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Thémata. *Revista de Filosofía* nace en el año 1983 con la intención de proporcionar a quienes investigan y producen en filosofía un cauce para publicar sus trabajos y fomentar un diálogo abierto sin condicionamientos ideológicos. En sus inicios participaron en el proyecto las Universidades de Murcia, Málaga y Sevilla, pero pronto quedaron como gestores de la revista un grupo de docentes de la Facultad de Filosofía de la Universidad de Sevilla.

Una preocupación constante de sus realizadores ha sido fomentar los planteamientos interdisciplinares. La revista ha estado abierta siempre a colaboradores de todas las latitudes y ha cubierto toda la gama del espectro filosófico, de lo que constituye una buena prueba la extensa nómina de autores que han publicado en sus páginas. En sus páginas pueden encontrarse trabajos de todas las disciplinas filosóficas: Historia de la Filosofía, Metafísica, Gnoseología, Epistemología, Lógica, Ética, Estética, Filosofía Política, Filosofía del Lenguaje, Filosofía de la Mente, Filosofía de la Ciencia, Filosofía de la Historia, Filosofía de la Cultura, etc. También ha querido ser muy flexible a la hora de acoger nuevos proyectos, fomentar discusiones sobre temas controvertidos y abrirse a nuevos valores filosóficos. Por esta razón, los investigadores jóvenes siempre han encontrado bien abiertas las puertas de la revista.

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MONOGRÁFICO_
'LOS RESTOS
DOCUMENTALES
DEL PERPETRADOR:
IMÁGENES Y TEXTOS'

Remains of the World War I: War against War by Ernst Friedrich and Two Approaches to Reading Archives.

Restos de la Primera Guerra Mundial: guerra contra guerra por Ernst Friedrich y dos enfoques para leer archivos.

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Abstract

In this paper, I analyze two methods of reading archives: 'against the grain' and 'along the grain'. First one focuses mainly on revealing what is marginalized and omitted in archive's dominant narration. The other carefully studies the logic of an archive itself. As such, reading against the grain allows to reveal victims' forgotten stories, while reading along the grain helps to understand perpetrators' perspective that may further lead to better recognition of the mechanisms of organized violence. I apply both approaches to the album *War against War* (1924) by Ernst Friedrich, which contains archival photographs from World War I.
Keywords: War against War; World War I; archival photographs; reading against the grain; reading along the grain

Resumen

En este artículo, analizo dos métodos de lectura de archivos: "a contrapelo" y "siguiendo la veta". El primero se enfoca principalmente en revelar lo marginado y omitido en la narración dominante del archivo. El otro estudia cuidadosamente la lógica del archivo mismo. Como tal, la lectura a contrapelo permite revelar las historias olvidadas de las víctimas, mientras que la lectura que sigue la veta ayuda a comprender la perspectiva de los perpetradores, lo que puede conducir a un mejor reconocimiento de los mecanismos de la violencia organizada. Aplico ambos enfoques al álbum *War against War* (1924) de Ernst Friedrich, que contiene fotografías de archivo de la Primera Guerra Mundial.
Palabras clave: Guerra contra Guerra; Primera Guerra Mundial; fotografías de archivo; 'a contrapelo'; 'según la veta'

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1 · Introduction

What remains after a war are not only piles of dead bodies but piles of documents as well. These documents, both textual and visual, often remain confidential long after the conflict has ended. However, it so happens sometimes that some of them leak out from military or governmental archives. Often their revealing provokes public indignation. Such events took place after World War I, when in 1924 a declared pacifist Ernst Friedrich published a book called *Krieg dem Krieg* [War against War] in Berlin. The album contains photographs showing battlefields and trenches of the War and its victims, followed by Friedrich accusation of government and bourgeois for being true perpetrators of war violence. Many of those photographs were published for the first time and they truly shocked the public. Even today, they remain disturbing.

"War against War" (Friedrich 2017: 22)

In his project, Friedrich uses archives not only as a source of visual materials but as a subject of his research as well. His second attitude is what I focus on in the paper. Referring to *War against War*, I analyze two methods of reading archives: 'against the grain' and 'along the grain'. First one – often applied to critical analysis of authoritarian regimes' remains – focuses mainly on revealing perspectives marginalized in archive's narration. The other carefully studies the logic of an archive itself. As such, reading against

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the grain tries to reveal victims' forgotten stories, while reading along the grain helps to better recognize the mechanisms of organized violence.

