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RAMBLINGS

A walk in progress (or the minutes of the International Society of the Imaginary Perambulator)

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Preamble

In this paper, seven writers experiment with ethnographic and artistic responses to each other's walking practices. The point of departure is a panel held at a conference at the University of Jyväskylä.¹ In the morning session, five papers were presented and discussed. In the afternoon the panellists and audience engaged in a series of walking experiments that took us outside the confines of the lecture room, and indeed, the conference venue. In this chapter, we (the panel presenters and co-chairs) re-embody this moment by walking together, writing together and engaging our understanding of self and our experiences of walking. This sense of experimentation is open to the reader, to whom we extend an invitation to travel with us through the process of ethnographic knowledge production.

Walking is a pedestrian activity peculiarly elusive to academic categorisation. It engages the emotions, involves the senses, invites creativity, brings forth memories and provokes the imagination. All are notoriously difficult to capture in ethnographic writing. Consequently, some of the questions we approached in our initial meeting were focused on possibilities: how can the intangible experience of walking be conveyed in writing? Can walking be archived? What happens in the process of textualisation? Can genres like creative writing and ethnographic fiction help us understand and communicate the "unwritable", including those emotive, mobile and sensory aspects? Finally, we wanted to know whether walking could be used as a hermeneutic tool – could enactment elucidate that which evades ethnographic description?

Such questions may not be satisfied, because they keep moving, wandering, walking. As such, in this chapter, we also keep moving, gesturing beyond conventional ethnographic writing strategies, searching for a path to collectivise

knowledge production by escaping the unidirectional academic text. In attempting to do so, we are aware that we transform ephemeral affective experience into an object, an inscription. For us, this has been part of the journey.

Attempts at an ethnography of walking are not new. To produce this chapter, we experimented with various forms of ethnography, sharing our attempts to transform a walk into other objects, all the while performing together. We are trying to push the representational limits of an ethnography of walking, reflecting on the various inscription modes available to us. In this sense, this chapter is a report on our knowledge engagements with walking practices. This is not a final product or object of our findings; it is a durable manifestation of our individual and collaborative meaning-making.

In our ethnographic process, all of the authors actioned a walk inspired and informed by our first meeting in the aforementioned panel convened by Susanne Österlund-Pötzsch and Dani Schrire at which five walks were described. These walks are often referred to in the main text:

- i Matti Tainio presented a study in applied aesthetics. He used running interviews (actually interviewing whilst running) as a method for collecting information about running experiences. His presentation concentrated on the method of running together in order to understand the aesthetic aspects of running.
- ii Daniella Seltzer explored the juncture where the social and the spatial meet in the moving body. Her research deals with the walking performance and performativity of previously secular Jewish women who converted to become ultra-Orthodox Jews. In considering the sociality of walking, this presentation also investigated the performance of secular actresses who learn to walk and perform as ultra-orthodox women in films and television shows.
- iii Gautam Chakrabarti discussed ritualised walking in an increasingly popular Hindu pilgrimage in North India. This pilgrimage had a revival in the 1980s (with certain popular films promoting it) and involves a substantial amount of singing and chanting while walking. As a cultural revival, this narrativised practice is coterminous with the rise of Hindu Nationalism in Indian politics.
- iv Matthew Cheeseman considered ethnography and walking via the methods of creative practice. In his project “Not the path” (2011), he tasked project participants with creating a set of instructions (“a path”) to be followed by one of the other participants. Imaginary spaces were thus designed by participants relying on other participants to turn them into geographic spaces. In doing so walkers were asked to retextualise their walks, taking photos and noting impressions, engaging in the ethnographic practices of recording and interpreting in the field.
- v Simon Poole described a project of repeatedly walking a route significant to his family and home while interpreting it musically through the method of perambulography via a purposively constructed device that allows the walker to draw on the move.² The aim of the research was to draw a connection

between home and the physical landscape, and to theoretically develop the notion of “be-longing”. The inquiry developed a research practice that could explore folk culture through musical composition; by understanding the landscape through drawing in motion.

Taking these walks and our memories of the panel as inspiration for this chapter, we set out on new walks, physically, affectively, and mentally. We chronicled our experiences, thoughts and interpretations and met digitally to discuss and generate this text. The conversation between and within the following passages sheds new light on our individual efforts but also produces knowledge that speaks about walking as a practice and an experience. Key metaphors emerged, beginning with the idea of memory. This metaphor serendipitously creates points of contact and discursive nodes that allowed us, as writers, to deal with our own associations as we strove to connect to those of others. A closely related metaphor was the concept of home, often in terms of a sense of place, sometimes in the sense of feeling disoriented, sometimes in terms of reconnection. Given the ethnographic intention of our writing, it is perhaps not surprising that physicality and sensuousness proved a third common denominator. Ethnographic registering naturally engaged our senses but the premises of our experiment also gave rise to the sensory experiences of being in and out of control. Finally, a distinct metaphor was variations of rhythm. Sensations of rhythm provided flow and poetry to our walks and writings together, but as the rhythms changed or broke, interruptions and fractures appeared and called for our attention.

