visual deceit is commonplace. One example of this action concerns the image of a person 'kissing' Jeff Koons' massive plant sculpture of a dog at the Guggenheim. Thus, architecture can be illustrated, manipulated, and engaged with in new, immediate ways through the use of Instagram.

c. Composition

Many images in the datasets also have similar compositions in terms of features and angles; many of the photographs of the GMB, for instance, show the river, the front walkway, and the prominent spider sculpture in the same view as the museum itself. The DDP also follows this trend, with many photographs taken of it showcasing the dual walkways shadowed by the rooftop. There are many potential explanations for why and by what tourists are motivated to take pictures (Konjin et al., 2016). Sontag (1977) and Urry (1990) postulate that one of the possible motivations for tourist photography is that they are enacting their status as passive viewers. They may simply be duplicating images they or others have experienced previously (Albers and James, 1988). Urry's

framework of the tourist gaze was corroborated by other scholars like Garrod (2009) when qualitatively recording similarities between photos taken by tourists and those presented in postcards of the same locations. Other explanations characterize tourism as a more participatory process (Haldrup & Larsen, 2003; Larsen, 2005, 2008) in which tourists are actively reproducing and narrating their experiences with these landmarks. Stylianou-Lambert (2012) argues that motivations may derive elements from both the active and the passive explanation, in that tourists may be duplicating common themes but are doing so in highly individual ways. She further argues that there are other social, psychological, and cultural elements affecting tourist motivation. Photographing objects in public places is subject to public scrutiny, and thus decorum and choices are communally-moderated in tourist destinations which may influence what they take photos of, how they do it, what is appropriate, and so on – which could be why photographs taken by many different people in the same places have a great deal of commonality. People are also most influenced by their own exposure to symbols and fables generated from their own culture and may most often choose objects to photograph that reflect these elements (Stylianou-Lambert, 2012, p. 1835).

Datasets collected for this study reveals two different categories regarding these museum photographs: the first are images that photographers freely choose to take and which are innovative in terms of both form and content; the second are essentially duplications of other images of these structures.

Table 5.8 Visual grammar of the images sampled

	GMB (N=262)	DDP (N=243)	Total (N=505)	Chi-Square test	
				χ2	p-value
Distance (shot length)				22.167	.000
Long (wide) shot	109	101	211		

Medium shot	86	105	191		
Close-up	47	18	65		
Extreme close-up	13	4	17		
Selfie	5	10	15		
N/A	2	5	7		
Angle of view				15.154	.019
Eye level	97	92	189		
High angle	37	25	62		
Low angle	115	120	135		
A bird's eye view	0	1	1		
A bug's eye view	9	0	9		
Reflections	2	0	2		
N/A	2	7	9		
Filter (colour)				21.890	.005
Normal	134	165	199		
Lo-fi	15	4	19		
Clarendon	20	19	39		
Juno	13	8	21		
Lark	13	9	22		
Inkwell	9	1	10		
Ludwig	6	4	10		
Gingham	8	5	13		
Other	44	28	72		

The results in Table 5.6 depict the relationship between the method of photography and the subject matter. The category of shot represented in the datasets differs depending on which location the image was taken at. This can be seen as $\chi2=22.167$, $p<.05$ and is verified by Pearson's chi-square test ($\chi2$), which achieved a noteworthy level of .000. Regarding the #guggenheimbilbao images, the long shot was most often utilised with a result of n=109, 42%. Results for the medium shot were n=86, 33%, close-up shots were n=47, 18% and extreme close-ups were n=13, 5%. In contrast, the #dongdaemundesignplaza images most often utilised the medium shot (n=105, 43%), closely followed by the long shot (n=101, 42%). Close-up shots resulted in n=18, 7% and extreme close-ups were n=4, 2%.

It is interesting to compare the types of shots taken at both locations. At the Guggenheim, long shots are predominantly used for location, concentrating on the exterior of the building and sometimes incorporating its surroundings. Long shots were also used inside the building to capture the magnitude of Richard Serra's exhibition, 'Matter of Time'. At the DDP, long shots were also used for location, to capture the building itself and its surroundings; however more images focused on setting, including the buildings and roads of the nearby shopping district. At both locations, medium shots focused more often on human subjects, although the proportion of long and medium shots was more evenly matched in the #dongdaemundesignplaza images and these images tended to feature the building or its interior as a backdrop to the human subjects. A higher proportion of the #guggenheimbilbao images were close-up shots - 23%, in comparison with 9% of the #dongdaemundesignplaza images. In the former, most shots captured the geometric shapes of the building, while the latter focused primarily on the LED Rose Garden installation.

'Modes of address', as indicated before, are formed through shot sizes. These modes reveal how photographers feel about their photos, and why they are motivated to take them in the first place (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996). Both datasets were dominated by longshots, with over 40% of the total showing a human being at the centre of a long-range shot, dwarfed by the surrounding scene (Giannetti, 1999). Even though the selfie is the emerging genre of

amateur self-portraits taken in a mirror or from arm's length with a camera phone (Tiidenberg and Cruz, 2015), very few images in either the Guggenheim Bilbao dataset and the Dongdaemun Design Plaza Seoul dataset were identified as selfies, these accounting for 2% and 4%, respectively. Instead, some self-portraits take the form of reflections in works like Jeff Koons' Tulips. That is, all images containing people also contain buildings, artwork, or gallery spaces as significant components of the photographs.

The content analysis of the camera angles used in each dataset showed the majority of the photographs to have been taken from a low angle: in the #guggenheimbilbao set, this was n=115, 44%; and in the #dongdaemundesignplaza set, this was n=120, 50%. Using a low angle can be helpful in capturing large sections of a building or its surroundings. At both sites, the low angle was principally used to capture the building's exterior. These were taken digitally, either using a phone or camera, by stationing the device beneath the object or below ordinary standing height and looking upwards. This enabled the users to capture various aspects of the sites, such as the Guggenheim with a view of the Nervion River and the DDP with the main outdoor staircase leading to the Eight Junction. In the #guggenheimbilbao data, a large proportion of the low angle shots were focused on the outdoor installations, which are tall statues that would not otherwise fit in the frame. This is the optimum strategy for photographing Jeff Koons' 'Puppy', which requires a low angle in order to capture its full height, as does Louise Bourgeois' 'Maman'. Low angle shots can also be used to mute distracting background noise that would take up much of the frame in a photograph of the building at a distance or would detract from an image of a sculpture. The photographer attempts to showcase a particular feature of the building or sculpture without its busy surroundings. A common method is to present the image with only the sky in the background. The Guggenheim's titanium exterior is often photographed in this way, particularly at dusk. A small percentage of low angle images (n=9, 3%), taken only at the Guggenheim, featured the bug's-eye-view shot, taken so low to the ground that the perspective is that of an insect. All these photographs featured 'Maman', known as the spider sculpture, whose unusual shape and height is best

captured from this angle. After the low angle, the next frequent angle was the eye-level one, for which the #guggenheimbilbao dataset showed n=97, 37% and the #dongdaemundesignplaza dataset showed n=92, 38%. The least frequent angle was the high angle, with n=37, 14% and n=25, 10% for the GMB and the DDP respectively.

Just as prose has adjectives, the meaning of visual stories is accentuated by camera angles (Giannetti, 1999). Perspective is a central component of meaning-making. As noted before, low angles add perspective significance to the object in focus, as it grows to take up nearly the entire frame; in contrast, taking a photo from above or at a high angle diminishes the perspective of an object (Giannetti, 1999). Eye-level shots, which are taken laterally, are perhaps the best angles for portraying an organic human experience, removed from artistic adjustments and transformations. Perspective is also important in other spheres of visual narratives, as it makes possible the ability to correctly maintain the composition of a three-dimensional object on a two-dimensional medium. It is always geared from the position of the image taker, creator, and consumer, and perspective is therefore highly subjective. A picture viewed by an audience almost always grants them the ability to put themselves into the place and time when the photographer took the picture, allowing them to view and connect to the architecture, and see what the creator sees. This is evident in Instagram posts where people are not populating the frame – since the point of view is eye-level, the audience can conceive of themselves in the poster's place, as they are taken from personal mobile technologies.

The addition of cameras, filters, or software after-effects components also allow people to add their own personal experiences and feelings to their Instagram posts. In this research, the results indicated that 49% of the GMB dataset and 32% of the DDP dataset used Instagram filters in their images. Ultimately, the meaning of original images can be transformed by the application of filters, which highlight certain features while dimming others – sharing with the audience the items that the photographers themselve believes is important. The statistical test for $\chi 2$ for the variables filter and a museum gained a p-value of 0.005, which confirmed that the colour scheme used in a photograph depends

on the museum where the photograph was taken ($\chi 2=21.890$, $p<.05$). The normal filter, also known as no filter, where no effect is applied to the image at all, was used in over half of the images, n=134, 51% in the #guggenheimbilbao dataset and n=165, 68% in the #dongdaemundesignplaza set. The second most frequently used filter at both museums was Clarendon, which intensifies shadows and brightens highlights in a photograph. The remaining filters used in the images in the #guggenheimbilbao set were Lo-fi (n=15, 6%), followed by Juno and Lark (both n=13, 5%), and, less frequently, Inkwell (n=9, 3%), Gingham (8, 3%), and Ludwig (n=6, 2%). Juno and Lark were also used with nearly equal frequency in the images gained from #dongdaemundesignplaza, accounting for n=8, 3% and n=9, 4% respectively. Less common were Gingham (n=5, 2%) and Ludwig (n=4, 2%). Lark also functions to highlight hues, excluding reds, which can alternatively warm or cool photos dependent on the colours present, the subject, and the environment. Lo-Fi adds many effects that make it ideal for a variety of photos, particularly for food, and for subjects that require intensified colours. Finally, Juno warms photos and brightens colours, which makes it ideal for highlighting city features in organic ways.

Empirical studies on the visual appeal of filters have yet to be conclusively studied. However, one study revealed that the application of filters has a positive effect on engagement numbers; a filtered photo received twenty-one percent more views as compared to posts with no filters added (Bakhshi et al., 2015). Although this seems to be decisive evidence of the power of filters, competing studies have claimed the opposite effect, and some studies (for example, Peng, 2017) have shown that images with filters vastly underperformed those that had no filters applied. Aesthetics, it seems, are difficult to measure empirically. Photographs taken of museums seem to emphasize visual cues in attempting to convey the meaning and context of a photographer's visit, which may indicate that the use of filters would be more popular in Instagram posts of this kind of venue.

5.2.4. Conclusion

One of the key objectives of this research is to identify how architectural iconicity is represented in social media, and furthermore, the way the perception and image of iconic buildings are shaped via social media, in particular, Instagram. With regard to the role of art, Goodman (1968) asked the question *when is art*? instead of the question *what is art*? This allowed aesthetics to be placed alongside human experience in exploring how meaning regarding the object of art and human consciousness is created. He emphasised that the aesthetic experience of art, including architecture, is context-specific and private, influenced by the individual and society (or culture). It is clear that, from Goodman's (1968) point of view, the matter of how an art object operates in experience is more important than the object itself, which leads to the conclusion that architectural meaning cannot be come by only in the physical properties of the architectural object, but also in this process of arranging and symbolising experience of it. Thus, ''the "building" and "aesthetic dimension" of the architectural work are not given to a person's sensibility as ready-made realities but as potentialities to be realized in the aesthetic experience' (Mitias, 1999, p.61). In a similar vein, the iconicity of architecture depends on 'the material, auratic presence of the singular, physically manifest object vis-à-vis the beholder' (Stierli, 2016, p.312). The question here concerns what comprises this aesthetic experience of architecture including iconic buildings, and how this experience is structured. According to Mitias (1999), two elements, vehicle and spatial form, constitute architectural work as a physical object, on which the aesthetic experience relies. The former means the physical structure of a building, which is perceived via the senses: texture, colour, shape, smell, extension and so on. The latter is a spatial dimension of a building as a three-dimensional object. For instance, when visitors approach the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, the first thing that meets their eyes is the building's shape and colour. As they move around the building, their engagement with the building goes further, surveying the façade, and then seeing the details of the building that might strike them as quite different from other buildings - sculptures, columns, windows, stairs, a hall, gallery space - all in a certain

manner. While proceeding around the building, they might perceive a large amount of details of the building and may try to see them from different vantage points, in order, possibly, to help them capture memorable images using their mobile phone. At the end of visit, they may end up with an image of the building, which may have a gigantic spider (Mamán by Louise Bourgeois) on top of the perceived image. These photographed images are ‘representations located at the diffuse boundary between the physical object and the perceiving subject, and they seem to borrow their iconicity precisely from their ability to multiply infinitely while at the same time retaining their memorability’ (Stierli, 2016, p.312-313). What is depicted in the subject of a photograph, its visual grammar, and the external environment is image formation through architecture, that is, ‘iconicity’.

