

The Color Remains The Same

Ali El-Darsa

The story is never complete.  
Its totality is never encompassed.

This is a personal document.  
A self-dialogue in process.

He sits down.  
*He sits down facing him.*

(In the distance, they stare at one another).

Do you remember?  
*How can I forget?*  
What does it feel like?

Is it an image?  
*It is my own image.*

*What I see is not what you may feel.*

Is it overwhelming?  
*It is what I know well.*

Is it as daunting as it used to be?  
(He looks for an answer).

Where are you now?

*I am home.*

When did you go back?

*I am always in this place.*

Does it feel familiar?

*What is home anyway?*

I cannot answer that for you.

*Are we alike?*

Not so much.

*Where are you now?*

I am back with you in that unfamiliar place.

*What happened to us?*

We are stuck in an idea, an image.

It is so colorful the thought of you.

*Is it joyous?*

If you want it to be.

*Do you remember the day you left?*

I felt numb; happy; absent.

Events transformed;

Re-transformed;

Altered the image;

Reconstituted the document;

Fixed, they remained.

*Is this fiction?*

It is now.  
Its documentation.

Tell me the story again.  
*It is a fragment, suspended in fiction.*  
*It was a summer night when I walked away.*

Are you there now?  
*For a moment. I stand still.*

Is it in your head?  
*It is a physical space. I repainted a version of it in my head.*

*Describe it for me.*

*I am in a car; we are driving back to the city.*  
*I see a sunset barely fading into the blue sea.*  
*I am being driven away from it.*

*It is an orange color.*  
*Murky; Imprecise;*  
*So tranquil;*  
*So vivid.*

*I am aging, but the color remains the same.*

Do you think you will ever be free of it?  
*Everything around triggers that image.*

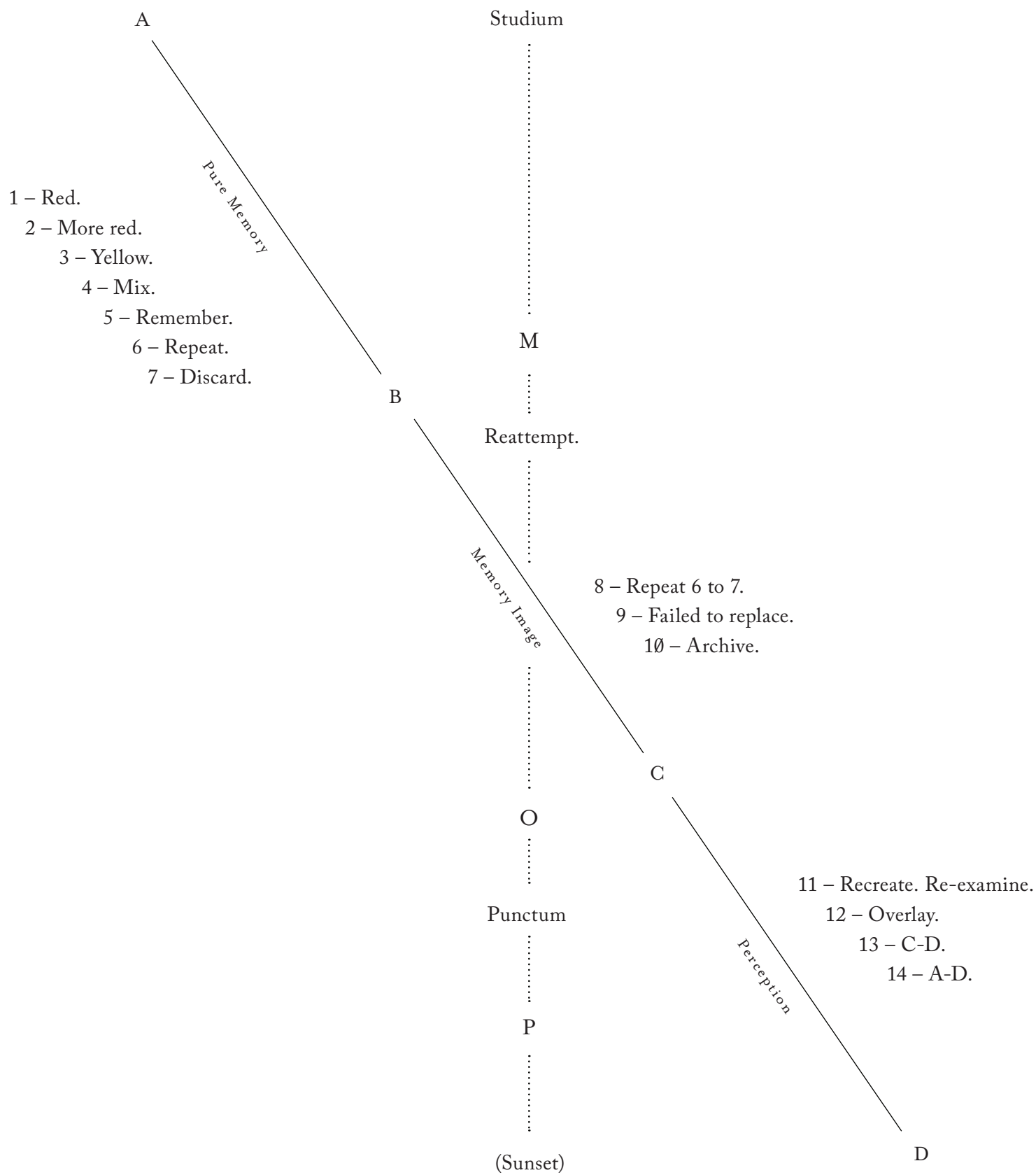
Let's stay on this path together.  
*The journey is never the same.*

