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School of Marketing and Communication

Josefiina Vanhanen

“Moron, Haiti after the Hurricane Matthew”
Creating Place in News Images

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Author:	Josefiina Vanhanen
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Supervisor:	Helen Mäntymäki

ABSTRACT:

Pro gradu -tutkielmani käsittelee visuaalista ja kielellistä viestintää ja sitä, mitä todellisuuksia ja merkityksiä ne luovat yhdessä. Tutkimukseni aihe on ranskalaisen *Le Monde*-lehden verkkoversio ja siinä julkaistu uutistarina Haitin yli pyyhkineestä Matthew-hurrikaanista lokakuussa 2016. Tutkimusmateriaalina toimivat verkkolehdestä julkaistut uutiskuvat ja niiden kuvatekstit.

Multimodaalisen analyysin avulla tutkin, mitä kuvat ja sanat viestivät yhdessä, niitä tuottaneiden toimittajien, kuvaajien ja toimituksen avulla. Tutkielman ytimessä on yhteiskuntatieteiden, erityisesti ihmismaantieteen paikka-käsite. Paikka, on tässä kontekstissa enemmän kuin arkikielen piste kartalla. Se on käsite, jolla tutkitaan merkityksiä, muistoja, ja jäsennellään maailmaa. Tutkimuskysymys onkin: millaista paikkaa uutiskuvissa ja niiden kuvateksteissä rakennetaan?

Ranskalaisen valtavirtamedian kertomassa tarinassa maan entisestä siirtomaasta Haitista, sanan ja vallan aspekti on myös otettu huomioon. Pääasiallisen materiaalin, eli uutiskuvien, takana olevat kuvaajat ovat kuitenkin paikallisia. Tämä on otettu huomioon tutkielman analyysissä.

Tutkimusmateriaalista löytyi erilaisia kategorioita, joiden mukaan kuvat on lajiteltu ja analysoitu. Hurrikaanin vavisuttama Haiti näyttäytyy niin tuhon, pelastuksen kuin toivonkin paikkana, jota katselevat ja tulkitsevat niin paikalliset kuin ulkopuolisetkin silmät.

KEYWORDS: Visual communication, Photojournalism, Multimodal analysis, Place, Human geography, Semiotics, Media analysis, Haiti, Le Monde

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1 INTRODUCTION

In this thesis I will analyse news images portraying the town of Moron in Haiti in October 2016, a few days after the passing of the hurricane Matthew. I will use multimodal analysis to study how the construction of place takes place through news images and their captions. The focus of the study lays in the concept of place. A town portrayed in the news story is an archetype of a place itself. But what offers the place-setting in the case of this study is the destruction caused by hurricane in this town and how it is portrayed in the news images.

1.1.Hurricane Matthew

The report of the *American National Hurricane Centre* tells that in October 4th 2016, a category 5 hurricane (highest one on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale with exceeding the wind speed of 70 m/s and 251 km/h) named Matthew struck violently the southwest coast of Haiti. The centre of the hurricane's eye reached the city of *Les Anglais* (situated approximately 50 km from the town of Moron) around 11UTC the 4th of October. (NOAA report, 2016: 1)

Matthew was one of the deadliest hurricanes in the Atlantic in history and the destruction it caused in the Caribbean was widely reported in the media worldwide. Being already one of the poorest countries of the Western hemisphere, the impact of the hurricane in Haiti was severe. The hurricane caused a huge humanitarian crisis in the country that was still recovering slowly from the earthquake of January 2010. The United Nations tells in one of its reports that the earthquake ravaged the country killing more than 200 000 people in Haiti in 2010 (UN report, 2010: 12).

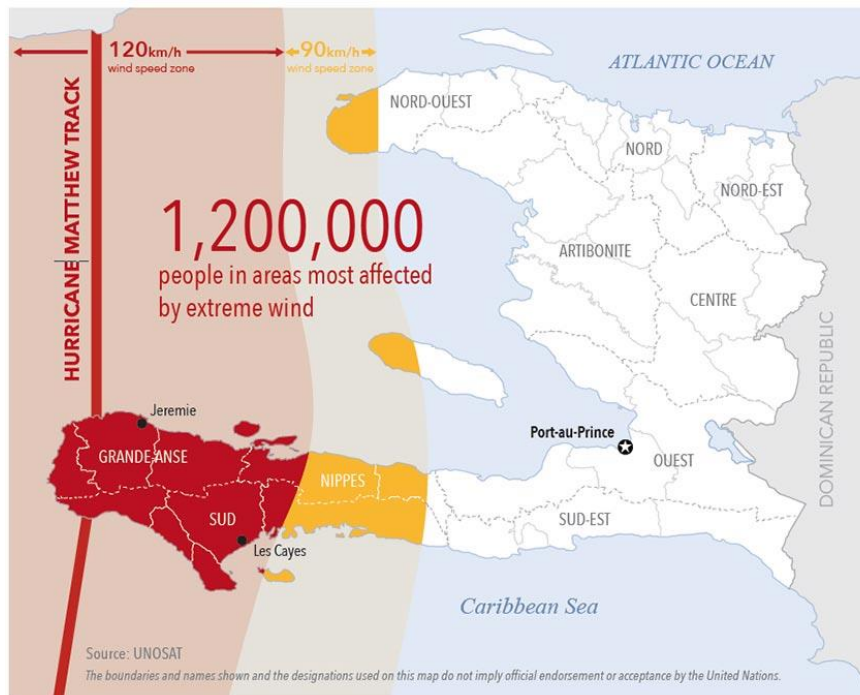


Figure 1. The town of Moron is situated approximately 25 km from the city of Jérémie in the Department of Grand’Anse. (Photo: Hurricane Matthew News Update: Aftermath in Haiti in Habitat for Humanity.)

According to the United Nations’ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Matthew was estimated to affect 2.1 million people in Haiti which represents approximately 20% of the country’s population. The hurricane was responsible for 546 deaths, 128 missing and 439 injured and left 806 000 people at an extreme impact level of food insecurity. (OCHA report, 2016: 1). The hurricane caused also notable material destruction. Haitian officials indicated that at least 29,000 houses had been destroyed or heavily damaged in the Department of Grand’Anse, where the town of Moron is situated. (NOAA report, 2016: 13). According to the Haitian government, in this region more than 85% of the buildings suffered serious damage – some were completely destroyed. The havoc was even worse in rural areas, where traditional buildings constructed of timber framing and roofing made of sheet metal or hemp were completely destroyed. (NOAA report, 2016: 13)

The hurricane also had a considerable impact on the agriculture and so on the economy of Haiti. The Haitian Government estimated that the long-lasting hurricane-force winds and heavy rains demolished all the crops in the community's fields. At least 80% of crops were lost in some areas in the region of Grand'Anse Department, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (NOAA report, 2016: 13) Above the destruction of material and crops, diseases like cholera started to spread in the country. According to OCHA report nro.17, the storm also damaged most of the cholera treatment centres of Grand'Anse and affected 34 of 212 centres for treatment of acute diarrhoea countrywide (OCHA Report, 2016: 2).

1.2. Research Aim

The aim of the study is to find out how the town of Moron, devastated by the hurricane, is portrayed and, importantly, constructed as a place in news images. I analyse post-catastrophe photos and their captions published in an online version of the newspaper *Le Monde* in a news story called *Haiti, Moron après Matthew – Dans le sud dévasté d'Haïti, après le passage de l'ouragan Matthew* (Moron after Matthew - In the devastated south of Haiti, after the passing of the hurricane Matthew). My aim is to find how a place is constructed in the process of communication with the method of multimodal analysis. I study the interplay of the linguistic mode (the captions) and the visual mode (news images).

My research questions are the following:

R Q 1: How is place created in post-catastrophe news images?

R Q 2: What different types of places do the news images portraying a destroyed town represent?

The material of the study consists of news images, published online in a French news story in the *Le Monde* in October 2016. An online newspaper presents what we call the mass media and is then one of the most important institutions globally distributing

selected information. I find it as an interesting subject of study for the institutional value it holds in our society.

The most central theoretical point of the study is the concept of *place* as it is understood and defined in for instance human geography, ethnology and oral history. In this thesis I rely mainly on the definition of the concept of place by human geographer Tim Cresswell and his work: *Place: An Introduction*. Second edition (2017).

What is portrayed in the material, is clearly a place. Already the title of the news story *Haïti, Moron après Matthew* (Haiti, Moron after Matthew) indicates us that the story is about a very specific place – a town destroyed by a hurricane. Journalists and photographers capture the town in a special temporal and spatial setting, destructed by the hurricane, which is then offered to the readers of *Le Monde* to interpret.

Drawing on the social constructionist idea of reality being socially constructed, I start the study from the assumption that the specific place created in the news images, exist only in them and comes alive in the process of representation when the viewer looks at the images, reads the captions and interprets them. To define social constructionism more precisely: it is a combination of different theories in social sciences that state that we construe reality socially, in interaction with each other through language.

1.3. Multimodal Analysis

I have chosen to use the method of multimodal analysis in my study. Multimodal Analysis is a vast field of study and a recently stabilized approach (or more like a frame for different approaches) to communication. Multimodal analysis is a tool for studying how different modes create and disseminate meanings together in different texts. Basically, multimodality means the existence of different semiotic modes in a given text. According to Carey Jewitt (2009: 1), multimodality approaches representation, communication and interaction as something more than language. Multimodality is not usually seen as a theory but more as a point of view. It is a point of view to meaning making. Gunter Kress

and Elisabetta Adami say that multimodality “stakes out” major aspects of the domain in which meaning is made (Adami & Kress, 2014: 234).

