

Commuting Time

C.T.

Cum Tempore



In order to make *Commuting Time*, I had to travel by train between Santiago and Barcelona thirty times during the month of November 2022, one day in each direction, approximately 30,000 kilometres and 400 hours of travel in total. In each city I had an actor waiting for me and half of a stage where, each day, we recorded a shot of a conversation. The complete result is a 45-minute video. This publication consists of the notes I took on the train during the month.

About fifteen days before the start of the project, I travelled back and forth between Santiago and Barcelona to get an idea of the needs and possibilities of the trip.

22-23 October

I have excitement like on few trips before, perhaps the first time I went to Tokyo. I haven't been so excited by the prospect of a work since *One True Art*. The result: it would have been impossible for me a few days ago to imagine that I could get such joy out of getting on a train and finding that there is a socket under every seat.

The first few days have been particularly stressful, because of problems with the sets, with the sound, with the procedure.... I've been very busy with these arrangements and I haven't been able to think about the project, I've only had time to get overwhelmed. Besides, at the moment it's just a long train journey.

4 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

The most persistent feeling I have these days is one of ridicule. It is understood that the project is ridiculous when it is thought, when it is told, when it is prepared, but its absurdity is experienced in its full dimension when one suffers from back pain, when one feels trapped in a stupid self-imposed commitment, when one spends hours and hours thinking about everything that lies ahead. And it is then that the full force of this nonsense is experienced as applied to an intense point of thought, exploding *inwards* like a nuclear bomb. The project is ridiculous, above all, because I feel ridiculous in it: I feel that anyone could be laughing at me, at what an idiot I am - I don't think so, or not so much. An idiot in the common sense and in the etymological sense (without a public profession, who lives only for himself). But explanations of where the fountain is don't quench the thirst. Only walking to the fountain and drinking can quench thirst.

On the other hand, however, the fact that it is so absurd and requires so much effort and commitment makes me feel *essentially* ridiculous, not *just* ridiculous. It is the meaninglessness of life revealing itself. That imprints on all actions a character of novelty, of unique experience, that reminds one of what art is for and why it's worth being here a while longer.

On the first day of shooting, in Barcelona and Santiago, a rehearsal of the whole text was recorded for reference. I was surprised to hear the last words describing "what the project has been like" in the past tense. I had only travelled for two days and already I found in myself an echo of what I was going to feel at the end and which I wrote only with my imagination.

5 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

Leaving Galicia on odd-numbered days is more pleasant than leaving Barcelona on even-numbered days, even if I slept less. The landscape is beautiful, more nature (I don't see it on the way back because it's at night), the people who travel are calmer and more traditional. You could say that on this journey you are also travelling through time -historically-, because of the type of people who are getting on and off the train in both directions: from Barcelona there is more denaturalised emigration, more people conscious of their appearance, more youngsters glued to their telephones. As I get closer to Galicia there are more students, or country people. In any case, technology dominates the scene, and the rules of politeness specific to it have not been learned, and more rural is the area, volumes are louder, there is more beeping, ringing, bells, etc. This is, I come to think, as a result of the pandemic, that absolutely everyone is on electronic devices, even older couples who until recently had a rather more distant relationship with the phone.

Travelling by train obviously makes you feel the distance. But the fact that it takes so many hours, and so many times, means that, to a certain extent, the train acquires its own spatial dimension. It is no longer a journey between two cities, but a place where you are isolated from everything else. This results in a feeling more akin to be teleported from one city to another, so that the memory I have of yesterday's coffee in the bar in Barcelona is immediately superimposed on that of the bar where I have breakfast today in Santiago, with its local pastries, accents and so on. The cold and the rain in Santiago occur almost simultaneously in my experience with the crowded terraces of Barcelona, because the trip has lost that character of transition between one and the other, due to the speed of the alternation. It's like that card with drawings on both sides that is spun between two threads, so that it changes quickly from one side to the other and what is perceived is the combined image of the two images.

