

Past Mobilities

Archaeological approaches to movement and mobility

Edited by

Jim Leary

University of Reading, UK

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This collection started life as a session at the 33rd Theoretical Archaeology Group conference in Birmingham in 2011. Although there were many speakers, few of the original contributions, for one reason or another, made it through to written form. Other papers were offered; some sought, one or two arrived out of the blue, and where appropriate have been included in this collection. Others were promised but never materialized. Despite the inevitable gaps, it is hoped that this volume will invigorate the study of mobility within archaeology, as well as situate archaeology within mobility studies.

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Jim Leary

Mottisfont, August 2013

Chapter 1

Past Mobility: An Introduction

Jim Leary

Introduction

On a warm summer's day, four young adults set off along the edge of an estuary foreshore. They walk alongside one another heading southeast. With every step their bare feet sink into the soft estuarine mud which squeezes up through their toes and clamps around their heels. It sucks and squelches as they move. They stride at a brisk pace. At one stage, one of them sees something and veers left, crossing the paths of the others and causing them to momentarily bunch together before spreading out once more. Four lines of flow: weaving, interacting and mingling together. Perhaps they are on their way to pick up something or coming home after delivering an item; or maybe they are out to undertake an entirely different task. Perhaps they are there to do nothing in particular; just out for a walk – to feel the summer sun on their necks and the cool, wet mud around their feet. Nearby a child of three or four plays with someone a few years older; perhaps a sibling. The younger of the two playfully, absent-mindedly, dances around the other leaving an erratic array of footprints in the mud. The older picks something heavy up (could it be the youngster?) and feels his or her feet sink, leaving noticeably deeper traces in the ground. Elsewhere a person steps out across the estuary in a straight line heading west. They walk at a steady pace, despite sliding twice in the mud, and halt momentarily, feet side-by-side, before continuing.

Movements like these are the stuff of life. They could be from anytime and anywhere – today, yesterday, last century. These particular flows happened at the end of the sixth and beginning of the fifth millennium BC, towards the end of the Mesolithic period, at a site now known as Goldcliff East in the Severn Estuary, UK (Bell 2007). The evidence comes from footprint-tracks recently exposed in banded sediments (of the Wentlooge Formation) on the edge of a former channel (Scales in Bell 2007 – although I add my own take, the first four people described above are based on ‘Persons 2–5’, the next two on ‘Persons 11 and 12’, and the last on ‘Person 1’). The fine-grained sediments within which some of the clearest footprints were found were laid down during spring and summer months, and in some instances there is evidence of cracking in the mud suggesting that it was hot when the footprint was made or soon after. The prints were later sealed by coarser grained sandy bands deposited during the following autumn and winter, thus preserving them. This process was repeated yearly for over a thousand years, before sea-level rise eventually inundated the whole area. These fragmented tracks now provide evidence for trails of humans and animals. From them it is possible to record stride length and cadence, as well as foot size – and from the latter a certain amount of data can be garnered on age and body size (Scales in Bell 2007). In particular, they provide tangible evidence for past mobility – the currents of life that make up human existence.



Figure 1.1: The footprint trails of 'Persons 11 and 12'

Mobility and archaeology

This is a book about past mobility. More specifically, it is about the movement and flows of people, ideas, objects and information from place to place, from one person to another. Mobility is all about us; it is both vital and ubiquitous. It can take the form of long journeys or migrations, or it can be undertaking tasks such as hunting, foraging, ploughing or making pots. Mobility can also be small actions – micro-gestures that form recognisable and repeatable practices making up everyday routines and habits. We come into this world moving and we learn about the world around us through movement; we attune to ourselves and to the world by moving and exploring (Sheets-Johnstone 2011a). Movement is primal: ‘in the beginning was – and still is – movement’ (Sheets-Johnstone 2011b: 124).

The development of the discipline of archaeology emerged through movement. Some of our best known monuments were described by travellers and antiquarians touring the land, often on horseback. John Leland, commissioned by Henry VIII, extensively travelled England and Wales describing the topography and compiling maps. This work inspired a genre of tours and ‘perambulations’ by topographer-antiquarians who traversed the country describing features and prospects (Lancaster 2008). These included antiquarians William Camden, whose *Britannia* was printed in 1586, and John Aubrey, who wrote *Monumenta Britannica* in the seventeenth century, through to William Borlase and William Stukeley in the eighteenth century. It also includes the novelist and commentator Daniel Defoe and solitary horse-riding traveller Celia Fiennes, both of whom recorded their adventures and journeys. As travel became increasingly accessible throughout the eighteenth century more people were able to participate, visiting well-known monuments around the country. The ‘Grand Tour’, on

the other hand, afforded the wealthy the opportunity to see the ancient sites of Europe and beyond (Lancaster 2008). Although, as Foubert and Breeze show in Chapter 9, tourism to historic sites flourished in the Roman Empire too (as did an associated trade in souvenirs).

