

## EVGEN BAVCAR: SELF-PORTRAITS AND THE “IMAGES- STAIN”<sup>1</sup>

**DOI**  
dx.doi.org/10.11606/issn.2525-  
3123.gis.2020.163196

**ORCID**  
orcid.org/0000-0002-0289-7574

**RODRIGO FRARE BARONI**

Universidade Federal de São Paulo, Guarulhos, SP,  
Brazil, 07252-312 - ppg.cienciassociais@unifesp.br

### ABSTRACT

In this article, the reading of four self-portraits made by Evgen Bavcar, a blind photographer and philosopher, is presented with the purpose of trying to figure out how he creates the character, or *persona*, of a ‘blind photographer’. Published in his book *Memória do Brasil* (Memory from Brazil), the first of these self-portraits is analyzed leading me to put forward the hypothesis that Bavcar presents a kind of manifest in his book. I also suggest that we could think about these photographs as “*images-stain*”, meaning that, when we look at them in the hopes of finding images made by a blind man, they give us back the image of our own prevailing blindness since, by being situated on the liminal of visibility, they question and dispute our own assumptions about blindness.

### KEYWORDS

Evgen Bavcar;  
photography;  
image; self-portrait;  
blindness.

1. This article is part of my master's degree research conducted with funding from Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo (Fapesp). Process nº 2017/15832-2.

## INTRODUCTION

Born in 1946 in the small town of Lokavec (Slovenia nowadays, Yugoslavia back then), Evgen Bavcar became known as, above all, a ‘blind photographer’. He lost his vision in the left eye due to an accident with a tree branch when he was 10 years old. A few months later, he suffered another accident while wielding a land mine that injured his right eye, rendering him completely blind. His relationship with photography, as a maker of images, only began after these two accidents, when he was 16 years old.

After majoring in History and Philosophy in his home country, Bavcar migrated to France to advance his studies at Master and PhD levels in Philosophy and Aesthetic at the Sorbonne. During this time, he went on photographing as an amateur, having attained, in 1987, his first exhibition called *Carrés Noires Sur Vos Nuits Blanches* (Black Squares On Our White Nights) at the Sunset Jazz Club in Paris. Drawing attention from critics, he was, in the following year, the honored photographer of the month in Paris, gaining then international projection. His pictures were exhibited all over the world in galleries and museums, often accompanied by talks on aesthetic and his relationship with photography. Because of that, although Bavcar’s relationship with photography is not exactly a rarity<sup>2</sup> and he neither could nor sought to be a spokesperson for the blind, his work has not only become a benchmark for the theme, but it has also inspired other blind photographers and blind photographers associations. Bavcar’s projection into the international artistic scene paved the way for the emergence of these new artists and for the discussion of issues put forward by them.

To reflect on the relation between photography and the ‘blind’ might seem, at first, a paradoxical question.<sup>3</sup> Blindness is, after all, usually seen as the antinomy of vision and images, furthermore, as a product of the eye made for the eye. On the other hand, the blind have been, at different moments, taken as a subject of representation in both visual and literary arts, obtaining a place in our collective minds. In this process,

2. To name a few blind photographers associations (or with impaired vision): João Maia, Teco Barbeiro, Alicia Meléndez, Aarón Ramos, Tanvir Bush, Pedro Rubén Reynoso, Mickel Smithen, Gerardo Nigenda, Alberto Loranca, Jashivi Osuna Aguilar, Ana Mária Fernández, Pedro Miranda, Henry Butler, Pete Eckert, Bruce Hall, Annie Hesse, Alex de Jong, Rosita Mckenzie, Michel Richard, Kurt Weston e Alice Wingwall, besides the New York Based association *Seeing with photography collective*.

3. This question ceases to be paradoxical when we remember of Benjamin’s concept of the *optical unconscious* (Benjamin 1987, 94). It breaks apart the popular analogy established between the human eye and the photographic camera. According to it, the photographic camera is able to reveal what our own eyes are unable to see. The shutter thus acts as the exact moment when we blink our eyes (Tessler 2003, Dubois 2012), bringing to light what our eyes missed; it does not show us things, but rather their “intimate, secrete relations, their correlations and analogies” (Baudelaire cited by Didi-Huberman 2012, 208). More than the the vision itself, the *photographic act* would be the one related to *blindness*, for it acts at the instant we do not see to allow us to see in a different manner.

terms were adopted and crystallized, taking on different configurations at different times, with the blind never being able to take part in these processes of building up a collective idea about blindness through the production of images.

Perhaps, then, photographs taken by the blind might impart an imaginary experience of a group of people who, given a distinct physical condition, were denied the promotion of their gaze, a promotion of what their eyes are directed at. Now, this gaze has risen and developed a way to stare at us. They are so forceful that they suspend, at least for a few moments, the definition of blindness, whilst we, as sighted people, realize that we do not have access to these images claimed<sup>4</sup> by the blind. Not unless they are arbitrated, as in Bavcar's case, by photography.

Out of that, some questions are raised: What do we, as sighted people, seek for when we look at the images made by a blind photographer? Could it be that we seek for something that we cannot see past our own gaze? I wonder if we look for some kind of otherness kept concealed from and inaccessible to us. Deep into these questions, there might be one more: where does blindness reside (if it resides at all) in these images? (Montiel 2014)

To face Bavcar's pictures knowing how peculiar his trajectory is brings several questions that deeply touch us. We look for a glimpse of knowledge in this realm where we do not know anything, and we try to get closer to this unknown universe of images made by the blind. That is, ultimately, a question of recognizing (and legitimizing) a sense of otherness in these pictures.

The sight of images made by the blind awakens a radical feeling of unrest in the observer. That is because these images are situated (maybe by us) on the brink of visibility (somewhere between their limit and their beginning), placing their authors in a situation of *liminality* (Turner 2013), withholding their social position and their attributes that get to be redefined. Thinking with Jacques Rancière, these images bring to light a *disagreement* and a *distribution of the sensible* when they put into dispute the distribution of the capabilities and skills required to see and speak about what is seen and, furthermore, about taking part in the common life (Rancière 2009; 2017).

---

4. Adauto Novaes (2000, 32) says: "I believe the idea of a blind photographer seems astonishing to us for two reasons: because it is difficult to us to admit that there are other ways to see that are different from ours, and because is not there an atrophy of four other senses precisely because of how potent the ability to see is?"

Based on this reflection, we might be able to better understand Bavcar's own idea of what his photographic work is. For him, it is a kind of offering where he gives himself over it (following Lacan's precept): "If for some, love is giving what one doesn't have, then I don't grieve this act of love I call my conceptual photography, that is, the donation of image" (Bavcar 2003a, 145). However, Bavcar (2005) gives to others something he does not fully own, not so these others can simply seize the image to themselves, but so they can give it back to him in a verbal form, making it visible in its own manner. Here we see the outline of the principles of the Gift, that Marcel Mauss (2003) described as a system of total services where bonds of alliance and social relations between people and groups of people are put in place. Didi-Huberman (2017) perfectly explained this principle of the donation of the image as an object that, when taken from the private sphere, is restored to the public one sphere where it can find new gazes.<sup>5</sup> He also underscores the issue of receiving through sight: "Is the image you see, and receive, received peacefully to the end? Is it, after all, as much mine as it is yours and everybody else's until it is disseminated as a common good?" (Didi-Huberman 2017, 220). In that sense, the issue laid out by Didi-Huberman takes us to consider the claim for the right to images made by Bavcar as an exchange of gazes (or images) that reconfigure spaces and social bonds.