Our work aligns with the paradigmatic stance of arts-based practice as research (Bobadilla et al. 2017; Leavy 2009; Sullivan 2005). Because the personal experience of walking is central to our collective composition, our methodology has been influenced by a postmodern orientation towards identity (see Lyotard 1984, 1992). This represents a social and political position that is ever-changing and provisional. It is a standpoint that revels in multiple truths and holds them as all equally valid. For example, Matti’s views are different to Dani’s but have equitable status, to each other’s and any of the other authors. Thus, this research is “Re/search [sic] [that] champions versatility, inter-epistemological acceptance, and diversity of knowledge types, understandings and thus ways of reinterpreting ‘impact’” (Poole 2017, 155); it reframes practices such as walking as innovative art-based methods of inquiry into ethnography. As arts-based methods, the conventional values of inquiry are less important, and as such “facts, control, distance, and neutrality” (Bochner and Ellis 2003, 506) have little relevance to us as practitioners (or perambulographers).

If our “twist” could be described as having a purpose or function it would be to undertake research that dissolves the dichotomy of process and product (Benetti and Hiney 2018) or, more specifically, the dichotomy of practice and the presentation of research. The purpose of this is to challenge the dominant popular and elitist cultural modes which have a tendency to pedestalize the final product. We

intend to walk a path, when walking might be defined not just as an individual's act but a collective understanding. Methodologically speaking, this understanding also means that collective responsibility is accepted for its success or failure. Moving by foot becomes a knowledge in writing which is more interested in process, contingent learning, community and performance than it is any definitive end, object or understanding of itself as a final product.

This chapter assumes an onto-epistemological standpoint of coherentism, accommodating varying, fluctuating and pluralistic truths. It leans towards auto-ethnography as a sound and proven methodological means of capturing the evocative or transient feelings and thoughts of authors and participants, but troubles any understanding of terms like reliability, validity, and generalisability. Nonetheless, there is enough cogency between autoethnographic methodologies and arts-based practice as research to allow sympathy for these altered contexts (Bobadilla et al. 2017; Grennan 2015). We answer any questions of this work's credibility and reliability by recognising that it is the reader and observer rather than any participant that creates the potential of generalisability. As such, our personal reflections of how we engaged with each-other's walking methodology was cut-up, layered, and juxtaposed, a methodological version of a collage technique. As researchers, it allowed us to unlock, twist, or perhaps untwist conventional patterns of perceiving, thinking, and representing that determine our interactions with our environment.

Our joint ramble thus suggests that ethnographic twists run through the full process of ethnography (from initial ideas through fieldwork to presentation). As such, it strikes us that it is easier and more acceptable to undertake unconventional fieldwork than produce work that is not traditionally presented or published in a conventional format. This chapter was edited in committee with each of its authors performing separate functions within the makeshift team. The editors of this volume then offered feedback to align our text with the "twists" of the collection as a whole. There were further discussions with the publishers in addressing what was possible in terms of design and typography. What follows are six pieces of writing which try to capture the walks of others, meshed together. To keep these individual footsteps alive, we use the paragraph as an organisational principle, segments authored by individuals within our collective and identified by [name]. One could read this chapter via the voices that comprise it, or by ignoring such distinctions and treating the text as a whole. Our ethnographic experiment is thus a multivocal contribution to an ethnography with a twist by different writers on different paths, sometimes intersecting, picking up each other's rhythms when (and if) they walk together.

The resulting text is brought together under a simple artifice: you are about to read the minutes of a society meeting, that of the International Society of the Imaginary Perambulator (ISIP). While this article is evidence of an open and ongoing process of knowledge production, a walk-in-progress, it can also be described as the minutes of ISIP.

Matt: To write implies a certain sense of rhythm
 Dani: Walking to buy milk with my son after “Walk to Kitty’s Stone”
 Daniella: Walking the Old City through Ms R
 Simon: My walk
 Gautam: Walking as a reverie fusing T/time/s
 Susanne: NOT THE Easter Sunday PATH
 Matti: Walking with atmospheric halos

The society meets

[Matt] To write implies a certain sense of rhythm, a method, perhaps a way of thinking, too, thoughts follow keystrokes and fingers; to walk is to put one foot after the other, to regulate the step on the landscape, rising and forward, fingers on the keyboard, gripped to the pen, words progressing on the page, matching the heartbeat with uncertain purpose, getting there, to the end of the sentence, putting words down like feet: word after word after word.