In my methodology, I rely primary on the ideas of Gunter Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen about multimodality. Multimodality is based on two main concepts: *mode* and *medium/media*. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001: 22) define mode as a semiotic resource which allows the simultaneous realization of discourses and types of interaction. Jewitt (2009: 21) adds that modes are culturally shaped by the daily social interaction of people. Modes are materialized products of culture and ways of communication. The use of mode(s) depends on the medium they exist in. Basic example of modes are image, sound, colour and layout.

Modes can be realized in more than one production medium. Media are the material resources used in the production of semiotic products and events, including both the tools and the material used (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2001: 22). If modes are social products, media can be considered social practices. Media are usually produced for a certain purpose of use. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001: 22) give *ink* as an example of a culturally produced medium through which the mode of writing is realized. Other examples of media are discussion, cinema, radio or newspaper.

In multimodal analysis, the different modes and their roles in the meaning-making process are not always easy to define. Modes do not always have clear boundaries, as for instance written language always has a visual form besides a linguistic form. A mode always exists through a medium. A medium is the physical form (or a product, as Kress and Van Leeuwen call it) through which a mode comes to exist. For instance, the linguistic mode exists physically in the medium of written text.

In this study the key modes are visual (images) and linguistic (written language), the visual mode having a more important role in the study. The medium through which these modes are produced is the online newspaper as written text and images.

According to Hartmut Stöckl (Stöckl, 2009: 205), communication is always multimodal. For this, one more key concept to define in the framework of multimodality is communication. Communication can be defined as the act of articulating and interpreting cultural sign systems and something through which semiotic products are created. And the communication of any kind does not happen in a void. Images and narratives do not have meaning on their own. They only become meaningful in relation to other images and narratives that have preceded them or are produced in relation to. (Carah & Louw, 2015: 27).

I find multimodal analysis as the method of this study appropriate. As I have collected my material from a news story including text and images. Multimodality is an essential part of media and its' development. During the development from radio to black and white television to coloured television and further to digital online news, the modes of communication have increased. We have constantly created new ways to disseminate information using different modes.

Now in the time of digitalisation and internet, the importance of the use of different modes in different media has become greater than ever. No media has longer the exclusivity to provide information. The expansion of the sources of information during the past decades has changed the game. When our society once was run by the economy knowledge it is now run by the economy of attention (see e.g. Davenport & Beck, 2002). The question is no longer who holds the information but who has in the most appealing package to attract the audience.

So, multimodality has become even more important today for all traditional media with, the online newspaper as an example. Nowadays the readers can read the headings and see the photos online before they even click to open a news article. The font and the colour are set to attract the potential readers, just like the images that come along. These visual elements must appeal to the readers before they are captured by the linguistic dimension of the article.

1.4. Material

Le Monde is one of the most known and reputed newspapers globally. It was established in 1944 and has been published continuously ever since. The distribution of the paper, and specially the online version, does not limit to France. The global edition (*Le Monde, édition globale*), where the news story used as the material of the study is published, is one of the biggest news forums in all the French-speaking countries worldwide. The paper is especially reputed for its long coverages – of which the material of the study is an excellent example. The journalists and photographers behind the reportages are reputed to be among the best of the world.

When studying events occurring in Haiti, the local media would be the first source to go to get first-hand journalistic material of the situation. However, Haiti being one of the poorest countries with one of the highest illiteracy rates in the world, the number of local news published online is unfortunately very low. Because of the high illiteracy rate, the radio is an important medium in Haiti, as in many developing countries.

The reasons for the decision to use the newspaper *Le Monde* as a source to gather the material are linguistic, historical and practical. As French is the second official language of Haiti (along with Kréyol, a hybrid of French and indigenous languages) studying news of the events published in French seems a logical choice. Nevertheless, the news story is not completely European work. It has been made in collaboration with Haitian photographers who are behind the photos I use as the material of the study.

In addition, Haiti being a former French colony, the relations between the two countries are still close and Haitian events appear often in the French media. Naturally, the colonial history still affects Haiti and the relation between the two countries. The photos are taken by local photographers but the medium through which they are published is European. So, these images are both local and European representations. I see that the focus in the images coming from inside the society has an impact on the final product. For instance, getting physically close to the photographed people is easier for a local photographer.

The Haitian photographers behind the news images are Jean Marc Hervé Abélard, Reginald Junior Louissaint, Edine Celestine, Yves Osner Dorvil and Estailove Saint-Val, who are part of a Haitian collective called Kolektif2D formed of Haitian journalists, photographers, cineastes and graphists.

The material of the thesis consists of 19 images and their captions published in a news story (*long reportage*) about the situation in the town of Moron, Haiti, a few days after the passing of hurricane Matthew in October 2016. In the multimodal story the total of 19 images slide altering with 9 units of text when scrolling down the page. They form a continuous stream of images and text throughout the story. The captions appear on the images.

The exact publishing date of the story cannot be found on the website. However, knowing the date is not crucial to the study -more important is to know approximately the dates the when photos were taken. This information comes up in the text and in the captions. One of the captions (of the image no. 19) says that it has been taken 5 days after the hurricane.

I have made the decision to analyse only the images and the captions of the news story. Including the units of texts that construct a story along with the images would have been too wide a scope for my study.

Text is traditionally considered a more relevant part of news (or any other) reporting than images. Yet, I chose to focus the analysis on the images and the captions for the emotional value that images are seen to hold and the impact that they therefore have on people. Paul Lester and Susan Ross say that news and entertainment images are especially powerful because visual messages are products of our sense of sight, not our cognition (Lester & Ross 2003: 3). The images construct the place also through emotional engagement.

In this study, I refer to these photos as “news images” as I see that defining these images just as news photos is too narrow. News photos can be seen as individual pictures that stand alone to tell a story and/or to back up an article (for instance Mark in Caple & Knox, 2012: 8). The images used as the material here form a coherent story where the images

show different aspects of the consequences of the catastrophe and stages following the passing of the hurricane, and so complement each other in telling a story.. The images also represent different places and different place-settings in the same town. The entity these images form together could be referred to as a picture story or a photo essay. In a picture story/ photo essay individual photographs must complement each other, each adding to the narrative and emotional impact of the others. (Moran in Caple & Knox 2012: 8).

I have divided the 19 images into four categories by the themes that arise among them. The categories are *misery*, *silent view*, *heavenly help* and *reconstruction*. I will conduct the multimodal analysis through these categories and observe how the concept of place is constructed in them. Analysing each of the images one by one would be too long for this study. Categories also help to organize the photos and to create a more controlled entity in the analysis, even though the categories are overlapping and do not seamlessly cover all the 19 photos.

1.5.Literature Review

In this section I will briefly present few researches that in some way cover the same topic as mine. These researches about catastrophe photos, war reporting and portraying Haiti in media are linked to mine, but do not focus on the same subject as my study. My study offers a point of view to disaster news specialized on after-catastrophe images. The theoretical focus on the place-making in images widens the field of studies of representing countries like Haiti in the media.

Susan Sontag's *Reading the Pain of Others* (2003) is a well-known work about the analysis of images of horror. The study focuses especially on photos of war. Sontag discusses the influence the images have on people but also for what purpose these types of images are used for.

An example of a multimodal study of catastrophe photos is B.W. Wojdyski's thesis *Multimedia Framing in U.S. Newspapers' Online Coverage of the Iraq War* (2008). The

study is about how the news frame war, focusing on the multimodal means by which the framing is done.

Stuart Allan and Barbie Zelizer (eds.) approach the issue of news reporting of war and terrorism from the point of view of journalists in *Reporting War: journalism in Wartime* (2004). The study discusses the role of journalists and photographers in war time related to civilians, soldiers, government and like.

The Role of the Media and Media Hypes in the Aftermath of Disasters (2005) by Peter Vasterman, C. Joris Yzermans and Anja J. E. Dirkzwager takes another angle to disaster news and investigates the impact of media on the consequences of disasters.

Nicole Smith Dahmen, Natalia Mielczarek and Daniel Morrison discuss the power that one single image of horror can have on societies in *The (in)disputable 'power' of images of outrage: public acknowledgement, emotional reaction, and image recognition* (2018). The study focuses on single iconic images and the collective visual memory.

Amy E. Potter offers a point of view to media representations of Haiti in her paper "Voodoo, Zombies and Mermaids: U.S. Newspaper Coverages of Haiti" in *The Geographical Review* 99 (2) (2004). Potter discusses the problem of biased image given of Haiti in the American news.

The photos of human suffering under war, natural disasters or other humanitarian crises are often strong, emotional and spread fast across the globe. News photos of catastrophes become popular fast and so the ways in which catastrophes are portrayed in news is a widely studied subject. Interestingly, most of the studies about images of horror focus on war photos. This could be because the development of photographs, different wars have been the most notable disasters the Western World has known. But, as often said, modern technology has made the world smaller. So today, technology offers us the possibility to fast report and experience things that happen far away from us. For this, also photos and reports about dreadful events happening far away from us reach worldwide audiences and arouse curiosity fast and become subjects of study.

2 MULTIMODALITY

As the material of the study consists of written text and images, the use of the method of multimodal analysis was a natural choice. Multimodality offers a way to observe and analyse the two different ways of expression, linguistic and visual, simultaneously in the process of communication.

2.1. Interplay of modes

Hartmut Stöckl argues that using different modes simultaneously is more efficient when in order to convey meaning. All the modes have their purposes in communication and the meaning potential of each of them is limited when isolated. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 19) say, that (for instance) language and visual communication both can be used to realize the same fundamental system of meaning, but each does so differently.