6 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

The train forces you to live very closely with people you don't know, which is not so common in other situations nowadays. You hear a variety of conversations, see what people are reading, what they spend their time doing on a regular basis. The compartment is a constant symphony of phone sounds of various kinds, of loudspeakers playing music occasionally, or for quite a long time, of videos or communications. This is quite disheartening, knowing what a large part of the Spanish population spends their time doing: football matches on their mobile phones, hours destroying soap bubbles in a video game, frantic scrolling through feeds... Advertisers have achieved the perfect *bioport* to introduce a stream of data into the minds of citizens. And the results are evident because, in addition, in the carriage you can also listen to the conversations they have with their family, friends and work colleagues - they force you to do it -, which reveal unimaginable intimacies.

They never ask me for proof of the ticket discount, but in Santiago there is a Renfe worker who is meticulous and very polite. I have shown him the card twice, and I will probably have to show it again tomorrow. I wonder if one day he will realise that it is the same person who shows it to him every other day, accustomed as he is to so many repetitions. Maybe at one moment he will think "this man travels a lot". And only a few days later he will think: "I think it was yesterday or the day before yesterday that he left for Barcelona", and maybe he will ask me something, by the end of the project.

Whenever meaninglessness is experienced intensely, the meaninglessness experienced is the meaninglessness of life. That is something to which some people are addicted, and for which it is worth all the effort and ingenuity that these projects require.

It is increasingly difficult to do something absurd. This waste is absurd, but nevertheless, a person writes to me on Facebook who immediately interpreted it as if it were motivated by my desire to create an artwork, that is, as if it were an investment, as if I had come up with a trick with which I can have one more work in my collection. The stupid expenses of marketing companies - investments - make it more difficult to do something that reveals the meaninglessness of life. To think that this effort, that this experience has the aim of "making work out of it" is a way of normalising it.

7 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

As I travel, I read the notebooks, as I do every year. In the 1998 notebook, I find this annotation for a theatre set, which would be a good image of this project: "I enter a set with a suitcase and take something out of the suitcase and put something else back in, go out and come back in, and so on".

The project tries to be precise. A large part of the improvisation, however, comes from Renfe, which is always late on this line. This creates a lot of stress. I wouldn't have minded arriving half an hour later if the arrival time was set and announced half an hour later. But the feeling of being late, and the hope that I will make up minutes, and the constant checking, is unavoidable and exhausting. Especially when I think that there are people and work waiting, and that every minute later I arrive is one minute less that I sleep.

In Barcelona I'm in an Airbnb that makes you think that this is just a modern way of calling post-war pensions. Sordid. The good thing is that I have a place to leave and pick up books and belongings. In Santiago I sleep in a hotel, with the particularity that every night I enter a freshly made room, as if I were starting the project anew each time. The only thing I do in it is sleep, and wander nervously around it while, every night, I make a *backup* of what I recorded in the last

session, on a hard disk that I'll leave the next day in the gallery's mailbox. Every morning I *check out of* the hotel.

8 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

At a certain moment, in any artistic project, the project takes over. One is only an executor of tasks imposed by the speed and demand of the work. I decided on the formula and now I just must go through all the operations that this algorithm imposes on me. The conditions change with respect to what was planned, which makes the operation more difficult, but you are hostage to your desire to carry it out according to the conditions it imposes on you.

If I gave it up now, it would be a failure. It would be worse if I hadn't started it, I suppose, but it only counts as a failure if you start it. What about all those who haven't tried anything like it, all those who haven't thought of it (such nonsense)? They haven't failed. As an artist, what I do, precisely, is open doors to failure.

They say to me, "Why don't you just do it for a fortnight? why don't you give the weekends a rest?". I believe it is that I imagined it that way one night as perfect, and now there is no reason to cut it back, to make it easier, because in the same way I might as well not do it at all. That would make as little sense as now, on the spur of the moment, deciding to extend it to two months.