[Dani] How can a specific walk be experienced by others, re-told, re-written. In my walk, I try to keep open the idea of a walk transforming into object and retransforming to a bodily performance. Simon’s intergenerational walk on the Cheshire ridge inspired me. He engaged walking in two modes: first, recording a succession of the same walk by drawing 36 walks with the use of a perambulograph. Following this, Simon transformed these drawings into a musical score. This way, the spatio-temporal experience of walking was engaged spatially (drawing) and then temporally (as music).

[Daniella] Following Matt’s “Not the path” I asked an ultra-Orthodox Jewish woman who lives in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City in Jerusalem to create for me a path through the Old City, one which transmits what it is like for her to live there, taking into account places that affect her, that she frequents regularly and that invite me into her narrative of self. I also asked for a path that would allow me to reflect on what it is like to walk between and through the different Quarters, all this while being visibly read as an Ultra-Orthodox Jewish woman from an outsider’s gaze.

[Simon] I had at first anticipated applying another’s walking method or thematic approach to a walk that I would take; I presumed it would be largely a methodological discovery, that I would experience a particular way of understanding movement on foot. I use “movement on foot” because what I came to realise was not specifically methodological in nature. It was instead a fracture of memories, discussions and feelings that were overlaid with the unexpected context of “movement on foot” and pain shared by others in the project. In my case, acute arthritis and osteophytes which meant walking more than a mile would mean pain the next day.

[Susanne] I attempted to engage with all of the walks simultaneously, looking for guidance in each of the projects. I decided to do my walk on Easter Sunday and walk to the largest graveyard in Helsinki (about 8km from my home). In this, I wanted to create a reference to the traditional Sunday family walk and the practice of visiting the graves of departed family members during seasonal holidays. Moreover, the route to the graveyard is a familiar one for me and takes me along the shoreline.

[Matti] I think of the movement on my feet and “Not the path” and reflect on how I am not in full control of my walk, which I record, remembering Simon’s practice of walking and making notes with his perambulograph. There are connections with walking as a bodily practice as well as hints of scientific-animistic spiritualism. These can be found in my descriptions on walking with atmospheric halos.³

Walking with others means a special time

[Simon] I had been taken by Gautam’s talk on pilgrimage and was curious about the religiosity of repetition. I had given some thought to the spiritual nature of “movement by foot” and had considered how Solnit’s (2014) and MacFarlane’s (2012) work had cogence with pilgrimage. I worried about misappropriation and was all too aware of how a sacralised walk could be trivialised. Nonetheless, pilgrimage presented a model.

[Gautam] In India, every act of self-inscribed walking – especially using a device like Simon’s perambulograph – is a reverie fusing the ravages of parallel and conflicting times; the post/colonial, the sacral/secular, the inter/nationalist, the in/tangible are but halos that attempt totalisation. A pilgrimage can be an act of political subversiveness, while secularised public discourses could exude fervent religiosity. Why does a woman walking, with two sacralised vessels of water balanced on a staff, which she carries on her shoulder, be a figure that moves millions?

[Dani] Simon discussed his experience as a Cheshirian whose family has been living on the same ridge for the past 350 years. I ask myself, in which ways can I know Simon’s walk? What kind of knowledge is this? I follow Simon’s experiment with my own experiment as I tried to re-live the walk elsewhere. I listened to the score a dozen times, engaging it by walking and writing this piece, which tries to convey the ephemeral idea of walking in writing.

[Daniella] I asked Ms. R to design my walk as a means of walking in dialogue with the embodied knowledge I had internalised from previous interviews in which I engaged reflexivity and representations of ultra-Orthodox Jewish women’s walking in my previous research. Her first instructions were to dress up wearing modest clothing, which I took to mean ultra-Orthodox dress. I did not attempt to perform specific body gestures I learnt previously. Yet, coming into the Old City and walking through the Muslim Quarter towards the Old City, I walked beyond my usual thoughts, feeling pulled into the imaginary character I never meant to inhabit.

[Susanne] I commenced my walk but discovered that it was impossible for me to hold all the modes in my head at once. However, when I was trying to focus on singular aspects of my walking, I often found myself making connections to other themes. At certain stages of the walk, one or two of the walks resonated more strongly with me in that they illuminated a situation or threw something into contrast.

