

Opening

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There are in every city, in every hub of population, places of neglected appearance that, however, secrete a strange beauty. Their singularity comes from a kind of accumulation without ownership that profanes public and private laws. Always excessive, even hurtful to our eyes, they can become grotesque when all that can be perceived are the remains of a party to which we were never invited. On their walls, cries of joy resonate like the echoes of a hubbub that has not yet managed to wake us up; here the barks of trees whisper love, like never healing wounds. In these places, we can feel, even more intensely, the latent collective as a nightmare of "public order", as the reappearance of an oceanic feeling always threatening to overflow. However, they also reveal marks of an intimacy that exceeds many of our "private affairs", an intimacy that, rather than being in opposition to the collective, welcomes its appearance at clandestine hours, away from watchful eyes, under the parapet of a complicity showing the first sign of revolt.

Perhaps you wonder what revolt deserves to be called "intimate"? To understand, any of these places could be a good starting point, although the path of the intimate can't be followed at any time. If you want to find it, you must go on many walks until the exact time; at least that is what Aurore Valade taught me: you have to walk until the city recovers its original state of labyrinth, walk until you reach one of the threads that memory sometimes lets us glimpse, for that which in intimacy is revolt, is this memory returning again.

Some languages of Latin origin suggest this meaning of the word "re-volt" that Julia Kristeva ties to a return of the archaic outside linear time¹. It is a "displacement of the past" in which, so to speak, is recreated a moment of transgression that we can apprehend, first, as the solid building of chronological time, the time of concatenations of causes and of consequences, the time that "links" moment together. As it happens unexpectedly, what this memory shows us is that our time is porous, that it is full of cuts through which the past infiltrates. One must thus read the words that seep into these places of which I speak, reading them too while paying attention to the moment when language arises like a declaration, and, hardly noticed, is addressed to me from an all of us. Because, possibly, what comes back in revolt is the ability to read what no one else would have written, perhaps the fleeting and unexpected encounter in which I recognize myself through the opening of what in me is "the innermost", the intimate.

I have known Aurore since she told me about this type of experience. In Madrid, she was walking in one of those neighbourhoods of abandoned appearance where it seemed everything had happened before our arrival. On the pavement leaves fallen from trees mixed with papers detached from improvised billboards, words of revolt whose meaning moved disconcertingly between political pamphlets and more or less homemade advertising. What she would not have noticed at any other time, at that moment presented itself with surprising intensity: surrounded by silence in this abandoned place, these words challenged her memory, they spoke to her from even further away as they said: "We want to change your life completely".

Strange is the way in which words break away from the moment that intended to give them meaning, strange is the way they escape from their initial context. Those who succeed in reading them differently will also escape oblivious to the spectacle and publicity, as if the words were not meant to who I am at this precise moment, to this private "me" or this public "Me", but to *another* much older who lives inside me and allows me to open myself to intimacy. It is in this very same opening - the one that allows intimacy - that this revolt takes place, its meaning being, as Kristeva tells us, in the dignity of one who attains autonomy by renewing its link with others². In fact, without this intimate revolt, we could hardly talk, we would remain forever subjected to infancy, in its literal meaning, that is, to the *in-fantia* of one who does not speak, or better, of one who stands at the threshold that unites and separates the sounds of pure language and of discourse.

Infancy is the place where these revolts are forged and can still be conceived. This infancy, to which Aurore gave her very early attention, keeps offering itself to us as the experience of an opening which is, between the laughter and the screaming, between the fights and the rudeness of children, the space where humanity preserves its specific animality, its intimacy³. The uproar, the explosion of joy or of sadness cannot hide its extreme fragility. But despite this highly vulnerable characteristic - or precisely because of it - we must acknowledge that only in this space can we begin to tell our history. Better still, we could say that there

is no history without infancy, since history is, in every respect, this departure from infancy that urges us to return to it again and again. However, this history demands more than just the sound of a word: it also calls for the ability to create the images that the words name. Finally, everything that may be historical in the idea of revolt, may start when an "I" becomes autonomous, precisely when one begins to speak to another and senses the emergence, from this singular conversation, of its own image.

From this viewpoint, Aurore's work could only develop between the word and the image, and could have come from no other point of departure than that of conversation. "To con-verse" means to go with the other, although we do not know if we are going here or there, it is the slow construction of this "going" that will give meaning to the conversation. Someone with whom I feel an affinity wrote that "intimacy is linked to the art of telling life" ⁴; surely if this life we tell in intimacy is close to art, it is because its facts are never ended. Quite the opposite, when we tell it, we also build it, we also imagine it. Thus, appear the photographs of Aurore. Photographers are said to work with continually disappearing things; but in Aurore's case, I would reverse the statement without losing sight of its extreme fragility. Because Aurore is working with what is continually appearing, and above all, with what we could still make appear as a future.

¹ Vid. KRISTEVA, Julia, *Sens et non-sens de la révolte*, Éditions Fayard, 1996.

² Cfr. KRISTEVA, Julia, *La révolte intime*, Paris, Éditions Fayard, 1997, p. 16.

³ Cfr. PARDO, José Luis, *Políticas de la intimidad*, Madrid, Escolar y Mayo, 2012, p. 10.

⁴ PARDO, José Luis, *La intimidad*, Valencia, Pre-Textos, 1996, p. 29.