Today's journey is very quiet. There is almost nobody in the carriage at the moment, so it is very silent and pleasant. It is also the first direct journey, with no change in Ourense.

A monk (from Silos, I learned later) gets on the train in Burgos. Arriving in Sahagún, he prepares to leave, approaches the carriage doors and cannot open them. Some nuns are waiting for him outside. As time goes by, afraid that the train will start, he goes to another

carriage and tries another door. It does not open. A girl tries to help him. He can't open either, neither one nor the other. The train starts. It comes with us to León. The monk looks good-natured, but instinctively I have despised him during the whole journey, because of the ostentation of the habits. And yet, after the misfortune, he didn't shout, nor did he have a bad time, nor did he curse against Renfe. I should remember this often as a punishment for my prejudices. The meek...

All mechanisms are set to fail, and there are many of them. Some fail from time to time. So far all the doors of the project have opened when I have pressed the button.

9 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

I try to use the first part of the morning for more difficult reading and writing, until my concentration drops. Then I edit the video of the previous day, make the subtitles. At the end of the day I read a bit, but I'm already very tired. There are days when seven o'clock in the evening is very early, and there are other days when it's already very late.

I have understood how important the process of habituation becomes in the development of tasks with extreme demands. To pick up a mechanic, to get used to it, to make everything more performative, to make the most of time, to cut corners, the café where coffee is served quickly, the street that is best to cross, what is and is not worth carrying in the suitcase, what is left next to the seat and what is put in the overhead luggage compartments. Everything is being perfected and everyday life becomes - reveals itself to be - an engineering problem. Maximum efficiency in doing something perfectly useless.

For a moment I think that what I am doing is magical, marvellous, unique. A little later I think that I am a fool, a loser, that life is slipping

through my fingers doing stupid things, that I am a ridiculous character, a ragged priest. And yet I can ask myself the same question as Christopher Columbus in a dialogue by Leopardi that I am reading: what would I be doing if I wasn't here, wouldn't those who can go wherever they want suffer too? Would I be happier somewhere else? Perhaps the sorrow would be of less intensity, but also would be less joy.

An employee of a company contracted by Renfe to carry out a satisfaction survey addresses those who are travelling alone and have a free seat next to them. He asks a girl behind me a lot of questions, a quite long questionnaire, but she answers it efficiently. I have another traveller in the seat next to me, so he is not going to ask me. It would have been a peculiar exercise to explain everything to him, because I can give answers with a very broad sampling of cases. Then he sees an older man alone. He asks him if he can survey him. It turns out that he was alone only for a moment, because his wife had gone to the toilet. The interviewer no longer has a place to sit down, and no option to leave. He starts asking questions to both of them and they always answer vaguely, without taking into account the scale of numbers that the interviewer proposes. They give a thousand explanations. Soon it's a conversation about how people used to travel forty years ago. The man next to me, who used to travel on this line fifty years ago, intervenes. They explain in detail many things that are not useful for the survey. The interviewer listens out of politeness. For the respondents, everything is fine with regard to the journey, because for them resignation is the norm. Things are the way they are, we take the trains that are there, they are worth what they are worth, if something didn't suit them, they have adjusted to it. They are all patience. The pollsters are looking for dissatisfied users, with the ultimate aim of neutralising them. One would find more of these on more luxurious services, on the high-speed trains.

Today there is a change of train in Miranda, for one that passes through Logroño. That was the traditional route of this train, which I took several times when I lived there, until it was diverted to pass through Pamplona and Vitoria. I am writing and, suddenly, I think of

my mother, I look out of the window and see illuminated the elderlies home where she spent the last two years of her life. A shiver runs down my spine. I often saw the train pass by when I walked to visit her. Today I am a pendulum that acquires maximum speed when it passes through Logroño.