Walking around is still the best way to explore archaeological sites and monuments, and can be an important part of the learning process through fieldtrips. Exploring archaeological monuments on foot is often used as a way of getting closer to the past – still today a visit to Avebury henge in Wiltshire, will see any number of people ‘processing’ along the West Kennet avenue, or, for that matter, along the Greater Cursus monument near Stonehenge. Similar fieldwork techniques are, in fact, well established within the phenomenology tradition of direct engagement with monuments in British archaeology (for example, Bender 2001, Brück 2005, Edmonds 2006, Gillings 2011, Tilley 1994).

Archaeological fieldwork, whether survey, excavation or any other approach, involves considerable mobility – that is to say – it is a physical task. This is particularly so with ‘fieldwalking’, where lines of archaeologists, head bowed, walk across a chosen area such as a recently ploughed field, and record objects lying on the surface. This is a form of walking that requires one to disengage from almost all but the piece of ground immediately below. Archaeological excavation involves the movements of trowel, mattock and shovel; actions which reveal the archaeological deposits or follow the cut and remove the fill. On a micro-scale it also includes the rather less energetic movements of the sharpened pencil across permatrace to create drawn plans and sections. Pencil movements that depict (according to the excavator’s interpretation and on the whole using standard conventions) the past movement of the soil – the tip lines

and flows of backfill (McFadyen 2011). These ‘lines of movement’ are past actions depicted by present ones, recorded for future use (McFadyen 2011: 40–2).

Discussions of past mobility have occasionally entered into the archaeological literature, and are sometimes quite central – particularly with regard to the spread of people, cultures and artefacts. Yet mobility is rarely studied directly as a subject in itself. More frequently it is treated as an aside, and often when discussed is framed in highly rational terms, generally through debates on optimal foraging strategies, and nomadism and sedentism (see, for example, papers in Barnard and Wendrich 2008). It is framed as cost and benefit, and the human-scale experience of mobility is often lost. Mobility strategies are chosen logically for their functional practicalities; it becomes an involuntary and behavioural reaction rather than a core component of the social world. This is what Ingold has criticized as a ‘head over heels’ approach (2004, 2011); that is, a belief that rational intelligence happens in the head; whilst the feet are simply a mechanical response to the brain. Perhaps, as Cresswell (2006) points out, this oversight is because mobility is an intangible subject to study, and archaeology in particular deals poorly with the fleeting. Mobility lacks a presence.

Place, on the other hand, does not; it is reassuringly tangible – there is something that one can see in the ground and excavate. Archaeologists like to have neatly bounded places; sites that can be drawn around, scheduled and territorialised. When the movement of, say, people or objects is discussed, it is the ‘place’ they came from or ended up that is highlighted – rarely discussed are the movements in between. Place is always the starting point, not mobility, for there is a preference for fixity rather than flow (Cresswell 2006). Studying only place, however, removes bodily movement from the discussion, and a stillness is imposed on the past.

If, however, the focus is shifted back to mobility and movement, we can see the landscape occupied by moving bodies interacting and affecting one another, much like the four people I started this chapter with, and with past movements influencing future ones. Place can then be seen as a pulsing node or confluence in a meshwork of different mobilities (Ingold 2009, 2011). 'By the interweaving of routes over time or concurrently, a place is made' (Lee and Ingold 2006: 78). Place, then, is not so much a definable, tangible 'thing' – more a confluence of movements.

Within the social sciences, the new mobilities paradigm (Hannam *et al.* 2006), or mobilities turn (Urry 2007), that has developed over the last few years (other publications include Adey 2010, Büscher and Urry 2011, Cresswell 2006, Elliott and Urry 2010, Merriman 2012), has done much to critique the suggestion that human subjects think and act independently of their material worlds. It has re-framed society from a fixed form, to one that is composed of complex mobilities, highlighting the meanings and politics of mobility as well as the social implications of it. Life is made meaningful as people, objects and ideas are mobilised.

The new mobilities paradigm has much to add to archaeology, but as this book highlights, archaeology has much to add to these discussions too. It is not enough to straight forwardly 'borrow' from the new mobilities paradigm, but to advance it and in doing so situate archaeology centrally within discussions of mobility (see also Aldred and Sekedat 2011). Archaeology needs to discuss mobility, but to go beyond the fact of the journey (see, for example, papers in Cummings and Johnston 2007) in order to discuss the rhythms, meanings, complexities, performance and social relations of mobility, as well as how different mobilities effect people and groups.