Disorientations

[Daniella] I felt disorientated, not knowing the “proper” script of an ultra-Orthodox woman walking in the Muslim Quarter. Whenever I went to the Old City in the past, I wanted to minimize my Israeli body and its privilege, trying not to stick out as a point of respect and to mark my lack of belonging. Here I am, hyper-Jewish. I noticed myself thinking who can I make eye contact with and who can I not? How “should” I appear to feel as I walk down the stairs of the Muslim Quarter? And how am I interpellated by the vendors and tourists walking by? I was treated differently, ignored and no longer perceived as a potential tourist, in sharp contrast to walking in the Jewish Quarter. I felt somewhat like an alien to myself, a tourist with a route, covering the voice-recorder I brought along, pressed to my chest and hidden between papers, embarrassed to be seen talking to myself nonstop. I am not alone, my shadows and reflection walking with me, appearing foreign.

[Dani] An abstract of a talk is not a talk – it lacks a voice and intonation and it is geared towards conveying general information about one’s intentions. At its best, it is the difference between an Aarne-Thompson tale type and an actual performance of a tale. An abstract draws contours of an argument, of a narrative, but it cannot sufficiently prepare an audience for the actual performance. When I first met Simon in a restaurant we walked in the sludgy streets of Helsinki. Later, I heard him describe his walk and I filled it with the actual body which I had already walked with. Imagination can replace that which is not known with impressions of actual beings. I have never visited Cheshire, although I drove past once, many years ago. Is the moving image of a walking Simon on green hilly pastures enough? Does that mean I can claim to know his walk to Kitty Stone?

[Simon] My father was diagnosed with terminal cancer four days before I was due to undertake my walk. He was given a couple of months. The next day I ended up on crutches with a sprained ankle, on the same foot that I already have my injury. Coupled with the emotional turmoil of loss, I wanted to resign from the project. In the face of living grief, and what felt like an insurmountable, unforgiving situation I decided to open myself up to a form of spiritual endurance. I would continue my walk. I used my crutches to get to Finland, donned crampons and with ice-spike walking sticks, got on with it. This debilitation brought me somehow closer to Gautam’s work, in spite, or because of the obstacles, the walk somehow seemed a pilgrimage. I hoped for some revelation of understanding in undertaking this endeavour.

I had no revelation, no epiphany.

Reconnecting/a sense of place

[Susanne] The reflected sunlight is creating a glittering avenue on the water. This makes the strongest impression of the walk – the sun glitter becomes a gateway to summers past, to time spent by the water. I am reminded of Simon’s project of finding ways to connect home, landscape and identity through walking. This becomes visceral, more anchored in

my body, when I reach a section that takes me off the tarmac and gravel roads onto a wood path that leads me over granite bedrock, roots and stones. This is uneven walking, up and down, swaying for a big tree or a boulder. Simon's concept of "be-longing" seems apt, I have an understanding for the landscape that I cannot put into words, but I believe could be expressed in sound, shape, colour – or movement: walking here makes my body feel at home, attuned and relaxed.

[Daniella] My walk started in the Muslim Quarter, passing through the central street, continuing through the Jewish Quarter, and stopping by several nationalist stops commemorating the fallen soldiers during the War of Independence (1948) and the Six Day War (1967). Ms R's instructions connected me not only to the place but also to cultural narratives, writing the self and place into and through one another. The path opened up stories beyond my own, meandering across time, ideas, and history. Re-entering well-trodden, well-known routes invites a different lens, making power structures and the place of the body in space more apparent. Here the presence of the past in the present, between one place and another, and between different bodies as imagined and represented through me, my body.

[Matti] Ever since I saw my first halo, a full ring around the moon, I have looked for these displays. Whenever I'm outside in spring, I search for these halos, rings around the sun, arches or sundogs. The displays are dependent on the occurrence of certain shapes in atmospheric ice crystals. Because of this, they appear only briefly. In Finland, April skies are best. It's usually sunny and it's cold enough for optimum, icy *Cirrostratus* clouds. Most of my outings here are characterised by chasing them. One must be alert.

[Matt] The landscape gives a break. The landscape gives a break from the page. It interjects thoughts into the conversation. The landscape, however managed, is there to interject, to refuse to be ignored, the steps are words – they come – words are like steps, they just come, one after the other, but the landscape, it arrives, it arrives, even in memory interrupting, there, present. It has a form.

[Simon] We were asked if we would like to visit Sibelius Hall, a concert hall and world-renowned acoustic space. It was a couple of miles away and we would have to walk. I was excited. Despite being in a group of people, I elected to listen to music on the way. I am a singer/songwriter, and this is how I know and understand the world. It also allowed me to be with the group but also to remove myself into a personal and private world. This was my world, and I was, to an extent, the arbiter of the experience of it. I thought I was deliberately enhancing the walk and world through which I was travelling: the scenery of Lahti, where we were staying, was to my mind bleak in winter and still had little in the way of vibrancy or colour (see Figure 3.1). Despite its beauty I longed for something else. I listened to *Heartworms* (The Shins 2017), particularly the first song: "Name for you", colourful music in utter contrast to the landscape. The feeling was enervating, perhaps it was the use of birdsong in the tracks – something I use in my compositions – so peculiar to feel the divergence of visual and aural. I saw graffiti of two magpies. In my culture two bring good luck. In my enervated state this seemed to heighten my walking, there was a synchronicity to something beyond, a release from the present.

