



**Iconophotology: between the poetical *lógos*, the *eikón*,
and the photographic *techné***

Iconofotologia: entre o lógos poético, o eikón e a techné fotográfica

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Abstract

This article proposes a new approach to reading texts from extemporaneous periods and, for this, it was necessary to create new terms that corresponded to this expectation: iconophotology and photographic poems. For contemporary readers to read and understand rhetorical texts of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, they would have to have access to sign keys to which only its readers had access: iconologies. However, this reference has been lost, so we replaced it with another one, based on the photographic - imagery collection that we have today, which we call iconophotological. By means of it, it will be possible to read, from the contemporary point of view (not from a 17th century point of view, for example) the poems we call photographic.

Keywords: iconophotology, photographic poem, poetry, photography, iconology.

Resumo

Este artigo propõe uma nova abordagem para a leitura de textos de períodos extemporâneos. Para isso, foi necessário criar novos termos que correspondessem a essa expectativa: iconofotologia e poemas fotográficos. Para um leitor contemporâneo ler e compreender textos retóricos dos séculos XVI, XVII e XVIII, ele teria que ter acesso a chaves sígnicas às quais só seus leitores tinham acesso: iconologias. No entanto, essa referência foi perdida, então a substituímos por outra, baseada no acervo de imagens fotográficas que temos hoje e que chamamos de iconofotológica. A partir disso, será possível ler, do ponto de vista contemporâneo (não de um ponto de vista do século XVII, por exemplo), poemas que chamamos de fotográficos.

Palavras-chave: iconofotologia, poema fotográfico, poesia, fotografia, iconologia.

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Introduction

The relationship between the pictorial image and the poetic has a long tradition. Both had walked together for centuries, despite the *paragoni* that sought to emphasize the predominance of one over the other. However, what is intended with this article is not to deal with this relationship, but try to establish another between the reading of extemporary

literary texts (from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries) – restricted to descriptive poetry – and photography. This relationship will not occur through the rhetorical assumptions of that period, due to anachronism, but from the imagistic reception, we make today of those seemingly descriptive images.

Unlike earlier centuries, we now make distinctive use of rhetorical rules and their impositions. This does not mean, however, that the rhetorical figures have been abolished, after all, constitute the essence of poetic (and literary) activity:

There is no poetry without figures, although 'figures' are understood in a sufficiently broad sense: every literary message is necessarily rhythmic, rhymed, assonant, graded, crossed, opposite, etc. However, of course, there are figures without poetry (DUBOIS et al., 1974, p. 41).

From Modernism, pictorial and literary art expanded their horizons through a real revolution, and part of this process was due to the advent of photography in the 19th century. Its repercussion occurred not only at that time but also throughout the 20th century, affecting even our relationship with the imaginary world, whether in the field of pictorial art or literature. There was also, at the beginning of the last century, a rapprochement between word and painting, as demonstrated by some *avant-garde* experiments. Today, in turn, word and image (in their vast photographic majority) are also widely used in (and by) advertising language.

However, in the domain of the *imagerie* we are witnessing, we have some questions that have already become common places: will the image always surpass the *lógos* (λόγος) in the apprehension of the world around us, or a picture worth a thousand words?

Does the image dispense *the lógos*?

The *lógos* has the power to represent itself and represent what is around us and, even in the face of harassment provided by the photographic-image whirlwind, continues to demonstrate its hegemony. One can verify this when, in front of a photograph – whether in magazines, newspapers, and billboards – we often need the subtitle so that through it we can explain that and make it more readable or even intelligible.

Strange as it may be to speak in search of intelligibility, one should not forget that many people still believe that the photographic image represents an exact copy of reality so that it would dispense with any explanation; after all, it would speak for itself. However, due to the many possibilities obtained by the new software of image editing, this myth is being

undone, little by little: already is aware that the photograph can undergo several manipulations; and, join to that, its unlimited propagation and the ease of its attainment.

Nowadays, many people already have the habit of distrusting what they see: is this woman here really the woman that is represented here? Is not that photo an assembly? This distrust of the photographic is becoming constant (it must be borne in mind that one of the functions of photography was precisely the opposite, the proof), mainly due to the infinite accessibility and dissemination of images provided by the Internet, which becoming idolatry (*εἰδωλον + λατρεία* – cult of the image) of our society.