In this manner, I understand that when Evgen Bavcar puts himself in his pictures, directly or indirectly, including a glimpse of his body or of its motion, he not only takes a picture, he also creates a character, or a *persona*, of a 'blind photographer'. This article aims to explore the development of this character through the analysis of four self-portraits published in the book *Memória do Brasil* (Memory of Brazil) (Bavcar 2003a). From the analysis of the first of these self-portraits I put forward the hypothesis that Bavcar presents a kind of manifest in his book, and he also invites us to think about these photographs as '*images-stain*' that, being situated on the liminal of visibility, question and dispute our own assumptions about blindness.

#### **"QUERO-VER" AND THE IMAGE-STAIN**

The portrait that opens the book<sup>6</sup> was taken when Bavcar visited the town of Pelotas, in southern Brazil. Strolling through the streets of this town, he heard the gallop of a horse approaching. He then decided to stop so he could better observe the animal and talk with its owner. He and the ones walking with him soon learned that the horse was called *Quero-ver*, Portuguese for "I want to see".

5. Didi-Huberman (2017) introduces us to this issue based on the work from the filmmaker Harun Farocki, who "rescued" images from private archives that are no longer accessible to the public precisely in order to give them back to the public.

6. This photograph is not part of the self-portrait series along with the other three I am going to analyze here. It is simply under the title "*Memória do Brasil*"

IMAGE 1  
Evgen Bavcar –  
Untitled. From the  
series: “Memória  
Do Brasil”  
(Bavcar 2003a).



Describing the photograph born out of this encounter, Bavcar (2003a, 126) accounts: “since I had felt and heard the horse, I wanted to get closer. So I kindly asked its owner if I could take a picture of the animal. It wasn’t about, of course, an artistic picture, but simply an identity”. Such account gives room for an array of questions. If, on the one hand, he at first sets this picture apart from his artistic oeuvre, on the other hand, this same picture is reincorporated under the title of the series *Memória do Brasil*. Not only that, this picture also opens the series. Also, maybe we should pay attention to how he employs the verb “to be” in the past tense, which generates an enlightening ambiguity. In this context, the verb “to be” refers to *the life of the image* on its own, and not simply to the moment the picture is taken: “it wasn’t about [...] an artistic picture”, but it came to be. But what could have happened to alter this picture’s destiny?

This issue gets even more complicated when we find out in a text by the psychoanalyst Edson Sousa (2006), who accompanied Bavcar in his visit to Pelotas, that it was he, and not Bavcar, who took the picture:

At the moment we said goodbye: the essential question that sets the picture about to happen. Without this question, that moment would not have acquired its magic, its surprising effect, its impressive outcome. Bavcar asks: What is the horse’s name? The incredible answer: *Quero-ver* (I want to see)... Bavcar, surprised, gets closer to the horse and hugs it saying: That is me! In a surprising manner, he finds his doppelgänger, his name galloping unrecalled on a gloomy street of a town in southern Brazil. He asks me to take a picture, a picture that, by the way, gets out-of-focus. That may be why it was published right at the opening of his beautiful book *Memória do Brasil*. (Souza 2006, 84)

What was meant to be simply a record of an event, a picture to be kept as memory, becomes, by chance, just like the encounter between Bavcar and the horse, part of his oeuvre: an “artistic picture”. Despite Sousa being the one who pressed the shutter, the picture remains, in a sense, authored by Bavcar. Not because his body is seen in the picture, nor because he was the one who asked to take it, but because he was the one who arranged the situation and gave life to the image by re-signifying it by incorporating it into his oeuvre, and in a certain way looking at the world.<sup>7</sup> In the words of Fontcuberta (2018, 40): “Nowadays we are aware that the importance does not rely on who presses the button, but on who does all the rest: who brings the concept and manages the life of the image”.

Therefore, instead of focusing on who took the picture, we should try to understand why it was selected to open the series *Memória do Brasil*. Seeking to understand this might help us to raise some questions about this particular image and about the series of self-portraits itself. Let us start with the following questions: What do we mean when we describe a picture as a “simple identity”? In what manner is this kind of picture different from an “artistic picture”?

When we think of a picture as a “simple identity”, we usually regard it as a document or registration of a past event. That is, a confirmation, a witness of a given time and space. It is a return to the *it has been* from Barthes (2015). The registration of an event is different from the initial impulse that propels Bavcar to create artistic pictures. While artistic pictures are conceived to express his “existential condition”<sup>8</sup> and the way he looks at the world, the registration is simply a proof or witness of an encounter. In that sense, this first portrait’s destiny (or destination) could have been to be simply kept as a memento or to be sent to someone else as correspondence. Nevertheless, it was not meant to be included in his oeuvre.

As a document or registration, it is widely expected that photographs follow some criteria that allows the registered event to be recognized in the future: the framing has to highlight what is intended to show, placing the main subject in contrast to its background and the things related to it; and, traditionally, focus and distinctness are expected from photographs so the depicted event becomes accessible to the eyes

---

7. Something similar happened to me when I attended a talk by a photographer with impaired vision (João Maia, who supports the Project “Fotografia Cega”, Blind Photography). At this event, I was invited to take photographs using Bavcar’s technique (lightpainting). I took photos and was the subject of photos, but I was also in charge of setting the camera (shutter speed, ISO, aperture) and framing the pictures, that all following the photographer’s instructions. Although I was the one taking the pictures, the image created out of the light traces done by Maia and others’ flashlights kept me from designating the image as of my authorship.

8. It is up to the photographer to consider his/her own work as a possibility of express his/her existential condition (Bavcar 1994).

of their beholder. As a document, in a more trivial and profane sense, it is expected that photographs proof what happened in the past, that they serve as witnesses and that they make events clear. It is important to note, however, that clarity and details are not [...], at all, characteristics of the document, the same way as soft-focus is not a mandatory requirement of art” (Rouillé 2009, 84).

If the notion of the image as a document leads us back to the *it has been* notion of Barthes, by revisiting it, a contradiction between terms can be found. According to the author, when we look at a photograph, we see the referent and not the object (*medium*) to which we direct our eyes at. The object vanishes in relation to the image it supports and boasts, becoming a transparent/translucid material which allows the lights from the past to reach us in the present as an emanation of the referent. That is not far from the notion of photography as a “window to the world”.

Barthes also lays another issue before us. As time goes by whilst he gazes a photograph, Barthes (2015, 84) says he dispenses time to try to dissect it; in other words: “turn to the other side of the photograph, get into the thick paper and reach the other side”. He follows: “Whatever is concealed, it is for us Westerners, more truthful than what can be seen” (Barthes 2015, 84). That might seem paradoxical, but it refers right back at a discussion between Janouch and Kafka, cited by Barthes (2015), where Kafka declares: “by closing your eyes, you make images speak in the silence” (Kafka cited by Barthes 2015, 52).

If it is fruitless to try to expand an image to dive in its depth in order to dissect it, on the other hand, closing your eyes is a requirement to let it reach the wound it itself opened in us. That is what Barthes (2015) calls *punctum*: the poignancy sparked by photography at moments like, when he gazes a now famous photograph of his mother in a winter garden – the only photograph he does not exhibit for considering others would be indifferent to it. That means that what he recognizes in the photograph is not actually in the photograph, but in himself, or in the affective relationship he maintains with it. Through this photograph, Barthes revitalizes the imaginary images – from dreams and memories – he has from his mother. Images he is unable to show us through image (Rouillé 2009, 213-214).