When we arrived at Sibelius Hall, I lay on the floor, not aware until then of the pain.

[Dani] A musical score – just like a walk – is not representational in the same way figurative painting is. Music triggers the imagination as Kendal Walton (1994) notes. Had I listened to *Walking to Kitty Stone* without any prior knowledge, without meeting Simon face-to-face, would I think of it as a score of a walk? Likely not. But I do. I have already acquired some knowledge of the score and I cannot think of it in separation from the act of listening. Can I re-walk a score? This was my original intention. I thought that I could listen to the score in a different setting and see how the knowledge of the piece could be negotiated. At first, I wanted to perform it in the desert, walking the Cheshire ridge in Makhtesh Ramon. The High Negev desert is our family’s escape from Jerusalem and every now and then, we go for a weekend there.

Revelations along the way

[Simon] On a tour of the building we were asked if anyone wished to sing. I shouted “yes please!”, walked to the conductor’s podium and turned to face the vast space and sang the acapella introduction to a song I wrote called “revelation”, followed by the first verse of “sparrows on the roof”. These were significant moments,

FIGURE 3.1 Simon’s walk. Photographs by Simon Poole. Copyright: Simon Poole.

precisely because of what the songs mean to me and others. Listeners have connected “revelation” with mortality, while “sparrows on the roof” was partly inspired by my dad’s ability to whistle a sparrow’s song so perfectly that they reply.

[Daniella] Walking helps us sharpen our senses, opening an opportunity for reflections to transform the ordinary. Following instructions was a release of control, which evolved into a sense of freedom by having someone else decide the route. This was coloured by the need to follow the instructions. Not doing so, or not finding the precise pathways led me to feel as though I wasn’t experiencing what Ms R had in mind.

[Matti] Keeping an eye on the sky influences the walks. The sun, the sky and the weather remind me about Matthew’s invented walks. Instead of a human designing a walk for me, natural forces make rules for me. Walking with atmospheric halos is a voluntary action, but whenever possible, I like to accept the invitation of the April skies.

[Susanne] As I leap off the path to let an elderly couple pass, I experience self-consciousness, a sense of the aesthetics of movement akin to Matti’s description of everyday running practices, not in terms of elegance but in behaving according to an ethic (letting someone pass) and my body negotiating the limited space. This stands in contrast: in general, it is difficult to register the aesthetic/performative aspects of my walking. However, when I enter the graveyard I notice a difference in my gait: I deliberately slow down and think about moving with decorum (reminding me of the women Daniella had interviewed). Nevertheless, I have no real purpose for being in the churchyard, there is no deeper sense of ritual, no grave to lay flowers at. “Walking with Intent” is a phrase used by Marion Bowman (2014) to describe pilgrimage.

[Daniella] Ms R’s route invited me to feel the places through her experience, visiting sites important to her:

At the end of the street turn right onto Jewish Quarter Road. Notice that it gets quieter and calmer as you pass by the shops and enter the Jewish Quarter [...] Go around the corner and walk into the courtyard in front of the Hurva synagogue. Take in the majesty of the building and listen to the sounds of Torah being learned.

Go out and around the other side and down the steps at the entrance of the Ramban Synagogue that lies beneath the Hurva. Close your eyes and feel the generations of Jews that passed through the door since the 1200s.

Stop and smell the delicious fragrance of oranges [...] Listen for the sounds of children [...] Listen to the birds and look at the contrast of the leaves of the trees against the sky.

[Dani] Simon connected his score to his environment, seeking community “through this earth we call home”, but I never regard the desert as my home, not in the Negev, at least. The polyvocal score of *Walking to Kitty Stone* explores the echoes between generations. There I was, walking in the seemingly lunar landscape

of Makhtesh Ramon, a region trodden by the Nabateans two millennia ago, yet leaving no physical impressions, as far as I could tell. It did not feel right; it felt removed from *Walking to Kitty Stone* and counter-productive: despite many attempts to obscure the situatedness of science (Haraway 1988), any scholarship is situated and partial, particularly the experiment I undertook. With this failure to channel walking knowledge from Cheshire to Machtresh Ramon, I decided to take a different path.