In this text I understand the term 'archive' in its broad sense rooted in Michael Foucault and Giorgio Agamben's use of it. The former writes that "[t]he archive is first the law of what can be said" (Foucault 1972: 128) and the latter develops this thought by adding that the archive "is the dark margin encircling and limiting every concrete act of speech" (Agamben 1999: 143). Thus, archives not only mark what is remembered and how but above all what and who is omitted. These mechanisms of setting boundaries between the speakable and unspeakable are produced not only inside the walls of physical archives as places of preserving historical documents but also in other forms of creating a dominant discourse. They are not archives created by any particular authors but rather both the results and mechanisms of dominant power structures. Thus, analyzing them does not reveal anything about the psychological nature of the perpetrators' perspective but rather about its social meaning. Based on this understanding of the term 'archive', I treat Friedrich's work as a reading of an archive, in which he describes not only actual medical or military documents but also pro-war press or even private albums[1].

In the next section I briefly present *War against War* and its reception. The second section is devoted to examining reading archives against the grain as a method of giving justice back to the victims. The last section, which focuses on reading archives along the grain, is split into two parts. The first one analyzes how this attitude helps to understand the logic of a dominant discourse, while the second examines how reading along the grain allows to see what this discourse covers. In all sections, the mentioned theories are applied to interpreting Friedrich's project.

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[1] Private photographs published in *War against War* are an interesting border case. I claim that they may be divided into two groups: those that work in favor of the dominant pro-war discourse and those that counter it. The first group I classify as a part of the archive, since even if they are stored in private albums, they still repeat the propaganda about the war. The second ones are not parts of the archive but rather they are tools used by Friedrich to criticize the dominant discourse by revealing a true image of the war that they present.

2 • *War against War* by Ernst Friedrich

t Friedrich was a socialist activist and a publisher who specialized mainly in left-wing theorists, e.g., Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht's writings. He was also the author of another book from 1921 called *Proletarischer Kindergarten* [Proletarian Kindergarten], which presents his ideas about upbringing children in the spirit of pacifism. His other life project was the Anti-Kriegs Museum [Anti-War Museum] destroyed by Nazis in 1933 and reopened by Friedrich's descendants in Berlin in 1982.

"This book, however (»The Proletarian Kindergarten«) is intended to educate children in mutual help and love" (Friedrich 2017: 69)

The album *War against War* contains around 250 photographs that are preluded by Friedrich's manifesto, in which he criticizes war and its basis from the left-wing perspective. Michele Martini notices that the book focuses not only on the military victims of World War I but also on the civil ones (Martini 2017). The book's narration mimics the chronology of the conflict – the first couple of pages contain images of pre-war enthusiasm and public mobilization, next are photographs from the war, and at the end post-war devastations are presented. Most photographs in the album were stolen by Friedrich from the governmental archives – mainly military and

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medical ones. Others are press photographs, and there are even some private images sent to him, probably by former soldiers or their relatives. It is not completely clear how exactly he sourced the archival materials. However, one can assume that he did not do it on his own. Even though *War against War* is presented by Friedrich as his very own original project, it seems justified to see it more as a collective effort to fight the military propaganda. At the end of the book, he thanks his "Comrades" from the socialist movement and anonymous supporters, whose names cannot be mentioned (Friedrich 2017: 273). In all probability, one can imagine that at least some of those anonymous supporters were people working in the military or governmental structures who had access to archival photographs.

What is striking about *War against War* is the uneven quality of the photographs presented in the book. Some, mostly those from press and medical archives, are clear and easy to read. Others, primarily those from battlefields, are blurry and indistinct. It is often nearly impossible to guess what these images present. Seen in the frames of classification and categorization, they seem nearly useless. The quality of these photographs, probably poorly taken from the beginning, got even worse when they were copied and then reprinted in the book[2]. As a result of this process, some images in *War against War* look more as abstract paintings than war photographs. In spite of that – or maybe even due to it – they still bear witness to the horrors of the war (Didi-Huberman 2008).

