

FSA photography and the Steichen Collections: *The Family of Man* and *The Bitter Years* in Luxembourg

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Introduction

In the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, two museum spaces with permanent photography exhibitions opened successively in recent years. Château de Clervaux in Clervaux and Waassertuerm+Pomhouse in Dudelange. The former is an old castle built in the 12th century, and displays *The Family of Man* exhibition. It opened in 1994, and was included in the UNESCO's Memory of the World Register in 2003. After a large renovation that started in 2010, it reopened in the summer of 2013 [Fig.1]. Waassertuerm+Pomhouse which means "Water tower and Pumphouse" in Luxembourg was opened in the fall of 2012 as the annex to Centre National de L'Audiovisuel (CNA) [Fig.2]. It displays *The Bitter Years* exhibition in two circular galleries on the ground floor of the tower and on the water tank above. The unusual museum architectures are renovated industrial buildings that were part of a steel plant closed in the 1980s.

These two photography exhibitions were originally organized for the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA) by Edward Steichen who was an established photographer and who also curated 44 exhibitions as the director of the photography department. *The Family of Man* in 1955 was the largest art exhibition at MoMA showing 503 photographs by 273 photographers from around the world, and made a record of over nine million visitors by touring 38 countries. On the other hand, *The Bitter Years* was Steichen's last exhibition when he retired from MoMA in 1962.



Fig.1 Château de Clervaux in Clervaux,
Photograph by author on July 27, 2013



Fig.2 Waassertuerm+Pomhouse in Dudelange,
Photograph by author on July 27, 2013

The main reason for Luxembourg to conserve and reproduce photography exhibitions of a representative art museum in the U.S. — MoMA — is because it is the home country of Steichen, who immigrated to the U.S. in his infancy. In 1964 and 1967, photo panels of *The Family of Man* and of the *The Bitter Years* exhibition were donated to the government of Luxembourg by MoMA upon Steichen's special request[1]. For Luxembourg, Steichen is the only Luxembourger artist of international acclaim. And unlike today, the country did not have financial means to purchase art collections at the time; thus, these were very valuable gifts from the U.S.

Steichen studied painting and photography in Paris in his youth, and was successful in both artistic and commercial photography in the U.S. He had a great influence on the artworld and related culture. He also played an important role in society. *The Family of Man* tour around the world was made possible thanks to strong support from the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), and it was part of Public Diplomacy during the Cold War era. Donation of the Steichen collection to Luxembourg also seems part of the Public Diplomacy of the U.S.

Public Diplomacy is “cultural diplomacy” that directly approaches people of other nations through culture in contrast to “diplomacy” that happens between government officials. This word was used by a former diplomat, Edmund Gullion, who defined that “It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with those of another” during the Cold War[2]. When the Cold War ended, some expected that its necessity would decrease. However, the need of U.S. cultural diplomatic strategy against anti-Americanism was recognized again as became obvious with the tragedy of 9.11.

This paper is intended as a historical discussion of the Steichen Collections in Luxembourg from the perspective of Public Diplomacy. First, casting a new light on the so-called FSA photography, which was produced by an American Government administration, the Farm Security Administration and originally circulated as propaganda for the New Deal Policy, its influence on Steichen will be affirmed. Secondly, the investigation of the differences between the original exhibitions and the re-exhibitions in Luxembourg within each historical contexts will emerge quite different meanings of the exhibition. Thirdly, examining the reception of these exhibitions, including the criticisms that were addressed to them, as well as the ways in which the re-exhibitions were made lead us to observe that the Steichen Collections provide good evidence of the basic difference between Propaganda Art and Public Diplomacy with Art.

1. The FSA photography as propaganda for the New Deal

Steichen's final exhibition at MoMA was *The Bitter Years: Rural America seen by the photographers of the Farm Security Administration*. Steichen repeatedly showed FSA photography in his curations. *The Family of Man* included seven pieces, and one third of photographs exhibited in his first exhibition at MoMA, *Road to Victory* (1941), were FSA photography. He clearly had special interest in the FSA photography[3].

