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IMAGE, TESTIMONY, AND MEMORY IN ART SPIEGELMAN, W. G. SEBALD, AND PRIMO LEVI

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Abstract: This article analyzes the complex intersections between memory, trauma, and literary representation of the Holocaust, focusing on the works *Maus: A Survivor's Tale* (2005), by Art Spiegelman; *The Emigrants: Four Long Stories* (2009), by W. G. Sebald; and *Is This a Man?* (1988), by Primo Levi. The central problem of the research lies in investigating the possibilities and limits of language in extreme situations, where horror challenges the capacity for enunciation. The objective is to demonstrate how these works highlight different places of speech and suffering, ranging from eyewitness accounts in concentration camps to inherited trauma and the melancholy of exile. Methodologically, the research is based on comparative analysis and literary theory, using conceptual contributions from authors such as Giorgio Agamben, Márcio Seligmann-Silva, and Hayden White. The results indicate that, although the Holocaust is often described as unspeakable, the works analyzed construct hybrid languages—between text and image, fact and fiction—that allow the transmission of traumatic experience, constituting an ethical resistance against forgetting and "memoricide."

Keywords: Holocaust; Testimonial Literature; Memory; Representation.

Introduction: The Legacy of Trauma and the Languages of Survival

The Holocaust remains one of the most central and challenging themes for the arts and humanities in contemporary times. Far from being an event confined to the past, its memory is continually reactivated through works that seek to convey the magnitude of the Nazi extermination. This article proposes an analysis of three fundamental works that, although distinct in form and origin, converge in their attempt to represent the unrepresentable: *Maus*, by Art Spiegelman; *The Emigrants*, by W. G. Sebald; and *If This Is a Man*, by Primo Levi. These works not only illuminate scenarios of extreme repression, but also reveal the diversity of victims and the persistence of trauma across generations.

The first of these cornerstones is *If This Is a Man* (*Se questo è un uomo*), originally published in 1947. Its author, Primo Levi (1919-1987), was an Italian-Jewish chemist whose scientific training gave his account an almost clinical analytical precision. The book is a documentary memoir of his survival in Auschwitz III (Monowitz), where Levi does not limit himself to describing the facts; he dissects the structure of the camp and the metamorphosis of humans into "non-humans," establishing eyewitness testimony as the zero degree of the language of trauma.

In a different time and form, *Maus: A Survivor's Tale* appears, published in its entirety in 1986, after serialization began in 1980. Art Spiegelman (1948-), an American cartoonist and son of Polish survivors, strengthens the ninth art by using anthropomorphism—Jews as rats and Germans as cats—to narrate the trajectory of his father, Vladek Spiegelman. The work is a critical inventory of inherited memory and second-generation trauma, in which the author-character uses the medium of comics to reconstruct the mosaic of a story that was passed on to him in a fragmented and painful way.

Finally, *The Emigrants* (*Die Ausgewanderten*), published in 1992, concludes this triptych from the perspective of me-

lancholy and traces. W. G. Sebald (1944-2001), a German writer and academic who lived most of his life in England, brings the perspective of the "post-memory" of a non-Jew confronted with the void left by Nazism. Through four long narratives that blend biography, fiction, and enigmatic photographs, Sebald traces the lives of exiles who, , though far from the crematoria, carry the silent destruction of their identities. His writing is an exercise in literary archaeology that seeks to glimpse the specters of catastrophe on the margins of official history.

The articulation between these different media points to the complexity of narrating horror. In *Maus*, the testimony is structured by a generational mediation in which Spiegelman processes an inherited trauma. As American historian and philosopher Hayden White observes:

> The manifest content of Spiegelman's comic book is the story of the artist's effort to extract from his father the story of his parents' experience of the events of the Holocaust. Thus, the story of the Holocaust told in the book is structured by the story of how that story was told. (White, 2006, p. 196).

This metanarrative structure highlights the difficulty of direct access to traumatic reality, requiring a reconstruction that is both biographical and artistic. *Maus* is not only about the Holocaust, but specifically about the transmission of this event. White identifies that the work has layers: the historical fact and the act of narrating that fact. This perspective confirms that the trauma did not end in 1945; it survives in the heir, who needs to create his own language to give shape to a past he did not live, but which constitutes him.