In *War against War* photographs are put together in a montage – adjacent images are carefully arranged. The rules governing their arrangement are often based on a high contrast on the visual and content level, which may provoke shock in viewers. Jacques Rancière calls this type of montage – drawing its power from bringing together elements that are completely different and incongruent – dialectical (Rancière 2009: 56). He claims that most projects use two types of montage – dialectical and symbolical. Unlike the dialectical one, the symbolical montage creates its meaning by searching for similarities between the elements that seem to have nothing in common

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2 Altough Hito Steyerl proposes the term "poor image" to refer to digital era images, it seems justified to call that the photographs published in *War against War* as well, as they are also a "copy in motion" that "transforms quality into accessibility" (Styerl 2009: 1), even if the material aspects of these images are different.

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(Rancière 2009: 57). The spirit of symbolical montage can be traced in *War against War* as well. By using contrasting photographs Friedrich shows that they show two sides of the same war reality. The military leaders smiling in one photograph are responsible for the piles of dead bodies in another.

"The position will be held..."
(Friedrich 2017: 106)

"...to the last man"
(Friedrich 2017: 107)

Montage in *War against War* is not limited to its visual elements – Friedrich adds a textual layer to the images by captioning every photograph with a short sentence. Some of these captions are quotes from press or commanders' speeches. However, most are made up by Friedrich himself. Characteristic for these captions is their ironic style. Often it gets even more absurd in combination with the photograph that it is assigned to. Such is the case of the image presenting a trench full of dead bodies, captioned: "How magnificent is the soldier's life!" (Friedrich 2017: 125). This free play of the montage's visual and textual elements creates a new layer of expression that challenges the viewers – together with the indistinct character of the photographs mentioned earlier – by presenting more questions than answers. These ambiguous elements of *War against War* encourage the viewers to take on themselves the burden of interpretation.

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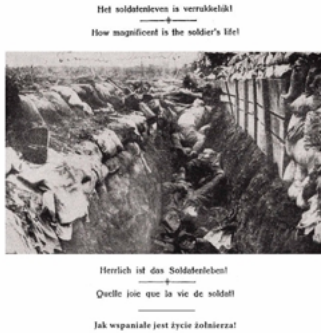
"How magnificent is the soldier's life!"
(Friedrich 2017: 125)

In the case of the first publication of *War against War* (as, in fact, in many of its reprints) not only were the photographs of poor quality but so were the materials for the book too. Cheap paper and ink were used to make the publishing process as mass as possible. It was probably one of the factors contributing to the high number of distributed copies. The other was the international character of the book. In his declaration, Friedrich does not blame one nation or country for all war crimes. On the contrary – he emphasizes the supranational character of the causes of war and the responsibility of governments and bourgeois for war violence. His understanding of war is highly influenced by Marxists and socialist theoretics, especially by Rosa Luxemburg (even though he does not mention any names he was inspired by). Calling for the proletarian resistance against the bourgeois interests all around the world that in his understanding are causing military conflicts, he captions photographs in *War against War* with sentences in four languages: German, English, French and Dutch. Contemporary publications of the album often maintain this multilingual character, adding new translations to the original ones.

Despite Friedrich's belief that "no one comes and says: "O how frightful that such pictures should be shown!" (Friedrich 2017: 48) it turned out not to be true. There were many who praised the book. However, there were also those who criticized it fiercely. Some of them were former soldiers that

had fought in the war known to Friedrich only from secondhand reports[3]. In 1926, one of them, George Soldano, published the album *Der Weltkrieg im Bild* that celebrates war as a life-changing experience for men leading to the discovery of true friendships and fortitude. It was seen as a conservative response to *War against War* (Szymański 2018). However, more direct was the response by the Weimar Republic police, who destroyed a bookstore where Friedrich's album was exhibited. This bare violence manifested by the authority against a few poor images may be read as a sign of their power to reshape the dominant discourse.