He, then, adopts a different strategy by rendering his readers ‘blind’ in relation to this photograph. He opts for describing it, instead of showing it, resorting to our imagination rather than our perception. It is almost as if the content shown in the image, visually accessible, is no more than one of several layers of meaning (Edwards 2012), becoming a hindrance to interpretation given its overly concrete and referential character. The descriptive exercise proposed by Barthes (2015) consists of, above all, creating

and mobilizing in the reader the desire to see without being offered the means to a possible satisfaction (or frustration) of this same desire.

Based on that, André Rouillé (2009) designates *Camera Lucida* (2015) by Barthes as the emblem of the beginning of the end of the *photography-document* regime. A regime characterized by having a fiduciary value related to the physical reality (bodies, objects, concrete nouns...) shown by photography. In its place, the *photography-expression* regime arises, where representation gives room for the *expression* of events, the “incorporeal”. The act of photography, from then on, requires more than the technical device. It also considers authorship and the photographer’s subjectivity, writing and dialogue. The photographic image, no longer isolated from the contexts and actions that enfold it, is now thought about in connection to the devices and discourses to which it is intertwined.

Back to the portrait Bavcar took with the horse (*Quero-ver*), our gaze faces an out-of-focus photography, helping us realize that this “identity”, as conceived by him, is anything but “simple”. Even though it is perfectly possible to recognize a *face* in the image, outlined by a white surface circling the two dark holes of his eyes (Deleuze and Guattari 2012, 36), and the shape of a horse, the blur, although light, turns the image lightly opaque, and not fully transparent as Barthes (2015) wanted when he pointed out the materiality of the image support and its haptic dimension. Thus, the image is put forward to its observer with a sort of resistance to reveal itself, allowing the shapes in the photograph to be recognized only in an indirect or allusive manner, requiring effort, a *desire to see*<sup>9</sup> (Novaes 2003, 107). As pointed out by the photographer himself when talking about the horse’s blinkers: “my identification with the horse wasn’t due to any eventuality. I’d also brought with myself, in some part, curtains that prevented me from seeing” (Bavcar 2003a, 126). Acting like the horse’s blinkers, the blur in the image brings about a third element of identification: the beholder of the photograph who, blocked from the access to a transparent image, is compelled to face an *image-stain*,<sup>10</sup> becoming, like the horse and Bavcar, a “*Quero-ver*” (I want to see). The accidental blur in the image becomes a conceptual device in the photographer’s work, inscribing the passage from “simple registration” to its artistic use as a form of expression.

9. Aduato Novaes agrees when he states that Bavcar’s work provokes this “wish to uncover allusive existences” (Novaes 2003, 107).

10. Sousa (2006, 84) writes about the idea of stain that will be worked on in this chapter: “The psychic monochromes work as stains that try to cover the holes opened by the sexual ones. Symptoms uniting the fringes of our despair resulted from the desire for the Other. Monochromes that follow the rhythm of repetition and the inscribed in our bodies a certain blindness”.

It is true that the triangle formed by the artist, the horse and the beholder under the sign of a *wish to see* is not only present in the photograph. It is also part of its inclusion in a device, of its part in the photographer's work, and a factor of the materiality of the book as an exhibition space. The image is completed by Bavcar's account, and that shows us that we also recognize it by the 'blind act' of inference and by projecting on the image what we already know about it. The artist's own words, when narrating his adventure in Pelotas, arise in his surprise to learn the horse's name, which, ultimately, also provides more elements to (re)interpret the photograph. The image that opens Bavcar's book, as well as his accounts at the end of it, can be seen as a way to show us that the more we forego its assumed transparency, the more we see in it, that is: the more we forego the description, overly literal or direct, of its referent.

Here we can bring an example, described by Gottfried Boehm (2017), about a peculiar exercise related to the stain (*macchia*) that Leonardo da Vinci used to use with his students: "it was a structure containing a random set of stains over a battered wall, and da Vinci would advise the aspiring painters to keenly observe it, so they could learn to see distinctions, features, bodies, monsters or even landscapes" (Boehm 2017, 26). Through a projective imagination effort (with memories, remembrance and words), these stains, like the one on the Shroud of Turin,<sup>11</sup> give way to the formation of figures or shapes that are not recognizable beforehand (Dubois 2012). It is true that both the Shroud of Turin and the wall used by da Vinci are quite distinct from the slight blur in Bavcar's portrait with the horse. That stain, however, is not meant to be thought of in the literal sense, but as an element of indetermination in the image that gives way for a projective memory or imagination to bring foreign elements into the image.

This also refers to identifying in the photograph a resistance in being read directly according to its referent, which implies in the observer taking part in this recognition process. A process that is, simultaneously, a recognition of the image (the inference of what it expresses) and a recognition in the image (what is interpellated in it).

The idea of *stain* can be found in one of Bavcar accounts in *Memória do Brasil*. In it, he describes the omnipresence of red dots in his "sight"

---

11. The Turin Shroud is, for Dubois (2012), an image consisting of a mortuary drape that would have covered Jesus' face, preserving the mark of this divine encounter. This sacred image, about which a lot has been written, presents fundamental aspects for, according to Dubois (2012), the comprehension of photography as a *medium* of perception. About the relation between to see, to think, and to believe, Dubois (2012) explains that the first reaction of Christians when seeing the shroud was that of an effort to see what could not be seen. That was until 1989, when a member of the Catholic Church who was in charge of taking photographs of the shroud saw appear, on what had been until then a stain, on photographic film, the image of the face of Christ. Just like the stories of fishermen who found sculptures of saint at the bottom of rivers and sees, the photograph operated the "miracle" of apparition.

when flying out of Brazil:

When the airplane had reached its cruising altitude, I imagined, under the clouds, the landscape down there as the early dreams watched over my gaze; I saw, then, Brazil as a green rug sown by red dots. Unable to figure out what those red dots were, I thought of poppy fields erstwhile described to me. Sprang to my mind the words of a poem evoked by them. Stronger than the eyesight [...] it is long since this color made itself so pervasive. It showed itself with such astonishingly accuracy, it felt like I was getting closer to new red objects from my past: rummaging in my own memory, I rediscovered red stars on car number plates, the red flag with the gold hammer and sickle, the fabric that covered the official tribune on the first of May; and also the blood stain of our cat Tucuman, run over by a car. [...] Afterwards, suddenly, when I'd almost forgone my excursions through my erstwhile color palette, I saw it again: what used to get stuck in my mind, the lady in a scarlet skirt [...] from a few little stains, very pale at first, it made itself present all night. Certainly, I'll need, still, a lot of images, and many returns to the 'ambar color' country to make sure it never leaves me, and so the fragments of this revived colours from my memory help me find, under my fingers, other dreams. (Bavcar 2003a, 109-112)

The red stain that resonates to Bavcar's memories and imagination, can be linked to Merleau-Ponty (2014) writing about how the color takes part in a constellation that is part of the crystallization of imaginary worlds. The red stain would be, thus, a contraction between "always opened external and internal horizons" (Merleau-Ponty 2014, 219) that sets apart colors and things. Sousa also writes about this theme, saying that "The hidden constellations that we always create work [...] as stains that blot over orderly surfaces" (Sousa 2006, 79).

The stain is this element that snatches the possibility of seeing things as they are right away, breaking up the illusion of pure transparency of the *medium*, taking us to resort to words and other images from our own memories so we can see what the image reveals and conceals. Therefore, the stain takes the place of "the Other" that looks at and inquires us without us knowing exactly from where.