Kress and Van Leeuwen also discuss the idea of each mode as having their specific role in multimodal communication. Expressing something verbally or visually makes a difference (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006: 2). The modes also often complement each other. When something is expressed visually with an image, it will have an effect on the mode of writing in the same given medium. Writing will then become used for specific purposes (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2001: 64). The interplay of two modes affects the conveyed and interpreted meaning of both. Words combined with an image play a vital role in how we read the image and vice versa. A caption becomes the mouthpiece of the picture and explains it. On the other hand, words create internal images for the reader. A photograph next to written text can freeze the world in particular meaning. (Bergström, 2008: 220)

2.3. Semiotics

Kress and Adami (2014) say that multimodality shifts the centre of gravity from linguistic to semiotic concerns. As mentioned earlier, different modes are often used for specific

purposes in a multimodal text. These purposes can be observed through the lens of semiotics. Semiotics is the study of signs by Charles Peirce that is used in producing, conveying and interpreting messages (Barbatsi et al. 2004: 227).

According to semiotics, meanings are made by using signs. We need signs as a means of expression, in order to be able to convey or share our knowledge. The sign is the prerequisite for all communication, all human exchanges of thoughts and ideas (Bergström, 2008: 221). Visual signs and images, even when they bear a close resemblance to the things to which they refer, are still signs: they carry meaning and thus have to be interpreted. (Hall et al. 2013: 5).

In the process of sign-making the signifier (the form) and the signified (the meaning) are relatively independent of each other until they are brought together by the sign-maker in a newly made sign (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006: 8). The focus of the semiotic study is not that much a sign as it is, but how the signs act in the context of semiosis (Luoto, 2008: 8). Semiosis means the process of sign-making, which is also in the focus of my study. Photographing, reporting and reading the news article form the semiosis in which the meaning is made.

2.4. Reading Images

As the focus of my study is especially on the images, I find it relevant to deepen the analysis with Gunter Kress' and Theo Van Leeuwen's pioneering ideas of visual grammar. Kress's and Van Leeuwen's theories provide functional tools to approach the analysis of images.

We often think that visual communication is universal and easier to understand than written language. Language, both written and spoken, has traditionally held a superior position, compared to the visual modality as a way of communication. Language as semiotic source is thought to be more cryptic than the visual one, demanding more specific knowledge in order to be understood.

According to Kress and Van Leeuwen the matter is not that simple. Reading images is a very culturally specific skill and requires expertise in interpreting signs, just as reading written text. Looking is a social practice (Sturken & Cartwright, 2009: 9). For instance, Western visual communication is affected by our convention of writing from left to right. Images, like language, will display regularities, which can be made the subject of relatively formal description (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006: 20). Visual communication has its own grammar with rules as to how to read images.

Very few images exist only for their aesthetic sake; visual communication almost always holds information within it (Bergström, 2008: 32). Images do not hold only aesthetic and expressive but also structured social, political and communicative dimensions (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006: 20). Visual structures do not simply reproduce the structures of 'reality'. They produce images of reality which are bound up with the interests of the social institutions within which the images are produced, circulated and read. They are ideological. Visual structures are never merely formal: they have a deeply important semantic dimension (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006: 47).

3 VISUAL MEDIA

In this chapter I will present some points of view to visual culture: illustrated media and its history, the power of news images and media representations.

3.1. Visual journalism

Helen Caple (2013: 9) defines photojournalism as visual reporting of newsworthy events. Photos became an important part of news reporting for their ability to impact people faster than words. The power of photojournalism lies in its ability to provoke an instant emotional reaction and to leave a lasting impression upon the viewer (Ewbank et al., 2009: 129). Grasping the meaning of a text takes time – an image impacts faster. In addition compared to text alone, news photographs compel greater attention, are more credible- and more memorable (Pfau et al. in Damen et al, 2018: 5). This is the essential task of photojournalists. The photojournalist's goal is to communicate a message so that the reader can grasp right away what the situation is (Hoy [1993] qtd in Barbatsi et al. 2004: 129).

The art of photography developed fast in the 19th century. The emergence of visual journalism took place when picture magazines arrived in the 1920'. Slowly during the 20th century, photography as a medium gained legitimacy as an art form, as professional practice, and as a serious subject of study (Griffin, 1999: 123). If the 21st century's great media turn has been going from print to digital, the 20th century's revolution was the rise of photojournalism.

Images have an impact. One of the most known photos in history is Nick Ut's Pulitzer-winning photo of a young girl burned by napalm in Vietnam in 1972. The war in Vietnam was heavily protested against in the United States, primary due to the widespread photos picturing the horrors of the war. And when an image causes a reaction strong enough, the viewer no longer feels distant from the image. Back in the days when Ut's photo was published, realistic photos of war were something new. The war photos which the Western world knew before that were mainly propaganda material from the First and the

Second World War and did not in those days cause the same type of reaction as the photos of war of Vietnam.

The revolution of photography was based on the idea of photos being able to mirror reality. Roland Barthes (1977) states that the photographic image holds a specific status as a message without a code, as the photograph can be seen as the perfect analogon of reality (Barthes qtd in Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 24). The myth of photos as portraying reality objectively has been abandoned a long time ago, but the idea of the visual as being more real than language seems to hold on. While news photographs are as socially constructed as any other form of news, they are still seen as “transparent window[s] on the world” (Caple, 2013: 9). Our world comes alive through images (Marusek, 2013: 1).

Even though in the 20th century press reports were mainly local, news images of the century spread worldwide. The fact that understanding photos does not require understanding the language of the news, is the most important factor in photos becoming universal easily and fast. Though, as said, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 4) claim that visual language is not transparent and universally understood; it is culturally specific. Bo Bergström (2008), on the other hand, estimates that the power of images is in their ability to affect us wholly. The deluge of images might create a balance between senses and emotions (Bergström, 2008: 121). Susan Sontag says that the power of the photo compared to the constant flow of moving images (television, movies) lays in its stillness in order to stay in the memory. In an era of information overload, the photograph provides a quick way of apprehending something and a compact form for memorizing it. (Sontag, 2003: 20)

Now, in the digital age, images spread faster than ever and reach audiences globally. An image published in one corner of the world can spread around the globe in minutes. Also, the quality of cameras, modes of photos, has seen a significant improvement in the last ten years. Photographs can be incredibly realistic, even compared to the human eyes' vision and go even beyond regular sight. A professional photojournalist usually has the

latest high-technology cameras in their use in order to produce presentations as realistic as possible, and even beyond that.

3.2. Media and power

The role of media in our society is undeniable. Different media have replaced older institutions like the church or trade unions that were the main source of knowledge in the past (Talbot, 2007: 1). By the end of the 20th century, the mass media had rooted everywhere across the globe. It is now difficult to find a society, culture or set of human relations that are outside the reach of media (Carah and Louw, 2015: 45).

Within different media the most important and salient one is the mass media. It can be defined as something that convey information and entertainment (the limit of the two often being shallow) with certain regularity simultaneously and publicly to everyone within a large group (Bergström, 2008: 31). Bergström (2008: 31) sees that the function of mass media can be divided in three: the informative (mass media tells us about occurring events), the social (allows us to share experience of the world) and the catalytic (stimulates our senses) function.

Power is an inseparable part of media and communication. Communication takes place via social structures which are inevitably marked by power difference (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 13). Meaning-production spaces (like newsrooms) are sites of struggle where people compete for access and argue over ideas (Carah and Louw, 2015: 15). It is important to note that this struggle is reserved for very few. News reporting is done by a selected group of people.

Because of the rise of the internet and its possibilities for almost anyone to produce content online, we face an unlimited amount of information daily. This decade has been all about the social media. The possibility for us all to produce information puts the power of the traditional media in society in question. The participative audience that produces information online along with the changes in the traditional news production processes (e.g. more freelancers) has most likely resulted in that the power involved

in information generation has spread to cover a wider group of people. But it does not mean that either power or its use would have disappeared. It has only become more difficult to locate and to trace. (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 14).

Journalistic information stills holds value in our society. The new media play an important role in disseminating meaning today, but they are still considered uncertain, unorganized and have not yet rooted into our society as trustworthy and reliable sources of information. Newspapers, such as *Le Monde*, have an institutional position in the Western world. The newspaper is produced by professional communicators who create and disseminate information. By sharing information, they control meaning making and so – use power. Journalists and journalist photographers are often in this sense referred to as gatekeepers of information. They, in cooperation with the newsrooms, decide what is represented to us daily as trustworthy and relevant information about the world. Trustworthy is the key concept of this gatekeeping in our time where all kinds of versions of truth can be spread online by anyone.

While the media control meaning making, they also create and maintain discourses. Discourses are socially constructed knowledge of some aspects of reality (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001: 4). Discourses are also ways of talking and seeing. They produce, reproduce and define how we talk about the world and how we see it. Discourses not only provide versions of who does what, when and where. They also add evaluations, interpretations and arguments to these versions. (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001: 15). Discourses are created both in texts and in images. Visual language has developed more freely than written language, still in a socio-cultural context. The dominant visual language is now controlled by the global cultural/technological empires of mass media (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 5).

