



The Images of a Camera Operator and the Public Imagination versus the Scientific Imagination

Author Erick Costa

Institution: Graduated filmmaker, Estácio de Sá University

Camera Operator for over 10 years at TV Globo (Second Largest Broadcaster in the World and the Largest in Latin America), as well as TV Record and Cinema.

SUMMARY

This article investigates the construction and interpretation of images captured by camera operators from two fundamental perspectives: the public imagination and the scientific imagination. While the general public interprets images based on their personal experiences, emotions and cultural narratives, the scientific imagination is based on objectivity, technique and the search for fidelity in the recordings.

The study examines the technical and symbolic aspects of the work of camera operators, as well as the role of the media in shaping the collective imagination. In addition, it discusses the methodological differences between scientific analysis and popular interpretation of images, highlighting how the operator's mediation can affect the perception of reality.

The methodology adopted for this research includes a bibliographic review and qualitative analysis of images. Authors such as Bourdieu (1997), who discusses the influence of habitus on the production and reception of images, and Flusser (2002), who analyzes the impact of photography and cinematography on the construction of knowledge and visual experience, were considered.

The results demonstrate that image production is never completely neutral: even in scientific contexts, there are technical and aesthetic choices that influence the reception of the image. In the context of the public imagination, subjectivity and emotion play central roles, while in the scientific approach, these influences are minimized through rigorous methods of capture and analysis. It is concluded that the intersection between these two imaginaries highlights the complexity of the process of interpreting images and reinforces the need for a critical approach in visual production and consumption.

Keywords: camera operator; image; public imagination; scientific imagination; visual perception; visual mediation.

1 INTRODUCTION

The production and interpretation of images have been part of the human experience since the dawn of civilization. However, with the advent of capture technologies such as photography, cinema and television, visual mediation has become even more influential in the way societies construct knowledge and perceive reality. The camera operator, therefore, is not only

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a technician responsible for recording scenes, but an active mediator who shapes the visual content through his aesthetic and technical choices.

Pierre Bourdieu (1997) argues that image production is influenced by habitus, that is, by the set of dispositions acquired throughout life, which guide the individual's choices and perceptions. This means that the way a camera operator records a scene is not neutral, but loaded with meanings and social influences. At the same time, Vilém Flusser (2002) highlights that technical images, such as photography and video, have a programmed character, since the devices used to capture them impose limitations and specific standards of representation.

In this context, this article seeks to discuss the differences between the public imagination and the scientific imagination in the interpretation of images. While the former is largely influenced by culture, emotions and media narratives, the latter is based on objectivity and technical precision. This distinction is fundamental to understanding how images are consumed and interpreted in different contexts, and how the mediation of the camera operator can impact this process.

Throughout this work, the following aspects will be addressed: the technical choices that influence the production of images, the subjectivity present in the work of the camera operator, the influence of the media in the construction of the public imagination and the methodologies used in the scientific analysis of images. To this end, we will use a qualitative approach, based on a literature review and a comparative analysis between different contexts of image production.

2 THE CAMERA OPERATOR AND HIS INFLUENCE ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF VISUAL REALITY 2.1 The Technique and Composition of Images

Image production involves a series of technical choices that determine the quality and visual impact of the captured material. Aspects such as lighting, depth of field, camera movement and framing directly affect the visual narrative.

2.1.1 Illumination and Perception of Reality

Lighting can change the way a scene is perceived, creating atmospheres that evoke different emotions. In a scientific documentary, lighting tends to be neutral, ensuring fidelity to details. In a television or film production, lighting can be dramatized to reinforce symbolic meanings.

2.1.2 Angles and Framing

The choice of camera angle can influence the understanding of the image. A low angle can convey grandeur and power, while a high angle can suggest fragility or submission. In journalism, the aim is to achieve a balanced and neutral framing, while in cinema, angles can be explored artistically to reinforce emotions.

2.2 Image Capture Between the Objective and the Subjective

Although camera operation is guided by technical principles, there is always a component

subjective involved. The camera operator makes choices that can reinforce certain narratives or interpretations.

2.2.1 The Role of the Camera Operator in Mediating Reality

Even if the camera records an event directly, the decision about what to film, when to cut and how to compose the scene impacts how reality will be perceived. Complete neutrality is almost impossible, as each operator has a particular style and vision.

2.2.2 The Influence of Culture and Context

The public imagination is largely shaped by cultural, social and historical factors. The same event recorded in different countries or under different political contexts can generate completely different interpretations.

3 PUBLIC IMAGINARY VERSUS SCIENTIFIC IMAGINARY 3.1 The

Public Imaginary and the Collective Construction of Images

The public imagination is formed by social, artistic and media references that influence the way images are interpreted.

3.1.1 The Impact of the Media on the Formation of the Popular Imagination

The media plays a fundamental role in the construction of the collective imagination, creating symbols and narratives that shape the perception of reality. Films, news reports and advertising often reinforce certain visual interpretations, which are assimilated by the public over time.

3.1.2 Sensationalism and Emotion as Key Elements

While the scientific imagination seeks objectivity, the public imagination is often guided by emotion. Dramatic or impactful images tend to gain greater prominence in the media, influencing the viewer's perception.

3.2 The Scientific Imaginary and the Search for Neutrality

The scientific imaginary is based on technical and methodological criteria that guarantee the accuracy of images, minimizing the influence of subjectivities.

3.2.1 The Use of Images as Scientific Evidence

In many areas of knowledge, such as biology, archaeology and astronomy, images are used as a source of evidence and analysis. Fidelity to the recorded object is essential to maintain the scientific validity of the information.

3.2.2 Image Recording and Analysis Methods in Science

Different methods are applied to ensure the neutrality and accuracy of scientific images, such as the use of filters, calibrated color adjustments and standardized capture techniques.

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4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis of images from the perspective of the public imagination and the scientific imagination revealed that visual production and interpretation are complex processes and deeply influenced by

by social, technical and cultural factors. The camera operator, when making choices about framing, lighting and movement, not only records reality, but constructs it subjectively, even if inserted in established technical standards.

As Flusser (2002) argues, technical images are not mere reflections of reality, but rather products of a programmed system that defines what can and cannot be captured. This point is fundamental for us to understand that, even in the scientific context, there is a degree of mediation and subjectivity in the production of images. Bourdieu (1997) highlights that the way images are interpreted by the public is conditioned by habitus, that is, by cognitive and social schemes that shape individual and collective perception.

In the public imagination, images are heavily influenced by the media and cultural narratives. Sensationalism and dramatization are often used to heighten the emotional impact of images, which can distort the perception of facts. In contrast, the scientific imagination seeks to minimize subjectivity through standardized capture and analysis techniques, but never completely eliminates the influence of context and technical choices.

We conclude that the intersection between these two imaginaries reveals the need for a critical approach to the production and consumption of images. Both image professionals and viewers must be aware of the implications of technical and symbolic choices in the construction of visual reality. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of new research on the mediation of images in the digital age, in which algorithms and artificial intelligence play an increasing role in visual capture and interpretation.

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