Berger (1972), in his 1972 BBC series Ways of Seeing, maintained that while technological mechanisms for transmitting images have changed, the social relations and power dynamics behind these images have not. In the current image-obsessed society, Berger’s view of image interpretation resonates with the reading of the visually encoded messages created by social media. His ideas will be considered further in the next stage of my research, discourse analysis.

The dataset for this study was gathered from images in the public domain on Instagram, along with metadata such as the usernames, hashtags, captions and comments accompanying each image, although for data protection reasons and to safeguard the anonymity of participants, personal details that might identify users were not recorded. The study observed the ways in which iconic architecture is characterised on Instagram through the utilisation of codes and used visual content analysis to study the variety of visual trends that emerged. Three main themes were identified in the posts, with visual attributes common to each type. These can be categorised as follows: firstly, ‘Glorifying the building and its architect’; secondly, ‘Sense of Place: the building within its urban context’; and thirdly, ‘Look at me! I am here.’

Table 5.9) Themes of photographs based on content analysis

Category	Examples
a. Glorifying the building and its architect	• Include external elements of a building only or ones depicted together with artwork • Include no human subject or indication of random person(s) • Tend to include specific information in texts on the building and its architect
b. Sense of Place: the building within its urban context	• Capture the building in its surrounding context; often the urban context is the focal subject in a photograph • Tend to include specific information in texts on the city or even the country where the case is
c. Look at me! I am here	• Include (a) person(s) visiting the place, photographed in the background of the external/internal architectural elements; often the featured person is an Instagram account holder or the member(s) of his/her party photographed are

5.3. Stage 2. Iconographic-Iconological Method

To start Panofsky's iconographic-iconological method, categories had to be read to identify and patterns that were relevant to the research objectives and the primary research question of how architectural iconicity is shown in images posted by visitors. By completing this process, I progressed iteratively through the categories and the individual Instagram posts used for data collection. I highlighted the key themes and patterns whilst considering the research literature and the content analysis findings to lead my research. This type of

Thematic analysis provides an effective and theoretically flexible way of assessing, according to Braun and Clarke (2006, p.2), as well as being a widely applied qualitative analytic method. To present the findings relating to these themes, six examples from each data-set were analysed. This allowed me to see how Instagram photos from museum visitors show engagement with the building.

5.3.1. Theme 1. Glorifying the building and its architect

5.3.1.1.Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (GMB)

Figure 5.17. Instagram screenshot of the GMB for theme 1

Step 1: Pre-iconographic description

White walls and windows are set out at various angles. The walls rise to the

ceiling and they are atypical and in various forms. A limited area of the walls in the left-hand front corner of this photograph is in light brown. The windows are framed with steel posts and glazing bars that are also of varied shapes, including curves, uprights, diagonals, and horizontals. The skylights bring natural daylight inside. The lighting seen at the top of the image cast shadows on the ceiling. The structure made of glass and framed with steel posts and bars is seen between white a column-like curved wall and a thin column set on the light brown wall.

Step 2: Iconographic analysis

The building has three levels which house around twenty galleries. There is an atrium which acts as the hub of the building and the central orientation space, which gives access to the galleries. Some of the galleries are designed in the classic style, that is, they are rectangular, but the building's innovative curves come into play in other galleries, which have unique shapes, angles and even balconies. The 'Boat Gallery' is an example of one of these unusually designed spaces. This is a massive space stretching over 400 feet along the riverfront walk and under the nearby bridge. Gehry's intention was to create a fish shape, one of his recurring design motifs. This vast gallery is empty of columns and is perfect for large-scale sculpture. Currently it houses an installation by Richard Serra. The museum entrance is a lobby opening into a 165-foot high atrium, which is almost twice the height of the Frank Lloyd Wright's rotunda in New York's Guggenheim Museum. The atrium acts as the organisational heart of the 257,000-square-foot museum. Gehry refers to it as 'The Flower' because of its configuration of repeating geometrical patterns, whimsical angles and glassed-in stems of upright supports. This space has the feeling of a sealed inner sanctum for the natural forces of creativity – a great greenhouse, rather than a cathedral (New York Times, 1997).

The photographer captioned the image: 'Waves of metal, glass, and concrete'. His reception of the atrium of the museum resonates well with the literature on the origin and definition of an icon. The caption plays a role in allowing his captured image to reinforce his impression of it and be more appealing to

viewers. Two of the key features of icons is that they are recognisable and memorable (Lees-Maffei, 2014), and in fact, they are recognisable because they are memorable. For example, sacred icons have an association with a specific, well-known religious narrative. The association of recognition relies on memory, and in the case of religious or architectural icons, this recognition is a wordless moment of cognition. Another feature common to iconic architecture is a novel, uncommon shape. In the study of iconic architecture, this feature is one of the central indicators that a structure has the status of an icon, and unusual shapes in iconic architecture form part of the design dialogue in architecture as it advances.

Step 3: Reflexive interpretation

The photograph is taken from below, which is sometimes referred as a bug's (worm's) eye view, as if the observer were a bug crawling on the ground. A three-point perspective is commonly used in a bug's eye view shot, with one vanishing point on top, another on the left, and the other on the right. This angle is chosen when a photographer wants to get as close to the building as possible, shooting straight up. It can capture ceilings, skylights and general off-the-ground perspectives in a way that clearly conveys their height and scale. This image was intended to capture the geometric ceiling structure of the museum building, which is representative of Gehry's architectural design. Getting as high up from the ground as as possible, the photographer was able to shoot the ample structure of the ceiling in one shot, thereby creating a unique image of the building as well as conveying the geometric design of the soaring atrium.

Step 4: Iconological interpretation

The windows of the atrium allow generous light into the space and are built on a massive scale. Their frames are made of steel uprights, with glazing bars that create patterned webs with curving horizontal, upright and diagonal elements. The visual effect of these is evocative, and potentially bewildering; however, the atrium features synthesizing, calming, tall white walls, rising 164 feet to the ceiling. This design pays tribute to Frank Lloyd Wright's New York Guggenheim rotunda, but in contrast to White's monochrome white space, Gehry's creation

features the dynamism of expanses of glass and polished stone blending with his vast white walls, in a synthesis of traditional and modern materials. The interior energetic pattern of this building is as breath-taking as its iconic exterior (Wilkinson, 2012).

Due to the fact that the atrium, as well as the exterior, is representative of Gehry's innovative technological skills, images of the atrium have circulated across media and around the world. The photographer of this image appears to have visited the site with prior knowledge of Gehry's project and replicated this famous image.

5.3.1.2. Dongdaemun Design Plaza (DDP)

Figure 5.20. Instagram screenshot of the DDP for theme 1

Step 1: Pre-iconographic description

This photograph portrays the descending indoor stairs, leading from one floor to another with a turn in direction. Straight flights are divided by intermediate landings. On one side of the staircase are wall-mounted handrails and on the other, white polished concrete or stone balustrades. The steps are of brown wooden flooring with dark-coloured anti-slip stair nosing. The space appears to be dimly lit or indirectly illuminated by lights put around the balustrades. There is no human figure descending or ascending the staircase.

Step 2: Iconographic analysis

The location where the photograph was taken is revealed by its geotag and hashtags, including #dongdaemundesignplaza, #seoul, #igersseoul, and #korea. The DDP, since its opening in 2014, has become a highly instagrammable spectacle and was the most Instagram-tagged location in Korea in 2015 and the second most tagged in 2016. This neo-futuristic building, designed by the late Iraqi-British architect Zaha Hadid, boasts a unique architectural beauty, which screams “I am a Zaha Hadid”, with its adoption of space framed with minimised columns. Visitors approach the gigantic space through the staircases that wrap around sections of the gently curved structure. Sculptural staircases within the DDP are another architectural marvel. Indoor staircases, illuminated by narrow strips of LED lights, spiral up to the fourth floor, connecting a museum, exhibition halls, a library, and so on. Dazzling the eye, they offer one of the most popular photographing spots along with the external staircase, also known as the ‘cave stairway’.

It is assumed that the photographer is well-versed in architecture, which is evidenced by numerous architecture-related hashtags, such as #tv_spiralstaircases, #tv_leadinglines, and #creativearchitecture over and above architect-related hashtags, like #zahahadid and #zahahadidarchitecture. Furthermore, the photographer even likens the staircase in the photograph to the Escherian stairwell, captioning ‘Up and down - almost M C Escher-like, which was commented on by a follower, saying ‘Fantastic. I like the Escher idea’. The Escherian Stairwell, also known as Penrose steps, means a phenomenon

“of a staircase in which the stairs make four 90-degree turns as they ascend or descend yet form a continuous loop, so that a person could climb them forever and never get any higher. This is clearly impossible in three dimensions.” (Wikipedia, n.d.). Spotting the similarity between the subject staircase in the image and the existing well-known one, the photographer depicts one architectural feature of the building and conveys her perception of it as analogous with the endless staircase called the Escherian Stairwell.

Step 3: Reflexive interpretation

The image was taken from a high camera angle, looking down from the upper floor of the staircase. Usually staircases are filled with architectural features, such as leading lines, patterns, shapes, and symmetry, all of which are conducive to creating interesting images. Leading lines, in particular, are an effective way to draw viewers’ eyes through different elements of a photograph. In this image, whether intentional or unintentional, the diagonal lines of the railing on the staircase draw the view from the top, to the middle, and then the bottom of the stairs. They create such a ‘mental exploration’ in viewers’ minds that viewers are enticed to wonder where these stairs could lead; this enables the curving staircase to demonstrate its dynamic feel and creates a visual narrative in the compositional structure of the photograph. Composing the elegant spiral staircase within the frame, the photographer challenges viewers to appreciate the artistic architectural element of Hadid’s building.

Step 4: Iconological interpretation

Some of the images in my dataset capture architectural details rather than a building as a whole. The focus on details without much regard for the context sometimes leads a photographer to create abstract work, whether expected or unexpected. The staircase that is often considered when imagining a building can seem too familiar and boring, but in this case turns out to implicitly frame an architect’s unique architectural style. Spiral staircases have been appreciated by architectural photographers for the dynamic form they make when they are photographed with the right perspective, a fact that the photographer of this image probably knew before capturing her subject. In addition, the staircase

photographed is one of the repeatedly pictured elements of the DDP building in my datasets. Due to the beauty of the staircase, it has become an iconic shot of the DDP that has been commonly photographed and published across the media. It cannot be affirmed whether the photographer has already seen similar images of the staircase before and decided to replicate her own version of it or if it was purely coincidence that she captured it in the frame. Whatever her motives, however, the underlying truth is that she appreciates its aesthetics to the extent that she photographed and uploaded it onto her Instagram account, even giving the analogy of its shape to the Escherian Stairwell, a concept that requires some pre-knowledge for understanding.

Peirce (1998) suggests that icons lead the perceiver into a phenomenological moment of consideration of one's senses, which is created and framed by pre-existing knowledge and associations, and that altogether this creates a 'composite photograph' (p. 435) in the perceiver's mind. The perceiver compares this moment, this "photograph", with their senses, and automatically searches for pattern and similarity. For example, when a perceiver is making a classification of the 'iconic' status of a Victorian chair, he or she must have at least some vague, pre-existing idea of what a Victorian chair looks like. Merrell (1995) suggests that Peirce holds the belief that it is more appropriate to understand signs as personal experiences, as opposed to objective realities. Although it is a perception that icons are seen as existing in an objective reality, this perception is highly, often unconsciously, subjective.

In a similar vein, images that are repeatedly photographed can disclose what specific elements of a building people are more drawn to. This could be clear evidence of how people capture images of the characteristics of an iconic building while viewing it, which ultimately leads to engraving it on one's mind. Through attention to details in people's photographing practice, people sometimes analyse a building on a micro scale, which also influences the overall perception of the building visited.