The sheer quantity of information that now circulates through the global media network means that professional communicators who can sort, aggregate and make sense of the growing volumes of information are critical to the construction of discourses (Carah and Louw, 2015: 127). Since discourses play vital role in constituting people's realities, the

implications for the power and influence of media discourse are real. Moreover, in modern democracies the media serve a vital function as a public forum. (Talbot, 2007: 1)

3.3. Media Representations

Representation refers to the use of language and images to create meaning about the world that surrounds us and that we are integrated into. We use words and images to understand and describe how we experience the world. (Sturken and Cartwright, 2009: 12). Representation is not the reality but a substitution and an idea about reality (Webb, 2009: 2–4). Carah and Louw (2015: 27) explain that representation is a *process* of re-presenting reality to others. Stuart Hall et al. (2013: 4) define two existing systems of representation in constructing meaning: the mental conceptual map of ideas and language. These are the systems through which we create and understand the world. The material world has meaning and can be “seen” only through representations (Sturken and Cartwright, 2009: 12).

Media represents us the reality we cannot perceive directly ourselves. Just like the media themselves, the representations they produce are social productions: their meaning depends on who creates them and circulates them (Carah and Louw, 2015: 27). Stuart Hall et al. (2013: 15) say that representation connects meaning and language to culture. Rules and conventions of representation exist and are learned within cultural systems (Sturken and Cartwright, 2009: 14).

News images can be seen both as representations and as instruments or products of the process of representation. Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996: 114) say that images involve two kind of participants: represented participants (the people, the places and things depicted in images) and interactive participants (the people who communicate with each other through images). Interactive participants would be those who produce and make sense of images, not the ones represented in them. In my material the represented participants would be the town of Moron and its inhabitants. The photographers, journalist and the viewers would then form the interactive participants.

4 PLACE

I use the concept of place, as it is known in human geography, as an academic looking glass when analysing the material of my study. I will mostly rely on geographer Tim Cresswell's (2004; 2017) definition of the concept of place. Cresswell has done pioneering research on the subject.

4.1. Defining place

Cresswell (2017: 18) states that place is a way of seeing, knowing and understanding the world. We produce places and we perceive the world through places. They construct our reality in overlapping forms. We see the world itself as a place; we live in places and we act in places. Place as lived and grounded space is a constitutive of human activity: it is equally the sources of livelihood, an element of culture, an aspect of knowledge and knowing (Rangnekar 2011: 2043).

Every event we remember and acknowledge is connected to a place. We construe our history through places. We talk about events connected to places as "The battle of Waterloo". We also use topographic language in our everyday speech as "Let's go there". Even the un-known is perceived as places. In the Western Christian history, what comes after death has traditionally been defined as places: heaven and hell. We really exist in places; we are always *somewhere*.

Place is a concept we use every day and the way in which we connect ourselves to the world. We perceive our lives in a very territorial way. Where we live, where we come from and where we are going are important factors of our identity. Beyond a location, the term place refers for example to peoples' positions within societies. Everyone has their place in the societal order. Places must have some relationship to humans and to the human capacity to produce and consume meaning (Cresswell, 2017: 14).

Above the use in everyday language, place is also a central term in many academic fields of study. J. E. Malpas (2010) says that place is perhaps the key term for interdisciplinary research in the arts, humanities and social sciences in the 21st century. Place can and has been studied for instance with the concepts of *sense of a place* or *place attachment*. Place can be a central point in very different academic fields of study like oral history and urban architecture.

Place as a concept is hard to define shortly. The most straightforward and common definition of place is a meaningful location (Cresswell, 2017: 12). The concept of place is easier to understand in difference to other, similar concepts. We can think about the difference between a place and a *location* to start with. When locations are just spots on a map, places are these spots embedded with meaning. For instance, 61°03'15.6"N 28°11'56.6"E are simply coordinates for a location that does not say anything to me. When I realize that these coordinates point to a house where I grew up this location becomes home, a place filled with meaning.

When defining place, another good starting point is the division between *space* and place—even though the terms are often used interchangeably. Space is a more abstract concept than place (Cresswell, 2004: 133). A house is just a space filled with objects. When you live in this house and the objects in the space are yours, this space becomes a place: a place you call home. Giving spaces or locations names is an important way in turning them into places. Naming spaces is an important way of giving meanings to locations in order to make them places (Cresswell, 2004: 134).

Place can be defined as much more than just an object. Cresswell (2017: 19) says that a confusing aspect of the genealogy of place is that place stand for both an object (a thing that we can look at, research, and write about) and *a way of looking*. In my research Moron after Matthew is a place which we look at. But the destruction of the hurricane is also a way of looking at the place. The place is constructed through the gaze.

4.2. Place as a social construction

Place, like any other concept that human beings have created, is socially constructed. Places can have topographic and so-called natural elements, but they always involve social and cultural elements as well. Throughout our existence, people have taken over different places all over the globe. These places are then constructed and maintained physically and socially and both physically and in language: places are being made, maintained and contested (Cresswell, 2017: 10). Social constructionism argues that the ways in which we commonly understand the world, the categories and concepts, are historically and culturally specific (Burr, 2015: 4). We construct places socially but also personally and subjectively. Place is a concept that builds on emotions, storytelling, genealogies and imaginations and is reinforced by discourses that give such constructions social validation and meaning. (Lefebvre qtd in Overton and E. Murray, 2016: 798).

We talk about places, write (about) places and read (about) places. Places are created and maintained in texts. Ilkka Luoto (2008: 4) writes that places are formed as expressions of language- that can be read either as signs, texts or narratives. Places (spaces) can be described in either literal or metaphorical ways (van Vuuren and Westerhof, 2015: 327). Places exist in different texts written topographically in maps, described in travel books, defined in statistics and portrayed in images. Places come alive in these cultural products. The existence of different places through collective narratives is also a widely studied subject within the concept of place.

Places always have a very strong social aspect about them. People share places, both physically and mentally. We all perceive places differently in our minds, from our own point of view. Interestingly, we believe to share this perception, this same idea of a certain place, with others. For instance, Madrid is a specific, different city to all its' inhabitants, tourists and even to people who have never been there. Yet, when we talk about Madrid, we are persuaded that the other share the same idea of this place as us.

4.3. Out of place

A common place is a significant factor in creating communities and the sense of us: people who share a certain place, who belong to same place. Besides belonging to a place, another important aspect in place-making is *not belonging to it*. Being outside, out of place is as important in place-defining as being inside a place. Geographer Päivi Kymäläinen talks about creating the idea of us compared the others through place-thinking. The disguise of objective describing “the others” and their place have been defined in a way that is all but neutral. One could say that it is not so much describing but rather categorisation or classifying that define others (Kymäläinen, 2005: 95). When describing others and their places, that we do not belong into, we create categories and classifications. Being an insider or an outsider in a place has impact. Rights and rules (written and unwritten) concern people in different places. These rights and rules vary depending on person being an insider or an outsider. The question of being an insider or an outsider in a place is relevant in my study. The European reporters in Haiti can be said to be outsiders in the place whilst the local photographers can be thought to be insiders. However, the hurricane has changed the place, since it has destroyed homes and schools. These places that have been shaped and controlled by humans, are now controlled by nature. So, do even the photographed local people belong to this place we see in the images?

4.4. Landscape

Connected to being outside a place and to distance, another concept that frequently appears alongside place is *landscape*. Landscape is a very visual idea, connected to seeing. In most definitions of landscape, the viewer is outside of it. We do not live in landscapes – we look at them (Cresswell, 2017: 18). Places are experienced from the inside, but landscapes are seen from the outside. This is the main factor that differs landscape and place. Places are very much things to be inside of. (Cresswell, 2017: 17). Landscape is also wide and panoramic. They cannot be pointed out on maps like places.

Kress and Van Leeuwen discuss the concept of landscape through semiotics. To the casual beholder a landscape simply exists and may even have a timeless appearance (as ‘the timeless beauty of the English countryside’). Kress and Van Leeuwen emphasize the still and distant nature of landscape and continue by adding that landscape is in fact a product of social action and social history, of human work on the land and on nature (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 35).

4.5. Place as event

An *event* can be defined as a happening that lasts for a certain (often a relatively short of) time. An event is marked by particularity or importance in the stream of time and involves action. In everyday speech we see that events take place in places, but a place can also be looked as an event.

Place is often connected to stillness, something quite permanent and opposite to action. In the history of geography, place stands against fluidity and flux which are portrayed as threatening (Cresswell, 2017: 91). These fluxes that risk to change the place can be people that do not belong to the place, new ideas or natural forces – like a hurricane. The flux is threatening because it makes the place uncontrollable for humans. An unpreventable and unstable place cannot be controlled. Place in this sense becomes an event rather than a secure, still and existing thing. Place as event is marked by openness and change rather than boundedness and permanence. This significantly alters the value put on place as it is constructed from the outside rather from the inside. (Cresswell, 2017:71).

Päivi Kymäläinen (2005:26) says that places are marked by both spatial and temporal difference. Every place only exists somewhere and some amount of time. In the case of my study, the element of fluidity is very present. The hurricane itself is an event, a very threatening one that shapes the environment and the place in many ways and makes it uncontrollable for its inhabitants. When the news images that I study, were taken, the place (referring to the town of Moron in Haiti) is already under construction so going through another change after the hurricane. The element of change is very much present in these images.

5 PLACE OF MISERY, PLACE OF HOPE

I have divided the news images into four categories: images of *misery*, images of *silent view*, images of *heavenly help* and images of *reconstruction*. I see that these are the four most important themes that connect the news images. The themed categories are overlapping and some of the images fit into more than one of the categories. Moreover, I see that two of the images do not clearly belong to any of the categories (images no. 3 and 18). In the process of categorization both the images themselves and their captions were taken into account. So, both the visual and the linguistic elements affected the categorization of the images. With every category, I go through 3 exemplary images belonging to them.