10 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

Another feeling that is reinforced in this extraordinary situation is that of loneliness. I find myself much more alone in this hustle and bustle, in the weakness that is taking hold of me, than at home, where everything is under control, time organised, all my justifications at hand. The project is made to become vulnerable, and then the good as well as the bad gets through to you. It's not about thinking about things, but about living them, experiencing them as inevitable, feeling them powerfully, more powerful than oneself. So is exaltation, so is sadness, so is bitterness.

Whoever has learned to be anxious in the right way has learned the ultimate. S.K.

The more days go by, the more difficult it is for others to understand these new sensations, the more difficult they are to share, the more difficult they are to explain. Plunging into absurdity.

And the more we shoot, the more it starts to make sense of what the result will be, and the more I remember what made me start this project -more afloat-.

Suddenly I think of everything that is still to come and suddenly I think of everything that has already happened. It's a curious experience, how these two opposing sensations alternate.

All these unusual movements that I do, sleeping every other day in a

shared flat, going to the same place for breakfast every other day, always with a suitcase, repeatedly taking the trains... In the times of ETA (the Basque separatist group) it could have been cause for someone to suspect me of being a terrorist. But nowadays creative people, or foreigners with customs that are outlandish compared to traditional ones, or the impositions of precarious economic conditions, as well as the general lack of interest in the lives of others, mean that anything you can do, however crazy or interesting it may be, goes unnoticed.

The play is self-referential, the whole script speaks only of itself. But it is also premonitory. I live every day what the characters are saying. I think it makes sense now what it didn't when I wrote it. And, I ask myself, how could I have known so well what I was going to feel? But that's just a mirage, a product of the unreality of my *current* situation.

11 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

Santiago station has two entrances to the platforms: one for those who want to go through security and one for those who do not. To catch my train, there is nothing to stop me from going through one or the other. I tell the security guard and he replies that he already knows, that it's been like this since 2019. I tell him that it makes you feel a bit ridiculous. "You're right," he replies. I guess he makes his job futile and therefore alienating. He gets paid for it, he'll tell himself. It also reveals the uselessness of the security measures at Sants, when you can get on at Astorga without even going through ticket control. You might think that, with that, at least you protect Sants from terrorist attacks. But that's only valid for the departure, but you can take a bomb or a submachine gun from Astorga, without going through any control. Many botches, rituals disconnected from any original purpose, and those most harmed are precisely those who comply with its rules.

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea. There is nature, but it is on the other side of the fishbowl. On this side it's all controls, fabricated and complex codes, an artificial world. And when it gets dark, this is a rattling spaceship.

The environment becomes unreal. The good thing about things becoming unreal is that you doubt the reality you had before the artistic moment and that breaks down the barriers and allows you to access other realities that you have known, it revives in me feelings of when my mother got sick and died, of my youthful work, the memory of the shock of my father's death, the last year with my brother. Being able to jump between realities helps to understand the world better, to understand oneself better, one's place in the world.

12 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

I already know several *commuters* who take the train every day at the same time. They are all from Santiago, because this train is used there for short, daily journeys, while in Barcelona it is taken by people travelling to distant cities. Besides, in Santiago we wait on the platform, while in Barcelona we enter the trains like a herd.

But today in Barcelona I recognised a local street sweeper on the way to the station. She has an angry face, the day before yesterday and today. The day before yesterday she made a little effort with her broom to make it difficult for me to pass, so I remember her well.

I'm becoming a *commuter* myself. It's not that it's getting shorter every day, but it's just that suddenly it's 21.00 and I'm almost there, and I haven't thought about everything that's still to come. It's as if I'm surprised that the day has already gone by.

All good poetry is written slowly and

cautiously, with great effort and
'unspeakable groanings' of the spirit.
It is forged slowly and painfully, and link by link
with sweat and blood and tears. A. D.

