
Chronicle of an Instant: The Announced Genocide

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A detail of a close-up. Five actors and a protagonist. A destroyed city environment. The foundations of a building shattered by the fury of explosive devices. Behind the camera, the footprints of a chronicler who testifies to the fury of arrogance and systematic terror. Palestine is, once again, the target of Israeli soldiers.

In the photo, two predominant shades of colors. A first look catches the set of colors that delineate the bodies, clothes, identities, and the agitated course of events, after the pounding of missiles taken from some grotesque device, built to wipe out lives, cancel the time of disjointed humans or the "natural" course of crowds, often anonymous.

This photo is drawn around a small, defenseless central character. His face will not make it to the front pages of glamorous publications or digital billboards of international corporations. It will go down in history as a figure, a statistical data. It will trigger a sum of protests on social networks that the "virtuous" algorithms will take care of shredding it like nothing.

A second color, white. Sometimes perceptible; others, secret. But it definitely filled the whole frame. It can be touched as an essential part of the narrative that develops in this image. It's a deafening, violent, dying tale. The shades of spectrum work as screen, an inexplicable trail. It's a huge irrepressible cloud or sheet of large proportions, unfold for the occasion, which in the end it's ephemeral.

It's the protagonism of the dust that explodes —and explores— every inch of the scene and every pixel of a snapshot, whose adjectives add up: outrageous, shocking, painful. There's also the darn word impotence.

These are the signs of this picture aimed at documenting a "unique, unrepeatable" moment, sometimes undeniable, because you fall — or you can fall — into restlessness. The required articulations are broken, coherence is cut off, the end point of your desire to speak leads to other disparate paths or to nothingness, to that nothingness that's also the whole. Anger is unleashed, that anger which is also ephemeral, recycled.

Of course, there's a third color in this chronicle, which in truth is not within its sadder limits. It doesn't dwell in its photographic folds, in the contours of its best frames. Not present even in the imagination of a specialized critic, accustomed to deciphering the keys to all symbology.

This color doesn't exist in any chromatic palette, in any catalog of watercolors, oils or paintings, the latter created to sketch entire walls, interior spaces or forest furniture. Of course, it can be described, deciphered, put into adjectives or question marks that go through, many times, as multiple related answers.

It's the color of the silence of others, of the calculated equidistant or of the one who articulates previously made-up words, thought as asymmetries. All of them arranged so that they don't disturb the other. The one with hidden power sitting in a powerful computer supported by acclimatized servers. Or that lobbyist who pays outrageous amounts, or not so much, to silence a doubt, a question, an imperceptible moment of fury.

Those who help for life are of the same color, dressed as deputies, senators, columnists, editors or secret agents. Career politicians or opportunists in this essential "profession" can add to this indescribable color, which some applied semiotics congress should name, to resolve this conceptual and terminological void.

And there are, as part of that unresolved color, the answers fed with those two sinuous words, always "saving: international community". With them, not few inhabitants of this broken planet, are "saved" from all responsibility, from all ethical and humanistic doubts. It's a kind of frontal sentence: "if the international community has made a statement, everything? is solved."

And while the words crowd on social networks, in the mass media - and the many other succulent authorized voices emit "forceful statements" - the announced genocide keeps its course.

The caption of this snapshot reads: "A Palestinian carries the lifeless body of his daughter after rescuing her from the rubble of a building destroyed in an airstrike in Gaza City. The UN Secretary General, António Guterres, has warned the parties in conflict that "indiscriminate attacks against civilians violate international law."

Translated by Amilkal Labañino / CubaSi Translation Staff