5.1. Misery

One of the clearest themes in these four news images is *misery*. Misery of people in miserable places is something that can be expected in a small, poor village after the passing of such a destructive natural force as a hurricane. Misery is naturally present in many of the images and comes out the clearest in the images no. 1, 5, 11 and 14. The images of misery represent people in different settings in the town of Moron. In the images of misery, the theme arises both from the represented participants (the people pictured in the images) and their surroundings. The captions enforce the theme by revealing information that could not be deduced only by looking at the images.

Messy environments are portrayed in all the images of misery and take great deal of space in the images. Pieces of textile, different objects, trash and plastic can be seen lying in nature. Anthropologist Mary Douglas has defined dirt as matter out of place (Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 1966). These images are an excellent example of that. The nature of destruction and chaos arises from the feeling of the things not being where they belong to. Piles of textiles and clothes hanging from the trees create a sense that these places are not controlled by humans, but by nature. It seems that nature has taken control over the

places. The direct, physical consequences of the hurricane are very much present in these images.

Most of the images of this category are medium-close shots which allows the interactive participants (the photographers and the viewers) to see clearly the faces and the expressions of the represented participants. One of them is a long-distance shot. The atmosphere of misery connected to the represented participants in these images arises for instance from the facial expressions. In the images of misery, the people do not look directly in the camera. The gazes of the people is neither directed to the devastated place but instead they face down of somewhere further. Their gazes do not seem connected to the place.

The most salient and common element of the people in these images is their stillness. They are not picking up the objects or cleaning the area. The represented participants are not acting nor taking control of the devastated places they are in. In one of the image the people are leaving the place they are photographed in. Instead of active, the people seem very passive, like the efforts they have in front of them are too hard to handle. For the lack of action behalf on the active participants it is also difficult to perceive the emotional attachment they have on the places they are in. Their relation to the places they are portrayed in is hard to define.

The places are hard to recognize and name because of the destruction going on in them. When the captions tell us that the places in the images are a home (as in the image no. 1) or a hospital (as in the image no.11), it fortifies the feeling of misery. The captions tell us that the places of these images are usually very meaningful places and very connected to activity of people in them. The passivity of the people in the locations that should be meaningful to them is sad.

The general appearance of chaos, unorganized objects laying all over and the passive people who are pictured quite small in the chaotic environments raises a question if these are places at all? What we see in the photos seem more like spaces with objects and people. Anthropologist Marc Augé launched the term “non-place” to describe locations

that for their fluidity and lack of meaning to people in them cannot be classified as places. Examples of non-places are airports and refugee camps where people are just passing, waiting for going somewhere else. The places in the category of misery have many of the same elements as Augé's non-places.



Image 1. Caption: The inhabitants of a house that has been reconstructed with recuperation of trash, waiting for help to survive the daily life (my translation).

The first image presents three women among the ruins of what the caption reveals us (little surprisingly) to be their home. Two of the women are standing and are slightly cut off the image so we cannot see their faces entirely. The third woman is sitting on a chair in front of the house, almost in the middle of the photo, looking down. The gaze of the viewer adheres to her first when looking at the image. What is left of the domicile behind the woman is a wall and a roof, both made of corrugated iron. The caption tells us that the house has been reconstructed after the hurricane with these elements. In front of the house there are piles of different objects that hard to define, clothes hanging on a tree and even a basin on the ground. Many of these elements are usually to be found inside a house, not outside.

The atmosphere in the image is very paused. As mentioned earlier, the typical element of place, stillness, is very present. The hurricane has passed, the destruction is left. The caption tells us that the inhabitants of the house are *waiting* for help. They are not taking

control of the situation nor over the place. Despite the element of stillness, the place in the image is not permanent. It is a place of waiting. The caption says that the inhabitants are waiting for help to “survive daily”. The woman on the frontline of the image is wearing a torn t-shirt and her breast is hanging out. Still, she sits calmly with her hands on her lap.

Even though the caption tells that the place in this image has already gone through reconstruction, I would not count this image to the category of reconstruction. When looking at the house, the so-called yard and the people in it, the strongest emotions arising are misery and passivity. Feelings of activity and hope are missing. This does not look like a newly built home with people starting a new life.

Besides the passivity of the people in the place that should be their home, some place-attachment can be seen in the photo. The woman sitting in the chair demonstrates silent ownership of the place. She, on the very contrary to the other images of the category, has taken control of the place by using a piece of furniture that could belong to the house.



Image 11. Caption: A young boy with cholera in a healthcare centre in Moron (my translation).

The second image in the category of misery is the image no. 11. In this image, a young boy is laying on a bench with a piece of textile covering him like a blanket. There is a bucket under the bench and a panel of corrugated iron behind the bench. The boy has a

piece of clothing under his head as a pillow and a backpack laying at his feet. Overall the place seems very dirty.

Shockingly, the caption tells us that the young boy has cholera and the place he is in is a healthcare centre. When looking at the image more carefully, there seems to be two bottles of liquid (maybe disinfectant?) on the wall which is the only visual clue of the place being a healthcare centre, at least for a Western eye. What is alarming is that even though the location of the image is a healthcare centre, in the caption the boy is not referred to as *a patient* but as someone who has cholera. That is probably because the definition of patient would have to include someone of the hospital staff taking care of him. In the image the boy is alone, there are no doctors nor nurses. The boy does not take contact even with the photographer. Just like in the other images of this category, the boy's empty gaze is directed somewhere at the emptiness. He does not show any interest nor attachment to place he is in. The boy being alone is the saddest element in this image. The place in the image seems like a place of abandon.

The clearest element of misery in this photo is the disease, cholera. Fast-spreading diseases and especially cholera, was one of the most severe problems Haiti was facing after the hurricane Matthew. If someone, especially a child, is sick with cholera one could expect that someone would be taking care of him. An image of a doctor treating a patient would hold hope in it. This image does not. The reader of the article would hope at least the caption to tell that the boy is at least waiting for help. It is hard to conceive that the place in this image as a healthcare centre. The lack of help and hospital staff does not fit into the idea. These elements are vital in forming the concept of this specific place. The lack of them indicates to us that something unusual is going on in the situation in which the image has been taken.

Another element of misery in the image is the state of the healthcare centre. The place is dirty and primitive. What is portrayed in the image is very far away from the Western idea of a healthcare centre. It is hard to say if the healthcare centres in Haiti generally are cleaner, more hygienic and better equipped than in this image. Maybe the image would

not be as shocking for a local person. Maybe the element of misery would not be as strong if not seen by Western lenses, so used to the clinical appearance of hospitals.



Image 14. Caption: The passing of the hurricane has devastated the locality of Dame Marie, Grand'Anse (my translation).

The last photo that I present from category of misery is the image no. 14. This image is most of all an image portraying an environment. Again, we see things where they do not belong to. In this image, a lot of objects and trash are laying around outside in nature. There are clothes in the trees, a mattress on the ground and what seems to be a gable of a bed on a rock. The piles of trashes seem to continue until the back of the image and over.

There is a woman at the right side of the image, but she is a little hard to distinguish from the background. The woman is standing in front of some type of construction with a roof and a wall. The woman is not looking at the mess behind her nor the photographer. She is not taking contact with anybody nor showing any interest into the place where she stands. Her serious and empty gaze is again directed somewhere outside the image. She is not completely still as the other people in the images of misery. She seems to be wiping her face with a cloth but does not seem very alarmed nor active. If anything, she seems tired.

The caption does not reveal us anything new but states the fact: *The passing of the hurricane has devastated the locality of Dame Marie, Grand'Anse*. It does not tell us anything about the woman in the images nor provide us more information about the place she is in. In this case, the caption supports the silent, heavy and yet simple message of the image: the hurricane has passed and devastated the place of the people in it.



Image 5. Caption: Returning from the Mafranc-market, the first one after the passing of hurricane Matthew, the villagers cross the Grand'Anse-river to climb back to the mountains where live, hours of walking away (my translation).

I count the image no. 5 as belonging to the category of misery even though it includes people in action, returning from the first market to their homes. Even though these people are active, the caption tells that the action these people have in front of them is very hard: crossing the river in the image and then climbing to their homes on the mountains, hours of walking away. These people are leaving this place with a hard mission ahead. They are portrayed from behind and the scene looks very diasporic. This image also holds elements of the second category, *the silent view*, being a wide long-distance shot portraying a view with no close shot of people.

5.2. Silent view

The second category I sorted out of the material are the images of *silent view*. The images I count to this category are the images no. 6, 16 and 19. Image no. 5 also presents a still landscape and could be counted to this category. But for the dominant presence of people in it, I put it in the first category: *misery*. Yet, this image has many same features as the images in this category. All these images have the element of stillness and silence in them. The images of silent view are sceneries: pictures of the direct consequences of the hurricane in the nature and in the landscape of the town of Moron.

Landscape is the key word with these images and the places these images portray are very much landscapes. All the images are taken far away from the represented participants, probably in order to capture a view as wide as possible. These images present different views to the destroyed town. The action and the movement of the hurricane has passed – the landscape is left and the landscape is very still. The sky in the images is already blue and the sceneries seem very calm and passive in the contradiction to the raging hurricane winds. These images show what is left to deal with after the hurricane. Like landscapes always, the places in these images seem to belong to no-one. No-one is taking control of these sights, no-one is mourning over them. These landscapes can only be looked at as they are at the very moment.