This book treats mobility as a central theme in archaeology; the chapters are wide-ranging and methodological as well as theoretical, focusing specifically on movement itself, and its importance, as well as archaeology's distinctiveness. In Chapter 2, Aldred suggests that it is this very distinctiveness, its focus on materiality and temporality in particular, that has so much to offer mobility studies. He shows that by understanding the fluid mobilities (the flows) that connect and link sites and objects, a much more dynamic archaeology comes to the fore. Aldred uses routes between medieval and post-medieval Icelandic sites to exemplify these 'flows', providing a diachronic view of mobility and revealing how existing mobility patterns can influence subsequent ones.

'Chiefs!' exclaimed Robert Louis Stevenson on the opening of the Road of Gratitude in Samoa.

'Our road is not built to last a thousand years, yet in a sense it is. When a road is once built, it is a strange thing how it collects traffic, how every year as it goes on, more and more people are found to walk thereon, and others are raised up to repair and perpetuate it, and keep it alive; so that perhaps even this road of ours may, from reparation to reparation, continue to exist and be useful hundreds and hundreds of years after we are mingled in the dust' (Stevenson 1894: 398).

Mobility in the landscape

Archaeologists study at a landscape scale; indeed, landscape archaeology has become so popular in recent times as to have formed a separate sub-discipline. The environment around us, however, also moves; it is constantly in flux (Bender 2001). This is a point Edgeworth takes up in Chapter 3, describing how fords, and to some extent bridges, fluidly gather the landscape, pulling in people and animals to cross the river at that

point. As Strohmayer (2011: 127) says: bridges (and here we can add fords too) ‘help us think mobility more clearly’. The landscape is configured in relation to these crossing places, which can become strategic, political or symbolic; a place for meetings and assemblies. Fords and bridges are therefore confluences in the landscape, but these nodes can themselves move or become abandoned as the river moves and changes, or as new bridges are constructed, diverting and reconfiguring the meshwork of paths and roads. This also means things are altered for people too – the settlements that rely on the routes and their traffic. Through two case studies, Edgeworth presents us with a swirling enmeshment of paths, droveways, routes, people and animals – strands of movement focused on river crossing points in a shifting ‘flowscape’.

Frederick (Chapter 4) also takes a landscape approach, studying rock art through a mobilities lens. In particular she explores the relationship between the stillness and permanence of the rock art itself and the movement that underpins its creation. Despite the prominence given to the fixity of rock art in the literature, Frederick chooses to focus on the ways in which mobilities may be discerned. This ranges from depictions of dancing and hunting, to modern technologies of movement such as the aeroplane and the motorcar, and also of journeys to the spirit world. Through this discussion Frederick shows that a mobilities approach is an apt framework for examining the mark-making activities of cultures.

The use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is one way of representing and analysing potential past mobility patterns. Seitsonen *et al.* (Chapter 5) use GIS and Hägerstrand’s time-geography to understand mobility, monuments and settlement sites in the Bronze Age environment of the Khanuy Valley in Mongolia. Taking a higher level view of mobility, they suggest that people moved between winter camps in the

foothills and summer camps alongside the river, while monument settings may have ordered and guided mobility patterns; the world around affecting and affected by mobilities.

Mobile objects

Archaeology's focus on 'things' is another of its strengths, and just as neither people nor landscapes are static, nor are objects. 'Social, economic and cultural differences ... push things from one place to another, or even obstruct their movement' (Hahn and Weiss 2013: 7). They move and shift through people, reflecting, to a certain extent, people's movements. But objects are also caught up in their own networks, moving between and across the flows of people as they are exchanged, given as gifts, or lost and found. They represent obligations and dependencies. Objects can also gather people and networks and pull them in, much like Edgeworth's fords, affecting the flow of others as people travel to them (Urry 2007). There are also the movements and networks that surround the production or transformation of an object – they are always part of an 'enmeshment'. Other processes move objects too, such as gravity, erosion and decay, and as Aldred points out in Chapter 2, there are post-depositional processes that continue to move objects even after they become buried. In this sense objects are 'flows of matter' (Hodder 2012: 160).

Objects also move through time as well as space – passed from one generation to the next as they become repositories for collective and intergenerational memories; heirlooms that represent 'material emblems of an ancestral past' (Gilchrist 2013: 170). The meanings of things are often fluid, changing throughout their use lives, rather than fixed, and objects themselves can change and transform through the process of

movement in time and over space (Appadurai 1986, Hahn and Weiss 2013). Mobility can be a transformational process for things as well as people.