W. G. Sebald, on the other hand, approaches the subject from an oblique perspective. His characters are individuals who, although they escaped physical extermination, succumbed to the weight of memory and exile. Sebald's narrative, marked by the insertion of photographs and melancholic prose, seeks a language for what is often considered unspeakable, operating in the field of fragmented memory and the traces left by persecution.

In contrast to Spiegelman's generational mediation or Sebald's archaeological perspective, Primo Levi's work presents itself as a direct eyewitness account. A survivor of Auschwitz, the author wrote one of the most powerful postwar autobiographies, in which the precision of scientific reporting is combined with a profound ethical need to bear witness to the annihilation of humanity. For Levi, the act of writing is configured as "writing from the limit," an idea explored by Márcio Seligmann-Silva when he states that "the literature of testimony presents itself as a writing of memory that strives to 'give body' to an absence, to make visible what has been erased by barbarism" (2003, p. 45).

Seligmann-Silva's formulation is fundamental to the objectives of this article because it allows us to understand testimony as a project of identity reconstruction and not jus , as a passive mirror of reality. By "giving substance" to absence, the authors analyzed confront the Nazi project of erasure to transform the vacuum left by the victims into a concrete textual presence. Thus, this study seeks to investigate how chemical-literary, visual, and melancholic languages function

as architectures of human survival that restore visibility to the subjects and experiences that barbarism sought to make forgotten.

This attempt to give substance to what has been dehumanized, however, faces the failure of language itself. As Levi himself acknowledges, "we realize that our language has no words to express this offense, the annihilation of a man" (1988, p. 24). The comparison between these three works allows us to investigate how literature and images operate on the threshold of the impossible, transforming silence into discourse and absence into presence. Each of them, from its unique position in time and in the experience of trauma, offers its own language to confront what the Nazi project sought to render unspeakable.

Dehumanization and the Figure of the "Muslim" in Primo Levi

Primo Levi's work is fundamental to understanding the process of stripping away human identity operated by the Nazi concentration camp system. In *If This Is a Man*, Levi describes the transformation of the individual into a cog in a machine, identified only by a number tattooed on his arm. This "gray mass" of prisoners reached its most critical stage in the figure of the "Muslim" (*Muselmann*), a term used in camp jargon to designate those who had lost all will to live and the ability to react. According to Levi, succumbing was the most common and easiest fate within the *Lager*: "just carry out every order received, eat only the rations, obey the discipline of work and the Camp" (Levi, 1988, p. 91).

The description of this existential category emphasizes that the Holocaust is not only a historical event, but a crisis of language, since the camp created a zone of indistinctness that standard language cannot fully grasp:

> Thus, experience shows that one can hardly ever last more than three months. The story—or rather, the non-story—of all the "Muslims" who go to the gas is always the same: they simply followed the descent to the end, like streams flowing to the sea. Once inside the Camp, either because of their intrinsic inability, or because of bad luck, or because of some trivial accident, they were crushed before they could adapt; they were left behind, they did not even begin to learn German and understand anything in the hellish tangle of laws and prohibitions, except when their bodies had already collapsed and nothing could save them from selection or death by exhaustion. Their lives are short, but their numbers are immense; they are the "Muslims," the submerged, they are the strength of the Camp: the anonymous crowd, continually renewed and always the same, of non-men who march and toil in silence; the divine spark has already been extinguished in them, they are so empty that they cannot even really suffer. One hesitates to call

> them alive; one hesitates to call their death 'death', which they no longer fear because they are too exhausted to understand it (Levi, 1988, p. 91).

In concentration camp literature and trauma studies, the figure of the "Muslim" (*Muselmann*) represents the extreme limit of subjectivity under coercion. Technically, the term refers to prisoners who have reached such a state of physical starvation and mental apathy that their consciousness is obliterated by biological urgency, resulting in what critics call "social death" before biological death. The *Muselmann* is the materialization of the success of the Nazi biopolitical project: the production of a living body, but emptied of *logos* and will, transforming itself into a "non-man" who inhabits the zone of indistinction between life and death.

In analyzing this condition, Primo Levi offers an interpretation that subverts the idea of "history" by classifying it as "non-history." By comparing these subjects to "streams flowing into the sea," the author suggests a movement of inevitable entropy, where individuality dissolves into an anonymous and submerged mass. The power of this metaphor lies in the realization that the camp not only killed the body, but destroyed the capacity to suffer and to understand one's own finitude. When Levi states that he "hesitates to call his death 'death'," he points to the failure of traditional legal and existential categories: if there is no longer a subject, the act of dying ceases to be a biographical event and becomes merely the discarding of a worn-out part of the system.