Farm Security Administration (FSA) is the name of the administrative agency for the New Deal Policy implemented by Franklin D. Roosevelt in order to rescue rural farmers. During the Great Depression that started in 1929, farmers were suffering from serious poverty due to the

fall of agricultural product prices and also to natural disasters such as floods, droughts, and large-scale sand storms, the so-called Dustbowls, that frequently occurred from the South to the Midwest. A photography project by the Department of Information of Resettlement Administration (RA) in order to research for the farm areas and to create the record of its activity first began in 1935. Then RA including the photography project were reorganized into the FSA of the Department of Agriculture in 1937. Roy E. Stryker, a social-economist, who was Chief of the photography project, selected photographers that were dispatched across the U.S., including Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, Ben Shahn and other now famous photographers who created many masterpieces of documentary photography [Fig.3].

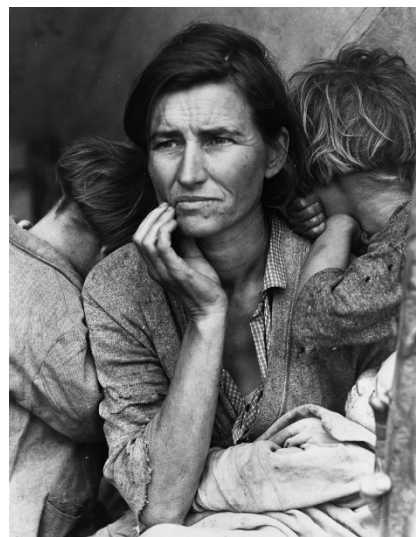


Fig.3 Dorothea Lange, *Migrant Mother*, 1936, FSA-OWI, LC-USF34-9058-C.

FSA photography encompassed not only farms and farmers but also natural environment and cities across the U.S., along with people, industries, societies, and cultures. Since all the negatives were stored in an office in Washington DC it is now at the Library of Congress site open to the public as a collection of 170,000 photos, and it is extremely valuable as historical documents for the period from the Great Depression to World War II[4].

At the beginning of the project, photographs only accompanied documents and government publications; however, from 1936, it became available to general magazines such as *Survey Graphic*, *Times*, *Fortune*, *Today*, and newspapers. Also in 1936, with the prosperity of photography magazines starting with *LIFE*, *Look*, *U.S. Camera*, etc., by 1940, over 200 news organizations had published these photographs. In addition, many books on the FSA photography were published, and photography exhibitions were held in art museums[5]. Their immense circulation clearly shows the straightforward photographs of farmers in poverty and suffering. And their images captured American citizens.

On the other hand, the FSA photography was also propaganda for Roosevelt's administration. The New Deal Policy made efforts to rescue the unemployed and to revitalize domestic demand through large-scale public works, and made radical and socialistic reforms on a wide range of issues including tax system, banking, labor issues, and social security. Therefore, the Republican Party and the Conservatives were hostile to New Dealers because they seemed turned to left. The FSA photography exposed the real images of people left behind in poverty and suffering in order to convey a message that President Roosevelt would never give up on these people. It aimed to gain the public support, and to have the New Deal Policy that required a massive national budget accepted by the Congress.

However, when the economy rapidly recovered due to the revitalization of military industry in World War II, the FSA became obsolete. In 1942, the FSA photography project was moved to the Office of War Information (OWI), and U.S. military propaganda took over. In a climate that demanded the image of a "Strong America", poor and weak images of "Poverty" became

undesirable. Congress even attempted to delete the FSA photography project altogether. All the negatives and documents were about to be lost forever, but in 1943, it was entrusted to the U.S. Library of Congress as the FSA collection, thus avoiding this grim fate. The OWI photography project ended in 1944[6].

In spite its high value as fine art and as record of negative aspects of U.S. history and as the origin as the Roosevelt's administration propaganda, the FSA photography's destiny was strongly affected by the change in the political situation, and was nearly forgotten in the post-war economic boom. Nevertheless, Steichen solely continued to exhibit the FSA photography during the War, and the last photography exhibition he curated at MoMA, *The Bitter Years*, in 1962 sparked a FSA photography re-evaluation that began in 1960s.