Faced with this incipient distrust, there arises the evidential need of the subtitle that will deny or affirm a possible manipulation made in an image, in what it may mean, or in what we want (or not) to believe. That is palpable when it is seen that, despite the evidence provided by a journalistic photograph – evidently proven – many still insist that it has been manipulated, preferring to believe in what they want, that is, in their truth, after all:

Because each photograph is only a fragment, its moral and emotional weight depends on where it is inserted. A photograph changes according to the context in which it is seen: thus Smith's Minamata photographs will seem different on a contact sheet, in a gallery, in a political demonstration, in a police file, in a photographic magazine, in a general news magazine, in a book, on a living-room wall. Each of these situations suggests a different use for the photographs, but none can secure their meaning (SONTAG, 2005, p. 82).

It is necessary to establish the signal limits of the photograph and, for this to be possible, it is essential to use the *lógos*: it will certify what we have to believe. It says whether or not there was manipulation in the photograph, what is its intention, and its meaning.

Wittgenstein argued for words, that the meaning is the use – so for each photograph. And it is in this way that the presence and proliferation of all photographs contributes to the erosion of the very notion of meaning, to that parceling out of the truth into relative truths, which is taken for granted by the modern liberal consciousness (SONTAG, 2005, p. 82).

This causes us to be impelled or to believe in everything we have before our eyes, or to believe in nothing and see everything as mere illusion, as if we were in a desert, surrounded by mirages on all sides. Therefore, we discover that they were not wholly: we could not touch what we wanted, the object-images fled to our touch.

That brings us back to Homer (2011) and Virgil (2006) when the former exposing us Odysseus in Hades and

his unexpected meeting with Anticlea, his mother – who had died because she could no longer wait for the return of his beloved son and before the attack of the pretenders to his daughter-in-law –, suffers to see it. However, at the same time not to look at her clearly, nor to touch her; after all, what was before his eyes was no longer his mother, just her *eidolon* (εἰδῶλον), a mere *simulacrum* of what she had once been (BRANDÃO, 2017, p. 20).

In addition, the latter display us Aeneas, who intends to hug his father in Champs Elysees near the River Lethe:

Let me clasp your hand, my father, let me —
I beg you, don't withdraw from my embrace!
So Aeneas pleaded, his face streaming tears.
Three times he tried to fling his arms around his neck,
three times he embraced — nothing ... the phantom
sifting through his fingers,
light as wind, quick as a dream in flight (VIRGIL, 2006, p. 203).

That relation between 'to believe' or 'do not believe' the imagetic true is further complicated, however, not because of the image itself, but because of the words that explain it, for when they join those we are forced to believe.

Flusser (2006), for example, says that something similar happened in the 19th century when the texts themselves had become at that time unimaginable because of the high degree of complexity achieved by *textolatry*: the desert had ceased to be imaginary and had become *logotic*:

To be exact, with it history came to an end. History, in the precise meaning of the word, is a progressive transcoding of images into concepts, a progressive elucidation of ideas, a progressive disenchantment (taking the magic out of things), a progressive process of comprehension. If texts become incomprehensible, however, there is nothing left to explain, and history has come to an end. During this crisis of texts, technical images were invented: in order to make texts comprehensible again, to put them under a magic spell – to overcome the crisis of history (FLUSSER, 2006, p. 13).

Paradigms can (and should) be broken and what common sense claims can be contested. That undoubtedly serves the claim that our society undoubtedly prefers images to words. However, the image cannot always dispense the word and its logic to clarify; this is necessary so that one can deduce from it much more than pigmentation, the incidence of light, or its referentiality, since:

The world of images is not necessarily the image of the world, but misallocated copies of stereotyped, narrow-minded worldviews. Hence the ease with which the logic of the text imposes itself, including forcing us to look at the world presented by images with greater mistrust than the world presented by texts (BONFIGLIOLI, 2008, p. 7).

Logically, such an affirmation breaks down again the commonplace that exposes us to the possibility of images prescinding the *lógos*. One should not forget, however, that *lógos* and *eikón* (*εἰκῶν*) – word and image – coming from a common source, nature – via *mimesis* (*μίμησις*) – ended up completing and intermeddling during the human trajectory – as in emblematic genre from 16th century, or even in some *avant-garde* movements of the 20th century. That also presupposes that the image must be read and its structure disassembled, in the same way as the written text, so that it is possible to extract the maximum of interpretative information from it, when all its constituent elements will be deduced – as in the iconological reading of Panofsky (2004), for example.

For this to be possible, the function of the reader is essential, because like the logocentric text, in the imagetic text it is also the reader who needs to correlate with the work, and from his *Weltanschauung* to have or not the possibility of understanding it. Therefore, it is not the apparent objectivity of an image that will act in the reader, facilitating or not his reading, but his ability to do it.