"The shop-window of the publishing house »Freie Jugend« with an exhibition of pictures from the book »War against war«" (Friedrich 2017: 266)
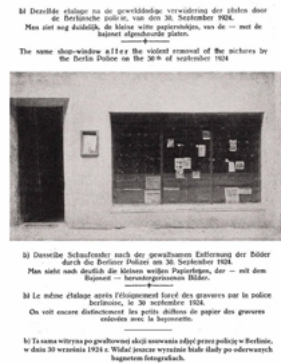
"The same shop-window after the violent removal of the pictures by the Berlin Police on 30th of September 1924" (Friedrich 2017: 267)

3 · Reading War Archives Against the Grain

Reading archives 'against the grain' – against their logic – is a methodology often used in examining documents left behind by authoritarian regimes, e.g., former colonial archives. Conceptual inspiration for this approach are Walter Benjamin's ideas expressed in his essay *Theses on Philosophy of History*

3 Friedrich as a pacifist did not take part in the war but instead ended up in prison for desertion.

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where he writes that the revolutionary fight is nourished by 'the image of enslaved ancestors' (Benjamin 1969: 260) and that 'There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism' (Benjamin 1969: 256). Due to that, one must look on the past events and their remains to uncover not what they *explicitly* say but to reveal perspectives of those 'enslaved ancestors' in an attempt to give justice to the dead ones (Benjamin 1969: 254).

Those issues raised by Benjamin are highly related to the aesthetic theories of political nature. Writing about the relation between aesthetics and politics, Rancière notices that they are not two separate spheres, despite how they are often understood (Rancière 2004). Rather, aesthetics and politics are inseparable. It is so, since politics is based on deciding who and how is represented. A dominant discourse is created by reserving the right to speak only for a few and marginalizing others by presenting them as speechless animals, incapable of expressing their interests. Every piece supports this division or transgresses it – there is no third way as staying 'apolitical'. If an image questions a dominant discourse by giving the voice back to those who are silenced, it 'reconfigures the sensible'.

The dominant discourse on war in Europe at the beginning of 20th century presented it in a romanticized manner. War was seen by many as an honorable and joyful event, a view illustrated best by pre-war enthusiasm expressed in spontaneous street celebrations in Berlin at the beginning of World War I (Eksteins 2000). This discourse was not significantly influenced by the tragic events of that war. Instead, some – as Soldano mentioned – who could not find themselves back in the post-war reality seemed to prize war even further after 1918. Those in power took advantage of these sentiments and used them to further support the military and nationalistic narration. To counter this image of war, Friedrich presents its other, hidden side. Yet what is even more significant to the fight against the dominant discourse, is an alternative perspective on the causes and aims of war that he proposes. Friedrich claims that wars do not start because they serve the whole nation (whatever this term is supposed to mean) but because they serve the economic interests of merely a few who are the real war perpetrators. By taking this materialistic and class approach, he reconfigures the image of war as grounded in virtues and ethical values.

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To change the nationalistic understanding of war, Friedrich applies visual methods rooted in his strong belief in the power of images. However, to source the materials for the album he had to first read the military and medical archives against the grain. It is a broadly analyzed issue that archives are not a neutral storage of documents but rather sides of producing knowledge and discourse (Foucault 1972, Agamben 1999). The power over the accumulated materials belongs to an archive's owner (Sekula 1983), the *archont* (Derrida 1998). Silence in archives does not result from the lack of alternative voices and perspectives. It comes from their active silencing by those who rule an archive (Carter 2006: 218). Overcoming this power to reveal the marginalized voices requires much work on the part of archivists. They need to examine archives closely, since the survival of alternative narrations often depends on them staying unnoticed by those who establish archives (Majewska 2018: 53). In the process of careful interpretation of the preserved documents, one can find gestures of micro-resistance and give the voice back to those, whose stories remained erased (Baer 2002, Tobing-Rony 1996).

This type of interpretation is also the methodology applied to archives in the part of *War against War* called *The Visage of War.* It is a collection of 24 photographs stolen from medical documentations, presenting veterans with disfigured faces. These were the people who, due to their injuries, did not return home after the end of the war. Rather, they chose to pretend to be dead in the eyes of their relatives, to save them the emotional distress. On some level they were indeed dead – buried alive in veteran centers outside cities and lacking contact with anyone except medical staff[4]. Many of them suffered from PTSD, depression, or other mental illnesses. They were used up by the system and could not be useful to it anymore, so they just got disposed of as 'human waste' (Bauman 1969). Paradoxically, some of them could potentially get back to their work and family life – not all of their conditions required constant medical care. Nonetheless, their face disfigurements were a 'visual afront' to the army and to the discourse parsing war (Feo 2007).