2. Edward Steichen and the FSA photography

Edward J. Steichen was born to a farming family in Luxembourg in 1879, and immigrated with his whole family to Chicago shortly after. At 15, Steichen started to work as an apprentice at a lithograph company, where he became involved with illustrations and design, and began photography. Shortly after, his photography was noticed by Alfred Stieglitz: a pioneer of American modern photography, and Steichen flourished with portraits and landscapes as a pictorial photographer, which was the mainstream mode in artistic photography at the time [Fig.4]. In 1900, he moved to Paris and London in order to study paintings and photography. Since then, he travelled between Europe and the U.S., and in 1902, established the Photo-Secession with Stieglitz, and was involved with exhibitions at Gallery 291.

World War I brought the first turning point for him. He broke with Stieglitz, who supported Germany, while he was a supporter of France. Once the U.S. joined the War, he volunteered and joined the U.S. Army Signal Corps Photographic section, and was later promoted up to lieutenant. After leaving the military, he abandoned his previous symbolist paintings and pictorialist photography and opened his own photo studio in New York. He led the expansion of sophisticated modernist photography that crosses art and commercial photography in publishing and advertising industries, as well as fashion magazines such as *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair*.

Encountering FSA photography was another turning point for Steichen. Just before turning 60, he announced his retirement from commercial art in 1938. That was when he came across about 70 FSA photographs that were special exhibits at the 1st International Photographic Exposition held in New York. Though subjects and the photographing method were completely different from Steichen's previous photographs, deeply impressed, Steichen unusually featured



Fig.4 Edward Steichen, *Self-Portrait with Brush and Palette*, 1902, in Todd Brandow & William A. Ewing ed., *Edward Steichen: Lives in Photography*, FEP Editions LLC, 2007, p.44.

the FSA photography in the 1939 issue of a yearbook of photography: *U.S. Camera*. He stated that it was “a series of the most remarkable human documents that were ever rendered in pictures. But the ‘Art for art’s sake’ boys in the trade were upset, for these documents told stories and told them with such simple and blunt directness[7].”

Furthermore, Steichen discovered potential for a new expression in presentation of the FSA photography as collective pictures rather than as autonomous individual works reflecting the individuality of a photographer.

It is not the individual pictures nor the work of individual photographers that make these pictures so important, but it is the job as a whole as it has been produced by the photographers as a group that makes it such a unique and outstanding achievement[8].

Since the moment he saw the FSA photographs at the 1st International Photographic Exposition, he likely had an idea to exhibit “America” to mass audience with a collective photographs: in other words, the idea of *The Family of Man*[9]. Instead of taking his own photographs, he became devoted to directing other photographers and curating photography exhibitions.

As soon as the U.S. joined World War II, despite his advanced age, Steichen volunteered to the U.S. Army Signal Corps again, and organized a Naval Aviation Photographic unit of 3,000. Subsequently, in 1942, he held a propaganda photography exhibition for the U.S. military, *Road to Victory*, at MoMA in order to explain the necessity of joining World War II to the citizens. The first half of the exhibition was on ‘America: our home to protect’ through photographs of nature, people, agriculture, and engineering in the U.S. The latter half showed ‘soldiers bravely fighting in the frontline to protect America, their homeland’. 134 photographs were collected from government agencies, military, or publications such as *Time*, *LIFE*, and so on. One third of these photographs were FSA photographs, and he had the support of Roy Stryker in the selection[10]. The exhibition venue allowed for photographic panels to be installed in the space at various angles, which dynamically guided the visitors’ line of sight in addition to massive photographs enlarged to fill the whole wall. This design allowed for visitors to move through the exhibition venue in a certain order. Texts by Carl Sandberg, a poet and Steichen’s brother-in-law, accompanied the photographs, completing a story.

Instead of simply exhibiting photographs, this method developed the installation that organizes the whole exhibition space, and it was a prelude to *The Family of Man*.

3. *The Family of Man* in 1955

Steichen assumed the position of the director of the Department of Photography at MoMA in 1947, and organized *The Family of Man* exhibition that commemorated the 25th anniversary of MoMA. Over 500 photographs taken around the world were exhibited with 32 continuous themes of humanity from birth, play, work, marriage, conflict, death, and so on [Fig.5].