In this sense, the "Muslim" personifies the integral witness, but, paradoxically, he is the one who cannot speak. Giorgio Agamben, in analyzing this account, points out that "the 'Muslim' is the non-man, the one who, in no case, can speak" (2008, p. 164). This impossibility lies in the fact that he has touched the bottom of dehumanization, becoming a living gap in the archive of history. Faced with the "non-history" of those who were submerged, Levi assumes the role of a "witness by delegation." His writing attempts to fill the void left by these anonymous beings, for, as Márcio Seligmann-Silva states, "testimony is always this 'speaking for another,' an effort to translate the unspeakable that seeks to rescue the dignity of those who have been reduced to silence" (2003, p. 48).

This ethical need for translation manifests itself in Levi's narrative through a profound intertextuality with the classical tradition. Upon arrival at the camp, the writer comments that the experience resembled a "crazy play, one of those where witches, the Holy Spirit, and the Devil appear on stage" (1988, p. 23). This perception of reality as a tragic spectacle is reaffirmed when he refers to Sophocles' tragedy *Oedipus Rex* to describe the medical examination conducted by Doktor Pannwitz. By stating that he felt "like Oedipus in front of the Sphinx" (1988, p. 107), the survivor suggests that the examiner's gaze did not look at him as one man looks at another, but as a scientist observes a specimen. The enigma consisted of proving one's biological usefulness to the executioner: if one's intellect or body were not considered useful in that screening, one's fate would inevitably be the gas chamber. The mythological analogy proves accurate because, in ancient times, those who could not decipher the creature's enigma were devoured.

This humanistic inclination reaches its peak in the use of passages from Dante Alighieri's *The Divine Comedy*. On his way to fetch lunch, Levi was accompanied by Pikolo, a young French prisoner who served as a messenger in the camp. In this brief interval of relative freedom, the author recited verses from Ulysses in order to rescue a last remnant of dignity in the epicenter of barbarism: "Remember your origin, your essence; you were not created for beasts, but for courage and experience" (Levi, 1988, p. 116). The use of classical literature serves as an instrument of resistance and maintenance of human consciousness. Such intellectual articulation demonstrates that the survivor's cultural background served as a bulwark against the systematic dehumanization imposed by daily life in *the Lager*.

Thus, Levi's testimonial literature is not only a record, but the only language capable of transforming the silence of the "annihilation of a man" (Levi, 1988, p. 24) into an ethical and perennial discourse.

Mediated Memory and Anthropomorphization in Art Spiegelman

Unlike Levi's direct account, Art Spiegelman's *Maus* uses the mediation of graphic art and anthropomorphization to represent trauma. The choice to portray Jews as rats and Germans as cats is not only an aesthetic device, but a scathing critique of the metaphors of dehumanization used by the Nazi regime itself. These were not mere figures of speech, but biopolitical tools of dehumanization. The Nazi regime used rhetoric that displaced Jews from the human sphere to the biological/animal sphere, justifying extermination as a measure of "public hygiene"[1] . By appropriating these images, Spiegelman exposes the logic of extermination while constructing a narrative about the difficulty of transmitting trauma between father and son.

Spiegelman's work is a seminal example of what has come to be known as "post-memory," a concept developed by Marianne Hirsch to describe the relationship of the "next generation" to the collective traumas experienced by their predecessors. Although the author did not experience the Holocaust, his subjectivity is shaped by the shadows of Auschwitz that emanate from his relationship with his father, Vladek. The structure of *Maus* reveals that testimony is not a ready-made fact, but a painful process of listening and mediated reconstruction. As Hirsch defines it:

> Post-memory describes the relationship that the next generation has with the cultural, collective, and personal trauma of those who came before them—experiences that they "remember" only through the narratives, images, and behaviors they grew up with. (Hirsch, 2012, p. 5, our translation).

1 In Nazi propaganda, especially in the pseudo-documentary film *The Eternal Jew* (*Der ewige Jude*, 1940), images of Jews in ghettos were juxtaposed with images of rats coming out of sewers. Rats were carriers of plague and filth. By labeling Jews as rats, Nazism transformed murder into "rat extermination." Spiegelman removes the invisibility of the metaphor. If the Nazis said that Jews were rats, he draws them as such, but gives them subjectivity, suffering, and humanity. There is an emblematic scene in *Maus* in which Vladek is subjected to humiliating baths and disinfections. Spiegelman uses the image of the rat (an animal despised by the Nazis) to show that the real "filth" was in the ideology of the cats (oppressors).