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4 The model example of veteran centers was *Invalidenhause* in the center of Berlin. However, it was a home for only a few veterans, 'the chosen ones' (Cohen 2001). Those were ex-soldiers who still could be useful for the military propaganda. Others, who do not fit the image of 'a national hero' were located out of sight.

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Worrying about 'public morals', military commanders decided to separate them from the rest of society. Photographs like those published by Friedrich could not be seen anywhere else – maybe except for some medical journals. Unlike in the case of veterans after amputations – who were praised in the press after World War I as real heroes (Biernoff 2011) – portraits of veterans with disfigured faces, as well as their stories, were meant to be forgotten. Friedrich's gesture preserves them by giving the voice back to the portraited ex-soldiers. In this section of the album, he quits his ironic style. Instead, every photograph is captioned with a short story of a photographed person – his name, age, former profession, sometimes the type of injuries and medical procedures he had gone through. Many of these bios are incomplete, since Friedrich did not have access to all required data. Despite that, the stories and experiences of these war victims at least partly survived. The case of *The Visages of War* illustrates what can be gained by reading archives against the grain. However, what is even more crucial for analyzing the mechanisms of violence, is the question what reading them along reveals.

"The Visage of the War"
 (Friedrich 2017: 223)

"After the steel bath: To the present day are lying in the hospitals gruesomely disfigured soldiers on whom operations are still being performed. Many of these unhappy war victims have undergone thirty, thirty-five and in some cases more than forty operations. In the case of thousands, the medical treatment has not yet been ended. Very many have to be fed artificially" (Friedrich 2017: 225-226)

"Agricultural worker, 36 years of age. Wounded 1917. Nose and left cheek restored with flesh from head, breast and arm. (20 operations.)" (Friedrich 2017: 229)

"Some war cripples refused information, other wounded, particularly those gruesomely mutilated, did not allow themselves to be photographed, as they feared that their relatives who had not seen them again, would either collapse at the sight of their misery, or would turn away forever from them in horror and disgust" (Friedrich 2017: 230)

4 · Reading War Archives Along the Grain

Another method of approaching archives critically – popularized by Ann Laura Stoler – is reading 'along the grain'. Stoler writes: "We need to read for its [archive's] regularities, for its logic of recall, for its destinies and distributions, for its consistencies of misinformation, omission, and mistake – *along* the archival grain" (Stoler 2002: 100). Differently than reading against the grain, reading along focuses primarily not on questioning an archive's discourse but rather on its careful analysis. On examining what is presented and how – narration's structure, dominant motifs, categories it uses and what it lacks[5].

5 Although there is certainly some great value in reading along the grain as a form of

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It is important to emphasize that reading along the grain does not ignore the issues of violence in archives mentioned in the previous section. The premises of this approach are mainly similar to those shared by theoretics who read against the grain. However, while the latter regard it as the grounds for rejecting an archive's dominant discourse, the former see it as an opportunity to better understand the mechanisms of creating perpetrators' narration. Reading along the grain enables one to analyze these violent and abusive structures. Stoler notices that archives are not only systems of exclusion but also 'stories that states tell themselves': "They [archives] told moral stories, they created precedent in the pursuit of evidence, and not least they create carefully tended histories" (Stoler 2002: 103). Studying these stories leads to recognizing the nature of a discourse that not only morally justifies but even creates basis for bare violence. Another gain of this method is that it allows to notice not only what a narration consist of but what is repressed from it as well. Compulsive repetitions in an archive may be a sign of a reality that it tries to cover. Hence, reading along the grain requires looking not only for what is in documents but for the omissions and mistakes in them as well.