In the foreword to the catalog, Steichen wrote:

[the exhibition] demonstrates that art of photography is a dynamic process of giving form

to ideas and of explaining man to man. It was conceived as a mirror of the universal elements and emotions in the everydayness of life – as a mirror of the essential oneness of mankind throughout the world[11].

He attempted to present a universal humanism. At the same time, by presenting works of 238 photographers from 68 countries regardless of their fame, it praised the ideal of world peace following the cessation of World War II. Following the war photography and mushroom clouds of hydrogen bomb experiments, the climax of the exhibition were the photographs of the United Nations Congress and the Charter of the United Nations.

After the national tour, *The Family of Man* toured 38 countries with multiple versions as the U.S. cultural diplomacy by USIA. Based on the large scale and the content of the exhibition, it demonstrated the superiority and prosperity of the U.S. It also verified the fairness of the nation and freedom of speech by showing the negative side of the U.S. such as poverty, discrimination, and violence. This strategy was said to be first used by “The Voice of America”, a shortwave broadcasting for Germany which Roosevelt started in 1942 following in the footsteps of BBC in the U.K.[12], however, it is more likely that this strategy followed FSA photography that visually exposed poverty in the U.S. under the Great Depression much earlier.

The Family of Man was praised around the world and wildly successful with 9 million visitors and 3 million catalogs sold. However, there were some criticisms against the contents and the display method, most prominently by Roland Barthes. After seeing the main exhibition in Paris in 1957, he pointed out that it involved two stages of mythicization:

first the difference between human morphologies is asserted, exoticism is insistently stressed [...]. Then, from this pluralism, a type of unity is magically produced: man is born, works, laughs and dies everywhere in the same way; [...], there is underlying each one an identical ‘nature’, that their diversity is only formal and does not belie the existence of a common mould. [...] and here is God re-introduced into our Exhibition: the diversity of men proclaims his power, his richness; the unity of their gestures demonstrates his will[13].

He then, criticized that this mythicization that unfairly confuses in a gestural identity the colonial worker and the Western worker, and de-historifies work in “an eternal aesthetics of laborious gestures”, although work is entirely historified[14]. Subsequently, renowned critics continued with harsh criticisms such as *The Family of Man* being a cliché and smugness based on the American middle-class culture, an exploitation of human emotions, and disrespect to photographers.



Fig.5 *The Family of Man* at MoMA, 1955, in Mary Anne Staniszewski, *The Power of Display: A History of Exhibition Installations at the Museum of Modern Art*, MIT press, 1998, p.243.

On the other hand, the viewpoint of the general viewers should not be overlooked. In recent studies on *The Family of Man*, Monique Berlier suggested that while those critics judged *The Family of Man* primarily in terms of its relationship with art and its place in U.S. culture and then in terms of its relationship with political and social situations, “the general audience paid almost sole attention to the timeless truths, feelings, and emotions that they found in the imagery and to which they could relate on a personal basis[15].”

Then how was audience experiencing *The Family of Man*? According to my personal experience at Château de Clervaux described below, the interior of the exhibit space is much more intricate than that of MoMA. There are a large number of steps as well, and near the attic, there are some galleries where beams are visible. However, experiencing a group of photographs with strong appeal that continue to expand as they change sizes and formats through a space that is physically limiting and does not allow foreseeing the spaces ahead overwhelms the viewers, and creates deep respect toward people they see within the photographs. Given that many criticisms other than that of Barthes appeared about 20 years after the tour, it is possible that these criticisms are not reactions to the exhibition but reflections obtained by looking at the catalog.

The message from Steichen, a prominent figure in not only art world but also in advertising and publishing world, to the public was an ideal related on his own social experience, and his message overlapped with the ideal image of “America”. However, it is important that *The Family of Man* provided not only emotional experience to people throughout the world and fascinated them, but at the same time, it received various criticisms. It must be noticed that we know that there were various criticisms against it, because of “the cultivation by governments of public opinions of others” in a sense that Gullion stated above. Thus we reaffirm that *The Family of Man* was successful Public Diplomacy.