Vladek's insistence on survival, manifested in his obsessive frugality and behaviors that border on traumatic stinginess, is read by Art as an indelible scar from a period when life depended on minute details. This behavior is not a common character trait, but the physical manifestation of an archive of deprivations that the survivor has never been able to abandon. Thus, postmemory in *Maus* operates in the tension between the father's verbal account and the observation of his daily symptoms, transforming Vladek's "grumpiness" into a living vestige of the dehumanization in *the Lager*.

Spiegelman does not hesitate to show his father's contradictions, such as Vladek's prejudice against black people, demonstrating that surviving horror does not sanctify the individual, but marks them in complex and sometimes contradictory ways. Thus, *Maus* expands the limits of testimony by including the very difficulty of narrating and the impossibility of fully understanding the event.

The choice of a black-and-white graphic style, marked by dense and contrasting lines, reinforces the atmosphere of oppression that permeates the narrative. This visual sophistication allows the work to be classified as a *graphic novel*, a concept that refers to high-quality productions intended for adult audiences that establish a direct dialogue with literature. This genre has a biographical and novelistic character, based on Will Eisner's vision of the potential of comic books. For the author,

> [...] the future of this form awaits participants who truly believe that the application of sequential art, as its interweaving of words and pictures, can offer a dimension of communication that contributes to the body of literature concerned with examining the human experience [...]" (Eisner, 1999, p. 138-139).

This dimension of communication mentioned by Eisner is materialized in the analysis of Figure 1, entitled "Deaths of Jewish rats, Polish pigs, and German cats in Auschwitz." In the image, the representation of corpses scattered across the camp floor exposes the industrial and routine scale of Nazi extermination. While the bodies of the dying lie on the ground, the remaining prisoners walk among the dead, revealing how trivialized contact with finitude had become. Those who still had the strength to walk inevitably wondered when they themselves would fall lifeless, as Vladek witnessed in his journey. Thus, Spiegelman's sequential art fulfills the role of examining the human experience at its most extreme limit, transforming the graphic trace into a support for memory and resistance.

Figure 1 – Deaths of Jewish rats, Polish pigs, and German cats in Auschwitz

Source: SPIEGELMAN, Art. **Maus**: A Survivor's Tale. Translation by Antonio de Macedo Soares. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2005, p. 255.

The formal acuity of *Maus* lies, therefore, in its ability to convert graphic language into a space for negotiation between traumatic memory and historical truth. By articulating Vladek's biography with the metanarrative of his own investigation, Spiegelman fulfills the premise that the representation of the Holocaust requires forms that account for the complexity of the act of narrating. As Hayden White observes, Spiegelman's work should not be seen as a simplification, but as an advance in the writing of trauma, for "it achieves its effect of realism precisely through its refusal to claim to offer a 'portrait' of reality, but rather by providing a 'story' of the effort to recover a past" (White, 2006, p. 197).

Exile and Melancholy in W. G. Sebald

In *The Emigrants*, W. G. Sebald explores the ramifications of the Holocaust beyond the barbed wire fences. His protagonists are individuals who, although they physically escaped Nazi persecution, remain prisoners of a past that cannot be overcome.

Sebald's narrative architecture in the work is based on the recovery of fragmented trajectories that, although distinct, converge toward subjective collapse in the face of historical trauma. The first itinerary presented is that of Dr. Henry Selwyn, a Lithuanian Jew who, after a mistake in his sea crossing, settles in England instead of going to New York. Selwyn stages an impossible adaptation by hiding his origins and anglicizing his name—from Hersch Seweryn to Henry Selwyn. This process of erasing identity is summarized by the narrator when he observes that "perhaps there was nothing the Germans envied so much in the Jews as their beautiful names, so closely linked to the country in which they lived and to their language" (Sebald, 2009, p. 222-223). Selwyn's isolation in the "age of catastrophes" (cf. Hobsbawm, 1995) culminates in his decline and subsequent suicide, an act that sets the elegiac tone of the work.

The second figure, Paul Bereyter, embodies the ambiguity of the categories of persecution. Because he was partly of Aryan descent, he served in the German army, but he did not escape the marginalization imposed by National Socialism, which prevented him from teaching. Bereyter's trauma manifests itself in his fixation on railroads, elements that evoked deportation and death for him.