It may seem that reading against the grain and reading along it are antithetical. However, it could not be further from the truth. Those two approaches correspond with each other and supplement one another. To oppose a discourse and give the voice and justice back to the dead, one must start with understanding what this discourse is composed of and how it is structured. On the other hand, to understand this, it is crucial to realize what perspectives are lacking. Thus, to read archives critically means to read them against and along the grain simultaneously. Those two perspectives are not separate approaches, rather they focus on slightly different aspects of the analyzed documents. Nonetheless, in practice they interpenetrate, morphing smoothly from one into the other. Adding this second approach to the interpretation of *War against War* requires reading it as an analysis of the pro-war discourse during World War I and further of what this discourse tried to cover.

visiting a physically archive, I do believe that this perspective as presented by Stoler can be also applied to analyzing an archive understood as a mechanism of creating a dominant discourse, and therefore I use it to describe Friedrich's work.

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4.1. Archives as Transcripts of Dominant Discourses

In his manifesto, Friedrich declares: "At last, at last the mask has been torn away from this »field of honor«, from this lie of a »heroic death«, and from all the other beautiful phrases, from all this international swindle the mask has at last, yea, at last, be torn away!" (Friedrich 2017: 48). However, to tear these masks he starts with a careful analysis of what they are made of. Especially in the first part of *War against War*, he publishes photographs of pre-war enthusiasm – young men marching in military parades, soldiers smiling in photographs taken before their departure to battlefields, officers inspecting armies and honoring subordinates.

Characteristic for many of those photographs are pathos and glory of captured scenes. Photographed people are proud to be a part of the military machine. They are also proud that somebody is taking pictures of them – they look confident and straighten up for the camera. Their bodies are stiff and tight. They are ready for a command, for a fight.

"The first German reserves start for the front" (Friedrich 2017: 80)

"The Hohenzollern distributes murder decorations behind the front"
(Friedrich 2017: 86)

These men's fantasies about war were shaped by tales about chivalry and conservative masculinity, repeated to them over and over since they were little boys. Friedrich emphasizes the military character of children's stories and plays at the beginning of the book. He shows illustrations of tin

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and cardboard soldiers and claims that war is prepared long before the army sets off for a battlefield. And even before public institutions start to shape children's imagination, it is already influenced by myths of 'field of honor' and 'heroic death' told to them at home.

Another tool of military propaganda is, according to Friedrich, the press. At the early stages of World War I, all armies taking part in the conflict censored strictly what kind of photographs could be published. Yet, after a while, they realized that the secret to a successful propaganda is not minimizing the number of photographs but rather creating their own images of the battlefield. In the second phase of the war, many photographs showing a propaganda image of the war were published in newspapers every day (Roberts 2014). This strategy shows that a dominant discourse is mainly shaped not by regulating the counter representations but by overproducing the dominant ones. Recognizing the role of the press in encouraging public support for war leads Friedrich to demanding drastic consequences for journalists. In the manifesto he writes: "And ten newspaper writers that agitate for war, shall be detained as hostages for the life of each single warrior!" (Friedrich 2017: 50). Even though he himself probably knows that the numbers would be enormous and impossible to enforce, this is a demand expressing a wish that actual war perpetrators – those profiting from war – should finally take responsibility for their actions.

The significance of press photography turns out to be even greater if one considers the role of visuality and aesthetics in the forming of authoritarian regimes. Military spectacles, like parades or commanders' speeches, lure their audience and promise it dreams about greatness. Referring to the war enthusiasm at the beginning of 20th century, Benjamin writes: "Its [mankind] self-alienation has reached such a degree that it can experience its own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order. This is the situation of politics which Fascism is rendering aesthetic" (Benjamin 1969: 242). The mechanisms of the anesthetization of politics and its work in favor of financial and military elites is what Friedrich reveals in his album.

One of the most memorable photographs from the first part of *War against War* is the one showing a military parade in a city. A few men look into the camera, saluting to the photographer. They have helmets on their heads and carry rifles. One even has a bouquet of flowers; he proudly waves it in

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front of the camera. Probably he got it as a thank you for the service for his country. On the left side of the photograph another man catches the viewer's eye – he grins from ear to ear under his impressive moustache. Between those two men marches an adolescent, noticeably younger than them. He is probably around 20. He does not have any helmet and one can see his wavy, light hair. But what stands out the most is his face expression. He does not smile, looks serious and focused. I imagine that the emotions on his face – or rather their lack – come from his deep concern with his mission. He is ready to die for his country, even ready to kill for it (even if he is a little bite afraid of both). But he is ready to die like all these knights in his goodnight tales – in the full sun, as he is marching now, with his head up and eyes fixed at the killer. That is the only war he knows up until it is too late.