Objects found in the archaeological record, which mostly represents their point of deposition, can also often be traced to their point of origin. This is either through typology or the result of using scientific techniques, such as chemical analysis, to provenance the material. However, the flows that the objects have experienced during their lifetime can normally only be guessed at. Some stages of the use-life of materials, however, can be reconstructed by, for example, use-wear and residue analysis of stone tools – the analysis of microscopic wear and tear, or residues on the edges of tools (Gijn and Wentink 2013). The *chaîne opératoire* is another way of helping us follow the movements of things (for example Knappett 2011), and while it is normally used to understand the manufacturing process of things, it can also, as Aldred discusses in Chapter 2, be used to reveal mobilizing and transforming processes.

People can go to great lengths to collect, mine or quarry materials, such as minerals or stones, acquiring them from a particular source and transporting them great distances. Often these places are themselves important, but the journey can be too. Boivin notes that ‘the value of a mineral is very often related as much to the journey that was made to acquire it as to the mineral itself’ (2004: 10). As Frederick sets out in Chapter 4, in Aboriginal Australia mineral pigments are exchanged over vast distances, and in some instances these can be linked to the travels of ancestral beings. It is the movement as much as the place that provides the meaning, and these mobile meanings are written into the objects.

Mobility and the body

Journeys, particularly over long distances, can often pose considerable difficulties, and frequently travel in antiquity resulted in illness and disease; the word ‘travel’ deriving from the fourteenth century word for ‘toil’ or ‘labour’. That is to say that physical travel involved the embodied, corporeal movement of bodies – or what Urry describes as ‘lumpy, fragile, aged, gendered, racialized bodies’ (2007: 48). Movement is a physical, sensuous experience. It works at the scale of the body and involves it in its entirety – including sight, hearing, touch, and smell (Cresswell 2006). It uses the hands and the lungs, and could, for more physical journeys, also include pain; exposed to the elements, and with blisters, muscle ache and insect bites (Adey 2010, Ingold 2004). As Lorimer points out ‘the lingering afterglow, and embodied ache, felt on having come home (and “put your feet up”) is one of the motivations for having gone out for a walk in the first place’ (Lorimer 2011: 24). Mobility is also often entangled with feelings, desires and emotions, and indeed certain mobilities, such as, say, pilgrimages, may be undertaken in order to generate a particular feeling or emotion. And of course as the playful young child in this chapter’s opening paragraph shows – movement is not necessarily linear or moving from A to B; like time, there is not a start and finish, but simply a continuation of the flow of life (Ingold 2011).

Mobility obviously does not need to comprise long-distance journeys, and Woolford and Dunn describe their Motion in Place Platform in Chapter 6, which uses motion capture to recreate micro-movements, exploring relationships between moving bodies and places. These micro-movements include sweeping out an Iron Age roundhouse and grinding grain with a quern stone. This was done first ‘virtually’ in a sterile studio, and then in a physically reconstructed roundhouse, showing how the

environment and the materiality of the environment in which the tasks were undertaken affected and afforded different movements and mobilities. Crucial to this analysis of performed bodies is Gibson's concept of affordances.

These micro-movements are habituated bodily actions that form repetitive daily routines. They exist within a particular practice, within a *habitus*, and daily activities and movements such as these shape and perpetuate social life (Bourdieu 1977). Regular movements train and skill the body through repetitive action, but they also change and shape our bodies (Sofaer 2006). Davies *et al.* show very clearly in Chapter 7 how movements can be literally written into our bodies. Far from being a fixed structure, the skeleton is plastic and mouldable, and can provide insights into repetitive mobilities throughout a person's lifetime. A professional tennis player, for example, will have pronounced deposition of bone on their playing side compared to their non-playing side. When this is applied to archaeology inferences can be made about the mobilities of past populations through signatures engrained in the skeleton. Davies *et al.* illustrate this using case studies from European prehistory, principally the transition to agriculture and state formation in the Nile basin. From their work we can see that mobility and the body are constructive of one another. Mobility is irreducibly an embodied action – we are our movements!