That all takes us back to the triangulation made by Phillippe Dubois (2012) between "*stain, plot, drama*": the *stain*: to see something where, at first, there is nothing to see – only "stains or clouds" – and, taken by desire to form a shape from these stains, as a way to establish a *drama* supported by different imagetic and discursive operations that are defined by a *plot* (Dubois 2012, 232). But would not every photograph be, no matter how clear, a kind of stain? Would not the image be, as a trace, "nothing but a residue or fissure, an accident in time that renders it, temporarily, visible or readable?" (Didi-Huberman 2011, 87).

The portrait-stain of Bavcar with the horse *Quero-ver* evokes a particular notion of the indictable Sign that Rosalind Krauss (2002) claims to be its pinnacle: the syncategorema, a level where “the Sign remains empty until it is filled by a referent. It, however, only remains filled for a certain amount of time, thus the referent is nothing more than a constellation of scattered interconnections randomly arranged” (Krauss 2002, 149-150).<sup>12</sup> The hypothesis I intend to explore here, based on the readings of the self-portraits I am about to show, is that Bavcar’s photograph with *Quero-ver*, when in the book, is imbued with a manifest character: if we expect to find images made by a blind person in it, the stain gives us back the image of our own blindness.

### SELF-PORTRAITS AND THEIR SHADOWS

PHOTOGRAPHY WAS BORN BLIND

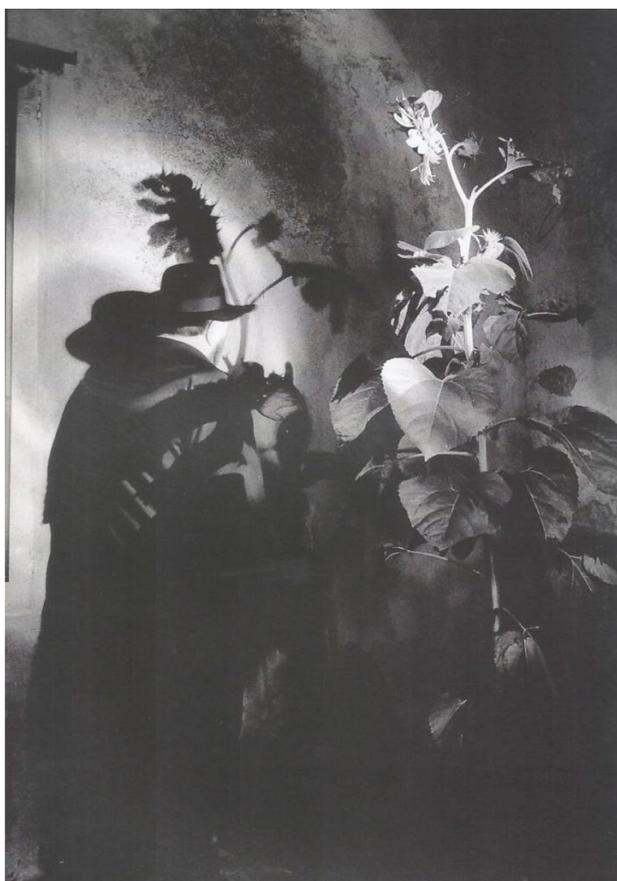


IMAGE 2  
Evgen Bavcar,  
untitled. From the  
“Self-portraits”  
series (Bavcar  
2003a).

12. The syncategoremata is used by Krauss (2002) to reflect on the movements of André Breton who, after a night of walkabouts in Paris, decides to recite fragments of the poem *Tournesol*, written ten years before. He realized that the poem not only described the same path he had taken, but that it also had several analogies between what had been written years before and the meeting that happens at the night. The poet then goes further in his analyses and puts himself as the subject and the poem as a manifestation of his unconscious mind. He then designates a movement that goes in two directions, towards both past and future, where he places himself as the field where associations between the poem, the path and the events become meaningful.

In all three photographs that are part of the “Self-portraits” series, the only thing to allow us to interpret something is its own title. Based on that, when we see (just like the first self-portrait showed above) a human standing next to the wall, we infer, right away, that that is Bavcar. However, the overexposed face disappears under light, suppressing his physiognomy whilst his body seems to emerge from the shadows projected onto the wall without never completely untangling itself from it. At the background, the incidence of light with concentric focus designs moons with huge craters over the wall texture. At the foreground, neither figure, nor face or moon, but a plant that grows in darkness but in direction to light, as if it was revealing itself.

The motif staged here by Bavcar, a motif adopted in the other two portraits, is the “fable”, or the imagination, of the origin of painting. As explained by Dubois (2012), based on Pliny the Elder, painting was born out of the “event” when the shape of human shadow was first delineated” (Dubois 2012, 117). According to the story, the daughter of a potter in Sicyon, having to say farewell to the man she loved who was embarking on a long voyage, decided to draw on the wall of a room lit up by fire the contour projected by his shadow so that she could preserve a fragment of his presence. This scene, combining elements of light projection with the shadow on the wall that serves as a canvas, reminds Dubois (2012) of the notion of photography as a product *written by light*, but also, inversely, as *skiagraphia: written by shadows*.

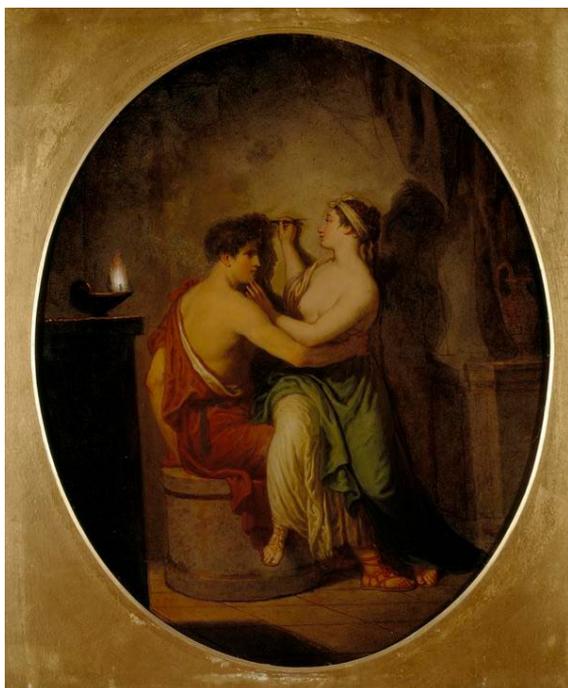


IMAGE 3  
David Allan  
Scottish – The  
origin of painting  
(The maid of  
Corinth) 1775.<sup>13</sup>

13. Available on: <https://bit.ly/2A05OFi>.

In another version of this same fable, the painting would have been first “introduced in Egypt by Giges, the Lydian who, admiring his own shadow projected on the wall by the fire, suddenly draw his own contour [...] with a piece of coal” (Vasari cited by Dubois 2012, 123). Considering this second story, the origin of painting would go from the portrait to the self-portrait made by shadows. Bavcar’s choice for this motif seems quite provocative considering that, although there are pictorial representations of the story told by Pliny (like the painting above by David Allan), these stories got to us through *Ekprasis*. That way, Bavcar finds a motif where the “origin” of image tangles with its own verbal description. However, unlike the depiction such as the one made by David Allan where the maid paints the one she loves, and unlike the description of Giges’ self-portrait, in Bavcar’s photograph, there is an imperceptible gesture: a hand arising from darkness, reaching to the illuminated body.



