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Memory is sometimes lazy. It requires support to evoke situations buried in oblivion. Photography is one of the crutches on which the so called episodic memory leans, which works as a hangar where the psyche stores the information with a personal meaning. When we glance over the family album or rummage through old pictures in the chest, the engines of the room containing that biographical memory start up. At times the result is surprising, as the pictures not always evoke the same incidents nor arouse the same feelings. Just some of the photographs in our most intimate circle can activate memories that we thought lost. This is very well expressed by the known start of Luz Casal's song: "Cada vez que veo tu fotografía descubro algo nuevo que antes no veía (Every time I see your picture I find something new that I did not see before)". This recovery of experiences before some of our private photographic treasures is a common phenomenon. Not so frequent is the fact that our biographical memory activates intimate emotions when contemplating pictures in which unknown people appear. This is the effect produced by Cristina García Rodero's photographs. A strange familiarity that can be defined in different ways, though all could be summed up in one: art.

Some of the psychological processes through which we recover the information stored in the memory were already known in Classical Greece, and were used for training orators. Since then, we know that to be able to remember any fact or experience it must be stored along with something familiar to us that helps evoke it, a friendly buoy from which to pull in order to recover said fact or experience. In order to remember, Cicero based his rhetorical method on the association between discourse contents and familiar images. Modern psychology has systematized rigorously these learning processes, finding out that though much effort is made to file these memories with asepsis, incidents marry to whoever they want in the large warehouse of long-term memory: an object, a scent, a sound... This is why, when we attempt to remember explicitly a specific memory, we evoke other undesired things or, conversely, a concept, a scent, a song make us remember things from the past that we were not looking for. This phenomenon, which is described as implicit memory, has been studied profusely in dozens of experiments. In one of the best-known ones, two groups of people were asked to memorise a list of 40 adjectives with their respective antonyms. One of the groups read the list in a room impregnated by a nice chocolate scent. The next day, the participants were located in different rooms. In one of them, the intensity of the scent was increased with respect to the previous day, which also improved the efficacy of the memory. The chocolate scent was incorporated to the list of adjectives, acting as a pilot light in the darkness (Schab, 1990). García Rodero's photographs, similar to the chocolate scent in the experiment, have an activating effect. When contemplating them, we relive experiences that we probably never experienced before, but which we feel them to be of our own.