5.3.2. Theme 2. 'Sense of Place': the building within its urban context

5.3.2.1. Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (GMB)

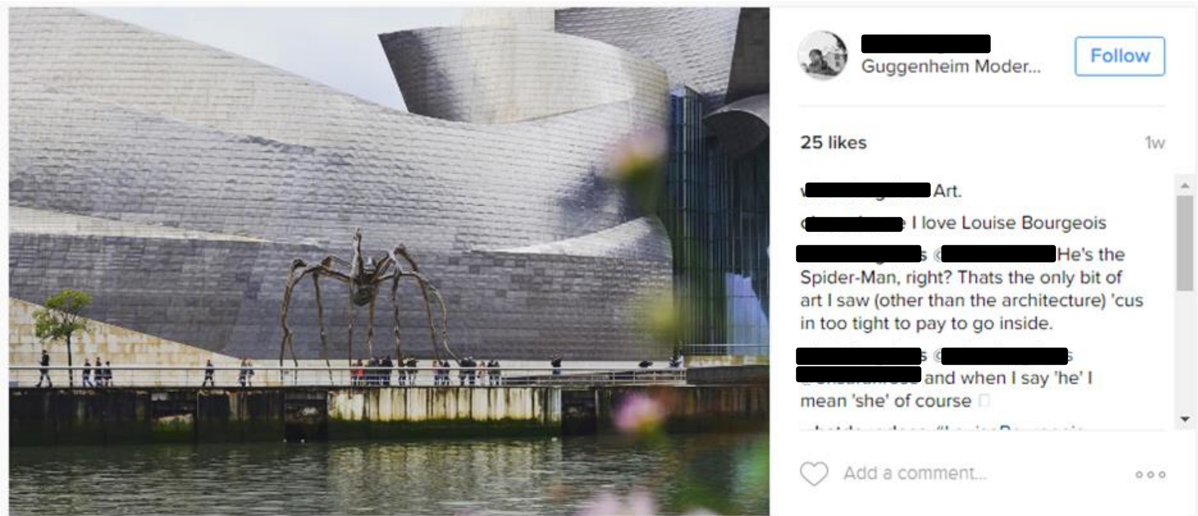


Figure 5.21. Instagram screenshot of the GMB for theme 2

Step 1: Pre-iconographic description

A section of the blackish river or lake is seen in the photograph. The refection of the structure behind is on the water. On the edge of the water, the curvy, randomly-shaped structure stands, with its exterior of rectangular panels. The panels appear to be constructed of metal, based on their colour and the shimmering surface catching the light. On the right side of the structure, a grand-sized window or glass wall is partially seen. Random people are on the bank of the structure, where a spider-like sculpture is also located. The spider is standing between the water and the structure behind. More people are gathered around the sculpture. People are dwarfed by the 8-leg spider sculpture. There is one tree on the left side of the bank.

Step 2: Iconographic analysis

A geotag and hashtags reveal that the venue where this shot was taken is GMB. The Bilbao Guggenheim was opened in 1997 by the King and Queen of Spain, and since that time it has had a deeply significant influence on the direction of

modern architecture, evidenced by the christening of ‘the Bilbao effect’, a way of describing how investment into centres of culture in downtrodden urban areas in the form of striking architecture may lead to economic renewal. This museum is considered to be the precursor of a new generation of architecturally significant, strangely shaped buildings all around the world (Moor, 2017). This nautical-themed building by Gehry is located next to the Nervión river on a 32,500-square-metre site and exists harmoniously within its urban setting. Its design references the city’s nautical industrial heritage: it is shaped like a ship, with titanium fish tail flourishes, and glass panels, whose transparency is a symbolic beckoning into its interior, which houses the city’s modern treasures (Stagg, 2017). An aerial view of the building’s metallic exterior reveals an almost floral sensibility, but the view from the ground resolutely shows a ship’s shape, which is a strong, immediate referencing of the city’s history as a port. The building’s materials play evocatively with the elements of weather: titanium, limestone and glass flow in surprising curves that reflect the light interestingly and continuously react to the various conditions of the sky. Each of the .38mm titanium tiles features a fixing clip, creating a dimple in each tile; the visual effect from afar is of water rippling and iridescence (Pagnotta, 2013).

Throughout this image, the photographer tells a captivating visual story of the museum building that reflects the background described above by capturing it all in the same frame: the shiny surfaced, fish tail-like odd shape of the building, its famous on-site sculpture, and the river that is well connected to the context and history of the building’s birth.

Given the caption, which included the word ‘Art’, and the fact that the name of the artist, ‘Louise Bourgeois’, is referred to in the dialogue in the comment section of the post, the photographer seems to have deliberately included the sculpture ‘Maman’ in his image in the background of the museum’s exterior.

Step 3: Reflexive interpretation

The photograph was taken at a long distance, from across the Nervion river, in order to capture the building’s gilded appearance and immense volume and to include the context. The river occupies the frontal one fourth of the frame. The

remainder of the frame was taken up by the building's massive volume in the background, which draws the eye immediately to the museum's unusual, curvy shape and its glittering skin of titanium shingles. The photographer depicts the sculpture 'Maman' in the centre of the middle ground, which is made up of the plaza that separates the building from the river. Thus, this shot appears to be intended to portray the sculpture as the central point of attention or at least with the same weight as the building itself in the surrounding context, thereby redressing the balance away from the domination of the building in the frame. By incorporating human figures with other elements of the image, such as the sculpture and the museum building, the photographer helps the viewer enhance their understanding of the scale of the elements photographed. Furthermore, the presence of random people in the scene provides information about how people engage with architecture - that is, the relationship between people and architecture. The inclusion of the botanical figure, a tree in the far left-hand corner also provides evidence of how big the sculpture and the building are.

Step 4: Iconological interpretation

In Instagram, hashtags play a key role, allowing users to search for pictures that are tagged with a specific themes (Highfield and Lever, 2015) that a user intends to associate his/her image with. This image is tagged with a variety of architecture-related hashtags, such as #Gehry, #FrankGehry, #architecturephotography, #engineering, #civilengineering, and #contemporary architecture, which shows the photographer's interest in architecture and his desire to share and communicate with like-minded people. The building has had a monumental impact in the sphere of architecture, and its innovative design pushed the boundaries of building technology. Presumably the photographer is well aware of this momentous effect, judging from the specialised technical hashtags #engineering and #civilengineering. It is questionable, in fact, whether the engineering and architectural design techniques of the early 1990s were adequate for such an avant-garde design, which featured a double-curvature, mathematically intricate exterior skin and structural frame (Bianchini, 2017).

Iconic architecture is a sphere inhabited by a small pool of architects who create

buildings and structures with a powerful, artistic aesthetic. Ethier (2015) describes iconic architecture as “avant-garde, unique, enigmatic and monumental”. Ethier’s exploration of iconic architecture takes into consideration its relationship with public policy and the current situations in major cities, where iconic architecture is often to be found. Iconic architecture can be compared to sculpture on a grand scale, and exists as symbolic structures artistically modifying cityscapes, cultural imagination and even digital space. Iconic architecture has a social impact as well as an aesthetic one, and far from existing as a visual abstraction, it has meaning and significance. Ethier alludes to Norberg-Schulz’s belief that architecture exists in a dynamic relationship with society (p. 2), and describes the tendency for iconic architecture to house cultural organisations such as “museums and concert halls” rather than ‘churches or seats of government’, questioning whether centres for culture are now the sole communal spaces where societies cohere (Ethier, 2015). Ethier asserts, referencing the observations of Jencks (2005), that iconic structures bestow a special synergy on their environment, one that contains both past and future. As a result, iconic architecture participates in a complex relationship with its (mostly urban) environment.

Based on its position at the centre of the middle ground in the frame, Louise Bourgeois’ spider is a focal point of the image. The caption ‘Art’ and the following comments on the artist also make the sculpture an eye-catcher in the image. The GMB has long been renowned for its world-class, site-specific installations, which have become almost as iconic as Gehry’s building itself. From its foundation, the GMB commissioned large-scale site-specific artworks, such as the famous sculptural spider ‘Maman’ by Louise Bourgeois as well as works by Jeff Koons, Richard Sera, and Daniel Buren, among others. The giant spider stands on the plaza with the background being the striking sculptural form of the building. The photographer probably intends to demonstrate that the sculpture is sensitive to its context by capturing key views of its surroundings and reflecting existing architectural features. Followers’ comments, including ‘Definitely awesome’ and ‘Totally rocks’ show how the intention of the photographer has been received.

Like most of the photographs in my dataset, the photographer associates Ghery's building with the city of Bilbao, where the museum is located, by including a hashtag #bilbao in his post. An analysis of projects by Hadid and Gehry provide answers to some provocative questions about iconic architecture, such as how architecture may create spaces with a virtual visibility, that is, a worldwide visibility, while still cooperating with local conditions. Their work in particular addresses the need to consider interpretation and experiences of places alongside the need to reimagine them. One of the points of Ethier's work is an explanation of how these architectural statements should not be mistaken as works permanently disconnected from their environment, but rather as potential ideological solutions to the new issues raised by hypermodernism. This view is well reflected in the Instagram images of an iconic building that are essentially tagged with the name of the place where it belongs.

5.3.2.2. Dongdaemun Design Plaza Seoul (DDP)

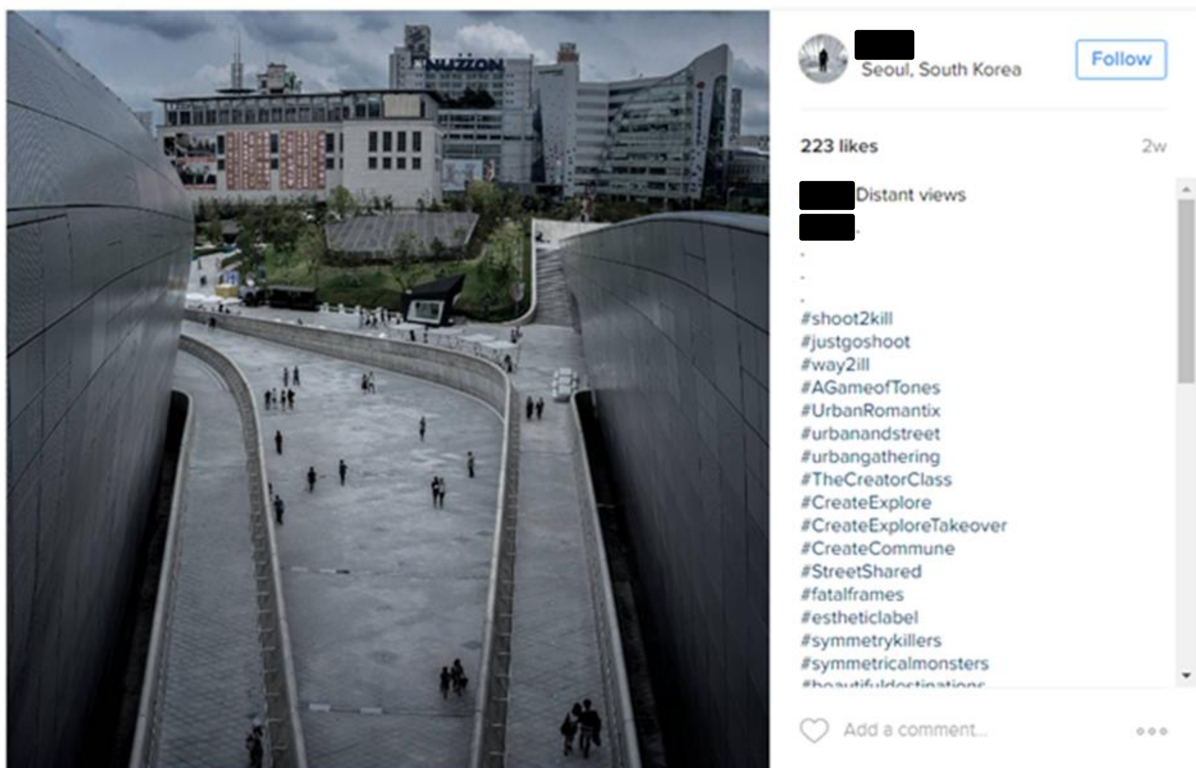


Figure 5.22. Instagram screenshot of the DDP for theme 2

Step 1: Pre-iconographic description

Three pathways are seen in the picture. The middle pathway is the widest; it gets wider as it goes along, and becomes narrower again as it curves to the left. On the other hand, the left and right pathways are of almost equal width. The left one bends to the left, whereas the right one divides into two, with one going straight and the other curving to the left, and going round the green area of trees and lawns. The architectural structure is in the green area, beyond which high-rise buildings are seen. Red banners, on which white letters are written, are placed on one of the buildings. Dozens of passers-by are seen on the pathways. On both sides of the pathways are walls composed of panels. A cloudy sky is seen above the buildings.

Step 2: Iconographic analysis

The geotag shows the image was taken in Seoul and the more specific venue photographed is disclosed through the hashtag #dongdaemundesignplaza. This shot was taken from the roof of the DDP, depicting the path under the DDP leading to the Dongdaemun History and Culture Park, which is part of the DDP complex. The Park offers an insight into the previous function of the area as a military training ground throughout the Joseon dynasty. The image extends onto the DDP's roof, showing it to be a truly unique area in Korea. The structure within the park, which is framed in the middle of the background, is one of the Park's gallery spaces. High-rise buildings in the background are 24-hour shopping malls in the area. The photographer and user of this post, who is presumably male, based on the user name, appears to be well-versed in architecture and photography, judging by the technical hashtags he used, including #fatalframes, #symetrickillers, #AGameof Tones, and #SonyImages, to name just a few. The caption says, 'Distant view', followed by comments, like 'Amazing', 'So cool', 'This is great', and 'Great shot', which indicates that communications between the user and his followers are centred around the aesthetic quality of the building and/or the view photographed. This shows that a photograph can easily be taken by a visitor in such a way that highlights

aesthetic features within a picture. It could be theorized that visitors may be more inclined to view the DDP with an eye to its aesthetic value, rather than its value as derived from being an art house with a truly impressive variety of artwork.