***They part ways knowing that they will meet again.***  
***The image freezes.***

*It's calm here.*

***Suddenly everything is quieter.***  
***He is here now. Alone. Navigating.***

**A. The color remains the same.  
The journey continues.**



Bergson, H. (1991).

*He fails to restore his own image and finds himself back in that obscure space.  
Images decompress and overwhelm, the lighter the color becomes.  
Not far from the sea, he walks with a friend. She leads.  
The sun has not yet set.*

**He Walks;**

**Walking;**

**Keeps walking;**

Lost, she guides;

They pause; reflecting;

Examine; they re-examine;

Recalling;  
They listen carefully;

Looking;

In control; they try to be;

He follows;

She walks;

## Re-encounter.

The immediate "color-moment."\*

STRAIGHT CUT.

EXT: RAOUCHÉ, BEIRUT.

1. We'll turn left at the next intersection.
2. Where are we now?
3. We're here in Qraitim.
4. We're parallel to Australia Street.
5. We're opposite to...
6. opposite to where the explosion occurred.
7. Over there is the way that you can take,
8. but where are you going? Martyrs' Square?
9. Yes, I will go to Martyrs' Square.
10. So, downtown.
11. If I say downtown, he'll take me, right?
12. Yes, definitely.
13. Now, me too...
14. I want to go to
15. You're going to Mar Elias or...?
16. I want to go to Dekweneh.
17. It's better for us to keep going from Dekweneh,
18. If the driver takes me.
19. Even if you took a private cab,
20. It wouldn't make a difference.
21. Imagine how many just died now.
22. The guy apparently detonated himself in his room.
23. Yeah, but...
24. Mustafa told me that he blew himself up. Done!
25. Well, because they were about to catch him.
26. They knew about him, so he blew himself up.
27. Oh man...
28. Fuck, what's happening?
29. Now we'll freak out at every sound we hear.
30. But what's happening?
31. Nothing.
32. The situation is fine, you know?
33. That's Simon.
34. No, that's not Simon.
35. We don't want taxis going that way.
36. Can you back up?
37. Martyrs' Square and Dekweneh.
38. No no.
39. No, he's backing up.
40. I'm going to Martyrs' Square. She's going to Dekweneh.
41. - A private cab ride, you mean?
42. No, shared. She's getting off second.
43. I'll pay 2 "service" fares and she'll pay 1.
44. 6000 Lebanese Pounds, can you take us?
45. - Dekweneh, for 6000 Lebanese Pounds?
46. It's OK. Don't say Dekweneh.
47. He's going in a direction that we don't want to take.
48. Look, I can figure it out alone
49. because I'm getting off in a different neighborhood.
50. Yeah but I won't leave you.
51. No, I mean...
52. I will...
53. I will not leave you. Come on.
54. Now we are at...
55. Wait.
56. Please give me a moment to figure out the way.
57. Here is Sa'iyet El-Janzir.