IMAGE 4  
Detail of the  
photograph.  
From the “Self-  
portraits” series  
(Bavcar 2003a).

This gesture causes a reversal: we no longer draw or paint on the shadow, but the shadow itself rises from the body and outline its own contour. It seems that Bavcar has fun with putting the photograph *en abyme*, playing with the indexical paradigm by photographing the shadow of a shadow. That is because if we consider the photograph as

a doppelgänger of the one who posed for it, as result, the shadow of this double becomes a triple. The hand arising from the shadows and extending itself over the shoulder divides the image from the body that created it, as well as the difference between that shape and its model breaking up with any trace of a speculative illusion or a direct relation between the *index* and its referent. This leads us to question the idea of associating identity with this image by using the term *self-portrait*.

In a commentary about Bavcar's photographic work, Benjamin Mayer Foulkes (2014) highlights that:

The blind photographer's self-portrait brings to light the rule of self-portrait, which is the disjunction between the icon and its maker: the self-portrait is only recognized by conjecture, there is nothing to secure the identity of either the portrayed or the portraitist. Far from being an exception, the blind self-portrait is an enactment, a kind of phase one of the self-portrait. (Foulkes 2014, 35)<sup>14</sup>

Foulkes statement is not far from the considerations made by Derrida (1993) related to two hypotheses put forward on a book about his exhibition: *Memories of the blind: the self-portrait and other ruins*.<sup>15</sup> The first hypothesis states that: every drawing is blind, if not the designer himself. That is because the act of drawing implicates to lose sight of the model or the trace, which implies, simultaneously, both an anticipation and an act of memory. The second hypothesis states that: every drawing of a blind person is a drawing made by a blind person, that means, the draftsman (or draftswoman) who depicts a blind person is someone who lets oneself get fascinated and who recognizes oneself in his/her own figure.

Concerning the self-portrait, Derrida (1993) also states that the portraitist, in order to depict him/herself, should only face a focal point in the mirror placed where the viewer will look at the image. That way, the self-portrait mainly designates a place for the viewer who, at the moment of taking the place of the mirror, will not be able to see the portraitist as such. According to Derrida (1993), the portraitist who wishes to show him/herself should gaze in the mirror nothing but his/her own eyes and then replace them for different ones staring back. About the portraitist who depicts him/herself facing some other thing, then a third object should be added, *with no eyes*, staring

14. In the original: "El autorretrato del fotógrafo ciego saca a plena luz la ley del autorretrato, que es la disyunción entre el icono y su creador: el autorretrato se reconoce sólo por conjetura, nada hay en la o que garantice la identidad del retratado y el retratador. Lejos de construir una excepción de género, el autorretrato del ciego es su instauración, una especie de grado cero del autorretrato" (Foulkes 2014, 35).

15. The exhibition curated by Derrida, gathers a series of drawing used by the philosopher to explore the phenomenon of vision, electing the blindness as the origin of images.

back in a way that makes us “the condition for his sight [...] and of his own image” (Derrida 1993, 62).

For Derrida (1993), the effect of the self-portrait will always require a foreign referent, not visible, being always able to dissociate the observer from the theme or the depicted subject. Its identification, thus, will always remain on the level of conjecture, being only feasible or uncertain, and free from any internal reading to the work: “an object of inference and not of perception” (Derrida 1993, 64).

If what is called a self-portrait depends on the fact that is called ‘self-portrait’, an act of naming should allow or *entitle* me to call just about anything a self-portrait, not only any drawing (‘portrait’ or not) but anything that happens to me, anything by which I can be affected or let myself be affected. (Derrida 1993, 65)

The projective effect of inference would be, hence, what allows us to recognize ourselves in both our own image and in any other object, or thing, that relates to us. Meaning, anything that gives us back a gaze that involves us with it. Thus, every self-portrait is, essentially, an image-stain and an artist’s body of work could, at best, be considered a great self-portrait, since it is related to this artist, and it carries his/her signature. That is what happens to Bavcar when he is affected by the name and blinkers of the horse *Quero-ver*, recognizing it as his double and asking for a photograph that is, ultimately, a self-portrait with his own double – with his own shadow. In that sense, Derrida (1993) asserts that self-portraits are like memories or ruins that keep getting made by the structure of the work, with no promise of restoration. He also declares that “The performative fiction that engages the spectator in the structure of the work is given to be seen only through the blindness that it produces as truth. As if glimpsed through a blind” (Derrida 1993, 65).

Therefore, when Bavcar puts himself in the motif that stages the origin of painting (which is analogous to the origin of photography by virtue of being the imprint of a trace projected by light over a body), he meets the Derridian thought and reaffirms the notion of blindness as the origin of all representation: to represent something is to lose sight of it. The artist, however, goes beyond that by erasing the physiognomy of his face in the portraits, breaking up with the benchmark found in identity portraits. Benchmark that forges a link of similitude with the portrayed, making it simply an allusive figure. Also, the portrayed motif itself embodies a portrait, eroding the notion of “oneness”, or of an authentic model, acting as referent for the creation of image.

THE PRINCIPLE OF REALITY AND THE IMMOBILITY OF THE EYE



IMAGE 5  
Evgen Bavcar,  
untitled. From the  
“Self-portraits”  
series (Bavcar  
2003a).

In this self-portrait, we can see Bavcar wearing a hat, glasses, a jacket, pants and shoes. On his face, we can only see a few traits, like his ear and the silhouette of his nose; we also glimpse his mouth and eyes, that seem to be closed. Bavcar carries a bicycle that we can see better than his face. The camera angle is slightly inclined. That can be perceived when we take the house in the background as a reference, as well as its fence. Up in the left, we can also notice a source of light that we cannot identify as either a lightening post (or something of the kind), or if it is the source of light that went through the image during its long exposure, since we can see the bright light, but not its support or actual source.

On the tarmac street the shadows of both the bicycle and its carrier (Bavcar) are projected, encircled by a bright contour that delimits and enhances their shapes. This gesture takes us back, again, to the “origin of painting”, but instead of coal, it is light itself that is used to outline the contours of the shadow. The axis inclination in the photograph,

whether it is intentional or not, might provoke a feeling of motion and of descent from left to right. If we cover, as an exercise, the superior part of the image, and only concentrate on the shadows projected on the street, we can see that its design in such a manner that makes us think that Bavcar is riding on it, and in motion, which belies the motionless feeling provoked by the whole portrait.



IMAGE 6  
Detail of Evgen  
Bavcar's self-  
portrait. From the  
"Self-portraits"  
series (Bavcar  
2003a).

Here we can think of the portrait of the poet León-Paul Fargue, made by Brassai in 1933, and studied by Rosalind Krauss (2002). According to her, Fargue, who was Brassai's partner and guide in his wanderings in Paris, let himself be portrayed sat on a bank of a public garden in the city, and the result was an image that, for Krauss (2002), raises an issue that permeates most of Brassai's work as a photographer. Our first thought in front of it is: "That is what León-Paul Fargue was like [...] it is with this figure that he actually looks alike – because we have always been led to believe in the objectivity of a photographic witness" (Krauss 2002, 144). However, when we consider a whole set of relations that are foreign to the image, like Fargue's role in the surrealist nocturnal life, reason why he called himself the "walker of Paris", Krauss (2002) disputes the alleged frankness of the photograph when designating its referent. She entices us to look not only to the body illuminated by the light, but also to the shadow projected by it:

The ghostly elongated shadow of the poet [...] projects itself on the floor on its left. In stark contrast to the massive density of the sat body, the shadow with flat legs leads us to note that the photograph of the body activates a kind of double vision. The upper half of the character [...] is the exact image of a immobile solidity. But the low half, its legs,

belongs to a different order, like the projected shadow: drowned in darkness, becoming almost fluid and disembodied. According to this second interpretation, the image is, thus, a solid body, immobile and heavy, betrayed by its legs that, surrounded in darkness, portends the possibility of a kind of air slide. This photograph, this portrait, is an image of Fargue as a night owl and of Fargue as a surrealist, the shadow being a silent index that allows similar reading. (Krauss 2002, 145)



IMAGE 7  
Brassai – León-  
Paul Fargue,  
1933 (Krauss  
2002, 145).