Step 3: Reflexive interpretation

A city view is seen from an elevated vantage point. It appears that the photographer intended to capture the exterior of the building along with specific landscape feature. Pathways are in the foreground. The leaning lines of the pathways start from the lower middle portion of the image and direct viewers' attention to the park and building in the distance. Intentional or not, such photographs give viewers the illusion that the background environmental features form the central point. Parallel lines give the appearance of converging at a single point when they curve to the left or the right, and this adds greater depth and distance within the image. Of course, the subject matter of concern is not the pathways or the background to the buildings, but the interrelations between the building and its urban context.

Step 4: Iconological interpretation

Images in the dataset show areas where the building is most frequently pictured. As with this photograph, images portraying a view from the roof of the DDP is one example. A shot of the pathways looked down on from the roof top is an iconic image of the DDP, and has been pictured by many photographers, professional and amateur alike. This is due to the fact that the elevated vantage point not only provides an aesthetically pleasing view for the photograph, but also that the circulation is on the outside of the building, giving people access to places there where they can take photographs. However, even though the images in the dataset portray the same view, each image depicts the space a little differently. As argued by Keilbach (2009), because there are certain visuals that have become such popular cornerstones of collective 'cultural memory,' it may very well be that visitors not only want to produce their own photos on these landmarks but want to mimic them entirely.

The implications of this reproductive act for the original building is profound, in that the processes call for the appropriation of architecture by the photographic depiction as well as the transformation of a photographic image into an icon (Scwharzer, 2004). Jencks (2006) proclaimed that the characteristics of an iconic building include its capability to invoke ‘public and journalistic excitement’ (p.13) or, even further, ‘media saturation’ (p.5) that may be caused by the building’s ‘sculptural gesture’ (p.4) through its unusual or even weird form or geometry. Iconic buildings have a considerable amount of fame propelled by their spatial qualities as well as an iconic image, which eventually goes beyond both the actual building and the mediatised image, in this case, a social image posted on Instagram. In the end, the iconic image impacts, or even controls the reception of the building by the public, as can be instantly confirmed by the caption and comments in this Instagram post.

In this image, the photographer, who is assumed to be knowledgeable in both architecture and photography, framed a certain feature of the building which is infrequently seen in typical tourist photography, rather than framing the familiar façade of the building. The pathways occupy two thirds of the entire frame. Above the pathways can be seen part of the skyline of the area - a few high-rise shopping mall buildings- and the Park. So, the key subject matter here is not the actual building itself but rather the relationship between the building and its surrounding urban environment. Furthermore, if there are random individuals in the image, they tend to appear dwarfed by the size of the subject site. When a photograph pictures a crowd of people, such an image tends to portray a more precise sense of scale, permitting the viewer to acquire a sense of spatial quality. As random people are generally anonymous, a viewer can imagine himself as any one of these people to consider how they themselves might relate within the pictured space.

As can be seen from the user’s hashtags, such as #symmetrykillers and #symmetricalmonsters, the photographer intentionally focuses on a particular element of the building - the walls alongside the pathways in juxtaposition. Converging lines in this image of the pathways carry the eye upward to the surrounding environment of buildings and the Park. Unlike most visitor

photographs, this one expresses artistic statements about buildings and their settings. In this photograph, the DDP acquires expressive power from the artistic contrast between the building and its urban context. An elevated perspective and the selection of the subject matter create an image of the DDP building which is hard to forget. This image is also intended to emphasise the contemporary modern cityscape of Seoul by highlighting the contrast between the anomalous, futuristic structure of the DDP with a normal aspect of Seoul, where the building is located. The photographer's intention is supported by suitable relevant hashtags, for example, #urbanandstreet, #urbangathering, #cityscape, and #citylimitless.

5.3.3. Theme 3. Look at me! I am here

5.3.3.1. Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (GMB)

Figure 5.23. Insagram screenshot of the GMB for theme 3

Step 1: Pre-iconographic description

A couple is depicted in the background of the installation resembling a spider or an imaginative alien creature. The woman is blonde-haired, wearing cat-eye-shaped, dark-coloured sunglasses and a grey (light blue) and dark navy checked shirt. Her hair has been swept back and a thick strand of front hair is pulled out. She is standing sideways, leaning against a man, smiling with her upper teeth visible. The man has brown hair in a short, brushed-up hairstyle, and has a combination of a goatee and a moustache. He is wearing square, dark-coloured sunglasses and an open, red-toned checked shirt with a V-neck T-shirt underneath. He is also smiling, with lips stretched across his face and no teeth shown. This couple is seen in a photograph which pictures them from the chest up and with their eyes looking out from the front. The installation behind has 8 rugged legs and a container, in which is contained round objects. Beyond the sculpture is a part of a building, with a canopy and one column which is holding up the canopy. The building is seemingly curved and its top area shines, catching the light and reflecting the sunlight. The sun doesn't reach to underneath the canopy, which is in the shade. The exterior of the building has repetitive square patterns on the surface. The sky is blue with a hint of clouds.

Step 2: Iconographic analysis

Viewers who have been exposed to images of and information on the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, which includes world renowned artwork onsite, will immediately recognise, without referring to the caption and hashtags in the post, the sculpture and the building partially seen in the picture as 'Maman' by Louise Bourgeois and the Guggenheim museum. Standing 9 metres high, the giant spider Maman (mother in French), was created in 1999 by the artist Louise Bourgeois, who used the spider as a metaphor for a mother. This mammoth creature is made of a bronze, stainless steel, and marble, and also includes a sac containing 26 marble eggs (Guggenheim Museum, 2017). Together with other magnificent artworks, it is representative of the Guggenheim museum to the extent that people easily associate its image with the museum. It is also one of the most frequently photographed elements at the museum. The

Guggenheim Bilbao is recognised as one of the best art galleries in the world (Prendergast, 2013). The synergy between the architecture by the starchitect Frank Gehry and its permanent installations and site-specific works helped the museum achieve its current fame. The building's random curves are built from titanium, limestone, and glass to allow the building to catch the light and react to shining sun. This can be seen in the picture on the building in the background.

Step 3: Reflexive interpretation

The reconstruction of the planimetric composition of the photograph makes it possible to see the image in another way, in a way Imdahl calls the 'seeing gaze' (sehendes Sehen): the entire composition of the picture is dominated by the position of the central body of the sculpture in the upper right section of the picture as well as the couple's heads in the lower left section. The rule of thirds is the most basic composition and it is based on the principle that an image can be broken down into thirds (both horizontally and vertically), meaning that there are nine sections within the image. Usually, people place important elements at the intersection point, where the eye tends to go first. In this picture, the centre of the sculpture is placed at one of these intersection points. Another intersection point is taken up by the couple in an approximately central place between the two people's heads.

The reconstructed formal structure of the total area of the photograph as well as the direction in which the spider's legs are sprawling dominate the composition strongly. The couple in the picture seems to be trapped by the legs of the spider which looks as though it might swoop down at any time. Bearing this scene in mind, the photographer set two central objects - the spider and the couple - in suitable areas of the photograph. The juxtaposition of the spider and the couple on the one hand, and the positioning of the spider, whose centre falls on the exact intersection point, on the other, results in compositional contrast. This staged scene, though terrifying in some sense, contradicts the smile of the two people.

The choice of the position of the objects in relation to the motive is an important way to express perspective. The photograph was taken with a selfie technique as well as being a low angle shot, with the camera pointing upwards. A low angle shot usually serves to express a sense of space. Camera position (level) and angle are important in that they help change the atmosphere of a photograph, even if the subject remains the same. Given that the sculpture is a 9-metre-high giant installation, the most effective way to depict most of the spider's body in a picture is essentially with a low angle shot. Thus, the chosen perspective enables the viewer of the picture to easily pay attention to the central object - the spider - and in this way be better immersed in the impression and feeling the photographer had at the time the picture was taken.

Step 4: Iconological interpretation

The aim of the final level of iconological interpretation is to disclose, with the help of the previous three stages, the meaning the photograph contains, namely, the condensed manifestation of architectural iconicity. In this stage, knowledge of historical, cultural, and social conditions is taken from the pre-iconographic description and the iconographic analysis relating to the formal construction of the picture. Regarding the knowledge obtained through the iconological interpretation, Panofsky (1955) emphasised the researcher's ability to perform a synthesis or to use synthetic intuition. Therefore, the knowledge gained throughout should be cross-checked repeatedly through comparative analysis with other photographs chosen for validity.

The reconstruction of the compositional structure of the photograph shows that the first thing that catches the eye is the spider, and second is the human object. The spider, whose legs stretch over the entire picture and whose dark colour contrasts with the blue sky, is in this way given a certain massiveness. The photograph falls in the category of cliché photograph, as this sort of staged photograph in the background of the sculpture Maman have been attempted frequently by tourists visiting the museum. For this reason, it can be assumed that the photographer is likely to have a prior knowledge about the museum. By positioning the human object in decent size at the intersection point, the picture

portrays a strong interaction between the visitors and the place. The partial depiction of the famous façade of the Guggenheim museum in the picture gives the audience enough of a hint about where they are, as does the choice of the iconic subject - Maman. The building itself in this picture is less salient than other subjects; however, by marking the presence of the building as background and highlighting the artwork in it, the photographer may understand the architecture itself in the context of the content within it.

The words used in the caption and comment help shape an understanding of the photographer's intentions regarding the museum, and they also express what the people in the picture were experiencing at the time. The caption in the post states 'itsy bitsy spider', which is the title of a popular nursery rhyme. The photographer and/or the post uploader have a humorous response to the sculpture by associating its appearance with a famous nursery rhyme which also describes the same subject, a spider. Through the comment 'Brrr..weeral', it can be assumed that the audience is also reacting humorously to the image and caption, using the interjection 'Brrr', which is suggestive of shivering and the word 'weeral', meaning 'again' in Dutch.

Hashtags used in this post included #spider, #louisebourgeois, #maman, #bilbao, #visitspain, #guggenheimbilbao, #frankgehry, to name just a few, from which it can be inferred what the photographer associated the Guggenheim museum with, and at the same time what the photographer expected the viewer to associate it with. From this image, the photographer may also have sought to convey his understanding experience of the building in a broader context.

5.3.3.2. Dongdaemun Design Plaza (DDP)

Figure 5.24. Instagram screenshot of the DDP for theme 3

Step 1: Pre-iconographic description

A woman stands, making the peace sign, with a smile on her face. She is wearing a scarf that covers her head and neck and carries a bag on her right shoulder. She is posing on a passageway leading to an architectural structure of considerable size. Several random people are seen behind her. The image was taken at night. Both sides of the passageway are lit up. The surface of the curved edifice is made of panels of varying sizes. Rays of light come through the panels, which makes the surface seemas though it is twinkling. The passageway stretches on to a tunnel that goes through the building.

Step 2: Iconographic analysis

The geo tag (Dongdaemun Design Plaza), caption, and hashtags (#dongdaemun and #dongdaemundesignplaza) reveal that the image has been pictured at the DDP. Based on the female user name of the post, the account holder is assumed to be female and to be the same person in the image. The hashtags #seoul and #koreatrip2016 disclose that she is a tourist, presumably, judging by her headscarf, from a South East Asian Muslim country, such as Malaysia and Indonesia. Asians tend to make the peace or V sign, instead of

using the American phrase ‘Cheese’, to show that they are indeed present in the photograph (Burnett, 2014); her V sign therefore also provides some indication of where she is from. Given the time of day the photo was taken, and the location of the DDP in the heart of Seoul’s 24-hour shopping district, the woman could be a late-night shopper to a nearby market,or could be there simply for the night view of the DDP, rather than an actual visitor to the paid spaces within the museum. In the caption of the image, the user writes:

> *Nope, this is not a UFO spacecraft, although it might look like one This is Dongdaemun Design Plaza, designed by the late Zaha Hadid (a prominent Iraqi-born British female architect) and Korean firm Samoo. The DDP has been designed as a cultural hub at the centre of Dongdaemun, an historic district of Seoul that is now renowned for its 24-hour shopping and cafes. DDP is a place for people of all ages; a catalyst for the instigation and exchange of ideas and for new technologies and media to be explored. The variety of public spaces within DDP include Art/Exhibition Halls, Conference Hall, Design Museum/Exhibition Hall/Pathway, Design Labs & Academy Hall, Media Centre, Seminar Rooms and Designers Lounge, Design Market open 24 hours a day; enabling DDP to present the widest diversity of exhibitions and events that feed the cultural vitality of the city.*
>
> Source : http://www.zaha-hadid.com/architecture/dongdaemun-design-park-plaza/

Providing such detailed information on the DDP project, sourced from the website of its architect Zaha Hadid’s firm, the poster expresses her impression of the building by likening its unique appearance to that of a UFO. It has been said that the DDP is indicative of the instantly recognizable, signature style of Zaha Hadid, commonly dubbed as ‘Queen of Curve’; ’a powerful, elongated curvature extraordinarily evocative of neo futurism’ (Artpremium, 2016, para. 4).