"From the August days of 1914 –
Enthusiastic... for what?..."
(Friedrich 2017: 78)

"... for the »field of honor«"
(Friedrich 2017: 79)

Another outstanding photograph from this part of the book is the one showing a middle-aged man posing in an orchard. It is captioned: "Papa as a »hero« in the enemy's country (Picture for the illustrated Family Journal)" (Friedrich 2017: 82). The man is smiling proudly (again under his mustache) in his military outfit. He holds some object in one hand, it could be a flask. All around him trees blossom in a bright spring sun. This idyllic scenery together with the man's expression make the photograph look more like a holiday souvenir than a war document. The footnote about a Family Journal

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emphasizes that the narration of 'fields of honor' was reproduced not only in the public discourse but in private conversations with relatives and friends as well. Through the lens of this photograph war really looks like a great adventure and an opportunity to see the world. As Soldano album proves, these were exactly the memories that the war created for a few long after its ending. However, this light spirit gets crushed in *War against War* when one looks at the following page. The next illustration, showing shapeless human remains and a corpsman leaning towards them, is captioned: "How Papa was found two days later (Picture not published in Family Journal)" (Friedrich 2017: 83).

"Papa as hero in the enemy's country (Picture for the illustrated Family Journal)" (Friedrich 2017: 82)

"How Papa was found two days later (Picture not published in the Family Journal)" (Friedrich 2017: 83)

This romanticized image of war – shared by both the proud adolescent and the happy Papa, as well as many others – turned out not to correspond with the WWI path, drastically changed by new war technologies, like trench warfare or chemical weapon, and old ones that saw a resurgence, like tunnel warfare. In the face of this hideous and brutal reality, the dominant discourse tried even harder to hide it. Nonetheless, at some point the duvet of military lies seemed to be too short to cover the masses of corpses.

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4.2. Archives as Repressed Memories

Reading along the grain allows to find out not only what is preserved in archives but what is repressed from them as well. Scrutinizing a dominant discourse shows what it is made of but also when it turns its eyes away. Those moments of hesitation, of stumble and omission may reveal the reality behind an image. Indeed, a dominant discourse is created not only to shape a social structure but also to repress what cannot be easily managed. The material basis of life that does not surrender to anybody's will. That war is a filthy, smelly business and no commands have power to change it.

In *Male Fantasies*, Klaus Theweleit analyzes diaries and letters of *Freikorps* members. Those pieces repeat the same narration as this disclosed in *War against War* – the story about 'field of honor' and 'honorable death'. He notices that in this discourse everything fluid, moist and humid – as filth, slime, and flood – is presented as dangerous and repulsive (Theweleit 1987: 230). Its proclaimers rejected what they connoted with organic matter and human sexuality – especially female reproductive organs whose ability to produce fluids scared them. After all, the organic matter posed a threat not only to their physical bodies but above all to their identity. To counter that, they saw themselves as free from those 'disgusting' features and instead as-signed them to their enemies. Those attempts to reject and fully control one's own biology created many obstacles. Life in war trenches – and death as well – was extremely hard to preserve its 'purity', both physical and mental.

The biggest threat under these circumstances posed death itself, al-though not one's own but others'. Soldiers watched it daily during the war. Julia Kristeva (1982) writes about a dead body:

> **The corps (or cadaver: *cadere*, to fall), that which has irremediably come a cropper, is cesspool, and death; it upsets even more violently the one who confronts it as fragile and fallacious chance. A wound with blood and pus, or the sickly, acrid smell of sweat, of decay, does not *signify* death. […] No, as in true theater, without makeup or masks, refuse and corpses show me what I permanently thrust aside in order to live. These body fluids, this defilement, this shit are what life withstands, hardly and with difficulty, on the part of death. There, I am at**

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the border of my condition as a living being. My body extricates itself, as being alive, from that border. Such wastes drop so that I might live, until, from loss to loss, nothing remains in me and my entire body falls beyond the limit – *cadere*, cadaver. (Kristeva 1982: 3)

The awareness of being at the border of one's condition as a living being – in case of soldiers in trenches of World War I both physically and metaphorically – triggers an attempt to save oneself from crossing it. At the sight (and smell) of decomposing flesh, soldiers resorted to what death signifies in order to try to cover what it shows.