Video stills from *The Color Remains the Same*, 2015.

58. Normally, we would come this way,  
59. on the way down to Bliss.  
60. Not Bliss. What's it called?  
61. Corniche El...  
62. We go down to...  
63. Where the...  
64. Karakol El-Druze,  
65. Aisha Bakkar.  
66. Yeah and we continue towards downtown.  
67. From there, you can go to Dekweneh, right?  
68. We can go up this way.  
69. If it's better, why don't you head down with me?  
70. Yes, maybe.  
71. and grab another "service" from there?  
72. That's what will happen.  
73. But I don't want...  
74. We want to get a ride from another neighborhood.  
75. All cabs will have to drive us through there.  
76. I don't mind taking a private cab,  
77. as long as we get there.  
78. Look at every one being so normal as if the situation is fine.  
79. Come on, Ali. They're all panicked.  
80. Look at them.  
81. They're all on their cell phones and by their cars.  
82. It's not so normal,  
83. but because he already blew himself up.  
84. It's not important anymore. It's an immediate reaction.  
85. They're not waiting around [...] where the explosion will occur.  
86. Fuck,  
87. I've never sweated like this ever in my fucking life.  
88. Because it happened so close to us.  
89. Look at us being so normal,  
90. waiting for a "service."  
91. Dekweneh, Dekweneh.  
92. How great is that driver arguing with us!  
93. Just give us a damn lift.  
94. Over here is my friend's house.  
95. He immigrated to France yesterday.  
96. Here?  
97. - Hello.  
98. Hi, how do we get to a main road?  
99. This way or that way?  
100. - Where are you going?  
101. - Hi Karim.  
102. We want to take a "service" downtown.  
103. - Downtown.  
104. - Go from here and tell the driver you want to go...  
105. Do we go up or down?  
106. - Up.  
107. Up and left.  
108. OK thanks.  
109. Both routes lead the same direction,  
110. but I don't want to take the long way.  
111. I need a cigarette.  
112. Here is Sa'iyet El-Janzir.  
113. It's quiet here.



Happening reported at 7:35 PM.  
Re-encountered at 7:48 PM.

**They Walk;**  
**Walking;**

B.

Memory Image

The happening plays on a loop interrupted by darkness.  
He watches carefully for that orange color.

They keep walking;

**Mediate reflections:  
Excavation of the color-moment.**

*He pursues his mundane and finds himself capturing moments of contradiction. Trying to make sense of his space, he collects obsessively, images of urgency and celebration. He forgets. His archive remembers.*

*Somewhere in the repertoire, a narrative forms itself in need of activation. He reflects, saddened by the celebration and joyed by the conflict. The structure breaks down. He ceases to understand, yet he engages in trying to make sense. These images are meant to be just images. Precarious, he contemplates:*

Everyone has a little bit of the sunset.

Everyone has the sea to escape.

Every celebration masks a pain.

Every pain celebrates a past.

Everyone has a construct.

Everyone strives for a luminous shade.

Oh my cherished...

My cherished spaces of ritual.

My dear:

Fields of reflection;

Flickers of abandonment;

Means of appropriation;

Encounters of celebration;

Needs for excavation;

Moments of reflection;

Gestures of restoration;

Failures of application;

Attempts of documentation;

Agents of separation;

Instances of (re)examination.

Oh my dear image, my joy, my melancholy,

I knew you would remain audaciously present.

Coming back to you,

I am still the same.

So different from you,

time has not changed.

My dear orange color,

return for a moment.

Form your memory and fade away.

Allow for reconsideration;

A visualization;

For the unfortunate reality of an illusion.

Oh his dear image.

**Walk away;**

**Walk away;**

He hesitates;

C. RE-ENCOUNTER: SOMBER SHADE OF THE COLOR-MOMENT.

STRAIGHT CUT.

INT - SOUTHERN SUBURBS, BEIRUT.

TRANSITORY HOME.



They celebrate the end of a soccer game.  
Their ritual is interrupted by a spectacle.  
Awake, he listens; unable to understand, he awaits.

A.

|| Is what we just heard an explosion?

|| I heard it,

|| but that was the sound of fireworks.

|| Is this an explosion?