The inclusion of external information on the DDP project in her caption reveals an attempt to extend the role of a photograph beyond personal documentation to educational tool to provide sufficient stimulation to engage viewers in intellectual discovery.

Step 3: Reflexive interpretation

The photographer depicts the woman in the centre of the foreground, with random people and the building in the background. This is a familiar tourist photographic cliché, with a single figure being captured in the middle distance in front of a landmark. The image is characterised by vernacular aesthetic tropes which involve such aspects as choice of subject matter, the placement and function of figures, and the abrupt cropping and framing of images. It appears that, in his/her effort to capture the entire building as well as the full-sized human figure in the same frame, the photographer has taken the image with a camera angle positioned low, which eventually invokes a heightening of the importance of the object photographed, the building in the background. The woman centred in the frame appears overwhelmed by the surroundings behind her, in contrast with the vastness of the building which occupies the majority of the frame. The filter used, among various Instagram filters, is Lark, which transforms a typical image of landscape into a more intense one, by desaturating reds and increasing blues and greens

Step 4: Iconological interpretation

An interpretation of this photograph, depicting an individual in the background of the well-known DDP façade, validates the way in which Instagram image posts act as 'a certificate of presence', announcing to the wider world that the individual depicted in the photograph has actually visited the site in question, an understanding proposed by Barthes (1981). With the growth in the popularity of museums, they have become subjects of photography so that they are used with this function in mind - to provide photographic evidence of 'certificates of presence'. This permits individuals to share the design of the buildings' structures and the art installations that they have witnessed with the general public. Having prior experience of photography of architectural features or art installations on many previous occasions (such as Jeff Koons' Puppy at the GMB, for example) provides every new visitor with the encouragement and confidence to not only take a picture, but also to post and share it on social media, thereby complying with the conventional tourist rituals of visiting well-

known landmarks, and of evidencing the visits. Many people also take photographs of themselves in front of famous architectural features, perhaps to validate their own self-worth and importance in having the ability to experience such landmarks and provide that certificate of presence to their followers and the general public. Urry and Larsen (2011) argue that there are many reasons, aside from providing a certificate of presence, that people may take pictures of themselves or other people. They state that this kind of person-centred tourist photography is meant to combine the image of a recognizable artefact with the visage of a person with whom they have a close relationship in order to highlight the aesthetic value of both within the photograph. The advent of mobile personal devices has further encouraged people to take pictures of themselves in times they think are remarkable, at locations that are recognizable. Views such as the façade of the DDP are photographed not only to encapsulate memorable experiences and views for the photographer's own sake, but also to provide evidence of their visit.

Jencks (2002) contends that iconic buildings should put forward a 'redundancy of popular signs and metaphors' that can be interpreted variously (p.34). As he goes on to argue, 'a successful iconic building will always elicit a flurry of bizarre comparisons…The icon won't calm down…This is the age of the enigmatic signifier' (Jencks, 2005, p.33). In his book, *The Iconic Building,* several examples of these comparisons are illustrated: Norman Foster's Swiss Re building as a pine cone and Gerhy's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao as an artichoke. Zaha Hadid's DDP building also works in this way. The DDP building has been frequently compared by the media and the general public alike with the 'Starship Enterprise', recently landed in Seoul. The user has confirmed this exactly by writing in the caption 'Nope, this is not a UFO spacecraft, although it might look like one'.

The exterior of the DDP is complexly patterned, with dips and edges that change at different times of the day and in different seasons with alterations in lighting settings. The building itself seems to be transformedby environmental shifts: it can appear to be smoothly conjoined with the rest of the scenery, or it can stand as a lone obelisk against the skyline. Its placement in a bustling

urban centre also sees it reflecting characteristics of its city quarter; for example, at night, it shines with the refracted lights of colourful signs and LED screens. Its fluidity is one of its most aesthetically beautiful – and famous – features. By framing the human figure in front of the building, which is animated by the built-in façade lighting, the photographer seeks to maximise 'otherness' and even further capture architectural curiosness. Hence, viewers are offered a souvenir, a way to experience the DDP in the form of visual and textual observations. Through the image and texts in the post, they also identify with the position of the user. This is a self-conscious moment of iconicity in architecture, and, through an Instagram post, is visually reinforced and textually marked as such, making sense of its presence in the viewers' reception of it.

5.3.4. Conclusion

An expansion of how building art is represented, and of its scope, is achieved through photography, which popularises a work of architecture whilst at the same time robbing the real building of some of its significance, thus constituting a sort of alter ego of building form and identity. Photography creates a correlation in individuals' minds between architecture and historical and geographical richness. Photography has the power to illustrate the latest structures and the earliest ruins, places of unparalleled exoticism, war-torn cities or urban revivals. Photography can make a building popular or detested. However, the renown and prominence brought by photography can be problematic, in that the existence of photographs of a building can eliminate the necessity to visit that building in person or mean that a building may appear less attractive in reality than on camera. Furthermore, the context of the physical site of a building is replaced by photography with media representation. The perception of the majority of buildings occurs between other spaces than their actual location. It is indeed extraordinary how culturally far-reaching photography is. Vision is globalised by photography through the dissemination of images throughout the world. The photographic perception of architecture

encompasses so much more than any specific place or building, giving it the capacity of a birds-eye view.

The design of these iconic buildings was done with the consideration that they were intended to appear pleasing to the eye and on camera; it can be said that they were 'iconised'. The images sometimes show that the context of the buildings was not accorded much attention, with the focus being explicitly on the buildings, in order to enhance the visual and spatial experience for the audience. This is also why unique or lavish materials are frequently used to adorn buildings, like the 38 mm titanium tiles on the GMB, which undulate as the light changes, or the fair-faced concrete, aluminium or steel cladding panels on the DDP. Without a doubt, the Instagram users in the datasets placed great emphasis on how the materials from which the buildings were made were structured on the surface and how they were treated in the visual images. The images of both the DDP and the GMB reflect this, with the visual dynamic generated by the visually enticing surfaces of the buildings and details changing according to environmental conditions.

Some photographs in the datasets did not focus on context, choosing instead to capture the essence of the building. For example, the atmosphere of permanence and iconicity at the DDP is expressed by photographs of the famous staircase; in these photographs it is typically only the staircase itself that is captured, occasionally with a human figure. The photographs prioritise surface and details, rather than presenting the staircase within the context of the building. Through the emphasis on details such as balustrades, stair flights, the spiral shape, and lighting, an appreciation of material complexity and elaborateness is imposed on the viewers. The photographs thus reflect a wish to attain a good balance from the diversity of architectural components. A photograph can be regarded as mediated experience, and a photograph of a building has no temporal or spatial parameters; it is weightless, and lacks texture, scale and even gravity occasionally. Furthermore, even though photography creates a barrier between viewers and architecture, it directs attention to buildings as well and permits the visualisation of architectural features that would otherwise remain out of reach. Unlike visiting a building in

person, photographs can provide only single views, rather than multiple ones. Therefore, photography can manipulate how a building is perceived as it compacts lived experience into a static image. According to Frank Lloyd Wright, this constituted the so-called 'definitive photograph' (Scwharzer, 2004), which had the power to uphold the reputation of a building.

It is also notable that shots depicting the same subject matter were found in both datasets. Numerous similar photographs have been produced over time by different photographers and illustrated in countless media and publications. For instance, the shot of the plaza with the spider sculpture looking from higher city level can be considered the meta-photograph of this building as it is familiar to many people who are aware of the GMB. Comparable to many acts of reproduction, the original building is impacted by such a process both in terms of the fact that photography appropriates architecture as well as in terms of the turning of the building into an icon from a photographic image.

The status of the GMB as an iconic building has as much to do with its renown as the quality of the building. In fact, both Gehry's building and the well-known image of its façade, for example, have been surpassed by the iconic image, which has come not only to influence reception of the building, but also to monopolise it, even on visits to the site. Obviously, the photographic experience cannot be replicated by the visit experience, due to seasonal or climatic variations in the details and surrounding natural elements. Furthermore, few visitors venture to cross the river to identify the accurate position from which the façade was photographed. Indeed, the flawlessness of the iconic image may be reinforced by the inability to reproduce it exactly during a visit to the site. Thus, the main idea is that photography wholly alters the experience of looking at architecture, with photographs providing a foretaste of buildings.

Imagining the life of a building within the broader culture is a prerequisite of photography. The fixed nature of art invites new interpretations, instead of narrowing comprehension to the illustrated objects. The argument put forth by Barthes in his essay *Image, music, text* (1977b) was that the meanings derived from photographs were social constructions, despite the naturality of the reality

portrayed. He further stated that photographs were always read historically, because things are read using established codes of meaning-production, being decipherable solely if the reader possesses the necessary knowledge, as is the case with any actual language.

Meanwhile, it has been observed (1977b) that the world itself is to some degree remodelled when a work of architecture is built, with materials being transposed and transformed, and the sense of the location being refashioned. Photography not only separates the work of architecture from its context, but also eliminates temporal and depth dimensions, recreating the image of that work of architecture and disseminating it to new contexts. It could be said that place is created by architecture and is converted into media by photography.

Although identical architectural features are photographed, as indicated in the datasets, it is still possible to produce novel contexts for the frame. Photographing different compositional structures, such as angles and distances, or enabling buildings to be depicted in 3D in the context of their surroundings or offering a wider perspective than the narrow view from straight in front of the building are all examples of the different ways in which this can be achieved. Such techniques allow depiction of asymmetrical or sculptural constructions and generate layers of depth.

According to the vantage point, variations between foreground and background, or between ambulatory paths and access points can be made and great significance can be attributed to intra-site relationships between key architectural features. Angled photographs allow views of the natural and anthropogenic factors in the environment surrounding a building, and these can be subject to repeated transformations, thereby shaping how the building will be viewed. In addition, although angled photography results in an inherent realism, naturality and casualness being associated with the photograph, such an impression is always carefully and masterfully orchestrated.

In numerous angled photographs in the DDP dataset, buildings are represented within their urban setting. To show how tall, massive and imposing a building is, one strategy is to photograph it amid surrounding structures. These kinds of

photographs are representative of whole cities in tourist literature, such as Paris embodied by the Eiffel Tower or Sydney embodied by the Opera House. In the work *Reading American Photographs*, the art historian Trachenburg (1990) stated that the identity of numerous cities in the US was shaped significantly by photographs, whilst also observing that the metropolises of the early 1900s could not be embodied by any building as well as it could by photographs, particularly those taken by Alfred Stieglietz. He argued that Stieglietz's photographs focused on iconic elements, such as the horsecar, ferry, plaza and skyscrapers to create an evocative and singular representation of the city of New York.

In terms of shot length, some photographs were taken at close range so that they do not resemble any identifiable object, let alone buildings. To a certain degree, there is a similarity between photography in minute detail and aerial perspectives. The standard cultural settings and the limitations of architectural perception are eliminated in both cases by the modifications of scale and the image immobility. In the absence of technological techniques, it would not be possible to observe shapes in the texture of the poured panels of the DDP and in the geometric patterns of the atrium ceiling of the GMB. The elements of both the building and the city over both near and distant ranges are combined within a 'zoomscape' (Scwharzer, 2004), which represents a way of observing architecture which is unrestricted by building or place borders.

The 'constructed' character of 'iconicity' and the psychological processes of projection, identification and narrative production underpinning the consumption of 'iconicity' are brought into sharp focus by the pervasiveness and universality of portable technological devices and social media platforms. The datasets obtained highlight that museums could successfully and concomitantly serve as 'selfie' backgrounds and as platforms for the manifestation of new personas.

From this perspective, owing to them being reframed by the pervasive camera phone, iconic buildings such as the DDP and GMB are part of a deeply ingrained tradition of public entertainment that was highly popular in the previous two centuries. For instance, a viewing experience and the illusion of

presence that engendered a perception of the embodied self were both concomitantly fostered by the parks and painted panoramas of the 1800s (Scwharzer, 2004).