Today I'm a bit discouraged, anxious. I complain slightly to a friend, and he recommends some pills he's taking, serotonin, which would lift my spirits. "With all I've worked and spent to feel this way, now it would be a shame to throw it all away for a few pills," I write to him.

13 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

It's Sunday and in Santiago all the shops are closed. I can't buy my usual groceries, and when I get so hungry that I have no stamina left I'll have to venture into one of the carcinogenic products in the cafeteria. This makes me think of a Monty Python *gag* I heard Steve Coogan tell: they are interviewing the survivors of a plane crash, who have been marooned for three months in the Andes. The interviewer realises that there is a part of the experience that has been particularly traumatic. "Do you want to talk about it?" he asks. "Well... actually... at a certain point... we were so hungry, we had to eat the menus on board the plane," he finally says. "But... how could you go to that extreme?" the interviewer asks in horror. "We had run out of other passengers' corpses," he replies.

The project is already in *cruising speed*. That is to say, that the mechanisms are greased, that I begin to think less, that I begin to enjoy the performances, in the sense that this life is becoming my life, not a passing thing: this is what I do, travel by train. It reminds me of Paul Auster's *The Music of Changes*, where the protagonist's occupation is to cross the country from side to side over and over again driving his Saab, with the sole purpose of escaping from his life.

A passenger in an FBI T-shirt, beer belly, long white hair, an old rocker, gets on in Ponferrada. I know he's going to Palencia, because three days ago he got on in Palencia and got off in Ponferrada.

14 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

Every morning I read the newspaper, then I write for a while, then I edit the video. It's been years since I've read the newspaper - on paper! This contributes to this immersion in the daily lives of people who have little to do with me, and about whom I usually know little; it contributes to catastrophism.

Neils Bohr said: 'We are all agreed
your theory is crazy. What divides us is whether
it is crazy enough to stand a chance of being correct.
My own opinion is that it is not crazy enough'.
Read in Auden.

Is this project crazy enough to be art... or is it just a way of making works?

Today I also recognise passengers. They are a mother with two children about five years old. They make the same way back. From Vitoria to León and from León to Vitoria.

A technique to annihilate oneself by being oneself, by exhaustion, by frenzy of oneself; a technique for the disappearance of technique, to impose so many tasks on oneself that one disappears as an executor, and becomes object, executioner and victim, a single entity.

15 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

A brute, a lady on the train, who does everything with blows, like the military. With the blows of the butt of the rifle, the blows of the firing pin, the blows of the heels, the blows of the bayonet, the blows of the shells. She lifts the suitcase onto the overhead shelves, pushing it up a lot and then dropping it, she closes the zips with an energetic gesture,

she bangs the phone against the table when she leaves it there... It's a learned brutality, like someone who has decided to take control of her life. I've often had people like that next to me, men and women, especially in cafés where you can work at the computer.

Also, by now I can establish statistics and, of all the people who have sat next to me, young girls, almost without exception, have wrung their hands to re-crack their bones with that peculiar noise it makes, whatever you call that movement. And it has only happened with young girls. I have also had passengers sit next to me, on three occasions, who have gone for more than twelve hours without getting up to go to the toilet or stretch their legs.

16 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

Yesterday I had an emotional breakdown. I spent the afternoon with a bit of bitterness and sadness. Today I am in better spirits. It's clear that a big part of the project is putting yourself in this situation where you are particularly vulnerable, and that allows things to happen, good and bad.

The journey does little to cure you of misanthropy. The artificial environment involves not only the contemporary physical fact of spending more than half the day at a speed that can only be reached by technical means, with no relation to trees or nature, in an absolutely coded world (not as much as a supermarket, but almost) but, above all, in the continuous relation with the mind of the co-passengers. You hear what they say, you see what they look at on their mobiles - worse, you hear what they look at on their mobiles - and it's all very disquieting, if not disgusting. You meet kind, polite, innocent and tender people but, logically, they don't attract so much attention.