Thus, for interpretation to be possible, as well as its rational visualization, the intermediation of the observer is necessary, so that he can reconstruct the same image from his reality. To do that, one must adapt its look to this reading, not seen here as something unique to the *lógos*, but its similarity, when one scans the image with one eye and seeks to understand the minutiae that are seen in its entirety. It can be said that this reading is similar to textual linearity, but in the text, the images are constructed line by line, while in the non-textual (pictures, photographs) one sees the totality at once. However, these precise meanings, or those hidden under the canopy of apparent signs wholeness, must be interpreted; otherwise one will accept interpretative pseudo-easiness, minimizing the imaginary present in work, as well as the play of creation established by its author.

Thus, our reading/interpretation must first pass through a process analogous to that provided by *lógos*, to establish the sign clarity, leading its reader to the intricacies of the imagetic text. Because we need clarification, the *extracampo* (outfield), it seems that the image feels the need of words, does not want to be far out of them, whether in the form of a caption, commentary, subtitle or even dialogues (BARTHES, 1982). If this does not

occur, one can see what does not exist or what one is prone to see, as in pareidolia, or even read, in an adverse way what one intended to inform.

Example of this relationship can be established from figure 1 when we see a crucifix placed on the hood of a luxury car (in the place where it is usually placed the symbol of the company that manufactures it) in an attitude that can cause some considerations. For some is the image, an artistic work; for others, one of bad taste, of desecration of the religious icon.

This reading, however, will depend on the one who intends to decode it, for one can see in it

a) or a brilliant and illustrative work of the new deities manufactured by our present society (when the Divinity itself represented by the crucified Christ is at the service of consumption and the money, whose symbol is under the cross: the Rolls Royce brand);

b) either propaganda of extreme bad taste that seeks to denigrate the image of Jesus, or even use it as an amulet.

The subtitle, in this case, is that it will make the difference between profaning and moralizing, it can even minimize the moods related to the use of a religious symbol in an advertisement, in order to demonstrate to what extent the consumerist vision of our society arrives, when the most important is not being but having.

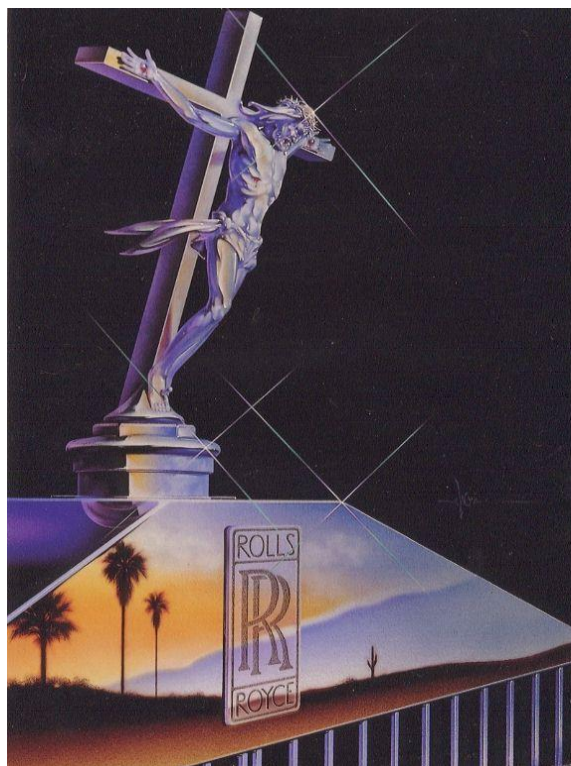


Figure 1. Between luxury and trash: advertising sacralizes consumption and divinizes possession.

Source: **Playboy Magazine**, may/1988

The poetic person and the photographic person: similarities

As words are images, the latter can evoke the former in a particular way in the construction of descriptive poems, due to the twinning between the two sign systems, the logical and the imagetic. There was even a specific moment, the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries when the two systems shared the same genre, the emblematic one. However, it is possible to verify that this relationship remains with two significant differences: social coding and non-staticity of the linguistic sign.

Today, for example, it is possible for a code to be used in a variety of ways in a short period, and even if there is a specific direction for a particular social stratum. That does not prevent the fact that another cannot have access to its sign keys, which did not occur, fully, in the 16th century, for example. The same is true of the mobility or staticity social: the sign today is not watertight, due to the very dynamism of our society, which continually seeks innovation, the different. That was a very different relationship from that which existed in the presented centuries, for that society lived under the stigma of *mimesis*, that is, there was no innovation, but a constant search for imitation. In this way, the new for that moment was the theories derived from the Greco-Roman classics.