The broad spectrum of opportunities offered by the DDP and GMB are not restricted to art viewing, but also include employment and the utilisations of images as 'selfies' and Instagram posts. This exemplifies the way in which the sophisticated and stratified characteristics of the architectural and cultural notion of 'iconicity' have been employed in a variety of situations. Therefore, as well as being environments which permit people to experience the iconic building, these destinations also enable the creation of novel online identities and images. This occurs to such an extent, that it even seems that greater value is associated with the image than with the actual experience of visiting the site, because the image has great mobility and can easily be uploaded and made available for sharing online.

The foremost goal of the proposed research is to explore the way architectural iconicity is represented on a social media platform by analysing how the two case buildings of the DDP and the GMB are represented through the manner in which their architectural features are positioned, framed, lighted and handled in the images photographed. The images in the two datasets are explicitly geared towards targeting the sensory expectations and viewing practices of an audience used to seeing images on the Internet and employing them for communication purposes. The results suggested that the expressive attributes of the buildings' forms and the messages they articulated were captured by the photographers and recognised by the audience. Although the current understanding of 'iconicity' has not changed much from previous notions of it, the representation and perception of this multi-dimensional concept have become more elaborate. Besides generating more focus on the architectural elements of a building and the context within which it is located, there has been a change in focus from 'I was there' type of photographs to a more sophisticated, creative capturing of a building's characteristics, in which a photographer or Instagram user is not commonly featured in the image of a building. This change also signals a departure from the investigation of a single

viewing position and identity to an investigation of a building and its environments that are tangible as well as intangible, with multiple facets that result in psychological and bodily experiences that differ according to the individual and to temporal and spatial parameters.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This study is centred on an arts-based approach to the research of iconic architecture and the theories surrounding its use and value. It explores the ways in which an iconic building is represented on social media and is perceived by the public. It must be stressed that the inclusion of social media and issues relating to digital sharing are part of an attempt to widen the discourse and give thought to the more practical, tangible aspects of architectural experience. Up until this point, academic literature on the subject has seemed to stick to a rigidly interpretive or conceptual viewpoint and this limits understanding of the way in which architectural iconicity is actually formed in the age of social media.

According to Rattenbury (2002), the notion of architecture as a progressively and intensely symbolised medium – before, after, and instead of the fact – is to some degree channelled and constructed by the propensities of every distinct form in which it is depicted. The research questions, from an empirical standpoint, the way in which iconic buildings are represented in social media. The only way to generate a reasonable response to the query at the heart of the study - what the essential elements and/or attributes that convey the iconicity of buildings in social media entries are – is to explain and clarify the representational processes of iconic architecture online. If this can be achieved, it makes it easier to conduct a deep empirical investigation. In any case, the following enquiry should be remembered as central to the study: how the social imagery of iconic architecture feeds back into people's perception of a city. Essentially, the study can be treated as an attempt to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the representational processes at play when iconic architecture is photographed and shared online.

As this thesis is primarily concerned with user-generated photographic images of the two case studies, the GMB and the DDP taken from Instagram, the two most popular hashtags for the two cases are the #guggenheimbilao and the #dongdaemundesignplaza ones. The data was collected using a third-party app, Iconosquare, during a two-week time frame in 2016, yielding 1,089 posts with

the #guggenheimbilbao hashtag and 814 posts with the #dongdaemundesignplaza hashtag. All photographs were then reviewed in order to select only those that met the requirements: a) that posts with photographic images should be chosen, and videos and photographs of the subject building in the format of drawings, illustrations, and posters should be excluded; and b) Posts not written in English should also be excluded from the dataset, as the language proficiency may differ depending on the languages. The final number of posts (photographs) used for the content analysis was 262 taken from the #guggenheimbilbao set and 243 from the #dongdaemundesignplaza set. Finally, the data was coded using inductive coding, choosing variables according to visual elements and attributes emerging from the dataset.

In terms of its analytical approach, this thesis combines elements from both quantitative and qualitative research methods. It draws on quantitative content analysis, which allows for numerically tracking key themes and compositional components in the data. A general picture of the representational practices of Instagram images was gained through content analysis, followed by qualitative readings of individual images using Panofsky's iconographic-iconological method.

In accordance with the key objectives of this research, final thoughts on the key findings drawn from the two-stage empirical analysis are provided in this chapter. This chapter also contains the main theoretical and methodological contributions, followed by some critical reflections on the notion of iconicity. Finally, it addresses some of the weaknesses of the research design and elaborates on directions for future research.

6.2. Discussion and Summary of the Main Findings

6.1. Objective 1: To examine how iconic buildings are represented in social media

A significant proportion of the datasets in this research are comprised of textual

components such as comments, hashtags, and captions, along with photographs. Instagram, essentially, is a continuous stream of crowd-sourced, fragmented, and non-linear images (Dryden and McCumber, 2017) that has provided a new platform for storytelling. Instagram is also often classified as a visual inspiration platform because of its ability to inspire the audience through visual storytelling. Therefore, it could be concluded that the pictures individuals share online have inherent social meaning.

A large proportion of images within the datasets were hashtagged with the name of the city and/or the country where the museum was sited. Hashtags, in essence, represent a collation of intentional self-representation, lived experience and personal associations (Dryden and McCumber, 2017). Consequently, when an individual uploads a city's picture with the hashtag 'Seoul', they are not only sharing their individual personal experience, but also generating an entirely novel narrative on Seoul to the online audience. The sub-narratives on Instagram, derived from large user numbers, can then play a key role in influencing the way in which a place's image is perceived. Social media is responsible for transforming the concept of place-making, as well as the results generated from social media sharing. Posts on Instagram may be categorised as post-modern narratives, in essence, entirely different from posts on other social media platforms (Dryden and McCumber, 2017). This in turn impacts how a place (in this study, the iconic building and its city) evolves and is maintained, and also influences the nature of the place that will follow on.

While some might suggest that, for instance, Facebook itself is also a platform for posting images, and for self-representation, a much more streamlined visual narrative is provided by Instagram. An Instagram life is essentially constructed by users that reflect their own narratives in a visually appealing and stylised manner (Wu, 2017). Despite the fact that Facebook posts still contain images, the images present on Instagram tend to be more theatrical, alluring, and trendy. One reason for this might be the notion that Instagram posts are essentially geared towards seizing public attention and triggering a reaction. As a result of this inherent aspect of Instagram, the images of the DDP as well as those of the GMP are rather aestheticised and glamorised on Instagram. They might even

be compared to the ones depicted in high-end architectural magazines, even though the images were photographed by amateur photographers.

For a long time, pictures were considered as depictions or portrayals of life (Klinke, 2014). An example is art historian Panofsky, who used pictures for storytelling, but more importantly, further strengthened interpretational methods that a large number of his contemporary researchers simply took for granted without clarifying their intrinsic conceptual foundations. Narrative can be defined as a representation composed of time, space, and sequence (Cobley, 2001); it is also elaborated as a manner of compiling various parts to make a whole or as a process revolving around the selection, arrangement, and subsequent deployment of story content for attaining time-bound effects on the perceiver (Bordewell, in Psarra, 2009). Therefore, a narrative inherently implies story content and its comprehension by viewers or readers. The construction and subsequent presentation of images to an audience using multiple media platforms is another way to do this and is what this research considers.

It has been suggested by Ethington and Schwartz (2006) that iconic buildings represent a key component of an urban landscape, and in fact constitute a visual symbol which allows the intricate urban experience to solidify into a representational reality. Visual narratives are enhanced by promoting an urban landscape's imageability (de San Eugenio Vela et al., 2017). Lynch (1960) makes a key reference to imageability as a constituent of the physical object which elicits specific and strong emotions in an observer. Iconic architecture may also be viewed as one of the most imaginative and creative types of content available on social media. Following the Instagram-stylised images of the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, captions and comments further encapsulate elements of the architectural features. Aside from offering an aesthetic argument for the building, the museum may also act as an inspiration for the audience and this may subsequently influence the way the building is perceived and its reputation.

Three particular modes were considered with regard to the images of the iconic buildings in the dataset: a) glorifying the building and its architect, with

photographs generally highlighting the building's aesthetic value; b) 'Sense of Place', concerned with the building within its urban context, and with photographs that reflect the building in its surrounding context; and c) the 'Look at me! I am here' mode, which included photographs focusing on people that really bore no implications for the building itself.

a. Photographs that glorify the building and its architect

Interpretation of an image can be assessed initially by taking into account the building's inherent characteristics and subsequently analysing how these characteristics relate to the areas of knowledge that are extrinsic to the structural system.

The focus on the images in this category is more on capturing the aesthetic value of a building and including the elements of that building that further add to the aesthetic appeal. Some examples could be capturing on-site artworks, a close-up shot of a surface catching daylight, or even a spiral staircase. While some were of facades, others were close-ups of a small detail; however, with both, the focus was on abstracting the architecture from its context. As a result of these images, buildings can be detached from their surroundings and spatial environment and the building's substance can be focused on. The emphasis was on the interaction of structures, materials, and forms, often accompanied with some other textual information regarding the building and its architect. Editing applications further enhanced the quality of these images and subsequently magnified their aesthetic appeal for the viewer.

Stierli (2016) suggests that 'iconicity' refers to a building's ability to generate a memorable image, or, in other words, its 'imageability' (Lynch, 1960). Images of this sort tend to be short-lived, mediagenic, and of impressions that are rather countless in nature especially across the different social media platforms (Stierli, 2016). These images reflect a positioning inherent between the subject and the physical object, borrowing their iconicity from their ability to multiply exponentially without losing their memorability.

b. Photographs which emphasise an iconic building in its urban context

Due to the differences in place and configuration, it is challenging to entirely capture either of the buildings. However, some images within the dataset clearly portrayed the building's locations. In particular, images of the DDP more often captured both the background and foreground of the Plaza, portraying a dynamic urban cityscape.

An iconic building is considered to be vital in defining a place (Vogl, 2013), its iconicity stemming from its architectural prowess and the engineering skills needed to achieve this; its aesthetic appeal; its attractiveness in tourism; and its celebrity status. A surrounding narrative always exists that facilitates the development of an iconic status of a building throughout its production lifecycle. Stories pertaining to the architect and the site, even those possessing adverse public reactions, tap into the core of architecture as being a force of life. It further reinforces the importance of its existence and, more importantly, its legacy.

Visual appeal can be strengthened through capturing the iconic building in its surrounding context. Concerning the DDP, the distinctive landscape surrounding it and the high-rise buildings further reinforce the reaction that needs to be evoked. As noted by Payne (2011), the implication carried by the icon revolves around it being a worshipped, ritualistic, and sacred object alongside an inherent aura, presence, and mystery that mystifies the audience. On a similar note, 'iconicity' eventually leads to a striking experience for the beholder. Through capturing the heterogeneous background of an iconic building, the mystical aura surrounding the place is further bolstered and reinforced. The picture's visual strength is augmented and provides much more data in regard to how the iconic building fits within the context of other objects in space and time.

C. Photographs that act as 'a certificate of evidence'

The focus of this category is on group or individual shots taken with the building

as background. Such images have human elements at the core, with limited visibility regarding the location in which the image was taken. For some images, only the comments and hashtags provide some insight into the actual location. This category is more oriented towards allowing the users to reflect on their own experiences at the site, thereby documenting their journey to create a visual memory (Brook, in Nunes, 2017).

In essence, these pictures can be considered as proof that the picture taker was engaged with something (Sontag, 1977; Barthes, 1981). Symbolic capital is provided by these pictures, therefore reflecting the authentic experience of the user during a journey (Tucker, 1997). It was suggested by Sontag that this desire to document a journey through photographs is explained as a 'chronic voyeuristic relation to the world' (1977, p.11).

The role of the building is marginalised, providing only some indication of the individual having been there and having experienced it. In such self-indulgent images, an iconic building might lead to the exertion of more power in social media as it allows the generation of appreciation and attention in a 'like economy' (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013). For iconicity to really take hold, the individual's presence and the overall photographing experience need to be present.

6.2. Objective 2: To explore the essential elements that convey 'iconicity' in the photographic representation of iconic architecture in social media entries

This research comprises data gathered from Instagram, a social media platform, of the DDP and the GMB across 2 weeks as a way to analyse how social media is used as a venue for perceiving the two iconic buildings, and to assess how 'iconicity in architecture' relates to user-generated content. Through analysing content, various iconicity-oriented assemblages of themes were explored. These assemblages were conceptually deconstructed and exposed to frequency analyses in order to identify the inherent typology within them. This

could be reflective of the inherent architectural elements captured in the photographs. The results were further analysed to assess the perceptions surrounding iconic buildings and how they are represented on social media. Results however indicated that although numerous architectural elements were captured by these images, using numerous compositional techniques, only a few similarities emerged in regard to these users' practices on Instagram.

