

## **Do indivíduo de referência ao consumo visual e o gesto da arte na fotografia de identificação**

### **From the individual of reference to visual consumption and the gesture of art in identification photography**

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**Resumo:** *Este trabalho tenta observar a construção da potência fotográfica em uma fotografia icônica realizada por Wilhem Brasse em 1940. Fotógrafo prisioneiro em Auschwitz durante os anos de 1940-1944, Brasse realizou mais de 45 mil fotos em estilo de identificação. Na foto de Jan Komski, o trabalho de posado e a figurabilidade enfrentam uma dialética do testemunho que se mantém em espera de um contraplano melhor, futuro. Trabalha-se aqui com a relacionalidade da foto em um duplo aspecto: o ato de impor à imagem uma tentativa de sujeição ao holótipo negativo e o trabalho do fotógrafo em condições extremas. O artigo conclui que a reinscrição artística e o consumo visual enlaçam a fotografia, 70 anos depois, em uma tentativa de premir uma ética da arte e uma estética do episódio.*

**Palavras-chave:** *fotografia; consumo visual; memória; Wilhem Brasse.*

**Abstract:** *This work tries to observe the construction of the photographic power in an iconic picture realized by Wilhem Brasse in 1940. Prisoner Photographer in Auschwitz during the years 1940-1944, Brasse took more than 45,000 photos in identification style. In Jan Komski's photo, the work of posture and figurability face a dialectic of testimony that stands in wait for a better, future counter-plan. We work here with the relationality of the photo in a double aspect: the act of imposing on the image an attempt to subjection to the negative holotype, and the*

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*work of the photographer in extreme conditions. The article concludes that artistic reinscription and visual consumption entwine the photograph, seventy years later, in an attempt to press an art ethic and an aesthetic of the episode.*

**Keywords:** *photography; visual consumption; memory; Wilhem Brasse.*

## Introduction: About the reductive system and photos

The register, on its own, harassed: soon after arriving, with dirty clothes from someone who already died. The photography enforced a type of submission of the subject to the punishment of image, designating a place of holotypical subjection.<sup>2</sup> In other words, receiving its distemporalization through the replacement of a name for a number, looking the construction of a scene in silence, being looked as an inanimate object. Images would transform, thus, the face into a radiologic archetypology. Pure carcass, the face represented the brutality of the exposed scene. Sessions were conceived, according to Zelizer (1998) within a program that, at the same time, would presuppose structural identification and the valorization in the scheme *about-to-die*.<sup>3</sup> They were intended to typological marking and the violence in the act would destroy even more the victim: their faces were attached as a symbol of racial memory that should be, in the infamous logic of the Nazi system, individually erased.

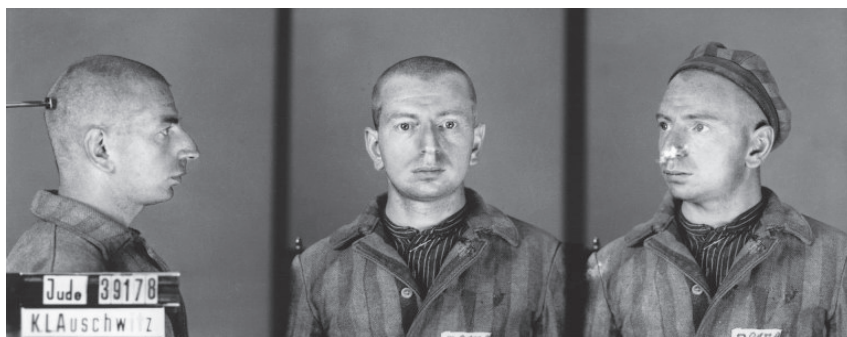
Exhaustingly multiplied in the obsession for uniformization of Nazis (over 45 thousand photos were taken), the registers had, therefore, to be made with instructions that designated the logic of the reducing system: the construction of the difference conceived as pure negativity, pure depersonalization, pure disgrace. In this sense, the racial rhetoric, in the field of typological and holotypic image, was assumed in the intention of writing a nucleus, read as deformed, from the perspective of alterity. In photos taken only once to save negative (ENGELMANN, 2015),

2 Process of “constitutive referentiality” which, in taxological language, designates the type-species that works as a visual unity for describing a taxon; put in the field of anthropology, inscribes the process of archotyping of an individual of reference, very used in the old physical anthropology in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (RASSOOL e HAYES, 2001) and in the relationships between photography, phenotype and anthropometry (EDWARDS, 2004); in the case of Nazi raciology (ZELIZER, 1998), the individual of reference was marked by juxtaposition between race, phenomenology and negativity.