Meaningful mobilities

People engage and interact with their surroundings so that both landscape and traveller are constructive of each other (Ingold 2004), but some movement is more engaged than others. Vergunst and Ingold describe a Roman army marching and how this is a disengaged form of mobility (2008: 13). Bodies are forced along at a given pace and are

to some extent unresponsive to the environment they move through. Interaction on a march like this is minimal – head up, eyes forward, deaf to the world, as they move along roads from one marching camp to the next. This is a very different way of moving, resulting in another way of perceiving the world. But Roman society was highly mobile as Foubert and Breeze show in Chapter 9, with extensive infrastructure, including roads, which afforded a speedy postal network that facilitated rapid communication. Movement and mobility enabled the Roman Empire, and, in turn, the Empire enabled greater mobility. The Roman army – cosmopolitan, multiracial and made up of people from across the Roman world – embodies this very mobility.

Roman mobility was also highly meaningful and political, and one's style of walking provided an identity, and separated the 'cultured' (that is to say Greek and Roman) from the barbarian other (O'Sullivan 2011). Just as culture can be expressed through say cloths or art, so too can it be through the way individuals move (Urry 2007). As with any society, it was for Romans more than a way of moving through space – it was a performance with the assumption that there was an audience to watch and appreciate, and to understand something of the walker's identity. As the Roman philosopher Seneca remarked 'we do not walk, we parade' (translated in O'Sullivan 2011: 32). Walking was an ambulatory performance, and by their movement through the urban setting one could advertise their status through motion. Other forms of performative mobility included, as O'Sullivan (2011: 53) notes, the triumphal parade, which was a 'mobile narrative of contemporary history', and the funeral procession, which was a 'mobile narrative of the past'.

One's gait was of particular importance to the Romans and separated men from women, and free men from slaves. Indeed, it was such a characteristic that 'a "family

gait” was no less distinctive than a “family nose” (O’Sullivan 2011: 16). This brings to mind the poet and essayist Sir Thomas Overbury’s characterisation of an ‘affectate traveller’: ‘his attire speaks *French* or *Italian*, and his gait cries, *Behold me*’ (Overbury 1940 [1614]: 85). As Farnell says: ‘movement practices of all kinds – both highly skilled and mundane – are complex, multilayered, multi-semiotic realms of knowledge that require *translation* from one situation and cultural context to another (Farnell and Wood 2011: 91–2, emphasis in original).

Furthermore, it was thought that gait in the Roman world reflected the movement of the mind, so that walking represented a unified performance of both the mind and the body. At the heart of this is how Romans thought about their body, and the relationship of their body with personal identity. But it was also believed that there were intellectual benefits of walking. The history of this extends back to the Peripatetics of Greek philosophy, and was taken up again later by philosophers such as Rousseau in the eighteenth century and the urban *flâneurs* of nineteenth century Paris (Solnit 2001). It also has parallels with de Certeau’s formulation of walking (Certeau 1984), and, to a certain extent, modern day psychogeographers. As Nietzsche exclaims in *Twilight of the Idols* ‘only ideas *won by walking* have any value’ (Nietzsche 1990 [1889]: 36, emphasis in translation). For Seneca, walking was also a metaphor for the journey to virtue: ‘the sage does not need to walk timidly or one step at a time; for his confidence in himself is so great ...’ (translated in O’Sullivan 2011: 44).

Walking in the Roman world was clearly a profoundly social activity. This is as it always is and has been: ‘not only do we walk because we are social beings, but we are also social beings because we walk’ (Ingold and Vergunst 2008: 2). Some Roman villa gardens were designed to provide a private space that choreographed movements so that

the householder could have ambling conversations with guests; a feature in common with the formal gardens and ‘wilderness’ walks of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries AD. The rhythm of walking shaped the rhythm of talking, and *vice versa*.

The Roman infrastructure afforded travel and a veritable tourist industry flourished. But travel was not always safe, as Foubert and Breeze show in Chapter 9, and use of escorts or dogs to protect against dangers is attested. Travelling by sea was not necessarily any better, and piracy was a problem. While underlining the obvious but fundamental fact that the body is/was vulnerable, this serves to show that mobility is complex and relational.

Gendered mobilities

Walking in the Roman world also appears to have been explicitly gendered. Elite males, for example, were expected to exhibit self-control and decorum in their bodies – indeed, their gait justified their social status as much as conveying it. Young, free-born men were trained to walk the ‘right way’ (O’Sullivan 2011), to acquire the skill. The speed at which one walked at was also important – slaves ran but aristocratic men did not hurry (nor did they linger, lest they appear feminine), reflecting a cautious and considered persona. A women’s gait, according to the ideal norm, was graceful but not ostentatious. As Ovid sets out in *Art of Love*, the ‘dainty’ women ‘swings her sides artfully, taking in air with her flowing tunic, and she haughtily takes measured steps’, whereas the uncultured woman ‘plods like the sunburned wife of an Umbrian farmer, and takes huge, straddling steps’. Ovid suggested that the ideal gait should be ‘a middle ground’ between the two (translated in O’Sullivan 2011: 28).