Walking to Kitty Stone is about be-longing, so I returned home. It was Passover, when Jews retell the walking of the ancient Israelites in the Sinai desert. I returned to my everyday landscape, which as Simon explains in the score (to his daughter?) is full of houses that “aren’t part of the environment”, except these houses do form *my* environment. Many shops were closed that Saturday and we lacked milk in the fridge. I decided to seize the moment and walk to get some milk with Hillel, my eight-year-old son, who was eager to join me.

Sensing the path

[Matti] Halo walks follow a pattern: on stepping out, I check the sky for a haze that I know is favourable. If present, I raise my hand to shadow the sun and look. This is the halo-hunter’s salute to the sky and it marks the onset of a particular kind of walk. If the result of the first salute is positive, I continue the walk, keeping an eye on the upper atmosphere.

[Matt] To write without a landscape is to do philosophy from the desk. This takes focus, almost meditation. Walking is to apply philosophy, it is to know place. Writing is letting the impressions of knowledge return. To write a people, to write a place. Here a city, there a hill. Technology allows us to communicate at distance with ease. The internet, the postal service. It allows us to write at distance, to connect our thoughts. To tap on computers, to grip the pen, to write about our tools. Writing about walking is writing about our tools.

[Simon] There is singing here. There is sound. There is the sound of the world around. There are other things beyond steps and words. The wind is fresh.

[Daniella] Solnit (2014, 5) writes that “motions of the mind cannot be traced, but those of the feet can”. I tried to record my stream of consciousness via audio. This mostly diverted my attention from being in any embodied presence to the act of translating embodied and sensual experiences into words for the recorder. On the one hand this enabled me to remember direct experiences and thoughts as I later began to write the walk, yet during the walk it prompted me to direct such experiences into words, even when there were no “right” words available at a given moment.

I walked imagining I was Ms R, bringing the branch to my nose and hearing the children learning religious texts aloud. Movement through space enables one to tune in and out of the present and travel through senses and memories to different sites and times. Usually I feel like I don’t belong in the Jewish Quarter, walking there I felt relief looking like everybody else, noticing my body expand in space, settling into my form, shoulders straightened.

[Dani] We set off, holding hands and walking together in what Hillel never realised and I only gradually became aware of, was another walk to Kitty Stone. As we made our way through the well-trodden streets, they conveyed many family experiences, intimate recollections from the last twenty years of walking around the same neighbourhood that forms part of our city.

How can Jerusalem be anyone's? My wife looks back at seven generations in the city, but I was born in Cape Town, Hillel in Berlin. We regard Jerusalem as our home in a mundane way, but also in the intimate sense that the word "home" conveys. Intercontinental be-longing is still a form of belonging. The last six generations of my own family were born in twelve different towns in three continents, speaking five mother-tongues. Wandering Jews? Probably, but with belongings, walking many paths. There we were, a father and a son walking to get some milk, something I can imagine carried out across these generations in numerous places and occasions. As we walked together, heading for milk to bring home, I finally got a sense of Kitty Stone.

[Daniella] The voice-recorder amplified auditory stimulus from my surroundings, leading this to be both a hyper-embodying and dis-embodying experience at once. I heard the sounds of my body walking, the pressing of my shoes as they made a rhythm on the Jerusalem stone covering the paths, my voice describing what was around, my reactions and small umms and ahhs. The journey was both familiar and strange. As my memory unfolded in parallel to the recording, it was infused with the captured words, my breath, footsteps, sounds of the Old City, all of which triggered visual displays, a Proustian superimposition of two different modes of time.

Documenting the path

[Daniella] Translating stream-of-consciousness recordings within the creative practice of the walk, played on the seams between absence and presence as I attempted to record thought in order to capture the present, which became absent as soon as it had passed. Walking the route didn't end when I got to the last sentence of Ms R's path, which asked me to touch the Western Wall. It continued as I played the voice recorder and wrote these words. Documenting this walking performance is itself a performance: as Cathy Turner (2000) wrote, "there is an uneasy relationship between performance practice and its analysis". In writing, I noticed myself in many dialogues: with the path, the voice recorder and the social scripts I presumed I should follow as an ultra-Orthodox woman.

[Matt] All of this must be edited together, it must be condensed on the page, this people – landscape – step – these mix of writers, these different rhythms and purposes. Look at these things from the world, from the past, here on the page, experience, live them, walk through them, picture them in your mind's eye, walking step after step in your head on the trail as you keep going, keep going and forget what it was that you were writing about. There may be interjections in the step. There may be interruptions from the landscape, from encounters, from what

is discovered on the path. The outside is here and it will intrude, it will break through the page. This perhaps is the greatest thing: that the outside steps over the page, that the outside manifests within, that the writing entertains that which it is not. This is somehow marshalled: other-wise manifested from the self.