These distinguishing element in these images is the lack of people. Nobody is acting in these landscapes. In contradiction to the images of misery, in the images of silent view people are not at the focus of the story these images. The only represented participants are the views and the active participants can only observe them as such. In two of the images very few people can be seen in the frame. These people are portrayed from long distance and they are mixed to the environment, we cannot see their faces. In the third image there is no people at all. As we cannot see the faces of local people, the destruction seems less personal and less touching. The destruction does not come as close to the viewer than in the images with people in the focus.

The captions of the images lack an actor as well. The actor is either the pictured as a place (like a village) or in a passive form. But like the blue skies of the images, the captions tell us about hope that is already in sight after the hurricane.



Image 6. Caption: In the Northern coast of the Grand'Anse department, the badly damages village of the fishermen of Bonbon, is getting back on its feet little by little (my translation).

The first image of the category of the images of silent view is the image no. 6. The image seems to portray a street, bordered by houses that are situated very close to each other. The caption tells us that the image is picturing the “damaged village of the fishermen of Bonbon” that is “getting back on its feet little by little”. The promise of hope is made in the caption and with the bright blue sky in the background of the image. It seems that nature has survived the catastrophe. Palm trees are still reaching the sky and the ocean seems calm.

But when looking at the image more closely the hurricane seems to have literally wiped off the village. The small houses represent diverse type of constructions, some looking more like terraces than houses with a lot of construction-elements missing. The hurricane seems to have destroyed the roof of most of the buildings. Clotheslines with clothes are hung in front of the houses. Different pieces of textiles are again hanging everywhere.

There are piles of textile on the ground that look like trash left on the street to be picked up. When looking even closer, people can be seen walking on the street. They are not as passive as in the images of misery, but they are not taking very much contact with their environment either. A street with many houses could be imagined to be more crowded on a normal day. Now, the scenery is very empty. There is something very peculiar in the place of this photo: the mix of stillness, hope and destruction.



Image 16. Caption: The 9th of October, the high school of young girls in Jérémie was transformed to a provisional shelter (my translation).

The second image of the category of silent view is the image no. 16. This image has many of the same elements as the image no. 6. It pictures a blue-skied day and a building that seems intact at first sight. The clothes hanging on the railing all over the building gives the first hint of something being out of order – out of place. They indicate that something out of ordinary might be happening in the peaceful scenery. When observing more carefully, a group of people can be depicted in the right down corner of the image. But the centre of the image is definitely the building that is capturing the gaze, the people in the image are only found after looking for them.

The caption gives the image an interesting touch as it reveals that the building in the image is a high school (*un lycée*) turned in to a provisional shelter. Hurricane has then changed something essential in this place: its function. The caption confirms the active participant that despite the blue sky, something severe has occurred in the place of this

image. An important place, a school, has been needed to be change into something more vital: a shelter. The caption also tells us that the portrayed situation and place: a provisional shelter is not a stable place but something temporary. The temporal dimensional of the photo is highlighted with the caption that exceptionally tells us the exact time the photograph was taken: five days after Matthew hit the coast of Haiti.



Image 19. Caption: In Jérémie, the roof of the Saint Louis church, an iconic monument of the city, was damaged (my translation).

The third photo I count to belong to the category of silent view is the image no. 19. What is seen in the photo is a view, a landscape of a town that is dominated by a church. Partly devastated, but still standing, the church is facing a calm ocean. The church is portrayed from up and behind. The view over the rooftops does not reveal any people in the town. Maybe the people have been evacuated before the hurricane stroke? This image might show the town in a special setting where the threatening event has passed but the people to who the place belongs to, have not yet returned. The caption tells the same story as the image, underlining the importance of the church by saying it to be “an iconic monument of city”. The hurricane has damaged the church, but it is still standing. This is the overall feeling in the image: hurricane has done its damage but buildings and especially an iconic monument are still standing when the new day has arrived.

I see that the image no. 19 could have also be counted to the next category: the images of heavenly help. The church in the images stands still and strong against the forces of

nature, damaged but survived after the hurricane. As a church, the building is by evidence a symbol of hope and salvation. The chaotic and miserable situation following the hurricane emphasize this symbolism.

5.3. Heavenly help

The third category I sort out of these images is *heavenly help*. I see that images no. 2, 4 and 15 have very similar features and can be clearly counted to this category. Help coming from above is connecting the images of this category. Each of these images include elements of salvation, coming outside from another world. In most of the images the salvation has religious nature, and they include Christian elements like churches or a statue of Virgin Mary. In the image no. 15 the heavenly help is coming from above in a form of a helicopter. Religious or secular, the salvation in all the images is white and somewhat colonial. Christianity (both Catholic and Protestant church) is an apparent remain of colonial history in Haiti, a country known for its' strong and still vivid traditions in Voodoo. Like Christianity, the helicopter is coming from the Western world: according to the caption it is a helicopter of the UN. The two heavenly, helping actors (the UN and God) have even put their forces together in the image no. 2 where help-kits provided by the UN are distributed in a church.

The religious elements represent constancy and security in the threatening change and chaos. Churches and statues of saints stand even though everything surrounding them has collapsed. A new church is being build. There is a feeling of a biblical end of the world and the salvation that comes after. This is not a place god has abandoned but heavenly help is on its' way, coming from above to save Haiti.

As said, in the images of this category the salvation is coming from outside. The focus of the images is then not so much on the local people and on their actions but on the heavenly help. Yet, local people are also portrayed in these images, as for instance in the image no. 2. The place in the images of heavenly help is taken over by those who come from outside.



Image 4. Caption: The virgin of Notre Dame du Perpétuel Secours, “protector” of the zone that resisted to the hurricane, in a locality of Jérémie (my translation).

The most outstanding figure of the image no. 4 is a human-sized statue of Virgin Mary, standing on a cage. The cage is situated at the right front of the image, next to a wall of a building that the caption reveals us to be a church (*Notre-Dame du Perpétuel du Secours*).

Dressed in white with a golden crown on her head, the statue of the Virgin stands out of the scenery. The statue, the white-blue cage and the flowers on the statue’s feet pop out as colourful elements in the image. Grey and cloudy sky, the cut trees and broken rooftops form the view behind the statue. Few local people can be spotted in the image, walking down streets of the ruined city. Interestingly, the caption tells that this area has resisted (*resisté*) the hurricane which means that the destruction is not total.

Statue being on a cage gives an idea of Virgin Mary being imprisoned. But when looking at the view, it looks like the cage has protected the statue from being destroyed by the hurricane. The caption says that the Virgin is the “protector” (*patronne*) of the zone, meaning that the locality is under her protection. This would mean that the Virgin has protected the area that has “resisted” the hurricane thanks to her. Protector or protected, the cage separated the statue of the virgin from her surroundings. She remains untouched, with the force from another world.

Unlike the local people in the image, the statue of the Virgin is very white of her skin. She is a saviour from outside, saved by something outside. The statue's gaze is aimed towards and upwards to the sky, to the future. It truly looks like this is place that has gone through the end of the world, but resisted and is looking for a better future, as the caption says, thanks to the white virgin.



Image 2. Caption: Through the perforated walls of the church of La Croisade de Moron, in the valley of the Grand'Anse-river, victims of Hurricane Matthew look cravingly the responsible of an OGN preparing the hygienic kits to be distributes. There are not enough of them for everyone (my translation).

The image no. 2 shows a messy space, a room, with piled up chairs that have been removed to the left corner of the room to make room for plastic packages. There is person in the middle of the space, facing back to the camera. His hands are on movement, looking like he is organising the space and the things in it.

When looking at the image more carefully, there are small holes (like windows) in the back wall of the room are packed with people looking in and looking intensely at the camera. It is clear that these people wait impatiently for something from the man in the room, something that is in the room. They are literally packed to the small holes, with hands hanging in from them.

The caption of the image is long and explicative, revealing us why the image is counted to belong to the category of heavenly help. The caption tells that the messy space, is a church (*La Croisade de Moron*) in the valley of the Grand'Anse river. The people are described as the victims of the hurricane who are waiting for the distribution of hygienic kits. The person in the middle of the image is from an unknown OGN.

The help in this image comes from outside, in a very concrete form on hygienic kits provided by an OGN. The kits are distributed in a church, a place of heavenly saviour, but the people must wait outside. The heavenly help comes from the church but there is no entering in. The church stands still, as the virgin of the image no. 4, separated from the local. This place is not under the control of the people, the victims, as the caption says. The bright light coming to the church from the holes in the wall endorses the heavenly aspect of the image, help and brighter times coming from the sky.

The final sentence reveals the hopeless situation: “There are not enough of them (hygienic kits) for everyone”. Not everyone can be saved.



Image 15. Caption: A helicopter of the United Nations flies over the sinister zone to come to help the inhabitants (my translation).

In the image no. 15 there is a young girl in the right side of the image, standing next to a damaged building, photographed from behind. The overall view is messy; broken branches, plastic bags and other objects laying on the ground. But the girl is not looking

at the messy environment or the damaged building, she is looking at a helicopter at the sky. “A helicopter of the United Nations flies over the sinister zone to come to help the inhabitants” says the caption. It makes the foreign helicopter the actor in this image. The local girl is an observer and the object of the help coming from heaven, from another world. This is a place that needs to be rescued, a *sinister zone*. But the helicopter is coming from a bright sky, bringing hope with it. This place still has hope that the heavenly help is bringing with it.

5.4. Reconstruction

The last category of my analysis is the *reconstruction*. This is the biggest category of the four, including 4 big images and 2 paired images. Images no. 8 & 9 and 12 & 13 are presented in smaller size and come in pairs in the news story.