Figure 2 – Train tracks reminiscent of the death of deportees in cattle cars

Source: SEBALD, W. G. **The Emigrants:** Four Long Stories. Translation by José Marcos Macedo. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2009, p. 33.

His journey ends tragically on the tracks, a fate he seemed to anticipate when he sensed that he would be doomed to "end up on the railroads" (Sebald, 2009, p. 67). This connection between rail transport and extermination is reinforced by the inclusion of photographic records of railroad tracks, an image that evokes the industrial logistics of the Holocaust.

From this perspective, photography in Sebald's work acts not only as illustration, but as an index of absence that strains the relationship between the gaze and time. As Susan Sontag observes, "since cameras were invented in 1839, photography has flirted with death" (2003, p. 24). When observing the train tracks scattered throughout the narrative, the reader is prompted to fill in the gaps of the visible with historical knowledge about the deportations. This mental operation confirms that "by bringing in their prior knowledge, viewers of the image thus fill in what is not represented, the gaps in representation," because, ultimately, "an image can never represent everything" (Aumont, 1993, p. 88). The image thus projects the anguish of the deportees and the impotence of Professor Bereyter, whose existence was overwhelmed by history even though he was not a direct prisoner of *the Lager*.

Continuing the archaeology of the exiles, the third narrative focuses on Ambros Adelwarth, the narrator's great-uncle who emigrated to the United States to serve th nd Solomon family. The disintegration of his inner world is precipitated after the death of his partner, Cosmo Solomon, and the onset of depression that leads him to a psychiatric asylum. Adelwarth's melancholy is described by Dr. Abramsky as an absolute condition in which "every casual word, every gesture, his entire posture, upright to the end, was in fact equivalent to a constant request for permission" (Sebald, 2009, p. 113). This figure exemplifies the melancholy of exile, where apparent social integration masks an existential void that culminates in his voluntary hospitalization. Adelwarth's trajectory reveals that the trauma of loss, in Sebald's universe, acts as a slow-acting poison that dissolves the will to remain in the world.

Finally, the painter Max Ferber closes the quartet of exiles under the gloomy atmosphere of Manchester, the city that welcomes him as he processes the loss of his deported parents. His studio becomes the stage for an exhausting struggle with pictorial matter and memory, resulting in a deteriorated state of health from which the artist intended to "get rid of as quickly as possible, one way or another [...]" (Sebald, 2009, p. 232). The suggested outcome for Ferber, as well as for the other emigrants, reaffirms the thesis that the survivor of "post-memory" inhabits a ghostly space. For these characters, life becomes an exercise in resistance against memories that, although fragmented by photographs and traces, remain unassimilable.

Sebald's narrative is marked by an aesthetic of resistance to forgetting, using the technique of inserting photographs that, far from serving as irrefutable documentary evidence, accentuate the ghostly and fragmentary nature of memory. Sebald suggests that the trauma of the Holocaust acts as a centrifugal force, disintegrating the identity of those who were torn from their roots. As Mark McCulloh observes, Sebald's work seeks "a language for the unrepresentable" (McCulloh, 2003, p. 55, our translation), where the silence and gaps in the text are as significant as the written words.

The relationship between Sebald and the Holocaust is also a question of the ethical responsibility of a postwar German author. By investigating the lives of exiled Jews, Sebald confronts the silence of his own generation and his ancestors. His prose, which flows between travelogue, biography, and fiction, creates a space for empathy and mourning, demonstrating that the Holocaust is an event that continues to cast shadows over the European landscape and contemporary consciousness.

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Sebald's effectiveness lies in his use of the "real effect," a concept developed by Roland Barthes that explains how seemingly insignificant details and documentary photographs serve to authenticate the narrative. This ironic game blurs the boundaries between fact and fiction, requiring a reading that considers the fictional nature of the story. According to Wolfgang Iser, "the reality represented in the text should not be taken as such; it is a reference to something it is not, even if this something becomes representable by it" (2002, p. 973). Thus, the photos and detailed descriptions are not pure historical evidence, but aesthetic constructions that seek to outline the unrepresentable.