3 Images, according to Sanchez-Biosca (2017), performed “on the verge of death”, generally produced by the perpetrators, in an indissociable relationship between physical and psychological violence and the act of registering it. In this class of images we can find, for instance, images of North American military men in Abu Ghraib, photography made by the Khmer Rouge regimen in Cambodia and pictures taken by Nazi officials during Second World War.

the scheme of three series (lateral, frontal, face turning to the side) was based in a hierarchy of raciological memory.<sup>4</sup>

Image 1: Image of a prisoner in Auschwitz



In these photographic series, the latent functionality of the scheme reserved for the biographic discontextualization of the photograph in a scopophilic redundancy. Almost always with the same disposition: instruction to pose within a model of criminal registration, minimal lighting conditions, precariousness of the image in the emptiness of visual background, normally contained expression without exposing admonition. Therefore, photography was, at the same time, the reproduction of a project and the duration of a preconception. They feed of phenotypical descriptions as if they wanted to make photographic form omnipresent and the undeniable relationship between science and spectacle.<sup>5</sup>

Emanation of an aesthetic of danger, the image revealed the negative perfectibility. In other words, when assigning the place of a copy (in-fame) over the series position, the photograph had to be a voluntary observation of the body, the face, the compositional elements defined

4 A Warburgian “atlas” made through the decadence, gradual similarities performed with an intention of transmitting a type of negative pathos, filled with “samples” read as biologically bad.

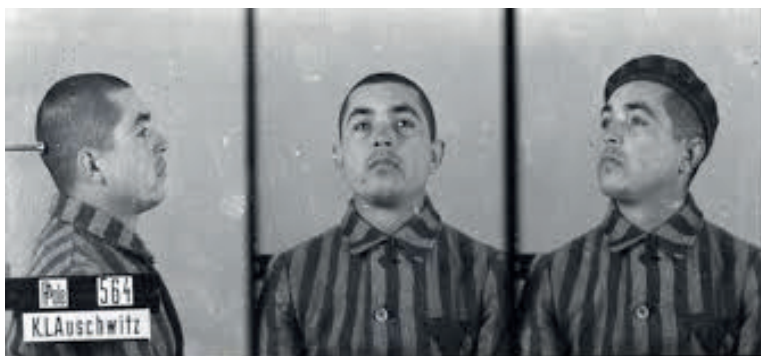
5 The compulsive circulation of anthropometric patterns and their demonstrability in relation with photography. Basing themselves, especially, in a hyperfocalization of facial features in a testimonial ocularization.

in its pathological potential: the indelible composition prefigured that would mark the image forever.<sup>6</sup>

When inserted in a type of essential scheme, the portrait was intensely reduced to laudatory objectification - a nominal insufficiency, a reapropriation of the iconographic vestige in anthropological history. Impregnated from criminal contextualization, the testimonial, here, wanted to cure the “negative perfectibility” in a constantly variable face, but assinal, idealized, guilty.

A face, specially, where the eluded, the indefectible, the abject build a direct relationship with metric and racial science.

Image 2: Jan Kowski in Auschwitz



In the photograph of Kowski<sup>7</sup>, taken by Wilhem Brasse in 1940, the sequence of the three image program is observed similarly to the registration of Czeslawa, establishing archetypically the model of Nazi

6 That is, “negative perfectibility” in the context of a plastic reduction of the face of racial archetype.

7 Encarcerated in 1940 in the border of Czechoslovakia after running from Poland and participating the movement of resistance in France, arrived in Auschwitz after a brief passage in other smaller camps, therefore, in a moment where concentration camps were still being built, on what would be the industrialization of death: gas chambers and crematorium ovens. In a certain sense, the “final solution” (HILBERG, 1996), the execution of the plan of physical elimination of Jews, was still in phase of organization, in the case of Kowski, a catholic Polish victim, a political prisoner (designated by the red triangle imposed to prisoners in the characteristic Auschwitz clothin), the picture is taken in this moment of the beginning of concentration camps.

dispersonalization.<sup>8</sup> The chain of effects (lateral registration, frontal image, three quarters), impresses a narrative condition that has the intention of insisting over the bond of photography and hierarchization. In the three successive pictures, we can observe the identification number (564) in the first image, beyond the characteristic clothing, the shaved head close to the skull and the normative instruction of photographic aesthetic. In the photography of identification, it is possible to see the typological system: the image of bust in a neutral background, the perspective that evokes a phrenologic context, visual representation that aspires to emphasize a program of social hierarchy based on an anthropology of negative image.