Nowadays, linguistic *clichés* are created and modified in an increasingly shorter period, when they are ignored by new generations who can no longer decode them. That is because all systems of communication live in a world of references and relative meanings, therefore, sets of signs are endowed with some mobility. Besides, words have several meanings, more or less related to each other, which order themselves and require themselves according to their place in prayer, while others disappear or decline (PAZ, 2005).

The same is true, of course, for specific imagetic uses, whose meaning is also relative, as well as in verbal language:

Images are significant surfaces. Images signify – mainly – something ‘out there’ in space and time that they have to make comprehensible to us as abstractions (as reductions of the four dimensions of space and time to the two surface dimensions). This specific ability to abstract surfaces out of space and time and to project them back into space and time is what is known as ‘imagination’ (FLUSSER, 2006, p. 8).

As they are endowed with signification, *lógos* and *eikón* – word and image – are susceptible to interpretation, that is, they do not exist without a look lingering and decoding the intention that the poetic person or pictorial person had in mind, despite the possible anachronistic distortions that such an act may elicit. In this way, the act enters into temporality:

While wandering over the surface of the image, one's gaze takes in one element after another and produces temporal relationships between them. It can return to an element of the image it has already seen, and 'before' can become 'after': The time reconstructed by scanning is an eternal recurrence of the same process. Simultaneously, however, one's gaze also produces significant relationships between elements of the image (FLUSSER, 2006, p. 8-9).

What do we do, after all, when we read a poem and see ourselves before the images constructed by the poetic person? It is characteristic of poetic language to come and go, to stop before its images and to stand in front of them as if in front of a painting, trying to understand what had been seen before and what is seen later so that its meaning can be constructed. Besides, the poet's images also have a sense on several levels and have authenticity: the poet has seen and heard them. They are the genuine expression of his vision and experience of the world, even if they belong to his world, it does not matter that the poet's truth is only of a psychological order (PAZ, 2005); or, corresponding to the creative act, to the emanation of his creative *lógos*, because, as a workable work, it becomes real and objective:

These images constitute an objective reality, valid in itself: they are works. A Góngora's landscape is not the same as a natural landscape, but both have reality and consistency, although they live in different spheres. They are two parallel and autonomous reality orders. [...] the poet does more than tell the truth; creates realities that have a truth: that of their existence (PAZ, 2005, p. 45).

The poet, therefore, creates a space of his own in the poem that belongs neither to him, as a writer, nor to the lyrical self, but only to the reality of the work itself. Besides, he enters into another dimension: that of temporality, which together with that of spatiality merge, creating a magical reality and belonging to it:

This space and time peculiar to the image is none other than the world of magic, a world in which everything is repeated and in which everything participates in a significant context. Such a world is structurally different from that of the linear world of history in which nothing is repeated and in which everything has causes and will have consequences (FLUSSER, 2006, p. 9).

The greatest magic, however, is to be able to glimpse new worlds without them having existed as a material substance, or bringing concrete and distant worlds to the palm. Here is the magic that *lógos* gives us through literature: to make the virtual concrete, palpable,

feasible. This same power, however, can be attributed to the photographic act, via *téchne* (*τέχνη*), when performing the different act: to make concrete, tangible, visible, the virtual: whether on photographic paper or the screen of a computer. Behold, the photographer is also a poet, since he urges us to read his imagetic metaphors, insofar as he becomes a photographic person:

What is once took a very intelligent eye to see, anyone can see now. Instructed by photographs, everyone is able to visualize that once purely literary conceit, the geography of the body: for example, photographing a pregnant woman so that her body looks like a hillock, a hillock so that it looks like the body of a pregnant woman (SONTAG, 2005, p. 77).

Therefore, it is not enough to say that only the poet is a *pretender*, being a creator; the same can be said of the photographer, after all, he is not only a means used by a technician instrument to only capture the light reflected by beings, by nature, or even by the human beings. He is also the creator of different realities, as far as in which his work takes persons to other worlds that are no longer their: to a temporal journey for a distant time, or a space journey, to unknown places. These, however, will remain in our memories, even though they have not existed in our concrete but only virtual.

Thus, we can establish relations between photography - as an artistic expression of a self - and literature -, which has long been considered this expression -, even raising points of contact between the two *téchnai* (*τέχναι*) that will aid in the interpretation (reception) literature/photography, from the mimetic relation with the world. To do so, it is necessary to establish a relationship between the photographic framework - as a fragment of reality perceived by that self - and the frame built by a poem - a sonnet, for example - in which the pictures of words, often fragmented, are delimited by the metric, or just by the empty spaces of the paper.