4. *The Family of Man* at Château de Clervaux and the memory of World War II

When panels of photographs of *The Family of Man* and *The Bitter Years* were bequeathed from MoMA in the 1960s, Luxembourg did not have a facility to store or exhibit those collections, and thus, they were divided and stored in a number of locations. From 1987, it was managed by the CNA as the Steichen collection, and repairs were made to deteriorated and damaged parts by inviting a restoration team from Italy. The repairs were completed in 1991; however, its opening at the Château de Clervaux only took place in 1994, after a tour through Toulouse, France in 1992, and Tokyo (Aoyama Bell Commons) in 1993.

It is noteworthy that the nomination proposal by Jean Back, director of CNA, for the UNESCO Memory of the World Register in 2003, stated the following upon considering the criticisms by Barthes mentioned above:

we can even endorse the criticism by Roland Barthes; but we must admire the legendary achievement of this extraordinary American artist for its profound sincerity and the “passionate spirit of devoted love and faith in man” in which it was created[16].



Fig.6 U.S. military tank at Château de Clervaux,
Photograph by author on July 27, 2013

The words “passionate spirit of devoted love and faith in man” taken from the foreword written by Steichen in *The Family of Man* catalog sounds so straightforward and simple. However, when one actually visits the Château de Clervaux, one faces a sight that beckons for a re-interpretation of the meaning of this quotation from Steichen. When one climbs up a curvy slope along the wall of the castle and passes through the castle gate, one is faced with a building with *The Family of Man* banner depicting people’s faces. But, in front of it, there is a U.S. military tank [Fig.6].

What does this installation of an American tank mean? The inscription on a monument standing beside the tank says, “This U.S. Sherman M4A3(76) of Company B, 2nd Tank Battalion 9th Armored Division is the only known surviving combat vehicle of the Division. Put out of action on December 17, 1944 while defending Clervaux here at the gate to the castle. Dedicated by CEBA in 2003”.

During the end of World War II, there were violent battles between the German occupation force and the Allied forces. Especially, a fierce battle remembered in history as the “Bataille des Ardennes” which includes the “Battle of the Bulge”, that was made into an American war film in 1965, during which the Château de Clervaux was destroyed. Luxembourg, as part of the Allies excluding the Soviet Union and Poland, had the largest number of victims only second to the Netherlands, and one third of the buildings in the country were damaged[17]. Luxembourg, despite being an unarmed permanent neutral country was invaded by Germany during both World Wars. Though there were supporters of Germany within the country, when the county was occupied by Nazi Germany during World War II, as a reaction against the thorough Germanic policy, patriotic spirit increased and led to independence movements. In response, the oppression by Nazi became increasingly more violent. And in December 1944, at the end of a fierce battle between the American and the German armies in the snow, Luxembourg was finally freed.

The Château de Clervaux was rebuilt after the War, with the town hall, a tourist office and the Musée de la Bataille des Ardennes that exhibits wartime documents such as weapons and military uniforms. World War II is lingered on the collective memory of the people of Luxembourg. There are many organizations such as CEBA (Cercle d’Études sur la Bataille des Ardennes) that continue to light the torch of the memory, and are involved with memorial events held every September for the liberation by the U.S. and war victims[18]. In 1994, there were large events to commemorate 50 years since the War, and thus, it is likely not a coincidence that the opening of *The Family of Man* at the Château de Clervaux was in the same year. Also the tank was dedicated by CEBA in 2003, the same year of the registration of *The Family of Man* on the UNESCO’s Memory of the World.

The American Tank beside the Castle gate also symbolizes the memory of World War II, and

to look back at its history. And the words “passionate spirit of devoted love and faith in man” can be interpreted to the relationship between the U.S. as the liberation army and Luxembourg’s trust in them. Therefore, just as *The Family of Man* was the diplomatic means of the U.S., the exhibition at the Château de Clervaux can also be considered as the diplomatic means of Luxembourg toward the U.S.[19].