Image 3: Jan Kowski



Kowski is identified with the abject number and name of the concentration camp. His face in profile is captured in a rigid image, with the back of the skull resting over a metal that supports the head in an erect position. In the second image, it is possible to see the characteristic clothing - apparently newer and more fitted to the body in relation to

8 After the war, he lived in refugee camps and migrated to the United States in 1949, already married (to another Auschwitz survivor). He developed his work of painter and illustrator, with several images of concentration camps, until his death, in Arlington (United States), in the year of 2002.

Czelawa's attire -, the read triangle that designates the position as political prisoner and was reserved to dissidents, the face in frontal position (which does not look o the camera).

The direct perspective of framework focus Kowski young face, 25 year-old in his first detention, and reveals the same context of capture. His expression is confident and serene in the three images, read in a prisoner that already engaged in the resistance against Nazism. The literal composition, however, evokes a phenomenological connotation that is, in a first moment, unintended from the narrative of three images.<sup>9</sup>

Kowski does not look at the camera at any moment, and the head position is slightly up, with the chin up, the lips closed and the body apparently well nourished. The gaze is defying, concise, safe. Even with the phrenologic didactic, the negative archetypology cannot reduce the facial signs of an expression of disenchantment, fear, contention that would be proof of (racial and deviant) culpability.

The interaction between the portrayed subject and his pride ruptures, in this case, the expectation of marginality of the photographic system. The picture is invasive, but the position-witness of Kowski bust seems to maintain a balance between the act of dispersonalization and the resistance against the symbolic aggressive language (transformation of subjects into objects, realistic intention, documental pretension based in an atlas of raciologic hierarchy).

The negative formula - photography as a vehicle of harassment - reiterates here the relationship of contamination of image: the three series aim the destination essentiality of visual representation, read as faithful to the process of vraisemblance that has the meaning of instructing (marking, describing, didactizing) more easily an ideal typology of the "racial faces" apprehended. In what we see the portrayed image, the triptych

9 It is important to consider that, in Kowski's case, "a face of a Polish political prisoner" amongst multiple other faces of political dissidents, one of the effects of the image is the content of politicization of the victim, that will be used in the exposure of the context of nationalization of holocaust on behalf of Poland.

photographic follows a similar pattern that Wilhem Brasse had to follow, especially in relation to the perspective of ideal anthropologization,<sup>10</sup>

In Kowski's case, the third image is also the one who carries bigger elements of visual *mise-en-scène*. A beret is used to perspectivate the construction of what would be a person partially protected by a scenic element. The emphasis in the physical effect of the image aspires a compositional provision that tries to allegorize what is a characteristic of the picture in its most contemplative and referent dimension. What is revealed is the person and the state as prisoner, but this relation is not, despite the characteristics of photography of identification, brutalized. Unlike the first two photographs, the composition ends, to a certain extent, an emotional perspective that designates a type of re-contextualized iconic force. The photographic statute (photography of identification) is destabilized by the perspective of diagonality of the pose. Kowski is photographed giving emphasis to the right profile of the face, in which focus the plastic value in the effect of focal lighting. This emphasis of angularity in the scene depicts the documental character of photography of identification and reveals an experience of corporeity that wasn't so firmly enunciated in the first two perspectives.<sup>11</sup>

10 Based on the studies of deviation in physic anthropology of Cesare Lombroso (HORN, 1995), this perspective sought to redeem the body portrayed as the racialized idea of "malformation", both anatomically and morally (sic).

11 For this reason, it is possible to observe that, probably, the moment of capture was fleeting and the rush did not allow the characteristic adjustment of anthropometrization with strictness, leaving more space for the gesture of capture in a trace of subjectivation.