León-Paul Fargue's portrait, then, contains a double connotation: its shadow is a second representation added to the first one's interior, which demonstrates the process of creation of image, and questions any interpretation of photographs that happen to be too realistic. The shadow that attests the body solidity also contains it in a space of representation, in a world set apart from the real one, impossible to represent or contain in its totality. Becoming an image, the body turns into a shadow because it loses its solidity (Belting 2014, 239-266), because the shadow can be applied as a way of giving life to the depicted body, as a witness of its solidity, or, like in the photographs of Bavcar and the portrait of Fargue made by Brassai, as a way of questioning the character of reality often given to the photographic representation.

The image's *mise en abyme* flattens the different layers of representation, leading us to recognize that in it supposedly real bodies have the same character as their shadows and reflections. Photography itself does nothing more than "give us back images of the real world" through virtual images (Krauss 2002, 154).

In Bavcar's self-portrait with the bicycle case, the image works in a way like the *mise en abyme* used by Brassai but reaching an even more poignant level. While in Fargue's portrait is the realistic interpretation that comes first to mind, causing the impression of being an instant or fortuitous photo thanks to its composition, in Bavcar's self-portrait the manipulation of light highlights its fabricated character, stripping the image of any interpretation that might be too literal. By not casting light on a portion of his own body, a portion of which is only possible to get a glimpse of, and by highlighting the shadow with the contours created with flashlights, it is important to note the photographers aim in placing both figures in the photo as equivalents. Hence, although the *syncategoremata* can be found in both images, Bavcar's one tries to bring it to the foreground by turning its figures and motifs in nothing more than allusive presence: in shadows or stains.

The picture with the bicycle also questions a certain notion about blindness. A notion that, like the photographer's own identity, is not given by the image itself, but by an external inference. Because of that, the self-portrait frustrates the observer, since there is nothing in it that associates Bavcar with the standard, canonical representations of blindness, such as representations from photographic portrait style,<sup>16</sup> or from Western art in which eyes covered by bands, closed or opaque, walking sticks, among other elements are often employed as a way to express the blindness (temporary or not) of its subjects.

By putting a bicycle in his self-portrait, Bavcar teases with these notions, since riding a bike is an activity generally thought to be impossible for a blind person, just like taking photographs and handling images. The top half of the photograph seems to embrace this notion, considering the impression of immobility given by the pose. However, the bottom half of it directly challenges this immobility feeling. Therefore, the shadowy portion of the picture precludes the notion of an immediate understanding through the image, that, in this case, is nothing more than making use of a previous knowledge on a subject that we expect to identify in the image that supposedly represents it. The shadow, acting as a stain, offers both the possibility of challenging

---

16. A few "canonical" examples of the depiction of blindness in the history of photography are: portraits of blind people taken by August Sander, the famous *Blind Woman* by Paul Strand. In both cases the posture, the gestures and the subtitles act as social boundary.

this previous knowledge, and of opening up to the unknown that demands an imaginative effort able to interfere with our common sense and galvanize its reordering under new terms.

Therefore, although Bavcar tells us in his book *Le Voyer Absolu* (1992) that his life became stagnant after he had become blind, moving ever more slowly and relying on familiar paths to walk around cities, he also talks about succeeding in horse riding, skiing and even riding someone on a motorcycle in first gear, everything after some preparation. He also mentions some friends that learned how to do things usually thought of as impossible to be done by blind people, just to make a point, like using a firearm. As follows, Bavcar's self-portrait with the bicycle also challenges people's expectations on what a blind person is and what this person can do. There are other sources of tension in this portrait, like the glasses: "At the beginning, after I'd become blind, I used to wear very dark glasses to highlight what I was; now, I wear lighter glasses, to suggest a sort of intellectual flair" (Bavcar 1992, 10).<sup>17</sup> As an answer to the common sense that relates glasses to an image of intellectuality and sunglasses to blindness, he expresses the necessity to, even lacking the physical capability of sight, answer to the demands of a world that is organized and oriented by a perception (and conception) that does not correspond to his own, at the same time that he teases with this same worldview. The chosen objects used to present him, both in his daily life and in this self-portrait, denotes their importance for the creation of a self-image. A self-image that is always understood as a continuous process of creation and affirmation to others.

The self-portrait with the bicycle confronts the immobility, or stiffness, of the gaze that seeks to identify in the image something that is already expected to be found, as if the image were nothing more than a direct channel to the materiality of the world.

The shadow taken as a stain or allusive presence, acts just like other figurative elements, inserting in the image a rearticulated structure of ordinary references that engages our categories of identification of the Other, from which a certain notion of reality is fixated through stable categories. The image-stain becomes refractory to the projection of pre-conceived notions and demands an imaginative effort that goes beyond the simple act of identifying elements depicted in the image. Thus, a whole array of possible interpretations takes shape with the insertion of the image in other constellations built not only of visual images, but also of verbal images and of other kinds.

---

17. From the original: "Au debut de ma cécité, lorsque je la pranais trop au sérieux, je portais des lunettes très foncées pour accentuer ce que j'étais; à presente j'utilize des lunettes plus claires, pour avoir l'air d'un intellectuel" (Bavcar 1992, 10).

Bringing the syncategorematic level to the foreground of the image, Bavcar's self-portrait is a refusal to reduce the image to an unequivocal meaning provided by the visual resemblance between an icon and its referent. Photography, thus, when understood as an index or trace of contact, should not be taken as a window to reality, but rather as its vestige in suspension, that is: in latency, waiting for new gazes and interpretations. Beyond offering access to reality, ungraspable in its totality, photography rather disputes it by crisscrossing different possibilities of interpretation, namely, different "perspectives" directed at it. Perspectives that generate dissent and consensus over what the image allows us to see beyond what is visible on its surface.

Although the possibilities described above can be found in every photographic image, it seems that what Bavcar tries to do in his photographs, specially the self-portraits described here, is to bring to the foreground its character of latent indetermination, its capability to create and articulate with other *endogenous images* (Belting 2014) existing in our imagination. Also, it brings forward the faculty of imagination as an essential activity to interpret images, that is: an exercise of assembly of vestiges, of ruins of memory.