Firstly, the heightened aesthetics of a building were observed in a majority of the dataset images. The judgement criterion comprised of 4 different categories, inhabited buildings, surrounding buildings and architecture, interior spaces, and exterior views. Even though the focus was on the building's numerous qualities, the objective was rather unified and distinct; allowing architecture to occupy a position of focal importance.

For buildings to be iconic, they must have a number of inherent aspects. The specific message conveyed by the building, its scale, and its design were salient features that these buildings possessed. Sklair (2006, 2010) correctly highlighted how aesthetic and symbolic judgement are considered to be vital constituents when it comes to 'iconicity'. There are certain images that incorporated the building's exterior without regard to the surrounding context of the building. This transformed these photographs into abstract concepts that the photographers could shed light on through their own unique perspectives. This could be pertaining to the details, structure, and even the form of the building. Furthermore, the ingrained ability of Instagram to further enhance the aesthetic appeal of these semi-professional photographs makes these images not dissimilar to images captured by professional photographers.

Secondly, most photographs were accompanied by textual components, which allowed a more accurate interpretation of the images on the part of the viewers. The inclusion of textual components with photographs, enables viewers to better comprehend and interpret the image. Images are usually posted with comments and captions that provide some additional insight regarding the building, for instance, its design features, its architect, and even the city in which the building is situated, even though the level of information provided

varies in the posts.

Instagram allows and encourages users to 'like' as well as to comment on images apart from including hashtags that categorise the images based on the image components or themes. Through comments and hashtags, discussions are further facilitated, and individuals are allowed to interact and connect with a larger social circle. Parsa (2004) suggests that images and symbols have been utilised by human beings throughout history, allowing both communication and the expression of meaning, especially when it comes to facilitating the experience between the recipient and the message. The reader's imagination, especially when it comes to text, is in a way ignited since a reader is usually well aware of the implicit and subconscious meanings underlying the words. Proficient authors often indicate their prowess when it comes to the interplay of words to succinctly and strongly communicate their message as well as to elicit desired reactions from the reader. In a similar manner, images possess their own ingrained messages that stem from numerous myths and ideologies, and the respective connotations are only brought to the fore through a thorough analysis of the hidden agenda.

Capdevial-werning (2011) indicates that a number of irregularities need to be taken into account when it comes to evaluating the architecture's aesthetic experience. Firstly, experience related to a building usually stems from perceiving the work through either descriptions, plans, or images. Prior knowledge regarding the object also influences the cognitive aspect of this perception. Through prior knowledge and awareness regarding the building, it becomes easier to differentiate the building and more importantly, to predetermine a user's perception regarding the building. Through actual visits to the place, visitors often reconfirm the perception that they previously had regarding the place; captions and comments play an integral role in highlighting these recollections.

In Instagram, the relationship between an iconic building in the context of its surrounding is emphasised. Geographical identification of metadata across

videos and photographs is facilitated through social media. While image geotagging is optional and can be conveniently switched off, the data utilised for this research comprises of public posts where the museums and their respective cities were clearly illustrated using geotags. Also, hashtags in a manner reflect the relationship between the building and the city in which the building is situated, for instance, the hashtags '#Seoul', '#visit_Korea', '#Bilbao', and '#Spain'. Such hashtagging and geotagging permit a discussion that often exceeds attributes related to the building itself. The creation of an iconic image is rather dependent, however, on the medium's properties through which the form is manifested (Lyons 1977).

This study's findings are in alignment with Ockman's (2004) proposition that the placement of these images of iconic architecture suggests that these buildings are iconic images that are integral to the city and are geared towards consumption by tourists rather than simply being tourist attractions. This research also indicates that iconic architecture is at the core of a city's representation, eventually influencing tourists to visit a place brought into existence by world renowned 'starchitects' (Lewis, 2007).

6.3. Objective 3: To investigate how the social imagery of iconic architecture feeds back into people's perception of a city

As reflected from the outcomes of the two-stage-analysis, incorporation of the surrounding context is quite common in the photos that portray the building's external elements. Both case studies demonstrated that whilst some photographs were focussed on placing the building's external features within the surrounding environment, others concentrated predominantly on isolating the building from its surroundings in order to maximally highlight the design and formal features of the building. In most instances, the surrounding environment was portrayed as the background. Particularly wih regard to the DDP, the building was sometimes portrayed as being only one element within a general cityscape. Whilst further research would be necessary to better explore this tendency, it might be safest to propose that the intriguing, dynamic urban setting

around the DDP interests visitors to such a degree that they consider it also as a focal point.

Consequently, it is useful to evaluate the way in which the desirability of an environment is perceived and expressed by these photographs, along with the user's awareness of architectural forms. The dataset photographs show the photographic frame surpassing the primary architectural feature, progressing towards the immediate margins of the frame, and in certain instances, employing vantage points from neighbouring high ground or buildings to capture the iconic feature at a distance, thereby highlighting the contours and other physical characteristics of the building. Whilst a significant quantity of compositional divergence is inherent, particularly in the context of ordinary tourist photography, this does not necessarily result in supersession being observed in the majority of both case studies.

An improved comprehension of the context can promote an understanding of architectural design by emphasising the architect's intentions. For example, the pedestrian and sidewalks of the DDP are inherent in the images and emphasise the building's scale, whilst the malls in the environment demonstrate the experience of being present in a construction of this scale. Certain characteristics relating to the DDP building, such as, for example, the textures and flowing lines which constitute the surface, are also highlighted. In the case of the GMB, the giant spider-like sculpture 'Mamán' was frequently depicted along with human subjects in the background of the GMB building, which served to accentuate the grandeur of the building in the images. The inclusion of these elements permitted a greater holistic experience of place. The images are enhanced by capturing the surrounding environment as well as offering contextual clues for the image's viewer in a more personal way. These interventions lead to the resulting photographs constituting something of much greater value than mere ordinary building snapshots.

It is also essential to realise that these images of buildings in their respective locations, include textual components, that is, comments or captions which also denote the location of the building along with details pertinent to the city – such

information being of prime value to a visitor. Reality is portrayed via these images, and a causal association is generated and interaction encouraged (Fahmy et al., 2014). Social media platforms are now intensively multimodal, and often constitute not only text, but also emoticons, hashtags, videos and pictures. Moreover, the framing, filtering and editing of visual images before distribution and sharing is also facilitated on these platforms. Consequently, aside from revealing key components relevant to the picture and the building under consideration this also offers a reflexive communication strategy to promote a specific perception with respect to the place itself, or to the user within this space. This permits the opportunity to justify interpretations, and although an image might be worth a thousand words, frequently, it does not detail the complete narrative (Binder and Jaworsky, 2018). There is significantly more information available from an image that is posted with verbal textual accompaniments, and the manner in which these aspects are conveyed in association with the images is also highly informative. The key importance of any verbal text associated with a photograph is that it may reveal diverse interrelations of the building with referents (humans, buildings, a place, and so on) in association with the photographic image as well as the way in which the building reveals itself within the image to be the focal subject of the photograph.

Branding now occupies a rather prominent role in the world, being understood as a societal phenomenon instead of an exclusive practice pertaining to managerial situations (Kornberger, 2010). With regard to places, brands focus on provisioning the meaning that is related to the negotiation as well as the dynamic communication process (Sevin, 2011). New mediums are now in existence as a result of innovative communication technologies that ascribe particular meanings to every place. In particular, through social media, brands can now be communicated more extensively without having to encounter the temporal or spatial constraints often inherent in other mediums. Consequently, a place’s representation on social media requires consideration from a ‘user-generated’ perspective, as this will ultimately define the respective projections of potential tourists with respect to the brand over numerous social platforms.

Visual appeal and attractiveness are inherent in establishing a mental picture of

a place, and these parameters are frequently affected by previous consumption of visual images. Urban imageability was evaluated by Lynch (1965) as the capability of a city to generate memorable and vivid images. Of all the senses which are engaged in producing such a mental representation, unsurprisingly vision is identified as the most influential. As highlighted by the 'mind palace' or 'method of loci' methodology, memories often result from a cityscape's visual attributes. Consequently, a city's image combines a symbolic dimension focussed on the city's mental representation, which is typically created from the collective consciousness, and also features of popular culture such as films, photographs and/or other means by which creative narratives are generated.

Although Instagram images may not be completely reflective of the urban or architectural environment directly, they do emphasise human relations or activities in a particular space, which permits the development of a broader comprehension of the underlying context. Bourdieu's analysis of photography is similar in that he explores the possibility of conducting sociological research using photography. He suggests that photography practices are in alignment with certain cultural models, often influenced by taste judgements. He goes on to suggest that 'society'perceived using photographical 'representation' as in fact 'the presentation of a represented society', despite the notion that what is integral to his discussion is how aesthetic judgement can be influenced as a result of photographic practices.

Therefore, it could be considered that Bourdieu's analysis requires reinforcement so that Instagram images which are affiliated with certain cities are not merely considered as images regarding the city in question, but in fact themselves constitute vital components of that city which reflect the cultural and social interrelationships present in that urban environment. If a particular practice or cultural model is considered by Instagram, the images not only reflect what Instagram users choose to capture and share, but also what they choose to represent as mediated on the Instagram platform itself. For this reason, the manner in which photographical representations of a building and a city are in fact mediated by Instagram itself requires thorough further research.

6.3 Contributions

6.3.1 Methodological Contributions

This study utilises visual discourse analysis, in a broad sense, visual content analysis and a modification of Panofsky's iconographic-iconological method. It makes use of both quantitative and qualitative methods as a way to bring together insights from content analysis and iconology. A detailed account of the mixed method approach was provided in Chapter 3, which is solely dedicated to the review of methodological issues. In particular, Panofsky's method, imported from art history, has rarely been used in social science except for political science. This unusual marriage of a traditional research method frequently used in social science and an arts-based method acts as the analytic foundation for this research. The value of methodological heterogeneity was addressed throughout the methodological review, particularly in relation to the benefits of combining seemingly dissimilar techniques. The use of multiple, varied methods is, in many ways, contrary to the traditional reliance on a qualitative or quantitative perspective. The decision to employ such a unique study design was made because it seemed to be the only way to open up the field of iconic architecture and introduce practical questions to a topic that has, until now, been firmly theoretical. In the case of this study, the aim was to investigate the compelling methodological obstacles associated with visual information. These include: (a) the emotional power of visual data; (b) the fact that images transcend tangible and cognitive barriers; (c) the context-dependence of visual data; and (d) the limitations of language. Hence, visual discourse analysis is a logical way to confront these obstacles, because it blends methodological processes from a variety of mediums, such as discourse analysis (emphasising power dynamics among and between images and other agents/structures), content analysis (identifying and reviewing different features of the data), and iconology (interpreting themes, topics of conversation, and motifs). It should be stressed that this is an atypical approach to research.

As already mentioned, the Panofsky model and its ideas on iconology are a big

part of this study. According to Knowles and Cole (2008), arts-based research reflects burgeoning and growing perspectives on the qualitative social sciences. In other words, social science also can derive its ideas, methods, demonstrations, and theories from the arts in terms of methodology. Over the decades, iconology has been used to expand understanding of artistic artefacts from the Italian and Northern Renaissance (Panofsky [1939] 1972; Panofsky [1955] 1982). Today, however, it has blossomed into an interdisciplinary study process that can provide a great deal of information about the interplay between art history and the social sciences. It refers to a comparative process designed to reveal the inner significance of visual data within a clear setting, at a clearly defined time (Müller and Özcan, 2007).The contemporary version of iconology is popular with humanities and sociology researchers. To the best of my knowledge, however, this is the first time that the Panofsky model of iconology has been applied to the field of place branding.

Images on social media are commonly accompanied by a subjective, informative account or description. For instance, Instagram creators can upload, share, and add comments to their images within minutes. From a singular perspective (one creator, one photo, one account), this data is of less value. On the other hand, when many images are viewed, they have a lot to say about discourse analysis and contemporary iconology. As Van Dijck (1997, p. 3) asserts, the creators in this scenario are adhering to their own form of discourse analysis – 'talk and text in context'. The difference is that the discourse exists between the creator, the incident that inspired the creation, and the actual image itself. When subjective observations are considered as part of the overall artefact, a more advanced understanding of the visual value inherent within social media content can be grasped.