The best protection against the sight of fluid and shapeless death is everything stiff and horizontal, as Theweleit writes: "Whether it is the man himself, a city, a rock, or a periphery: the aspect of *towering up* is decisive in warding off the flood" (Theweleit 1987: 245). Thus, all military celebrations mentioned earlier, with their disciplined, tight bodies, attempted to be a visual antidote to the show of the death. The richness of the aesthetic form was meant to cover slaughter and plunder (Leder 2016: 195-196). On the ideological level, their counterpart are 'Religion, Morality, Law' (Kristeva 1982: 16). This Trinity gives '[a]n unshakable adherence to Prohibition and Law' (Kristeva 1982: 16) that staves off the Real – the death – and keeps soldiers in trenches. This reveals a true paradox of archives – that what is kept in them as confidential is often already known by many (Stoler 2002: 108). At the end, many of those who fought in World War I had seen for themselves the war horrors long before Friedrich showed them in *War against War*. That suggests a different function of archives' 'confidentiality' – that it consist of what everybody already knows but wishes they would not. Therefore, a society represses the real image of war, replacing it with one that is easier to confront (and those who profit from it enable these processes). The secrets in archives speak not about what people do not know but rather what they cannot admit that they do.

A good illustration of those issues is the contrast between the two previously mentioned photographs with 'Papa', whose family preferred to imagine the war in which he died as an honorable and dignify adventure rather than a bloody, messy inferno that it was. Similarly disparate are two other images from *War against War* – one shows four smiling soldiers that

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make a toast to their victories in a restaurant, and the next one presents a lonely dead body with a gruesome face expression, laying on the ground. The photographs are captioned respectively: 'German soldier's song: In victory shall we vanquish France…' and '…to die like a hero' (Friedrich 2017: 126-127). It is hard to say if the dead man is one of the four on the previous page – probably not. Yet this comparison shows that the discourse about the war glory – repeated in military celebrations and nationalistic culture – is just a mask whose role is to hide the horrifying reality of that war. Even after the ending of the conflict, it still functions as a way of repressing the personal and social memories that are threating to veterans' identities.

"German soldier's song: In the victory shall we vanquish France…"
(Friedrich 2017: 126)

"…to die like a hero"
(Friedrich 2017: 127)

This threat on a personal level might – and often did – take a form of mental disorders. It is hard to say exactly how many of WWI veterans suffered from it, since there are no official data. The fact that the term 'shell shock' – classified in contemporary psychiatric as PTSD – was first described during studies of World War I soldiers, may be a proof of its commonness. However, the number of cases did not translate into social acceptance. Mental illness was seen as a proof of one's 'weak', 'unmasculine' and 'hysteric' nature that war only triggers (Fox 2006). Due to that, those who suffered from it often did not gain compassion and support but instead they were at least partly blamed (or probably even self-blamed) for their lack of faith. In

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such circumstances, many did try to repress their disturbing memories and shield from them behind the narration of 'field of honor'.

"Edward Grey: »Business is as usual«"
(Friedrich 2017: 262)

5 · Conclusion

Surprisingly, there is no mention of mental costs of war in *War against War*, neither in the manifesto nor in the visual part. It may be caused be Friedrich's lack of awareness or the lack of visual representation of these conditions. It indicates that even a very careful study of archives – both against and along the grain – can still miss some spots and that the project of reading per-petrators' documents critically remains a constant hermeneutical process.

In this paper, I presented two methods of approaching archives – 'against' and 'along the grain' – exemplified by *War against War* by Ernst Friedrich. The first method focuses on revealing victims' voices, while the second presents the mechanisms of dominant discourse and reality that it covers. Those two concepts were applied to Friedrich project to examine some photographic remains of World War I.

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Thémata.

Revista de Filosofía