Foubert and Breeze highlight how women travellers in the Roman world were perceived, by contemporary authors at least, as ‘transgressive’, leading to a modern view that few women travelled. But as they set out in Chapter 9, recent archaeological work attests to the fact that Roman women of all ages and rank were highly mobile; a point also highlighted by Eckardt (2010) and her work on Roman diaspora communities. Similar assumptions is a theme picked up by Brown in Chapter 8, who points out that the spread of ideas and materials in prehistory is normally seen in the literature as the result of the heroic travels of men. But how much of this results from our own male-centred conceptions? Using scientific techniques, such as strontium isotope analysis and mitochondrial DNA, Brown redresses the balance by outlining the considerable, but often overlooked, evidence for women on the move, shifting the focus away from male mobility. We should not assume that men travelled more than women in the past, not least for with it are implications for how we interpret the spread of material culture, knowledge and ideas. Women in prehistory, as Brown states, may well have been the ‘movers and shakers’.

Mobilities of inequality

Mobility could have been a source of freedom, but it could also have been used to exert power over people and groups, as in exiles, slaves or prisoners of war (indeed imprisonment is forced immobility), reflecting inequalities of power. Some people had control over mobility and greater ‘access’ to it (were more motile), and others did not. To take an example, a series of economic depressions in late sixteenth early seventeenth century AD England created a proliferation of dispossessed and highly mobile labourers. This shifting group was made up of young apprentices, peddlers, wage labourers, and mobile craftsmen, and most moved easily between any of these roles

(Fumerton 2006). As poverty spread throughout this time whole families were driven onto the roads, and extreme poverty for some led to begging and theft. ‘A beggar lives here in this vale of sorrow, and travels here today, and there tomorrow, the next day being neither here, nor there: but almost nowhere, and yet everywhere’ (John Taylor, 1621, *The Praise, Antiquity, and Commodity of Beggary, Beggars, and Begging* quoted in Fumerton 2006: 56).

Tudor poor laws and official proclamations against vagabonds and beggars led to many becoming perpetually mobile, travelling the byways of rural and urban England (Fumerton 2006). Enforcement was, however, uneven and depended on age and gender amongst other things. Clearly to some the ability to roam regularly from place to place, job to job, relationship to relationship, indulging in alehouse pleasures, provided a libertine freedom that defied the otherwise repressive households. But for unmarried women by themselves this meant persecution where female freedom was linked with lewdness and illegitimate children (Fumerton 2006).

Different mobilities

Ways of movement vary radically depending on the terrain one is moving through (Ingold and Vergunst 2008, Urry 2007). That is to say the ground is textured, so that some terrain requires greater hardship and exertion than others, and clearly moving through woodland is different to, say, open ground or over upland areas (Vergunst 2008). In this way, the topography (as well as, amongst other things, the weather and the vegetation), to a certain extent, forces the form of mobility. Furthermore, as Ingold and Vergunst point out, the world ‘teems with non-human forms of animal life’ (2008: 10), which influence human movements. The animals one moves with, whether hunter

or herder, also condition movements – the speed one moves at, the routes one takes, and the trails one leaves behind (Gooch 2008). Moving with animals constitutes a different form of navigating the world. This acts as a counterpoint to any discussion of past mobility that sees it as a series of undifferentiated acts. Any understanding of past movement clearly has to take the affordances of the environment into consideration; itself, which as Edgeworth (Chapter 3) shows, is mobile.

There are also different forms of movement. In the Roman world, the use of escorts of considerable size around town provided conspicuous evidence for one's status, wealth and power – particularly the power to defend themselves or threaten others. Conversely, the decadent could move around the city in the relative refuge of a litter, literally and metaphorically lifting them above the masses (O'Sullivan 2011).

Much discussion on mobility centres around terrestrial landscape movement, however movement on water offers a different experience of travel. Dunkley surveys prehistoric watercraft in Britain in Chapter 10; this form of movement enabled people, animals and materials to travel along rivers, estuaries, coasts and across the seaways around Britain, and encouraged the dissemination of ideas. It also provided a means for a vast network of long distance contacts, the extent of which in prehistory has probably previously been under-estimated.