Image 4: zoomed photography of Komski (background)



When the diagonality is emphasized, the intentionality of the enunciator lets shine through the experience of rupture that is contained in the postural act that rejects the condition of subjectification. The use of the beret and the facial angle, the eyes up, the lips closed, impress a credibility of testimonial that want to be noticed, that want to be done.

In a certain sense, the last part of the triptych ends a destabilization of the stereotype and “deforms” the (in)coherence of the documental perspective, decomposing the statute of identification photography. The imaginary can flow more easily questioning, thus, the photographic substrate and the reductive genre. The inscription in another interpretative/argumentative possibility calls attention for allowing an effect of meaning and presence (GUMBRECHT, 2010) which enlance the duality of photography and a plastic densification of the image. Similar

to the photos conceived in an artistic perspective (art gallery, museum, installations, postural, etc.) where the work of the photographer is more evident and heartfelt, the third image concretizes an aesthetic-esthetic situation that allows the encouraging to be the expressive vector against the numeric statute of identification.

The photo becomes gesture in the grammar of emotional essentiality of a face in which physiognomic freedom was not allowed. Even so, the situation of threat, the condition of protest and the immersion of the powerful image are catalyzed in the effect of Brasse's camera, which, before marginalizing the person, emphasizes the presential cator.

The postural gesture, in this case, is a language that is present in the denial of an "implicit shame" (AGAMBEN, 2008), which would disable the performatic will. Komski's body is not a carcass because it trumps the "negative perfectibility" when it deals with an intersubjectivity that is reserved, the same way as Czeslawa's, for a future viewer. Notwithstanding, the formed triptych, in a superlative way, avoids the cliché of the photographic program narrating subjectivity as the first act (to be photographed) against the movement of stigmatization.

Here, it isn't the sharing (in wait, in act) that is more highlighted in relation. It is the sign of the image that weaves its political power to endow the identity of a functionality. The face trumps the sign abuse (the reductive outfit, the raciologic scopophilia, the hierarchic narrative) because it expresses in a tough and safe effect, the falsity of the system.

Predominantly, the criticism of visuality in Komski's photography obligates the viewer to discover the infamous relationship there is in the system in its oppression and totalitarianism. The first photographic movement (attempt to erase the name, carry a number) is deconstructed in the postural action. The presence of Komski protests against the photographic-reductive structure and the iconic force of his witness made describe, in a single character, in one only dramatic body, the negativity of de-personalization. Instead of letting himself be the object of photography, Komski deconstructs the reading of the photographic program in a theatricality that is opened in the process of preserving the confrontation, the determination.

The viewer's eyes are always directly in the image, the same way the interaction between the photographer (obligated to shoot) and the subject of photography, which seem to break with the expectation. This visual simile - to wait the future, propositional alterity - (dis)identified the model, tensioning identification photography with the seduction of an artistic imbalance.

The portrait of Komski warns for the vernacular message: the intended auto-dominion of document photography is relativized by the "imposture" of art. As Rancière (2005) writes, the "indetermination of frontiers" of the artistic dominion, in these terms, enables that the powers of meaning are associated to the "next event", which is always an alterity waiting.

This is very meaningful in Komski's portrait, because the determinance of identification photography, in its rigid framing, neutral background and highlight structure face-bust, does not limit a lack of anonymity. It's as if the functionality was sold by the position in scene, which seeks the portrait and preservation of identity. Similar structure has its disadvantages, as Sanchez-Biosca (2017) writes, because what surrounds the image is the spectrum of the assassination, of the enunciative decision of photographing someone to kill (to keep the register in a assassin perpetuity).

The characteristics of enunciation fixed with the objective of transmitting a negative archetypology (forced circumstances, reductive imaginary, anti-Semite vision) are retained by the scenic happening, which denies the sensation of normalcy. It inserts in the image a power of identification, choreographed in the smallest details and ruptures with the "domestication" of the photographic program when highlighting the "impurities" (SANCHEZ-BIOSCA, 2017) of representation.