5. The FSA photography in *The Bitter Years* and people of Luxembourg

As mentioned earlier, *The Bitter Years* was the last photography exhibition to close Steichen’s activities at MoMA, and also a trigger for the reevaluation of FSA photography. During the post-war economic boom, no one looked back on the suffering from the Great Depression in the U.S. In addition, under the Cold War policy of the Truman administration, McCarthyism swept through the 1950s with concerns about “threat of communism” overlapping with the “nuclear threat”. The “Red Purge” was aimed at New Dealers that acknowledged the Soviet Union as a nation and pursued socialistic reform plan. Under such climate, interests in the FSA photography, the child of the New Deal Policy, seems to be also suppressed.

However, Steichen exhibited 208 FSA photographs with 15 themes in *The Bitter Years* in 1962 [Fig.7] which he dedicated to Stryker, who directed the FSA photography project[20]. At the same time, Walker Evans’ exhibition was held at MoMA, and the catalogue of his earlier exhibition *American Photographs* in 1938 was reissued. Furthermore, since Dorothea Lange passed away in 1965 and Ben Shahn passed away in 1969, their retrospective exhibitions were held in



Fig.7 *The Bitter Years* at MoMA, 1962, in Françoise Poos ed., *The Bitter Years: Edward Steichen and The Farm Security Administration Photographs*, d·a·p, 2012, p.9.

various locations, and the momentum for the reevaluation of FSA photography gradually increased. This is what Steichen stated in the foreword to the catalog:

I BELIEVE it is good at this time to be reminded of those “Bitter Years” and to bring them into the consciousness of a new generation which has problems of its own, but is largely unaware of the endurance and fortitude that made the emergence from the Great Depression one of America’s victorious hours[21].

It was the period of social contradictions, which was hidden in the shadow of the prosperity of America, that erupted as civil-rights movement, feminism movement, and anti-Vietnam war movement by the New Left. These movements are likely the problems of a new generation that Steichen meant. Alan Trachtenberg analyzed it as “particularly in the 1960s, when many college students turned to the 1930s in search of radical heritage. Evans’s sharecroppers and Dorothea

Lang's migrant workers had made the FSA seem to have mounted a campaign on behalf of the dispossessed[22]."

It has been pointed out several times that there is a fundamental commonality between the humanism of the FSA photography and *The Family of Man*. However, it also created friction as seen in the previously mentioned criticism. *The Family of Man* represented the whole world that is culturally, politically, and historically complex through the eyes of middle class typified by *LIFE* magazine. In other words, *The Family of Man* could not be "a family album of the earth". However, *The Bitter Years* had a different situation. Stryker himself, and Rexford Tugwell, a practitioner of the New Deal policy as the Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, who chose Stryker for the FSA photography project were both from a farming family, and were familiar with the sufferings of farmers. Furthermore, Steichen, who emigrated from a farm in Luxembourg, has been known to have continued growing flowers in his farm alongside his photographic activities. It seems as if their family backgrounds guaranteed that *The Bitter Years* presented the past of American farmers to America. Thus, it could be called "the family album of America".

How about *The Bitter Years* in Dudelange? How do people of Luxembourg receive the FSA photography that depicts time, place, and environment quite different from theirs? Daniela Del Fabbro, the curator of Waassertuerm+Pomhouse, told me that there was fortunately no serious natural disaster in Luxembourg, but economic conditions only stabilized in the recent years and life of farmers formerly had been poor. In addition, there are a large number of immigrants in Luxembourg, which also allowed for people to connect their own immigration history to the figures of migrant farmers captured by the FSA photography[23].

Looking back to the history of industry in Luxembourg, the steel industry was born after the industrial revolution; however, agricultural reform did not make progress, for that reason a large number of farmers emigrated to the U.S. during the late 19th century just like Steichen's family. Simultaneously there was a large influx of German and Italian immigrants as steel industry workers for they were willing to engage in harsh work in mines and ironworks. The steel company ARBED that led the steel industry of Luxembourg (currently it has gone through a merger and became the world's largest ArcelorMittal) had been founded in Dudelange, and there was a massive steel plant and a slag heap. The last remnant of this modern industry today is Waassertuerm+Pomhouse [Fig.8].