Thus, social media provides myriad opportunities to study images and texts all in one place. Unfortunately, only a handful of researchers have taken advantage of this and there is a lack of literature on the rich possibilities of social media sharing (Drainville, 2018). One problem is the rigid emphasis on textual

responses that some studies embody. Often, this is at the expense of the images shared. Alternatively, studies might focus too narrowly on the visual aspects of the content and don't consider the role of textual data (Milner, 2016). For this reason, studies in this field can end up seeming curiously incomplete. In some cases, studies are run with little recourse to social media reactions, whether referring to corresponding observations or metrics that indicate the comparative significance of some images over others (Huntingdon, 2016). There are some examples, however, of studies that have taken a more coherent perspective when analysing images and texts. However, these examples are few in number and the field is only just starting to open up to the marriage of practical and conceptual models (Bruns and Hanusch, 2017). For this reason, I used a modified version of the Panofsky model in my research. This takes into account user reactions in the form of comments and investigates their hints and inferences, as it were, to uncover the significance inherent within these informal sequences of antecedent visual data. To conclude, the findings extracted as part of this study are an attempt not just to answer some key methodological issues regarding social imagery, but also an effort to understand the transformation of visual data throughout history.

6.3.2. Conceptual and Theoretical Contributions

This research study is rooted in interdisciplinary fields of research. They include marketing, urban studies, architecture, tourism, place branding, and sociology. This study investigates the birth of digital media and its impact on contemporary sociality from diverse perspectives, which have influenced the notion of 'iconicity'. Almost instantly, iconic buildings become a fundamental component of their place. They demonstrate engineering or architectural innovation, whether the outcome can be called beautiful or unsightly, whether they are built for the purpose of tourism or some other function. It should be noted that the iconic nature of a building is wrapped up in its unique narrative. Often, this begins before the building itself exists as a physical object. It is inherent within the design, planning, creation, inauguration, and even the eventual decline of

the building. Even buildings that attract the wrong kind of attention – negative feedback or PR – possess a narrative that gives them influence and power.

There is ample research on iconic architecture and the majority has been carried out within the last twenty years. Once again, the problem has been a relatively narrow focus on conceptual ideas and a lack of empirical data and analysis has been evident. Existing literature comprehensively describes the iconic features of a structure. However, it is a more complex process to demonstrate how and why this iconicity exists, in its specific time and place and more complex yet is the influence of social media. Few studies are concerned with the production and reception of visual data from an empirical perspective. Similarly, most studies have failed to investigate how perceptions are actually formed, in particular, in the relatively new context of social media. Iconic buildings are an important part of city branding, because they are often used to raise the profile of urban communities. Unlike similar research, in this study, iconic buildings have been viewed in relation to the city they belong to. Over the last decade, social media sharing has become a lucrative commodity for cities trying to drive tourism and fund regeneration projects. While a reliance on tourism is not a new phenomenon, contemporary cities are increasingly dependent on iconic buildings – structures that are purposely created to gain global fame and attention. They have become the ideal accompaniment to 'selfie culture' and people travel around the world seeking out these buildings to photograph and share on social media. If somebody wants to know how influential their city has become, this can be found by searching for its name on social media. It is this culture that informs this study, particularly throughout chapters 2 and 3. They are shaped around a broad understanding of iconic architecture that is enriched by historical viewpoints, technological developments, the iconic structures vis-à-vis city narrative, and the continuing democratisation of photography. All of these perspectives come together to answer the question of how iconicity in architecture informs, inspires, influences, and moulds the nature of cities.

It is my belief that, in completing a thorough analysis of the content, representational processes, and iconological translations of modern iconic

buildings, this study stands as an important juncture in the field of iconic architecture. The results are of great significance, because the study design, visual data, and corresponding interpretations support the construction of a new type of research model. The study is also responsible for providing a rigorously labelled and ordered visual archive. In addition, it offers an extensive look at the hegemonic rules of representation that influence social media sharing and the processes that have to occur for iconicity to be realised online. For all of these reasons, the study has value for future researchers who are interested in the way images of iconic buildings are produced and disseminated. It may be used to form the basis of further studies on the creation and perception of architectural narratives.

6.4. Limitations of the Research

The chosen study design offers many benefits, but it also has its weaknesses as most pieces of research do. Identifying these limitations is a key part of assessing the value of studies and assessing how to improve them. In this case, a number of theoretical, procedural, and analytical weaknesses exist within the study design. For one thing, the data is taken from a social media platform. This invites selection bias, because it focuses on a population that cannot possibly provide a full representation of global demographics. Selection bias is a factor when the sample population is picked without considering all of the groups and demographics that it does not encompass. For instance, Instagram has a very specific type of user. The average Instagram user is predominantly female and below the age of 35. Therefore, many different types of people (and their perspectives) are not covered in this study. It should also be noted that only publically available data could be collected. This means only those images that users have purposely made visible on their profiles was collected and not privately shared data. Similarly, all extracted data is in the English language. The textual information provided by social media data is multilingual, an issue that Zheng et al. (2011) consider presents significant issues in terms of textual information analysis, especially with regard to geo-tagged images. For the

purposes of this study, only English content was selected. As such, the perspectives of non-English speaking Instagram users could not be accommodated or analysed.

The second limitation is associated with the use of case studies. While they add a valuable perspective to the study, they are heavily reliant on distinct, unique circumstances. Also, there are only two case studies (the DDP in Seoul and the GMB in Bilbao) featured in the research which is a very small sample. Hamel (1993, p. 23) explains the problem with case studies by stating that 'they are not broad enough and the degree of applicability is low. Generally, the extraction, configuration, and evaluation of empirical data is insufficiently thorough. There is a clear issue with bias, as it comes naturally with the emotional responses of researchers and study participants.' In short, two studies with an identical research design could be conducted in two different cities and generate completely opposing outcomes. The obstacle of low applicability is a problem here, perhaps because the case study takes too narrow a focus. It targets a singular scenario or circumstance. Despite this, case studies continue to be a useful resource, as long as they are combined with other methods (Stake, 2005) and the details of the case are comprehensively covered. However, in this case, two case studies are not enough to suggest clearly valid or confirmed results. Future studies would need to investigate more cases or cover different geographical regions. To summarise, there are major limitations to this choice of methodology, but the strengths it does bring should not be discounted. As Shields (2007) notes, the power of qualitative study designs is their ability to accommodate and appreciate diversity – methodologically, ideologically, and epistemologically. They look at evidence from a broad range of human sources and do not disregard valuable insights. The very fact that case studies, as a qualitative tool, are a complex mix of paradoxes and social limitations is the reason they should be considered as a research tool.

Finally, it is particularly difficult to interpret and explain an image when using visual methods. Frith et al. (2005) explains that visual research methods have been at the forefront of scepticism from social scientists, and have only entered mainstream focus in recent times. This scepticism has often been blamed on

the validity of images, which can be ambiguous and open to individual, subjective interpretations. Arts-based visual research can be considered mutable, and there is one major limitation with this. Furthermore, criticism regarding the extent to which a person can completely interpret a work of art or whether it is valuable to do so, also exists within the field of arts-based research (see, for example, Sullivan, 2011). In this research, Panofsky's iconographic-iconological method was used to undertake a visual content analysis of photographic images taken from Instagram. Scholarship is generally characterised by science-based research that uses particular values such as reliability and validity, together with the ability to generalise and replicate results, as indicators of the quality of the research. However, arts-based research has not yet established its own culture, so these indicators of quality have not yet emerged to a degree that is widely accepted. Given Marcus and Fisher's (1986) explanation of the 'crisis of representation' in social science, a move towards exploring the creation of meaning and multiple realities was seen. In this way, the ambiguity of visual data poses no real problem, since (as is the case with all data), its interpretation does not represent a rigid reality, but rather serves as a means of constructing multiple realities according to the social and cultural factors that exist within a given time and context (Frith et al., 2005). This research uses a visual analysis approach to discern the visual elements of images and then examines the more covert meanings below the surface, exploring symbolism and the constructs behind the image. Contextual information is also gathered through the textual information in individual Instagram posts and the analysis of this was informed by previous research into elements such as iconography. The researcher was also mindful of the fact that a viewer's own knowledge, as well as their cultural perspective, affects their interpretation of images. According to Collier (2001), the process of visual analysis is complex and oscillates between some stages that are more concerned with the whole picture and others that necessitate focused analysis and cross-checking. Collier (2011) also offers guidance about considering the data as a whole and pondering its undertones and implications, suggesting that the researcher listens to their intuition as well as looking at specific questions.

While it is impossible to firmly establish a truthful reading of a photograph, it is possible to limit the potential for an incorrect interpretation and Panofsky's 3-level method is a useful tool that helps to assure this process, together with visual content analysis. Despite some limitations, this two-pronged interpretive approach was chosen for its ability to facilitate the analysis of iconic architecture and its iconicity in a way that deconstructs its representations and meanings.

6.5. Directions for Future Research

The case studies in this research were carefully selected and purposely chosen to be different from one another. This ensures that the results are as rich and applicable as possible, but it isn't as illuminating as investigating a larger number of cases, spread across a variety of countries. If this methodology were to be followed, it might provide an answer to questions regarding, for example, the difference between domestic and foreign visitors in the production and reception of architectural imagery on social media, and whether there are any differences between cultures in terms of perceptions of iconicity. However, to guarantee valid outcomes, actual audience research would need to be conducted and used to reinforce follow-up studies. There are, of course, areas of the field that this study did not have the time or resources to cover in depth. Certainly, there are opportunities for future research on the methodological and conceptual evolution of iconic architecture and city branding. For one thing, this research focuses only on western perspectives and uses textual data composed in English. The Instagram data used as part of the study were filtered to include only posts written in English. This was necessary due to time and resource constraints, but it is not representative of the population that utilises this social tool. Instagram and other sharing platforms are widely used in countries across the globe. Unfortunately, there is a distinct lack of literature encompassing different cultural perspectives. Almost all studies focus on western concepts and ideas, though this is another area that researchers could explore in the future. It would be of great value if a researcher was to create a conceptual model for investigating social media responses and use the cultural

dimension as a primary factor (Hofstede, 2003). One thing that the current study does show is that target audiences cannot be easily delineated for each case museum and its accompanying social sharing behaviours. Therefore, it is vital that there is a full awareness of the characteristics within each audience, as well as their values, outlooks, and impetuses when they share content online. In telling their stories, it is difficult to grasp the social and conceptual contexts of this activity and create a separation that will aid in uncovering the full impact and value of associated behaviours.

Many other improvements could be made to the aforementioned technological aspects of social media as a means of enhancing the efficiency of the study of the relations between iconic architecture, the city and Instagram. An example of such improvements is that metadata may be taken from Instagram accounts and applied in such a way to facilitate a more comprehensive depiction of the user. I used a third-party application to download Instagram posts, which was called Iconosquare. This application allows all media content that has been uploaded to an individual Instagram account to be downloaded, in addition to all associated metadata. As far as social media analytics is concerned, metadata refers to all data pertaining to one specific social media post (Barrero, 2017). A short Tweet or Instagram post looks relatively simple, however a wealth of data is concealed under the surface of every single post. This data (metadata) generates more information regarding the context of each post. By using the Instagram Application Programming Interface (API), queries pertaining to user-specific tags including keywords or titles can be used to reveal extensive information relating to the images and videos in question (Highfield and Leaver, 2015). Metadata includes information such as the post author, the date and time of post, the number of followers, the likes per post, and the posting frequency, and the location details. Metadata identifies new aspects that can be filtered and investigated when assessing social media data. Such aspects include the time frame, the audience, the location and the sentiments associated with a social media conversation (Barrero, 2017). In the present study, the analysis of textual components, such as caption and comments of each post, were not included in the first stage of content analysis. Only photographic images were

analysed in the content analysis. Eeven though this research analysed the captions and comments of the selected images during the second-step analysis of iconographic-iconological interpretation, it did not include the metadata, although the aforementioned metadata were established during data collection. Content analysis may be employed in order to thematically categorise the content of Instagram posts and to count the number of likes and comments for every individual post (Ball & Smith, 1992). By exploring what type or subject of images of an iconic building are popular through the number of likes and/or comments per post, for instance, it is possible to gain a more accurate understanding of audience reception of iconic buildings. This aids in exploring how iconicity in architecture can be defined and shaped through interaction between the author of an Instagram post and the viewer.

While time is always a constraint, the more data sources that can be gathered, the more reliable the results are likely to be. Varied methodologies are an effective way to strengthen weak points or fill in missing insights within the existing literature. Such knowledge gaps are common, as some studies are able to identify a trend but cannot uncover the reason for its development. For this reason, I recommend that future studies attempt to triangulate results by using multiple analytic tools to explore broad, socially applicable data sources. For instance, interviews with Instagram users and practitioners could provide a much more in-depth account of why people share architectural images and what the responses mean to them personally. Researchers could potentially expand this idea by conducting research that attempts to identify causal trends. While the current study design and theoretical processes combine to create a complex interplay between content analysis and iconographic-iconological methods, additional analytical methods will always offer more valuable insights to the fields of iconic architecture and city branding.

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