It is precisely photography as future condition of visual consumption that interests the photographer. In this sense, his secret struggle is so that it doesn't become an archive, it doesn't lose itself in the convenience of perpetrators. In the terms of this relation, photography not only can be a power invested by a will of adjudicate an un-typified identity, not

untied to the vital position of the act of remembering. Obstinated with its representation, the triptych develops a feeling of latency which holds the position of waiting. We unfailingly have, there, a scene.<sup>12</sup>

The photographic act (DUBOIS, 1993), in Brasse's case, is necessarily a perspective of memory that registers a diaphanous testimonial, positioned in the sub-reptitious enunciation. The perspective will always be the denial of the reductive and redundant objectification through a game with the pre-fixed compositional relationship and signification in the details. Looking inside the image, we feel its concealment: a contained gesture, the insuperability of the face, an identification with what's yet to come.

### Insertion in art seeking the portrait

Image 5 Pictures of Thomas Ruff



When the photography of Jan Komski is enlarged in an artistic exhibition about Auschwitz,<sup>13</sup> the effect is particularly disturbing: the

12 In an emancipated way, we get involved with a testimonial yet to be said, yet to be tracked, exposed.

13 The installation *Auschwitz, no hace mucho, no muy lejos*, open to the public of December, 2017 to June, 2018 in the city of Madrid, Spain and a monographic exposure, about the concentration camp organized by the first time in relation to the dimension of pieces, reproduction of objects and testimonials.

photography gains scenic space (exposed in an art gallery, it enhances the possibilities for interpretation) eye perspective (diagrammed in the potentiality of the picture in an exaggerated size), situation of focus (seen without the perception of perspective of stiffness of identification photography, dislocated from the narrative triptych).

In the phenomenology of exposure,<sup>14</sup> Kowski's presence is even more disturbing. As in Thomas Ruff's work (German contemporary photographer - born in 1958) which uses the model of photography of identification to conceive portrait and representation) the augmented image of the painter is a "visual text" that engenders a dramatic essentiality. The enlarged photograph is the second part of the narrative triptych made by Wilhem Brasse and the neutral tone, the erased background and the partial illumination are dismantled in a tension between the file and the artistic condition. Under the seal of art, in a wall of a gallery, in an installation, the accentuated expression values the perspective of the physical experience of the portrait. Kowski is seen in a dissonant proportionality, which allegorizes the identity in a pictoric sensation that defies the objectifying content of document photography. In certain hyperbolic dimension, the emotional involvement with the picture is bigger and the feeling of proximity becomes clearer, established in the museistic transit, which assumes the possibility of casting a more flexible gaze in the frame.

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14 The itinerant presentation emphasizes the diverse materialities of the field: objects, pieces of precedence of diverse entities, museums and institutions, audiovisual materials, photography, documents, letters, graphic arts, etc.

## Image 6 Thomas Ruff's photographs



In the narrative of installation, which seeks to bring to the present the horror of the biggest death camp in the Second World War, the augmented image of Komski is detached from the concept of identification photography to embrace a circulation game of art installations. Among the objects of the field, the other photos and the discursivity of the proposal, values the perceptive engagement of the image. Similar to the pictures performed by Ruff in the 80's and 90's,<sup>15</sup> the image of Komski receives the value of focal light and details of physiognomy can be more intensively presented.<sup>16</sup> With the perspective of exhibition, in times of denial and feeling of historical distance of the Holocaust, the image of Komski is fed by a condition of presence that ineradicably is in

15 The first portraits were in black and white and only in a second phase, some years later, Ruff began to expand (more than two meters) the pictures taken in color, like faces of people generally instructed to pose in frontal view and with perspective of identification photography.

16 The monumentality of portraits, according to Koetzle (2011) would hit a figurative scale in which human perspective would transmit a feeling at the same time of intensity of presence and photographic (dis)identification.

the impossibility of responding the gaze over your face, made giant by proportions.<sup>17</sup>

In the exhibition room, the contextual elements lose reference, where you weight the painters photography to be exhibited before, in traditional format. The picture can be seen in different angles and perspective games: amongst the windows and objects, with lighting nuances, in multiple interactions in the positions in the room. Such effect is discursively a possibility of widening the scenic game, the engagement with the objects and, through that, transform the image in a survivor material, densified, plastic.

It's important to notice that, in the perspective of installation, which has the intention of exploring historic representations along with the museum environment - in a place commonly used for art expositions -, the process of approaching the construction of photography is developed between the historic and figurative.