This need for a hybrid language arises as a response to the linguistic perversion of the Third Reich itself. The Nazi regime operated under the sign of "memoricide," a strategy that Pierre Vidal-Naquet defines as the systematic effort to "kill memory, after having killed man, and thereby consummate the murder itself" (1988, p. 11). This process was sustained by euphemisms that sought to silence the horror and disconnect language from physical reality. Vidal-Naquet observes that, in Auschwitz, there was no talk of extermination, but rather of "special actions," transforming the camp into an "*anus mundi*, that is, the place where the excrement of the world is unloaded" (1988, p. 173). The codification of speech facilitated the execution of tasks because, as Tzvetan Todorov explains, the purpose of these terms was "to prevent the existence of certain realities in language and thus make it easier for the performers to carry out the task [of remaining silent]" (2003, p. 137).

Thus, Sebald's literature faces the challenge of representing trauma in a scenario where language itself has been corrupted by *Lingua Tertii Imperii* (LTI). By using fiction to fill in the gaps in history and images to evoke what words cannot convey, the author resists silencing and denialist attempts that seek refuge in the ambiguity of official euphemisms. The work thus constitutes an archive of indirect testimonies which, although they cannot offer absolute truth, offer ethical resistance against forgetting.

Conclusion: The Tower of Babel and the Ethics of Testimony

The works of Primo Levi, Art Spiegelman, and W. G. Sebald form a "Tower of Babel" of languages and testimonies that, in their diversity, converge toward an ethic of memory. While Levi offers us the harshness of the gaze of someone who "hit rock bottom," Spiegelman shows us the difficulty of inheriting that gaze, and Sebald reveals to us the invisible scars of exile. Together, these works demonstrate that representing the Holocaust is not an impossible task, but a constant necessity that requires the invention of new narrative forms.

To conclude this reflection, it is imperative to recognize that, although the Holocaust poses radical challenges to language and creative potential, the works analyzed demonstrate that the trauma- s representable through the exploration of formal plurality. The importance of language in the narratives of Levi, Spiegelman, and Sebald lies in its ability to break through the "barbed wire fence" that labels the event as a zone of absolute silence. This literary gesture confronts theoretical traditions that place extermination outside the realm of meaning, such as George Steiner's famous statement that "the

world of Auschwitz is outside discourse, as well as outside reason," or Alice and A. R. Eckhardt's question about "how can one speak of the unspeakable?"

Even in the face of Jorge Semprún's provocation, when he states that "it is not that the experience was unspeakable; it was unliveable," the authors studied here prove that testimony is constructed precisely in the gap between horror and the word. By converting the unliveable into architectures of human survival, they demonstrate that art does not ignore the unspeakable, but inhabits its fracture. Thus, what is consolidated in these narratives is not a resigned silence, but an ethical resistance that uses literature as the only language capable of rescuing the subject from memorycide and restoring their right to their own history.

By emphasizing the multilingualism of the camps, the authors show that the traumatic experience is not "outside discourse," but rather saturated by it. As Bakhtin rightly observes, "the contradictions of individuals are here only the crests of the waves of an ocean of social multilingualism, an ocean that stirs and makes the waves powerfully contradictory, saturating their consciousness and their discourses with its fundamental multilingualism" (1998, pp. 128-129).

Thus, survival and memory depend on the strategic articulation between different languages and registers. While for Vladek, being multilingual served as a bridge to life, for others, language manifested itself as a "perpetual Babel, in which everyone shouts orders and threats in languages never heard before" (Levi, 1988, p. 36). Whether through the heavy accent reconstructed in *Maus*, the insertion of untranslated technical terms in Sebald, or Levi's documentary precision, what we witness is not a passive account, but a continuous effort to establish grammars of impossibility.

In this context, the subject narrating the trauma acts as an ideologue whose words represent a particular and resistant point of view about the world. The works analyzed transcend mere documentary record by proposing true neologisms of the unspeakable, in which writing renounces naive realism in favor of a new diction. By accepting its own fractures and the insufficiency of the common vernacular, this hybrid language manages to give body and permanence to what barbarism intended to make unrepresentable, transforming the silence of trauma into an architecture of survival.

Analysis of these works leads to the conclusion that literary and visual testimony is a vital tool against "memoricide." By giving voice to the "submerged" and mapping the trajectories of those who succumbed to survival, these authors transform trauma into knowledge and pain into resistance. The fluidity between the real and the fictional, the text and the image, does not diminish the historical truth of the event; on the contrary, it makes it transmissible to future generations, ensuring that "never again" is not just a slogan, but a continuous practice of ethical and humanitarian vigilance.

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