In the images of reconstruction, the hurricane and its horror are gone, and the focus is on the future. These images present people acting on places. People are reconstructing their homes, churches and collecting drinkable water. If in the images of misery, the presented people were looking away from the places they were in, in the images of reconstruction the people are looking around them, taking over the places again. In these images, the focus is on people who look concentrated, active – and even happy! The skies are blues, the nature is still, and progress is happening.

If the in the images of heavenly help, the place was taken over by forces coming from outside, in the images of reconstruction the local people show very strong ownership and belonging to the place they are portrayed in. People are taking over the places they belong to. One could also imagine that the people are also planning to stay in these places because they are making the places still and stable again after the threatening change and chaos. Unlike in the image of silent view, the stillness is calm and promising, because it is connected to peoples’ actions.

When looking at these images compared to the other categories, a certain timeline can be imagined. These images are in the end of that timeline, representing the future, the last stage in the event of the hurricane when making Haiti a place to live again.



Image 8. Caption: In Fondelin, a local community of Jérémie, the reverend Homer Roland rebuilds the parish of the church of "l'église de Dieu de la délivrance promise", destroyed by the hurricane (my translation).

In the image no. 8 three men are in the construction of a building what the caption tells us to be a parish of a church in the locality of Fondelin. Caption also says that one of the men is reverend Homer Roland who is rebuilding the parish that has been destroyed by the hurricane. The status of a pastor could not have been guessed for the lack of the uniform. It seems also peculiar that the reverend himself is in the middle of the activity, rebuilding his parish.

The two unidentified men and the reverend are situated in the middle of the image inside a frame of the parish. One of them has even escalated upon the frame, taking that much control over the space. The men are moving and seem to be communicating. They look each other and the construction, not the camera. The so-called construction site seems to have been cleaned. There are no additional textiles, plastic or other objects laying on the ground like in some of the post-catastrophe images.

This image has similar elements with the images in the category of heavenly help. Constructing a new parish is considered important, the church brings hope to the future. One of the men (the reverend himself?) in the image is even looking up to the church,

seeing maybe salvation. But the difference in this image is that the activity for the salvation is coming from the local people. Even the caption underlines the role of the reverend Roland, saying that he is reconstructing the parish. The help is not coming from heaven to these people, they help themselves in this place what is clearly theirs and meaningful for them. The reverend Roland is taking care of his own parish.



Image 17. Caption: The principals of the schools try to save the school material they can after the passing of the hurricane (my translation).

Like the image no. 8, the image no. 17 presents 3 men in outside, but this time in the ruins, not in a construction site. The nature behind them is calm with broken palm trees and the sky is almost bright. The most outstanding element in the image is that all the three men are well dressed, wearing blouses. The men are in the middle of action, going through papers, looking focused. Like in many of the image of this category, the men almost like they were too busy to look at the camera, doing their work. One of the three is standing behind, his arms crossed, looking calm and not desperate. His tranquillity creates a feeling that the worst is over.

The caption says that these men are the directors of a school, trying to save the little material left after the passing of the hurricane. If the place the men are in, is a school, it is no longer identifiable. Paper material is laying everywhere on the ruins. Yet, misery and destruction are not the first things that this image evokes. The calm but active

presence of the well-suited men tells a different story. The caption basically names these directors as *saviours*, they are trying to save what is left after the hurricane. This image is an interesting example the role of men in the images of this news articles. Whilst, in the images of misery, many local people where passive women on the ruins of houses, in the images of reconstruction, men are rebuilding the future.

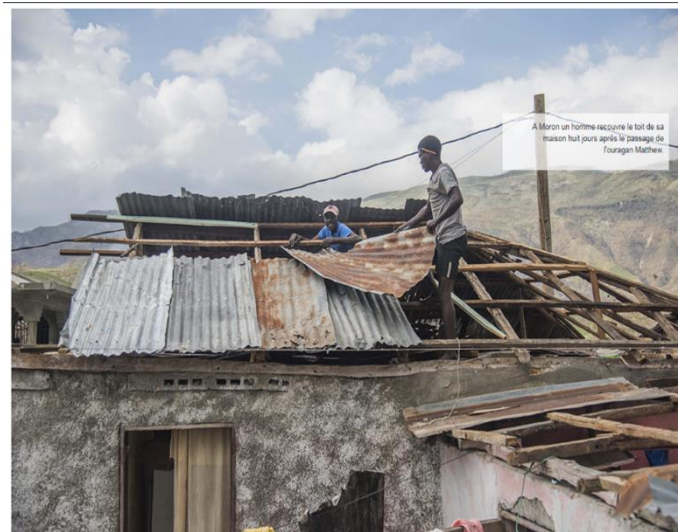


Image 1 Caption: In Moron, a man is recovering the roof of his house eight days after the passing of the hurricane (my translation).

The image no. 7 is following the same principle as the previous ones presenting men at work. The caption tells us that the image portrays a man recovering the roof of his house eight days of after the hurricane. Of the two man in the image, the one in the middle of the image, looking up from the inside of the roof must be the man mentioned in the caption. The other man, who is not facing the camera, is younger and could be the owner's son. He shows interesting professionalism to the project of construction by the little gesture of having a pen behind his ear.

This image has a unique element that none of the other images in the news story has: the man in the middle of the image is looking at the camera and smiling. Looking the camera for a reason or another is rare in these post-catastrophe images. But smiling is a never-seen before. The smile of this man is the clearest sign of hope that any of these images

have. It's a human communicating joy to another. This man is rebuilding his home, probably the most meaningful place to humans.

6 CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis, I have analysed a news story about a town, published in the online version of the French newspaper *Le Monde*. The news story is about a town of Moron, in Haiti a few days after the passing of the hurricane Matthew. In a news story that is a collection of news images and text, I have focused my analysis on the 19 images and their captions. With the method of multimodal analysis, I have studied what type of place these images construct. The concept of place, as it is known for instance in human geography, has been the key word in my study. In the analysis, four categories: *misery*, *silent view*, *heavenly help* and *reconstruction* we retrieve from among the images. A few of the images were overlapping in categories and two of them I couldn't clearly place in any of them. For instance the image no. 3 communicated something else than the other images and then did not fit into my categories. The two images should have been analysed separately which would have widened and lengthened the analysis too much.

When Matthew arrived onto Haiti, the island was still recovering from an earthquake that had ravaged the country few years before. A poor country hit by a hurricane can be easily imagined a place of misery to start with. What constructed the misery in the case of these images (of which each represented more or less something miserable) were the people, their struggles and their expressions. People were passive in places where one would expect activity and showing attachment the most: in homes and in hospitals.

The misery was also constructed for the Western gaze like mine through the contrast between the images and the captions. The caption was needed to explain what places these images represented as for the European reader such as myself they were unidentifiable.

Overall, it was rewarding to note that the captions played important role in the photos. As predicted, sometimes they provided almost the same information as the image and worked as a verification for what was predicted in the images. So that the language still held a credibility value that the images did not. Sometimes the captions revealed information

that I could not have perceived only by looking at the image. Sometimes this information was defining for the categorization of the image. Translating the captions in only two of the translations some ambiguity could not be avoided.

One important element in the construction and identification of place in these images was the mix of nature and culture. Nature and its forces had taken over the place which did not then no longer belong to the people who had constructed it. Something you cannot control, does not belong to you. The difference between nature and culture became blurred, as elements of mixed as a consequences of the hurricane. Things in the images were clearly where they did not belong and then made the places unclassifiable in terms of the nature-culture binary.

Besides nature, other forces were present in Moron, Haiti in showing power over the place. In the images of heavenly help, the importance faith and especially Christian faith in Haiti came up. In my reading of the material, my own cultural background becomes visible: if I were Haitian, I may would have spotted local elements connected for example to voodoo, in constructing the place. Higher forces were in the images depicted as taking the situation under control, presenting comforting and protecting stability.

The contradiction of change versus stability in a place was present throughout the images. First, the hurricane Matthew represented (and was!) a threatening change when for instance the aforementioned heavenly help and protection represented safe stability and continuity. However in the images of *silent view* the stability was not so comforting. These images had less feeling of sorrow as they were lacking people. Emotions are hard to depict without human presence. Nevertheless still landscapes were informative: this is what has happened. These images had least feeling of moment and event but felt then very temporary. In this light the change brought by the action by the local people showed as relief and help and not as a threat.

I also see that these categories represent different stages after the passing the of hurricane: chaos, misery, the emptiness that is left after the intensive hurricane, help coming from outside and the villagers getting back on their feet little by little can be seen as a timeline.

The whole hurricane itself is also an event. It is something that arrives (very physically) and then leaves, a specific event that forms the place at the moment (or the line of many moments) it happens. In the end, the material was picked from a documentary media story, and documentary stories are most often chronological.

One type of place that Moron, Haiti represents is *home*. The destruction caused by the hurricane was devastating precisely because it destroyed homes. The destruction of an area without inhabitants would probably not be represented in media in the same way, nor would it cause the same type of reaction than the destruction of an area *belonging* to people. Moron, Haiti was a home for people who do not have many possibilities to move or rebuild their lives somewhere else unlike many Western people. The rich have globality, the poor have locality (Eagelton in Cresswell, 2017:82) Home in the case of this study was both a place of sorrow and a place of happiness. In the images of misery, apathetic women sat on the ruins of their homes. In the images of reconstruction, smiling, active men were constructing them. The study was a good example of the importance of the problematization of the concept of home. Home is not always a safe and warm place but can also be a place of violence and sorrow. In one of the images, people were returning home but had to go through a struggle to get there. When home was destroyed, deformed by the hurricane its whole essence was under question. Is then home really home? Temporality, lack of attachment and change are all elements that are presents in non-places.