The making of the photographic person coincides thus with that of the poetic person in the imagetic creation, insofar as the former also uses subjectivity in his production, in his photographs, as well as the latter. Among several angles and points of view that could be employed, for example, only one was chosen, as a poet who has to determine, in the lexicon offered by the language, the words that best fit to represent the desired images. So the photographer also searches in his field of vision, which is the world, the best taken, recording what others do not see or would go unnoticed.

In this way, photography fixes the real, but from a subjective selection of the set of images that is the world, through an individual self, whose vision is also unique. After all, would not that be one of the prerogatives of poetry defined for a long time as the art of verse

was eventually recognized as the art of the image? The poem not only carries the meanings that act on the words he has collected but also organizes them into a subject, a scene, in the pictorial sense of both terms (DUBOIS et al., 1980).

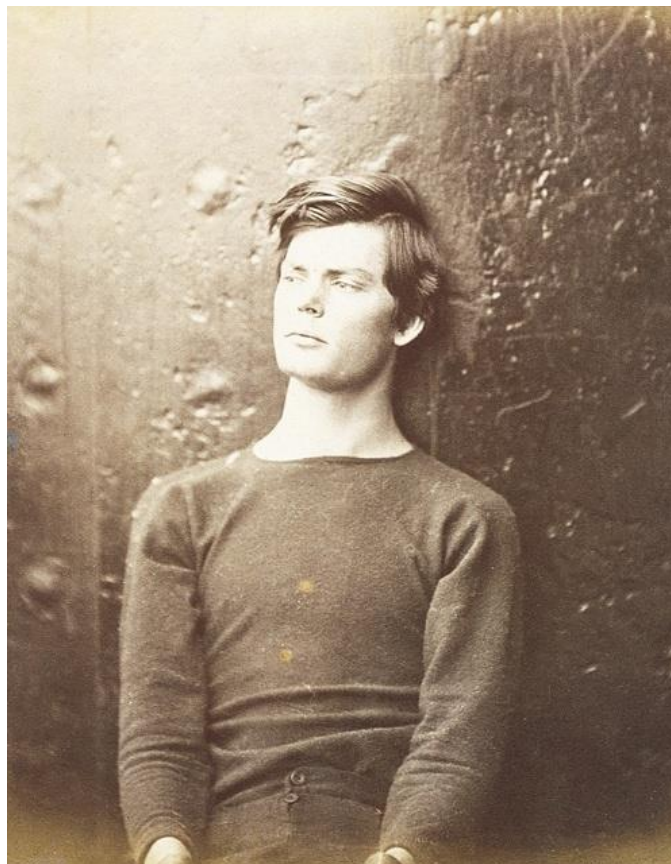


Figure 2. Lewis Payne before his hanging, photo of Alexander Gardner, 1865.

Source: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. <https://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/97.44/>

However, one of the essential points in both poetic and photographic creation is that of remembering, since the images constructed by both have the power to make us go to a time that is no longer ours, to review those that are no longer with us, to visualize what no longer exists:

The image reproduces the moment of perception and forces the reader to raise within himself the object a day perceived. The verse, the phrase-rhythm, evokes, resurrects, awakens, recreates or, as Machado said: it does not represent, but presents. Re-create, revive our experience of the real. It is worth noting that these resurrections are not only those of our daily experience but those of our most secret and remote life. The poem reminds us of what we have forgotten: what we are (PAZ, 2005, p. 46).

Thus, photography and poetry bring forth that present that was absent both from our unconscious and from society, the same thing that sometimes wanted to remain hidden, even though we know it is there, in memory, but in a pass of poetic and photographic magic, is awakened and rises from the ashes, causing that gift to resurface again. However, this resurgence is not given in a clear and orderly way; it is built.

Poetry's commitment to concreteness and to the autonomy of the poem's language parallels photography's commitment to pure seeing. Both imply discontinuity, disarticulated forms, and compensatory unity: wrenching things from their context (to see them in a fresh way), bringing things together elliptically according to the imperious but often arbitrary demands of subjectivity (SONTAG, 2005, p. 74).

That is what happens when we come across the photograph of Alexander Gardner (fig. 2), in which we see Lewis Payne, waiting for his hanging:

The photograph is handsome, as is the boy: that is the *studium*. But the punctum is: *he is going to die*. I read at the same time: *This will be* and *this has been*; I observe with horror an anterior future of which death is the stake. By giving me the absolute past of the pose (aorist), the photograph tells me death in the future (BARTHES, 1982, p. 96).