17 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

Yesterday's shooting was very enjoyable and interesting. To make unique works is to make gifts, works that otherwise could not exist for anyone. Works of art are gifts, they are miracles (when they are works of art, out of doxa). The script is *inexorably* being executed.

Is the work going well? I am asked. There are many levels on which to answer:

- The quality of the video to be obtained as a result
- The experience of filming (of the art in it)
- The experience of the journey (of the art that is lived there)
- Resistance to the effort to achieve it, to comply with it with all the tiring tasks
- Public response in the galleries
- The public impact in the media and networks
- Relationships with and between those involved

The development of the narration in the video we are recording is full of visual games, anecdotes, curious ideas that try to help the audience to get to the door of the work, and that they then walk alone through the spaces of the house, and observe the room of the clock, the room of trains, the room of eternal art, the room of economic conditions. This diary is the bedroom, under the duvet.

Truly, to serve the truth
There is only one thing to do: suffer for it.
This is the only possible way
of awakening. S.K.

When I go towards the two cities, the messages I send to it are different from those I send when I move away, a different urgency, a

different immediacy. What I ask for the city I'm leaving can still wait a day. It is as if there were a doppler effect whereby the messages sent to the city you are approaching sound sharper than those you send to the city you are moving away from. Do the spectators perceive whether I am approaching or moving away from them, in each gallery?

The emotion comes from me saying to myself: "Is it true that I am doing this?" If you don't start something like this, you can be sure that you are not doing it, but if you start it, you can only doubt all the time whether you are really doing it or not.

18 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

On the one hand, it is the apotheosis of travel, of tourism, of visiting as many places as possible. On the other hand, it is its complete negation. It is its negation by exacerbation. In order to visit more and more places, it reduces the time of the visits, the experience of the visits. The mockery of tourism too, because I visit the same places.

The original idea of the term "Commuting Time" refers to the world of work, to the extra work involved in the working day, the commuting necessary to get to work. Here the extra work is at the centre of the operation, or at least disputes its pre-eminence with the work that is done in the cities (the narrative in the video, moreover, revolves around commuting, the conversation could not be about anything else). There is such a symbiosis between the two activities that they become one: travel is filming, filming is travel.

The script is a prognosis, a projection, but it also leaves a lot of things out, which are appearing here, and I'm surprised I hadn't thought of them before, all those emotions that you can only have if you go to the source.

19 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

Several people congratulate me for having passed the halfway point of the project. No! I passed the halfway point of the project two days ago! I passed the halfway point two thousand kilometres ago. For those who only think about it, a couple of days more or less is the same.

What makes this project exciting is not thinking about it but, precisely, not being able to think about it in its entirety. That its parameters escape me is what makes it a work of art.

Apocalyptic feeling caused by constant contact with artificial environments.

20 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

In some classical author whose name I cannot remember, I have read the recommendation that, if you don't know how to deal with a subject, you should divide it into three parts. Each of those parts into three chapters, each chapter into three paragraphs, each paragraph into three sentences and each sentence into three parts. Today I complete two thirds of the video. It will be when I get there and record the shot of the day.

I have travelled through Madrid, on the AVE, which is a different experience, because you don't suffer so much from the friction of the distance, and because I have more time to rest in one place or another. This trip is more contemporary, with more affluent people, more tourists. The service is also more careful, the trains arrive on time, they ask over the loudspeaker not to talk on the phone. On the other hand, the space is more cramped, there is less light in the carriages. It is a European Union journey, while the other still has the smell of old Spain, where travellers might still offer you food, and say

"que aproveche" when they see you eating, something I have read that Kropotkin was struck by when he travelled in Spain.