[Simon] MacFarlane discusses, in one talk (2012) that the root etymology of the word “path” is shared with the word “learn”. Initially, the learning on my walk had been fractured. I had attempted to apply different methods of understanding too forcibly. When I allowed the walk, the path, to reveal itself these fractures became useful filters. The walk became an incredible rendering of the power of context, which shed light on an emotional scenario. The various spectrums of feeling became and were one light, too complex for a simple reflection, but could be filtered with a sensitive and ethical use of our methodological prism.

[Matti] The most frequent halos appear close to the sun, so I squint to avoid the burning glare. I also look for shadows that let me look without getting blinded. When there isn't a shadow I block the sun with my hands. Sometimes, I walk with it behind me, and have to keep turning to see the halos. Stopping is not always possible, so I turn and go on walking backwards. The best halos are photographed.

All this concentration on the sky makes the walk intermittent. There are periods of good walking followed by periods when the purpose seems lost in favour of celestial events. The rhythm of these periods is sporadic, depending on the environmental factors that allow me to look upwards. Otherwise the walking environment is secondary, only worth a glimpse to keep me on route. Because these walks are mostly connected to my daily errands, the environment at the outskirts of the city is familiar and looking at the sky while walking is possible and (reasonably) safe.

A few years ago, I was walking through the centre of Turku when I suddenly saw an impressive display of halos. There was a full ring around the sun, the 22-degree halo, as well as upper tangential arch, sun dogs (parhelia) and my favourite, the parhelic circle. None of these halos are rare but seeing many together is a special event. The full parhelic circle extending as a horizontal ring around the sky makes the display distinct, since it often implies a further possibility of rare halos. Attempting to photograph this display turned my walk into an unusual performance. I crossed the street several times, searching for a vantage point between the high-rise buildings, walking backwards in order to get a better image, with many people passing by in the centre of the city.

[Dani] The old Ottoman train went through the southern parts of Jerusalem. People living next to this abandoned corridor struggled to reuse them. The line was eventually turned into the “Train Track path” which cuts across Palestinian and Jewish neighbourhoods. In this contested city, this one track shared by people of different religions and languages may seem quite striking, a ray of hope. To be sure, divisions cannot be glossed over by a line, but a line it is. Some choose to walk on the former track which has been filled between the sleepers, or on the adjacent narrow lawn, but Hillel – like many children his age – is fascinated by the gaps that still exist on the edge of the old Ottoman track.

Putting steps into signs

[Matt] Do we choose who we walk with?

Are ethnographers selective?

The words are within you, the words will fall out. There are questions. Provocations, routines, games. Is the path the subject? The purpose? Who else walks it, where are we going together? Is this the structure of the chapter? Six writers, five speakers, language, words, how is it to play out?

To hear a shriek in the air. To sit at one's desk and see the images, almost unbidden, of the walk. To be faithful to the notebook of the imagination.

To set off, into the page, to face the whiteness of the snow, the landscape melting, changing, to imagine the map, the words accompanying in your head, words multiplying and magnifying, spreading out in all directions, language expanding like a cloak over the land/city as you walk. The taste of ethnography in the mind, these words, writers' words, that take their place, that cover it. We need them, as we walk, untethered researchers, free-floating observers, our feet kicking around the page, looking for the footstep of the other, intuiting and overhearing others' words to write with. To walk alongside each other. To invite each other to write our words as we walk, to give them our feet, to let them dictate us.

[Matti] The perambulograph is a special device while my digital camera is not. However, the camera is employed in an unorthodox manner. I point the lens to the sun to capture the halos symmetrically. At times, I block the glaring sun behind an obstacle or raised hand. Both the composition and exposure emphasise the sky, leaving the other parts underexposed. In post-production the image is manipulated to isolate the halos from the background, making these images more peculiar. Sharpening and tweaking the pixels reveal rare halos while the rest of the image becomes distorted beyond recognition. The resulting images are typical for amateur-scientific documentation, where fixed conventions define a successful outcome.

[Simon] The walk I took problematised the idea of ethnographic knowledge in relation to walking and somatic inquiry. Taken alongside the other walks and writings in this chapter, it illuminates our diversity of practices and how this diversity could generate a form of understanding by way of a prismatic core: how our paths crossed.

To-gather/rhythm

[Dani] We walk to-gether – I walk on the smooth surface and he jumps from one track to the next, balancing himself with each cheerful bounce that lands on the white granular stones in between the tracks. It is a playful walk for him and for me as we get into the mutual rhythm of a walk and talk, the same rhythm that can be heard and experienced in the score: "Pam Pam [clapping]" ... Simon's acapella fuses two lines that seem apt: "like the landscape daddy experienced without a ... touch of a stone." We finally make it to Kitty Stone, get our milk, taking a different path home.