Because the photo is beautiful, and the man is also gorgeous, this photograph escapes the commonplace of what we believe to be a murderer. So we are diverted from its intention – to serve as an example so that others do not commit the same crime, to show the monster to all – we can also think: how could such a handsome young man have tried to take someone's life? What facts compelled him to do despicable deeds? Alternatively, we go deeper: no, he must not have done any of this, look into his eyes... We have, however, to subjugate our subjectivity, to divert our gaze from Lewis's eyes and enter the temporality/reality that the photograph retakes: he is going to die, but it is already dead and, despite everything we say or speculate, the act has already taken place, even if we have left the limits established by the frame.

Formation of the iconophotological collection

When we propose to make an analysis of the images evoked by poems that cover the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, there is always the question: to what extent can we use an image different from the one used by those authors – from the perspective of the 21st century – since we no longer have the rhetorical precepts of those authors? That is what we intend

to discuss when trying to present as it is the reception of extemporaneous poetic images in our days for to want them to be decoded from the referential of that moment would result – for most of today's readers – in anachronism, after all, we have not that determinations.

We believe that the imaginary reception of the images formed by those poets takes place today through the photographic collection that we have created throughout our lives, in the likeness of a virtual album of the events that surround us, constituted by years of the bombardment of technical images via media. It is as if this virtual and latent corpus was waiting for an external stimulus – like an image evoked in a poem, for example – so that it could reappear. That because “before a sensitive experience (a certain variation of the light regime, the perception of smell, the drawing formed by a milk stain), we reach a fragment of the past that we thought was forgotten or lost” (GUIMARÃES, 1997, p. 180).

Photography, therefore, has the importance of a monument, as a reminiscence of what there was, since, for us, its function is always to make clear, before our eyes, a certain period, event, person or people. It is as if one told us: one cannot forget it! Like a totem – the monument that would reconnect the two temporal extremes of a social group, becoming a bridge between the present and the past – it does not leave the memories it conjured up to be destroyed. Because it was a rock, the totem would last long enough for those people or events not to be forgotten to be remembered for generations, until all memories of the first motive that originated it was extinguished; when, finally, nobody else will know what people or facts the authors of the monument wanted to perpetuate. Thus, one of the peculiarities of the memorial is the idea of perpetuation, so

Earlier societies managed so that memory, the substitute for life, was eternal and that at least the thing which spoke Death should itself be immortal: this was the Monument. But by making the (mortal) Photograph into the general and somehow natural witness of ‘what has been’, modern society has renounced the Monument [...] and the Photograph is a certain but fugitive testimony (BARTHES, 1982, p. 92).

Perpetuating an event is also a way to prevent it from recurring if it is counterproductive; or which will be recalled, if beneficial; hence the importance of its record, whether photographic or even poetic. Photography, therefore, becomes the fuel that rekindles the flame not only of our memory but also of our emotions, for despite its fleetingness – hence its dissimilarity to the totem, whose appearance bears testimony of perennality (as long as it exists) – there will also live with it the eternalization of an inevitable reality. Time may pass, certain people may not have experienced the scene pictured, but, because of a photograph, there is the extemporization of the moment, similar to a time travel, through

the images evoked by it. Moreover, it cannot only reveal to us what was on the scene, like what was probably behind it. Even the most common attitudes become credible when photographed, yet *a posteriori*, that is, the banalest of events is of great importance as if everything revolved around interesting facts worthy of being photographed. When these, however, become extinct in time, the photograph will be there, giving them not only the importance but also immortality (SONTAG, 2005).

Precisely this fact that everything is worth photographing reinforces its trivial and fleeting aspect, something unimportant, especially in a society full of images without deference. However, this lack of importance is a demonstration of its constant presentification, that is, it portrays the moment in which it is inserted, and that corresponds to the present picture in the photograph: both immerse themselves in a surrounding embrace, when that present becomes part of this present, even in its more routine aspects.

This relationship, however, will change over the years, for such a picture, when visualized sometime later, will no longer show the banality of a frozen moment. That will be seen on totality of a moment that will not be exposed in that image-paper, but will be reactivated in the memory of those who passed through it, or even through those who have always heard of it; something close to the oral tradition of a people, repeated from generation to generation, by the fire. How many times have people heard stories of any moment when they were portrayed in a photo, and when they see it, *in loco*, they can view beyond their frame, without having been there, like a *déjà vu*? In this way, photography impels us to homesickness, remembrance, the search for a lost link, to nostalgia:

Photography is an elegiac art, a twilight art. Most subjects photographed are, just by virtue of being photographed, touched by *pathos*. An ugly or grotesque subject may be moving because it has been dignified by attention of the photographer. A beautiful subject can be the object of rueful feelings, because it has aged or decayed or no longer exists (SONTAG, 2005, p. 11).