21 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

Every day the friction of the distance is softer, because the day is beginning to be perfectly structured. I'm getting stronger every journey, because I know the mechanics, because I'm busy. It helps that there is already a lot of delicate and interesting material *in the can* (as they used to say when shooting, once all the editing had been captured on celluloid and stored in a metal box). The video *rendering* operations are getting longer every day, but on the other hand, I have found much more efficient mechanisms to choose the shots and make the subtitles. Also on arrival at the two sets, everything starts up more quickly, and a curious choreography has been established, each time tighter, between the actors, Robert and Bill, the camera operators, Juande and Roi, the gallerists, Asunta and Jorge, Fabiola, which I activate on arrival at each site (before saying "action").

22 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

The weather has changed and for the last three days it has been much colder. I thought it was only in Santiago, but when I arrived in Barcelona, I saw that it had changed there too. It was cold in the gallery, and that made the shooting much more difficult. On the first day (the 19th) we managed to get through it quite well. But yesterday was a real problem. The air was rushing around the set, and Robert looked like he was about to get sick. It was a really distressing and stressful situation. Today we have to solve this problem, try to close the windows and put some heaters, so that they don't make too much noise.

Things seem to flow smoothly in an established routine, as if it were just a matter of waiting for events to happen, but suddenly, the slightest difficulty sets everything in a state of alarm, especially my mood. Today my whole-body aches.

It's raining in Santiago. When I arrived the day before yesterday, Sunday, there were floods of students returning to university after the weekend, and it was raining heavily, and all the taxis were busy. It was a grade three inconvenience. Now I've got inconveniences of almost every grade. Among the ones I have yet to experience are the train crash and the heart attack.

23 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

On the one hand, it's already a countdown, the little that's left (I'd like to think). On the other hand, I'm in an advanced cycle of tiredness, I've already passed several screens of the video game, each one with its own particular tiredness. On the one hand, the satisfaction of what has already been recorded, on the other, the disappearance of the illusion of the first days, when one marvelled that this was possible, to hear how the words I wrote months ago in solitude in front of the computer have taken off, with their own life.

The AVE, which I take more and more every day, because of decisions Renfe has made for me, is a more comfortable journey, allowing me to travel earlier and sleep later. On the other hand, it is more laborious, more bustling, with changes at crowded stations, with commuter trains in Madrid between Atocha and Chamartín stations. Above all, I have a greater sense of futility: if I have made it easier with this train, why not make it easier with everything, why not make it less days, why not make it between closer places. Which leads me to think: why do it? why am I doing it?

Fatigue can become such that physical fatigue becomes secondary and anecdotal. The transubstantiation of tiredness by sublimation.

24 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

Due to infrastructure works, today the section between Monforte de Lemos and Ourense is by bus. Great chaos on arrival in Monforte, with rain, fights to put the suitcase in the boot of the bus, misinformation - or contradictory information, depending on which Adif employee you ask. But it was the first day we arrived on time.

Many times these days, at night, I find it hard to think that I woke up that morning in Barcelona, or in Santiago. Having left the hotel or the room in the morning seems far away to me, impossible for it to have happened all on the same day.

25 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

Disbelief that I have spent 24 days on a train. Surprise that there is so little left. Anguish at what might happen, no longer strong enough to contain it. Panic at the exhaustion that will precipitate once I get home.

I edit this diary for possible publication and distribution on the opening day. I write this note only to be faithful to the self-referential character of the whole project.

26 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

Last night I found a method to improve the *backup* process I follow every night. First I move everything to the fastest hard drive, which is the one I take on the train, and then from there I copy everything, while I sleep, to the one that stays in each city. If I had thought of it

earlier, I would have gained about twenty minutes of sleep each night of the previous twenty-five days.

27 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

Today I also must travel a section by bus. Travellers always ask questions when the conductor passes by. I know the answers better than he does, for a start, because I have already made this bus transfer, and I have seen *the other side*, while he does not continue his journey. But I also know where the next station is, how much we stop at each place, how late we are at any given moment, and that we always make up some time when we get to the AVE tracks... Whatever they ask. Many other travellers have their own answers, often wrong or inaccurate; they provide information with the best of intentions, or not.