In conclusion, Moron, Haiti was depicted in the images and their captions as a place of sorrow, uncertainty, chaos, await and in the end a place of hope.

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APPENDIX:

**IMAGE 1**

Les habitants d'une maison qui a été reconstruite avec de la récupération des débris attendent de l'aide pour survivre au quotidien.

Eng. The inhabitants of a house that has been reconstructed with recuperation of trash, waiting for help to survive the daily life (own translation).



IMAGE 2

A travers les murs ajourés de l'église La Croisade à Moron, dans la vallée de la rivière Grand'Anse, des sinistrés de l'ouragan Matthew regardent avec envie le responsable d'une ONG préparer des kits hygiéniques en vue d'une distribution. Il n'y en aura pas pour tout le monde.

Eng. Through the perforated walls of the church of La Croisade de Moron, in the valley of the Grand'Anse river, victims of Hurricane Matthew look cravingly (?) the responsible of an OGN preparing the hygienic kits to be distributes. There are not enough of them for everyone (own translation).



IMAGE 3

A Moron, commune du département de la Grand'Anse sinistrée après le passage de l'ouragan Matthew, des habitants désespérés tentent d'obtenir des kits d'aide lors d'une distribution dispensée par une ONG selon une liste pré-établie par la mairie.

Eng. In Moron, a town of the Grand'Anse department, after the passing of hurricane Matthew, desperate residents are trying to get supplykits in the distribution dispends by an OGN, according to a list prepared by the mayor's office (my translation).

**IMAGE 4**

La Vierge de Notre-Dame du Perpétuel Secours, patronne de la zone qui a résisté à l'Ouragan dans une localité de Jérémie

Eng. The virgin of Notre Dame du Perpétuel Secours guards the zone that resisted to the hurricane, in a locality of Jérémie (my translation).

**IMAGE 5**

De retour du marché de Mafranc, le premier après le passage de l'ouragan Matthew, des villageois traversent la rivière Grand'Anse pour remonter sur les hauteurs où ils vivent, à plusieurs heures de marche.

Eng. Returning from the Mafranc market, the first one after the passing of hurricane Matthew, the villagers cross the Grand'Anse river to climb back to the mountains where live, hours of walking away (my translation).



IMAGE 6

Sur la côte nord du département de la Grand'Anse, le village de pêcheurs de Bonbon, fortement endommagé par le passage de l'ouragan Matthew, reprend vie peu à peu.

Eng. In the Northern coast of the Grand'Anse department, the badly damages village of the fishermen of Bonbon, is getting back on its feet little by little (my translation).

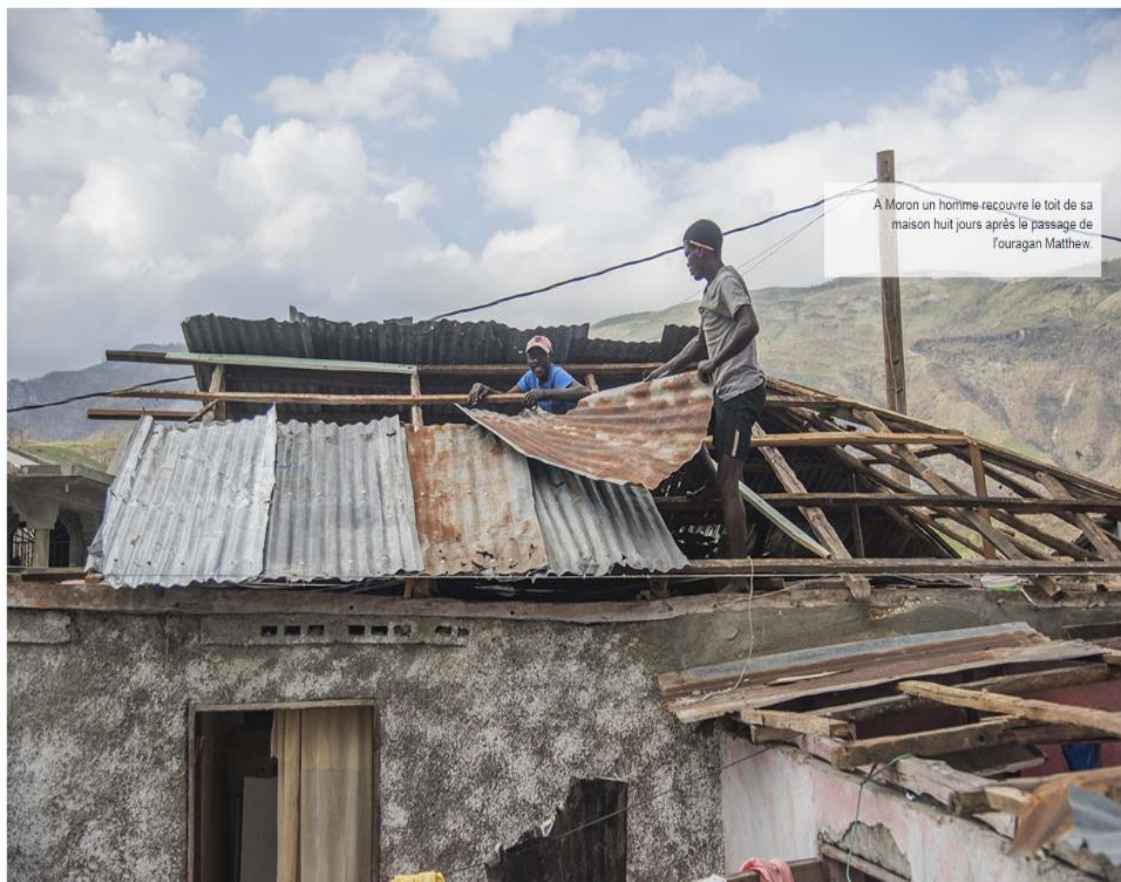


IMAGE 7

A Moron un homme recouvre le toit de sa maison huit jours après le passage de l'ouragan Matthew.

Eng. In Moron, a man is recovering the roof of his house eight days after the passing of the hurricane (my translation).



IMAGE 8 & 9

8: A Fondelin, localité de Jérémie, le pasteur Homer Roland reconstruit la paroisse de "leglise de Dieu de la délivrance promise", détruite par l'ouragan Matthew.

Eng. In Fondelin, a local community of Jérémie, the reverend Homer Roland rebuilds the parish of the church of "leglise de Dieu de la délivrance promise", destroyed by the hurricane (my translation)..

9: Un habitant de Plaine Gomier essaie de récupérer ses affaires à l'intérieur de sa maison.

Eng A resident of Plain Gomier tries to get back his belongings from his house (my translation).



IMAGE 10

A Buvette, hameau de la vallée de la rivière Grand'Anse, Pierre Michelet, 29 ans, travaille à la fabrique de charbon de bois à partir de branches récupérées au sol après le passage de l'ouragan Matthew. Il recouvrira ensuite son "terril" de terre avant de l'enflammer par dessous pour récupérer le précieux combustible qui sera revendu à la ville.

In Buvette, a village in the Grand'Anse river valley, a 29-year-old Pierre Michelet prepares carbon of wood, made of branches picked up on the ground after the passing hurricane Matthew. He will then cover his "terril" of ground before flaming it below to recover the precious "combustible" that will be sold to the village (my translation).



IMAGE 11

Un jeune garçon atteint du choléra au centre de santé de Moron.

Eng. A young boy with cholera in a healthcare centre in Moron (my translation).



IMAGE 12 & 13

12: Huit jours après le passage de l'ouragan Matthew, à Fondelin, section de la commune de Jérémie, une fillette fait le plein d'eau.

Eng. Eight days after the passing of the hurricane Matthew, in Fondelin (in Jérémie) a young girl recollects water (my translation).

13: Des enfants recueillent de l'eau de pluie dans un puit.

Eng. Children recollect water from a well (my translation).



IMAGE 14

Le passage de l'ouragan a dévasté la localité de Dame Marie, Grand'Anse.

Eng. The passing of the hurricane has devastated the locality of Dame Marie in Grand'Anse (my translation).



IMAGE 15

Un hélicoptère de l'Onu survolant la zone sinistrée pour venir en aide aux habitants

Eng. A helicopter of the United Nations flies over the “sinistrated” zone to come to help the inhabitants (my translation).

**IMAGE 16**

9 octobre, le lycée des jeunes filles de Jérémie a été transformé en abri provisoire.

Eng. The 9th of October, the high school of young girls in Jérémie was transformed to a provisional sheld (my translation).



IMAGE 17

Des directeurs des écoles tentent de sauver le peu de matériel scolaire après le passage de l'ouragan

Eng. The principals of the schools try to save the school material they can after the passing of the hurricane (my translation).



IMAGE 18

Un employé de l'hôpital départemental Saint-Antoine de Jérémie brûle les déchets de la structure sur un terrain adjacent qui fait également office de sépulture pour les patients morts du choléra.

Eng. An employee of a hospital of a Saint-Antoine department of Jérémie burns the trash of a structure on a ground that is also used as the office of burial of the patients died of cholera (my translation).



IMAGE 19

A Jérémie, la toiture de l'église Saint Louis, monument emblématique de la ville a été endommagée.

Eng. In Jérémie, the roof of the Saint Louis church, an iconic monument of the city, was damaged (my translation).