Similar to the witness value evoked by photography and its purpose to perpetuate itself in time as a monument, we have the poetic language that unlike conventional has as its attribute the fact of lasting (LEVIN, 1975). That is because while the common – centered on the referential function – does not sustain, for from the moment we understand what it says, "it is replaced in our minds by what it meant" (LEVIN, 1975, p. 103), becomes therefore worthless (while art) and is erased.

In poetry, both the form and its disposition of words on paper remain, since the poetic message enjoy a permanence that the common language does not possess. This is not to

say that a poem can last for generations or centuries as a palpable reality (represented in its paper sheet), but because its permanence – both in the individual and in the collective mind – does not require concrete elements to exist, like in the Middle Ages with its *trouvères*, minstrels, and *troubadours*.

Thus, the poem would also have a function of a monument, reconnect the present to the past and, being memorable, would perpetuate itself in the memory, in the thought and the remembrance of posterity. In this way, both the poem and the photograph could be indicators of the authenticity of a time that is already far from ours and, like the Bible, be otherwise historical communicators in the middle of the rhetorical function. How many did not employ their lives to try to prove that the biblical images were a real copy of past reality? However, they had forgotten that the Book is not merely historical, but poetic and that not all of his poems are, in our view, photographic.

One of the links, for example, which brings the photograph of the 17th century, is the improvement of the death found in both. However, death not in its sense of termination, but as perpetuation, a constant resurrection of what was photographed or what was described in a poem. Both images retain the time, "when the temporality of the object separates from that of the subject" (VIRILIO apud GUIMARÃES, 1997, p. 48), that is, immortalizes what is mortal, although they are *memento mori*. Photographing, for example, is to participate in the mortality, vulnerability, and mutability of another person or object, witnessing the inexorable dissolution of time, precisely by selecting and fixing a specific moment (SONTAG, 2005).

When one chooses this moment, it is as if we told him: have eternal life! Live more than its referent, than its first emanation. That is why the act of photographing is to dedicate oneself to the capture of death:

For Death must be somewhere in a society; if it is no longer (or less intensely) in religion, it must be elsewhere; perhaps in this image which produces Death while trying to preserve life. Contemporary with the withdrawal of rites, Photography may correspond to the intrusion, in our modern society, of an asymbolic Death, outside of religion, outside of ritual, a kind of abrupt dive into literal Death. Life/Death: the paradigm is reduced to a simple click, the one separating the initial pose from the final print (BARTHES, 1982, p. 92).

Iconophotological reading and the photographic poem

One sees, therefore, with the advent of photography, the renunciation of the monument used by the ancients to celebrate the death, or even an all iconological vision whose theme

is precisely the same, but the resources are different. With photography, death exists (and resides) from the present perpetual; in the 16th century, on the other hand, it is accurately portrayed by its future, that is, the total degeneration of being: the skeleton.

If the 15th century had shown a real obsession with death, the 17th [...] surpasses it and manages to give an even more fearful and impressive version. If in the Middle Ages death is, in art and thought a theological idea, and in the popular spectacle of macabre dances presents itself with a general and impersonal instructive character, is now the subject of an experience that affects each one in particular and causes a painful convulsion (MARAVALL, 1997, p. 268).

When Maravall says in a show, such words may sound metaphorical, since the *topos* of the world as the stage is also echoed in the last moment, however, is not what was seen in the 17th century, according to Flemming:

Even in his final moments, the self does not feel alone; there are always others as spectators at your side who wish to applaud. Thus, finally, life ends, as it was feeling and directed: like a stage. As in death, as in the tombstone¹ (FLEMMING, 1937, p. 26).

Both the photography and the poetry of the 17th century end up treating, even if not directly, the *memento mori*: the former because it perpetuates the moment (embalming it), the latter because this is an own *topos* of its *Weltanschauung*. Thus, in photography, it is as if we look in a mirror and, on the one hand, we were see reflected our present; and on the other, concomitantly, the future and the past.

We are not allowed to see the future, so we have to restrict that view to the present, but as a reality that has passed, because our past is one different from that verified and concretized by photography. On the other hand, poetry can be considered as a specular reflection of both the human language and the human soul: the former by presenting the phonic and semantic levels and the latter by reflecting the totality of his being, his thoughts, and his emotions.

