Some Reflections About the World We Are Living In

We are going (have gone?) through a quarantined life, situated in unmapped territories and new time dimensions. Never before we have experienced a pandemic like Covid19, with its corollaries of extreme vulnerability and fear of dying, isolation, uncertainty accompanied by new perceptions of our own body and new/different ways of interacting with the others.

It is also true that, what the French call l’écriture du moi, has proliferated. Autobiography, auto-fiction, autobiographical novels, self-portraits in painting/drawing, personal performances and diaries (and many other forms of personal expression) seem to be the best way of representing and communicating our current experience of being in the world. Also, that pendular movement of remembering and forgetting, of going back to the past-our personal/reconstructed past- in the middle of the unknown, is a good exercise to preserve our sense of identity and mental sanity.

Those who have read my work and/or attended my classes and presentations have heard me, more than once, quoting Ricardo Piglia’s statement that “Literary criticism is the modern form of autobiography”. For quite a while now, I have been moving from literary criticism to the autobiographical mode. The purpose of this talk is to share with you some entries of my diary written between February 2020-2021. Running the risk of being too self-centered (one of the conditions of the autobiographical genre), I have been inspired by two recent books: Zadie Smith, Intimations (2020), and Slavoc Zizek, PANDEMIC. Covid 19 Shakes the World (2020).

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