#### FACING THE IMAGE: CLOSE YOUR EYES TO SEE FURTHER

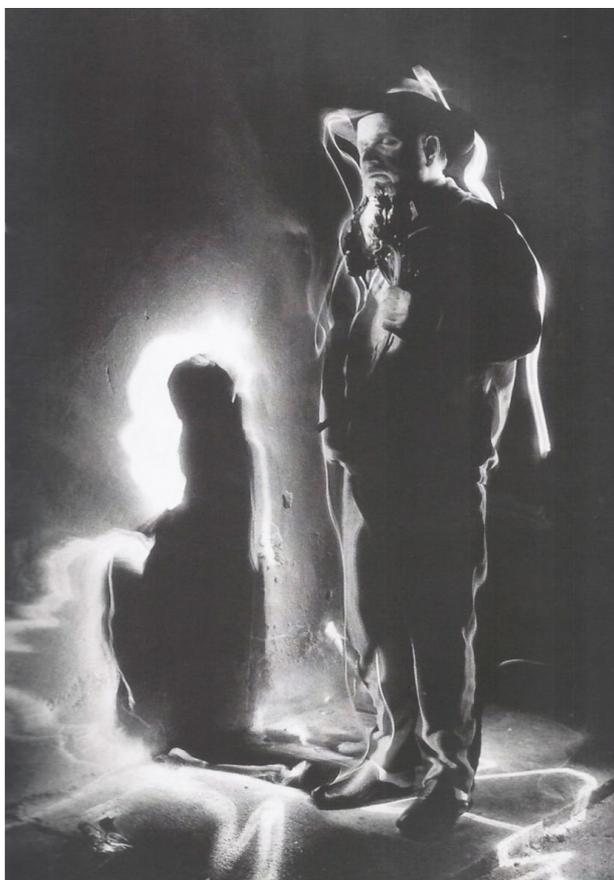


IMAGE 8  
Evgen Bavcar,  
untitled. From the  
"Self-portraits"  
series (Bavcar  
2003a).

The fourth self-portrait brings Bavcar holding a flower close to his chest. With his eyes closed, he stands still next to a wall to his right side, where his shadow is projected. By closing his eyes, Bavcar diverts attention from his face to other elements in the photograph. Eyes sealed, we give more attention to other elements composing the image, like the shadow projected on the photograph. A shadow with contours that could reference Christian iconography being a Pietà or a Madonna highlighted by a halo produced by light. The shadow, then, is an image-stain containing a latent form, inconclusive (or virtual), that can be revised when it refers to other images.



IMAGE 9  
Giovanni Bellini –  
Wily Madonna,  
1480 – 1490.<sup>18</sup>

It is often said that closing your eyes in face of an event is a way to ignore it, if not a demonstration of horror. In front of an image, however, when he closes his eyes, Bavcar's act gains a double meaning. It can be both an association with the representation of blindness, and an association with the shadow in the shape of Pietà. That gives the image a transcendent meaning that goes beyond what can be seen. Standing still in front of the image, Bavcar signals an in-between place that gives access

<sup>18</sup>. Available on: <https://bit.ly/2WPrtcg>.

to the transcendental. That shape is only associated with Pietà after an imagination effort since, according to Bavcar himself, this Christian icon operates as a way of seeing what is invisible, something whose referent is beyond the image itself (Bavcar 2005). This same quality is highlighted by Didi-Huberman (2010): Christian icons are able to present, whether distant and invisible, the potency of the image (painting or sculpture) to stare at the believer, making this person close his/her eyes believing to be gazed at and touched by it. It is a manifestation of the power of memory that charges the object with the virtual images connected with its cult and sacred character. According to the author, then, it is the manifestation of a desire to see that is brought to light by the icon:

So, it is indeed the *strength of desire* that manages to incite the paradoxical performance of this object: because the frustration of visibility – demonstrated by Dante in renowned verses about the “ancient insatiable hunger” to see God face to face –, this same frustration is “replaced” for a visual desire for excellence. Not for a simple curiosity, but for a hyperbolic desire to *see further*, an eschatological desire for a visibility that goes beyond the ordinary space and time. (Didi-Huberman 2010, 152)

However, I believe that we fool ourselves by limiting Bavcar’s act of closing his eyes to a *mise en scène* of a transcendental gaze taken as above reality. This is rather, like the shadows found in Duchamp’s work, an expression of the intractable reality that, as such, always remains invisible. Bavcar’s gesture invites us to do the same. To close our eyes against his own image and letting it reclaim our virtual images to develop with them new ways to see the world. The closed eyes, therefore, set in motion an Imaginary about the different ways to face an image. This gesture reappears in other photograph present in the book *Memórias do Brasil* under the title of the *portraits* series.



IMAGE 10  
Evgen Bavcar,  
untitled. From the  
“Portraits” Series  
(Bavcar 2003a).

In the portrait above, the model closes her eyes to let the hand touch her face (“to be seen up close”) by the photographer. It is a gesture that alludes to representations of Christian iconography of blind people being cured.



IMAGE 11  
Nicolas Poussin  
– The Healing  
of the Blind of  
Jericho, 1650.<sup>19</sup>

According to Moshe Barasch (2001), who studied representation of blindness in western art history, the healing of the blind is a motif depicted in the Old Testament as one of the greatest miracles, far surpassing what was conceived as belonging to the earthly world. Back in this period, pictorial representations of this motif were found, usually, in places and objects related to funeral rites like catacombs and frontal panels of sarcophagi. For this researcher, when found in this context, the “healing of the blind” does not represent a physical cure, but personal salvation, making this motif a representation of the transition from earthly to eternal life. Besides, according to him, during this period, terms like “blindness” and “darkness” were considered synonyms and used metaphorically to describe people before their conversion to Christianity (Barasch 2001, 47-55).

In this central gesture found in representations of cure of the blind – Jesus extending his hands and touching the (usually) closed eyes of the blind – Borsch (2001) identifies reverberations of a representation of Oedipus being punished (present on the surface of an Etruscan urn), which he defines as a “energetic inversion” (Barasch 2001, 38) that denotes the polarization of the gesture: from the knife about to blind Oedipus to Jesus’ hand about to restore the ability to see, both leading the observers to focus on the depicted eyes, a detail that, otherwise, might have been overlooked.

<sup>19</sup>. Available on: <https://bit.ly/3e4Y43G>.



IMAGE 12  
Etruscan  
Urn, Oedipus  
Punishment  
(Barash 2001).



IMAGE 13  
"The healing of the  
blind", Catacombs  
of Domitilla  
(Barash 2001).

In Bavcar's portrait, we see neither a sacred figure giving back a blind man his vision, which would not be a witness to a divine power, nor a violent act afflicted in someone's eyes. We rather see a blind man himself using his "palpable gaze" to "cure" the "non-blind" blindness, closing their eyes to the immediate vision and eliciting them to see the potency of what remains invisible.<sup>20</sup>

20. In an interview to Eduardo Veras, Edson Sousa and Elida Tessler, Bavcar (2003b, 116) shares his desire to "make the blind be seen. An impossible mission, almost unbearable".

Close your eyes to see, close your eyes to be seen. This is not about ignoring images; but rather, this is about giving them life, fostering them in their pulsating movements and feeling them touch us, and connecting with the beats of our hearts. It is exactly when images hit us deep, mobilizing our passions and sources of unrest, that they provoke *apparitions*. They are saved from the limiting scope of imitation that “shows no more than what can be seen, whilst imagination is capable of representing even what has never been seen [...] in the shape of an image, of an apparition” (Didi-Huberman 2015, 25).

The wish to see beyond images is the impulse to pursue its oscillating motion of apparitions and disappearances, following them in their transformations and freeing them from the bland copy or imitation through work of imagination. Therefore, facing images with “closed eyes” is a way of getting to know them in their own lives, acting in the interstice and fissures of the unknown provoked by them. The image-stain in the form of shadows described in Bavcar’s self-portraits are connected to the history of art and to the representations that came to be part of our common sense about blindness, all that in a game in which the elements of indetermination found in images confront this very same common sense by placing all visibility in liminality.

