

TIME

plural *times*

A non-spatial continuum that is measured in terms of events which succeed one another from past through present to future.

Bruno Marcos-Dezeuze

17th March 2020: France begins a generalized lock-down to try contain the COVID-19 pandemic. The population is asked to stay at home for an indefinite period of time.

The park closes. Streets empty. Pedestrians become rare. Planes disappear.

Time seems to have stopped.

In order for time to have meaning, things must happen. If not, the notion of time loses meaning, and it becomes a simple parameter: it is possible to move in either direction in time, forwards or backwards. This is what is known in physics as a simple system. An example is a billiard ball which moves forward on a horizontal surface. If we record this event and project the movie, it is impossible to guess whether the movie is projected as filmed or backwards. Time does not have a clear meaning, a clear direction. This is also true when a billiard ball is hit against another: it is impossible to determine what the direction of time is. Are we watching the film forwards or backwards? All simple systems, for example elementary particles, behave in this way.

And yet, time flows. Looking around us, this is obvious.

So how is it possible that time is not moving on for a billiard ball, but clearly goes on for the world around us?

This is related to the notion of complexity: time becomes meaningful if we consider a more complex system, with a greater number of entities. Let's go back to billiards: if we start a game of English billiards, by striking the white ball at the other balls in the triangle, it is evident which is the direction of time. You will know for sure, when you watch the movie, whether it is projected as filmed or, instead, backwards. This is closely related to the notion of chaos: if you change the way you throw the white ball very slightly, you get a very different final configuration of all the balls. It is no longer possible to reverse time.

Gaston Bachelard, in his philosophical theory of time, builds on the concept of simple versus complex systems. Duration is an effect of perspective. It is a complex construction, whereas the instant is related to our immediate conception of time. If there is no longer such a complex construction, the notion of time loses its meaning.

When the lock-down started, time stopped, it lost its signification. Our lives, usually full of events that mark the passage of time, became frozen. Each day looked like the precedent one.

Then, subtly, time reappeared. Its passage began to manifest itself in details that had previously escaped us, drowned out by the hubbub of daily events. In the same way that the sound of a dripping tap is imperceptible in the middle of the day but becomes evident in the silence of the night, the small events of everyday life, ignored until now, take on weight and start to recompose the web of time.

PROJECT OF EXHIBITION

The exhibition project consists in a video installation of pictures with sound and a selection of printed images.

The slideshow is constituted by two series of pictures: the first series, which consist in 207 pictures, which move forward as an epicyclic. Between them are interspersed 23 pictures of the second series. All the pictures have been take boulevard Jean Jaurès, in Nice, between the 17th March and 11th May 2020.

The first series of pictures is constituted by pictures with the same frame, taken twice a day, around 11 am and 3 pm, moments in which habitually the street and the park are very busy. This pictures show the *time stopped*.

The pictures of the second series, interspersed between the ones of the first series, show the *recovered time*.

The slideshow can be downloaded at

<https://marcosdezeuze.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/tiempo.mp4>

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