

ALIVE. I am, with pleasure.

BABEL. From the fallen tower dust was born.

BASIN. I always keep an eye on the bottom of the basin when I'm washing floors. It has to be there, nearby, to make the floor tiles at home even cleaner. If I lose sight of the bottom of the basin an unstained horizon is further away.

BROOM. The broom holds a dialogue with the home and its contents. To be more effective, from time to time it tries to slip under the furniture. A vacuum cleaner would be a possibility, but its bulk and noise would make it an other. The broom is still oneself.

BUFFING. Loving makes shiny.

CAMP. In spring, the weather was fine at the camps. Green grass, soft sun and the living. At the side of the road, at the side of us, there were wrongdoers making camps.

CEMETARY. Lying there under our feet, almost gone beneath the heavy stone, are stowed the fragile bodies.

CHURCH. Deserted, the house of God is closed too often.

CITY. Under the layers of the city lie the former inhabitants, who don't miss a chance to get in the way of the living, when a shop or an underground car park is to be built.

COLOUR. I wasn't a colour, I became white in Kinshasa.

CREATING. To be happy and intense like a lover.

DIGGING. A good spade and a good pick axe for a beautiful tomb.

DUSTING. Household dust, while elusive in the air, comes to rest on the floor, on objects and on furniture. It insinuates itself between the furniture and the walls. Little by little, it becomes concentrated. It accumulates, gets stronger, builds itself up. Dusting is therefore necessary.

EARTH. When I am abroad, far from home, I am still on the curve of the earth.

FARAWAY. Run to go faster, sweep to go further.

FARM. My forebears lived and worked on the farm. I am also from the terra firma.

FATIGUE. Exhausted, worn out, but not dead.

FEET. The earth is sometimes hard, burnt, moved with the heavens or Promised. Above all, it is there, under our feet. Holy and to be protected.

FIELD. Ploughed, cultivated and always honoured, the fields of the North of France have found peace again.

FLOORCLOTH. Hung on the brush against the wall, the rinsed floorcloth loses its water, coming to rest after washing the floors of the house.

GOD. The call to prayer came through my bedroom window, like a wake-up call. Then four times a day in the Cairo streets. And there was the immense desert, where I realised that God does not live in towns or cities but in open spaces. God is great.

GREEN SPACES. The machetes are dirty and a little rusty, but nowadays they cut the grass.

GROUND. On the ground, gravity soothes my body. Sitting, contemplating the horizon. Giving oneself time, resting time. Forgetting neglected ground, forgetting the earth that covers buried loved ones. Grounded, at rest.

HEAVEN. I shall not go to heaven, I want to stay on earth. On the grassy meadows, in the peat of the marshes, in the waters of the Loire and the Atlantic.

KINSHASA. Placed on the ground as if it had no foundations, Kinshasa was born yesterday evening. Large areas of small homes; no large buildings. Little tarmac, no public transport as yet, no refuse collection as yet, but a great deal of green. Vegetation-green, dense and damp, ready to absorb the town. Kinshasa was born yesterday evening.

LANDSCAPE. On foot, through my eyes, far or near, I live the landscape.

LIFE. Yes to art, but to life above all.

MARY. This woman mourns for her son, but she is forever with the living. Our loved ones leave us and we have to live.

MOUNTAIN. The mountain is placed on the ground. Thanks to all those hands searching for coal below, the mountain is born beneath the earth.

NANTES. When I return to Nantes I contemplate the Loire river and I feel good on the edge of the world.

NORD. For the love of beer and bricks.

PARQUET. Waxed and buffed, the parquet is the house's mirror.

PLACE. Non-places don't exist. There are plots, rooms, territories, sites; then again there are terrains, locations, areas, places, spaces and - my favourites - green fields and sandy deserts.

RINSING. New water running onto dishes.

ROUBAIX. Walls of bricks for houses and factories. Walls of bricks to live and work in.

RUBBLE. My way of thinking doesn't like rubble, but I am always touched by what it once was. Then there comes the time when, like an archaeologist, I am henceforth beneath the rubble. This is the time for clearing it away.

RUG. In place, suspended or hanging from a window ledge, the rug is ready for flight, unburdened by apartment dust and crumbs.

SAND. Big grains, medium-sized grains and little grains in my shoes. Dust in my socks.

SEOUL. A river, mountains. Apartment blocks and little wooden houses. Churches, temples and giant screens. Cars and yet more cars. Seoul polluted. And neons, neons, neons, Seoul lit up.

SIESTA. The meal is over, this is not a time for work.

SISYPHUS. When I grow up, I'll help Sisyphus find rest.

SNOW. On the streets and the pavements, beneath the wheels and the shoes, the snow is dirty.

SPONGE. The sponge is my most useful tool. Dry and hard or wet and soft, soaked in water and often saturated with dirt, a sponge is also very delicate.

STAY. The happiness of days in one place.

SURFACES. Natural, they are always beautiful.

SUR-SOLS. Floors are not always beautiful, so I imagine sur-sols (over-floors).

SWEEPING. Sweeping is naming and outlining my everyday life, refusing to forget my personal space. It is the pleasure of making clean, to be in a place defined by the absence of dust and of waste. Between ritual and discipline, sweeping is a support for reflection and, sometimes, a way of distancing oneself. Being concentrated and methodical, like a sportsman, aiming for cleanliness.

TOMB. Standing, on the edge of the hole we haven't dug, we always leave before the soil has been replaced. On the coffin of my loved ones, I will lay the earth.

TRAVEL. Pathways, streets, roadways, regions, countries, by car, by train, by plane, to walk, watch, work and love.

WAR. Crushed, wounded bodies torn to shreds. Today, lines of crosses in the cemeteries and still bodies lying in the ground of war.

WASHING. Rubbed water, carrying the dirt to the bottom of the sink.

WASTELAND. At the foot of the old town of Lublin, and at the edge of the Catholic cemetery: two large open spaces, not quite enclosures, not quite zones of transit. Two wastelands. The old Jewish neighbourhood, gone. The big Jewish cemetery, gone.

WATER. When the water no longer runs in the streams, the mountain is sad.

WHITE. The countryside is white, the town is white, the forest is white, the mountain is white. With its great white blanket, Poland is white.

WINE. At thirty five years of age, my wine trail: Muscadet, Savennières, Quart de Chaume, Coteaux du Layon, Bonnezeaux, Coteaux de l'Aubance, Saumur-Champigny, Chinon, Vouvray, Jasnières, Quincy, Sancerre, Châblis, Gevrey-Chambertin, Chambolle-Musigny, Pommard, Volnay, Chassagne-Montrachet, Mercurey, Margaux and Port.

WORDS. The act of naming marks my territory more clearly, my everyday space where the right words (mots propres), like tools, define themselves by use and modify themselves with age. Clean words (mots propres) and frequently dirty hands, to be with one-self, faraway from abandoned ground.

WORK. Buffing, clearing, cleaning, dusting, filming, mopping, naming, photographing, protecting, rinsing, rubbing, scouring, scraping, skating, sponging, sweeping, tidying, throwing, washing, waxing, wiping. I want to rest.

WORKSHOP. This everyday space: I've scoured, scraped, swept, washed, waxed, buffed. An enclave of cleanliness. Now, beneath my feet, the workshop parquet is already at the limit of dirtiness and neglect.

ZEN. Wipe the table, wash the dishes, sweep the settings, turn off the gas...