Here I write liminality because the stain is refractory to the illusion of pure transparency in photography and it puts forward every image’s projective and evocative character. The stain gives a glimpse precisely where it seems to be lost to sight. Its vulnerability and potency reside on the fact that by foregoing any supposed objectivity and the ability of direct designation of a referent, it gets open to a polysemy where to see an image gives no guarantee of possession or right to its meaning.

As a result, through his photographs, Bavcar manages to challenge the common sense about blindness. A common sense that understands blindness as privation of images. That way, Bavcar enjoys his freedom, since he says that: “to be free is to be able to look at a different way and to have, above all, independent imagination built by your own visions” (Bavcar 2005, 157).

That is why I am sure Bavcar would agree with Jacques Rancière (2017) when he says that: “an emancipated community is a community of narrators and translators” (Rancière 2017, 29). according to this French philosopher, the strength of an observer does not reside in his/her belonging to a group, but in this person’s ability to “translate on his/her own terms what is perceived, and to tie that to a unique intellectual adventure that makes him/her akin to anyone [...] who is equally able to utilize this common strength to trace their own path” (Rancière 2017, 21).

In agreement with this interpretation, the portrait showing Bavcar's hand touching the face of the model whose eyes are shut expresses reciprocity and the wish for communion based on the exchange of experiences. By closing her eyes in order to be seen by the blind artist, the model's gesture evokes the recognition of several possible ways of seeing. That also invites us to, when facing an image, repeat the same gesture of recognizing the bias, and need for completion, of our visions. That is how we recognize different types of blindness in our shared experience of the world, blindness that both unite and divide us. Based on that, it is worth bringing Bavcar's own words: "So, what is a gaze? It may be the sum of all our dreams of which we forget the nightmares by looking at them in a different way" (Bavcar 1992, 16). The blind photographer character is, thus, the one that takes us to foreign lands, in a thought done through images on which borders between the possible and the impossible are redefined, allowing us to dream with a world where the distinction between blind and non-blind is done to highlight the uniqueness and plurality of our ways of being and seeing. Ways that are the result of the crisscrossing of gazes that reconfigure the terms required to participate in and share a life in community.

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY REFERENCES**

- Barasch, Moshe. 2001. *Blindness: the history of a mental imagen in Western thought*. London: Routledge.
- Barthes, Roland. 2015. *A câmara clara: nota sobre fotografia*. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira.
- Bavcar, Evgen. 1992. *Le voyeur absolu*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil.
- Bavcar, Evgen. 1994. A luz e o cego. In *Artepensamento*, org. Aduino Novaes, 461-467 São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.
- Bavcar, Evgen. 2003a. *Memória do Brasil*. São Paulo: Cosac & Naify.
- Bavcar, Evgen. 2003b. O verdadeiro valor do tempo. Entrevista concedida a Eduardo Veras, Edson Sousa e Elida Tessler. *Humanidades*, no. 49: 114-120.
- Bavcar, Evgen. 2005. A imagem, vestígio desconhecido da luz. In: *Muito além do espetáculo*. São Paulo: Editora Senac São Paulo.
- Belting, Hans. 2014. Imagem e Sombras: Da teoria da imagem em Dante à teoria da arte. In: *Antropologia da imagem: por uma ciência da imagem*, 239-266. Lisboa: KKYM.
- Benjamin, Walter. 1987. Pequena história da fotografia. In: *Magia e técnica, arte e política: ensaios sobre literatura e história da cultura*. Vol. 1, *Obras escolhidas*, 91-107. São Paulo: Brasiliense.
- Boehm, Gottfried. 2017. Aquilo que se mostra. Sobre a diferença icônica. In: *Pensar a imagem*. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica Editora.
- Deleuze, Gilles e Félix Guattari. 2012. Ano zero - rostidade. In *Mil platôs: capitalismo e esquizofrenia 2*, vol. 3, 35-68. São Paulo: Editora 34.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1993. *Memoirs of the blind: the self-portrait and other ruins*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Didi-Huberman, Georges. 2010. *O que vemos, o que nos olha*. São Paulo: Editora 34.

- Didi-Huberman, Georges. 2011. *Sobrevivência dos vaga-lumes*. Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG.
- Didi-Huberman, Georges. 2012. Quando as imagens tocam o real. *Pós*, vol. 2, no. 4: 204-219.
- Didi-Huberman, Georges. 2015. *Falenas*. Ensaaios sobre a aparição. Lisboa: KKYM.
- Didi-Huberman, Georges. 2017. Devolver uma imagem. In *Pensar a imagem*, 205-225. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica.
- Dubois, Philippe. 2012. *O ato fotográfico e outros ensaios*. Campinas: Papyrus.
- Edwards, Elisabeth. 2012. Objects of affect: photography beyond the image. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol. 41: 221-234. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-092611-145708>.
- Foncuberta, Joan. A pós-fotografia explicada aos macacos. Porto Alegre: PPGAV/UFRGS, v. 21, n.35, maio 2018: 35-45
- Foulkes, Benjamín Mayer. 2014. El fotógrafo siega. In *El fotógrafo ciego: Evgen Bavcar en México*, comp. Benjamín Mayer Foulkes, 9-42. México: 17, Conaculta.
- Krauss, Rosalind. 2002. *O fotográfico*. Barcelona: Gustavo Gili.
- Mauss, Marcel. 2003. Ensaio sobre a dádiva: forma e razão da troca nas sociedades arcaicas. In *Sociologia e antropologia*, 183-314. São Paulo: Cosac Naify.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. 2014. *O visível e o invisível*. São Paulo: Perspectiva.
- Montiel, Juan Antonio. 2014. Las (des)apariciones de Evgen Bavcar. In *El fotógrafo ciego: Evgen Bavcar en México*, comp. Benjamín Mayer Foulkes, 219-237. México: 17, Conaculta.
- Novaes, Adauto. Evgen Bavcar- Não se vê com os olhos. In: *O ponto zero da fotografia*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Very Special Arts Brasil, 2000 25-36.
- Novaes, Adauto. 2003. Imagens impossíveis. *Humanidades*, no. 49: 106-113.
- Rancière, Jacques. 2009. *A partilha do sensível: estética e política*. São Paulo: EXO experimental org., Editora 34.
- Rancière, Jacques. 2017. *O espectador emancipado*. São Paulo: WMF Martins Fontes.
- Rouillé, André. 2009. *A fotografia: entre documento e arte contemporânea*. São Paulo: Editora Senac.
- Sousa, Edson Luiz André de. 2006. Noite e dia e alguns monocromos psíquicos. *Revista do Departamento de Psicologia*, UFF, vol. 18, no. 1: 77-86. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-80232006000100007>.
- Tessler, Elida. 2003. Evgen Bavcar em diagonal. In: *Memória do Brasil*, Evgen Bavcar, 7-14. São Paulo: Cosac & Naify.
- Turner, Victor W. 2013. *O processo ritual: estrutura e antiestrutura*. Petrópolis: Vozes.

**RODRIGO FRARE BARONI** holds a Master's degree in Social Sciences by the Universidade Federal de São Paulo (Unifesp) and a bachelor degree in Social Sciences by the same university. He is a member of the Visual and Urban Research Group of Unifesp (Visurb). E-mail: [rodrigof.baroni@gmail.com](mailto:rodrigof.baroni@gmail.com)

**Use license.** This article is licensed under the Creative Commons CC-BY License. With this license you can share, adapt, create for any purpose as long as you assign the work.

Received: 10/14/2019

Resubmitted: 01/16/2020

Accepted: 03/06/2020