Del Fabbro pointed out a group of small houses that can be viewed from the top of the tower and said that families of Italian migrant workers laboring at ARBED lived there since the early 20th century[24]. After World War II, immigration from Portugal increased rapidly as if to fill the workforce lost by the war, and even in the present time when Luxembourg houses central institutions of the EU congregate, about half of its population is said to be immigrants and permanent foreign residents. Luxembourg is small but a major country of immigration, and its



Fig.8 View from the blast furnace toward the city center with the water tower in the background, 1956, *Ibid.*, p.42.

collective memory of immigration may make viewers to feel sympathy with *The Bitter Years*.

Conclusion

Let me summarize the main points that have been clarified above. The reason why these two contrasting photographic exhibitions – *The Family of Man* representing the mightiness of America and *The Bitter Years* of suffering America during the Great Depression – are installed and displayed permanently in Luxembourg relates more to the idea of Public Diplomacy, than to the fact that their organizer Steichen was an immigrant from Luxembourg. It represents at the same time U.S. Public Diplomacy to Luxembourg and Luxembourg Public Diplomacy to the U. S. Further, the exhibitions could be accounted for as propaganda for government policies, because the FSA photography that had influenced on Steichen was propaganda for the New Deal policy and Steichen himself was committed to the U.S. military propaganda during World War II. Taking into account all of those facts, it is adequate to critically conclude them to be Propaganda Art. For the reason already stated above, the various criticisms of *The Family of Man in 1955* have been succeeded in its studies and in its re-exhibitions. It is possible to say that the criticisms were accepted as the “public opinion of others” in the sense of Public Diplomacy which emphasizes interaction with the opinions with others. On the contrary Propaganda by principle exterminates criticisms. The difference between Public Diplomacy and Propaganda Art becomes to be obvious at this point.

Nonetheless, it is possible to affirm that there was, so to speak, a kind of primary and deep humanitarian point of view that were shared by the FSA and Steichen at the basis of their motives. It may be thanks to this primary and deep humanitarianism that the art exhibitions especially related to historic locations have the function provoking in viewers a certain collective memory and sympathy across time, locations and situations. *The Family of Man* is linked to the memory of World War II in a symbolic location, Château de Clervaux, and *The Bitter Years* installed in the water tower of the steel factory is linked to large-scale immigration caused by the modern industrial revolution. To discuss humanitarianism in art here is beyond the scope of this paper, yet I am convinced that photography is still the best media in contemporary visual arts to convey humanity spontaneously and straightforwardly in various forms of display.

Epilogue

In the summer of 2013, an exhibition *Jennifer's Family* was held at Pomhouse [Fig.9]. A German photographer Louisa Marie Summer closely photographed a Puerto Rican immigrant mother living in the suburb of New York City. The mother, Jennifer, was then the same as Summer, 25 years old. Candid texts by Jennifer and her family members were exhibited along photographs, and conveyed their everyday lives vividly and their sentiments delicately. The exhibition presented “the portraits of a family” revealing not only the general problems of the low-income classes and this family’s own personal difficulties, but also their own dreams for the future.

Jennifer's Family is linked to *The Family of Man* in subject, and as it presents the poverty

of a family at the bottom of society, it can be considered as a documentary work that follows the tradition of the FSA photography. It shows us that issues put forward by the Steichen Collections still exist today, and that they can be shared across nations and times, and that they should be. Nevertheless, the approach of *Jennifer's Family* is very different from *The Family of Man* that symbolized the worldview seen from the U.S. and represented its affluence and power by the massiveness of the exhibition. There is an absence of privileged position in *Jennifer's Family* in which photographs of a Puerto Rican mother and her family in the U.S. taken by a German photographer were being exhibited in Luxembourg. What fills the absence are a delicacy generated by the smallness of the exhibition, and an intimacy accompanied with generosity. The delicacy and intimacy underlie an attitude of being willing to understand neighbors beyond the differences in race, nationality, and class. Such attitude in *Jennifer's Family* is supposed to a fruit of critical discussions about *The Family of Man* and *The Bitter Years*. Therefore, it seems to be an ideal aspiration of artistic practices nowadays when conflicts and terrorism occur frequently around the world.