It is Sunday and the train is returning to Barcelona completely full. Can trains be delayed because of the load they are carrying? The physical principle is yes, but the weight of people and luggage, compared to the metal mass of the train, seems insignificant. But there are so many people, so many suitcases... There are perhaps 800 mobile phones. There are no phones travelling without a passenger, no passenger travelling without a phone, but there are passengers travelling with two - just as there are at least two shoes per passenger. Are there phones travelling with two passengers?

It has occurred to Jorge that in the publication of this booklet there could be a photo of me travelling on the train. This is my last journey on the ALVIA, and I'm arriving in Barcelona. 350 hours on the train and I don't have time to take that photo.

A new sensation, which has surprised me as new at this stage of the development: that the experience of the spaces in which the project takes place has separated into its own compartments, and it seemed to me yesterday for a moment, in Trinta, that I had taken all the shots at

once, without leaving there. What I said at the beginning of the trains, that the experience of the train was separated and was one, and apart from everything else, happens to me now with all the spaces, the galleries, the hotel, the room in Barcelona, the bar in Barcelona where I have breakfast and order my dinner to take away.

28 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

Yesterday, on the way to the gallery in the evening, I was staggering a bit, and tired from the hours on the train, like someone disembarking after a long journey.

Eternity is a very long time, especially towards the end. W. A.

In all the shoots in Barcelona, we have been bothered by the noise of the nearby trains. In Santiago, the noise of cars and people going out for a drink at night. The problem in Barcelona is that the trains arrive at roughly regular intervals. Every shot I'm listening to Robert saying the text and at the same time I'm thinking: "there's no train coming, there's no train coming, it's going to get to the end of the shot without a train coming". At this point in my travels everything is dominated by the constant presence of the end, that nothing has to fail in this last bit, that I can hold on a little longer, that we can do these last shots without a problem. This thought saps my strength in anticipation.

29 November (Santiago - Barcelona)

It's hard to concentrate on anything other than the idea that this is over. What I'm thinking about now during the journey is about the limits of the work, and almost looking at it from the outside: what I'm going to do in the following days, the arrangements I have to make to the video (especially the sound), who will see it, where I'll send it... It feels like I'm about to jump over the "close brackets" sign (more than the "close inverted commas").

We will not stop exploring
And the end of all our exploration
It will be getting back to where we started
And getting to know the place for the first time.
T.S.E.

Tonight I say goodbye to Robert, who flies to Austria tomorrow. For the actors, too, it has been a peculiar experience. Then I'll pack my suitcase and leave the room tomorrow. The video is over 45 minutes long, but the two remaining takes are short.

30 November (Barcelona - Santiago)

All extreme activities, those that are tiring, those that are surprising, those that are exhausting, leave in the mind the idea that one can die in the attempt, that one can die, probably because of the recurrent idea that what one is doing may be bad for one's health. Food, sleep, lack of physical exercise.

Yesterday, when I arrived at the shoot, I was asked how I was feeling... "Fine, just finishing". I say that, and there are still 1,900 kilometres to go, there and back, which would have been the prospect of a great trip under normal conditions.

Bill confirmed to me that the project had also been an experience for him. As Robert's last intervention in the recording says: "putting life aside completely in order to do art at full is, in fact, the true identification of art and life".

Tomorrow I have to take the train again, to go to Barcelona for the opening. Will the journey be different? At least I don't have to shoot at night anymore, the result of the night doesn't depend on my *performance*.

I would like to thank the effort, dedication and friendship of the actors, Robert Cambrinus and Bill Nash, the technicians during the filming, Juande Jarillo and Roi Rivera, the gallery owners, Jorge Bravo and Asunta Rodríguez, and Fabiola Barreiro.

The photographs of apples that appear in the video are the work of Juande Jarillo, who was also my advisor regarding the compositions and lighting of the work.

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