Komski's portrait is exposed in its differential sign (constricted face, crisped lips, distant stare). But the inexpressivity and the serious tone are ambivalently repositioned by the artistic engagement, which adjudicates the archivist value of the image at the same time it detaches, further, of the characteristics of identification photography. In this sense, the documental instruction is relativized in a more intense form facing the predominance of dramaticity. We can perceive an evocation of presence of a visuality that interacts with the viewer, in certain sense, in the level of expression, safeguarding its gaze directed to infinity.

The reality, here, seems to be transubstantiated in a notion of similarity (with the emphasis of device) and pour to the image a pictorialized circulation, which turns the anchorage of document still less perceptible. Notwithstanding, Komski's photography is repositioned by the artistic-cultural appeal and the portrait gains a layer of timelessness.

17 It is interesting to punctuate that the "renewed physicality of image" has to do with the political organization of exposition in terms of production of regimen of visual dissemination of a Polish face, among many faces that Brasse captured, and the circulation as effect of the most recent attempt of nationalizing the Holocaust in Poland (the participation as victims and the current denial of the Polish government in relation to the direct participation in the camps).

The image, with a bigger size than normal, is realigned in the field of art. And the real document - the constricted expression, the testimonial in pose, taken from the third image - can emerge the performative meaning that was trapped in the triptych narrative. The relationship with the museum environment, in this sense, engages photography in a multilinear narrative that has to do with the interpretative value of portrait. The artistic statute and the subtle perspective of Brasse's work are perceived more intensely. Facing the change of genre, the presence of Kowski's face, augmented many times from the original, disperses the dysphoric figurability of the portrait of identification and puts the image in an associative movement. The plasticity of the presence of Kowski is felt, then, as a possible testimonial, which is in constant movement, open to the interactive eye.

Along with audiovisual testimonials, other photographs and objects of the field, with images of Kowski himself,<sup>18</sup> the image gets rid of the "negative perfectibility" and emerges, stronger, in the desire to circulate. Beyond the document, what is more prolific in its minimalist dramaticity is exposed in a transit focus the possibility of interaction. Absent in the triptych in a more distracted gaze, the augmented picture is more open to the performative interactional figurativity. Questioning the documental genre, Kowski instigates a polyphonic need to know how to look, to know the biography more intensely. And thus, in the dimension of the installation, Kowski can be seen under different approximative angles, but it cannot be rejected in its relentless presence, its impactful liminality.

As in Ruff's portraits, the painter's face will always be between the ambivalence of art (BOURDIEU, 1996) and the particularity of the biographic. When we watch the compositional game of the installation about Auschwitz, along with his pictures about life in the camp, the construction may suggest, in different ways, the perceptive quality of the

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18 Kowski, after the release of camps in 1945, migrated to the United States, developing graphic work about his life in the camps. He was an illustrator for the Washington Post and developed images about the Holocaust.



Komski image immediately freed from the triptych, valuing himself as a painter, as a survivor, as an enunciatory artist.<sup>19</sup>

The personal language, therefore, can be reinforced in the cultural treatment, and the physical reference seem to perspectivate the notion that the face is emancipated from its past - of the conditioning triptych, the historic dimension. The instructive power of the image has to do with its new possibility of circulation. Facing the phenomenology of exposition, in a new visual consumption, the large portrait of Komski is associated to the transitive gaze, which affects, inquires, opens in the montage of the exposition.

This re-contextualization of the art, as in Ruff's works<sup>20</sup>, is fundamental, because, instead of a perspective forced by history, the position of presence give gestures in the eyes. Photography becomes a resisting image, linked to the movement of apparition (LÉVINAS, 2010) of the face. It is not only a residue in the narrative composition while a testimonial conditioned to the historic context. It begins to be permeable to the element of being captured, of the power of being seen with the predisposed image, in shelter. That means that Komski's face, in the installation, emerges with a possible and open relatability.

The document genesis is registered in another substance that composes both forms - both wishes of propagation of the document: the phenomenology of the historic photograph (document) with which made it circulate (exposition and visual consumption). The epic face of Komski scrutinizes, thus, the singularization of the model, the possibility of relation. But without making the mode of enunciation be proportioned by the referential dimension of the historic brand. It is the timelessness of the face in big proportions, in this aspect, that undo the centrality of the documental narrative. It calls the meaning of presence and the affections for the relationship of the subject with the viewer. In

19 In an exhibit like Auschwitz, no hace mucho, no muy lejos, the work of images and objects is not only to intercede to a correct awareness of rejection that the event must be seen. It is directing itself to the place of the viewer, personally hit by the owners behind the objects.