Fig.9 *Jennifer's Family* at Pomhouse, Photograph by author on July 27, 2013

Notes

- [1] Jean Back, "Vintage point: 'The Bitter Years' reconsidered", in Françoise Poos ed., *The Bitter Years: Edward Steichen and The Farm Security Administration Photographs*, d·a·p, 2012, p.8.
- [2] The Edward R. Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy, "What is Public Diplomacy?" at <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/Murrow/Diplomacy>, accessed on October 20, 2015.
- [3] Conversely, it was Steichen who introduced the FSA photography into the artworld. See. Yumi Takenaka, "AMERICA SHASHIN no tanjo: FSA shashin to New York kindai bijutsukan [The Birth of American Photographs: FSA photography and The Museum of Modern Art, New York]", *Minzoku geijutsu [Ethno-Arts]*, Kyoto: Daigo Shobo, Vol. 30, 2014, pp.180-187.
- [4] Library of Congress, Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information Black-and-White Negatives, at www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/fsa/, accessed on October 20, 2015.
- [5] Cara A.Finnegan, *Picturing Poverty: Print Culture and FSA Photographs*, Smithsonian Books, 2003, pp.53-6.
- [6] Jack F. Hurley, *Portrait of a decade: Roy Stryker and the Development of Documentary Photography in the Thirties*, Da Capo Press, 1977, p.162.
- [7] Edward Steichen, "The FSA photographers", in *U.S. Camera Annual 1939*, William Marrow, 1938, p.43.
- [8] *Ibid.*, p.44.
- [9] Eric J. Sandeen, *Picturing an Exhibition: The Family of Man and 1950s America*, Univ. of Mexico Press, 1995, pp.43-50.

- [10] Christopher Philips, "Steichen's 'Road to Victory'", in *Public Photographic Spaces: Exhibitions of Propaganda, from Pressa to The Family of Man, 1928-55*, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 2008, p.372.
- [11] Edward Steichen, "Introduction by Edward Steichen," *The Family of Man*, MoMA, first printed in 1955; renewed in 1983, p.3.
- [12] T. Sato, Y. Watanabe, Y. Sibauchi ed., *Soft power no media bunkaseisaku [Media Cultur Policy of Softpower]*, Tokyo: Shin-yo-sha, 2012, p.123.
- [13] Roland Barthes, "La grande famille des homme," *Mythologies*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1957, pp.195-196.(=Annette Lavers, trans., "The Great Family on Man", in *Mythologies*, New York: Noonday Press, 1972, pp.100-101.)
- [14] *Ibid.*, p.197. (=Ibid., p.102.)
I would like to thank Paul Dumouchel for helpful suggestions.
- [15] Monique Berlier, "The Family of Man: Readings of an Exhibition", in Bonnie Brennen and Hanno Hardt eds., *Picturing the Past: Media, History & Photography*, Univ. of Illinois Press, 1999, p.230.
- [16] Jean Back, "Memory of the World Register Nomination Proposal" in UNECSO Memory of the World, at www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/Family%20of%20Man%20Nomination%20Form.pdf, accessed on October 20, 2015, p.2.
- [17] Gilbert Trausch, *Histoire de Luxembourg*, Hatire, 1992, p.174.
- [18] *Ibid.*, p.176.
- [19] Luxembourg doesn't have the armed forces still now, though it has joined North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1949 and participated in an international peacekeeping operation.
- [20] MoMA held a symposium in connection with *The Bitter Years* in 1962, and Stryker and three FSA photographers including Shahn were invited as speakers.
MoMA, PRESS RELEASE ARCHIVES. 2013.10.30, at www.moma.org/docs/press_archives/3067/releases/MOMA_1962_0126_122.pdf?2010, accessed on October 20, 2015.
- [21] Edward Steichen ed., *The Bitter Years, 1935-1941: Rural America as seen by the photographers of the Farm Security Administration*, MoMA, 1962, p.iii.
- [22] Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History Mathew Brady to Walker Evans*, Hill and Wang: New York, 1989, p.247.
- [23] From interview with Daniela Del Fabbro at Waassertuerm+Pomhouse on July 27, 2013.
I would like to thank her for providing the valuable information.
- [24] It is said that 70% of workers of the steelworks were Italian.
See. Antoinette Lorang, "The Château d'Eau: A Water Tower as Cultural Reservoir" in Poos ed., *op.cit.*, pp.42-47.

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