Travel by water can take many forms and each would have provided a different experience and perception of the environment. To a certain extent sailors and canoeists are caught up in, and need an understanding of, the different rhythms and movements of the water bodies they move through. To sail is to enter into a different realm of everydayness. But as Dunkley points out, travel by water did not just require knowledge

of the water, itself highly variable, but of nautical astronomy too – to navigate seaways one needed an intimate understanding of the heavenly bodies. It is also worth considering the movements required to produce a boat – the physical actions and meshwork of interactions with people and materials that surround the manufacture process, locking people into the boat and its use. Boat mobility was a fundamentally different way of moving, it required different ways of knowing, seeing and being, and people's identities and social relations were created by it – the sea is 'in their blood' as Dunkley says.

Dunkley also mentions portage (carrying the boat between rivers), which may be evidenced by a cleat on one of the Bronze Age boats from Must Farm, Cambridgeshire, UK. This unique form of land/river boat movement usually requires the boat to be heaved-up on to one's head. Waskul and Waskul point out (in the context of modern canoeists in North America) that while there can often be limited social contact between different crafts on the water, 'portages are the primary place where one encounters people' (2009: 29). Portages can perhaps then be seen as nodes in a river journey; social confluences where people can pause to pass pleasantries, have discussions on conditions further upstream, or enquire as to purpose of travel. Portage sites may, over time, have become social arenas and meeting points.

Like horseback riding, boats bring places closer together – 'a time-space distancing'; they afford greater connection, which in turn leads to responses of further mobility as ties are made. They also speed up mobility and the sensory perception of it, creating a 'time-space compression' where the landscape moves ever quicker so that one engages with the world around differently. The arrival of new forms of mobility, such as boats or horseback riding, in one region will also have affected others, possibly

altering previously favoured routes, and effectively immobilizing groups. Further, social inequalities are brought about by the use of boat or horse, as opposed to feet, as a form of travel – that is to say that new mobilities can create elites. And questions should be asked about how people resisted or adjusted to the threats posed by this sort of outside movement.

People are affected by mobility, either intentionally or unintentionally, in different ways – one group's mobility can reduce the mobility of another, whilst some mobilities are dependent on others. Mobility is often unevenly distributed and people are differently mobile. Some movements are unrestricted, others bounded; some are hard, requiring exertion, and others are easy. Some people are dependent on others in order to move, such as a mobility-impaired person (the ill, the old, the disabled, or the pregnant) (Adey 2010). In other words, some people have more mobility than others, and different people can gain access to different spaces.

Travelling with the pilgrims

Many of the themes discussed above, that is to say meaningful, political and gendered mobility, are exemplified by the act of going on a pilgrimage. Pilgrimage is a journey taken specifically for a religious purpose, usually as an act of devotion, supplication or the completion of a promise to a God or saint, and is motion, both physical and metaphorical. That is to say that going on a pilgrimage is to feel and experience the physical, as well as the spiritual. While pilgrimage is common to many religions, I draw here mainly from that in medieval Britain, where most people will have attempted at least one pilgrimage in their lifetime (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005).

There were many different types of pilgrims and motivations for pilgrimages, and these differences would have led to considerably different experiences of moving. Some pilgrimages were undertaken voluntarily; and for some being a pilgrim was a way of life – people that were constantly on the move and ‘indistinguishable from vagabonds’ (Webb 2000: xvi). Others undertook a pilgrimage to earn an indulgence, which became common in the twelfth century AD. Some pilgrims were seeking a miraculous cure from an illness or disease, or relief from chronic pain, while others conducted it barefoot or in fetters – making the experience considerably more painful (Webb 2000). The experience of pilgrim mobility was a highly varied one.

Others pilgrimages were overtly mobilities of freedom – such as those simply interested in getting together with a group of friends and neighbours and enjoying the experience of going somewhere either as a day out or for a slightly longer time. Often this occurred at particular times of the year in order to enjoy a religious festival at the pilgrimage site, and certainly fairs and games often accompanied the celebration of a saint’s annual festivity.

However, pilgrimages were also a form of restriction and were imposed on people, usually by bishops, as penance or rather punishment for minor offences such as adultery. These pilgrimages may simply require the penitent to go to a particular cathedral and stand before the high altar with a candle during mass. Others forced people to go barefoot; or for William Covel, guilty of repeated adultery, to go ‘naked but for his breeches’ (Webb 2000: 236). It was clearly the public humiliation as much as the journey which was penitential here.

Pilgrimages were also gendered, so that while men could travel alone, women would be expected to have a male escort (Morrison 2000). Some shrines were restricted to men only – for example, women were forbidden to approach St Cuthbert's shrine in Durham Cathedral, and relics or images in Carthusian or Cistercian houses were generally not accessible to women (Webb 2000). There was also a restriction, if not an outright ban, on the mobility of nuns and other female religious in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries AD (Webb 2000).