[Matt] With these companions what is possible? One can walk in a group, one can journey together, friends, pilgrims, sing, think, step after step, word after word, no conflict, no difficulty in the steps, weaving in words with each other's, in pace, in time.

The map becomes a cloak becomes a sense, becomes another landscape, another people, perhaps, or a mirror, a shiny clean mirror, like a shield flashing halos in the sun's face as the walk continues towards our memories of where the horizon might be, every step evoking another's words and every word stepping in the service of the other.

To come home, to reach a destination, end, finish, to draw a line, to come to a full stop? Such an eventually seems unlikely. To reach an end at this point, so far into the project, so close to its beginning, full circle at the end of the page, the right margin and come back again to the left, and finally stop, say "it is over".

A sense of arrival?

[Matt] How did the group fracture?

[Gautam] Why do I feel unsure of my *locus standi* while meandering lazily through the "revolution"-ravaged streets of the Dark Goddess's own city? Am I looking for the epiphany that eludes Simon ... is there a paradoxical T/truth in Calcutta-Kolkata's ultra-religious hyper-secularity?

[Dani] Did I walk to Kitty Stone? Are Simon's solitary walks under grey skies over green hills similar to my walk accompanied by my son under blue sky in the city of Jerusalem? That is not the question I need to answer. For me the question was always whether I could know a walk. What conditions of knowledge are there in learning these affects? John Wylie's (2005) wonderful account of his walk tries to convey his own experience in ways that are more than representational. Our experiment is different from this, it is not autoethnographic.

Walking experiences differ but all ethnographies are based on an engagement that transforms understandings of cultures. They may leave a physical trace, but ultimately rambles are not about arriving anywhere. I hope that by experimenting with re-experiencing, I have at least reached somewhere.

[Matti] Although images do not document the walk or are by no means connected to the act of rambling after halos, I feel that they capture the essential mood of these April outings when my focus is the sky.

[Susanne] Does this chapter add to (or begin? end?) the Walking Archives – a concept suggested by Dani. Any such archive will have to reflect the jumble of sensations, feelings, associations and thoughts weaving in and out of each other. Only through walking layers upon layers, repetition, a multi-fold of perspectives and methods, finding artistic and creative ways of expressing and interpreting beyond the verbal, paying careful attention to body, performance and identity, looking at the junctions of the body and the landscape as well as the social and the spatial, documenting representations of walking – the list goes on as walking cannot be contained. It is hidden in the everydayness of the activity.

[Daniella] A man invites me to go up to his rooftop and he sees me speaking to a recorder:

“Why do you record your thoughts?”

“For a shared chapter”, I said.

“What do you do with the chapter?”

“You think about it”, I said.

“So what do you say?”

“The view is amazing”, I said.

“No, to your thoughts”, he clarifies, “I am not cynical by the way”.

“Ah, well, I don’t usually record my thoughts as I walk, it’s just that I need to write about it”, I mumbled as I thought to myself: “Did I expose the mission I am on?”

[Matt] And so the thought comes of not moving, of pretending to move, of writing when one is not walking. For how can one write when one walks? One can talk, one can compose in one’s head, into a machine, perhaps, a perambulograph. Writing is the memory of walking. The memory of walking people. Writing is making nonsense of the walk, of interrupting it, of being nature, or positioning words as nature, great words, huge words as corporeal as the Western Wall, as milk or rocks or sun halos, floating onto the path, obscuring it, settling on the path, lending their weight to the page, words ending here, resting in the circular measure of the stop. It seems impossible.

Postamble: parting ways

A good conclusion is telling the truth – here is where academia and walking part ways. They disconnect in the very act of bringing ethnographic/artistic research to publication. The act of fixing something to the page, which is then sold to publishing markets, implies an end point that considers a host of other considerations that were never part of the twist. Doing so, however, remains worthwhile as it introduces the possibility of our subjunctive walk being read and shared by those that are not us. The metaphor of walking as writing breaks down in publication, but this gives it the possibility of being reborn in other people’s minds and, eventually, perhaps, their feet.

Notes

- 1 “When walking and writing merge – exploring the potentials and limits of ethnographic writing” at the conference *Ethnography with a Twist*, University of Jyväskylä, February 2019.
- 2 The perambulograph is a machine invented by Dr. Simon Poole. It is mounted on a harness and allows the wearer to draw or write on a roll of paper as they walk. Advocates of the machine are known as perambulators.
- 3 For an explanation of different halos, see “Halos – Contents”.

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