Fehrenbach, Heide; Rodogno, Davide (Hrsg.): *Humanitarian Photography. A History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2015. ISBN: 978-1-107-06470-6; 366 S.

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Although the history of humanitarianism has recently attracted great attention from historians and social scientists, surprisingly little work has so far been done on its visual dimensions. Yet there can be no doubt that images, visual technologies, and media practices were fundamental to the emergence and formation of a global humanitarian enterprise since the nineteenth century. The volume „Humanitarian Photography," edited by Heide Fehrenbach and Davide Rodogno, thus constitutes an important and most welcome contribution to a flourishing field of research. Focusing on the mobilization of photography by humanitarian activists and organizations in the twentieth century, the volume gives compelling insights into the transnational production, reproduction, use, and function of photographs in various contexts of humanitarian activism. Pointing to the key role that photography played in the development of humanitarianism, it introduces a range of people, groups and organizations that conceived of photographs as essential means in order to aid far-off people, to raise funds or to create awareness of human suffering. Fehrenbach and Rodogno insist on the need to study humanitarian photography in a historical perspective. Consequently, their volume, which follows an interdisciplinary approach and consists of both new texts and reprints of important articles in the field, presents a chronology, according to which humanitarian photography emerged out of transnational missionary activity, expanded within various international organizations and eventually developed into a professional field that was ethically framed and regulated in the 1980s.

The first chapter, by historian of religion Heather D. Curtis, examines the use and function of photography in the internationalization of Christian philanthropy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Examining two American evangelical journals, Curtis shows how editors successfully relied on photographs of human pain and modern developments in print journalism in order to make American readers participate in famine relief campaigns in India. Realistic depictions of human suffering also constitute a theme in the next chapter by Christina Twomey, who analyzes the concept of atrocity from a historical perspective. Considering the examples of the British relief campaign to the Indian famine 1876–1878 and the Congo Reform Association 1903–1913, Twomey insists on the need to consider the emergence of photographic evidence as a support to the concept of atrocity and its potential to create moral outrage. In a similar vein, Kevin Grant's chapter stresses the power that a set of missionary photographs acquired in the framework of the Congo Reform Campaign. However, photography was also central to the humanitarian framing of genocide. As Peter Balakian's chapter argues, despite earlier photographic traditions of documenting atrocity and war, the early twentieth century, with trench warfare in the First World War and the Armenian Genocide, produced and distributed a new type of images. According to Balakian, it was precisely the relationship between an image and knowledge of a certain event such as the mass killings in Armenia that created depth and mobilizing power in American humanitarian campaigns (p. 98). Moving the focus further east, the next chapter by Caroline Reeves examines the use of images in humanitarian campaigns in early twentieth-century China. Comparing the use of photographs by the Chinese Red Cross with that by humanitarian agencies in the West, Reeves argues that, contrary to a Western focus on victims, the Chinese campaigns tended to center on the aid-givers, for it was with them that audiences were encouraged to identify (p. 135). Francesca Piana's chapter likewise deals with visual campaigns in the Red Cross Movement that strove to raise funds and to gain legitimacy and institutional strength in both post-war periods. Examining the use of photography and film by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Piana tells a story of not only increasingly professional media work but also entangled local, national and transnational per-

spectives on ICRC operations worldwide. Besides, she observes an increasing focus on the use of photographs of rescued children in the campaigns after 1945 (p. 156). This is indeed significant, because children today occupy an important place in humanitarian visual culture. The chapter by Heide Fehrenbach approaches this observation from a long-term historical perspective. Arguing that the child moved into humanitarian imagery around 1900, Fehrenbach suggests some key moments in the history of child-centered humanitarian photography such as the „Save the Children"-campaigns of the early 1920s or the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War.

With the remaining chapters focusing on the second half on the twentieth century, the volume emphasizes the rapid professionalization of media work and the employment of visual technologies in the major humanitarian organizations. As Silvia Salvatici's chapter on the media campaigns of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) shows, photography played a pivotal role in fostering a particular humanitarian narrative after 1945. Similarly, Davide Rodogno and Thomas David, turning their focus to the World Health Organization (WHO), argue that the visual politics of this eminent body was highly influenced by that of other organizations. Starting in the early 1950s, the WHO employed well-known photographers and collaborated with prominent photographic agencies in the US in order to promote its worldwide battle against disease. While the WHO and UNRRA tended to visualize relief and scientific solutions to humanitarian needs, images of suffering continued to feature in humanitarian campaigns in the second half of the twentieth century. As the chapters by Lasse Heerten and Henrietta Lidchi show, atrocity photographs from Biafra in the late 1960s and the Ethiopian Famine 1984–1985 still served as powerful instruments in order to create humanitarian media events and to mobilize public attention in Europe and the US. While Heerten convincingly points to the great importance of the visual memory of the Nazi crimes in this context, Lidchi argues that the famine campaigns of the mid-1980s initiated a significant turning point in many NGOs, for they started to discuss the political and educational implications of humanitarian image making. Since the late 1980s, some prominent development charities drafted ethical guidelines for that purpose, which stressed for instance the need for dialogic production of images and the need for greater accuracy and truthfulness (p. 293). The last chapter, by Sanna Nissinen, analyzes photographic ethics as practiced in contemporary aid organizations from a sociological perspective. Based on fieldwork in Bangladesh, Nissinen not only discusses the tensions that arise among NGO-workers and professional photographers in the field with regard to ethical questions connected to humanitarian image-making, but also provides a fascinating insight into this type of work and the interaction between photographers, aid workers, and the recipients of aid.

Overall, the volume not only provides a comprehensive overview of the use of photography by humanitarians in the twentieth century, but also shows that photography has profoundly shaped the ways in which international audiences faced major twentieth century humanitarian issues such as atrocity, hunger/famine, genocide, and development. Fehrenbach and Rodogno establish humanitarian photography as something profoundly shaped by its use over time and thus embedded in institutional contexts, discourses, and humanitarian narratives. Yet, perhaps surprisingly given the volume's exclusive concentration on photography (and the twentieth century), it does not tackle the question of the status of the visual and aesthetics in the history of humanitarianism more generally. Ignoring all non-photographic image production, it risks overlooking links to broader visual traditions as well as the important function of image objects connecting humanitarian communities in the past. To give but two prominent examples, the book neither considers the visual culture of earlier movements that some scholars have considered pivotal to the history of humanitarianism, such as the antislavery movement, nor engages with well-established Christian traditions of transnationally making, exchanging, and using images in the name of benevolence. While other recent studies have argued the need to study the relationship between

images, moral judgements and the mobilization of compassion since the mid-eighteenth century, Fehrenbach and Rodogno take the massive expansion of photography and photographic practices in the early twentieth century as a starting point.[1] While this produces clear ideas about the workings of images in certain humanitarian contexts, it does not engage with chronologies of humanitarianism more generally or explore potential non-photographic pivotal points in the long visual history of global humanitarianism.

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[1] See Sharon Sliwinski, Human Rights in Camera, Chicago 2011.