H.

|| Where's he?

**A.**

|| What?

**H.**

|| Where's he?

**A.**

|| He fell asleep in the other room.

**Him**

|| Where was the explosion?

**H.**

|| Tayouneh.

**Him**

|| You're kidding!

**H.**

|| I swear.

**A.**

|| I swear.

|| It was at the Tayouneh checkpoint.

|| We went through it today.

**Him**

|| You're kidding. I don't believe you.

**A.**

|| Get up. It's on TV. The power is back.

|| I'm freaking out.

**H.**

|| Seriously, the blast is probably...

|| It's probably close to where you're staying.

**Him**

|| Where are you coming up with this?

**H.**

|| Get up and see. It's on TV.

**A.**

|| It's mentioned on TV.

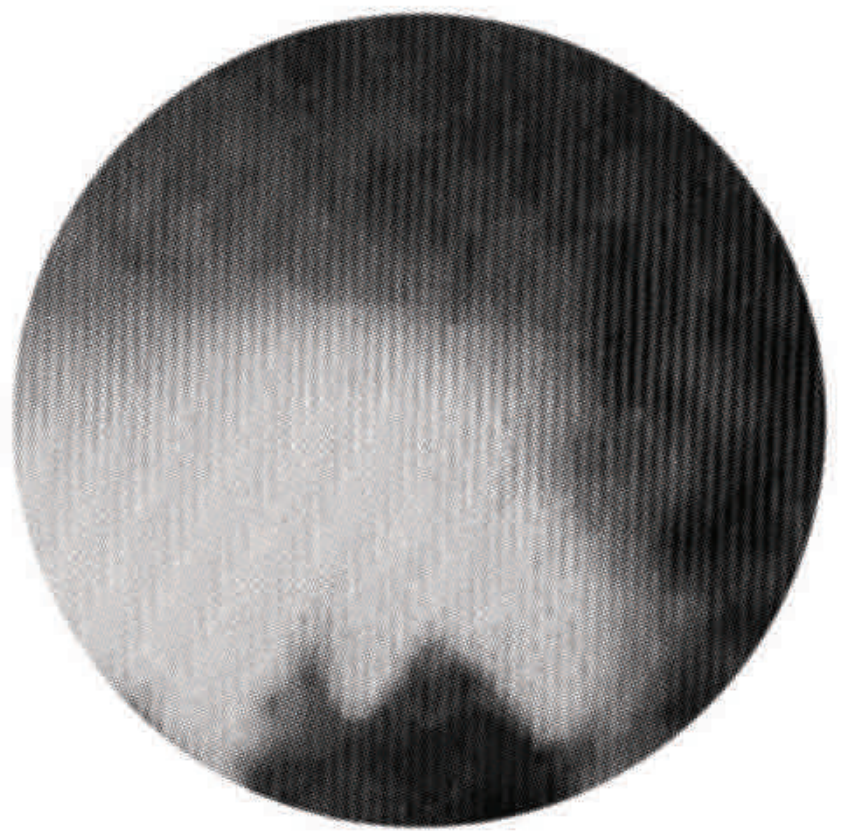
**H.**

|| Didn't you hear it?

|| I heard it all the way to here.

**CUT TO BLACK.**

Oh his precious sunset,  
fade away.



He sits down.  
*He sits down next to him.*

#### Bibliography

- Bergson, H. (1991). *Matter and Memory*. (N. M. Paul, & W. S. Palmer, Trans.) New York: Zone Books.
- Bernet, R., Welton, D., & Zavota, G. (2005). *Edmund Husserl: Critical Assessments* (Vols. 2: Vol. 2: The Cutting Edge: Phenomenological Method, Philosophical Logic, Ontology and Philosophy of Science). New York: Routledge.\*
- El-Darsa, A. (Director). (2015). *The Color Remains the Same* [Video]. Canada.

#### Credits

All images are video stills from *The Color Remains the Same*.

9min 32sec loop, part of *The Color Remains the Same*, installation, 2015.  
Two-channel video projection.  
HD, Stereo sound, Color.  
Arabic, English and Arabic with English subtitles.

12min 40sec loop, part of *The Color Remains the Same*, installation, 2015.  
Single-channel video projection.  
HD, Dolby surround sound, Color.  
Arabic and French with English subtitles.

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