If, therefore, can we consider poetry as a specular reflection carrier, what then to say of photography, which not only reflects what is in front of a camera but also has the power to fix it? That would be enough for us to start comparing poetry with photography

¹ "Selbst in den Letzten Stunden fühlt das Ich sich nicht allein; stets stehen die anderen als Zuschauer herum, nach deren Beifall man verlangt. So endet das Leben, wie es überhaupt empfunden und geführt wurde: als Schauspiel. Selbst noch im Tode, ja noch drüber hinaus im Grabstein."

concerning its imagetic specularity, after all the photo, besides imprisoning the image before it, also reveals the minutiae that one wants (or one had wished to) keep it hidden.

There is, moreover, the fact that both, by their very structure and employment, remain perennial, eternalized through paper, something extraordinarily fragile and perishable. What is a human being than the totality of a perishable nature – his body – together with an immortal – his soul? Even if there were no God, no religion, no eternal soul, the human being would already be endless, because he could perpetuate himself through his work, his *téchne*, and his *lógos*, and being conscious of it.

One sees, therefore, that the link between poetry and photography is not so tenuous as to break as quickly as it might initially appear. It is not possible to dissociate *lógos*, *eikón*, and *téchne*, after all, are part of a trinity constitutive of the spirit of man that makes him a being different from others by the inherent ratio.

Faced with this, it would not be nonsense to call a poem of photographic, nor photography of poetic, as we propose. Thus we could call a poem of photographic, whose poet has not had the direct influence of photography, but the one whose reader has been influenced by it, since it is the verbal images contained in this linguistic structure that reveals, precisely, the photographic images that permeate our memory, what one calls iconophotological collection.

That repository also makes us reflect on our own poetic work and the world in which it is inserted, in a particular way through imagery contemplation. What is nothing more than an activity oriented towards the capture of signification, since that is not inherent to the work, but dependent not on a single, but several readings. Those interpretations can be understood as a set of decoding processes and associations with an indefinite series of messages, memories, affections, intensive multiplicities or existential quality (LÉVY apud ALMEIDA, 2006, p. 89). Through which the sign keys are opened by replacing a logotic image with a photographic one, latent in our memory, waiting for a stimulus that makes it come out of its lethargy.

It is incontestable that this start in our memory does not happen only through visual images, but also by acoustic images, when certain music reminds us of a moment lost in time, but that is stored in our unconsciousness. There is also the palatal-olfactory images, when a perfume, the fragrance of a flower, the smell of wet earth, or the essence of a particular seasoning produces them a similar effect.

For the neuroscientist Jean-Pierre Changeux (1997), for example, both in contemplation and in the aesthetic pleasure, different processes intervene that range from pure sensation – apprehension of the colored surface and forms, to the perception – activity of recognition of shapes and figures. The latter, for example, will awaken a significant synthesis of the

work (understanding) in resonance with the internal images stored by the viewer (the memory). Thus, contemplation and aesthetic pleasure imply different operations and faculties, recruiting, neurologically, both states of activity of the limbic system (the brain of the emotions) and more synthetic representations of the frontal cortex (related to reasoning).

Contemplation, therefore, would be oriented to capture signal meanings that are not intrinsic to the work, but which presuppose the use of our iconophotological collection, from which we would withdraw images that would fill those that are forming during the reading that we make through the *lógos* (poems or novels, for example). Thus, we can visualize the *whole* idea proposed by the author. It is evident that this complete will be read subjectively and will never correspond to what it originally conceived.

Anyone who reads, unpretentiously and mechanically, any poetic text, without any dedication to apprehend it, may not have sharpened its photographic memory unless some evoked image punctures it and removes it from the text – serving as *punctum* – and lead him to look for his correspondent in his iconophotological collection. However, for that occurs, the image must be removed from the medium in which it is inserted or disposed of, by suppressing those, which are contiguous to it (BERGSON, 1999). The moment that the activation of memory occurs, the resurrection of a past that no longer exists since it was already dead: once "the land of origin and its language disappeared, that becomes the narration" (GUIMARÃES, 1997, p. 150). Thus, "the last remains, remnants and shards of something that was irretrievably lost and could no longer be recomposed by any artifice of the world" (HANDKE apud GUIMARÃES, 1997, p. 150) becomes to the life.

Such shards, therefore, may resurface, but always individually, through literature, through photographic poems. Those are whose images have transit at different times, that is, apparently do not demonstrate to be only inherent in a certain period. However, as there is a change of the linguistic sign over the years, what seemed obvious at one period will no longer be in another; in this way, what appeared to be diachronic, is nothing more than a synchronic illusion.

The reading of photographic poems, therefore, is always iconophotological, since it is effected from the synchrony, since the words/images used by the poet are of free temporal access, that is, perfectly perceptible in any time, therefore the poems that indicate catastrophes and wars – inherent in the human whole – are usually photographic.

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