There was also a very clear social hierarchy involved in pilgrimages – people with money had a better, or at least very different, experience of the pilgrimage. Prosperity, for example, may have dictated how close one could get to a saint's shrine, as well as the form of travel such as on foot, on horseback (the protagonists of Chaucer's fourteenth-century *The Canterbury Tales* all had mounts), or by some other form of travel. Those with money could travel to the Holy Land, Spain or Rome, whilst a more humble person may only undertake a short journey to a local or perhaps regional shrine. Evidence for these travels in the archaeological record comes from pilgrim badges, emblems and tokens, and possibly scallop shells placed within burials (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005). The clothing on a fifteenth or sixteenth century pilgrim buried at Worcester Cathedral Priory indicates that he was a man of 'reasonable means', as does the location of his burial inside the cathedral (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005: 84). There are frequent records of wealthy people paying others to go on the pilgrimage for them. Indeed professional pilgrims seem to have developed as a viable form of employment, hiring themselves out to people with the money but not the time or ability to go on pilgrimage (Webb 2000); an immobile form of pilgrim travel.

Furthermore, pilgrims did not simply move independently through the landscape; they influenced and affected the world around them. For example, offerings at shrines and the purchase of pilgrim tokens were an important source of income to the church and it was in their interest to encourage more pilgrims. This meant improved access such as better roads, the benefits of which clearly went beyond just the pilgrims. Others also benefited from pilgrims; flourishing pilgrim traffic led to an increase in peddlers, traders, and vendors, as well as taverns and hospices along pilgrim routes, and pilgrim fairs brought with them dance and theatre troupes. Thames ferrymen did very well by serving pilgrims travelling from East Anglia and Essex to Canterbury (Webb 2000). No doubt we can also add criminals as amongst those that benefited from large groups of pilgrims. As McCorriston states: pilgrimage was an ‘intersection of economic and religious practice’ (2011: 28).

Pilgrim mobility was so much more than going on a journey. Like any other form of mobility, it was political, varied, uneven and unfair. It was a gendered activity – available to one sex more than the other, and experienced very differently. Whereas pilgrimage was a form of freedom for one person, it was a constraint for the other, occasionally serving to humiliate and perhaps even marginalize. Overall it would have resulted in very different embodied experiences.



Figure 1.2: 'Earthbound Plant' by Antony Gormley. The soles of a life-sized statue buried upside down outside the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge

Moving on

This short discussion of mobility has barely scratched the surface, however, hopefully it has shown how ideas about, and practices of, mobility have always been capricious and inconsistent. Mobility was not simply 'movement', but: embodied movement, performative movement, potential movement, free movement, or restricted movement. And it was constitutive of economic, social and political relations. As Adey says, mobility 'underpins many of the material, social, political, economic and cultural processes operating in the world today and in the past' (2010: 31). Movement is an essential part of our lived experience. The discussions of mobility that see individuals as independent of their social and political worlds ignore the richness of the mobility experience; the power relations, meanings, embodiments and effects of mobility.

Culture, society, and ideologies have been constructed through mobilities and it underpins and informs the way we see the world.

Mobility was imbued with meaning and power. It was an ensemble of freedom, opportunity, adventure and progress, and yet it was also a form of restriction. Relative immobility can be a form of resistance too, blocking the normal ordering rhythmic flows of everyday life. Mobility is sensual, experiential and performative and engrained with social activities and cultural practices. Moving in a crowd can be pleasurable, social and tactile with all bodies moving together, connecting and binding them, whilst solitary movement can be a form of meditation, a reflexive practice, perhaps even creative. Mobility can be conformity or it can be transgression. Mobility that is different to the cultural norm may be seen as deviance; something threatening, to be feared and suspicious of and often something to be controlled.

Mobility cannot be taken on its own – it is complex, relational and impacts on people differently, and warrants closer examination in archaeology. We need to throw away old assumptions and unquestioned conceptions about mobility, and develop an alternative framework, and through this aim to understand who had access to and was affected by mobility. We also need to better understand cultural mobility (see Greenblatt 2009) – what were the mechanisms of interaction, and how did they set others in motion?

Archaeologists ignore the new mobilities paradigm at their peril; equally social scientists operating within mobility studies ignore archaeology, and the temporal richness this involves, at theirs. This book is a call for an archaeology of movement rather than stasis and to develop a distinctive archaeological approach to mobility. This

entails privileging movement over place, and explicitly accepting that movement and mobility is and always has been a source of meaning and knowledge for all humans.

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