20 "Debido al tamaño se daban cuenta de que aquello no era una persona, sino una gran fotografía. Esto supuso prácticamente una liberación y es una técnica que he utilizado en casi todas las series que vinieron después..." (BOYM, 2003).

this sense, the engagement of the circularity promoted by the disruptive effect of raising the size and the decontextualization of the triptych opens gesture for its dismembering, for its remembering. It's the value of life, the sign of survival, that is in evidence.

The image, therefore, becomes an element of restlessness that transports the document, but intensifies the testimonial and its concentration. However, it is not a hostage of the typical image of identification photography. It lets the body, the face, be presence. As far as it depends more of the flow, the relations between image and its geography and exposition, it has nothing to do, unilaterally, with historical significance. It has its reflections in what is figured, scrutinized, moved through other eyes, with the desire to look.

### **Final considerations**

Jan Kowski's photography performed by Brasse in a period prior to the Second World War, in the beginning of the camps, the emphasis lies over the postural gesture (confronting, not surrendering, alive performance).<sup>21</sup> The ontology of the portrait is perfiled in an intersubjectivity between photographer and photographed. A visual action produces a state of synonymy of photo with image, generating resistance, destinating it to the future.

In this case, the triptych conserves a struggle against the dispersonalization characteristic of this style of limit-photography. The composition of Brasse rewrites the elements of iconography in a postural action that relativizes the "imposture" of identification photography. Perceptible specially in the third image, the perspective in profile the photo is approximated more than the mythical force of images in a warrior of a brave leader. In the end, what is built in terms of visual *mise-en-scène* is an emphasis in the physical effect of the image. Which, at the same

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21 Highlighting again the particularity of exposition in relation to two context: the historical distance with the events (source of concern, with the raise of denial and current revisionism) and the necessity to circulate in different historic images.

time, conserves a concentrationary conditional and an ontology of the (indestructible) pose of the portrayed subject.

In the effect of an installation about the death camp, the enlarged face extracted from the context that makes him a prisoner of the about-to-die style (SANCHEZ-BIOSCA, 2017) reveals a new associative materiality. Similar to the work of Thomas Ruff, which expands the perspective of portraits to create the act of presential dilatation, Kowski's face (extracted from the third picture) underlines a desire of indestructibility.

The gesture of art (DE DUVE, 2009) is present in the obligation of gaze. It imposes a silence that, in the phenomenology of exposition, turns the face an ethical power (LÉVINAS, 2010) Or a saying about the prevented alterity in that moment. Kowski's photograph, in monumental proportions, creates a strange bond with the implication of the viewer, exposing deeply the transit between the historic genesis and the artistic circulation. In these terms, it is the seal of art that essentializes the physicality of the image. Its act of presence, its direction of meaning is less conditioned by the narrative impression of the initial photographic statute. The desire of being choreographed with the objects of exposure and the durability of the gaze in the museum sensation, notwithstanding, confirms the appendix of the image, its meaning available has to do with the experience of seeing. In this aspect, it is unavoidable to look more.

When they become visual consumption, with the historic distance, they suffer the risk of losing themselves in the banality and the redemptive expectation: there is no happy ending in Auschwitz, as Agamben (2008) remembers. But also, with the action of art (color and size), photography receive a possibility of expanding the physical perception of presence. The visual appeasement, the historical comfort of black and white (belonging to the past) is undone by the act of hybridism and circulation. The possibility of looking, in this case, his promise and his call, are more available in an alterity that can no longer be or that have been under the referral of threat.

The photographic sequence by Wilhem Brasse, the prisoner photographer of Auschwitz, in effective nature, but in an unfinished act, rekindles the annoyance of not having seen the photo. When it “burned”, when it “blazed”. Modified by the artistic effect, they breathe again. By transformation they, finally, are noticed. From the artistic opening, they trigger what was in genesis in the photographer work.

As if we were opening up, again, his political saga. In a memory album we cannot help but remember. An intense gesture, a pronounced relationality.

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