

This text is a list expressing distances through time and space. It has been written to echo the series of films presented at EUCA annex. These films were showing how we try to establish some sort of meaningful connection with others, a past, an object, a memory, a narrative... They all embodied a way to deal with someone (or something) that is not right here, not right now. This is precisely how I approached the films and how I composed this text. Indeed, as I live in France I watched the different movies presented in EUCA annex through the screen of my computer. I believe it was another way to experience distance and materiality through films. I couldn't ignore the time distance between France and England, the internet connexion, the dirtiness of my screen, the mediated sound, the other computer. Still the movies were existing far from the exhibition space. During the online screening, an animal was asking for food, I took it as another meaningful appearance which will be part of the story. The figure of the dog, especially the stray dog, is an element I am used to work with. Its faculty to cross boundaries, to escape from defined and definite spaces, enables me to think about language translation. It also allows me to compose with the gap between two different languages, places, times which sometimes tends to disappear but never completely. The dog runs all along this list, coming in and out of the various sections. I wrote from a variety of memories and dates as a protocol to accompany the show in EUCA annex, which remains far and close from me at the very same time.

## TIME, SPACE, DOG

17 years ago

'The light becomes the eye, and as such no longer exists' is borrowed from Michel Tournier's novel; *Friday of The Other Island* (1967). When I was 11, I read *Vendredi ou la Vie sauvage*, which is the adaption for children of *Friday of The Other Island*. It was required by our literature teacher. I don't really remember the story, I read it 17 years ago.

19 years ago

The first color I learnt to translate in English was 'orange' from the French 'orange'. I remember it very well.

5 years ago

I spoke more English than French.

2 years ago

I spoke more French than English.

3 years ago

If we were going out for a walk or a run we should sign an official paper called 'attestation de déplacement dérogatoire'. We could not go further than a kilometre from home and no longer than an hour.

3 years ago

I left London with a bag packed for a few days. I was supposed to do a poetry reading in Paris. The evening I arrived in France, the event was cancelled, all bars and shops in France were suddenly closing down.

3 days later

I watched the speech live of the President of the French Republic on a computer. At some point, Emmanuel Macron said 'we are at war' and by the power of words, the French borders were closed.

1 day after

I mostly spoke face to face with a big black dog for nearly two months.

15 years ago

'Her red merle Australian shepherd's quick and lithe tongue has swabbed the tissues of my tonsils, with all their eager immune system receptors. Who knows where my chemical receptors carried her messages or what she took from my cellular system for distinguishing self from other and binding outside to inside? We have had forbidden conversation; we have had oral intercourse; we are bound in telling story on story with nothing but the facts. We are training each other in acts of communication we barely understand.'

Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (2008)

6 years ago

Like many of us, I was living in a language that wasn't my own.

3 years ago

I received the rest of my stuff that was stocked in London for a few months in a suitcase and two boxes.

4 years ago

At that point I didn't know where to start.

7 years ago

'I realised that I needed to reactivate the girl who committed herself –ten years, I had signed up– and lost in a job that doesn't suit her, to expose this question that rarely appears in literature: how, at the beginning of life, do we all cope with this, the obligation of doing something to live, the moment of choice, and finally, the feeling of being, or not being, where we should be?'

Annie Ernaux, *Mémoire de fille* (2016)

During the whole redaction of this text

I kept wondering about the conjugation of verbs in English. The simple present, the present continuous, the past, the simple past, the future perfect and so on. They are all time distances.

Now

I wonder if my foreign language is well settled within me.

1 year ago

I returned to England. Since I have been away, there had been a global pandemic, Brexit had been definitively agreed, fires were ravaging forests of Europe and the Queen Elizabeth II was about to die. I arrived on a day when the temperature in the country was rising at record levels. Because of the heatwave, the trains linking Stansted airport to central London were running at reduced speed. Travellers were scrambling to book Uber cabs that cancelled en route, and around me hundreds of people were running to catch the first bus to leave. It was a pretty chaotic come back.

1 year ago

The plane ticket to London from Nantes had cost 13.90 euros. I sincerely doubted the reliability and longevity of an economic and political system where an international journey cost less than a simple car-pool journey.

2 weeks ago

The plane ticket to London from Nantes was still costing 13.90 euros

1 year ago (summer)

The summer of 2022 was one of the hottest recorded in Europe, according to the European climate change service *Copernicus*. During this period I had nightmares probably every night, probably

because of the end-of-the-world smell made of dried tree leaves on the ground, tarmac smelling strong from the heat, plastic that tends to melt. I had nightmares about everything and anything: swimming in a swamp with snake eels under my feet, missing my train, falling down stairs... I hesitated to check the internet for something like 'why do I have so many nightmares' or 'how can I have fewer nightmares', but I assumed I'd come across some pseudo-analysis remotely linked to Freud and I thought it would be pointless. I didn't want to write down my nightmares when I woke up so that I could remember them better, because I imagine that the point is precisely that I don't remember.

13 years ago

At night, our dog started to bark. The ocean was flooded our house. The north-west coast was hit by a storm called 'Xynthia'.

28 years ago

In the *Abécédaire*, Deleuze fundamentally reproaches dogs for barking. He says: 'To me, barking appears really as the stupidest cry... Barking is really the shame of the animal kingdom'. However he says that he will tolerate a dog howling at the moon, before correcting himself saying that it is 'completely idiotic because people who really love dogs have a non-human relationship with dogs. What matters is to have an animal relationship with animals.' I feel that Deleuze cannot stand a human relationship with animals. But what is forgotten here is the idea that dogs too could have a human relationship with humans. This is a possibility explained by the unstable dog nature, its ability to cross out borders, where things circulate, and language with it.

Now

The dune protecting my hometown is constantly and progressively diminishing due to rising ocean waters.

Now

Some people appear and disappear by the very force of texts.

2 months ago

I travelled from Brussels to Paris in a crowded Flixbus. It took four long hours. The radio was on, the Black Eyed Peas were singing: 'I had the time of my life, and I never felt this way before'.

4 months ago

A man was sitting next to me on the train. He was watching a movie on his iPad.

The girl in the movie often frowns, we mostly see her from the back. She is wearing high heels. No-one walks like the way she does. She barely opens her mouth. There is a scene where this character meets up two other girls on a city rooftop full of green plants. They are happy to see each other. For the first time, the actress doesn't frown from fear of worry. I see her smiling.

The man behind me pulls back the curtain.

She goes to the courthouse, she passes through security, she may be a lawyer, I can see her accessing offices. She frowns. On the screen, her body often appears before her face. She has curly and short hair, brown eyes and she is wearing lipstick. A prisoner tries to escape, she tries to arrest him. She falls down and her nose bleeds, her eyebrows are frowned. She goes back to her apartment, there is a guy on the sofa, he may be her boyfriend. They are talking to each other. They seem to have a serious talk, she frowns like she never did before. He takes her face into his hands and leaves. At night she smokes some weed to forget her life that makes her frown, she receives a message from Sébastien's wife who is asking if she can call her today, she answers 'yes'. The day after, she frowns a very last time.

The train driver announces that we are arriving, the man next to me stops the movie and puts his iPad mini on his Quechua bag.

5 days ago

I wrote this text wondering if someone was reading over my shoulder, just like when you examine more or less attentively what the person next to you is watching on their phone on the train or the underground.

some days ago

I was just about to finish this text on a train.

some minutes ago

I was just about to finish this text on a Flixbus.

years ago

There are distances within language I cannot stand.

at some point

I'll have a dog.