

Temporal Saturation

Memory's inscription on the mind can be compared to afterburn on a retina after a flash of light. It is a physical enlightenment measured by the degree to which the gesture, the occurrence, the after-living, haunts the individual in blue repetition until they are released. The depth of this inscription and variations in its amplitude are a result of the phenomenon of temporal saturation—the explanation for why certain moments of your life seem to spill or shrink, to transcend or subvert their physical duration, and color differently their surrounding time.

Temporal saturation is an elusive measurement disproving any correlation between quantity and influence, that is used to explain both the canyons that can appear inside moments of great rending, joyous or horrific, entombing an incarnation of the self which will never again exist; as well as the median intervals of floating passivity that resist recollection and whose ending is marked by a feeling of awakening: a drowsy startle or a gradual reconsciousness.

High levels of temporal saturation are evidenced by a languorous stretching of the experienced present, which then refracts and amplifies the emotion of the moment. The joy making this spreading pleasurable, the fear terrible, though both poles can be described in terms of the sensation of falling. The difference being that the first is a falling *into* and the latter a falling *through*.

Low levels of temporal saturation are evidenced by malaise, an involuntary refusal on the part of the individual to knit themselves to the place they occupy. Homesickness—the corporeal and spiritual longing for a physical and temporal point of greatest belonging—is the best diagnosis to describe these ebbs of existence.

So the instance when in your room one afternoon you first reached for my face, placed your hands on either side and sighed. A sigh not of air escaping the lungs, but space escaping the heart—which suddenly I filled. And in that displaced space, that love broke around me, I drowned, I drown, I will forever drown. I burned, I burn, I will forever burn.

And conversely the feverish restless years I spent in the city, insensate, starving, trying always to convince myself that I loved things I did not. The night I called a boy, a beauty, talking to him through the wide night window of the city, talking to him and to the city itself, arguing about who would come to who across those streets, who would burrow crosstown through the inertia. Finally deciding to do nothing. We hung up. I left shortly afterward, and years later saw him at a party where, he told me how the part that called me and that I weakly tried to answer was dead, that he had killed it. This isn't an anecdote of the one who got away. It is evidence of a state and the proof: that despite our magnetism we both succumbed. And while some might posit that that was just the result of our indifference towards each other, the truth is we were both living through, which is a definition of surviving. No thing presented us with the hard edge of reality, no one acted on us with opposing and equal force, certainly not each other. (Is that youth? I no longer know.)

The measurement of temporal saturation then can be used to quantify both the abscesses and the vividities, these gestures floating in great swathes of meaningless automation. Just as the atoms composing a human body can condense smaller than the head of a pin, the self can like a black hole collapse, like a poem reduce. And the proof of the emptiness which oceans those bright livings is how they sparkle and call to each other despite the expanse of the interims, be they seconds, decades, lifetimes. Inlaid in space, they form the constellation of the soul.

A final note: there will be certain people in the life of each of us, figures ringed in mothglow, who can be expressed as refrains of richest temporal saturation. They run like a weft through, becoming so inseparable *you* ultimately cannot be defined without *them*. If you can recognize these people in their approach, these are the figures you will navigate by, by whom you will plot your journey. They represent the closest approximation to knowing another being. Which of course, has been proven over and over again, to be impossible.